Serving Canada & Beyond
CVM Canada Director’s Office

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble and be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

- Joshua 1:9

What a big change two months can bring. In March, I was happy to report about all the January and February events that I was part of. I returned home from finishing all those events and a visit to Stephen’s parents on February 27th and the next day the first COVID-19 case was announced on a WestJet flight.

I’m so thankful that we were able to complete all 11 Real Life Real Impact events before closures and cancellations started being our new way of life. Jacob and I had plans to go with Stephen to a conference at Silverstar ski resort in Kelowna, BC and the conference and our trip was cancelled the day before we were to leave. At the time there were only a few cases of COVID-19 and it seemed like it would still have been safe enough to travel, but within 3 days, schools in Ontario were closed, the ski resort was closing and we would have been scrambling to change return flights. Again, I’m thankful that God’s hand was on the timing.

So now the new normal is work at home, study at home, outside for walks, check in on friends and relatives. So far, I’ve only had one planned conference that has been cancelled. The next upcoming one is not for a few months, so we are waiting to hear about that one. All the veterinary and technician students have had their classes and rotations cancelled and are switching to online classes and rotations. Our short-term missions trips have certainly been severely impacted. Almost all the trips from the beginning of March have been cancelled and for the future ones, we are just watching the situation for each one. In Canada, we have had trips to the Middle East, India, Bolivia,
and Mexico affected. This is hard on the team members who have worked so hard planning and preparing for the trip. CVM also has 36 long term workers spread around the world. Some of them chose to stay where they were and others have returned home; some were forced by the situation to do one thing or the other which wasn’t necessarily their first choice.

How are you doing during this time of “physical distancing”? I prefer that term to “social distancing” because we still need to love and care for each other. CVM has started two series of webinars to connect students and vets for Bible studies, discussion and encouragement. Now since everyone is working at home, remote CVM staff like me are also meeting for staff meetings and devotional times. Even though most churches are going online – I’ve heard of lots of phone calls, emails, drop-offs of care packages happening. Even Youth at our church was live on Instagram.

2 Timothy 1:7 “For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and love and a sound mind.” NKJV This verse keeps coming to mind these days.

Many are fearful about what lies ahead; we see that in people hoarding food and toilet paper. We certainly need to respect this virus, but we can have peace when we trust in God. I’ve read of an Italian pastor reading the Bible in the ER as long as he could before he died, but it was long enough to bring hope to the ER doctors that were working for him. We can trust in God throughout this time. This is a time to show the love of Christ to others – taking care of our family, checking on neighbours and the elderly, caring for others by staying home. May we be of sound minds and always be thoughtful of our interactions and protect ourselves and others.

I would love to hear from you about how you are doing in these times. What has changed for you? Let me know if there is any way that I can encourage you or help you.

Debbie

Praise notes

- I’m so thankful that we were able to complete all 11 Real Life Real Impact events and some large early year conferences before the cancellations started.
- I’m thankful that we have the technology to stay connected as CVM staff and can create Webinars and connect with students and others during this time.

Prayer Requests

- Please pray for the students who have been affected by early school closures and rotation cancellations and who will be working at figuring out what their summer is going to be like.
- Please pray for CVM staff as they navigate this time, especially the short-term office dealing with many cancelled trips and uncertainty about others. The CVM long term workers also had to decide about staying where they were or returning home. Sometimes the travel situation determined their choice.
- Let’s also pray for the doctors, nurses, firemen, EMS that are on the front lines fighting this virus. Pray for their health and safety and that they receive the medical supplies they need.

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