



Phillips' Forum



Chip, Laurie, Reed/Joy, Caleb/Emily, Alison/Alan, Susanna, Julie Anne

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COVID-19 Hits Our Town

Some wondered if our isolation might protect us, but they were wrong. The Coronavirus piggy-backed its way to our town three separate ways: a doctor returned from vacation in southern Brazil, students returned home from Manaus and traveling salesmen visited local stores. Fortunately, our local health officials took reports from Europe and the US seriously and began preparing. Due to early testing we made national headlines as the first to have a COVID positive indigenous person who lived in a neighborhood next to ours. Amazonians are used to ignoring rules, so efforts for social distancing and quarantine were resisted, but we were impressed with the local health professionals' resolve. Laws were passed, all people entering the city were evaluated by a health team and instructed in quarantine, fines were enforced, motorcycles were compounded and people were arrested. Chip and the Secretary of Health started a daily radio program. Yet it was only when the first death occurred about 2 weeks ago that people believed the seriousness of the pandemic.

The Lord has blessed us with an attentive mayor, a great state hospital director and a wonderful state hospital physician. Chip has been able to work alongside them to prepare for COVID.

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We bought 100 oxygen tanks and built three temporary nursing wards to be able to treat up to 25 COVID patients. We are averaging about 3 admissions per day with an inpatient census for COVID of 15-25. We are on the upswing of "the curve" with an anticipated peak toward the end of May. Thirteen people have died to date.

Ministry has changed dramatically with COVID, but it continues. Prenatal care continues at a slower pace with about half of our staff sick at home. Surgical care is limited to emergencies, which is mostly c-sections. We had one case of "dead bowel" from COVID related clotting. Most of our counseling has been put on hold, but we continued with some marital counseling. In both cases the husbands continue to live rebellious lives, but we are helping the wives learn to grow in their faith and influence their husband by their examples of godliness.

COVID has brought highs and lows. In the last week we discharged a 94-year-old gentleman who "beat the virus" and also buried a beloved mother of three young boys from our church. As the Lord brings Geovanne to your mind, please pray for him as he seeks to honor God and help his boys during this very difficult time. We greatly appreciate your prayers for us as well.

Praise

- City officials are doing well in preparing for and managing the COVID pandemic
- Storefront construction progresses.
- 82 people at Faith Baptist have taken the challenge to memorize 63 verses over three weeks of Lockdown.

Prayer

- Geovanne as he helps his boys adjust to their mother's homegoing.
- Wisdom for Chip as he helps manage the COVID crisis in our town.
- Continued outreach in the prenatal program and the uncertainties of the COVID crisis.



Sending Church

First Baptist Church
216 Sunset Road
Willingboro, NJ 08046



For the COVID crisis, new temporary nursing wards were built and named after animals and birds. Each ward has its own color and distinctive siren to call for help.



Travel restrictions due to the COVID crisis made it impossible to receive blood from the state blood bank. For critical patients we were forced to do direct transfusions from one person to another.



The COVID crisis brought moments of happiness as 94 year old Aderaldo was discharged, but also sadness as Geovanne and his three boys are adapting to life without Fátima, one of our nurses who died.