

New Horizon News

New Horizon URC mission is a grown daughter congregation of Cornerstone URC, London, ON
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March 2021 (Still waiting for the Covid Curve)

What's happening in the church?

Greetings in the Lord Jesus. There is much to say, so let's get started. We are thankful to the Lord that we have held together well as a congregation in spite of our limited resources and personnel. No family has disappeared from the church's radar. In fact, the opposite is true: We have seen a good bit of interest in the church (and in the Lord) and will likely end up larger than at the beginning of the Covid saga.

We have not struggled with the divisions that some have faced: To mask or not to mask. Brothers and sisters seem to be quite gracious to each other. Our bigger struggle is the young kids who are not able to see each other and are always asking: "Where is David," and "Where is Theodore?" When they are able to see each other, it is hard to keep them apart.

We are presently having 3 worship services. Only 10 are allowed in worship. The first service is repeated. Our members are able to be in at least one service per Sunday and for the other they join online.

Toronto has likely had, and still has, one of the strictest lockdowns and stay-at-home orders for URC's. The stay-at-home order was finally lifted this week, though there are many restrictions yet – including the number of visitors allowed. The stay-at-home order violated my Christian duty.

The government lockdowns have not been without difficulties. We've had two talks of suicide and one about divorce. The young people have been frustrated. Three graduated university, but no graduation. Some have no classes in person. (Our older girl is studying music and singing from her bedroom instead of an auditorium.)



And some of the younger ones have not been able to go to school and don't understand why.

But yet, the Lord has been merciful to us.

We've had many sermons downloaded online. We've had quite a few joining us online for worship, and we can say there have been more people worshipping now than before.

We are looking at a new semi-Filipino family hoping to join us in membership. They have worshipped with us for months online and live a few minutes from the church building. They come from a Roman Catholic/Pentecostal type background. I say "semi-Filipino" family because both husband and wife are mixed. They have Spanish, Chinese, Filipino, and white mix. They fit right in! They have 3 beautiful young girls, 5, 3, and 10 months.

We have a family from Ghana who is interested in joining us now as well.

Pastor Brian Zegers, who worships with us, is working with a Christian family from Pakistan (He works with Muslims, so he understands their culture well) and they have interest as well.

There is a young Canadian man (that means he is white) whom I've been evangelizing for several months, using Skype. His opposition to God and creation has subsided. Please pray he will take the next step forward and grab hold of the Gospel promises.

A Sri Lanka professional man is interested in learning more of the Gospel after joining us online for a few months. He has asked to meet to talk about the Scriptures.

A Chinese woman, from Singapore, I believe, has been attending for almost 1 year. She lives next door to the church building. We will be talking to her about

membership soon. Katrina was excited when we asked her if she wanted to come to church. Now she loves being in worship more than politicians love the new power they gave themselves.

We are now working with a Reformed lady who lives and works in Saudi Arabia. She will be using our “Ten Reformed Doctrines Simply Explained” (note the name drop) to lead a Bible study there in a foreign embassy. A lady named Sharon contacted me through our sermonaudio.com page and wants to know more of the Bible. This is a relatively new contact.

We don't know where all of these individuals and families will end up, but is sure creates a lot of interest and work among the people.

On Regular Members Report

Max Wang, one of our deacons, continues to recover from cancer. His brain surgery and chemotherapy treatment have cleared the cancer in the brain. They are now treating the cancer in the lungs (the source of the brain tumor) and are extremely optimistic about it.

Tim Heersink presently has to carry the major burdens of the diaconal work. Thankfully, others are pitching in to help, especially on Sundays. He is a blessing.

One of our members, Victor, has been a tremendous help as well. He has used a lot of hours to help walk a sister through some trying domestic issues. That is Victor's line of work.

Enoch Chow, our seminary student who has basically completed seminary at Westminster, Philadelphia, is considering his next steps. He is being encouraged to complete a PhD there and translate *Selectarum disputationum fasciculus* by Gisbertus Voetius, into English. (If you know what that means, tell me.) Pray for wisdom as he considers this or full-time ministry.

Jacob London, along with his family, are back at seminary at Mid-America. It seems Jacob will complete his training in the spring of next year, with a view to doing his candidacy examination in the Fall of 2022. Because of his credits from previous studies, he will only need to be there for 2 years. Jacob served with us for a month from December 2020 to January. During that time, they had their baby girl, Elizabeth, born and baptized. We need to raise some support for Jacob. If you would like to donate (No tax receipt. Legal reasons!) you can send an email transfer to: studentsupport_notaxreceipt@newhorizonchurch.ca (Underscore between support and no.) Their photo is on the front.

The Labors

It had been physically challenging to keep up with the number of hours doing the work here, but the Lord has been very gracious. In December, in order to get everyone to participate in the Lord's Supper, we had to have it six services in a row because of the numbers. We continue to meet weekly online for prayer meeting. On Sundays we've been examining the Old Testament signs, ceremonies, priests, etc. so we could get a more expansive view of the work of the Savior. We've also restarted the Catechism after completing our 18-month trip through the Belgic Confession.

Administration and Money Stuff

As we expected, with a number of unemployed, giving was down last year. Hopefully, things will improve this year. Thank you for your continued support.

Do continue to support our work in Scarborough, and send support to Cornerstone URC and designate it to New Horizon. We still need help!
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Sire-lings and Spouse

Our whole family was subject to a brief bout with Covid-19, but we won. I've done bigger bouts with cold. So it wasn't bad for us. We are all back to normal. We thank God for his healing. The only lasting complaint was my wife losing her sense of smell for a while and refusing to eat her aged Dutch cheese because “she didn't want to waste it if she couldn't taste it.” (But Bavink is better than cheese.) Shabeeda did pray we would get Covid, get over it, and get on with life. We thank God for our quick recovery. A member had a longer battle with it, though he has now recovered. Thankfully there were no hospital or doctor's visit for any! We do have one relative in the US who is still in the hospital after 2 months.

Joshua is still waiting to complete a required course to get his Emergency Management degree. They canceled it last year because of Covid. Joel completed his degree and is heading to law school in September. He desperately tried to stay in Toronto, I think because of his mother's cooking. But Osgoode law school, I hear, is good. (Now he has to find that rich uncle!) Karis is finishing her 2nd year of Music at University of Toronto. Annabelle is deciding where to go for University, even with limitations from not being able to do the SAT that homeschooled students normally do.

I must admit, that Covid, as much as it is despised, has been used by the Lord to increase and reinvigorate my own passion for what he sent me here to do. It is a delight to serve the Lord. Thanks for your support. Thanks for the letters and cards that come from time to time. They are very much appreciated. We enjoy reading them. Mitchell & Shabeeda Persaud in Scarborough.