Well, 2020 is in the books. As the worship response goes, “God is good. All the time. All the time. God is good.” It was a challenging year, but I stand in amazement and awe at all that God is doing in and through the people of St. Luke’s. Here are some of the reasons:

1) Faithfulness.
Throughout the craziness of 2020, with economic uncertainty and tumult, our folks have remained faithful. Faithful in prayer. Faithful in attendance at virtual worship, study, and outreach. Faithful in generosity.

2) Unity.
In a time when there are so many differing opinions about how organizations should deal with the epidemic, St. Luke’s folks have responded incredibly well to the protocols and processes our leadership put in place. Some folks would rather us keep all in-person activities cancelled completely, and others feel we should be far more open without restriction. Nonetheless, everyone embraced the decisions that were made to move forward in faith together and have practiced willingly all the necessary precautions to do ministry safely. What an incredible group of people is St. Luke’s church family.

3) Momentum.
One would think that in the face of headwinds the church would slow down. But, what I have discovered is that challenges bring out the best in our folks. Virtual worship attendance soared beyond our usual in-person attendance. We had so many folks involved in groups and Bible studies who never participated in-person. St. Luke’s even used this crazy year to found a whole new outreach ministry in PX project and launch our Small Steps early childhood partnership at Gethsemane! Wow.

Paul writes to the Corinthians, “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.” (1 Corinthians 4:10) In 2020, I have seen the power of God at work in ways I could never have imagined. God is good. All the time.
WE PRAY AND WORSHIP

WE NEVER RETREATED. WE JUST ADVANCED IN A NEW DIRECTION.

2020—a new year full of promise that began with 40 Days of Joy. Our halls were bustling with children and adults heading to worship, classes, and meetings. And then in mid-March, COVID-19 necessitated closing the building. But we never closed—we just practiced distance loving. Our pastors, singers, and ministry leaders began to record themselves from home, which the media team edited into worship services. As we slowly and safely return to the church building, we will continue to be the church wherever we may be—living and loving like Jesus.

"Because you have sacrificed and leaned in and poured yourselves into what could be instead of bemoaning what was or was to have been, my relationships with Jesus Christ and the St. Luke’s community of faith are stronger than ever."

CEREMONIES STILL HAPPENED.

COVIT or not, there were still babies to baptize, couples to marry, and memorials to conduct on top of the liturgical calendar: Holy Week and Easter were celebrated from Tom’s living room, Pentecost from the backyard, Communion in the Parking Lot, Christmas Eve on Blanton Field.

Q: When do driveways, parking lots and fields become holy ground? A: Whenever the people of God gather for worship, communion, teaching, serving, and giving!

- Graduating seniors drive-by
- Goodbye parade for pastors Bill Denham & Thomas Harper
- CARnival Fall kick-off
- Weekly CCSC Food Drives
- VBS drive-by
- Drive-in Communion
- Parking Lot Worship
- Commitment Sunday Drive-thru
- CARtoon Trunk or Treat
- Seniors Celebrating St. Luke’s 75th
- Student Worship
- Family Christmas on the Field
- Caroling By The Columns
- Christmas Eve on Blanton Field

"I just want to say how much you guys have changed my life. I am so grateful for the pandemic because my relationship with Jesus has deepened."

“AVERAGE SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2,486 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2,875 households*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*5,031 estimated actual viewers

SO MANY WAYS TO PRAY... AND WE DID.

2,900 prayer requests
560 posted on prayer wall
2,080 requested during livestream services
260 messages on prayer line
WHEN WE STAYED HOME, ONLINE BIBLE STUDIES CAME TO US.

IN IT TOGETHER.

Our musicians gave the gift of song, a soundtrack to our lives in a new online library of contemporary worship, special virtual choir, Children’s Praise, and piano Hymns from Home.

Our pastors reminded us that we are In It Together and practiced the “art of the selfie” as they filmed a daily message of Biblical truth for us. And then The Daily Habit was formed, making our inboxes a little more sacred.

“We tuned in online after the dishes were done and the kids were in bed to study the Bible with Tom Pace and the associate pastors. We took a 45-minute deep dive each week and covered: Acts, Colossians, Israel in the Time of the Kings, and Prophecies of the Messiah in Isaiah. Now Zoom experts, we interacted by putting our comments and questions in the chat.”

“If ever there was a time to look to the Scriptures for wisdom, guidance, and hope, it was during a global pandemic. Not only were we reading the Bible; we were reading the Bible together. Whether we explored books of the Bible, tackled difficult subject areas like racism, or had lighthearted discussions about the Gospel according to Star Wars, you all showed up, eager and willing to dig deeper into your faith with others. Together, we learned that studying the Bible with our church community is powerful and life-changing.”
We Make Friends

LONELINESS DID NOT OVERTAKE US.
WE JUST HOPPED ON ZOOM AND GATHERED OUTSIDE.

When did Zoom become a verb? And when did we learn to mute, unmute, and even change our backgrounds? We no longer just watch church online; we participate, greeting one another and chatting with our hosts. Often, our prayers include gratitude for this technology. While it’s not as good as being in-person, seeing our friends’ faces helps make us feel connected. The time is coming. We will be back together in the halls of St. Luke’s. Hang in there, church!

THURSDAYS WITH FRIENDS

Our older members have embraced Thursdays with Friends and come back week after week to learn, to be entertained and to connect with the church and with one another. Our weekly zooms have attracted interest from churches and senior centers across the country, and visitors often join our programs.

“St Luke’s has put loving each other first above all else even when it has been difficult.”

VBS * GIVING-O-BINGO * CAR-NIVAL * CHRISTMAS ON THE FIELD * ACTIVITY BAGS * CHILDREN’S PRAISE * STORYTIME WITH JULIE * 3RD-5TH GRADE ZOOM GROUPS * PM PALS DRIVE-BY * BANDS ON THE FIELD * DNOW * CIY FLAMINGOS * SMALL GROUPS OUTSIDE * GRAD PARADE * STUDENT LED DEVOS * CHALKING DRIVEWAYS * HYMNS FROM HOME * CURBSIDE CHOIR CONVOS * TAPESTRY PLAYERS VIRTUAL PLAYS * GAME NIGHTS * PURE SOUND 25TH ANNIVERSARY RETREAT * NOTES TO FRIENDS AT HOME * CHECK-IN PHONE CALLS

REVIVE!
A WHOLE MONTH CELEBRATING WOMEN.

“Despite the craziness that this year has brought, my faith has flourished. I feel so fortunate to have a place to continue my relationship with Jesus!”

“St Luke’s has put loving each other first above all else even when it has been difficult.”

“The women’s programming events during the pandemic had a completely unexpected impact on my faith life. Instead of feeling disconnected, I felt more connected to St. Luke’s than ever before. I have made some unexpected new friendships and am so excited about in-person programming once the pandemic has passed.”
GLORY TO GOD FOR 75 YEARS!

You shared your stories and pictures with us as we celebrated 75 years. Each memory shows a snapshot of how God has been at work in our hearts and in our church. Memories of our rich heritage and faith traditions inspire us toward living and loving like Jesus as we look to the next 75 years.

“St. Luke’s has been invaluable in helping to raise our children to be Christ-loving, enthusiastic, and faithful believers. How blessed we are to be a part of the work of Christ and to be able to pass it on to the next generation!”

“It has been a place of learning and teaching, a refuge in times of sorrow and a joyous setting in times of celebration. A place we happily call our home, filled with family members from far and wide - there are no borders here, simply the desire to follow Christ in community with others.”

“We love St. Luke’s. It is a central part of our lives and marriage today. We thank God every night for our church and our pastors. We are so grateful and feel so blessed to worship and serve there.”

Share your story too, and tag St. Luke’s!

@stlukeshouston
We Give Ourselves Away in Generosity and Service

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EASY TO QUIT, BUT WHEN HAS ST. LUKE’S EVER TAKEN THE EASY WAY? SERVING IS IN OUR DNA.

It is said that limitation is the primary key to unlocking creativity. It feels as though 2020 didn’t give much, but it did provide us the opportunity to be innovative. With more need than ever and fewer ways to gather helping hands, this year has demanded creativity in order to continue to serve others. And, as usual, St. Luke’s heeded the call. We were bound and determined to help carry the load, walk alongside friends and strangers, and provide as much respite as we possibly could. The work is not finished and neither are we.

The diversity and talent that rests in Gulfton/Sharpstown is astounding. Our neighbors there are eager to find their way and place in America. With young people often leading the family, there are many that simply need someone to walk alongside them as they navigate a new workforce and life outside of school for the first time. We are here to do just that. Providing career readiness, mental health support, and skills that reach beyond the kitchen, we hope to give confidence, guidance, and new knowledge to young people looking to find a life of sustainability and honor.

“When I come here [to PX] I feel like I am home. Not every job feels like that. I am happy when I come here.”

OUR PERSONNES EXTRAORDINAIRE.

The diversity and talent that rests in Gulfton/Sharpstown is astounding. Our neighbors there are eager to find their way and place in America. With young people often leading the family, there are many that simply need someone to walk alongside them as they navigate a new workforce and life outside of school for the first time. We are here to do just that. Providing career readiness, mental health support, and skills that reach beyond the kitchen, we hope to give confidence, guidance, and new knowledge to young people looking to find a life of sustainability and honor.
“It’s not everyday that our children will have someone who has lived where they are, come back, and offer them a chance. You are a blessing, there is kindness in your words. We are happy to welcome you here. We are happy to welcome Small Steps.” – Pastor David Horton

Even though The Story couldn’t worship in-person for most of the year, the church never closed. Now three campuses, River Oaks, Timbergrove, and Online communities gather in-person and virtually for worship, small groups and serving, which never stops - especially in a pandemic.

“Thank you so much to our Story family for your support of @lifehousehouston Christmas Wishes! This past Saturday, hundreds of moms and children received their special gifts given by you.”

GETHSEMANE BY THE NUMBERS

3 Worship services every Sunday – English, Spanish, Swahili
13 reVision students enrolled in college
28 Elementary students in the HISD Sanctuary of Learning program
38 Consecutive weeks of online Bible study (0 pre-Covid)
30 Students, ages 2 and 3, enrolled in Small Steps Nurturing Center, Gulfton Campus, opening January 7
43 Bags of books donated to KIDS HOPE students
10 Bookcases created for KIDS HOPE students at Sutton Elementary
55 Children participated in virtual VBS
3,840 Boxes of perishable food distributed over 5 events
9,000+ Meals provided to reVision students
11,731 Food packages donated to CCSC emergency food pantry
54,214 Persons served by CCSC at Gethsemane since March 16

Welcome to The Story’s Timbergrove campus! Timbergrove is a booming neighborhood nestled near Loop 610’s Northwest corner. We want to welcome you as you are; services are casual and geared toward lifelong Christians or non-religious, first-time guests with lots of questions. Our campus pastor, Kale Kinchen, and team will be ready to welcome you and help provide all the information you need to connect to the campus.
This report is dedicated to the life and ministry of Reverend Bill Denham, whose impact of love at St. Luke’s will always be remembered.