

Mission News and Prayer Letter

Wonersh Church

Easter 2020

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I am surely with you to the very end of the age. **Matthew 28:19**

Viva and Mim Friday

Thank you for praying for us at this time. At the moment the UK is feeling the direct impact of Covid-19 much more acutely than Uganda in that we have just 52 positive cases.

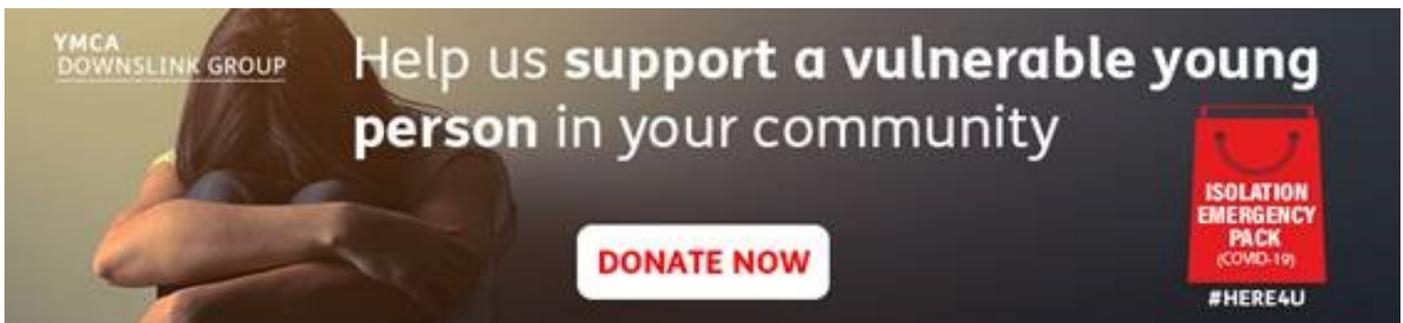
The President closed all the Borders within 24 hours of the first positive case being declared. The authorities are now trying to trace everyone who is in the country who travelled out of the country in March as they try to contain the virus. We pray that things really are under tight control, though testing per day is only in the hundreds.

The poor are suffering subsequent to a full lockdown with a night curfew and no movement of private vehicles with 30 minutes notice on Monday 30th March. Schools had closed the week before, and we had sent staff home before the weekend with some emergency food supplies. We are thankful to the Lord for giving us that thought.

The Government has started to distribute food to those who are unable to work and earn what they will eat that day.

Our network in Uganda, CRANE has been working tirelessly with the City Authorities to set up a place for the children on the street to be quarantined for 2 weeks and then helped to return home. They are in a desperate situation. This gathering will be attempted on 9th April after the first attempt was stopped by the Minister of State.

We also know that children with disabilities who need medication and are unable to get it are in a desperate situation. We heard of one tragic situation where a mother could not get a vehicle to get to the hospital. She carried her child to the hospital, but the child was dead on arrival.



YMCA Downslink

The YMCA has had over 60 members of staff (many of whom have returned to work now) and 35 young people in self isolation. This is being managed incredibly well by the staff, their response to this crisis is impressive - and is a testimony to their commitment and care. A myriad of small details have to be thought through with relation to how to maintain the level of service provision required to support the mental and physical well being of our young people and our staff. Many hours of planning and preparations have been put into ensure our services can be maintained.

At the moment we have had one Covid-19 case. It will be extremely hard to limit the spread of the virus in our supported housing and shared accommodation schemes, so please do pray that these homes stay virus free. Please pray for the morale of staff, that they will continue to work creatively and with sensitivity to the needs of our young people. Pray for our Dialogue counselling services which are as busy as ever, albeit being carried out virtually.

In the Brighton area particularly we have seen an increase in youth homelessness as young people who are sofa surfing or staying with grandparents have been asked to leave in order for the grandparents or families to lockdown. The YMCA is doing all we can to ensure that those young people are found safe accommodation.

For the young people who are self-isolating we are providing 'isolation packs' with food and basic necessities to keep them going. To support this we have launched a specific crisis appeal, which is the banner above. If you feel you would like to support this very immediate and practical appeal, please click on the banner to find out more. We know we will feel the financial impact of this crisis for years to come, therefore support is welcome.

Wonersh and Shamley Green School

The current situation is, of course, presenting unprecedented challenges for our school as we have had to move to online learning at very short notice. However, Tess and all the staff prepared both children and parents brilliantly for this extraordinary season and are doing an outstanding job of teaching and keeping in touch with our children remotely.

Earlier in the term we were delighted to appoint Mr Tim Cheesman as our new Headteacher from September, following a two-day selection process in which Tim (currently deputy head at Tillingbourne) demonstrated outstanding expertise and experience. We're looking forward to welcoming him in September.

Do give thanks for the wonderful staff at our school, and pray for stamina, energy and creativity in the weeks ahead. Please pray for our children too, many of whom are missing their friends and are disappointed about the cancellation of school events and trips that they were looking forward to. Pray that the disruption to their learning will be minimal, and especially for their mental and physical health and wellbeing during this time. Of course, we pray that it won't be too long before schools can reopen.

Charlotte R—WH

Charlotte and the WH team are all currently working from home. Charlotte is back with her Mum (Chris) and is involved in pastoral care for those who are still overseas, and also working on the big new initiative that WH plans to start next year. Many WH workers believed that the Lord wanted them to stay where they were living, so please pray for about 200 colleagues especially those in the Middle East, North Africa, West Africa and South Asia.

Pray these workers rise daily in the Lord's strength and bring Christ's love, peace and hope. This is a time of trauma and huge need, but we are already receiving stories of how it is interwoven with wonderful opportunities, signs and wonders and salvation!

Charlotte shares this thought provoking message in the box from a doctor known to WH.

"Social distancing is a privilege. It means you live in a house large enough to practise it. Hand washing is a privilege too. It means you have access to running water. Hand sanitisers are a privilege. It means you have money to buy them. Lockdowns are a privilege. It means you can afford to be at home. Most of the ways to ward the Corona off are accessible only to the affluent. In essence, a disease that was spread by the rich as they flew around the globe will now kill millions of the poor. All of us who are practising social distancing and have imposed a lockdown on ourselves must appreciate how privileged we are. ~~Many~~ ^{most} Indians won't be able to do any of this."

Tearfund

WE WON'T STOP UNTIL POVERTY STOPS.

As the coronavirus continues to spread, Tearfund is very concerned for all people living in poverty wherever they are in the world. The poor are the ones likely to be most vulnerable if the outbreak hits their communities.

In recent weeks they've faced some difficult decisions, including postponing or cancelling events and opportunities to share stories of Tearfund's work publicly. In spite of the virus reducing people's incomes in the UK, funding for their work was never more necessary. They are concerned about what happens if they receive fewer donations, and what effect this would have on people living in poverty.

They are doing all they can to make sure they can continue to follow Jesus where the need is greatest, bringing practical help and powerful hope to the most vulnerable people, just as they have done for over fifty years.

This is only possible thanks to the prayers and gifts of people like us. Our annual gift from church is being sent to Tearfund this week.



Emma and Viorel Tulpan

Sadly Covid-19 has hit the family recently. The father in law of Emma's niece died two weeks ago of the virus - the 6th case declared in Romania at that point.

He was a wonderful man and dedicated pastor in Arad (northwest). It was very sudden. Unfortunately this experience showed the state of the hospitals - they had not isolated him and it took 4 days to get the test, which came half an hour before he died. Then the family have the sadness of not being able to have a funeral, or even his close family attend as his wife and son were in isolation. Thank you all for praying. We hope we will not have any more news like this, and we all go through this in peace. God is gracious. Please pray for my nephew in Dublin as he finds it extremely hard to come to terms with his father's death, they were really close.

We had been planning a family reunion this summer to celebrate Emma's mother's 80th birthday, but that now is out of the question. We continue to stay here at home, Viorel keeps in touch with the church and youth group via phone, the boys do schoolwork on Zoom.

Members of the Mission Committee are: Caroline Stearman, Alex Vinall, Keith Bateson, Liz Tilley, Jane Boswell and Nick Bamber. Please do get in touch if you want to find out more about our Mission Partners or Giving.