

Edgefield Baptist Association E-Newsletter

April 2020

Christians in a Pandemic by Tim Shull

As followers of Christ in April 2020 are facing an extended medical timeout due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, we often hear news media pundits declare that this pandemic is unprecedented. It is not. What is unprecedented is our response to this contagion, as good citizens follow the advice of our medical and governmental leaders that we should practice 'social distancing.' Not gathering together, so that the spread of the disease may be slowed down, is a difficult request for the people of God. Hebrews 10:25.

There are those that point out that influenza outbreaks have affected more people than this Corona virus. For instance, the H1N1 "swine flu" of 2009 infected an estimated 60 million people with 12,469 deaths in the United States. According to the CDC, since October 2019 we have already had a deadly flu season: 38 to 54 million flu illnesses, 18 to 26 million hospitalizations doctor visits for flu, 400 to 730 thousand flu hospitalizations, and 24 to 62 thousand flu deaths since October. So how is this COVID-19 worse?

- For one thing, with flu numbers we're talking about six months, compared to a few weeks of Novel Corona virus, which is doubling every few days. Medical epidemiologists are projecting larger numbers; some predict horrifying numbers if the spread isn't checked.
- We have vaccines and therapies to treat the flu. At present we have nothing like that for the Novel Corona.
- The COVID-19 virus is more virulent, more infectious, than flu. One person with the virus, especially if that person has no symptoms, will pass it to more people, who will each pass it to more people. And the period of time that a person is contagious is longer than with flu.
- This virus has a higher mortality rate. While flu can lead to pneumonia and death, some of that can be mitigated by pneumonia vaccination, a slower speed of onset and well-established treatment. But this virus can rapidly trigger ARDS, acute respiratory distress syndrome, in which the immune system malfunctions and quickly fills the lungs with fluid. Patients with ARDS will require ICU life support, which is a finite resource that could be overwhelmed with many patients. Then patients with all kinds of serious illness, heart problems, stroke, etc. will be put at greater risk by the greater numbers of patients needing intensive care.

Therefore, I pray and ask God for guidance for church leaders to know what to do and to have the courage to do it in the face of this impending calamity. Unless and until we are beset by a tyrannical government bent on stamping out Christian witness & influence, which I will resist, **I choose to voluntarily follow the counsel and guidelines given to us by medical and governmental leaders in this effort to save lives by preventing the spread of this disease.** 1 Peter 2:13-17, Romans 13:1-7.

This pandemic is not unprecedented. Throughout the history of the church, followers of Christ have faced outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics. Search 'epidemics in history' and you'll find an overwhelming list.

Whether it was bubonic plague, measles, smallpox, yellow fever, scarlet fever, dengue fever, one of the seven cholera pandemics, malaria, diphtheria, Russian flu, Spanish flu, Asian flu, Hong Kong flu, Bird flu, Swine flu, yearly H_N_ flu, hepatitis, HIV/Aids, Zika virus, West Nile virus, Rhinovirus, Ebola virus, Coronavirus or the Novel Coronavirus, Christians have suffered, died and grieved throughout our history. In each of these outbreaks you can find marvelous examples of deep compassion and courageous ministry in the midst of contagious and dangerous disease. I think of Dr. Kent Brantly and missionary nurse Nancy Writebol, who worked in Liberia, West Africa, working through World Medical Mission, the medical arm of Samaritan's purse. They stayed and ministered to the people of Liberia when the Ebola virus was decimating the population there in 2014. It killed over 11,000 people. Dr. Brantly said, "We must act out of love instead of reacting out of fear." When they contracted Ebola, they drew attention from the world. Among the first thoughts he shared with the world at the

end of long, nearly fatal battle: “I am forever thankful to God for sparing my life and am glad for any attention my sickness has attracted for the plight of the people of West Africa in the midst of this epidemic.”

Followers of Christ do not insulate themselves in an effort to protect ourselves. Like Christ who touched the lepers, we serve and minister, doing the best we can to avoid catching a disease, but not letting that caution keep us from ministering, helping and serving. Make sure you understand that this ‘social distancing’ is about others, not ourselves. We stay at home not because we are scared of getting sick but because we each must do our part to not spread the virus. This is about doing what is best for your neighbor, not yourself. Jesus gave us the Great Commandment in Matthew 22:37-39: Love God with all you have and love your neighbor as yourself. We can love God in many ways besides physically coming together for worship. We can love our neighbors by not spreading this disease. Our daughter said, “The best way to help medical professionals is to stay home.”

The church has much work to do as we stay at home. Don’t sit around and do nothing. Make phone calls and check on people, especially the ones who don’t use online communication. Send cards & letters. Watch the archived worship, teaching and preaching that many of our EBA churches have on their Facebook pages, websites, or blogsites. Improve your family relationships. Read your Bible and pray. Pray for all the people who serve in hospitals, doctors offices, clinics, and residence homes: doctors, nurses and nurse techs, therapists, dieticians, cooks, technicians, laboratory technologists, food workers, janitors, custodians, housekeeping, maintenance workers, clerical staff, couriers, supply distribution, administration, and chaplains who seek creative and innovative ways to minister to patients, their families and staff. Pray for residents in residence and nursing homes. Pray for our first responders and law enforcement personnel: fire fighters, public safety, police officers & staff, sheriff’s deputies & staff, EMTs, paramedics, and transport drivers. Pray for the people who keep our utilities functioning. Pray for the people in distribution systems and the truck drivers who get food and products to the stores. Pray for the people who work in the stores. Pray for cooks and restaurant workers who now serve take out only. Pray for those who work in the jails and prisons and pray for the prisoners. Pray for our elected & appointed leaders at every level. Pray for our emergency management people, town & county & state administrators and workers. Pray for the folks at CDC and NIH and DHEC. Pray for the laboratory scientists and manufacturers that have become so important. Pray for those building and tending temporary hospitals in the big urban areas. Pray for all of our military. Pray for missionaries local, state, North American and all over the world. Pray for pastors and church leaders.

Our son is an EMT in Columbia and our daughter is an Emergency Medicine physician in Greenville. They are taking appropriate medical precautions and wearing personal protective gear. They are also keeping good health and strength because they each presume that they will eventually catch this virus. Gloria and I wrote to each of them, “We earnestly pray for you as you serve people who need help. We pray that you won’t catch it, and, in any case, that God will protect you as He always has. We are proud of you and we love you. Be safe, be courageous.” My prayer for my wife, who works at Lexington Medical Center, and our children, is the same prayer we lift for you and yours. Be safe, be courageous. Share the love of Jesus with everyone, especially to those who need help and encouragement during this time.

Much love and prayer,
Tim Shull

Edgefield Baptist Association has canceled or postponed all meetings and events in April, including the April 19 Spring meeting. The EBA office will not open during April, however we keep all of our information systems open. Mail and phone messages will be checked weekly.

Email tim@ebamissions.org or jackie@ebamissions.org. Our phone numbers are Tim 803-760-8042 and Jackie 864-941-7225. We both receive and send texts. Check the EBA Facebook page often. Let us know about your cancelations or other information you would like to share.

**Financial Report
February 2020**

Church Contributions	MTD	YTD
Antioch	796.86	796.86
Berea	75.00	150.00
Big Stevens Creek	300.00	600.00
Ebenezer	0.00	0.00
Edgefield First	0.00	0.00
First Bethany	0.00	0.00
Gilgal	0.00	0.00
Little Stevens Creek	0.00	0.00
Modoc	0.00	377.32
Mountain Creek	0.00	93.00
Mt. Zion	0.00	0.00
Parksville	576.60	1341.30
Peace Haven	0.00	0.00
Plum Branch	0.00	951.90
Providence	0.00	575.00
Red Hill	543.52	1018.40
Red Oak Grove	0.00	2700.00
Rehoboth	0.00	477.00
Republican	0.00	4598.25
Sweetwater	0.00	904.57
Various Donations	900.00	948.24
Total Receipts	2395.12	15531.84
Total Expenses	8111.46	14649.06
Designated Accounts	Balance	
Block Party Trailer	187.09	
CCC	14915.54	
Hispanic Missions	1616.43	
Disaster Relief	9377.17	
Men's Ministries	12318.69	
WMU	2610.61	
EBA Missions Offering	938.62	
Investments	Balance	
Money Market #1	13358.82	
Money Market #2	10368.77	
Baptist Foundation	13317.46	

Special Days in April

Birthdays

08 Tim Shull.....Red Oak Grove/EBA
 11 Skip Myers.....Big Stevens Creek
 14 Lori Noblin.....Plum Branch
 14 Kathryn Tripp.....Edgefield First
 19 Larry Ford.....Ebenezer
 20 Beth Lyda.....Little Stevens Creek

Wedding Anniversaries

07 Jerry & Helen Garvin.....Gilgal

Pastoral Anniversaries

April 8, 2007.....John Noblin, Plum Branch
 April 23, 2017.....Jon Nichols, Republican
 April 24, 2011.....Craig McDaniel, Parksville

**Churches Changing Communities
July 12-17**

Host Church: Edgefield First

Church registrations must be received at EBA on June 15-16.

Registration packets will be available at the EBA Executive Committee Meeting on May 19.

Pastors and church leaders are encouraged to identify construction projects needs in your church community. Just let us know by the end of April so that the project can be assessed. You may contact Ricky Miller at 803-215-5500 or Tim Glover at 803-618-2581 or send to Jackie Ridings at 864-941-7225.

**Health Ministry Kits
Due by Tuesday, May 5**

Please place one of each item in a 2-gallon slider zipper bag:

Toothbrush, individually packaged	Toothpaste, large size
Soap, bath size boxed or wrapped	Wash Cloth
Bath Towel (no white)	Comb or Brush

Kits will be delivered to migrant camps on Tuesday, May 12.
 Please meet at EBA office at 6:30 P.M.

Executive Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 19
 7 P.M. at EBA Office

Audit Report
 Nominating Committee Report
 Presentation from Craig
 McDaniel on the Water Project



FIX YOUR EYES 2 Cor 4:18



**Week of Prayer For
Association Missions Emphasis and Missions Offering**

This year contributions to the EBAMO are designated to assist with the well and church building project led by Rev. Craig McDaniel at Parksville Baptist Church. For more information you may contact him at 864-941-1629.

Edgefield Baptist Association

