

HBC ALIVE

A Publication of Harrisonburg Baptist Church, Harrisonburg, Virginia

June 2020

What's Inside

WHERE IS JESUS'S DONKEY?

- 2 Paused
- 3 Worship & Re-opening Plans
HBC Summer Internship
Note from Summer Intern
- 4 Drive-Thru Food Distribution
Lord of the Harvest
Zoom! Zoom!
Creation Care During Covid-19
- 5 Missions Committee Update
Nasaruni Academy Updates
- 6 Reading Through the Bible
Cheese Ministry
Youth Graduation
Recognition Sunday
- 7 Class of 2020
Invitation for Committees
to Meet In-Person
- 8 Prayer Concerns
Thank You
- 9 June Calendar
Financial Snapshot
The Big Payoff
Address Changes
June Birthdays

Pastor Matt Winters

It's amazing to listen to what kids think. Let me share this jewel with you. On a recent car ride, Leigha and Samantha were discussing whether or not the donkey Jesus rode on Palm Sunday was still alive. They're not scientists and not veterinarians, mind you, so one must take off the rational hat to listen to their point of view. They both agreed that the donkey was still alive because they've seen movies and pictures of Jesus on the donkey. Because of this visual evidence, they can prove the donkey is still alive. They asked me what I thought. I shared that I thought the donkey was dead because it had been 2,000 years since Jesus rode it. I also said I don't think donkeys can live for 2,000 years. Their retort was, "Dad, are you saying Jesus couldn't keep the donkey alive? Jesus could do it."

And therein lies the beauty of childlike faith. It's a perfect capsule of absolute trust that Jesus can, if Jesus chooses, keep a donkey alive for 2,000 years. As God reminds Job, God has absolute power. In God's and Jesus's timing, we'll get through this season of isolation and emerge with new tools on our belts. But, until then, keep an eye out for Jesus's donkey, take a picture of it, and send it to my girls. It'll be more proof for them that Jesus can do amazing things! Stay strong and keep loving others.

-Pastor Matt

PAUSED

Laura Fly, LT

I didn't realize how tired I was until the world stopped.

Long, long ago, before COVID-19 was a thing, my family entered a new season of extracurriculars. It began in August with cross country practice after school, followed by Girls and Boys Scouts in the evenings, dance classes, Girls on the Run, basketball, the school musical, play dates, appointments, work committees, and church meetings. Activities were strung together throughout the school year, some happening at the same time. Our life was overcrowded. Exhausted from the daily pace, we collapsed at home each evening while unfinished chores piled up around us. Dinner? Anything we ate had to be quick, easy, and transportable as we hurled ourselves from one activity to the next. Our mantra became, "We just have to get through today." Life became unmanageable.

In March, Governor Northam's announcement about school closings brought mixed emotions. I cried, mourning the loss of time with my students and friends. It took my family a few weeks to fully comprehend what "lockdown" meant: no friends, no playground, no fun. I was also relieved. Suddenly our calendar was cleared indefinitely. We slept in, watched movies, played games, and—most importantly—lost track of time. "Woo hoo!" my daughter crowed. "No more school!" It was like a vacation until the full, horrible realization struck me—I would not have a break from my children until August.

School, of course, was not completely over, and there is a difference between teaching children and being your children's teacher. As a middle school educator with 18 years under my belt, one would think that managing my kids' distance learning would be a breeze. Nope. We practice daily resistance in our household, as in, "Today we will resist learning about the climate and geography of Ancient Greece." I overheard my 9-year old daughter say to her grandmother, "Momma's doing a good job, but I

prefer Miss King." In theory, working with my 12-year old son should be easier. His teachers are my friends; in fact, his science teacher was one of my students years ago! Unfortunately, we're having a bit of a motivation issue. I had to bully my son into completing his assignments, threatening him with "I have phone numbers for every single one of your teachers on my phone, and I will use them. How about we call Mr. Suter right now and you can explain to him why the solar system doesn't matter to you?"

The phrase "new normal" has become a bit cliched, yet that's what we've had to create as a family. Our new normal consists of sleeping in and staying up late. We try to stay active every day by taking walks, riding bikes, mowing the lawn, and neglecting the flower beds. We cook. When the four of us sat down for dinner the other night, my daughter said, "I like how you make dinner, Mom. This is great!" She wasn't complimenting my cooking skills; a home-cooked meal with all four of us sitting and eating together was a pleasant surprise to her, to all of us really. I like our new normal.

It is in the evenings, after everyone has gone to bed, that I can sit down and reflect on the day and be with my own thoughts. 1 Peter 5:8 stays with me: "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." (ESV) I think about my adversary, and how the devil is particularly gifted in twisting good things into tools of destruction. I think about our overcrowded life and how the good things—the innocuous extracurriculars—were used to overwhelm and nearly devour us. I'm alarmed of how easily it happened and unsure on how to prevent a recurrence.

The world has stopped, and during these moments of pause, God is teaching us how to be watchful over our time, our resources, and—most importantly—our family life. May we all have the opportunity to stop and reflect on what is most important in our lives, to establish new normals that bring people and families together, and then ask God to help us keep watch against the roaring lions.



WORSHIP & CHURCH RE-OPENING PLANS

Pastor Matt Winters

As we publish this newsletter, the Commonwealth of Virginia is just beginning to step out

into Governor Northam's Phase I. We feel there is no rush to resume worship in-person for several reasons.

First, we have an adequate, safe, and meaningful online worship option. We recognize it has its own limitations, but we are growing as we utilize it. Thank you for your patience with it. Please know we will continue to use online services even when we resume in-person worship.

Second, rates of infection in and around us are still high, and we do not want to contribute to more stress on the community and health care systems. Nursing facilities, schools, day care centers, and hospitals severely restrict participation from outsiders in order to protect the health and safety of everyone.

Third, we just don't know enough about this virus and the effects of the larger community opening to make a confident decision on risk. We prefer to take a cautious approach to make sure we are as safe as possible when we open. There will come a time when we open despite the risk, and each day of life is fraught with risks beyond coronavirus, but that time is not today.

Fourth, in-person gatherings are not essential to the participation in the kingdom of God. Recall Jesus's mandate that we "go into all the world teaching, baptizing, and proclaiming." This work can be done where we already are and where we already go.

When we decide to open, we will gradually come back to worship in stages. We plan to start allowing committees to meet in June and hope to offer outdoor opportunities of gathering at some point in the near future. A date and time would be decided in the weeks ahead but we are too unsure at this time to advertise. Time and healthy, honest assessments will lead us to the next steps. Thank you for understanding where we are. Pray for our wisdom as we navigate what's next.

HBC SUMMER INTERNSHIP

Pastor Eli Withers

We are excited to welcome Heidi Ruiz as our Summer Intern! A generous donation was made to the church, providing the means to give Heidi a summer internship to continue the work she has already been doing to help further the ministries of Harrisonburg Baptist Church.

As a part of her internship, Heidi will continue working with the Children's Ministry, especially with Kids Alive, and with our Missions Committee in the development and disbursement of our recent food pantry ministry. She has been an integral part of reaching out to the community to share the donations you have given—especially to our Spanish-speaking friends.

Additionally, Heidi will be an integral part of our cheese ministry and other mission projects throughout the summer. For example, she plans to assist our youth group as they prepare for a week of various service projects in downtown Harrisonburg.

No doubt Heidi will be busy this summer! We are grateful that God had brought her to us, and we are grateful for her servant heart.

When you see Heidi don't forget to let her know how much we appreciate her! God continues to do amazing things all around us. We must continue to keep our eyes open to see where God is inviting all of us to serve him!

NOTE FROM SUMMER INTERN

Heidi Ruiz

I am thrilled to be back at HBC this summer as the new Summer Intern. I am excited for the learning opportunities these next few months will bring, working alongside such amazing people!

There is so much incredible work being done inside and outside the walls of our church, it is truly a blessing to be able to take part in all that HBC continues to do despite the circumstances we find ourselves dealing with.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Drive-Thru Food Distribution

Heidi Ruiz

On Tuesday, May 19, HBC held a Drive-Thru Food Pantry to distribute the food that was so generously donated by the congregation. Our volunteers were able to give out food to 26 families! Thanks to the combined efforts of so many, we distributed boxes and bags of non-perishable food items, as well as some fresh produce and toilet paper. We were also blessed to be able to give out 11 Spanish Bibles and tracts.

What an incredible blessing to be able to help so many families within our community! Although uncertainty seems to be the theme of so many aspects of our lives these days, food should not be one of them. Your generous contributions to the food pantry, and more importantly, your prayers, are appreciated more than you know! A big thank you to everyone that played a part in making the Drive-Thru Food Pantry possible.



Lord of the Harvest

Bag Lunch Ministry Update by Kathy Ritcher

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.’” Matthew 9:37-38

In answer to prayers to the “*Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field,*” God has recently brought new volunteers to serve in Saturday Bag Lunch Ministry at HBC. The Rayos de Esperanza church in Harrisonburg served Saturday lunch at HBC for the first time on February 1, 2020 and plans to join us in this ministry on a regular basis. Carl and Kelly

Crocker will serve with this team as liaisons and interpreters. God hears our prayers and answers in His perfect time and way!

Zoom! Zoom!

Pastor Eli Withers

In case you didn't know, we have several Sunday School classes and other small groups who meet online.

Our children are meeting via Zoom on Sunday afternoons at 4:00, in their very own 2020 version of Kids Alive! If your kids haven't been able to join us yet, we hope to see them soon! We want to say a great big thank you to Mary Smith, Erin Waddell, Heidi Ruiz and Cindy Skelley, who have made this possible.

Several of our adult Sunday School classes are also meeting, as well as a Thursday evening small group. If your class isn't meeting right now and you would like to be plugged in somewhere, please reach out to Eli. It's the next best thing to meeting together!

Creation Care During Covid-19 Crisis

From BGAV e-newsletter “Advance Notice”

Submitted by Kathy Ritcher, Creation Care Team

During these times of social distancing and grocery shortages, many people are exploring the idea of starting gardens in their own backyards. Vegetable gardens can provide sustenance for your family and even enable you to share your harvest with neighbors who may need food. Craig Waddell (from BGAV's Mission Development staff) and Michael Lipford, Director of the Nature Conservancy's Southern Division, created a series of short videos to help you get started if you're interested in creating a garden. Here's the link...

<https://bgavdr.org/gardening/>

TRIVIA QUESTION: Craig Waddell (in the garden video) is the father of which of our HBC college students who recently graduated from JMU? (See page 7 for the answer.)

Missions Committee Updates

Mary Smith

Feeding Our Neighbors—Our ministries of feeding those in need in our community continue through Saturday Bag Lunch, Blessing Box, Food Drive & Distribution, and the Salvation Army Meal on 4th Wednesdays. Your donations of food and money have provided much needed provisions for people who have been impacted by the COVID-19 virus. You will be both blessed and informed by these two interviews between Kathy Ritcher and two of our visitors for Bag Lunch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8JhjiSsNLk&feature=youtu.be>

Nasaruni Academy for Girls—As the whole world has been impacted by this pandemic, our girls at the Nasaruni Academy were sent home to their families, many of whom are experiencing hardship. Normally the Maasai people go to the public market and sell their sheep, goats, cattle in order to earn money to buy food. Since coronavirus has closed public markets they are not able to get money and buy food for their family. HBC has sent a \$500 donation directly to Bishop Moses and Alice (through Michelle Cude) to help support the girls and their families at this time. The money enabled Moses and Alice to purchase food in bulk and transport it to Nasaruni Academy, where the academy staff distributed it to the students and their families.



Nasaruni Academy Updates

Michelle Cude, Executive Director, USA

—For those who cannot walk to come get their food at the school, the school van will bring them some basic necessities.

—Moses (Alice's husband, director of the school) is personally overseeing all aspects of the distribution. Because he has access to transportation and cash (thank you so much for your part of this!), he can buy corn flour and rice and beans in large quantities and divide it up. He is able to pay the teachers a very small amount to help with the distribution, which enables them to feed their own families.

—Moses and Alice are there living on site at the school. A couple of the students at Nasaruni have no safe home to return to, so they keep those girls as part of their family there at Nasaruni.

—Those on site at the school are working diligently in the gardens and growing much skuma wiki (kale) and cabbages and beans... so they are trying to also produce food. I sent money earlier for seeds, and now those are growing well. They work the fields daily.

—Thanks be to God they have had good rain. (This has been the rainy season). Thus, the water catchment systems at the school have enabled them to save much water which will be stored and will be helpful in dry weather.

—Moses and Alice and a team from their church have been able to broadcast sermons and speeches to the community giving them hope and building faith. They also give instructions regarding the coronavirus so that people can learn from those they trust that it is a real threat. They "preach" handwashing and hygiene and following the government's rulings about staying home and social distancing.

—In all, I believe this is an example of truly spreading shalom to the people... very much akin to the mission of Nasaruni in general. So, we are going about our mission of educating, spreading hope, goodwill, and faith.

Thanks, HBC, for remembering us and sending the gift. We covet your prayers for our girls there and the community of Nasaruni. We need God's protection on Moses and Alice and their family as well. Bless you!

Reading Through the Bible

Deb Douglas, LT

Greetings all! Even with the church not being able to come together on a regular basis like before, we are still able to come together in like mind every day as we read through the Bible. John 1:1 says *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* God’s Word and prayer are the life lines to guide and help us in day-to-day living.

As we read the Word, we get to know the characters of the Bible in a deeper context. The Word comes alive and we see and read things we had not noticed before. The people of scripture, such as Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Ruth and the disciples become more real to us as we glean new truths. Jesus’ ministry on earth speaks to us over and over reminding us of His love and sacrifice for us. And through it all we grow in that personal relationship with God because we are reading His Word.

I was privileged to listen in on a BGAV Town Hall meeting recently. John Upton was addressing the lay leaders of the church and he encouraged us to think about the stress and anxiety the Pastors are under at this time. Our Pastors are trying to shepherd the flock without being with them. They are working in uncharted territory and the day to day ministry for them has changed drastically. Each decision has to be carefully thought out and covered with prayer. Pastor Matt was never able to preach his first sermon with the congregation present. John Upton gave the following things we can do as members of the congregation to help our Pastors during this time of social distancing:

- Pray for your pastor and church staff as they wrestle with these decisions.
- Continue to support your church financially.
- Be the positive person in the church.
- Write a letter of encouragement or text to your pastor and staff.

It would be such an encouragement to Pastor Matt if you would write him a note and introduce yourself and your family. Tell him some interesting facts and history about yourself. Also, encourage the rest of the staff as they move through this time. Hearing from the congregation would be such a great encouragement and will build one another up as we walk into the future with God. Just as we are getting to know the people of the Bible better as we read God’s Word, we need to share our stories with and get to know those around us on earth.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NASB) Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.

Keep praying and reading God’s Word.

Cheese Ministry

Pastor Matt Winters

We are continuing to make plans for the Cheese Ministry to take place sometime in June. We’re expecting cheese to flow through the church and continue to be a blessing to our neighbors. We want to thank Keith Turner for getting this vital work back up and running along with the LT, Missions Committee, and Staff who have been working hard to make this happen. We look to have more information as soon as the final details get worked out. If you’d like to help, let us know!!



We hope you will plan on joining us as we recognize HBC’s high school graduates during a special video worship service coming up on Sunday, June 7. We covet your prayers for the graduates as this is such a special time in their lives, and it has been difficult missing and postponing once-in-a-lifetime events like prom and graduation. Please join us as we lift them all in prayer for God’s peace, guidance, and safety.

- Rev. Katelyn Belcher

CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!!!



CLASS OF 2020



Avery McCray

Avery is graduating from Spotswood High School. She will be attending James Madison University in the fall, majoring in business management. She is the daughter of Tracy McCray and granddaughter of Diane Stiteler Gray.



Grant Folsom

Grant graduated from JMU with a BA in Media Arts and Design. As a student, he worked filming and editing the sports programs at JMU including all football games. He is currently looking for employment in media or editing.



Katie Mazingo

Katie is graduating from Spotswood High School. She will be attending James Madison University in the fall. She is the daughter of Eddie and Dana Mazingo and granddaughter of Tony and Marie Graham.



Sophia Perkins

Sophia graduated from James Madison University with a M.A.T. in Elementary Education (PreK - 6). She will be working at Park Ridge Elementary School, in Stafford County, teaching 5th grade.



Claudia Obenschain

Claudia is graduating from Harrisonburg High School. She will be attending James Madison University in the fall and has been accepted into the Musical Theatre program. She is the daughter of Jeff and Faye Obenschain and the granddaughter of Faye Bland.



Douglas Ritcher

Doug graduated from James Madison University with a B.M. in Music Education. He plans to pursue work in teaching, church music, and making music.



Diego Paul

Diego is graduating from Harrisonburg High School. He will attend Blue Ridge Community College in the fall and plans to pursue a career in graphic design. He is the son of Emito Elan and Nomene Paul.



Erin Waddell

Erin graduated from James Madison University with a M.A.T. in Elementary Education (PreK - 6). She is now busy looking for a teaching job. (Erin is also the answer to the Trivia Question at the bottom of page 4!)



Jake Petit

Jake is graduating from Broadway High School. He plans to enter the workforce and pursue a career in welding. He will begin coursework for certification in August at Blue Ridge Community College. Jake is the son of Kevin and Jeannie Petit and grandson of Mary Petit.



Abbey Weist

Abbey obtained her Doctorate in Audiology from James Madison University and plans to work at a local private practice, Harrisonburg Hearing Services.

INVITATION FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET IN-PERSON

Pastor Matt Winters

Beginning June 1, we invite committees to begin meeting in-person as long as the committee members are comfortable with in-person meetings. Please poll your committees prior to scheduling meetings—these committees should not exclude persons who do not wish to come to in-person meetings.

Please know this is an invitation and not a mandate. We have found we can do important work via email, phone, and Zoom. We also recognize limitations to these media options as they limit discussion on sensitive topics. With all concerns noted and acknowledged about meeting in-person, if your committees would prefer a face-to-face meeting, we would like to invite you to use the church.

Here are our recommendations:

- Please meet in the sanctuary, which allows for more space for social distancing. I would imagine spreading out in pews
- Please use masks as appropriate and reasonable
- Please assign a person to wipe down areas used at the conclusion of your meeting
- Please reserve your meeting time so as not to intrude on another's meeting

THANK YOU...

... to the church family and friends for your Christlike concern for the less fortunate in our community with your generous response to the Food Drive. Thanks, also, to those who have made monetary donations toward the purchase of produce, fruit and other perishable items. Many thanks to Mary Smith and her band of volunteers who have spent hours sorting canned and boxed goods and packing boxes and bags for pick up. Pray that folks on both sides of this ministry will be blessed in knowing that God really does care for us, provides for our needs and enables us to be a blessing to others.

PRAYER CONCERNS



Members:

Paul Steagall, Jimmy & Nancy Russell, Karen & Kerry Potter, Sara Kate Moore, Julie Aittama, Judy Miller, Jane Bowers, Dennis Greene

Extended Family:

Bill Lee's mother

Tom Smith

Margaret Straw—Mother of Courtney Shiffer

Jimmy Cottle—Rosemary Lonberger's cousin

Karen Farrier—Jessica Winters' mother

Dicie Griffin—Mark Griffin's mother

Julie Diehl—daughter of Dale & Anne Wright

Our Church, community and the world as we work through COVID-19



SYMPATHY

We express Christian sympathy to

- Pastor Matt & Jessica and family upon the death of Jessica's stepfather, Darrell Farrier.

- Jim & Susan Kiser upon the death of Jim's mother, Alma Kiser.

- Rev. Wayne Hannah, Sr. upon the death of his brother, Ronnie Hannah.

- Ron & Mary Smith upon the death of Ron's aunt, Nancylee Henkel.

- Carl and Kelley Crocker upon the death of Carl's mother, Bonnie Crocker.

- Sara Kate Moore upon the death of her grandmother, Sara Gregory.



Thank you to the HBC church family for the Christian sympathy, prayers and love you have shared with us following the sudden passing of Jim's mom. You have touched our hearts with your cards, calls, texts and food. We are blessed to call you friends.

Love,
Susan & Jim Kiser

JUNE 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 10am Community Lunch (Team Skelley)
7 Youth Sunday 2pm Kachin Baptist Church	8 Staff Retreat 7pm Leadership Team Mtg (FH)	9 7:15pm Finance Committee Mtg (FH)	10 6:30pm Missions Comm Mtg (FH)	11	12	13 10am Community Lunch (Team Ritchie)
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 10am Community Lunch (Team Ritcher) July Newsletter Articles Due
21 Father's Day 2pm Kachin Baptist Church	22	23	24	25	26	27 Community Lunch at St. Stephen's 12-6pm Kitchen & FH reserved
28	29	30				

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

AS OF 5/17/2020

Prorated Budget needs to date	\$191,691.20
Budget Receipts to date	\$198,105.99
Budget Expenses paid to date	\$126,925.90

THE BIG PAYOFF

Thanks to the generous contributions from our members, the current balance of the Liberty Street Properties mortgage is \$28,705 (down from \$113,000 at the start of this campaign).



1 Dale Wright	10 Emily Hartman
3 Irv Byrd	14 Hunter Hayes
5 Donna Downey	17 Susan Huffman
Larry Ecklund	21 Sue Jones
Sallie Darling	Michael Renfroe
Sara Kate Moore	23 Faye Bland
6 Suzanne Selb	Terrie Childress



ADDRESS CHANGES

Tom & Emily Hartman
105 Millstone Street
Bridgewater, VA 22812

DEACON OF THE WEEK

June 7—Mary Smith
June 14—Debbie Douglas
June 21—Mark Griffin
June 28—Bill Lee

Harrisonburg Baptist Church

501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

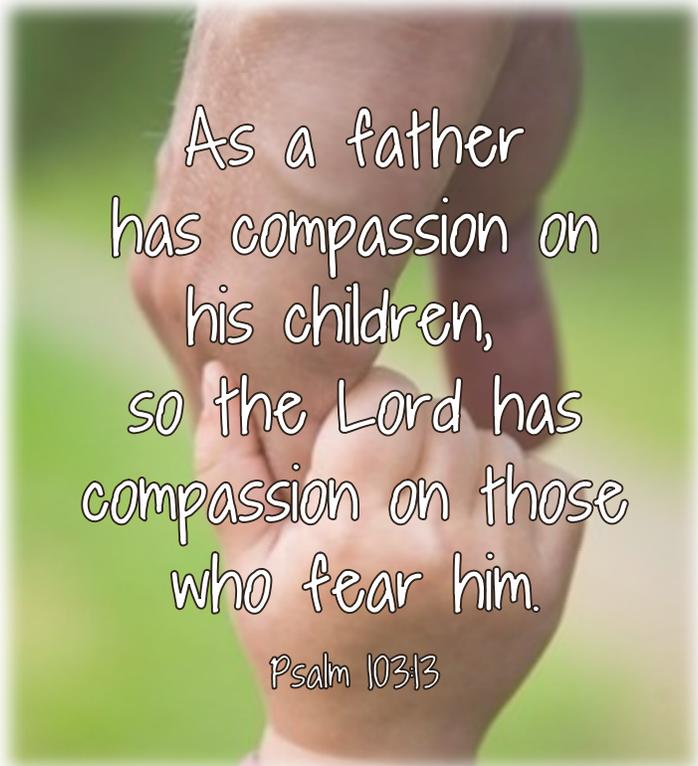
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Dr. Matt Winters, Senior Pastor
Rev. Eli Withers, Minister of Spiritual Formation
Rev. Katelyn Belcher, Minister of Youth
Dr. Gary Ritcher, Choir Director
Ebony Cleveland, Praise Band Leader
Rosemary Lonberger, Organist
Harold Bailey, Pianist
Kim Brubaker, Administrative Ministry Assistant
Susan Kiser, Financial Ministry Assistant

July Newsletter Deadline: June 20, 2020

Please submit articles to
Kim Brubaker at kim@hbcalive.org



As a father
has compassion on
his children,
so the Lord has
compassion on those
who fear him.

Psalm 103:13