



July 3, 2020

## Who We Are

It was the title that captured my attention as I scrolled through the library's app, and the first known use of 'Elvis has left the building' was printed in the *Detroit Times*, November 23, 1956:

*Presley gave his guitar a final bang, flung it from his shoulder and fled the stage seconds ahead of the mob. Outside, a car waited, with door open and motor running. By this time, his press agent, Oscar Davis, was on the stage. He grabbed the microphone and yelled: "Elvis has left the building. Hold it. Hold it. Elvis is gone."*

Soon afterwards, in December 1956, it was used again by Horace Logan, who was the announcer at the Louisiana Hayride show, in which Elvis was a regular performer. Presley had very quickly become very popular with teenagers but had previously taken a regular lowly spot at the Hayride. He was on the bill quite early in proceedings but after his performance was over the crowd of teenagers wanted to see more. Logan announced:

*Please, young people ... Elvis has left the building. He has gotten in his car and driven away ... Please take your seats.*

The phrase, "Elvis has left the building" now takes a more general meaning – the show is over! There's nothing more to see here, people!

These days, "The Church has left the building." But the truth is, the church is not over – there is more going on – more we are called to together – more to see.

For the first four years of its life, Saint Andrew existed without a building. Each week, volunteers would come to set up church in the gymnasium – first at Rib Mountain School and then at St. Matthew’s school gym. There was sweat equity involved in church on Sunday mornings and everyone had their job to do. Now, without a building, how can we know just what our job is? Many are wondering – when can we come back to the building?

As weeks go on, the novelty of on-line worship can lose its luster. Frustration is beginning to mount because we want to be back in church, in the pews. I really want that too. We may be tempted to think, “What’s the point? If we can’t have church now we might as well just close up for good and call it a day.” Even as it may be a while for us yet, the truth is viable and vibrant ministry is happening, even while we wait to gather in person.

The recent resurgence in cases and the DHS now listing Marathon county at moderate burden and increasing trajectory puts us in a high risk category. And because churches are known to be “super spreaders” we are now faced with the daunting task of creating a series of procedures and expectations. We are working on gathering cleaning supplies and creating disinfecting procedures that will lead to things like the recruitment of volunteers and training – all while we yet wait for Shannon, our custodian, to fully heal from her medical leave.

Oddly enough one of our annual council goals for this summer was to focus on redeveloping the mission statement of Saint Andrew. Taking a solid and critical look at what is there, what is missing, and how we might shape that mission for the next forty years is oddly enough, being addressed in how we live and respond to this pandemic. Little did we know that examining our mission under a microscope would be the prominent criteria or lens of all lenses as we plan to resume in person gathering. Carey Nieuwhof is a former lawyer, author, scholar on church leadership and himself a pastor. Last week in his blog he posed a question that he has been asked by many, “*Why would anyone not gather for church if no one is ordering us to not do so?*” His response:

*“Well that depends on your mission. If your goal is to gather people in a building, then keeping your building open despite public health risks and diminished returns makes sense. But if that’s not your mission – if instead your mission is to connect people to the hope of Christ and each other – then there are several things to consider beyond whether or not we are worshiping within the church building.”*

(You can read the full article [here](#).)

Carey writes, “*Churches that overfocus on their buildings run the risk of becoming like shopping malls in the age of Amazon, taxis in the age of Uber, or cable TV in the age of Netflix, Disney+ and YouTube.*”

When we consider all of the lenses for criteria that contribute to reopening, we do our best to be vigilant and stay comprised of government criteria, expert information, financial and liability concerns, context and ecclesiology, ethics and faith – but it is our mission and purpose that ultimately guides us forward. This ought to be true whether in the time of covid or not.

Many churches that do resume in person worship are reopening with 10-20% of their former in person attendance. To solely focus on in person worship diminishes the effort and energy we can share with a world in need.

The Plan to Gather Task Force is actively working. There will be a time for returning to in person gatherings in our building when things can thrive again. We are just not there yet. We do not have a date to share yet with you. In the meantime, our mission to be "Open to all" is not at stake. Instead we are given the gift of this time to be open to a new reality that is actually an old truth: *Saint Andrew has never been its building.* We are a people. We are the body of Christ in Wausau and the world. And there is more going on – more we are called to together – more to see – more to come. We know this to be true because of Jesus and our call through him to be open.

Pr. Jenn

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## Plan to Gather Updates

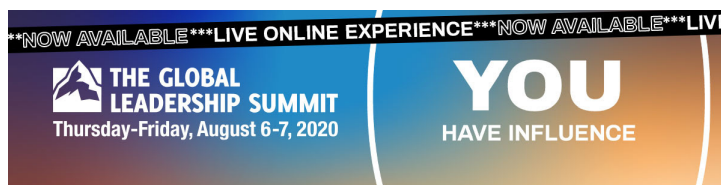
At the Church Council meeting held June 25, 2020, the following motion was passed:

*After review of DHS and county level indicators, council moves to approve the "Plan to Gather" as is, acknowledging indicators may change. We commit to staying agile as we monitor criteria and move from "safer at home" to "Phase 1" of our plan.*

A letter is being sent to describe what "Phase 1" of our plan looks like. You can look for that letter in your mail box soon or read it now [here](#).

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## Global Leadership Summit 2020 - August 6 & 7



Saint Andrew Lutheran Church is excited to host The Global Leadership Summit 2020 Online.

The GLS is an opportunity to access a wealth of leadership insight from a world-class faculty ready to equip and inspire you—no matter where you have influence. Now, more than ever, Saint Andrew is looking to equip its members with skills to lead our church and our community. Leadership takes perseverance, dedication, and a commitment to stretch your mind, expand your heart and use your God-given gifts to impact your world in real and powerful ways.

On **August 6 and 7**, you're invited to join with thousands of leaders across North America for The Global Leadership Summit. This year the GLS is being presented online. Your registration will give you access to the 2-day livestream event and video recording for 7 days, giving you flexible options to watch. GLS will also be offering two replay events in October and November.

As a host site, SALC members can use the Priority Code: **LEAD2020** for a discounted price of \$99 until July 21 (reg. price \$169)

To register, [click here](#).

To view the 2020 faculty, [click here](#).

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## Join the Stream Team

Do you enjoy videography or video production or would like to learn more about it? Consider joining the group of Saint Andrew members, the Stream Team, who support the video streaming of worship services. Six teams will be created for a rotating schedule about every six weeks. Interested? Send an email with your contact information to [info@salc-wausau.org](mailto:info@salc-wausau.org) and someone will contact you with more information.

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## Weeding Assistance Needed

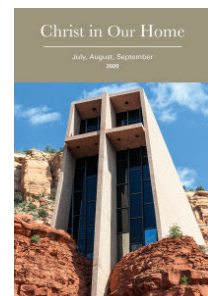


Though we are not gathering in person quite yet, the weeds have not taken a break this summer! Anyone is welcome to stop by the church at their convenience and weed any section that looks like it needs a little TLC. All help is great appreciated in caring for Christ's church!

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## Christ in Our Home Devotional

Christ in Our Home quarterly devotional resource encourages readers to live out their faith daily. Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer for the day that follows the Revised Common Lectionary. Augsburg Fortress Publishing has extended the complementary email subscription for the third quarter (July-August-September). [Click here to sign up](#). ***Copies are also available at church in a plastic bin outside the north (Chapel) entrance. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy.***



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