

# CONNECT

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REHOBOTH CHURCH NEWSLETTER



Church in COVID

# Letter from the Editor

**Greetings** to each of you. It seems our connection was severed this year but you always remained in our thoughts and prayers. If this is your first time reading the CONNECT Newsletter, you started at the end of 2020 but a new beginning awaits you in 2021.

We are happy that you survived 2020 the past 12 months. When we embarked on our journey in January, we had no idea that along the way we would encounter a force called the coronavirus, which severely impacted every aspect of our lives. It changed the way we function on our jobs (if we still had one), the way we relate to each other and even the way we worship.

Nothing has remained the same except God's faithfulness to us. Many started this journey and today, they are no longer with us because God built a wall of protection around you and told the enemy that he cannot penetrate that wall to get to you. Indeed, He gave His angels charge over you.

As you venture into the New Year, you are now ready for whatever comes because your yesterdays have fully prepared you for what lies ahead. What lessons did you learned from your experience this year? What battles have you won? What trials have you overcome?

The pandemic wasn't the only thing happening in your world, so this year begin to shift your focus from the negative to the positive. Count your blessings! You are what you think. You are a survivor! An overcomer! So think of yourself becoming a better person from your experience of the past year. Remember that nothing is beyond your capability.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us, so continue working to improve your health, upgrade your relationships, pursue spiritual heights and yes, reach for your dreams. In fact, dream bigger in 2021 and dare to visualize greater things. Now you know that you can see things differently, you can love yourself more and of course your neighbors. Someone said, "You don't get to choose how you're going to die or when. You can only decide how you're going to live". Live your best life now. The coronavirus serves as a reminder that in life, nothing is promised except God's forgiveness and eternal life.

Best wishes and blessings to you and your family for the New Year.

Until next time!

BEVERLY COKER, PH.D.



# God is with Us!

*"Behold, the virgin shall be with child,  
and shall bring forth a son,  
And they shall call his name Immanuel;  
which is, being interpreted, God with us."  
- Matthew 1:23 (ASV)*

**During** the most difficult times in our lives, times such as we are currently facing, it is good to have the assurance that *God is with us!* Persons are in isolation, feeling moments of anxiety and fear, others feeling a sense of being disconnected from the world, unable to come and go as desired. When you do leave your homes, there is a constant wonder or worry about who you may come in contact with that could potentially be a risk of exposure to this very deadly virus.

Yes, our world has been devastated with the impact that the pandemic has had on families, businesses, the medical institutions, and the mental health community. Everything that could be shaken has been shaken, but despite all of these happenings, *God is with us!*

That must have been some of the emotions that Mary experienced when the angel appeared unto her and told her that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and she shall conceive the Christ Child. It probably was overwhelming and at the same time, she must have had a sense of inadequacy, to be the mother of the "Christ Child" the "Savior of the world". Her faith in the omnipresent God was manifested in the birth of Jesus; so we thank God for the birth of our Savior. Although there was no room for Him in the Inn, God, through His Son Jesus, made room for humankind to have everlasting life.

*"Therefore the Lord himself  
shall give you a sign;  
Behold, a virgin shall conceive,  
and bear a son,  
and shall call his name Immanuel."  
Isaiah 7:14 (ASV)*

The prophecy was fulfilled. The hope of Israel had come. The Messiah, the redeemer, our Savior came in the form of a child through the womb of a virgin. Emmanuel was here, *God with us!* No matter what circumstances of life you may be facing today, you can rest in the assurance that *God is with you* through every crisis, through every disappointment, and through every storm that may come your way.

This is the revelation the Apostle Peter had to hold on to when he was thrown in jail, awaiting his execution. However, while sitting there in a cold clammy cell, the angel of the Lord appeared and told him to arise and follow him out of the prison. In the same way God showed up for Peter, Emmanuel – *God with us*, will show up for you and I.

As Senior Pastor of Rehoboth, I cannot tell you the countless reports I get of the hardship and the adversities that people are facing in this season, but I want to give you a word of encouragement and consolation in the fact that for every report of a struggle, there are twice as many reports of victory and deliverance. People of God, know that *God is with us* and that He is going to see us through this season of setbacks and challenges. *God is with us!* The one that brings hope, joy, love, and peace. Emmanuel, "*God is with us!*" in a very personal way, the Son of God has promised that He will be with us throughout eternity. Take courage, you are not alone.

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BISHOP JONATHAN RAMSEY, JR

# Great God, Great Vision, Great Accomplishments



**2020**, a year that will go down in history for being one of the most eventful years that we have experienced to date. Many have encountered great losses due to the COVID 19 pandemic, amongst other circumstances, and there seems to be a feeling of sorrow lingering not too far behind at all times. However, in the midst of all of the disheartening uncertainties that we may feel, one thing still remains certain, and that is the goodness and faithfulness of our great God. In what appears to be the longest winter season of our lives, good things of life are still happening all around us.

One of those good things that serve as a testament of the faithfulness of God is the almost completed expansion of our church, Rehoboth Church of God. In the summer of 2019, ground was broken to begin the work of this expansion. Now, we are nearing its completion and there is much to be excited about. This expansion is inclusive of additional seating in the main sanctuary, a new children's center, café, and much more. The great vision that God has given to our Bishop for this expansion is demonstrative of the mission of our church, to be a place where you can belong, grow, and serve.

As we thank God for the obedience of our Bishop to continue with this assignment to build, despite a feeling of desolation, you, the members of Rehoboth are to be celebrated in this time as well. Many of you have sacrificed and trusted God greatly as you gave into this vision. Some pulled from their abundance, but many pulled from their last, both of which were done wrapped in great faith. As we come to the close of the physical work of this expansion, may it only be the beginning of the abundant spiritual blessings that our God has in store for you.

Our great God inspired a great vision, and now, as we cross over into this New Year, we celebrate this great accomplishment!

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K A R I E N   G R E E N



# GenKids

*Generation Kids (Genkids) is the name of Rehoboth Church of God's Children's Ministry. It is led by a team of volunteers with a new service posted every Sunday since April and available 24/7. In addition, GenKids meets on Zoom every Wednesday from 7-8pm for DOTK girls club ministry and children's Bible Study.*



**ELIZABETH GUNTER**  
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR

**With** the expansion of the church, a new children's church room and classrooms are under construction with state of the art audio and visual equipment and lightning. Genkids' goal is to provide fun filled programs tailored to kids ages 4-12. Our volunteers have a passion to connect kids to Jesus and help them grow in their love and walk which will give them the opportunity to share with others. We are aligned to our church's motto: "A place to belong, a place to grow, and a place to serve" as the kids participate in all areas of worship.

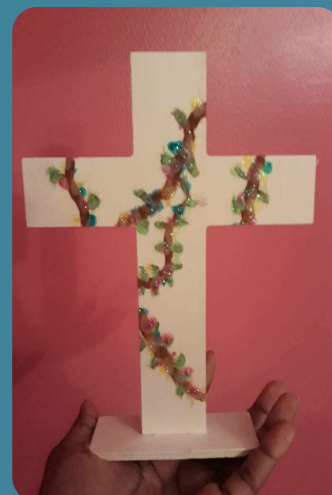
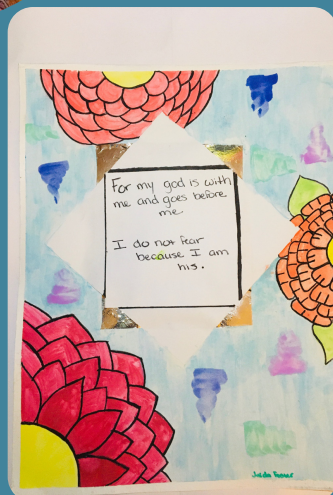
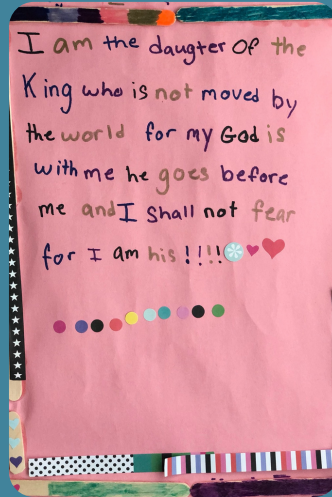
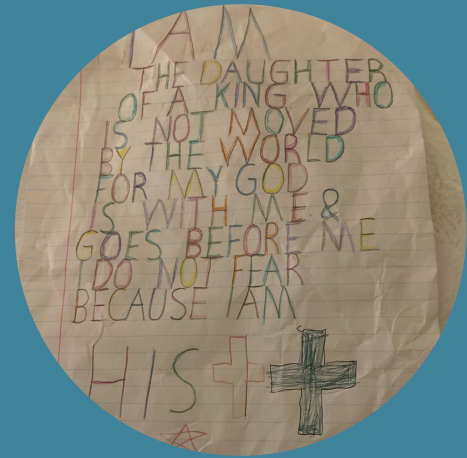
On November 8, 2020, the annual children's church rally was held. This rally has been conducted for over 25 years, where the kids display their God-given talents. To God be the glory, Covid-19 did not prevent this annual event as Pastor Ramsey felt strongly that the show must go on. We had 10 original pieces where parents recorded at home or setup time with Brother Badhai for recording.

In addition, we showcased items from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was live on YouTube, Facebook and the church's website. We are blessed to have the assistance of Brother Badhai as he works with the team and parents behind the scene week after week. This year we had an Art Gallery in which one of the pieces was sold to the highest bidder for \$150.00.

We thank God for the dedication of the Online Genkids team which serves joyfully as we continue to go through the pandemic. Special thanks to the parents and Divine Inspiration (DI) who assist with getting the weekly communication distributed.



GenKids  
Art Gallery







# Juggling Remote Work & Remote Schooling

ONNUS ADEWUNMI

**On** March 12th 2020, my wife and I were notified of our school district's decision to transition from in-person learning to remote learning for 2 weeks as a result of a novel pandemic that was spreading across the State of Connecticut. I immediately turned to one of my favorite scriptures in the Bible - Deuteronomy 31:6- "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." Having recalled how he brought me through other crises in life, I was confident that he would do it again.

I then informed my supervisor about this new development and received approval to work remotely for 2 weeks initially. Three days later, Governor Ned Lamont announced that he will sign an executive order closing all public schools through March 31st.

That weekend, my wife and I came up with a game plan of having one child assigned to one parent for one week and then switching over the following week. Next we reviewed our meeting schedules so that each parent would be able to participate at work with undivided attention.

Finally we created a checklist for us that included meals, recess, class times, homework in preparation for Monday March 16th 2020 which was day 1 of working full time remotely with our 1st and 2nd graders who were also schooling remotely.

Despite all the preparation that had taken place, the first day did not go as planned. The boys did not understand why they were not allowed to wake up later than normal since they were not going to be dropped off at school, neither did they understand why screen time was not an option during their breaks,

why we insisted on reviewing their school work before they turned it in or why we ensured that they did the optional assignments after they had completed the mandatory assignments. At the end of that day, I realized that it will take God's grace to make it through March 31st.

Nine months later, that same grace has been sufficient for us. While each day presents challenges, we are in a better position than when this journey began. Not only have my wife and I learned a lot more about our sons, we have learned more about each other. This was not how we envisioned 2020, however, it was God's plan for us.

So rather than focusing on the impact of the pandemic to our lives, we are discovering the blessings in this situation. One of such blessings was when our sons asked us to donate some of the money their grandparents had sent them for Christmas to the children at St. Jude's Hospital because they recognize good health is a blessing.

In conclusion, we have learned to deal with this situation by following Paul's letter in 1st Thessalonians 5: 16-18 which states "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."





**Whether** you like it or not Covid-19 has the unique ability to massively affect everyone's life and for the past seven months that I've been in quarantine, I've learned a lot about myself. I've learned things that shock me, things that excite me and things that make me a bit apprehensive. In the beginning of quarantine my schooling was disrupted with a seemingly harmless email from the Administration forewarning all college students that 'they will be switching to online schooling for the upcoming weeks and they look forward to seeing students return in April.' At the time I was excited to have some extra time to spend with my family and get a break from college life, little did I know I would be trapped in my house for the next 7 months!

I need to see people's faces in front of me and direct them while I handle various equipment. Virtual classes disregarded all of my needs. As I continued my schooling throughout the summer, I became even more discouraged. I came to the conclusion that film is simply not an independent medium. As much as my teachers were expecting me to take my own film and use myself as a subject, I found it incredibly difficult to be inspired and continue practicing and learning about film virtually. Therefore, I decided to take a break from school all together. I thought, 'If I'm not able to do school in person I don't want to do it at all.'

Since deciding to take the fall and spring semester of college off, I can't say it's been a breeze but I can say it was the right decision.



## Quarantine: The Up's and Down's from a College Student's Perspective

JOURNEE BROWN

I started my quarantine off delving into almost every curiosity I had. I baked banana bread, took photographs, wrote poems and scripts and performed numerous monologues and scripts. Unfortunately, as time went on my motivation dwindled. I no longer had the same zeal I initially had for school. Near the end of the spring semester, I struggled with my schoolwork. The new online platform of classes simply wasn't working for me. Every aspect of online school was discouraging. The students barely participated, breakout rooms-where we were supposed to discuss 'interesting topics from class discussion'-were dreadful, even my teachers seemed to be giving up. For instance, my french teacher ended up continuously cancelling classes and failed to provide any explanation other than an email 15 mins before class. The worst part of online school for me was there was no hands on, in person interaction.

As a film major, actress and improv lover, I need to see my fellow classmates work.

I'm not as stressed and I'm able to listen to myself more. Doing school in quarantine really took a toll on my mental health, the expectations of online school paired with living through a global pandemic, kept me from staying in tune with myself. For the past couple of months, although life hasn't gotten any easier, I've been able to console myself, ask questions and take my time looking for answers. In addition to that my passions have reemerged, I've fallen back in love with acting, I'm baking more, and my familial bond has gotten even deeper. I can't say I've enjoyed quarantine to any extent, but there is a peaceful core to the whole world being in lockdown. Quarantine has provided me with the gift of reflection. I've changed a lot in the past 7 months, in ways that I never would have expected. From a philosophical perspective, I listen more, I observe my thoughts more, and I feel more grounded. From a creative perspective, I'm starting to find my fashion sense, I've become more confident and I take much more chances. Quarantine gave me unexpected growth and for that I am thankful.

Interview w/

# Rev. Elsa Smith-Pleasant of the **Helping Hand Food Pantry Ministry**

344 Blue Hills Ave, Hartford, Connecticut

COVID has not prevented the work being done by the pantry but has only intensified the process. They have had to create ways and means to serve the community without jeopardizing themselves. Rev Smith-Pleasant is thankful to God for providing people with the heart for ministry and the heart to serve.

In my interview with Rev. Elsa Smith-Pleasant, one thing that was evident in speaking with her was her passion for those less fortunate and being an example of steadfastness and perseverance during these pandemic times. The Helping Hand Food Pantry is one of the few food distribution agencies that remained operational with the onset of COVID-19 due to the restrictions that were put in place. As a result, the participation in the program has significantly increased. Some weeks they service between 120-130 clients, which would normally be approximately 75-90. Rev. Smith-Pleasant has ten active volunteers but unfortunately due to space restrictions, she is not able to increase that number.

The volunteers are all very committed to the task and have continued to serve in their capacity during the pandemic. As a group, they have taken extra precautions and follow the guidelines of the Health Department and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to ensure that face shields, masks and gloves are worn. They are now doing “grab and go” bags as no one is allowed inside the pantry for provisions; no physical contact with clients. As a team, they also pray for those who request prayer.

Between March and November, they received 137,440lbs of food from Food Share which equates to 114,533 meals which was served to 7,395 persons. Community Special Food Program (CSFP), which is run by Food Share, partners with Rehoboth to distribute special food boxes for the seniors in the community once per month.

The Helping Hand Food Pantry on behalf of Rehoboth Church of God distributed Farmers Market checks to approximately 150 seniors.

The Urban Alliance an affiliate of World Vision also supplies food boxes with meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. In addition to weekly food boxes, World Vision also provides clothing, blankets, hand sanitizers, personal care items, toys, household items and facial masks which are given to participants.

Much appreciation goes to all those who partner with The Helping Hand Food Pantry: Food Share, Urban Alliance, Shop Rite, Rehoboth Church of God (host of The Helping Hand Food Pantry) and individuals who provide support through their giving.

The Helping Hand Food Pantry Ministry is located at 322 Blue Hill Ave., Hartford, CT.

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MINISTER DONNA MAXWELL



**What** does the Town of Bloomfield have that no other Connecticut town has? The first Jamaican Mayor? Yes, but Bloomfield was also named, “the nicest town in CT” by Readers Digest. One of the things that make Bloomfield a “nice town” is the care and concern that the town’s leadership has for its residents. Mayor Suzette DeBeatham-Brown was fortunate to have learned of an opportunity to partner with The Prosperity Foundation as well as the USDA’s and State of Connecticut’s Farmers to Families Food Box Program to have truckloads of food delivered to her town. Mayor Brown reached out to the other surrounding towns, Town of West Hartford, Mayor Shari Cantor and the Town of Windsor, Mayor Donald Trinks and formed an alliance, “Mayors United.” They collaborated with Bishop Jonathon Ramsey of the Rehoboth Church of God to utilize the grounds as a distribution center as well as the leadership of First Cathedral.

The Town of Bloomfield did its due diligence in securing these premises for distribution and ensured that traffic was not impacted.

## Interview w/ **Suzette DeBeatham-Brown** Mayor of the Town of Bloomfield

They also ensured social distancing for all activities.

All volunteers had their temperatures checked, they were properly registered, provided with masks, gloves, hand sanitizer and, of course, a delicious lunch. Participants included Bloomfield Social Services, Dept of Public Works, Police, Senior Services, students from UCONN Nursing, Rehoboth COG volunteers and Windsor Social Services. With everything in place, the process began. Distribution was scheduled for every Friday in October at Rehoboth Church of God and on Saturdays at First Cathedral.

“Mayors United” was successful in distributing over 3,000 boxes of food weighing approximately 22-pounds which included milk, eggs, meat, fruits, vegetables for nutritious meals. Food was delivered to communities, senior homes, other church communities, shut-ins, and of course, the many individuals who drove to the church for provisions.



HOSTED BY MAYOR SUZETTE DEBEATHAM-BROWN (BLOOMFIELD),  
MAYOR SHARI CANTOR (WEST HARTFORD)  
& MAYOR DONALD TRINKS (WINDSOR)

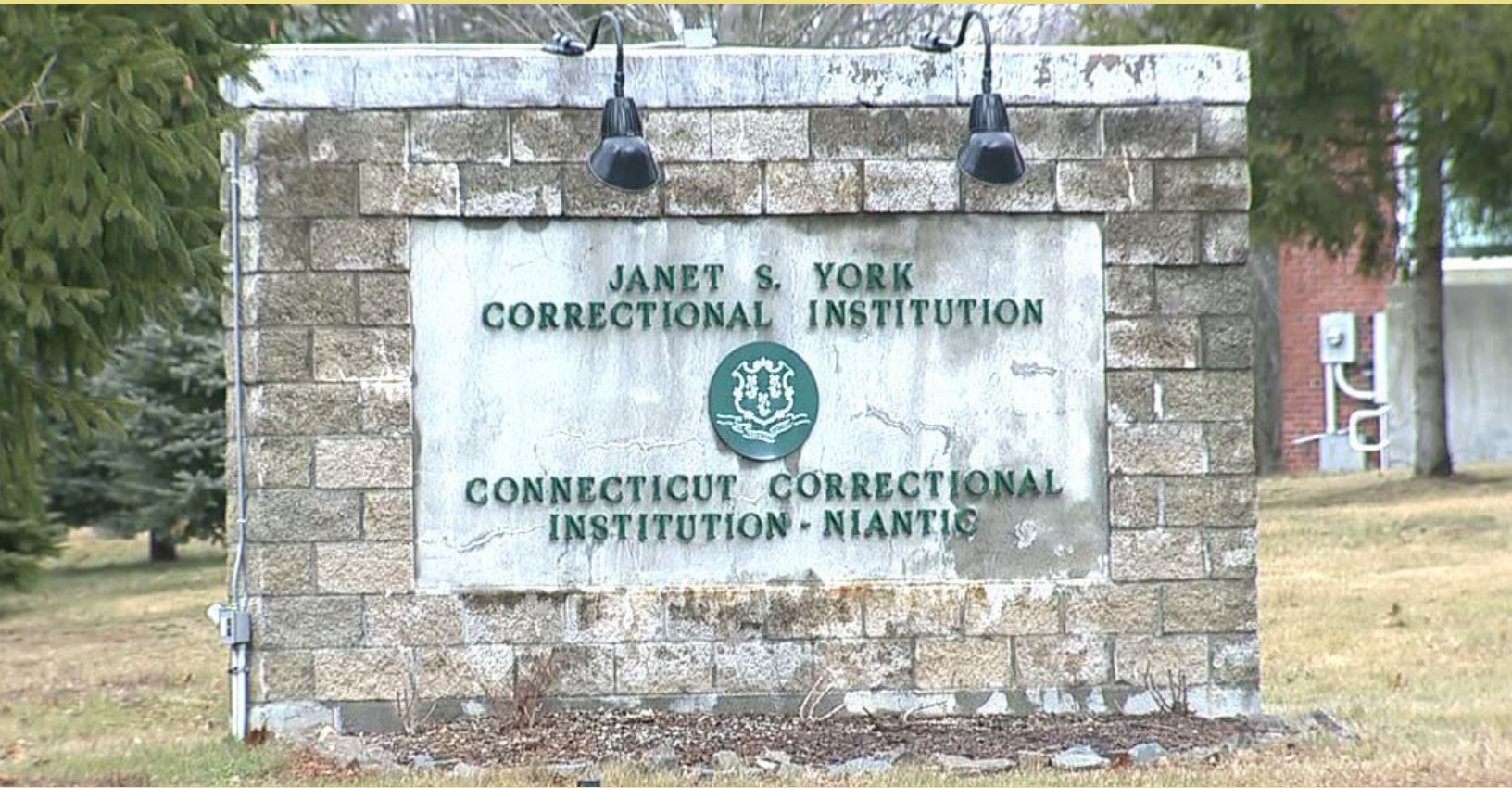
**FRIDAYS OCT 9, 16, 23, 30** **DISTRIBUTION BEGINS 10AM TO 2:30PM** **REHOBOTH CHURCH OF GOD 1170 BLUE HILLS AVE**



FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL DAVE MELESKO OR CAMILLA HILLIAN AT 860.243.2923  
OR EMAIL DMELESKO@BLOOMFIELDCT.ORG OR CHILLIAN@BLOOMFIELDCT.ORG

The needs of the community is great and access to healthy food has increased based on the growing unemployment due to COVID-19. It is important for the Town of Bloomfield to know that as a servant of the community, the Town Council will continue to engage the necessary resources to help meet the needs of the people.

MINISTER DONNA MAXWELL



# Rehoboth Prison Ministry for Women

"Jesus said, 'I was naked and you clothed Me;  
I was sick and you visited Me;  
I was in prison and you came to Me.'"  
- Matthew 25:36

**Through** the various ministries at Rehoboth, we seek to fulfill the Great Commission to spread the gospel to all the ends of the earth. We desire to be God's arms and heart extended to His people. In so doing, the Rehoboth Prison Ministry for Women came to life in 2017. The ministry's mission is to facilitate spiritual transformation and the walk of repentance through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God and to always share the love and compassion of God.

This writer had the opportunity to speak with a couple of the ministry team members, including its leaders Rev. Christine Grant, and Councilman Lamel Smith, who shared inspiring testimonies of launching the ministry and ministering to the inmates respectively. The team, which includes Rev. Grant, Bro. Smith, Sis. Joan Malcolm, Rev. Racquel Torres, Rev. Michelle Mercado-Ruiz, Rev. Debbie McDonald, Rev. Alicia Morgan and Bro. Bowen, minister at the York Correctional Institution throughout the year. Everyone on the team serves an important role, whether it is to greet inmates, preach the Word, pray for individual needs, or do altar call.



York Correctional Institution is located in Niantic, Connecticut and is the state's only institution for female offenders. When asked how this ministry started, Rev. Christine Grant shared how the Lord had laid a burden on her heart to minister to female inmates, and so began the journey to bring the vision to life. It started with Rev. Grant trying to gain access to the facility, which proved very difficult. She discontinued her efforts for some time, but later resumed, by discussing her goal with Bro. Lamel who had previously served as a Correctional Officer for 20 years. Bro. Lamel knew the Warden at York and so he reached out to him. What might have appeared to be a coincidence to some, was God putting the wheels in motion, equipping as He does, those who are called, in order to fulfill His purpose. Rev. Grant was informed that she could start with 7-8 people. There began the Rehoboth Prison Ministry for Women. The team is very cognizant of the privilege to minister to this population.

The York church service starts promptly at 9 a.m. and ends by 10 a.m. This requires the team to start their journey from Rehoboth at 7:30 a.m. There is also a 1 p.m. service for inmates transitioning out. With the strict requirements of the institution, the team isn't allowed to bring anything in but their Bibles. Ministers are not allowed to touch inmates in any way whether to shake hands or give a hug. That being said, compassion is shown by the sharing of the Word of God, genuineness in greeting, and the group's commitment to serving.

On average of 40 to 60 women attend the services. They are comprised of teenagers, seniors, mothers, daughters, sisters. These demographics seem no different from our own church, but there is the priceless difference of freedom.

Coming to church is for some, the only hope for survival. The lives of the inmates are dependent on the Word, which creates a tremendous sense of importance and urgency. The ministers always assure the inmates that they are praying for them even during their absence. They treat the women with respect and genuine care. Under God, the Women's Prison Ministry has led over 200 women to Christ since the inception of the ministry in 2017.

The Women's Prison Ministry seeks to continue the Great Commission through community outreach efforts in serving outside the walls of our church. In an effort to meet the needs of inmates who are transitioning out of York, the group held a sweatshirt drive, which was highly successful. Generous monetary donations were also made to the ministry by Rehoboth Women's Ministry, the Beautification Committee, the Church body and other individuals. In addition, the Women's Prison Ministry team has received recognition from the State Department of Correction for its work at York.

What we may see as simple acts of obedience, are often God's plan for meeting someone's need and ultimate salvation. Though we may face obstacles in fulfilling the calling or assignment the Lord has given us, when we press forward and commit our actions by faith, the Lord provides the access, resources, strength, and guidance needed for completion. We praise God for the souls!

Please continue to pray for the inmates, the Chaplain, and all who work in correctional institutions, especially during this pandemic. Volunteers are not allowed to minister at these facilities at this time.

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LISA O'CONNOR

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,"*

*- Charles Dickens.*

**How** appropriate are these words to the year 2020, the pandemic, and the affect that is so much more than the symptoms and impact of the disease. It's equally about all the areas its tentacles touched, unveiled, grasped and moved. As a parent, there is nothing more serious than to know there is something out there - seen or unseen - that has the potential to harm your child. It really sets the protect mode and momma-bear instinct into hyperdrive.

The pandemic driven quarantine, the real and potential threat of food, housing, income, healthcare, even mental and physical security were and are a very present reality.

For moms and dads alike, I'm sure, the instinct to have the means to provide and protect are heightened.

One mom, Caroline, a single mom of three, shared that the pandemic and ensuring quarantine impacted her security on a mental level. "While my income never changed,"

she says "I became more cautious about spending." Similarly, so did my husband. Cutting down on spending was important, but of equal concern, was the possibility of having money with no way to purchase food and all the other necessities of life.

Caroline mentioned the physiological impact on her elementary school aged children, stating, "they are very aware of the pandemic, hyperaware of symptoms, if they cough or may not be feeling well, it not only changes their outlook or interpretation but it impacts their social connection. They're use to play dates and activities."

For Sally, a business owner, married and homeschooling mom to two elementary aged children, the paramount issues were not necessarily of finances. "When COVID hit, we lost all of the activities we were doing outside the home. We no longer saw our friends.

I think people who don't homeschool, think homeschoolers are at home all day, but it couldn't be further from the truth. I refer to ourselves as road schoolers because we are constantly on the go," she states "But then the Zoom classes came too often and were too long and we began to dread our computers. So we found things we COULD do. We poured our energy into projects. We worked on our home together, painting, putting in wood floors, putting up shiplap. And the whole family took part. We planted vegetables and fruits in pots. We went skateboarding. We surfed more than ever.

On the contrary, notwithstanding any other concerns but specifically as it relates to her children,

## Family Adjustments to the Pandemic

another mom, Mary shared via the Internet, "I noticed my kids were better not being in school. We got along better, I let them sleep in,

instead of waking them up for regular school time (and) they did their work without complaining.... She commented that now they have returned to school and the routines, she finds that they're more short tempered and moody.

As the married mom of a high schooler and an elementary age child who is mature and quite dependable, having them home and completing their school day without incident was never a problem but what revealed itself is that one of my children required social interaction, learning was easier in a classroom setting than online. I also noticed that a lot of the information being provided lacked depth for one child in particular.

Jane, married mom of two children shared, "Overall, I have to say my experience with parenting in a pandemic has not been that bad. In my case, my kids are both mature and pretty good about managing their time and their responsibilities. At the beginning of the pandemic, they were both learning from home through the spring. I found that there was little intervention needed from me in order to keep them going. They were both able to easily follow along with their teachers, and both their schools did as best a job as they could with the quick pivot to distance learning.

The area of commonality among the small group of moms that I spoke with is that the pandemic had its challenges, but more than that, it created the space that allowed her to value more the opportunity to be a parent.

Sally shared, "Surprisingly, having my husband home was nice. I heard from a lot of people on how having their husbands home all the time was hard, But I welcomed it. I think it actually brought us closer". Jane shared, "While we may have missed out on some of the activities our children used to engage in, in general, as a family we have been more appreciative of the amount of time we have had to spend together. ....We have spent time as a family doing activities that both build character and bring us closer. ...painting together, watching new and classic movies, hiking, going for bike rides.... The relationship between my children has grown immensely and they are each other's companions, which was not the case before.

I will echo the same sentiment, unlike the moms I had the opportunity to speak with - my children were home but my spouse and I worked throughout the entire time. Life slowed down a bit, we saw where the children grew in being able to handle their schedules, assignments, prepare their own lunches, , become best friends and likewise we took time to connect more as a family.

The one brave father, Mark, father of 2 boys, who responded to my request to share his parenting experience said, "With school closings and many churches not having live children's church, the biggest problem I faced with my children was social interaction. The best solution has been for me as the father and priest is to be more involved daily....The need for parents to look at their home as a dwelling place for Father God and keep that atmosphere in the house is a necessity." Caroline concurs and summed it up so well, the pandemic, she says, also propelled her to connect more with and be intentional about ministering to her children, helping them to understand eternity and helping them to understand that this world is temporary and having their own relationship with God is vital.