

SINGAPORE MISSION UPDATE

March 7, 2020

THERE IS WORK ON EVERY HAND (BUT BE SURE TO WASH YOUR HANDS!)

As we closed January's report, the COVID-19 virus (coronavirus) was just beginning to make an impact on life in Singapore, but now we are fully engaged in living in a geographically small, densely-populated country as it tries to responsibly handle the outbreak. Although our desired focus in this report is not the COVID-19 virus, we feel it is important to share the current situation in Singapore and how the COVID-19 virus has affected everyday life, life in the school at Four Seas, and within our congregation. We know that many places in the US and across the world are also working to deal with the virus and its implications.

The country of Singapore is on high alert in regards to the virus. As we previously mentioned, Singapore was hit hard by SARS in 2003 and determined to attempt to handle future disease outbreaks better. The government has taken the threat of this virus very seriously, but because they have taken the threat seriously it appears that currently they have been able to prevent wide community spread of the virus. Singapore was one of the first countries outside of China to report cases of the virus; yet, at the writing of this report has only had a little over 100 cases.

Singapore has encouraged many different types of measures to help prevent community spread of the virus including twice daily temperature checks (in homes, workplaces, and schools), screening questionnaires, and travel restrictions. Singapore has also discouraged large scale group activities (more than 50 people) and as a result many events ranging from school outings and assemblies to concerts have been cancelled.

Our congregation is also partaking in many of these same measures. Prior to entering the church building each individual's temperature is taken and each individual has to confirm that they are not exhibiting symptoms of the virus, have not recently travelled to any of the virus-stricken areas, and have not been around anyone with the virus. The congregation also keeps detailed attendance records for each service in the event that contact tracing needed to take place (if someone associated with the congregation got the virus). The congregation has cancelled most activities outside of worship service and Bible classes to avoid group gatherings. The men who serve the Lord's supper use hand sanitizer and gloves and individually hand out the bread with tweezers. The congregation is also employing "open-air" ventilation, not using the air conditioning but instead opening windows and using fans. We even had a nurse give a congregational demonstration about proper hand-washing technique to prevent the spread of germs.

Four Seas has also been taking extra measures with the COVID-19 virus situation. The students' temperatures are taken and logged twice daily. The students are not allowed to use any public transportation except to attend worship services. Additional cleaning is also taking place in the dorms and school facilities. While we do have some students who are currently ill, they have tested negative for COVID-19; we are thankful.



We do not currently have serious personal concern in regards to the virus. We are certainly being careful, but to this point the virus has not been spreading here quickly as it has in other countries, I think largely to the quick action of the government and community. As a precaution, some of the local Christians have given us some face masks incase we have to be in a densely populated area on occasion or if one of us starts to feel sick. The brethren here are among the most generous on earth. Helping curtail the spread of the virus, Singapore has an excellent healthcare system, which we got to see firsthand this month as well. On Valentine's day our oldest son Troy started having sudden, severe pain that resulted in a trip to the emergency room and being admitted into the hospital for further testing and possibly surgery. Thankfully, the source of the pain was determined to not need surgery, only rest (a week of no running or jumping for a 9-year-old!), and he has fully recovered now.



Although the situation with the virus has resulted in minor inconveniences, it has not disrupted instruction at the school. The second half of the first term began in the middle of February. To the first year students I am continuing to teach English and began teaching the book of Acts which we study in coordination with Peter Chin's class on the New Testament church. I am teaching the wisdom literature (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon) to the second year students. While Lisa has had some opportunities to teach, she has really been able to exercise that talent this past month. In addition to teaching in the children's classes at Jurong, she is also teaching a course to all of the female students called the Christian Woman considering such topics as the character of the Christian woman, the Christian mother, and the Christian wife.



Additionally, Lisa was scheduled to teach a Saturday Bible Marking Workshop for ladies from congregations across the island, but this event was postponed due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak. Since the workshop was postponed, Lisa taught a mini-workshop over Bible marking to the female students from Four Seas so that the two graduating female students who finished their coursework in February would be able to attend before returning to the Philippines.

This month our home location has proved to be an unforeseen blessing! When we were apartment-hunting, our top priority was to be in walking distance to the school and church building so that we could have easy access to the school, but also so that the students could conveniently come to our home. Being in walking distance proved to be of extra significance this month since the students are not allowed to use public transportation at this time due to the virus. We were blessed to be able to host all of the students for a spaghetti dinner at the beginning of February, and it was a great time to get to know the new students (and get to know the returning students better).

I began my rotation of teaching the adult class at the Jurong congregation and will continue to teach in March. We have plans to travel to Malaysia in March where Lisa and I will be conducting a Saturday workshop with the Kota Kemuning congregation. Lisa will speak to the ladies while I will teach the men. Because of this, I will not be preaching in March at Jurong. I hope to be back on the schedule in April. This month has also allowed me to have some personal studies - though mainly through text messages - with some folks from here in Singapore. We pray these opportunities to serve will continue. Please continue to pray for our family, our work, the local church, Four Seas, and the Lord's church across the world.



KEEP UP WITH US

WWW.SINGAPORESIX.COM
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SINGAPORESIX

TRENTKENNEDY@GMAIL.COM
LISADK@GMAIL.COM

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

With the close of the first half of the first term, two “wrap-around” students officially finished their required coursework at Four Seas. We are thankful for the opportunity to get to know Jana Del Castillo and Thyna Mancia and look forward to hearing about their continued service to the Lord in their home country of the Philippines where they will use the education and experience from the College to serve our Lord. The beginning of the second half of the first term brought the arrival of one additional female student from the Philippines, Racquel, bringing the total number of students in the first year class to 13. Our student body consists of two wrap-around students, thirteen first year students, and six second year students for a total of 21 students. We expect some changes in March, and we will pass that information along as it becomes clear and official. Also, we hope to use the student spotlight in the next months to focus on individual students once again. When you read about these students, please think about them, say their name, and pray for them.

CULTURE SHOCK: CHINESE NEW YEAR

We saved the culture shock section of our report from last month to write about the wonderful and festive occasion of Chinese New Year. Chinese (or Lunar) New Year (the year of the mouse) began in January when Lisa’s parents were here, but the last official events take place in February. Unfortunately, the last event, an in-home visitation, was cancelled in precaution of COVID-19. We would like stay more about CNY, but space in this report is short. Maybe we can write more next year? Suffice it to say the lights are beautiful, the lessons (including the children learning a Chinese greeting) are priceless, and the souls are generous.



CURRENT COURSEWORK AT FOUR SEAS COLLEGE

WWW.FOURSEAS.EDU.SG

2ND HALF OF 1ST TERM (FEBRUARY 20, 2020-APRIL 10, 2020)

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
PREACHER & HIS WORK I (THE CHRISTIAN MAN)
NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH
ENGLISH GRAMMAR I

ALL FEMALE STUDENTS

THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN

SECOND YEAR STUDENTS

WISDOM LITERATURE (JOB-SONG OF SOLOMON)
CHURCH HISTORY
TOPICAL BIBLE STUDIES
NEW TESTAMENT GREEK

Thank you to all our generous supporters (Matthew 5:16)