



*Lake County, Ohio*

Lake County Board of Commissioners

Jennifer Bell, Clerk

105 Main Street

Painesville, OH 44077

(440) 350-2751

Jennifer.Bell@lakecountyohio.gov

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Willow Praise Church & Volunteers recognized by Lake County Board of Commissioners for providing over 23,000 lunches to children in need during COVID-19 Pandemic**

On Friday, August 13, 2021 the Board of Lake County Commissioners issued a formal Certificate of Recognition to Willow Praise Church and their volunteers for providing over 23,000 free lunches to children in need during the COVID-19 pandemic and government lockdowns. Commissioner John Plecnik presented the Certificate to Pastor Larry Bogrenrief and volunteer Michael Zuren at Willow Praise Church in Willowick (PICTURE ATTACHED). The Certificate thanks local businesses, churches, elected officials, nonprofits and volunteers who came together in March 2020 to feed the hungry:

“Willow Praise Church of Willowick, under the leadership of Pastor Larry Bogrenrief, along with Painesville Assembly of God, the Salvation Army in Painesville, Paula Price of 100 Youth that Care, Eastlake Councilman James Overstreet, Eastlake Councilman and Pastor Todd Gulley of Willo-Lake Church of the Nazarene, Lake County Treasurer-elect and fmr. Eastlake Councilman Michael Zuren, fmr. Timberlake Councilwoman Sherri Falkenberg, Lake County Commissioner and fmr. Willoughby Hills Councilman John Plecnik, Willowick Councilman Charlie Malta, Asa Cox of Century 21 Homes, Revolution Pizza, Master Pizza, the Eastlake Women’s Club and many donors and volunteers came together to donate and provide free lunches to kids in need when local schools and school lunch programs closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic”.

“From his time as Youth Pastor of Painesville Assembly of God to today, Pastor Larry Bogrenrief of Willow Praise Church is a good and caring man of faith,” said Commissioner John Hamercheck, president of the Board of Lake County Commissioners. “We thank the Pastor for his dedicated service to all the children of Lake County.”

Lake County Treasurer-elect and former Eastlake Councilman Michael Zuren is a member of Willow Praise Church and a chief volunteer organizer of the “Free Kids Lunch Program,” which has distributed more than 23,000 free lunches to children in need since March of 2020. Mr. Zuren won the office of Lake County Treasurer last November and will take office on September 6 pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 321.01.

“As your Commissioner, I am so glad to welcome our new Treasurer Michael Zuren to the team in September,” shared Commissioner John Plecnik. “Mike’s caring and selfless efforts to feed the poor and take care of those most in need show he is ready to lead in this very important role for our community. In volunteering side-by-side with Mike and Pastor Bogrenrief throughout the pandemic and lockdowns, I saw the transformative impact of their work first hand.”

Willow Praise Church is located at 32901 Vine Street in Willowick on the west end of Lake County and was founded in 1993. Willow Praise Church partnered with Painesville Assembly of God last year to distribute free lunches to children in need with fundraising support from local businesses. Both churches hosted lunches and dinners with curb side pickup throughout the pandemic and continue to accept donations and volunteer help to feed the hungry in Lake County.

“Lake County is so blessed to have outward looking and caring churches like Willow Praise and Painesville Assembly of God,” said Commissioner Ron Young. “We are also very grateful for the generosity of local businesses, like Revolution Pizza and Master Pizza, who donated food and helped to raise money for the kids.”

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