

We're having to do things a little differently as we heed the experts warning to stay home in hopes to slow or prevent the spread of COVID-19. Even though we aren't gathering together in the church building, we're still a church family, and we have news and updates to share during this time.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We are delighted to announce that Masyn Evans-Clements has been hired as our permanent Minister for Youth and Outreach, effective June 1, 2020. Masyn has served in the interim role since October 2019. Masyn will remain part-time as she finishes her Master of Divinity, expecting to graduate next summer.

Much gratitude to the Associate Pastor Search Committee who continued the search during this time of quarantine. It's been difficult but they have continued to meet virtually and do the work they were called to do. Thank you Abby Byrd, Kade Keith, Courtney Morton, Edna Nation, and Hannah Neas.

The Church Council voted unanimously on May 17, 2020 to accept the Search Committee's proposal and expressed nothing but total support of their decision. The Council as a whole was very complimentary of the work Masyn has been doing thus far and are excited about what the future brings with Masyn on our staff.

Masyn: when we can gather together we look forward to welcoming you formally to The Church @ Highland Park!





It's rather hard to wrap my mind around the fact that it's been 12 weeks since we closed the doors of the church building and took the church out into Austin. I remember the day we made the decision we thought were talking about a couple of weeks, a month at the most. The staff jumped in immediately and came up with ways to do worship, stay in contact, work from home and make sure The Church @ Highland Park was still "doing church" as we were called to do. You, the church, also jumped in and accepted the situation with grace and love and did what you needed to do make this work.

We have all (mostly) learned how to do Zoom meetings and Walt Shelton volunteered to do an Adult Sunday School class. Masyn worked with the youth to create a Zoom class for them every Sunday morning. The Balkums moved their Young Couples class to a Zoom meeting on weeknights and now Rachel is starting a class on Wednesday nights studying early American hymns. Kay Greenhaw has shown us that one of her many talents is editing our home-recorded videos into beautiful services each Sunday. Many have agreed to share their gifts of music or words of wisdom in our Sunday services. Many of you are sending notes, emails, and texts to one another. Our social media page has been active and fun. The Church @ Highland Park is continuing to stay connected and we're learning and growing and staying connected.

I guess the biggest thing on most people's mind is....When do get to go back to the building? When can we see one another face-to-face? When can we worship together in one place? I wish I could answer those questions. The Council is united in their vision of bringing the church back together when we can be confident that we aren't putting anyone in danger.

I've talked to many other pastors, I've read what the CDC recommends, and I've talked to churches that have opened their doors back up. Some have begun services with major changes, some are planning to open in September or October, others not until 2021. We are all very aware that when we do return we will need to make some changes. We will need to spread out; we will need to keep distance

between us; we will probably need to wear masks. We may need to make changes to our service and we will need to think how to best keep ourselves and our children safe.

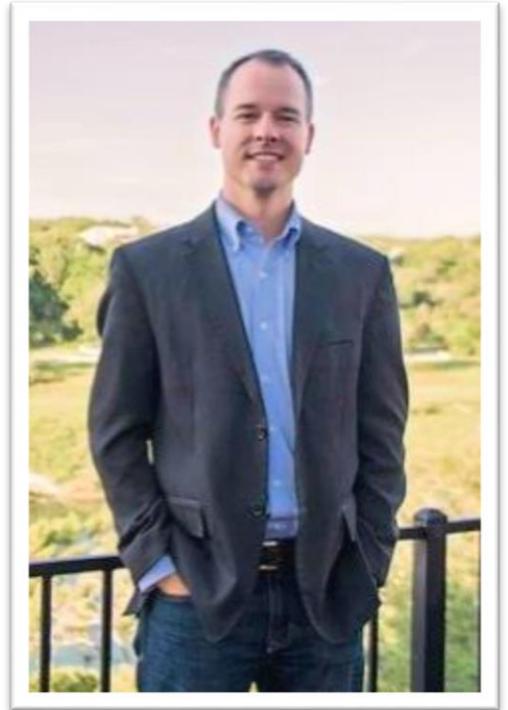
All of this is to say we are thinking ahead and we're trying to prepare the building. Angel, our building's janitor, is cleaning the building for our return, as well as the return of Paragon Prep. While I can't tell you a date, I can tell you the staff and the Church Council are working on a plan and as soon as we know a date we will spread it loud and clear.

Thanks for your patience, your strength, your support and your love. You are an amazing community and I thank God every day for you.

Your Pastor,
Cheryl

Dear friends -

This virus has taken a terrible toll on our world, our country, our economy and, closer to home, it has certainly impacted our church on a number of fronts. Though I wasn't surprised to get the news, when I heard last week that Children's Camp had officially been cancelled I grieved for all of the memories our crew will miss creating together at camp this summer. It would have been Luke and Eamon's 6th grade swan song at camp where they would have had the opportunity to lead much of the content. They are also going to miss out on their first year at youth camp. In the grand scheme of things, our children and youth missing out on VBS and camp is far down the totem pole in terms of severity but I have to say it's a really harsh outcome for them because they look forward to it all year long.



As disappointed as I am and as I know so many are across the church, it also serves as a reminder for us to cherish each and every opportunity like this that we have to create memories and make an impact on others at The Church @ Highland Park in the future, be it camp, Sunday School, Touch Groups, missions, choir or many other fronts.

As eager as we are to dive back in, we still believe it's too early to re-open the church based on where things currently stand. The risk is just not worth the reward in the short-term. With that said, we are actively watching the trends and official announcements and we're putting together a draft plan to re-open in a safe way for our membership as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the interim, we will continue to be The Church @ Highland Park right where we are. I want to encourage you to reach out spontaneously to fellow members to check on them and also want to invite all members to let me know if there is anything our church can be doing to better serve you during this time.

Here are a few items to mention:

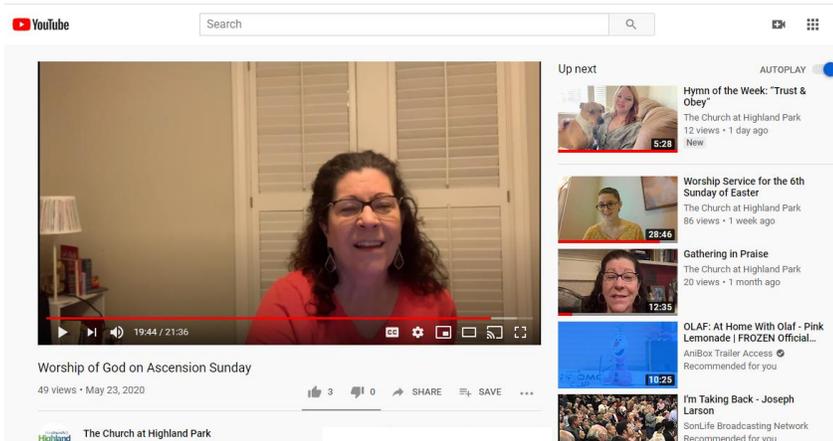
1. **Congrats to Masyn!** I can't tell you how excited I am to have Masyn officially a part of our leadership team. I can tell you as a parent of a youth group member who has loved the energy, engagement and fun she's brought to the table that I'm very excited about the future of this area of the church. I also want to thank the search committee for landing on such a wonderful fit for our church.
2. **Church Council Meeting Re-cap** - Despite some Zoom tech issues, we had a productive council meeting on May 17. I love this group and am just honored to work with them. We talked about a number of items, including the Masyn news, PPP progress and also a discussion around when to re-open the church.
3. **Youth and Children's Ministries Staying Connected** - Masyn leads a virtual Sunday School for our youth on Sundays at 11 AM on Zoom. Abby emails activity suggestions each week and just created an awesome photo slideshow of the HP Kids. Thanks, you two, for all you're doing to stay connected with our youngest members.
4. **Please Continue Supporting HP** - I want to thank each of you for continuing to give to the church through this challenging time. As a reminder, you can support our church by [donating online](#) or mailing a check to the church.
5. **Join Us for Church each Sunday** - Each Sunday morning, email and social media have been sharing the link to that week's service. These services have been such a great way to stay connected with our faith during this time and I want to again thank all who are pouring so much time and energy into them.
6. **Multiple Virtual Studies Continue To Take Place** - My Dad will continue to lead a Zoom Sunday School class on Sundays at 10 AM. (June 14 and June 21 will be at 11 AM). Rachel Davis will begin another study on Wednesday nights, and the Balkums continue to lead their "Late Risers" class over Zoom.
7. **Are You Connected With HP on Social Media?** - I have been so impressed with the great work the entire staff is doing with social media and email communication throughout this quarantine. I see a lot of our members interacting and sharing our content on Facebook and Instagram but we'd love to see more. You can find us on Facebook [here](#) and Instagram [here](#).
8. **Please Let Us Know if You Have Emergency Needs** - We have some members who may be in a situation where they are low on supplies, food or other vital items and are not able to get access to those items. If you are in this position, please contact the church and we'll do everything we can to help you get what you need.

Thanks,
Rusty Shelton, *Church Council Chair*

We may not be meeting in our church building but God's work is always happening. Here are some of the ways that the ministries and staff are continuing that work...

Worship Service Group

Kay Greenhaw, *chair*



Our Sunday morning services may not be happening in our beautiful Sanctuary right now, but the church staff and guest participants are still finding a beautiful way to lead us in worship each week. Each Sunday, we'll continue to share a pre-recorded service on [our YouTube channel](#). Thank you to all who work so hard on these

services and all of the guests who have contributed thus far. If you would like to share your own voice – whether it's singing or reading or praying – please reach out to ckimble@hpbcaustin.org.

Hymn of the Week

Rachel Davis, *Director of Congregational Music*



Rachel has been recording and sharing a "Hymn of the Week" each Wednesday since April 15. Rachel plays a portion of the hymn and then spends some time speaking to the history and meaning of each hymn. Thus far, she's covered *Crown Him With Many Crowns*, *I Will Sing of My Redeemer*, *Be Thou My Vision*, *Precious Lord, Take My Hand*, *Shall We Gather at the River?*, *Trust and Obey*, and *Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me*. Many thanks to Rachel for bringing another worship opportunity to us each week. [Check out our YouTube channel](#) if you'd like to view any past or upcoming videos.

Christian Education Service Group

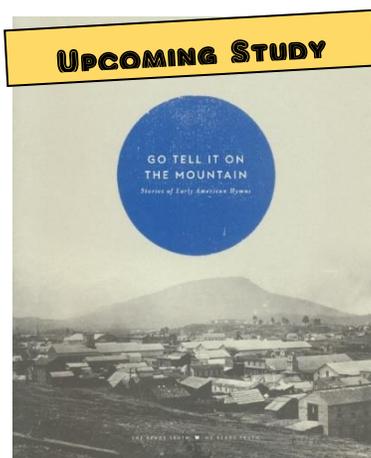
Donna Reisenbigler, *chair*



Walt Shelton will continue to lead a **Sunday School class over the Zoom** platform each Sunday morning, typically at 10 a.m. **Please note: classes on June 14 and 21 will be at 11 a.m.** Our next topics will include: (1) "Coping with Unexpected and Other Seasons of Life," in part utilizing Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and Mark 1:35-38, as well as discussing the importance of daily and other periodic routines to stay focused and live out our priorities; and (2) "How many times did or does Jesus have to come for his followers to 'get it'?" We will use a variety of passages here, including Mark 13, I Cor. 15, parts of I and II Thessalonians, and parts of some of the Gospels' Easter narratives. Finishing the justice unit and these next two units will take us well into the summer. The link for the Zoom meeting is emailed out weekly from the church.

A note regarding the class from Suzanne and John Lowe: Walt Shelton's Zoom Sunday School lesson every week is an enriching experience for us. It is good to see both our class members and a good group of people who are not in our Journey Class. It is particularly nice to see Cindy and Nathan Thane all the way from New York. The focus on Biblical justice is particularly appropriate as we think about so many people affected by the coronavirus now. Join us!

The **Late Risers Sunday School Class**, taught by David and Kim Balkum for young couples, continues to meet via Zoom. The meeting days are spontaneous, but the group is meeting regularly and are up to ten in our group now.



UPCOMING STUDY **Great News! Summer Bible Study Class!** Our very own Director of Music, Rachel Davis, will be holding a very special Bible Study Class this summer. The class will read, study, and discuss the book "*Go Tell it on the Mountain: Stories of Early American Hymns*", a fantastic devotional book designed to take you through one of the classic American hymns each week. The class will learn the scripture behind the text, the meaning behind the music, and the brilliant writers behind it all! Rachel's summer class will be held **via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Wednesdays starting June 10th**. All are welcome to attend, and encouraged to order the study book as well. [Click here to find the book online for purchase](#). Be on the lookout for the Zoom link and meeting information. Can't wait to see you there!

Missions Service Group

Alana Mallard, *chair*



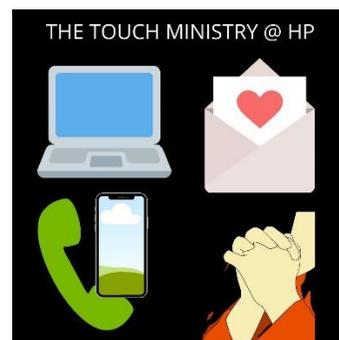
With food for 20 or so — Michelle Poncik's beans and cookies, Alana Mallard's brown rice and chicken, Shelia Kershaw's bread and ice cream and salad — Sheila heads to Micah 6 Street Youth Drop-In Center on Sunday, April 27. The Church @ Highland Park provides a meal each quarter for the 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday afternoon respite. Drop-in director Mac McCaskle has taken social distancing precautions for visitors and volunteers with only 10 people allowed per room.

Our next time to provide food is July 19, and all are welcome to contribute. Please contact missions@hpbcaustin.org if you'd like to participate in the July 19 meal.

Servant Service Group

Kathy Stanley, *chair*

The Servant Service Group is still looking for a few folks to volunteer to be a Touch Leader. A Touch Leader maintains contact with their Touch Groups, a small group of church members, through prayer, phone calls, notes, cards, etc. The Touch leaders can keep up with important milestones of fellow church members, like birthdays or anniversaries, and check in regarding prayer requests or personal needs. This is an important and valuable ministry of our church, especially during this physically-distant time. Please email servant@hpbcaustin.org if you are interested in volunteering and you will be assigned a group.



NOTICE TO TOUCH LEADERS: The church office has a stockpile of notecards that are not being currently used while the building remains closed. The staff would love to share these blank cards with Touch Leaders to aid in their correspondence with their Touch Group, especially if you haven't been able to get out to purchase new cards or stamps. If you would like to request a group of greeting cards, Touch cards, and/or a book of stamps, please email office@hpbcaustin.org to request, and a package will be put in the mail to you.

Outreach & Communication Service Group

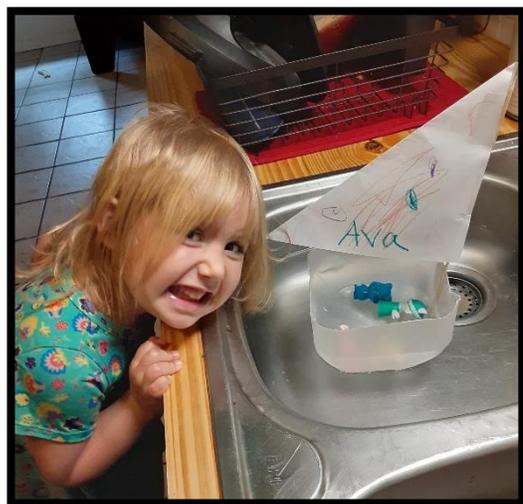
One of the main focuses in staying connected with one another during this quarantine time has been a strong Social Media presence. The staff has been hard at work creating interesting and meaningful content. We have the service video on Sunday, #MeditationMonday, Staff Challenge Tuesday, #WorshipWednesday, prayer on Thursday, and #FunFridays! All are encouraged to check it out and participate. "Loving", "sharing", and commenting are easy ways to boost our message to others during this time and keep connected with one another.



A team continues to meet over Zoom as the new website for The Church @ Highland Park is being built. The brand book by Zilker Media and website by Alter Endeavors are coming together beautifully. Emails with our new domain and the new website should be launching soon!

Children's Ministry

Abby Byrd, *Children's Ministry Coordinator*



Ava Byrd and her milk jug boat for the Noah's ark study.

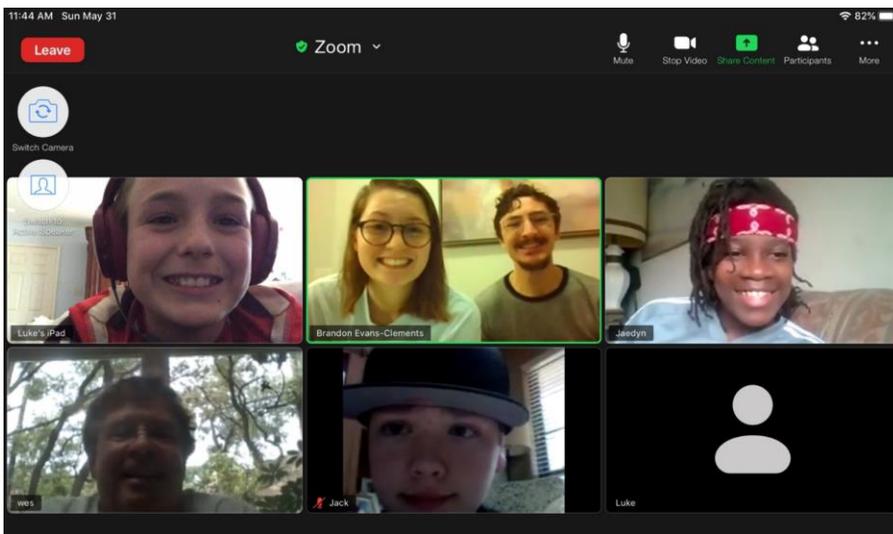
What an unexpected and challenging time the last few months have been for us all! I have been thinking a lot about our children and our children's families, as I am sure we all have. In an effort to keep our children plugged in and entertained, I have been sending out bi-weekly lessons that involve a YouTube video, discussion questions that can connect the video to their lives, and an activity. We are all disappointed that Vacation Bible School, camp, and SWEETT have been cancelled this summer, though not at all surprised. And I am looking forward to making up all the lost time with them as soon as we are able.

We are tentatively planning a get-together towards the end of the summer so that we can get the kids connected with their familiar church friends before they embark on their new school year, especially our 5th graders that will be moving up to youth next year! I find it moving that our church family misses seeing their sweet, growing faces and please be on the lookout for more updates on how they are all doing! ~ Abby

Youth Ministry

Masyn Evans-Clements, *Minister for Youth and Outreach*

First and foremost, I have to thank The Church @ Highland Park for all of the love and support as I transition into the permanent position as Minister to Youth and Outreach. I very much enjoyed my time as interim, and transitioning into the permanent role has been seamless, thanks to Cheryl, Kelley, the Search Committee, and the Church Council. I have received so many emails from you with boundless support. I tried to respond to every email, but if I missed yours, I appreciate your love and encouragement!



As far as the youth group during quarantine: it has definitely been a strange time, but we're having a blast! Life coming to a halt for all of us has been uncomfortable and frustrating at times, but our students are taking it in stride and adapting quickly. Wes Glazener has also been a massive pillar of support for me and our students as

we navigate. Each Sunday we start with catching up on life and where we're at in our video games (or duck rearing), and then move into a lesson in which they all engage and speak up.

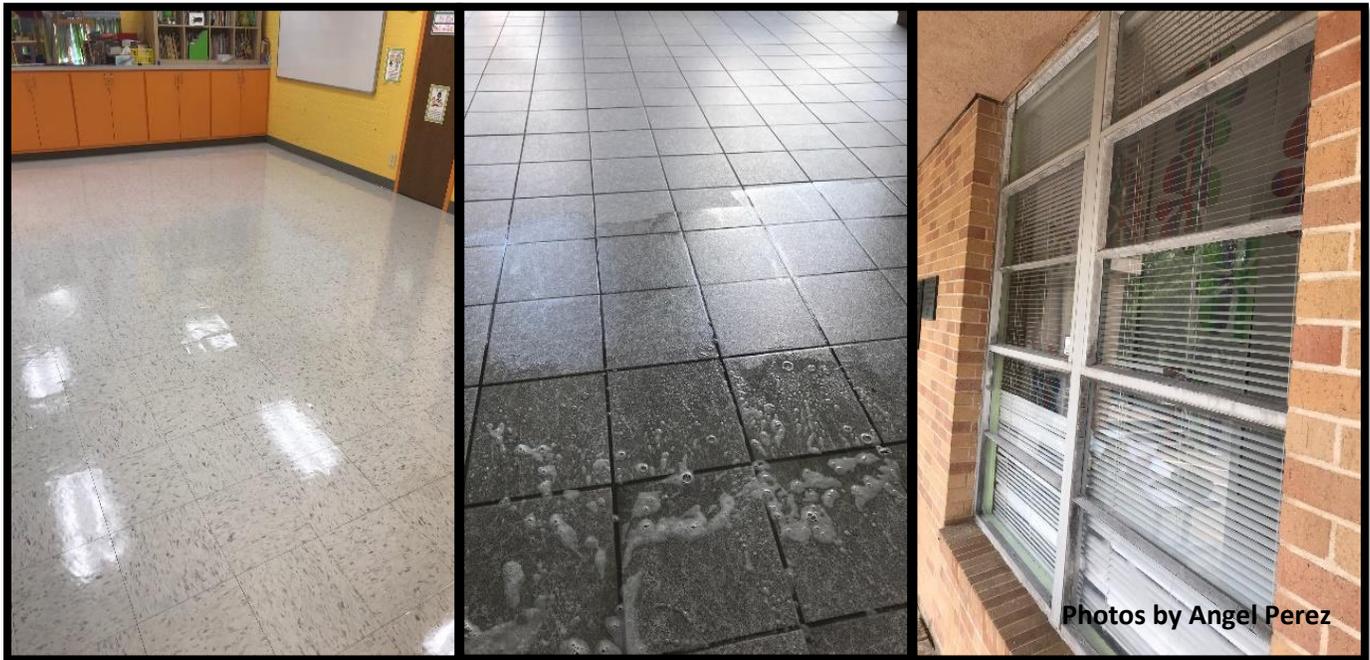
I have to say, I may be dreading quarantine's end just in that I know I will see their faces a little less as they get busy with school and sports. They are funny, thoughtful, engaging, and full of spirit. Thank you, Highland Park, for continuously supporting them.

Grace and Peace, Masyn Evans-Clements

Administration Service Group
Property • Personnel • Finance

PROPERTY – Mary Ellen Sullivan, chair

The building's janitor, Angel Perez, has been working tirelessly inside and outside building to get things in tip-top shape for the eventual return. Angel has stripped and waxed all tile flooring, including the school areas, Nursery, Sapp Hall, Atrium, and second floor. Everything looks shiny and spectacular! Angel has also washed windows and disinfected toys and surfaces, with plans for additional projects over the summer.



Becky and Don Dillard have overseen a few repairs to the building during this time. The power to the front sign was redistributed, a broken breaker box cover was repaired, an office upstairs was repainted, and the roof was replaced on the two back buildings. Cheryl and Becky have also worked hard to finish some organization projects in the building, particularly in the Worship closet in the basement and establishing an office for Abby and Masyn to share upstairs.

The grounds are also being maintained even though gatherings are not taking place indoors. Members and parents of Troop 410 have a socially-distant schedule for taking care of the grounds, alternating with a once-a-month lawn service provided by Paragon.

PERSONNEL – Kade Keith, chair

At the end of April, the Personnel Service Group oversaw the renewal of health benefits that some employees receive. In May, they oversaw Masyn's change to permanent hire (part-time for now, potentially become full time next year).

FINANCE – by Nancy Osgood, chair

**Thank you for your faithful contributions.
Big or small, your gifts matter.**

Although our building has been closed, much has continued at The Church at Highland Park. The staff has been going to check on mail, messages, preparing updates and lessons for children, youth and adults. Presenting us with beautiful services and mid-week studies and working hard to keep us engaged.

The janitors have used this time to do much deep cleaning. We have continued to pay every employee.

We received a Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan/grant which allowed us to pay all of our employees salaried and hourly for 8 weeks. This loan should be forgiven since it was used for authorized expenses.

Paragon Prep has asked for a possible reduction in their lease payment, in the event they have a reduction in the number of students next school year. The council has addressed this with an addendum to the lease that will allow them to lower the lease payment as much as 15% tied to the number of students enrolled. Our other tenant is a restaurant business and could be affected by the COVID-19 situation. They have not requested any change in the lease payment.

Here are the numbers as of the 29th of May:

Contributions:	May 2020 \$23,568 (\$3,315 over budget) Year to Date \$114,789 (\$2,995.95 over budget)
Personnel, Programs, Missions Expenses:	May 2020 \$38,410 (\$5K over) YTD 2020 \$145,230 (\$2,500 over)
Contributions minus Programs/Missions:	May 2020 -\$14,842 YTD 2020 -\$37,763
Rental Income:	May 2020 \$29,546 (\$2,018 under budget) Year to Date \$133,850 (\$2,016 under budget)
Land & Property Expenses:	May 2020 \$15,698 (\$6,638 under) Year to Date \$103,723 (\$8,923 over)
Rental minus Expenses:	May 2020 \$13,848 YTD 2020 \$30,127

FINANCE, continued...

The budget this year was very intentionally setup for us to manage the income received by leasing our building to cover the expenses of managing the building and grounds, while continuing to fund most of our Personnel and all of our Ministry Programs and Missions through member contributions. There is a difficulty in this reporting because a great deal of both ministerial and office staff time is required in the management of both the building and tenants. We will work on a way to divide Personnel costs to even the costs.



Update from our Community

Paragon Prep held a socially-distant, drive-thru graduation ceremony on Friday, May 22, 2020, to honor their graduating 8th graders. Families drove around the parking lot with their graduate inside before going home to watch a pre-recorded video that was posted on YouTube. The teachers were encouraged to park spaced around the lot and hold up posters congratulating the students, and the administrators stood by the main entrance.

All cheered as the families drove by. As each graduate passed, the Paragon gong was rung, a tradition of the school, which warns Austin area high schools that a Paragon knight is on the way!

From the Staff @ Highland Park

We may not be able to meet together in our building, but The Church @ Highland Park is still a loving community. Do you have a prayer request, update on yourself, or celebration from your family that you'd like to share? Photos are welcome, too! Please [email the church office](#) and we can share with everyone by email, in hopes to keep us socially-connected in this socially-distant world. Please be sure to mention if you are okay with it being shared over the church-wide email, or if you prefer for it to only be shared & prayed over during the Monday staff Zoom meeting.

Rev. Cheryl Kimble, Pastor
Masyn Evans-Clements, Minister for Youth & Outreach
Dr. C. Ray Burchette, Pastor Emeritus
Abby Byrd, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Rachel Davis, Director of Congregational Music
Kelley DeCleene, Director of Church Operations
Becky Dillard, Ministry Assistant
Carolyn Doolittle, Church Bookkeeper
Childcare workers: Maddy Bewley and Amanda Haley

the**church**@
HighlandPark