



Care & Share

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

By Dr Marno Retief

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a lecturer in systematic theology at the University of Berlin in Germany during the 1930s. At this time, German Christians were deeply divided over Hitler. One group allied themselves with Hitler, striving for the ideal of a so-called “pure” German nation. They formed an official German church which supported Hitler and banned Jews from holding official positions in the Church. Bonhoeffer was part of another group, a group that simply could not go along with Hitler’s anti-Jewish, radically German vision. Along with other likeminded Christians, Bonhoeffer set up an underground church which explicitly refused to ally itself to Hitler’s Third Reich vision. Given the socio-political circumstances of the time, this was, of course, a very dangerous course of action. In August 1936 Bonhoeffer’s authorisation to teach at the University of Berlin was withdrawn.

About three years later Bonhoeffer was faced with a difficult choice. While on a visit to the United States, he’d been offered a very prestigious theology appointment – an opportunity to become a lecturer at Union Seminary in New York. This position would have allowed him to remain in the United States, far away from the dangers and political turmoil in Germany. Nevertheless, he decided his faith would be meaningless if he took the easy option. He headed back to Germany and found Hitler’s actions so evil that he abandoned his commitment to non-violence and got involved in a plot to assassinate Hitler. Unfortunately, the plot failed and in 1943 Bonhoeffer was arrested. In prison he led worship services for his fellow prisoners, and counselled them, until the fateful day, April 9, 1945, when he was executed by the Nazis.

Bonhoeffer’s life points us to a very important truth about the Christian life: Staying true to your convictions, staying true to what you believe, can sometimes be very dangerous. It can bring you into situations where your fundamental beliefs might be considered a threat to the status quo. In some cases, it might even cost you your life. As we see in our Scripture reading, John the Baptist was arrested. The Greek word used here literally means “handed over”. Of course, later on in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus himself was “handed over” to the authorities, and Jesus warned that those who followed him would face the prospect of being “handed over”.

But why was John the Baptist “handed over”? Did he commit some kind of crime? In Mark, chapter 6, we are told why John the Baptist was arrested. John the Baptist fiercely objected to Herod’s marriage to his brother Philip’s wife, Herodias. According to Mark 6:18 (ESV), John repeatedly warned Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” The law of forbidden marriages in the book of Leviticus prohibited a person from marrying his brother’s wife. The book of Deuteronomy made an exception in the case of levirate marriage, where the brother of a man who died childless was obligated to marry his brother’s widow. But this exception didn’t apply to Herod, since his brother, Philip, was still very much alive at the time. Herod’s wife, Herodias, harboured a grudge against John the Baptist. In fact, she wanted him dead. But Herod regarded John as a holy man and feared him – although he felt challenged by John, he had no desire to kill him. Yet, ultimately, under the prompting of Herodias, and in light of an ill-advised oath he had taken, Herod agreed to have John killed. John the Baptist was beheaded, and his head brought to Herod on a platter. John the Baptist refused to be silent when he identified a clear transgression of the laws of God. Just like Bonhoeffer, he was willing to die for his convictions, and – as the Gospel of Mark records – was ultimately killed because of his convictions.

We live in a world where the temptation to stay silent or compromise is immense. It seems like ours is an age where people are more easily offended than ever. Rather than speaking out for what they believe and possibly offending someone, many Christians choose to rather remain silent. In some countries, governments are becoming increasingly intolerant of religious beliefs they don't agree with, and Christians are facing increasing pressure to let go of their beliefs. But the Gospel of Mark reminds us that staying true to what we believe won't always be easy. In fact, it might sometimes lead us into dangerous situations, even life-threatening situations.

This is precisely why we need to trust the Holy Spirit to guide us regarding when and how to respond to God's call in our lives. We need to trust the Holy Spirit for the right timing, knowing that the circumstances in our lives will rarely, if ever, be ideal. When you sense the Holy Spirit is calling you to do something, you should, of course, pray about it, but – when you believe the time is right – trust God and do it. No matter how unfavourable your circumstances may seem, trust God and do it. Let's be honest, the arrest of John the Baptist would've certainly deterred many aspiring preachers from launching their ministry or, at least, make them think twice, but not Jesus. After John's arrest, Jesus decides it's time for him to launch his public ministry. According to the Gospel of Mark, Jesus' very first words in his public ministry are "[t]he time is fulfilled". In the context of Jesus' ministry, these words are extremely significant. It indicated that the time of God's decisive action in human history had arrived – in and through the ministry of Jesus, God would fulfil his promises and fully implement his plan of salvation. This was the moment! This was God's appointed time!

Winston Churchill had nearly reached the height of political power early in his career; by the age of 33 he was a cabinet minister and one of the Britain's most celebrated speakers. However, a series of events and unpopular positions caused Churchill to lose his political standing and become a subject of ridicule and rejection. By the early 1930s, he had been excluded from the seats of power. Churchill's prophetic warnings about Adolf Hitler were ignored by the British public who preferred to hear comforting words of peace. When Britain was plunged into World War II, Churchill was already 65 years of age – he was eligible to retire on a government pension. Yet, it was at this very moment that the nation turned to him, and Churchill became the prime minister who inspired the British people to remain firm during the darkest days of the war. You need to trust God for the right moment to do what God's called you to do. Don't let your present circumstances deter you. When you sense the Holy Spirit is calling you to do something, when you sense the time is right, go ahead – trust God and do it.

But here's the interesting thing – no matter what your specific calling may be, all of us should invite people to believe in the gospel. Your specific calling in life might be as a teacher, or a doctor, or an accountant, or a construction worker. Yet, this is irrelevant when it comes to the general calling all followers of Jesus has – what's that general calling? All of us are called to proclaim the good news that, in Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God has arrived. As Jesus put it, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15, ESV). At the end of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus commands his disciples, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15, ESV). Jesus' command to proclaim the gospel is ultimately directed to all of us who follow him. We have good news to share! In Jesus, we encounter the kingdom of God, the reign of God. In Jesus, God is on the move like never before! And all of us are called to invite people to embrace this incredibly good news!

It's said that the evangelist D. L. Moody walked down a street in Chicago one day, and he saw a man leaning against a lamppost. The evangelist gently put his hand on the man's shoulder and asked him if he was a Christian. The fellow raised his fists and angrily exclaimed, "Mind your own business!" "I'm sorry if I've offended you", said Moody, "but to be very frank, that IS my business!" Moody is right. It doesn't matter what line of business you're in, as a follower of Jesus, your number one business should always be proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yet, there's something important I need to remind you about – you can't proclaim the good news, you can't call people to discipleship, if you're not a disciple yourself! I know that sounds pretty obvious, but I think it's something that's sometimes overlooked. In order to make disciples, you need to be a disciple. Effective proclamation of the good news requires your personal commitment to Jesus. Notice what Jesus says to the first disciples – "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17, ESV). What are his first words? "Follow me". Before Jesus makes his disciples "fishers of men", they must respond to his call to follow him. The same is true of us today. Christians sometimes engage in lengthy debates about what's the most effective style or method of evangelism. For example, some people prefer confrontational evangelism, some prefer intellectual evangelism, others prefer relational evangelism. But I believe none of these methods will ultimately be effective unless the one using them is first of all a committed follower of Jesus themselves.

After a distinguished performing career, the virtuoso violinist Jascha Heifetz accepted an appointment as professor of music at UCLA in Los Angeles, California. Asked what had prompted his change of career, Heifetz replied, "Violin playing is a perishable art. It must be passed on as a personal skill; otherwise it is lost". I'm convinced the same is true of making disciples – you can't become a disciple-maker unless you're a disciple yourself. We need to be skilled at the art of discipleship before we try to make disciples of others.

One of the most important aspects of following Jesus – of becoming a disciple – is the need to make Jesus our number one priority. Nothing should be more important than following Jesus – not our safety, not our financial security, not our careers, not even our family. If we call ourselves followers of Jesus, Jesus must be our number one priority. We see this truth powerfully illustrated in our Scripture reading. When Jesus called Simon and Andrew to follow him, they "immediately they left their nets and followed him". We don't know how long they'd been fishermen, but given their cultural context, it's very likely fishing was the family business – maybe even for generations. Yet, they don't hesitate in giving up their jobs and following Jesus. The same could be said about James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They too didn't hesitate to leave behind their jobs. In fact, they even left their father behind. Jesus' first disciples set the example of what it means to put Jesus first in your life. Jesus offers us the gift of salvation freely, without cost, yet the cost of discipleship – the cost of following Jesus – requires that we're willing to give up everything to follow of Jesus, if that's what He asks of us. This sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? So, how does it work?

Well, suppose I had the desire to climb Mount Everest. Those who know me well will know that I would never have such a desire, but let's suppose that I did in fact desire to climb Mount Everest. But the cost of undertaking such an expedition is about \$60 000 and I certainly don't have that kind of money. But let's further suppose some wealthy businessman heard of my desire and offered to pay for the entire expedition. He would buy all the expensive clothing and gear, he would pay for my transportation, the guides, and the training. So, it's totally free for me. I don't have to pay a cent. But if I accept his free offer, I have just committed myself to months of difficult training and arduous effort. Truth be told, it could even cost me my very life, because many good climbers have died trying to climb Mount Everest. Given this kind of scenario, climbing Mount Everest would be free and yet extremely costly. The same is true for the cost of discipleship – Jesus paid everything on the cross and offers us salvation freely. Yet, once we accept his invitation, it might end up costing us everything. This was something Dietrich Bonhoeffer also emphasised through his writings and ultimately by his example of dying for the sake of his beliefs. The grace of Jesus Christ is free but costly. As Bonhoeffer puts it,

Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*)

The fact is: Making Jesus the number one priority in your life might require much more than you anticipated.

I know all of this can sound a bit daunting – after all, even with our best efforts, becoming a disciple and a disciple-maker can seem like an exceedingly difficult undertaking. But this is where Jesus offers us some great encouragement. We don't become disciple-makers through our own power or strength – no, Jesus is the one who makes us "fishers of men". As Jesus says to his disciples, "I will make you become fishers of men". Jesus is the one who makes us disciple-makers. Jesus empowers all those who follow him with the power of the Holy Spirit. It's the power of the Holy Spirit working in us that makes our ministry powerful and effective. Yes, God uses us to make disciples, but He is the one who works in and through us for the transformation of people's lives. May God help us to always have the humility to acknowledge that, whatever measure of success we experience in our ministry, all the glory and honour belongs to God alone.

In 1958, the Anglican priest and theologian, John Stott, was leading a university outreach in Sydney, Australia. The day before the final meeting, Stott received the tragic news that his father had passed away. In addition to his grief, Stott was also starting to lose his voice. It was already late afternoon and within a few hours the final meeting would take place, so there was no way for him to back out. He went to the great hall and asked a few students to gather around him and pray. They read these words from Second Corinthians to him: "My grace is sufficient for you for my strength is made perfect in weakness". A student then prayed for him.

When it was time for him to preach, He preached within half an inch of the microphone and, as he describes it, "[C]roaked the gospel like a raven." He couldn't exert personality. He couldn't move around, nor make any voice inflections. He basically croaked the gospel in monotone. Then when the invitation came, there was an immediate response. Many people were converted to Christ that night, despite Stott feeling so weak and helpless. As you go about making disciples, always remember – it's power of God in you that empowers your ministry as a disciple-maker. Soli Deo Gloria – glory to God alone!

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We are already in the season of Lent. How are we dealing with Jesus' suffering? It is all so familiar and we risk accepting it all so casually, without feeling guilt about our sin. We know the Easter story but Jesus' followers did not know or realize what was happening. Jesus was betrayed by his own disciple and that with a kiss. Then, a couple of hours later, Peter, another disciple (who had earlier professed, "You are the Christ") said he did not know Jesus. How hard that must have been! Forsaken by everyone! Alone! And then while on the cross bearing horrific pain, a murderer asked to be with Jesus and Jesus says, "This day you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43).

Guy Arpin is recovering well from his knee replacement and is now undergoing physiotherapy.

Cathie Sinninghe has had her cast removed and now has a walking boot. She is also going to physiotherapy.

Larry and Dove Stahn's grandson, Nathan Bujold, is going back to work again after his accident a few months ago. Larry and Dove are thankful for your prayers and support.

Jacqui Hunsperger is going for laser surgery on her eyes to reduce pressure on her eyes.

Dove Stahn will be going to Thunderbay for cataract surgery on the 10th and 24th of March. She would appreciate prayers for a successful surgery and full recovery.

Our condolences go to:

- Dale and Kathy Kaemingh and family with the passing away of Kathy's father, Bennie Beck, in Fort Frances, on Saturday, January 30th.
- Henry & Thea Kaemingh and Arnold & Cindy Kaemingh with the passing away of Gerry Prinzen on February 10th in Jarvis, Ontario and with the passing of Rita Prinzen in January in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Both were sister-in-laws to Thea and aunts of Arnold.
- Our condolences go out to Hilda Schryvershof and Gerald & Colleen Wieringa with the passing away of Lloyd Wieringa (brother of Hilda and uncle of Gerald) on the 11th of February in Markdale, Ontario and with the passing away of Manny Wieringa (sister-in-law of Hilda and aunt of Gerald) in the Netherlands in the middle of February.

I (Sietske van Zwol) would like to thank everyone who showed their concern and love for me, prayed for me, and sent me cards and flowers leading up to and after my recent surgery. I am now waiting to hear from the oncologist to set up radiation.

Thank you for the cards and phone calls received after the passing away of our brother and uncle Lloyd Wieringa and our sister-in-law and aunt, Manny Wieringa. Hilda Schryvershof and Gerald Wieringa

Welcome to Josh & Tessie Spyksma. Their address is: Unit 3, 146 3rd Street West, Fort Frances P9A 3A3. Josh's cell # is 226-228-2318 and Tessie's cell # is 226-985-1185. Their email address is tjspyksma@gmail.com. We hope that soon you feel at home here with us in Northwestern Ontario.

Congratulations to Nico Kooistra and Jenny Dyck who became engaged this past month. We wish you God's blessings as you plan for your future together.

For everyone celebrating birthdays in March, we wish you a happy and joyful day. Our seniors celebrating this month are Corrie Wiersema on the 5th, Ted Kaemingh on the 12th, Thea Kaemingh on the 18th and Larry Stahn on the 20th. Happy Anniversary to all those celebrating anniversaries in March.

Answers to the Bible Quiz which was in the February CARE & SHARE:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Third | 8. Lilies | 15. Deborah, Rebekah's nurse |
| 2. Fig | 9. Man | 16. Elijah |
| 3. Myrtle | 10. Apple blossom | 17. Mustard |
| 4. 70 | 11. Rose | 18. Zacchaeus |
| 5. Olive | 12. The wicked | 19. Wisdom |
| 6. Jesus | 13. Fruit | 20. Coriander |
| 7. A worm attacked it. | 14. It will sprout again | |



**Our steps are slow,
Our breathing ragged,
Our burdens heavy.
This walk to the cross,
It is not easy,
Yet Christ walked it for us.
For the joy
that was set before him,
He despised the shame,
He bore our blame,
And shared our pain,
Now let us build on the rock,
That is Christ.
Let us walk the way of the cross
together,
Moving forward without fear,
Into God's eternal purposes.
For Christ himself is with us,
every step of the way.
Let us trust in God alone,
And find the joy that Christ did,
Obedience to our loving God.**

(c) Christine Sine <http://godspace.wordpress.com>

An email which was received from World Renew:

Thank you from World Renew! Emo CRC's giving in 2020 is furthering God's story of justice and mercy as World Renew joins communities around the globe to renew hope. We are deeply grateful for your gifts of \$11,603.60 received in 2020 for World Hunger, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and Refugee Resettlement. We press on to fix our eyes on Jesus in a world laden with challenges affecting humanity from racial injustice, increasing hunger, and mounting deaths from COVID-19. Together as a global church let us "learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow." (Isaiah 1:17) To learn about how World Renew is joining the world's families in more than 30 countries to change the story of poverty, visit worldrenew.ca.

Have you been heard? Our congregation has a once-in-five-year opportunity to participate in the 2021 CRC denominational survey. This survey helps denominational leadership understand the concerns and needs of local congregations like ours. It is crucial that as many people from our congregation as possible participate. Please visit crcna.org/survey/6332 to answer the survey questions by **March 31**.

“A Little Bit of History”

Sixty years ago, on March 2, 1961, the Dorcas Society began and we would like to share a few things with you on how we got started and the work we've been doing.

It all started in the fall of 1960 when Nell McCulloch (Romyn) volunteered to give sewing lessons and taught us how to make bias. We so enjoyed these evenings, that at our last sewing meeting in February, we decided to continue our monthly get-togethers. On March 2, we started our first meeting which became known as the Dorcas Society.

We decided that the goal of our society would be to reach out to our mission fields. A board was elected. We decided to meet at the members' homes and dues of .25 would be collected. We started with seven members, and that doubled by the end of the year. Members at that time were: President – Grace Wielinga, Vice President – Florence Borger, Secretary – Dini Ewald, Treasurer – Winnie Vosteen, Riek Sieders, Ann Veldhuisen, Hilda Schryvershof, Linda Esselink, Gertie Kamerman, Ynske Kaemingh, Alice Wieringa, Boukje Hoogstein, Rita Byma, Nellie de Jong, Tina Kruizenga, Wilma Wielinga, Tina McDiarmid (Romyn), Tina Visser, and Nellie Romyn.

M Kar and Takan hospital in Nigeria were the first places we gave support. They were in need of bandages made from cotton material, so for the first year we came to the meetings with old sheets which we ripped into 3x3 and 4x4 squares. We also made eight foot rolls of bandages. When we had a good supply ready we could send them to Nigeria. After a year they requested that we send them knitted cotton bandages since they were stronger than the sheets. So we bought skeins of white cotton yarn and for the next few years we knitted long strips of bandages at our meetings. We also sewed diapers and gowns for the hospitals. In later years we knitted scarves, socks, and mittens for Korean orphanages. We also collected and boxed good used clothes to send to Korea, but as the cost of shipping kept rising, we decided it would be wider to send them money instead. We also started to do the mending for the Emo hospital twice a year.

We did our first catering in October 1962 when we served dinner for a Young Peoples' rally at the La Valee hall. The profit of this was \$68 which was sent to M Kar hospital. We also started to serve at weddings for which we charged \$10, \$6 for serving and \$4 if we had to do dishes. In 1964, the cost of making a loaf of sandwiches was set at \$1. We used to have suppers in church with a film afterward on different mission fields. We served the first of these suppers in October 1964. The charge for adults was \$1.25; ages 6 to 12, 75 cents and under 5, 50 cents.

This is just a little information about the early years of Dorcas. Many things have changed – we don't knit anymore and our prices have gone up, enabling us to give much more support to different mission causes, locally as well as overseas. We support two students in Columbia every year. We used to give the booklet, “The Miracle of Love”, to every mother of a newborn baby and we also give support to Justin and Tammy Hettinga on a yearly basis. Our main source of income comes from catering now.

As a society we feel the Lord has blessed us richly and we feel blessed serving Him through our society. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation for their faithful support and prayers, and also a big thank you to all the ladies and men who are always willing to lend us an extra hand when we need it.

BIBLE PUZZLE

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them?

This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much: he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam; especially since book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in the paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "the books are all right there in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have been shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There are (really) 30 books of the Bible lurking in this paragraph waiting to be found.

Greetings from Rainy River!

We have some very exciting news to share! Since our last newsletter was sent to you, the church in Rainy River has extended a call to our son Ben to serve as their pastor! Presently, Ben is finishing his Master's degree at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and (Lord-willing) **Ben & Ireland will be moving to Canada in May**. They are in the process of purchasing a cute little house and we are so excited to welcome them home! Please **pray** for them throughout all the transitions they will be going through the next few months. **Pray** especially for their calling to shepherd to the flock of God in this community.

In any other given year, this would be the season that we are busy preparing, creating, printing, and distributing registration forms and other materials for Sunny Cove Bible Camp. We would also be ensuring that the dates for all the Vacation Bible Schools we conduct each summer are confirmed, and the lessons, crafts and materials needed to conduct these events are in readiness. We would be searching for volunteers to help with Bible Camp, the Wilderness Canoe Trip and the VBSs. Our house would be a flurry of activity even in the dead of winter in order to gear up in anticipation of the summer ministries. However, it would appear that the door to summer 2021 is completely slammed shut to the typical ministries we have conducted for the past 34 years... so we are **praying**, brainstorming and seeking the Lord's direction, wisdom and provision for the days ahead. Please **pray**.

Last year, we held out that everything would go as planned... right up until May 18... when Premier Doug Ford canceled everything... requiring us to immediately put alternative plans in motion. We certainly thought that by now we would be in a position to resume typical plans for the summer of 2021, but unless things change drastically, we are once again going to have to rely on the Lord to be extra creative and visionary. **Pray** for the Lord's will in every **"Divine Activity"** He provides us.

We can honestly say that in the midst of the "limitations" we are finding a great deal of "silver lining". There have many unique opportunities (in spite of all the setbacks) to embrace significant ministry events and activities. And of course, much of it involves technology and an online presence. We have grown in quantum leaps and bounds in our technology skills! Please **pray** for wisdom.

In November and December, Tina and Rachel conducted a 6-week **"Apple Blossoms"** event here in Rainy River. We were limited to gatherings of only 10, so we hand-picked girls from Rainy River to specifically introduce them to Christ. It was a great blessing, but we were so saddened that we couldn't throw out the net like we have in the past to include girls from neighboring communities as well. Please **pray** for many **"Divine Appointments"** to declare the Gospel in creative ways.

Thankfully, we have been "allowed" to make some trips to the USA, although it is very frustrating that every month the USA/Canadian border closure is extended... now for nearly a year! Each time we have gone to the USA by land crossing, we have had to complete a 14-day quarantine upon returning to Canada. During the quarantines, we have not been allowed to leave our property at any time for two weeks. Presently, the Canadian government is trying to implement a requirement that everyone returning to Canada quarantine in a government run "facility". This is already happening at airports. As of yet, it hasn't begun at land crossings. This means, that rather than having people quarantine in their homes, they would have to quarantine at a facility at great personal expense. As you can imagine, this is deeply concerning. We can hardly believe how rapidly our "freedom" has eroded since the Covid-19 era began. Though having to do quarantines at our home has been a nuisance, it pales in comparison to being required to quarantine in a government run facility! **Pray** for Canada.

We are grateful that both churches Mark preaches at (one in Minnesota and the other in Canada) are also doing their services via **Zoom**, thus allowing us to reach many people all over the world with the Gospel. On Wednesday evenings, we continue to host **"Prayer & Praise"** gatherings that we have been providing via Zoom since Covid-19 restrictions began last March. These have been a huge blessing to so many people and we have seen the Lord answer many prayers in powerful ways!

Thankfully, the people at **Pikangikum First Nation** are online 24 hours a day, so we can typically engage in conversations with people there at any time of the day to encourage and direct thoughts and conversations toward spiritual things. Pikangikum has been under a very strict lockdown, so it is highly unlikely that we will be able to return anytime soon. Again, so heart-breaking. Please **pray**.

We have been able to maintain a strong presence in **Guatemala**, finding sponsors for all 90 children that attend the Christian school we helped to build. How thankful we are that the school was constructed with Guatemalan leadership to carry out the day-to-day operations, thereby not requiring us to physically be in Guatemala to ensure its success. In early February, Guatemala introduced more Covid-19 restrictions, so the children are once again doing all their schooling from home... which makes it very difficult for the children from the dump. In January, we had received special permission for the children from the dump to attend school and it was working out so well! It is extremely disappointing that these precious children are now back at "home" where it is so difficult for them to complete their education. Their parents are illiterate and do not have internet access. We are ensuring that they receive their school lessons with instructions, along with a monthly supply of food, but we wish that we could do more. Please **pray** for the children in Guatemala. **Pray** also for teachers and pastors in their labor of love for the people they serve in the schools and churches.

As you probably recall from our Christmas letter, we provided funding to build an orphanage in **India**! This is truly something that came about as a result of Covid-19. It's a long story, but it's a good one! **#OnlyGod!** Truly the Lord gets all the glory and praise for this miracle! 50 little orphan girls are going to be extremely blessed in very short order with a new **"House of Bethel"** home. Please **pray**.

So, in the midst of many setbacks, we are finding multiplied opportunities to continue the work that God has called us to do, even though, at this moment, it looks very, very different from what it has for the past 34 years. Every day, the Lord reveals new ways that we can fulfill the mandate to **"reach the otherwise unreached"**... those with the least opportunity to hear the **Gospel**! We realize that the time is short and the days are evil. Yet, as we lift our eyes, we believe that the Lord's return is near, and so we must do more than ever to advance the Good News of Salvation and Life in Christ with boldness and courage, utilizing every ounce of strength, along with every breath we take. **Christ is the Answer!** He alone is our Hope and Salvation! Thank you for your **prayers** and support.

Looking to Jesus, All for Jesus,

Mark & Tina

"But may it never be that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14).

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Please be sure to indicate that your gift is for **"Mark & Tina Mast"** in the designation box.



International Mother Language Day

This past Sunday, February 21, was International Mother Language Day. Why is this a big deal? For us, languages matter, because people matter. Language is central to who we are as people. We have generally focused our updates to you on Bible translation, but today we want to help you understand our work beyond this one aspect. In order to talk about this, I will be referring to [SIL](#)*, and not so much Wycliffe Bible Translators. Wycliffe is our employer and they second us, or loan us, to work for SIL (Wycliffe's primary global partner).

In SIL, we long to see people flourish in community, using the languages they value most. We are inspired by God's love to advocate, build capacity, and work with local communities to apply language expertise that advances meaningful development, education, and engagement with Scripture.

As of 2020, SIL is involved in approximately 1,350 active language projects in 104 countries. (Justin gives leadership to SIL's involvement with 196 of these language projects.) These projects impact more than 1.1 billion people. SIL's work brings together more than 4,300 staff from 89 countries who work alongside thousands more local partners and community volunteers worldwide. Most of our focus is on the most marginalized people of the earth, those that tend to speak lesser known languages.

In light of International Mother Language Day, SIL is proud to stand with communities worldwide and applaud their resilience and creativity in confronting the challenges of current world events. We celebrate the languages that most deeply express their unique identities, relate their distinct worldviews and help expand their opportunities for a better life. The video below highlights these communities and the languages they value.



Thank you for your partnership in serving those who speak and sign the world's lesser-known languages.

Justin & Tammy Hettinga

**[SIL](#), Wycliffe's closest partner, is a faith-based nonprofit organization that serves language communities worldwide, building their capacity for sustainable language development by means of research, translation, training and materials development.*

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Finance Update:

As missionaries working with Wycliffe Bible Translators (giving leadership to the work of Bible translation and language development in the Americas), we trust God to supply our financial needs through churches and individuals who wish to partner with us. Part of our reliance on God is to make our needs known as we have them. **We are currently lacking about \$310/month to reach 100% of the ministry budget that Wycliffe Canada has set for us.** Please consider becoming a financial partner or increasing your regular monthly donation.

To Partner Financially:

If you would like to make a one-time donation or set up a recurring donation (pre-authorized payments), visit Hettinga.ca, and click "Give Now." For pre-authorized giving from your bank account, simply fill out and submit this "[Pre-authorized Monthly Debit Agreement](#)" form. To donate by credit card over the phone, please call 1-800-463-1143 (9am-4pm Mountain time) and ask for the Receipts Department. To donate by mail, please make cheque(s) payable to Wycliffe Canada and mail to the Wycliffe address above. (Please include a separate note that states "for the work of Justin & Tammy Hettinga.") If you have any issues with any of these giving options, please do not hesitate to ask for our assistance.



MARCH 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9:45 DORCAS	2	3 Cheryl Foster	4	5 Corrie Wiersema	6
7 Nico Veldhuisen Rich Veldhuisen 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	8	9 Bradley Veldhuisen	10 John Sinninghe Kayle Veldhuisen	11 Tanner Kaemingh Cathie Sinninghe	12 Ted Kaemingh Jordan Paishk-Ronmark	13
14 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	15	16 Carolyn Strydhorst	17	18 Ashlyn Beck Thea Kaemingh Carly Veldhuisen	19 Feitze van Zwol	20 Olivia Esselink Larry Stahn Quinn Veldhuisen
21 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	22	23 Monet Retief	24	25	26 *Dan & Kayle Veldhuisen (5th)	27 Marissa Esselink Gary Foster
28 10:00 WORSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL	29	30 David Kaemingh	31 Alyssa Hettinga Dan Hettinga			