



Wednesday, June 16, 2021

ELHS Report to the PNW WELS Pastors

Good morning fellow workers in God's kingdom,

On June 5, we held graduation ceremonies in which 20 of our seniors walked the stage, and we said good-bye to them as students of Evergreen Lutheran High School.

With the end of the school year, we are hoping to say good-bye to Covid 19 as well. As I look back of 2021, I can see both positives and the obvious negatives that came about because of Covid.

From a negative perspective, we took a hit in enrollment. We were expecting a slight drop in enrollment anyway from 80 to 75, but when families found out that we were going to begin the year as an online school, some decided not to re-enroll. "Why pay tuition when I can get it for free from our local school district." We began in September with 71.

Here is one of the positives: We became a hybrid school by the end of September. Hybrid meant a student could come to school to be in person or continue his/her education by watching online. Credit our teachers for going the extra mile to provide a hybrid-type education. Each day required extra preparation and class time to get a student connected through TEAMS. Due to the fact that we were in-person and due to the fact the local school districts were not doing a very good job in educating their students, our enrollment grew slightly to 75. Plus, we had a family transfer in with two wonderful girls to bring our enrollment to 77.

During this year of the Covid and its limitations, ELHS tried to provide as many of the high school experiences as possible, especially for our seniors who missed out last Spring. We were able to provide the following:

- Two in-person concerts
- In-person graduation
- An in-person drama production for the casts' families and fellow students
- Prom
- Senior skip day
- Arbor day
- Sports with league championships and Sea Tac League All-stars even though the seasons were all in February to mid-June with shortened seasons of six or seven weeks
- And, of course, In-person instruction.
- Note: Students need to develop socially as well as academically (spiritually, certainly) and they can't do that online.



From the budget perspective, we ended the year with all bills paid. That was true last year and again this year. If some of you have been around Evergreen Lutheran High School prior years or most years, that hasn't been the case. Usually by the end of June, we would have used some/much of next year's registration money. Currently, that's not the case. Money which already has been paid by parents to sign up for next year is being held in reserve for the new fiscal year to begin in July. Truly, to God be the Glory for providing ELHS with financial support from congregations and individuals throughout the PNW and elsewhere.

With the end of the school year, we said good-bye to Mr. Phil Bunkowske and hello to our next athletic director/coach/teacher in Mr. Chris Denney. Mr. Denney is a whirlwind of energy. He taught previously at Bethany Lutheran School in Port Orchard where he plans to continue his church membership.

#15! Yes, #15 is our lucky number. Not really lucky but God saw it fit that we call for a principal fifteen times before Mr. Kyle Raymond of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin accepted our Call. He is very excited about being with us and very excited to take on the challenge of leading ELHS to great things. With his encouragement, we are already signed up to use Grace in Action to strategically plan ELHS' future ministry. He will be here at the beginning of July.

As of today, we are expecting an enrollment of 91. It's a far cry from the 167 we had back in the early 2000's, but it's a major jump from the 71 we began with last September. Currently our freshman class has 33 signed up. We will be graduating 13 next June with another larger class of 25+ coming in. God willing, that will put us over 100. It's not 167, but still exciting.

Of those 91. We have two Sudanese students, two Ethiopian students, and 1 or perhaps two Kenyan students. And each year we have Asian students as well. This past year, four of five of our Asian students returned to their homeland due to Covid. As of today, only one is returning.

For our Sudanese families, Mel Kam, District Mission board layman, has been seeking financial support, especially for Pastor/Evangelist Simon Thareek of Divine Peace in Renton. Several years ago, Beautiful Savior of Corvallis, Oregon sent ELHS enough money to fund one student for two years, and one student for one year. That fund is now empty but thank you to Beautiful Savior for supporting the two students. One of the students is Khat Thareek, Simon's son, who is considering the ministry.

Last Sunday we passed our 2021-2022 budget of 1.27 million dollars. Of that 1.27 million, \$145000 was awarded in financial aid to families.

We live in a mixed-up world. Police are bad people. An average white male student is supposed to feel guilty because he is "white privileged." CRT is invading local school's curriculum. BLM wants to end the typical nuclear family of father and mother. In fact, the term "mother" is obsolete, the new term is "birthing person." And, you get paid more to stay home and do nothing than be a productive member of society.

I say all this, not to be political, but to stress the urgency and importance of Evergreen Lutheran High School. I mentioned the positives and negatives of Covid. Look how the devil cleverly, covertly used Covid to keep people from going to church. We'll all agree that online is not the same as in-person, but I'm more alarmed that the pattern/habit/routine of going to church on Sunday may be/is broken.



Here is another positive. We will have a new family at Evergreen in August. The mother works as a support staff person at the local public high school. "I'm sickened by what they are teaching the kids now; I want my son out." Dad says, "We have to get religion back in our lives." Pray that there are more like Tanner's family who need Jesus in their lives.

Our school theme for next year (Mr. Raymond's suggestion) is Isaiah 28:16: (NIV) "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation, the one who relies on it will never be stricken with panic."like Covid did this past 15 months.

Even though we live in a mixed-up world, we have that sure foundation of God's Word found in the Bible. That sure foundation in which we believe and teach that Jesus is our savior from all sin. And, it's upon that sure foundation, the education provided at Evergreen Lutheran High School is sure, solid and forever secure. To God be the glory, great things He has done.

In His service,

David Habeck

Ex Interim Principal

