



April 2020 News

Jesus in the Boat!

In This Issue:

* Ministry News:

- Featured Articlepg.2
- Top Stories pg.2

* Features:

- Article - Jesus in the Boat..... pg.1
- Item - Prayer Points pg.2
- Article - On a personal note pg.2
- Article - Board Member pg.2

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Look for us:



“Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along, ... in the boat.” Mark 4:36a NIV

There has been a global event in our world since our last newsletter. Our habits have changed. Our work has changed. Our children’s education has changed. Life, as we know it, has been altered. Even our language has expanded to embrace new words and new ideas: Social distancing, flatten the curve, home quarantine. Ventilators.

Our order is disrupted. Our systems are upended. There is a storm raging, and fear lies in wait to captivate our hearts and minds. As I am writing this the numbers of those infected are growing daily.

Beloved, we must remember that Jesus is with us, here in the boat. He can calm the raging storm sweeping the globe. He can vanquish the fear attempting to take over our lives. Remember above all, He is with us. He has not left us adrift in this raging sea. We are with Him and He is with us. And, in Him, we are safe.

I have been thinking about times in the past where I felt frightened and vulnerable. One clear memory was about a year into the Iraq war. Josiah was attending school in Chiang Mai. Although the students were from all over the world, over 50 percent were from the United States. One evening we heard from our guards (former Thai military) that a car filled with

Middle Eastern men had driven back and forth in front of the school. Then one man got out of the vehicle and approached the guards asking them what percentage of the students were Americans?

Oh!! My mother’s heart was cold with fear, and nothing, NOTHING in me wanted to send Josiah back to that school the next day. I wept and cried and felt so far away from home. In that night of stormy fear, God’s peace did come. Jesus was there in the boat. He was with our children, our teachers, our school guards. We later learned that those men were caught by police that very evening; they proved to be no threat to us...at all!

Beloved. We need to draw near to Jesus and cry out to God with all that is in us on behalf of our world: our families, our friends, our communities, our doctors and health care workers, our churches. Our leaders. All of them.

Finally, let us draw near to God in full assurance of faith, knowing that as we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. Jesus. You are in the Boat!



WRITTEN BY,
DEBBIE ECKER

Take Courage! ..



WRITTEN BY,
DAN ECKER

Many of our overseas co-workers are facing very much the same challenges with the coronavirus as we are and in some cases, maybe even more so. I was encouraged to talk with and to pray with several of them from Myanmar, and Thailand.

Through this most challenging time we need to be ready for Jesus to walk up to our boat and hear Him say "It is I, do not be afraid." (See John 6:20) Once they had let Jesus into their boat, then immediately they were at the land which they were going. (v.21)

Beloved, we will get through this! Stay calm .. Do not fear .. Keep faith!

On A Personal Note ...



WRITTEN BY,
DEBBIE ECKER

Beloved. I want to tell you that Dan and I did not check with each other when we wrote our articles for this newsletter, and yet, both of us came up with the idea of Jesus getting into the boat with us. I can only think this is a word from the Lord for all of us. Josiah is still in Seattle, working from home, and safe. My mother happily video chats with me and makes me laugh, just like always. Our families and friends are isolated... but joined. Joined in a bond of love. We love you. He loves you even more. Fear Not!

On Earth As It Is In Heaven!



WRITTEN BY,
ELLIE GEPPERT

"On earth as in heaven" is a phrase taken from the Bible (Matthew 6:10). Recently, I watched the movie "It's a Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood" about Mr. Rogers. The movie depicts a very humble life given to reaching others into the Kingdom of God. The key in this movie was the son forgiving his father on earth and becoming free in the forgiveness of his Heavenly Father. It was Fred Rogers who orchestrated the path to forgiveness for the young man. We too can be as free on earth as it is in heaven. We too can give and receive forgiveness and freedom. This is how we have heaven on earth. Fred Rogers prayed by name for people everyday in his routine of prayer and bible reading and he was personal and cared about the people he met daily. This opened the doors to a beautiful neighborhood and a heavenly life on earth. The link is that of missionary life. Jesus was sent and said "so send I you". Do the work of the Lord and live a heavenly life. Dan and Debbie and Firstlight International examples of living this life. Let Dan and Debbie know how God is bringing heaven to earth through you.

Bringing Christ To The Fatherless!



Every month through the year children and families like these are being reached through Families Without Fathers (FWF) in four locations in selected areas of Thailand. Please keep up the good work that you are doing that helps to make all of this possible. Each interaction brings Christ into each of these fatherless homes.

Breakthrough Prayer Points

"God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble." Ps. 46:1 NAS

Do Not Be Afraid!

1. For the coronavirus to cease!
*divine containment, *divine projection, *minimal loss of life, *supplies needed in selected areas
2. Families Without Fathers (FWF) project plans for the first part of 2020. *finalizing budgets & costs, total number of children/families to be reached this year.
3. For all of Firstlight to be strategically positioned in 2020
*clear direction, *confirmed steps
4. For the Lord's abundant provision, open doors, and lasting fruit in the first quarter of 2020.