

VARIATIONS

MARCH 17, 2020
VOLUME 27, ISSUE 6

*Bi-Weekly Newsletter of
Vestavia Hills Baptist Church*

THE SHEPHERD'S ENCOURAGER

Lessons During a Health Crisis

by Pastor Gary Furr

We are facing an extraordinary and global moment. Leaders are having to rethink how we *do church*. We are now worshipping together by video streaming and radio broadcasts. This will be the norm until we are advised differently. In our congregations and communities, we have those caring for children and grandchildren, healthcare professionals and chaplains, vulnerable individuals in high-risk categories, and professionals whose businesses are downsizing or telecommuting. We are all carrying additional concerns and stress right now. This is a time to stay connected, be positive, and do what you can.

Maybe the church is learning something on all sides. It turns out that technology, the contemporary church's strong suit, and ritual and tradition, the traditional church's strong suit, both have a lot to offer. And many things that seemed inevitable, necessary, and essential in our culture, are now not. Few things are necessary. As my dad always used to say, "Son, people do what they have to do." Crises are like that.

There are also new opportunities during a crisis, such as this. Crisis is when we see that nothing we're familiar with is working. However, there are new things to discover. Let's figure out how to solve these new problems. If our routines, habits, and common comforts are gone, new possibilities are presented to us. I have really loved seeing how people are springing into action, helping each other, figuring out issues, and offering their gifts and talents.

CONTINUED ON BACK



VHBC PRAYER LIST

Members in the Hospital

Sam Brown	Lakeshore, Rm. 139
Mary Ann Goodson	Aspire Cahaba, Rm. 407A
Louise Burton	Heart Surgery, 3/18

Members at Home

Maxine Ammons	Leon Nix
Ron Ammons	Margaret Northrup
Libby Brown	Grace Oliver
Zelle Buckner	Lynn Owens
Taylor Burton	Gaynell Pinson
Bob Bush	William Poe
Carolyn Cain	Carolyn Slappey
Louise Cunningham	Ron Smith
Geri Dodson	Crawford Taylor
Esther Evans	Hazel Turner
Milton Fullman	Sue Virciglio
George Griffith	Margaret Walker
Ardath Grizzell	Betty Wallis
Ruford Hodges	Bobbye Weaver
Charlotte Kyser	Doris Wilson
Betty Longshore	Allison Youngblood

CONGRATULATIONS

David & Cathy Compher on the birth of a granddaughter, Joanna Reign Stanley, on March 4th. Proud parents are Seth & Christina Compher Stanley. Proud great-grandparents are Bob & Mavis Hardy.

MINISTRY BUDGET OFFERING

Budget Needed March 2020

\$145,133.00

Budget Given March 2020

\$68,455.04

Christian Sympathy

Kathy Whitfield and family in the death of her mother, Elizabeth King Killen, at her home in Leighton, AL on March 6th.

VARIATIONS IS PUBLISHED BIWEEKLY BY
VESTAVIA HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH
2600 VESTAVIA DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35216

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Connect with us online at VHBC.com for current news and ever-developing resources!



We're also connecting across several media outlets and ShelbyNext to provide you services, devotionals, and other videos to watch at home!

THE SHEPHERD'S ENCOURAGER CON'T

Even small things -- resources for children learning from home, help to a neighbor in trouble, food delivery, gift card purchases from your favorite restaurant, or online funding to keep businesses afloat during this time. There is a world of things to do -- activities you forgot from childhood that didn't require going anywhere at all. Nature is out there, which is one thing that Coronavirus seems unable to destroy.

Your staff and deacons will continue to stay in touch with our members. Pray for our national and state leaders. Our state government in Alabama is working hard. There will be a time to critique, deconstruct, analyze, and assess responsibility when this is over, but now is not the time. Refrain from criticism and help problem solve instead. Resilience, ingenuity, and hope have developed during this time of crisis. Social media, when in prosperity acts like a low-grade chronic personality disorder, is showing real value through encouraging words from friends, helpful articles that are shared, and new resources that are being developed every day. There is darkness, but also light. Be hopeful. Speak positively, especially to the children and the vulnerable. Act with courage WHEN you are afraid.

I will be posting devotionals and provide abbreviated online prayer services on Wednesday nights. Stay in touch with us at VHBC.com. We're here and we'll get through this together even when we're apart. If you need assistance connecting online, call the office and we'll be happy to help you.

Gary