



Northwest *FOCUS*

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

APRIL 2020



How Does COVID-19 Affect NICE?

"We have more than a dozen of our members who have tested positive for the coronavirus, and our Pastor is quarantined," stated a friend of NICE in an Email just received. This is the reality of the current pandemic affecting our country as most of the churches served by NICE have cancelled services indefinitely! So what's our response? Here are excerpts of a letter sent by our Executive Director, Bob Rodgers, seeking to provide valuable encouragement and help:

Dear NICE Family,

Our prayers are with each of you in these extremely difficult days throughout our nation. In a society where panic, anxiety, and fears abound because of coronavirus, as believers, this is a great time to show the love and trust in God, and concern for those around us. What a blessed opportunity to be ambassadors of truth and share a message of peace based on a firm confidence that nothing catches God by surprise!

Some of you have asked advice on how to handle church services, Bible studies and other activities in light of the restrictions established by our authorities. Do remember that the "church" is not a building, it is people! Hebrews 10:25 urges us "to not forsake our assembling together," but during this critical hour that "assembly" can take on a different look. Here are some ideas:

- 1) If equipped to do so, **live stream** a message, prayer, scripture reading and even singing through Facebook.
- 2) Use a Facebook **Video Chat**, or other technological means for mid-week Bible studies.
- 3) **Reach out** in a limited way to your community. One church lady made their own Facebook group for her street to be in touch with each other with needs they were aware

of: babysitting, groceries needed, etc. Taking a survey in your community could provide opportunities to minister. Are there ways you can help those out of work to show the love of Christ?

- 4) **Email** helpful insights from various resources that can be uplifting, encouraging and exhorting for the believer's life.
- 5) Suggest some **biographical reading** of the lives of people who dealt with difficulties and challenges and how they handled them.
- 6) Send out **prayer requests** and **set a time** for the whole church to pray at their own homes. Eg. "Tuesday night at 7:00pm we'll all join to pray through the list provided, in our own homes."
- 7) Make sure the **needs of the elderly** in your church are taken care of: buying groceries, rides to appointments, picking up medications, etc.

One last thought from our IFCA International Executive Director, Richard Bargas: "As Christians, we need to proceed with faith in our Lord and prayer on our lips. We should lift up our communities and nation before the Lord in concerted prayer on behalf of those that are sick, those grieving deaths, and those who are panicked at the prospect of the unknown (1 Tim 2:1-2). Our hope is in Christ, so pray that the Church of Jesus Christ will see this situation as an opportunity to demonstrate the love of Christ to those who have no hope and are living in panic and fear."

His servant for eternity, **Bob Rodgers**
NICE Executive Director



So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7