



# UPPER PATH VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## April 2020 Newsletter

Dear Covenant Partners, Active Supporters, and Friends,

We are living in a time unlike any other time. Even in the past when global events were happening, the information about what was happening was slow getting to us. Now we can literally watch events in real time All Day Long. For those who have a tendency towards anxiety and worry, this time of social distancing in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic ranks up there as one of the hardest times ever. Take heart, friends. God knows what we need. Though we do not know when we will be released from our current situation to be back together again, we do know that it will come. It will happen. And until then, let's make sure we are staying connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ! This time is not time to be wasted. It is not 'throw-away' time. Ecclesiastes 3:11, *"He has made everything beautiful in its time."* Oh Lord, help us to see the beautiful things you are doing and still want to do in us and through us in this time. May this Easter season bring us closer to you and more in tune with your mission of telling the world about Jesus Christ, the Lord! Amen!

In December (which seems like a really long time ago), Dr. Bonnie submitted 4 newsletter articles for us since she would be away in Florida – January, February, March, and April. I now surrender the rest of this page to her April insights and counsel, for obvious reasons. As I said before, God knows what we need. I love you all and look forward to whatever is next! *With love and many, many prayers, Rev. Meagan*

### Words to Ponder

Dr. Bonnie Cornelious

What were you worried about April 1, 2009? 2019? Whatever it was, it worked out somehow. What are you worried about now? Keep in mind that worry is like rocking in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but you don't get anywhere. Also worry is not godly.

There are two helpful ways to avoid worry. The first is to make a conscious decision about who owns the problem. For example, if you are worried that your son/daughter will get a poor grade on a test, remind yourself that it is not your problem. I acknowledge that we love our kids and want what's best for them, but doing the work so they pass a test is their responsibility. Our responsibility is to encourage them, pray, and trust God.

If you determine that the problem is yours -How will I pay my bills?- the answer is always the same: Wait on the Lord. Lamentations 3:25-26 says, *"The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the person who seeks him. It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord."* I'm not suggesting that you don't make an attempt to restructure your debt, seek advice from a financial planner, or use any other practical means to improve your finances.

I do know that worry paralyzes; waiting causes us to submit to God and to invite him to move in your heart with complete freedom. That freedom brings peace, and peace is lacking in worriers. "When you lose your peace; check your believing." (Joyce Meyer)

When you're gripped by fear and worry, follow David's example and fix your eyes on the Lord to gain a right perspective of the problem. The threat may or may not be real, but the one who is with us and for us is bigger than that which may be against us. *"But let endurance and steadfastness and patience have full play and do a thorough work, so that you may be perfectly and fully developed, lacking nothing."* (James 1:4)

Remember that patience is part of the fruit of the spirit. Worry has no place in a believer's life.

*Heavenly Father, please help us to cast our worries and fears on you.*

*You are bigger and more powerful than anything we face.*

*We need to learn to rest in your arms and wait for your instruction.*

*We have no power on our own. Amen.*

**Easter is not cancelled! How could it be?  
Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen Indeed!**

**As His Church, we celebrate the resurrection of our Savior every day as we remember the NEW LIFE he has given to us through his death and resurrection.**

**As His Church gathered on Easter Sunday, we sing at the top of our lungs, "Up from the grave He arose!" while remembering that the words are not just lyrics to a catchy tune. The words are real. They tell the story of our Savior. They tell the story of our faith.**

**That story remains.**

**It undergirds everything we do as his disciples.  
As the first disciples, we will be 'hidden' apart from one another on Easter morning 2020.**

**As there were when the tomb was found empty, there will be mixed emotions.  
But then he came to them and their joy was unending.**

**In fact, that resurrection joy still lives! It lives inside of you and me, because he has come to us too. Nothing and no one can take that away from us.  
Let it sink in. Deeply. And rejoice!**

**The Upper Path Valley Presbyterian Church will be handing out Easter Goodie Bags for pre-school and elementary aged children on Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> from 3-5 PM in the church parking lot across from the Orrstown Bank. This will be pick-up only. Social distancing & non-contamination precautions will be honored! Pass the word!**

**celebrate!**

**celebrate!**

**celebrate!**

#### **April Birthdays**

- 4/3 Lena Lakjer
- 4/4 McKenzie McGee
- 4/5 Brett Hostler, Berk Meredith
- 4/9 Lily Daniel, Ken Shirk
- 4/11 Brooke Fischer, Jay Hammond, Gabe Johnson, \*Nebeyou Endale Getachew (Ethiopia, Ben Walters)
- 4/12 \*Elton Dossier (Haiti, Missy Barkman)
- 4/14 Levi Fischer
- 4/15 Bailee Parson, John Stewart
- 4/16 Chris Metcalfe, \*Isaias Uriarte Martinez (Honduras, Gary & Patti Rebok),
- 4/16 \*Andika Rohit (East Indonesia, Berk Meredith)
- 4/18 Cohen Daniel
- 4/19 Tammy Campbell, David Cornelious, Jen Harris, Missy Shoop
- 4/20 \*Yohana Soikan Osuphat (Tanzania, Brad & Becky Gerlach)

4/22 Angie Ruby  
4/24 Mikell McGee, Kyler Rosenberry, Blake & Brock Woodward  
4/25 Gavin Earnest  
4/26 Morgan Frazier, Joni Frey, Greg Hart, Nikki Rosenberry  
4/29 Keith Hart, Janet Shirk  
*\*Compassion International children & their UPVPC supporters*

### **Anniversaries**

4/8 John & Meagan Boozer (42)  
4/8 Preston & Joyce Carbaugh (32)  
4/10 Donnie & Wilma Umbrell (49)  
4/21 George & Bonita Bair (63)  
4/21 Corey & Autumn Daniel (8)  
4/22 Bobby & Willa Allison (48)  
4/25 Jay & Cheryl Hammond (39)



### **Your UPVPC Staff: How are we doing during COVID-19 Quarantine?**

*(In reverse alphabetical order.)*

**Gary Rebok:** How are we? Pat and I are well. Pat is working part-time as essential staff at the hospital, my job world at Occupational Services, Inc. changes every day. There is work I can do from home, but whether that's my full-time reality from week to week is unknown. The remainder of both our families remain healthy. The quarantine has not really affected our daily schedule other than we do not go anywhere outside of work or home, only for groceries as needed. We are now regularly scheduling time on ZOOM with our families 1-2 times per week. My seminary studies are exhausting, now taking two classes; Greek and Church History post-reformation. The greatest blessing is spending time with our families by way of Zoom. The blessing is that we spend more time together even though we are apart. The one thing God is teaching both of us is extended patience. Prayer? That the world soon gets an answer to all the craziness and disruption it has caused, enabling all of us to return to Sunday morning. Soon my 32 weeks of Greek class will be complete, and that will be a time of celebration, for sure. God bless.

**Monique Parsons:** I am hanging in there! We are taking advantage of all the extra time together. Usually our evening and weekends are non-stop so even though my anxiety has been really bad over the change in our routine and the constant bad news coming in about the virus, I'm thankful for good quality family time. If it's nice outside we hike up the path behind Lisa and Marty's house to the top of the mountain. If it's raining we play board games and bake brownies. Owen's preschool, gymnastics, and t-ball have all been cancelled. He has not been happy about that. A few days ago I explained to him about what viruses are, how they work, and how they spread. After I was done he looked down at his hands and said "Oh no, Mommy. I need to go wash my hands" 😊. I'm so thankful Nathan can still work so everything is as usual with that even though some Wood-Mizer shows have been cancelled. And I'm thankful for the Reserves even though I don't like the idea of him being in Pittsburgh right now. God is teaching me to TRUST in him. It was a really hard for us as a family to decide if Nathan would stay in the reserves. After a year of it, I was realizing just how hard one weekend a month is! Now in the middle of an epidemic and the economy unknown, I give thanks every day that God guided us in that decision because we always have the Coast Guard as plan B. We pray we never need plan B but there's a peace just from having a plan B. Please pray that my anxiety can go down and remain low. Please pray that Nathan can make it to and from Pittsburgh for drill safe and germ free.

**Laurie Parsons:** Greetings to our Church family! Boy, do we miss gathering with you all on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. We miss your smiling faces, your hugs, and the ability to gather

together freely. We pray that you are all doing what you need to do to stay healthy and stay close to Christ. Today I am finding comfort in Daniel 3:17-20 (from the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego when they are about to be thrown into the furnace), *"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up."* This passage is so needed as we grapple with the situation around us. This is a trying and difficult time AND God is still good. God is still in control. Even if we cannot gather together for Easter, we will still worship our Lord. Even if we are physical-distancing for months, we will still worship the Lord. Even if this virus shows up in us or our families, we will still worship the Lord. GOD IS STILL GOOD AND GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE! Amen and Amen! Now to how are we doing and what are we doing during this time of physical and social distancing. Nick is continuing to work at Wood-Mizer so his schedule has not changed much, though there is a lot more answering phone calls than normal for him. I am working from home (besides getting the church mail twice a week). Switching to online ministry has been a challenge for many of us and I'll admit it is hard for me to stay focused on a computer most of the day. Usually, when this is needed at the church Meagan and I find something physical to do around the building, I suppose now I have no excuse for not cleaning out my closet or finishing the myriad of home projects that are on our list. On Tuesdays I am doing Stories with Laurie on our public Facebook group, which are shareable. Wednesdays, we are hosting Rooted Youth Online at 7 PM for our middle and high school students. The ability to continue to meet with our students virtually and the ideas of our leaders have been a blessing for me during this time. The ability to see their faces and to laugh with them has been uplifting for me. It is truly wonderful to see how as the Body of Christ we are witnessing and praying for one another. May this time apart make us stronger for His Kingdom when we are together again. It's also been a blessing just to slow down a little bit and to have a slightly free schedule. My schooling has not changed much except that now I have no excuse for procrastinating. My residency scheduled for April 20-24 has been moved to a completely online format. This means I will have to present my two group projects online instead of in a physical classroom. We ask that you pray that our time with the youth is a blessing for all of us and that technology would continue to work. Pray for health and safety for our immediate and extended families (as far as I know my grandfather is continuing to deliver eggs to Baltimore despite being in the most-vulnerable category due to his age and heart issues). Please pray we all receive renewed strength from the Lord. And finally, pray that we would continue to do the next right thing in love that would bring glory to Christ and not to ourselves. We love you and miss you! Nick & Laurie

**Jonathan Parsons:** Being under this quarantine has had more of a positive effect on me than anything. Actually, I consider this quarantine to be a blessing, a reprieve from the heavy demands of life. Sure, with my venture in obtaining this engineering degree my professors haven't slowed down at all since everything has been transferred into online courses. However, with being home-schooled since first grade, I had to do nothing more than literally roll open the roll-top and plug in my computer (a little dusting included). Ever since dad received his diagnosis last March, it's been very hard to be away most of Monday-Friday of every week, so when Penn State said "stay home" I was like "thank you Lord!" Also, so many of my classmates have been complaining about being bored but that's one thing I've never been. There's certainly no shortage of work here when you have a farm! I will say the one thing that I miss due to this quarantine is spending Sunday morning at Church with you all, especially the singing. If there's one thing to keep in prayer with regards to my family, please keep dad in your prayers for continued healing. He has already been prayed into a stable position with his cancer so let's keep praying and see what the Lord will do. God has certainly never failed to amaze me so I'm not giving up now! We are so blessed!

**Chris Metcalfe:** Jim and I are doing fine. We have been maintaining phone contact with our families (kids, grandkids, brothers, sisters) and they all seem to be weathering this well. Our schedule has slowed quite a bit because the nursing homes where we usually go to sing have all closed down to visitors. The greatest blessing during this time has been a report of improvement in Jim's condition. God has been trying to teach me many things, but I think patience and acceptance come foremost to my mind. Unfortunately, I tend to be a slow student. I would ask the congregation to continue praying for continued improvement for Jim, and for me to become a better student. ☺

**Keith Hart:** I miss seeing everyone together on Sundays as it truly doesn't feel right not worshipping in person. We can re-create that time but we can't replace the joy it brings. Keep Hammering. I am doing well, been busy putting in boot miles enjoying the outdoors. Can't say much is different than usual other than the cancellation of regular meetings, church, etc. Staying positive and focused. My Grandmother is having a hard time with a number of things happening all at once during this time. Other than that we are all well. PennDOT and Turnpike projects are at a standstill. We were given an exception on the business shutdown, being we are considered essential. NESL has implemented steps to keep everyone safe. Field employees for the majority did not start back yet, so they are just getting an extended winter shutdown. We are still bidding work and pushing for revenue incoming. My greatest blessing I have received during this time is seeing people getting active outdoors and off computers, TVs, phones. Lots of people hiking and kids on bikes. For me, God is confirming that he is in control. This shows us how much work we have in bringing more people to him. If you have him in your heart, there is nothing on this Earth to fear. Please pray for continued good health and no interruptions to my upcoming Texas and Alaska trips in July and August.

**Ruth Frazier:** My experience to date with COVID19 has been challenging; trying to juggle all the changes and restrictions!!! Mark and I are still working; his job at the tunnel and my bookkeeping jobs both at Fannett Metal and here at Church are both deemed "essential", although there are soooo many changes, daily changes!! Abby of course is home due to schools being closed and Morgan is home from college also starting online classes and planning the start of her summer Paramedic classes in early May back in Williamsport. Meanwhile she is very busy running ambulance calls back home in the Valley. The greatest blessing through this is that we are both still have our jobs and it is teaching me to slow down, appreciate the little things that technology and social media has taken away from being together and doing things as a family. My prayer request is obviously to keep me and my entire family healthy and protected during this time and for me to be patient and understanding with all the people I interact with at work, this whole thing is new to all of us and we need to work together and pray together and stay strong together.

**Rev. Meagan Boozer:** John and I are doing well. John has a little bit of at-home work, but for the most part all of the jobs he coordinates have come to a screeching halt. For me, I am taking the time given to read and pray and listen to what I am to do next. Connecting with all of you either on Facebook, Facetime, Zoom meetings, through email, texting, messaging, and over the good-old phone is so important to me, and I believe important for all of us. I am way out of my 'box,' but I truly believe it was time to get out of that box. We can so easily fall into patterns of being and doing that are not bringing forth God's very best for us. So, I am submitting myself to God's chisel, to God's cutting and pruning shears, trusting and believing that great, great times of fruitfulness are ahead. Personally, John and I have kept our distance from our kids and grandchildren, which is so hard. We went through all our bins of pictures and organized them, which was a 5-day task. I'm planning to clean out our really messy outdoor shed when the sun is out for a whole day, and I'm hoping to clean out a few closets. With so much computer time and phone time, it is necessary to have the physical activity that projects like this contribute. I am also walking a lot! That's the time I set aside for listening to music, praying, and listening to inspiring podcasts. I could walk all day and not listen to everything I want to listen to! Thank you for your continued prayers for me as I seek to lead during this time in the life of our congregation. I am so grateful for our staff and ask that you keep each one in your prayers.

**During this time of not being able to gather together on Sundays, if you are able to send in your tithes, gifts, and offerings, please use the P.O. Box 128, Spring Run, PA. 17262 address. You can also donate using Paypal through our website at [www.upvpc.org](http://www.upvpc.org) under the GIVE tab. God's got this!**

**Even in the midst of such hard times, we are still continuing our Lenten Mission Project of purchasing Bibles for the persecuted church through Voice of the Martyrs. As of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 262 Bibles have been purchased! By God's grace, getting God's Word into the hands of the spiritually hungry will continue! Thank you!**