



"Your people will rebuild what has long been in ruins, building again on the old foundations. You will be known as the people who rebuilt the walls, who restored the ruined houses." - Isaiah 58:12

Will Anything Ever be the Same Again?

I hope not! I hope we never again take for granted our health, our freedom, our ability to live in community, and the wonderful opportunities we have to be salt and light! During this time when most Americans are celebrating the birth of Jesus, I wonder if we know how to read between the lines. By that I mean, camp out a little by the hard and difficult places and events that surrounded the Savior's entrance into this world. We love to talk about stars in the sky, angels singing and announcing his birth, and wisemen bringing gifts. (Which most people have discovered came much later!) He was not born into a free Israel. They were oppressed under Roman rule. Babies were slaughtered by Herod in an attempt to destroy this awaited Messiah. Joseph and Mary and the child spent time fleeing and hiding. Life was not easy for the people of God. As a matter of fact, life was never easy for God's people from the beginning of time. Regardless of how far back you go, God's people, though favored and blessed by God, were rarely without hardships. We can start with righteous Abel who was killed by his brother and on and on the stories of persecution and pain continue and will continue until Messiah's return.

C.O.V.I.D.

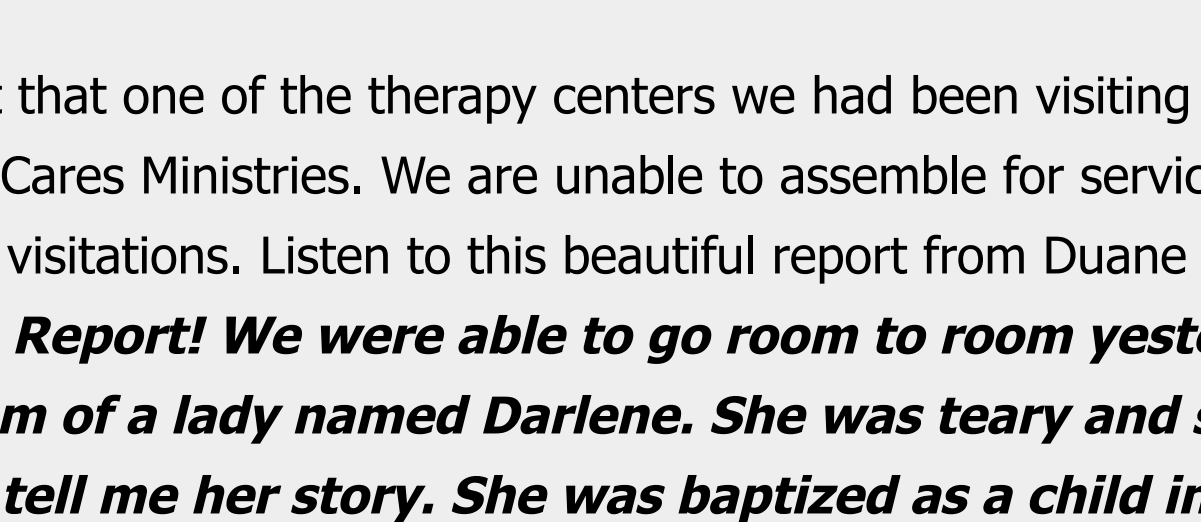
(Crying Out Victoriously In Distress)

"Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have freed me when I was hemmed in and relieved me when I was in distress; Be gracious to me and hear (and respond to) my prayer" - Psalm 4:1(Amp)

No matter what is happening with our current state of affairs or global catastrophes, can we remember who is enthroned in the heavens? This is not to minimize the pain, loss, and distress that many have experienced in this season. The reality is that many are suffering in many different ways during this global crisis. To deny that is just not very smart or compassionate, but can we remember that He hears our cries? Can we remember the saints of old that suffered with wars, and famines, and vicious world powers and trust that we, too, can obtain the grace we need to match the darkness?

This is why I love the story of Hanukkah! The darkness that enveloped the people of God during that season came in the form of the cruel and dominant ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (God Manifest). Though the battle raged for several years, the people of God triumphed! In our fast food culture we have become accustomed to instant everything. Victories take time. Strong muscles and fierce competitors don't grow up overnight. Many times our strength is being tested over time. Instant muscles are not a reality and neither is instant victory! Thankfully, as the people of God, we can cry out victoriously no matter what kind of distress we are facing. We come from a place of victory because we know who is standing at the right hand of the Father; above all powers and principalities. (Ephesians 1:20-22)

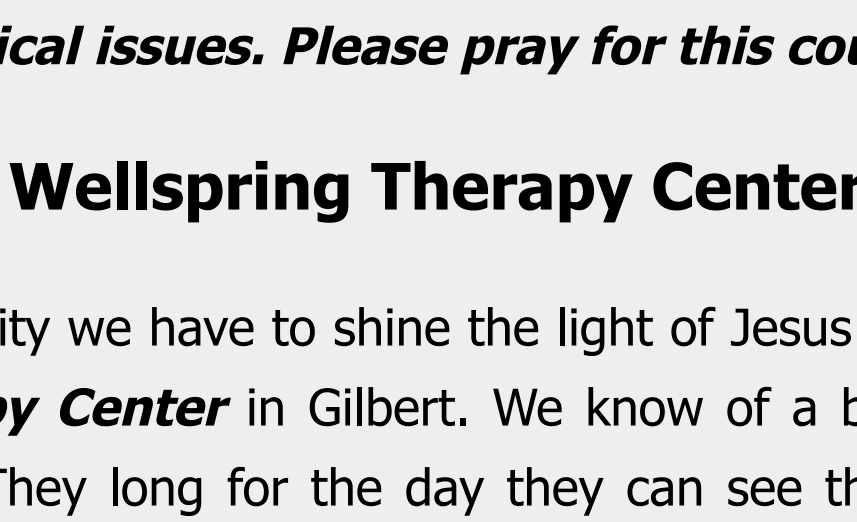
We are grateful that every season brings new opportunities. Hardship and distress can turn into testimonies of His faithfulness in spite of the faithlessness we see so widespread. We would love to share the opportunities that we have had to experience victory over the darkness and triumph over tragedy this past year!



Duane at "The Center"

Light Shines Again for The Center

We are so thrilled to report that one of the therapy centers we had been visiting weekly before C.O.V.I.D. hit has reopened their doors for Jesus Cares Ministries. We are unable to assemble for services but Tom and Duane suit up and mask up for room to room visitations. Listen to this beautiful report from Duane regarding his recent visit with a patient of *The Center*: **"Praise Report! We were able to go room to room yesterday to share and pray with residents. I went into a room of a lady named Darlene. She was teary and said she was waiting for me. I went in and she began to tell me her story. She was baptized as a child in the Lutheran Church and was not sure of her salvation. She said she lived a rough and sinful life and prayed for forgiveness of her sins throughout her life but never receive assurance of being forgiven. This past week, she actually was dying and felt her soul leave her body and she said she felt there was something wrong because it was dark and it was terrifying and getting worse as she was slipping away. She said she fought it off and begged to come back and was given mercy to come back to her body. So I read her Psalm 139 to her to reassure that God loved her and asked her if she wanted to make Jesus Lord of her life and she said yes. I asked her if she was believing with all her heart and she said yes. So she repeated after me a prayer for salvation and lordship from and of Jesus. I kid you not, after she was done praying with me, her whole countenance changed from anguish to joy. She said her heart was beating rapidly in excitement after the prayer. I gave her an "Our Daily Bread" and a bible and as I left her room, she said God sent me to her room for this very moment and thanked me for coming. About an hour later I passed her room and she was reading "Our Daily Bread". God is good! He had already prepared her heart for this moment. He reaffirmed to me yesterday that He will do everything He can to reach the lost!**



Gifts for the Residence

Continue to pray for this open door to continue and for the light of His glorious gospel to reach the lost. We also pray for encouragement for those saints currently in The Center at Val Vista who are unable to see spouses or clergy. Listen to this difficult report:

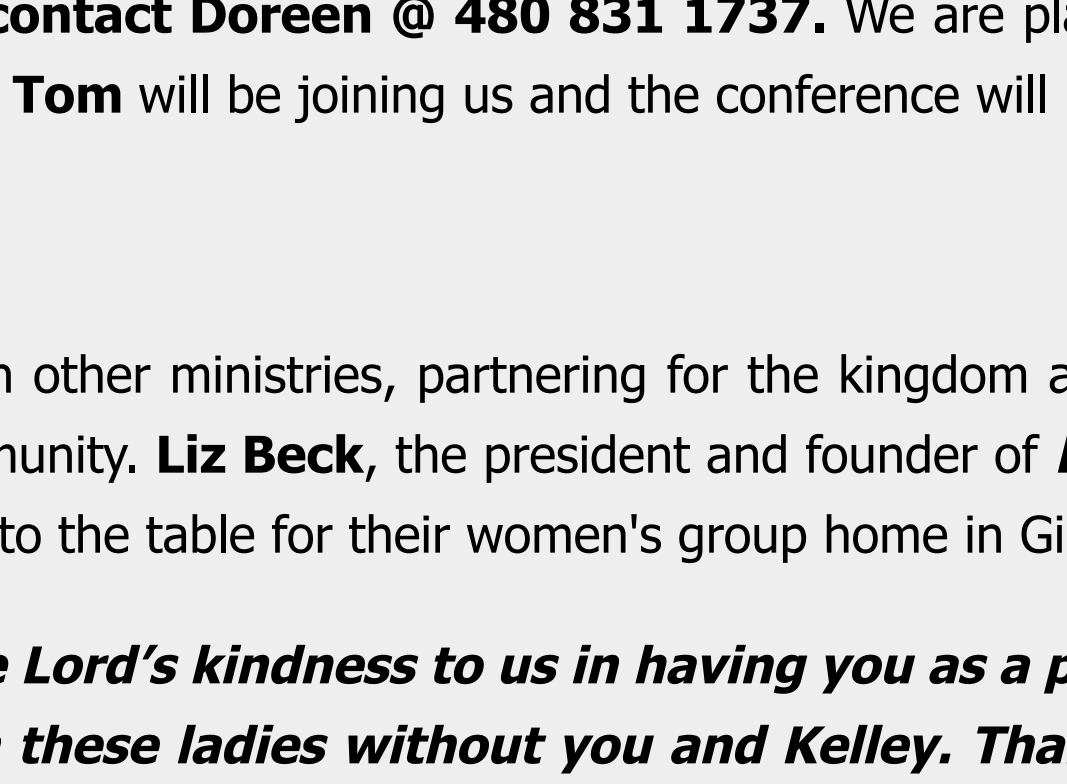
"Sue is a believer and she and her husband attend a local church. Her husband Ken, has been diagnosed with cancer. So Psalm 139 was that passage of the day for comfort about her situation and her husband's situation. She is frustrated after 40 years of marriage that they cannot see each other while they are going through physical issues. Please pray for this couple."

Wellspring Therapy Center

We are grateful for every opportunity we have to shine the light of Jesus. **Jackie** and **Jeff** continue to send gifts into the rehab at **Wellspring Therapy Center** in Gilbert. We know of a believer who is there right now, yet we cannot come in to offer consolation. They long for the day they can see the residents face to face. They may be joining **Duane** at **The Center** to help spread the light!

Another Open Door: Midwest Food Bank

While many are experiencing closed doors, the ministry is privileged to announce another new opportunity to reach others during this difficult season. **Midwest Food Bank** is an amazing supply house of provisions for the community. We were approved recently to receive from this outpouring. **Traci** and her daughter, **Sheyenne**, and several others minister at various locations in the community. Their focus is the very poor and homeless. Recently they brought a food box to a woman who confessed to prostituting for extra income. Their hope is to bring more than food to these desperate hearts. **Traci** and **Sheyenne**, are an amazing mother and daughter team who truly care about the poor and broken and are having a wonderful opportunity to speak into the lives of many through this food outreach. Literally hundreds are being reached. Thank you to these two for being such a beautiful extension of God's love, reaching out in places that many do not want to tread. Thank you to **Midwest Food Bank** and all of the wonderful folks that make this mission happen!



TRACI DOREEN AND SHEYENNE

Training and Equipping for Service Opportunities

Trauma training and equipping...

It was interesting that we started out January 2020 with an opportunity for others to learn about trauma and how to walk alongside of the vulnerable! God is faithful to go before us. Several ladies benefited from this series and reflecting back, we can see the preparation that God was doing for the upcoming season. Also in January, over a dozen ladies assembled at the ministry in late January for an **E.Q.U.I.P. Conference** led by **Doreen** and **Suzanne** from **Bridgeway Community Church**. Again, it could not be more timely! Equipping others to be faithful leaders of integrity could not be more important in this hour. We had a fantastic time of learning together and sharing insights into God's purposes for our gifts and callings. **If you are interested in joining us this year for another E.Q.U.I.P. Conference please contact Doreen @ 480 831 1737.** We are planning for the first quarter of 2021. Exact dates still to be determined. **Tom** will be joining us and the conference will be open to men and women.

Networking...

We also continue to join with other ministries, partnering for the kingdom and offering a full range of services, support, and referrals to the community. **Liz Beck**, the president and founder of **Hope for Addiction** had this to say regarding the teamwork we bring to the table for their women's group home in Gilbert:

"I am just so in awe of the Lord's kindness to us in having you as a part of Freedom House. We truly could not be as effective with these ladies without you and Kelley. Thank you for serving with us! You are a blessing!"

Men of integrity...

Tom was busy in the first part of this year investing in others through leadership training opportunities and classes with men. His heart is to raise up men of integrity. After watching this man of integrity over the years, in spite of my own failures and messes, I am blessed to have a faithful partner in this work as we co-labor in the Kingdom!

Step up training opportunities...

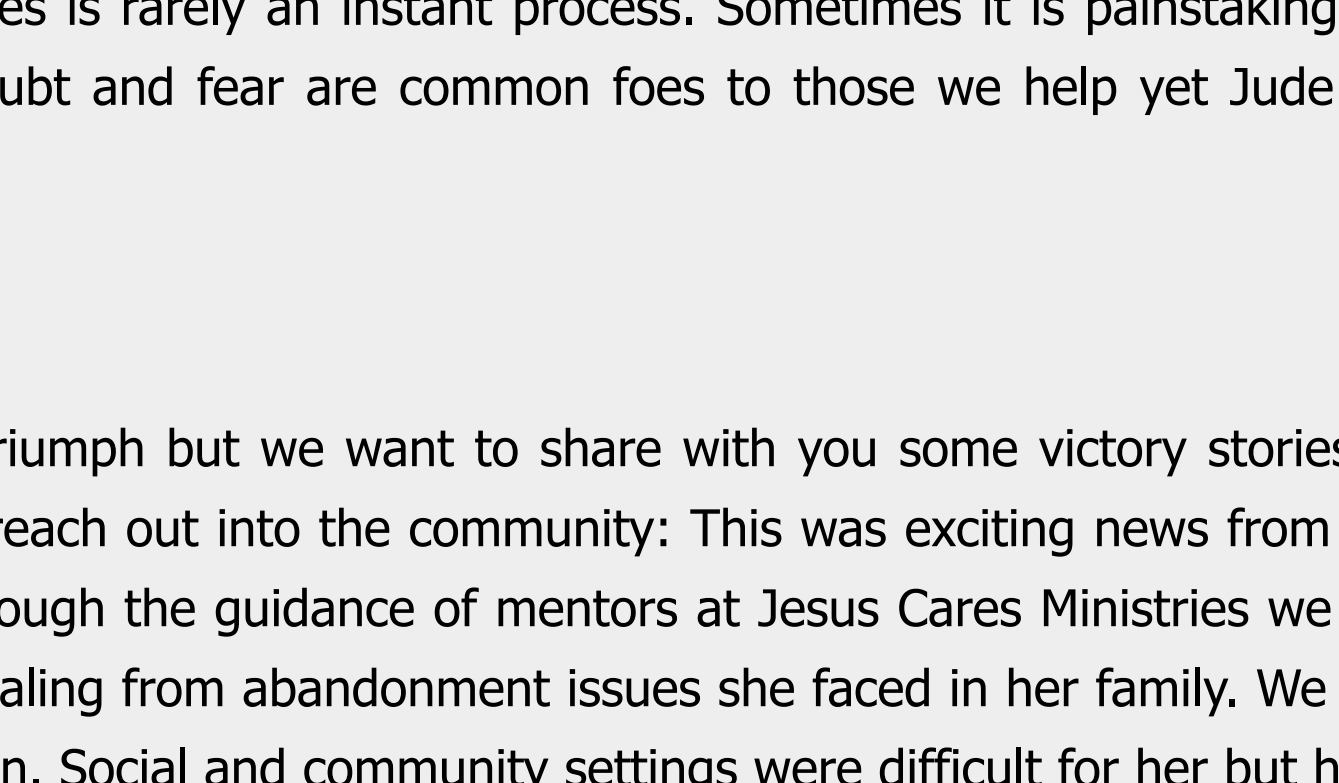
Our goal for this year is to minimize counseling and expand our training and equipping. This past year along with the above training opportunities, we used a **Gary Thomas** series on how to handle toxic people and our own **Beauty for Ashes Grief Seminar** to equip others for Kingdom work. We recognize the need to impart to others and mobilize individuals to reach their potential and grow up into maturity! We plan on offering more opportunities in 2021.

Interns in the house...



Christina and Bella

Being the senior citizens that we are, we are always looking to invest into young lives. This past year brought an amazing opportunity for this impartation. It has been our joy to house two interns these past few months. As you know, **Bella** is called to the dark corners of the world through her ministry, "Elpis." Her next target is Iraq, where she visited for 10 days with a ministry team that is based out of Texas. She plans to go back in February. There may be a possible long term opportunity so please pray for her. She will be ministering to refugees and victims of Isis. **Christina**, our intern, is busy learning how to engage and communicate more effectively with difficult people for the purpose of influencing their hearts for the kingdom; understanding about the responsibility of leadership; helping to mentor a young woman with disability issues; and seeing the benefit of time management and stewardship for more effective ministry opportunities. She juggles all of that along with her job teaching music and vocal lessons to various students. Her hope is to prepare for the possibility of ministry in the middle east.



Bella ministering to Yizidis and Syrians - November 2020

She may be making a locational move which also holds promise of preparing her heart to the middle east. Thank you for being a part of imparting important principles and demonstrating God's ministry of love to these young women as you support this ministry. They have learned so much about family, ministry, and living graciously in community with one another. Many of our supporters and volunteers are making investments that make this beautiful partnership happen!

Grow Girls: Brand New Outreach



"GROW GIRLS"

Speaking of investing in young lives, we now have 16 grandchildren. They are a major focus of our lives. Grandparenting is **All** and **MORE** than it is cracked up to be!!! We are so excited to develop a new outreach program to girls from 7-12 years old. My own granddaughters have been a vital key in implementing this in the community. **Bella** and I first offered this conference to them. They were so excited, they wanted to be a part of reaching out to other young girls. They are now sponsors. We held our first outreach to the community in October of this past year. It was a joy to connect with these young lives! Our vision is to teach young women how to authentically "imitate" the Savior. We want to provide a venue that will encourage safety in transparency, security in femininity (the way God designed) and value in community. It is a double joy to have my grands involved in this outreach. They have beautiful hearts and they know that reaching out is part of spending time together. We are also looking forward to **Bella** taking this model of **"Grow Girls"** to the field!

Discipleship, Counseling and Teaching

Dozens of individuals and families have received counsel and discipleship this year through Jesus Cares. Our heart is to see broken lives restored. We cannot make that happen; we can only facilitate this process by inviting people to experience God's redemptive power! As always we see triumph and glory in these opportunities. Seeing people through their struggles is rarely an instant process. Sometimes it is painstaking as we see some go through cycle after vicious cycle. Doubt and fear are common foes to those we help yet **Jude** exhorts us to be merciful in these situations. (Jude 22)

Good reports...

We don't always see triumph but we want to share with you some victory stories. You are all a part of these stories as you enable us to reach out into the community: This was exciting news from a woman who had been in a domestic violence cycle. Through the guidance of mentors at Jesus Cares Ministries we saw this single mother come to faith and walk through healing from abandonment issues she faced in her family. We introduced her to Gloria from New Turning Point for Women. Social and community settings were difficult for her but here is the latest:

"Sue and I have been good and been going to church with our neighbors and their granddaughter who Sue is really close to. We are getting close, love and enjoy being with and around the people there."

Another beautiful victory report came in this past year from a woman we counseled that is reaping some lasting results from counsel we offered several years back:

"I was JUST thinking of your ministry this past week, as Bob (not real name) and I just celebrated our 23rd wedding anniversary on Sunday! I can never thank you enough for graciously guiding me through one of the hardest times in my life, pointing me back to my faith, and helping to save my marriage (and soul). We are doing well, even in these crazy quarantine times."

Sarah and Brood

One of the greatest joys is to see long term and lasting results from years of investment opportunities. **Sarah**, who lives in Florida with hubby, **Brandon** and her 4 beautiful children sent this picture along with a thank you for shaping her into the mother that she is today. She lived with us over 20 years ago along with her firstborn son, **Tristan**. She has been a faithful intercessor for the ministry. Nothing can compare to the joy of seeing changed lives for the kingdom! We can relate to John's "no greater joy" message when we see our spiritual children walking in Truth! (3 John 1:4)

Another woman, mentored and engaged in the Jesus Cares community of women for years, sent a message:

"Thank you for sticking by me, mentoring me, and being the living example of Christ. ... I want to thank you for helping me be the mother the Lord is calling out of me."

There is so much more we can say but it would be close to a volume! We have so much thanksgiving in our hearts. This has been an incredible year of opportunity for local and global investments! You our faithful supporters, are making this happen through donations and prayer support. We treasure your partnership in letting the community and the world know that....

