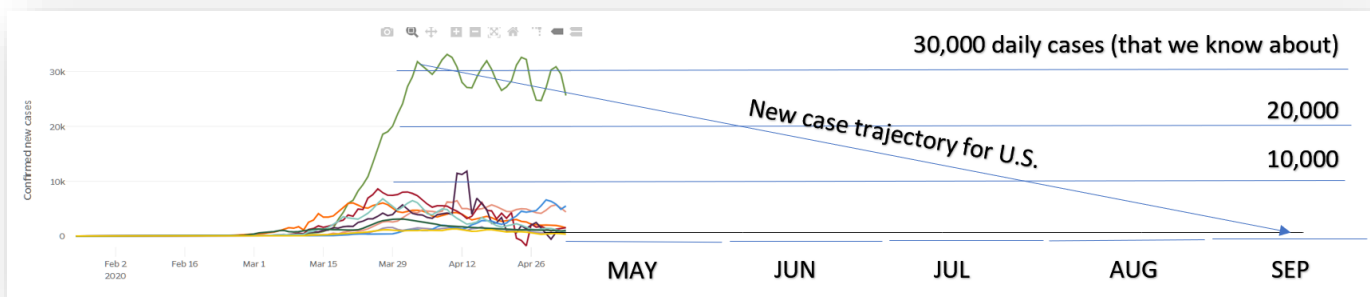


Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

May 5, 2020

Well, here we are, past Derby Day (that may not be important to you, but it is forever engraved on the minds of those who have lived very long in Louisville) and on our way to Mothers' Day. We're having a small dose of "Dogwood Winter" and a very large dose of COVID-19.

As you probably do, I check the trends on the Johns Hopkins dashboard from time to time, and after today's look, I had the idea to construct the timeline you see here. That's perhaps how things look if nothing changes for the worse . . . which at the moment doesn't seem very likely. And who knows what that means for our face-to-face life as a congregation? I certainly don't know.



One of the aspects of this unwelcome and unbidden journey that may not be getting enough attention is the dimension of life we commonly call "grief." There's a lot of grief going around:

- We grieve not being able to see one another.
- We grieve the isolation and loneliness that is forced upon us.
- We grieve having to think about life and death issues . . . all the time.
- We grieve for lost jobs.
- We grieve for unemployment checks and stimulus checks that haven't come yet.
- We grieve for lost businesses.
- We grieve for those who have lost loved ones due to this pandemic.
- We grieve that we cannot honor their lives in the normal ways we need to do this.
- We grieve for those who must go to work and who are terrified to do so.
- We grieve that every cough or snuffle has become an existential threat.
- We grieve for those who experience hospitalization and we cannot visit them.
- We grieve for those who celebrate new marriages and new births and we cannot join their celebrations.
- We grieve for the divisions and hatred that permeate our nation.
- We grieve that life is not likely to be "normal" again anytime soon.
- We grieve that life is going to have a "new normal" that is not going to be much fun.

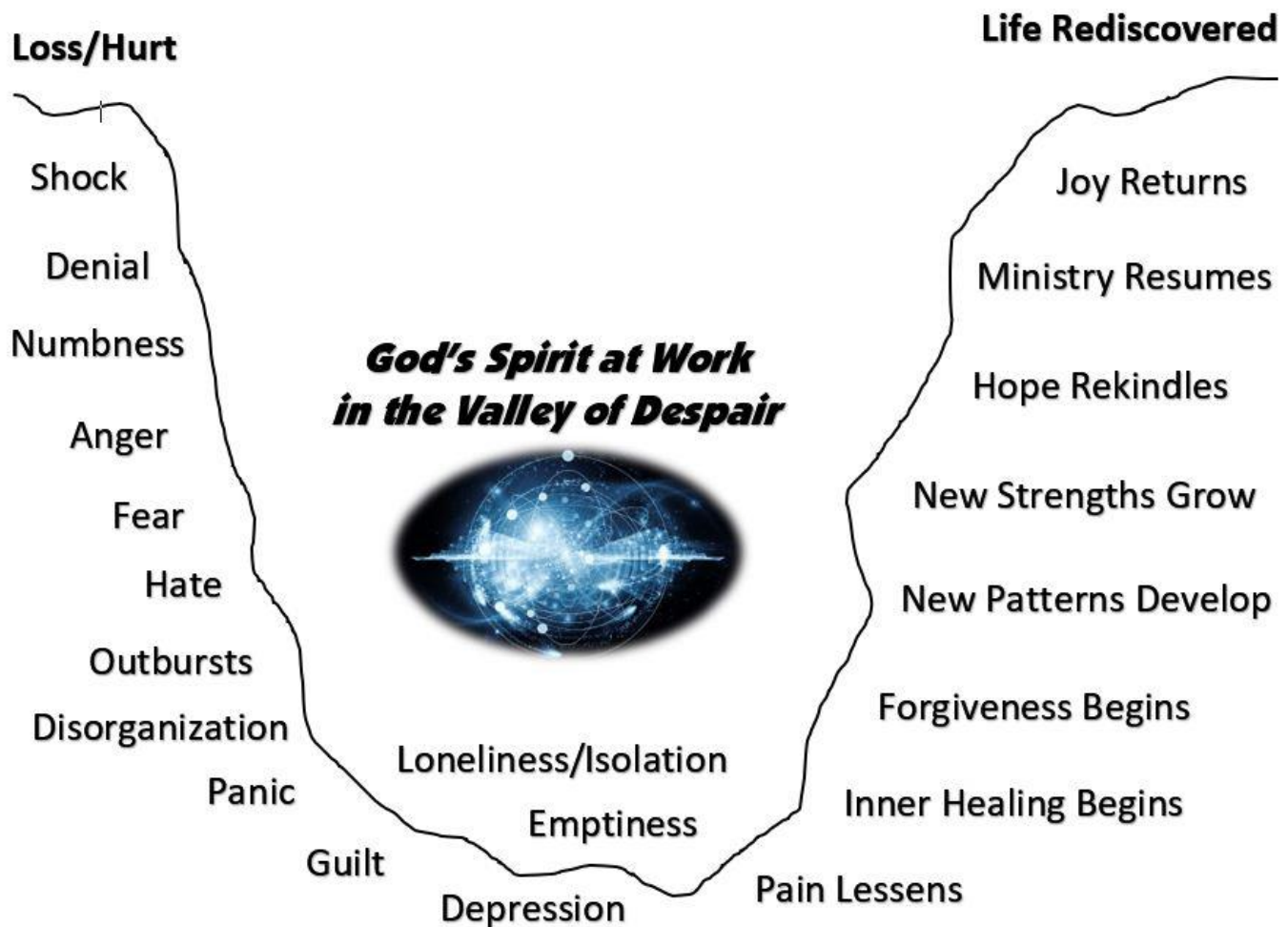
And the list could go on and on.

CBF: transforming Oakland Mills into a community others wish to replicate.

Archived Laptops are available at http://www.dcstancil.com/daves_laptop

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I've included another chart below that illustrates the journey of our grieving. I can't remember whether this came from someone else or I did it. I've used it for a very long time. And I'd like to use everything in this *Laptop* thus far as an encouragement to prayer.



Someone wiser than I once said that "There may be more we can do AFTER we have prayed, but there is nothing more important to do UNTIL we have prayed." And I imagine that you've been busy praying through this journey, as have I.

In the hope that it may be helpful to have some suggestions about how to pray, here's a list that I offered to you during Holy Week. And attached to this Laptop is another such list that came to my Inbox from *Christianity Today*.

Pray on, my friends. Pray on.

Dave



1. Pray for the physicians, nurses, and staff in our congregation.
2. Pray for the physicians, nurses, and staff in our hospital.
3. Pray for the physicians, nurses, and staff in ALL hospitals.
4. Pray for the military reservists who have been activated for this crisis.
5. Pray for our Village leaders and County Executive.
6. Pray for our Governor . . . for all Governors and Mayors.
7. Pray for the leaders of the CDC and other Federal agencies.
8. Pray for our President and for the Congress.
9. Pray for your family, both near and far.
10. Pray for those who are producing ventilators and masks.
11. Pray for those who are trying to create a vaccine.
12. Pray for those who are testing positive today.
13. Pray for those who have already been bereaved.
14. Pray for those who will be bereaved today.
15. Pray for those who are in ICUs today.
16. Pray for overwhelmed funeral directors.
17. Pray for our Church Staff and Church Leaders.
18. Pray for other CBFers both near and far.
19. Pray that God will teach us new things about God's Faithfulness.
20. Pray for opportunities to tell others about your Faith.
21. Pray for CBFers recently bereaved.
22. Pray for CBFers in the hospital.
23. Pray for CBFers who are lonely and isolated.
24. Pray for persons who have lost their employment, and for their families.
25. Pray for persons who are trapped at home in abusive relationships.
26. Pray for parents who are trapped at home with their children.
27. Pray for children who are trapped at home with their parents.
28. Pray for farms that have lost most of the workers needed for harvest.
29. Pray for the drivers that are bringing essential things to us.
30. Pray for the workers who are operating essential businesses.

May 4, 2020

The following article is located at: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/march-web-only/covid-19-coronavirus-20-prayers-to-pray-during-pandemic.html>

Christianity Today, March, 2020

PRAYER

20 Prayers to Pray During This Pandemic

As COVID-19 sends the globe into crisis, it also sends us to our knees.

JEN POLLOCK MICHEL / POSTED MARCH 18, 2020



Image: Illustration by Rick Szuecs / Source images: Diana Simumpande / Unsplash / The New York Public Library

In recent days, as COVID-19 has been declared a global pandemic and countries have taken urgent measures to stem the spread of infection, I wish I could say that my first impulse has been to pray. It's probably more honest to say that I've obsessively refreshed my feeds.

The crisis is urgent, and I feel powerless. But perhaps feeling small is the best reminder to pray. Prayer is how we actively practice believing, so simply, so confidently, that God has the whole world in his hands. It's where we "let petitions and praises shape our worries into prayers, letting God know our concerns" (Phil. 4:6–7, *The Message*). Prayer is never the last resort of God's people. It is our first point of action.

With that in mind, I've put together a list of 20 prayers to pray during this pandemic. Each one addresses the specific needs of a specific community. I'm fortunate to be a part of a church with many medical professionals, some of whom gave me advice on how best to pray for them at this time. I've included their responses here. I've also tried to think broadly about how the rest of us are impacted by the current crisis.

This list isn't comprehensive, of course, but it's a good place to start. My hope is that it can provide words for us as we pray collectively (if also virtually!) as a church body. We believe there is a God who bends his ear to

listen, and so we pray:

1. For the sick and infected: God, heal and help. Sustain bodies and spirits. Contain the spread of infection.
2. For our vulnerable populations: God, protect our elderly and those suffering from chronic disease. Provide for the poor, especially the uninsured.
3. For the young and the strong: God, give them the necessary caution to keep them from unwittingly spreading this disease. Inspire them to help.
4. For our local, state, and federal governments: God, help our elected officials as they allocate the necessary resources for combatting this pandemic. Help them to provide more tests.
5. For our scientific community, leading the charge to understand the disease and communicate its gravity: God, give them knowledge, wisdom, and a persuasive voice.
6. For the media, committed to providing up-to-date information: God, help them to communicate with appropriate seriousness without causing panic.
7. For consumers of media, looking to be well-informed: God, help us find the most helpful local information to equip us to be good neighbors. Keep us from anxiety and panic, and enable us to implement the recommended strategies, even at a cost to ourselves.
8. For those with mental health challenges who feel isolated, anxious, and helpless: God, provide them every necessary support.
9. For the homeless, unable to practice the protocols of social distancing in the shelter system: Protect them from disease, and provide isolation shelters in every city.
10. For international travelers stuck in foreign countries: God, help them return home safely and quickly.
11. For Christian missionaries throughout the world, especially in areas with high rates of infection: God, provide them with words of hope, and equip them to love and serve those around them.
12. For workers in a variety of industries facing layoffs and financial hardship: God, keep them from panic, and inspire your church to generously support them.
13. For families with young children at home for the foreseeable future: God, help mothers and fathers to partner together creatively for the care and flourishing of their children. For single mothers and fathers, grow their networks of support.
14. For parents who cannot stay home from work but must find care for their children: God, present them with creative solutions.

15. For those in need of regular therapies and treatments that must now be postponed: God, help them to stay patient and positive.

16. For business leaders making difficult decisions that affect the lives of their employees: God, give these women and men wisdom, and help them to lead self-sacrificially.

17. For pastors and church leaders faced with the challenges of social distancing: God, help them to creatively imagine how to pastor their congregants and love their cities well.

18. For college and university students, whose courses of study are changing, whose placements are canceled, whose graduation is uncertain: God, show them that while life is uncertain, their trust is in you.

19. For Christians in every neighborhood, community, and city: May your Holy Spirit inspire us to pray, to give, to love, to serve, and to proclaim the gospel, that the name of Jesus Christ might be glorified around the world.

20. For frontline health care workers, we thank you for their vocational call to serve us. We also pray:

- God, keep them safe and healthy. Keep their families safe and healthy.
- God, help them to be knowledgeable about the diagnosis and treatment of this disease, as well as the changing protocols.
- God, help them to stay clear-minded in the midst of the surrounding panic.
- God, deliver them from anxiety for their own loved ones (aging parents, children, spouses, roommates).
- God, give them compassion for every patient in their care.
- God, provide for them financially, especially if they fall ill and are unable to work.
- God, help Christians in health care to exhibit extraordinary peace, so that many would ask about the reason for their hope. Give them opportunities to proclaim the gospel.

God, we trust that you are good and do good. Teach us to be your faithful people in this time of global crisis. Help us to follow in the footsteps of our faithful shepherd, Jesus, who laid down his life for the sake of love. Glorify his name as you equip us with everything needed for doing your will. Amen.

Jen Pollock Michel is the author of [Teach Us to Want](#), [Keeping Place](#), and [Surprised by Paradox](#). She lives with her husband and their five children in Toronto. This piece was adapted from her recent [blog](#).

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A second set of [20 More Prayers for the Pandemic's Peak](#) is also available in [Spanish](#), [Portuguese](#), [Korean](#), Chinese ([Simplified](#) and [Traditional](#)), and [Indonesian](#).

For translations of other select CT coronavirus articles, [click here](#) and look for the yellow links.
