

HEARTBEAT

The Hope in Christ Church Monthly Newsletter

God's Use of the Corona Virus

By Pastor Scott

Covid-19 has changed our daily patterns in ways that most Americans would not have thought possible. Across our land, people are living under “shelter in place” orders, jobs are disappearing or being done at home, schools are canceled, university students have returned to their parents’ homes and the economy is in shambles. By any measurement, one could legitimately ask, “What good can come of this?”

This has been a question we have been posing in our house over the past few weeks. Early on, the answers were pretty negative. We were having a difficult time seeing how anything good was going to happen as all the things each of us valued so much were being slowly stripped away. My college daughters were particularly vocal in this time to declare that nothing good was coming of this – and from their perspective, they were finding important events like their college graduation being stripped from them. Add to that the incessant presence of human sin as people hoarded, of all things, toilet paper. In the midst of all of this, it appeared early on that nothing good was going to come out of this situation.



But as time has progressed and the last two or three weeks have played out, the tenor in our home has changed. We are starting to see how God is bringing good out of this trying time. One of the great things we see happening is growth in family worship or home worship. As families are confined to their homes, a number of wonderful resources are being offered by churches and Christian businesses that are aimed to help families to worship each day. Furthermore, the amount of time that families have available to one another has significantly increased. Three weeks ago, the average family was busy beyond measure. Running here, going to this extracurricular, attending meetings out of the home - but in a short time, God has returned husbands and wives, parents and children to the same home and he has given them a lot of time to build up relationships with one another and to grow one another in their

love for God and His Word.

A second benefit of this situation is the reality that prayer is growing. A few weeks ago, people weren't calling each other daily and praying together. Now, I am hearing regular reports of daily calls from one to another that are punctuated with prayer, and even non-Christians are turning and asking for people to pray for them. Who would have thought that the presence of a virus would be a spur to family worship, increased prayer and even the ability to grow relationships with one another and care for them? Truly the Scriptures are coming true, for I would never have thought that these things would have come about as a result of an infectious virus.

A Heart for Orphans

By Doug Scholten

The first of February, Ken Wick and I, along with Chuck Valley, the Director of Kidstown and a young man from the Tacoma area, made plans to travel to Romania at the end of April to visit eight of the ten Kidstown supported orphanages. Airline tickets were purchased a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, concern about the coronavirus is causing us to cancel our trip, with the hope that we can go in the fall. Even though the trip is postponed, Ken and I would like to move ahead with our goal of raising funds for new closets in the Alesd Home, an orphanage which houses 18 children. I am very familiar with the orphanage as I have visited it many times in my past trips to Romania. The Alesd Home Closet Replacement project was a request presented to Kidstown by the orphanage. The current closets are very old and falling apart. Kids share closet space and their belongings sometimes get mixed together, which causes problems. The new closets will allow every child to have their own personal

*For my thoughts
are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,
declares the LORD.*

*For as the heavens are higher
than the earth,
so are my ways higher
than your ways
and my thoughts
than your thoughts.*

Isaiah 55:8-9

storage place. Our goal is to raise up to \$4000 to help cover the costs.

If you feel led to donate, you can donate online at www.kidstown.org and click on "donate" (top right of page). In the "any special instruction" comment area, notate Alesd Home Closet Project. If you prefer to donate by check, please make your check payable to Kidstown International and notate Alesd Home Closet Project on it. There are self-addressed stamped envelopes available on the credenza in the foyer or you can hand your check (or cash) to Ken or I and we will bring it to the local Kidstown office. All of the funds donated will go directly to this project.





MamaBaby Haiti

Reprinted verbatim from <https://mamababyhaiti.org>

Submitted by Christine Speyer

I was 15 years old I walk with my Aunt to the hospital when she was in labor to have twins. We got to the hospital and they turn her away because she had no money to pay.

As we walk home for 1/2 hour my Aunt pushed one baby out on the road. She was bleeding but kept walking. When she got home she pushed the second baby out and kept bleeding. I didn't know what was happening, but when I saw my mother cry, I cried. My Aunt, she died.

I told my mom I wanted to go to nursing school. My mom worked very hard to get the money to pay for my school. When I found out about midwives I thought, if I were a trained midwife my Aunt may not have died. I wanted to help women not to die.

I went to school for four years. As a student midwife I went to MamaBaby Haiti for internship. MamaBaby Haiti was different than anything I had seen because of the way they treat people. They do not ask money for anything. MamaBaby Haiti gives free care. All people are treated respectful, and if somebody need the hospital, MamaBaby pays for it because we want life for BOTH the Mama and the Baby.

Bonswa. My name is Carmelle Moise. I am a Haitian midwife. More babies and mothers die in my country than any country in the Western Hemisphere.

Some hospitals in Haiti, when you don't have money to pay, you can not go there or they keep you in prison for up to 3 months. In Haiti we don't have too many resources, it is so hard for people to get money because many Haitian woman have no job. Some people sell their clothes, pot and pans, and ask people for money to try to get out of hospital prison. MamaBaby Haiti raise money to

pay as many bills as possible to free woman and babies from this injustice.

If a woman can not pay or can not get hospital, they birth at home with Matwan - a traditional birth attendant - who does not have formal training or access to life saving medications. One mother who was pregnant with triplets lived 3 hours walk from hospital. She pushed out 2 babies and died with one baby inside. We now do mobile clinics at her village and tell the mothers to come to MamaBaby Haiti for free safe birth. If they can walk the 2 hours down the mountain, we will pay the tap tap bill if they can make it to us.

MamaBaby Haiti has 8 full time midwives, 4 who live at the birth center. We have a midwifery school and this year we will graduate 8 midwives. Volunteers come from all over the world to help the staff midwives, bring in supplies, and help us feel like we are not forgotten.

The volunteer fees help MamaBaby birth center have money to help the community. Every penny, every dollar counts for Haitian woman.

MamaBaby Haiti has helped mothers and babies who come to us from all around Cap Haitian for 10 years.

We have helped over 5,000 births and done over 50,000 prenatal, postpartum and well-baby visits.

For 10 years we have paid to rent the the birth center building, but this year we buy land and will build our own facility.

Then we want to expand and have more birth centers in other parts of my country.

We will continue to make a difference for the women of Haiti.

CHOOSING JOY

*The Lord your God is with you,
He is mighty to save.
He will take great delight in you,
He will quiet you with his love,
He will rejoice over you with singing.
Zephaniah 3:17*

Today I choose joy. I did yesterday, and I will tomorrow. My hope and prayer is you will choose joy also. Because of our great assurance in our salvation, we share this blessed hope.

The above verse has been one I hold close. Such promises! Our God is with me. When I am afraid, when I am sad, when I am confused, or when I am frustrated, He is still with me. And not only is He with me, but He is big enough! He is big enough to save me and help me in all situations. He is big enough to seek me, to go before me, to guide me, and protect me. He is big enough that he bends to hear each whispered prayer and draws close enough so that I can feel his arms around me.

And He does this because He delights in me! Not just a little, or on occasion, but ongoing, in his full measure. He treasures me, for He planned me from the very beginning of time, and He said I was very good. He loves me!

His next promise? He will quiet me with his love. He doesn't quiet my day, my home, my experiences - He quiets 'me'. How? By his love. His love for me fills my heart to such a degree I can stand in his peace. His deep, deep, peace. I can let go of all anxiety and self-control and let his love hold me. I can be quiet and calm because He is good, and thus I am 'good'!

And He rejoices over me with singing. God sings! Just think! If He sings, so can I! And so can you . . .

Now, would you go back and read all this with your name in it? God's 'you' is for all of us who believe, as well as us individually and specifically. You, too, can claim each promise and treasure it in your heart.

In Psalm 16:11 we can say, "You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand." So, today I choose joy. I have my Christian music cranked up and I'm singing along with gusto. Since we are diligently social-distancing, I am sure my off-key warbling is met with a tolerant grin by my husband. But, hey, he married me for better or for worse- chalk up another 'worse' on the list. My audience of 2 will just have to be forgiving and sing along, . . . okay God? Are you currently finding your days are spent by yourself? Don't believe it! For God is with you, and you can sing to Him!

And I know this: *"Though you have not seen him; you love him and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls."*

1 Peter 1:8-9

So, sing out! Share your joy and why you have it with cards, phone calls, and messages through the internet. Lean on his great love. Nature itself is showing us promises of the new birth of Spring. We have this living hope right outside our window, declaring He lives!

So I add this great benediction from Jude 1:24,25 -

"To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy — to the only God and Savior be glory, majesty, power, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen

Choosing Joy,

Ida Richards, Council President



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|----|-----------|----|-----------------|
| 4 | Daniel O. | 21 | Chris D. |
| 6 | Roland V. | 22 | Jerry H. |
| 15 | Debra R. | 24 | Gina N. |
| 16 | Clair A. | 25 | Mark R. |
| 19 | Elisha R. | 27 | Pastor Scott R. |
| 20 | Gloria G. | | |

Northwest Hispanic Ministry Report

Mid-March 2020

By Joe Strong

“To go or no to go,” that is the question. My wife was not feeling well on Monday evening, and of course the corona virus came up. I reflected over my last three days. Saturday, I attended a community event meeting with the new police chief of Mt. Vernon. Saturday evening, I was present with the men of Amor Viviente and Vida Nueva churches in Bellingham. Sunday, both of our churches met as usual. Monday, I worked out at the gym and then went to the Whatcom County jail and visited many inmates. I thought of all the close contacts that I have had. If I had the virus, at least 150 people could have been infected just by me. That is a bit scary. My wife takes my temperature every day and I wash my hands and use disinfectant wipes. After that, I have to decide if it is responsible to continue to do my daily ministry. So far I am. Continue to pray for wisdom about this subject. As you know, a lot of people are feeling out of sorts about this.

On Tuesday of last week, I went to visit a woman of our church who does not read or write and only speaks Spanish. I read her mail and fill out the paperwork. She wasn't home because she was in the emergency ward with her daughter who had been contemplating suicide. I spent 5 hours at the hospital that day. It was only a month earlier that I worked with the family of a 13 year old boy in the Hispanic community in Mt. Vernon who had killed himself. Oh, how the darkness is so dark for some people. Pray for this young woman.

A Venezuelan family of our church in Lynden invited me to their apartment. They recently had moved in and wanted me to be their first guest. After eating, they showed me their new abode. Well, to my surprise and not surprise, there were very little furnishings. They showed me the bedroom of Gabriela. They opened the door and

there was only the wall-to-wall carpet. Nothing else. Henry had an air mattress and nothing else. So, I am fortunate to know a store, Bargains Galore, in Mt. Vernon, which sold me box springs and mattresses for half-off, plus several more items for their apartment. Needless to say, these people were very happy. We are presently waiting for 2 more people from Venezuela to show up.

We are developing leaders. We are influencing our communities. Thank you for your support of this ministry. Your prayers count. Your donations make a difference. This ministry touches many, many people.



Finding God in the Anxiety of the Waiting Room

By Elizabeth Reynolds Turnage

Thrum. Thrum. I glanced cautiously around me—could others in the waiting room hear my heart pounding? Only four days ago, an ear, nose, and throat doctor had disrupted our lives with shocking news: Our apparently healthy 22-year-old son appeared to have a brain tumor. Only three days ago, an MRI at the local hospital had confirmed the diagnosis. Only two days ago, we had shared the heartbreaking news with his siblings and their spouses. And just yesterday we had wept through hymns at church proclaiming the goodness of our

good Father. Now, one long hour had passed since our son had checked into the top tumor center of our region.

Have you ever been there? In the waiting room of a health crisis? If you haven't, you know someone who has, someone who has experienced the heart-pounding, stomach-souring, head-throbbing anxiety of the wait. As the minutes tick by in the waiting room, your mind trips through the troubling what-ifs:

What if it's cancer?

What if I lose my job?

What if I can't lift my grandchildren?

What if—my son is going to die?

These questions and others disrupt the peace of caregivers and patients alike as they endure the agonizing wait of a serious health crisis.

Our son's brain-tumor diagnosis coincided with my 83-year-old father's battle with stage IV prostate cancer. Already my father's primary caregiver, I now became my son's as well. Passing hundreds of harsh hours in multiple waiting rooms, I was met again and again with the hope of the gospel.

In the uncertainty of a health crisis, the following gospel realities can calm our anxious hearts, bringing us peace and hope.

1. Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

The gospel contradicts the common 21st-century worldview that individual freedom and self-rule bring comfort. The Bible asserts that belonging to the Lord brings comfort. After our son's third brain surgery, he spoke about this comfort.

He was recalling his tumultuous tumor journey with some visitors: two brain surgeries to excise the tumor, a third after his wound had become infected. In the third, a piece of his skull was removed. Our son and his visitors were laughing at the ugly taupe-colored foam helmet he was instructed to wear to protect his vulnerable skull. One visitor, a kind, older gentleman, commented that if anyone could

pull this off, our son could, because of his remarkable bravery. The laughter hushed. All was silent for a moment. Our son then spoke slowly, with tears in his eyes:

“Nothing . . . nothing can take Jesus and my family and my friends away from me.”

In the disturbing realities of a health crisis, even when death is a real possibility, to be persuaded that “whether we live or we die, we belong to the Lord” ([Rom. 14:7](#)) and that “nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” ([Rom. 8:39](#)) brings comfort, peace, and hope.

2. God Rules over Everything, including Every Hair of Our Heads

On that first day in the waiting room, as my heart pounded away, as my mind wandered through the what-if's, a thought struck: *Oh, no! His hair!* I realized that our son, who had always carefully groomed his hair, would likely lose those locks to the surgery.

Thankfully, immediately after this unpleasant realization, I remembered something I'd been studying recently—part of the [answer](#) to the first question of the Heidelberg Catechism:

He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation.

In the losses of a health crisis, peace and hope come from knowing that our heavenly Father is also a gracious king, caring compassionately and ruling kindly over his children ([Matt. 10:29–31](#)).

3. In Jesus Christ, We Have Forgiveness for Sins

It's not uncommon for people in the waiting room to experience a deep sense of remorse and guilt. The patient who is terminally ill may feel regret; loved ones may feel anger and frustration as they care for the patient. Forgiveness is particularly good news in such a space.

One day, in the oncology waiting room with my dad, I received news that angered me. Previously, when I had checked on my dad while I was away caring for our son, he had told me he was “tip-top.” Now, as we sat in this crowded waiting room, he let it slip that his chemo pill was no longer working—he had stopped all treatment. I was angry because he’d lied to me about his condition. My anger made him feel guilty and ashamed.

Thankfully, he forgave me for being angry, and I forgave him for lying. What brought us both peace and hope in that moment was the truth of Ephesians 1:7: “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.”

4. Jesus Is Near

Knowing that Jesus is near brings peace and hope to the loneliness and uncertainty of the waiting room.

Two aspects of his nearness make the wait bearable.

First, Jesus is close to the brokenhearted (Ps. 34:18). His nearness soothes our anxiety; his nearness blankets us with the surpassing peace which can only be found in him.

During our son’s third surgery, which was unexpected and therefore left me alone in the waiting room, my anxiety skyrocketed. Waiting to hear whether the infection in the wound had spread to his brain, my heart beat so rapidly that my Apple watch urged me to breathe. I chose instead to pop in my earbuds and listen to the hymn, “’Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus.” As I listened, Jesus’s peace washed over me, soothing me as a mother soothes her panicked baby.

Second, the Greek word used in Philippians 4:5 (“The Lord is *near*”) also refers to his soon return. This anxious season in the waiting room won’t go on forever. One day, Christ will come back, and our deepest hopes will be fulfilled as he makes all broken brains and hearts and limbs new (Rev. 21:5). In that day, God will dwell with his people, and we will know true and lasting peace.

Today, as we pass tense moments in the waiting room, we will find peace and hope in remembering

that day—when we will finally live as God designed us, glorifying him and enjoying him fully and forever.

Elizabeth Reynolds Turnage is author of “The Waiting Room: 60 Meditations for Finding Peace & Hope in a Health Crisis.”

*This article was reprinted with permission from **The Gospel Coalition**, and may be found here <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/god-waiting-room/>*

Getting to Know our Church Family

By Elaine Snapper

This month I am featuring Debra, who has been attending our church for several years. Debra was born in Whatcom County, and has one older brother,



Brent, who lives with his wife and son and daughter in Lynden. Debra’s mother attends the Rome Chapel, and they usually get together on Tuesdays and Sundays.

Debra attended school at Mt. Baker for a few years, but when she was 16 she attended the school for the blind in Vancouver, Washington, and lived in a dorm there, and that is where she graduated. After school on Fridays she would take a greyhound bus and come home to Bellingham for the weekend. While she was at school she had a job working at McDonald’s making salads and biscuits and cleaning the ovens. She said it was hard work.

Once out of school she shared an apartment for a time with a lady in Bellingham. until she was notified by Housing that there was availability in a unit at Washington Square, and she has been there for 20+ years.

Debra says she has always gone to church, and she has gone to some church camps. She really enjoys going to church, and she really enjoys our Friendship program.

For hobbies she likes to swim and she really loves to color. She also likes to jump rope, watch tv and play with her cat, Ella. She also enjoys getting together with her boyfriend, Don N., who also resides at Washington Square. She also helps at Washington Square on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays cleaning the tables and wiping things down.

We're glad this pleasant gal is a member of our church.

DEACONS DIGEST

By Elaine Snapper

We talked about the deacon candidates and discussed the responses we had received. All prospective deacons will be invited to attend a candidate informational meeting on Sunday, March 18.

Doug Scholten and Ken Wick requested an opportunity to speak to the congregation about their upcoming mission trip to Romania where they were hoping to work with Kids Town International to build wardrobes for the orphanage. They were tentatively hoping to leave on April 27.

MARCH GIVING

	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Designated Fund Offerings:	\$ 1,199	\$ 8,661
General Fund Offerings	\$16,885	\$ 74,563
Rent / Utilities Income	2,589	10,987
Interest Income - Undesignated	21	141
Total Undesignated Income	19,495	85,691
General Fund Expenses	(19,409)	(67,629)
Income Over(Under) Expenses	\$ (86)	\$ 18,062

Total 2020 budget, including ministry quotas	\$ 273,588
Year-to-Date Budget for 4 months	\$ 91,196
Total Undesignated Income	85,691
Income Over (Under) Budget	\$ (5,505)

Loan Balances:
Classis: \$ 12,500

COMMUNITY NEWS

SERVE COMMUNITY

MEALS: Community meals will be served every Tuesday evening at First Baptist Church in downtown Bellingham. During this time of crisis, those who need a meal will be offered grab-n-go bags of food (a hearty sandwich or wrap, fruit, and bottled water) each week in order to abide by the official health guidelines. If you or your (very small) group are healthy, and would like to help prepare Tuesday afternoons and/or serve those in need between 5 and 5:30 p.m., please contact Jim Parker at (714) 785-5488 or jameswparker@hotmail.com.

LATEST KIDS CORNER: Check out the children's programs at www.kidscorner.net. In this week's episode, "Beat the Buzzer," Liz and his friends are very excited about competing in the Beat the Buzzer game Listen now at kidscorner.net and subscribe to KC's weekly e-mails for future episodes. Download this month's Kid Corner Easter puzzle and game giveaway, "The Bible Challenge Activity Book Five." <https://kidscorner.net/activities>.

SENTI FAMILY CONCERT NOW ON YOUTUBE: Join the Senti family for a family concert on YouTube ([www.youtube/UCi7jvqFoUZqzHkg6Vj9nWkg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCi7jvqFoUZqzHkg6Vj9nWkg)) on April 17 at 7 p.m. It will be filmed from the Over Easy Restaurant in Bellingham (a breakfast place with deliveries available from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.) and will be available for viewing by 7 that evening. The Senti family's new CD, "Our Eyes Are On You," also will be available for download on their website www.envisionmission.org/media. For more information, call (360) 392-0289 or e-mail mitchsenti@hotmail.com.