

June 2020

Life on pause -- It's different but interesting in many ways. However, God's hands are never tied. Like most of you, we have been confined to our home for the most part. We have used a lot of the extra time to put in a big garden with raised beds! **Should be the best garden ever!**



There are limitations for sure, but not dead ends. For example, when Easter approached it seemed a shame to not have "church". We got an idea from another one of God's servants and decided to reach out to our neighbors nearby with an **outdoor Easter service** along the road. We approached a *nearby neighbor who let us use her yard which sits on a little hill above the road. She was thrilled and helped get the word out for Easter Sunday.* We also hung plastic



bags on the outside of our neighbors' mailboxes including a Daily Bread Easter devotional booklet along with an invitation to the service and copies of some hymns to sing. The weather was threatening rain so it was a short service and folks stayed in their vehicles, but songs were sung, Scripture was read, and Don shared the Gospel with everyone who attended. This **would never have happened without the virus shutting everything down.** We pray for hearts to be touched and salvation to occur as the seed of God's Word was sown.



We are having drive-in church services now on Sunday mornings at RidgeCrest Bible Church.

For the most part, our church people stay in their cars in the parking lot, and Don and the hymn leaders are on the front porch of the church. (People are now visiting with each other again while still maintaining "social distancing.") Microphones and speakers allow everyone to hear – including our neighbor at the church who never has come to church, but has been listening to the service while sitting on his porch! He says he can even hear inside when his windows are up, so we pray he is listening and his heart is being reached.



Summer ministries are a real question mark for now and impossible to definitely plan. VBS ministries were scheduled last summer, so it is just wait and see what happens with the virus. VBS's planned for June have been cancelled, as well as Smoky Mountain Day Camp. We hated to cancel camp, but were afraid it might not be safe for children or workers to have such close contact for so long. This year will be the first time in about 33 years we have not had camp, but God knows all these things and we will just wait upon Him. We have contacted our campers from last year and their families in hope of starting fresh next summer. **At this time, we are planning to have 3 VBS's in late July and early August. Please pray that we will be sensitive to God's timing for all our summer ministries including our ministry to the Hispanic migrant workers at the end of the summer.** At this time, there is a **major outbreak of Covid-19** in one of the camps that is currently working with strawberries. The close quarters for their housing and working conditions makes the virus very easily spread.

On January 10th Don was having trouble breathing and couldn't sleep. He went to the doctor thinking it was something simple. His blood pressure was very high also and he was diagnosed with Congestive Heart Failure. **Long story short, Don ended up having 5 heart bypasses on January 21st. He had some major blockages including 95% blockage of the**

“Widow Maker”! God was so gracious in that Don never had a heart attack! Praise God! He has been recovering well, but his heart went into AFIB after surgery, really zapping his strength. In April his heart was shocked back into a regular rhythm, and his strength has been improving ever since. However, there is still an electrical problem. **Please pray for Don as he is having another surgery on July 6th when he will have a pacemaker/defibrillator implanted.** This will increase the efficiency of his heart, enable him to feel much better, take care of the electrical problem, and will replace the external defibrillator he has had to wear since early January. We pray that this will end the medical setbacks, and that we will be able to resume more normal activities in the future. The heart problems do make Don more at risk to Covid-19, so **please pray for Don’s safety as we have VBS ministries later this summer.**



Don with external defibrillator and pacemaker/defibrillator



All of our family are well even though John, Karen and their girls may have had Covid-19 back in early March. We are not sure, but they are all well now and John has been teaching from home. Everyone else is fine. Kristi, Adrain, and their girls are well. Adrian works from home already, so that has been good for them. We are hoping

they will be able to come visit soon. **We finally got to see Nick, Allie, and Wesley recently.** It was so good to see some of the family! **Wesley loved being out in the country and eating watermelon!**



Thank you for praying with us during some difficult times and for your continued generous gifts for our ministry here. Please pray for Don to continue to heal. May God bless each of you! We would love to get a message from you to hear how you are doing and what is happening in your lives. Feel free to email us or use Snail mail!

In Christ’s love,

Don and Carol