

North American Planters and Mission Groups Updates (03/26/2020)

I've been using this time to sort of recalibrate and look at what we're doing and how we're doing it. Pray for me as I seek the Lord. And pray that our people will be bold to share and to invite people to online church. We want to be focused on those that don't know Jesus.

~David Pothier, Montreal~

This has been an exciting time for me! Our hearts are with those fighting this virus, but I'm excited about the opportunity to truly be Christ's church in our community. Pray that our community would see Christ in how we're ministering. Please pray for me personally as I work from home. My wife is at home teaching our 4 children their schoolwork, so pray for us in this season of busyness. Please also pray that I will be diligent each day to put work aside and be present for my family.

~Chris Philips, Denver~

Pray that our people would grow to have great confidence in the Lord. Pray that way would give and serve confidently, knowing that the Lord is in control. And as I spend time with my family, pray that I would be disciplined in my time. I want to rest well each night so that I am truly refreshed and present in my spiritual disciplines. As I travel up the mountain and look out over the city, I'm reminded of who God is and that he is in control.

~Brian Hook, Tucson~

One of my reactions to this crisis has been frustration with how this might affect our church's launch this fall. But working with my core group, we are resting in the Lord and in his plan. Please pray for wisdom as we wait and that the Lord would guide us each day.

~Steven Castello, Boston~

*Please continue to pray for a little girl in our church. She is 6 years old. She is tested Covid-19 coronavirus positive. She is first confirmed CoVid-19 positive case among our church members. Her doctor called her mom this morning and confirmed it. We have been asking God for live. I agree with Steve Canter's prayer— **"Please LORD save this girl again."***

Update: 6 years old Abigail is doing better. She is given medication to control fever. Praise God for she is very active. Praise God for she never complain about her pain. God has given her amazing power to tolerate pain and bodily difficulties.

Also, please pray for my parents who are still in Nepal. Also for more non-believers to view our services online.

~Sylvanus Bhandari, New York~

We've had lots of missionaries from other religions return to our city. But praise God, we had a few of them watching our online services!! Pray that more of them would view our services and encounter real faith in Christ!

~Ben Heile, Salt Lake City~

We've been able to start an online gathering that meets 7 days per week! Some days it is a bible study, others a prayer lobby, then on Sunday we have a special message. And we are a

sharing church, so that we want to be active in helping others in the community. Also, pray for one of our church members whose mother has lost her job as a result of all of this.

~Garrett Raburn, New York~

There is an openness in our city at the moment that hasn't been there before. People are responding to our messages in ways that they otherwise wouldn't! Continue to pray for them. Also, my wife and I are both continuing to work our jobs, I am also leading the church, and we have 3 children at home. Pray that as we are so busy, we would find rhythm in the Lord.

~Jeremy Proemsey, San Francisco

International Missionary Updates (03/26/2020)

Thank you so much for making contact and reminding us that you're praying for us. That's SUCH an encouragement.

I thought we were a few weeks or months behind the shutdowns in the USA, but it seems we're tracking with you guys. We've been on business lock-down since Tuesday last week. We all went in for our last meetings and given work-at-home assignments until after Easter. Schools have shut down until 14 Apr (if not longer). Grocery stores and petrol stations are still open but that's about it. The economic downfall of small business is hitting hard already. But I'm thankful people are generally taking the shut-down seriously because our healthcare systems would NOT be able to cope with an outbreak like Italy.

I wrote a piece for our non-profit that might paint a picture of our township scenario and help you see the plight of our working population: <https://www.commongood.org.za/blog/how-to-multiply-compassion-and-justice-in-a-time-of-isolation/>

~Melanie and Andrew, South Africa

"Nations around the world are taking extreme measure to protect lives from COVID19. Indeed, human life is precious and the government must do whatever it takes to protect it and stop the deadly virus from its epidemic spread. However, I also hope and pray that our government may also recognize that there is other deadly virus like evils that endangers human values and life in our country. We need protection from ideology that undermines human life, protection from syndicates making money from modern day slavery and human trafficking, protection from politics and religions promoting religious hatred, protection from powerful people who systematically manipulate justice or collaborate to siphon off public money for individual gains. I only pray that the political leaders and government official show similar passion and plan to counteract these evils in our society. We might succeed in making people aware of health and hygiene and possibly save many. But we will do ever better if we succeed in making people aware of their moral and spiritual integrity and be able to save them from sin and guilt. Human life needs to be secured on every front."

While being alert and careful we must remain focused to Jesus.

~A, South Asia~

Circumstances seem to be threatening our health and our finances. Words of uncertainty fill the airwaves and our screens. But as believers, we don't live there. Jesus said, "Take heart! I have overcome the world!"

So I write this to you as an overcomer. You are made for times like this. In fact, we thrive in times like this. We think differently. We act differently. We pray differently. We "be" differently.

Our secret is that in times of uncertainty, we run to the place of certainty and we carry you with us. This place of certainty is described by John in Revelation. He was given the opportunity to see the place of power, this place of authority. It is a place where Jesus said that we as believers are to come boldly and confidently in a time of need. This is the throne room of God. The place where His presence fills the space. Wisdom and direction are given here. Commands are issued here. Answers are released in power here. Time in His presence in this place changes us and our circumstances.

~DC, Southeast Asia~

As things progress in our country, we're now hearing of the military being in the cities forcing people to return home. And please pray for those who will be affected by the loss of jobs. The two largest parts of the economy have been devastated by this crisis. There will be lots of hardship and desperation. We've seen people be harsh towards us as we shop for food, but we've also seen people be very generous. Pray for our country as a whole, it's going to be very tough here for a while.

~J and A, North Africa~

We need God's help to maintain the unity of the Spirit in our family church during the time of quarantine in Austria.

Pray for the doctors in Vienna fighting with the sickness that is so rapidly spreading.

Pray for the two the newly baptized women, to maintain their love for the Lord and for His Church.

~Cristian Pana, Austria~

All is the same here. Deb and I are still healthy and it's been over 2 weeks since we were in Alabama so if we get sick... it won't be from the GIC.

Spent the day yesterday trimming trees at camp, we have hundreds and they all need to be cut-back. It's steady work. All inter-island flights have been canceled and flights to the continent are few and far between. Living on an island means we have a fragile supply chain. So far I haven't noticed panic buying which is good but everybody wants more inventory at home than

usual so the food stores are busy. In order to reduce person-to-person contact only one person per 24 sq meters of store space is allowed in a store at any time. There are security guards, and police in some cases, regulating the traffic on the sidewalks.

My daughter Sarah is holed-up in her dorm at Samford. She was allowed to stay on-campus because she's an international student. Classes are all on-line other than that there isn't much to do. We're grateful for social media or she'd be all alone.

I was praying specially today for the many small business owners I know. They're taking a licking and in many cases, they are letting long-term employees go because they can't afford to pay them.

~Art Nilsen, Azores~

As you'd expect, ministry looks a lot different when you can't leave your house and meet people. We are getting creative in how we continue to share the good news here in Seville. Our church is doing video sermons on Sunday and we are doing our Bible studies through video chats. This past Saturday night we had a video Bible study with the teens at the church and had about 10 people together worshipping, studying the Word, and talking about things we can do during quarantine.

We are also talking to our lost friends through messages or over the phone to share the hope that we have in Christ! This is a time when many people are afraid and thinking about the future, so we want to take advantage of any openness to the gospel!

Please pray for the following:

- gospel opportunities*
- Bible studies that are being done online*
- coronavirus - health of everyone affected; for the spread to slow down and stop*
- families who are doing life/school with kids at home 24/7*
- opportunities to minister to people's needs during and after this crisis*

Thank you so much for your continued prayers on my behalf and for your continued support through local tithing and Lottie Moon giving! God will continue to do a great work here in Seville! I am praying for each one of you as well during these crazy times. Please feel free to reach out if you have specific prayer requests or just want to check in.

¡Gracias!

~Seth Graves, Spain~

I'm thankful at this time because:

- 1. Crime rate is significantly down; even gangs are discouraged from killing.*
- 2. Families are getting to spend time together, and possibly discovering the value of "family time". Amazing!*
- 3. The King of kings is STILL on the Throne!*

May we look in, to examine our hearts; look out, to be salt and light to others always; Look Up, looking forward to the glorious appearing of the One we love and long for.

~John Constantine, Arabic Baptist Church, Birmingham~

