

Heater Headlines

May 22, 2020
Day 66 of Covid-19 Quarantine

No Contact Required – Contactless Delivery –

I have a few thoughts:

The measures that have had to be put in place during a pandemic were way beyond my imagination just a few weeks ago. Whether it is a virtual check up with the doctor, pick ups at stores placed in car trunks, settlements or refinancing done indirectly, and virtual weddings, graduations and worship services, the necessity of these adjustments to normal activities were unimaginable but here we are.

Being present and coming alongside is almost the description of a missionary and yet we cannot be physically present during this time. Many years ago when my 14 month old son was undergoing sclerosing treatments that required him to be sedated, the staff at Univ of Iowa Hospital was gracious to John and I and allowed us to stay with him until he was sedated and brought us back to him before he woke up. At a time when we knew that what he was experiencing was scary, hard, painful and difficult to understand, being able to be present with him helped make the situation more bearable. During difficult, anxiety-producing and uncertain times ministers are prepared and willing to bring the gift of being present with our loved ones, ministry partners and friends.

I can remember many other times when circumstances have required that we could NOT be with someone and we had to accept that reality. Those times of leaving a church family that we loved, leaving our firstborn at college half-way across the continental US, leaving my youngest at the recruiters office as he left for basic training, and saying final goodbyes to loved ones were heartbreaking and painful. It is just hard to not be able to be there for others.

But if I know that being apart is part of God's plan and out of my control, I cope by entrusting those that I love to the Father who loves them more. My faith in God and understanding of my limitations have grown exponentially through these times and I find myself returning to these lessons during the Covid -19 pandemic. Remember the words of an old hymn: "I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day". Entrusting our ministry, entrusting our dear friends in Jamaica and entrusting the medical care of all our patients to the Lord is what He has required us to do right now.

Hand in hand with entrusting comes praying! Praying diligently! praying earnestly! praying expectantly! praying redemptively!

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Eph. 3:14-21 NKJV)

How are we/T4MM affected by Covid-19?

We too are working from home and social distancing. The May J-Team has been cancelled due to the travel restrictions both in Jamaica and the United States. The Ministry of Health is not approving medical teams at this time. We are planning for the August J-Team with the hope that it can go on as scheduled. Many who were scheduled to come in May have agreed to come in August. A doctor and a nurse are still needed for this team.

What is T4MM doing in Jamaica now?

T4MM had funds set aside in a Relief Fund. The board of directors has approved these funds to be sent to Joe and Elaine Ramcharan to distribute in our community:

1. to pay our staff the wages that would have been earned during the May J-Team
2. to pay the wages for projects at TEAMS house to provide work opportunities for those unable to work because of Covid-19
3. to buy food and distribute to those in need in our community

Please pray for the Ramcharan's and Omar Vassell as they implement this relief effort for wisdom and that they will be able to get these resources into the hands of those who need them with the current restrictions in Jamaica.

If you would like to contribute to the Relief Fund, please note that when you contribute to T4MM.

What about the Kauffmans?

Mike and Jayne Kauffman joined us on May 1st and we are very excited to have them. Please pray for their need for monthly support and for one-time gifts towards their startup fund. They will be traveling with us in August. Please pray for them as they transition to this new ministry and all the changes that come with that in addition to a global pandemic. They will be raising support, serving with J-Teams and focusing on their cultural adaptation and language acquisition. It is very difficult to meet with people and churches to share their ministry goals in these days of social distancing. If you would like to meet Mike and Jayne through a Zoom call, we would be happy to set up a meeting. If you would like to plan an in person meeting for when things open up, we would love to do that too.

If you would like to contribute to the Kauffmans, please note that when you contribute to T4MM.

How is your support?

Through the gracious and faithful giving of our ministry partners, our support and the other funds of T4MM have been continuing to receive support. We are very grateful for all who have continued to partner with us in this way. We have not seen a downturn so far. There is a need however in the Building Fund for the homes to be built in August and November. After all these days at home we can definitely appreciate the need for having a safe and secure shelter for your family.

If you would like to contribute to the Building Fund, please note that when you contribute to T4MM.

Thank you for once again standing with us in prayer and support during a time of great uncertainty. We are thankful for you. Your Covid-19 experiences may be very different from ours. You may be working more than ever on the "frontlines" with great personal risk, you may be dealing with the loss of a loved one or may have personally contracted the virus, or you may be enjoying the opportunity to work remotely or some other positive consequences to these circumstances. Whatever your situation, we are praying for you and entrust you to our Lord's care. We look forward to writing again soon with updates. We would also love to hear from you. Your questions, comments and news are greatly appreciated!

Keep lookin' up,
Linda and John Heater

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