“Bless The Lord, O my soul;
And all that is within me,
Bless His holy name.”

Psalm 103:1
He is risen!

Easter 2020 looked a bit different for most of us. Here are how some in our church celebrated this all important event.

From Shaun & Evie Beach:

The Beach’s Easter 2020

This year, Easter Sunday began way earlier than I expected. It was still dark when my sleep was disturbed by the sound of one-year-old Eamon waking up at least an hour or two before his normal time. As a mom, this is not the ideal start to a serene morning. That is, until I realized what he was doing. He was singing! Although he was not able to talk yet, little Eamon was singing his heart out. Hearing him praise Jesus was worth every minute of sleep loss that morning!

Over the past week, we had been hiding resurrection eggs in our yard for our three oldest kids to find. Instead of candy, they had little items in them that reminded us of the different events Jesus encountered leading up to His death and resurrection. Every morning I hid three eggs, one for each of the kids to find, and then we would talk about the events they represented while eating breakfast. On Easter morning, we finished up with the last egg being empty for the resurrection. At least, it was supposed to be empty. Laurel, already knowing it had nothing in it, had slipped a little paper heart inside for us to discover when it was time to open it. When asked what it was supposed to mean, she simply said, “Because that’s what it’s all about!”

So as you see, our day had some sweet moments, intermingled with a lot of imperfection. Only half of our “Resurrection” buns were actually empty tombs! And after the egg hunt, I had to talk with a pouting child who thought he should have found the last one. But isn’t that the point of Easter? Our sin overcome by Jesus’ sinlessness. Our imperfection made perfect because of HIS flawless performance. After all, when “It is finished!” there is nothing more we can add!

From Ralph & Debora Claassen:

With the stay-at-home order, we knew Easter would be different this year. None of the kids would be here, but I wanted them to have a taste of the usual. So I started by getting out my plastic eggs and adding a quarter to each – doing 6 for each grandchild. The parents would have to hide them this year and not me. Then I added other things to their boxes. I shared the candy in the house (except what I liked), added pop that was the kinds they drank when here on Sundays, a box of kid cereal, Easter coloring pages, and chocolate rabbits. Then I made elephant tacks (cinnamon roll like), dinner rolls, and deviled eggs. There were also four April birthdays that we could not celebrate here, so got those gifts ready.

Then the Saturday before Easter, we headed out about 4. Alan and Katie’s was the first stop. It was fun to see them all and talk for a little bit. But no hugs. Next was Matthew and Julie’s place. They had chairs set up in the garage, 6 feet apart so we stayed and visited with them a bit. Next was Jim and Lori’s place. Along with their Easter box, I had shoebox things I had found in my cleaning, so delivered them too. We stood outside and visited a little. Then it was on to Derek and Lindsey’s. They sat on the steps and we stood on the sidewalk, although it’s hard for the kids. Some had to be reminded to stay back. But we behaved. Our last stop was Burger King for supper out. We got our food and sat in the parking lot to eat. That way the food is still warm.

The next day it was just the two of us – we watched our church service and enjoyed our ham and mashed potatoes. But the house was way too quiet. We all still celebrated the same Good News of Christ’s resurrections – just in five locations.
Q: Why are oak trees so forgiving?

A: Every May they “turn over a new leaf”.

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He is risen!

From Wilmer & Alvera Thiessen:

This was the plan:
Chad and Karen and their family were going to come to Kansas on Friday, April 10. This was my birthday. My gift from Wilmer is a short white vinyl fence to replace the deteriorating wood fence behind my flower bed. My hope was to have the family help install it.

Saturday, the 11th we were going to have our family dinner at church at noon. The number of people we were planning for was 29 (Family increasing in number and height and the house is getting crowded). In the afternoon, we would come to our place for the “egg hunt” and games, and visiting.

This was reality:
Chad and Karen and family couldn't come. Social distancing and the “stay at home” order changed those plans.

On my birthday, seven grandkids came to play and Grandpa made pancakes for my birthday cake ($7 + 2 = 9$ people). I actually found a number 7 and a number 6 candle and put it on the pancake and they sang “Happy Birthday.” The fence mentioned about has not arrived yet, but it is ordered. Oh yes, I got 100+ birthday wishes on Facebook!!

Easter Sunday
Live Streaming Church
Nap for Grandpa and Grandma
Rainy cold day so the postponed egg hunt was held inside, followed by a taco supper.
Maybe the first time in 50 years I haven't bought an Easter lily.

Wilmer and I ended Easter Sunday by watching the movie, "Jesus" by the Sight and Sound Theater. It was a good way to focus on why we have Easter--All because of Jesus’ love for us.

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He is risen!

From Carlen & Katie Busenitz:

Despite all the changes to our "normal" patterns of celebrating, our Easter was a wonderful one! Our lessened commitments gave more time to focus on getting ready for Easter, instead of it sneaking up on us as in the past! During Lent, as a family, we read through a book called, "Journey to the Cross", containing a daily reading and devotional, which was gospel-centered and challenging. All the dread and fear on the news really seemed to highlight the joy and hope we have because of the Resurrection, so it seemed doubly meaningful this year! Since we have just made the move to the farm, it was exciting to plan for our first holiday there, yet sad because we had wanted to host a large family gathering.

Yet, much of our celebration remained the same as other years. We have a tradition to make Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday. Katie wanted to delve into her Polish traditions as well, and made a Polish Easter bread for Easter morning. It is interesting how much traditional Polish food is similar to our Mennonite fare! Another tradition in our family is our own campfire sunrise service. So we got up early and got the fire going and the eggs and sausage cooking, while the kids hunted their Easter baskets in the yard. Carlen got creative with the hiding places and Eben had some climbing to do before he got any candy! The food was done just as it started raining, so we didn't get to sing any Easter hymns by the fire, but we were all done with our breakfast in time to join the live stream service and joined the singing then! The rain made for a quiet afternoon, but Mom came over to join us in the evening, which made the day even more special! After the little ones were put to bed, we ended the day watching the Sight and Sound Life of Jesus movie, which was a great way to end a day celebrating our hope of eternal life!
He is risen!

From Bitty Wiebe:

Over the Easter weekend, I really channeled my inner Betty Crocker (Bitty Crocker?) and had a great time creating various culinary masterpieces of the extra-sugary variety.

I grew up eating Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday, which is a spiced roll with currants (or raisins, if you happen to be fresh out of currants), with a salt-dough cross baked into the tops of each roll. In recent years, I’ve caved to the whims of my progeny and have begun substituting a frosted cross (powdered sugar, lemon zest, and lemon juice) in lieu of the more traditional salt dough, and while the departure from tradition does cause some minor inner turmoil, it’s quickly appeased by the punch of citrus goodness received when bitten into.

I also experimented with my sugar cookie recipe (substituting different extracts for a diverse flavor profile), and had a lot of fun cutting them into spring-themed shapes and decorating them with my girls. They’re definitely in the "more is more" camp when it comes to frosting, so the thickness ratio of cookie to frosting was about 1:3.

Then, when I saw the "bunny Peeps in the garden" variation on the oh-so-popular dirt 'n worms cup in a magazine, I knew I had to replicate it for Easter! The layers were chocolate pudding, crushed Oreos, something green for "plants" in the garden (I used leftover green frosting from the sugar cookies), with a cheeky Peter Rabbit or Benjamin Bunny keeping watch over the lot.

Not wanting to overwhelm my family with chocolaty goodness, I served these with chocolate milk bunnies. I purchased hollow milk chocolate bunnies, snipped off the very tops of the ears, and filled them with chocolate milk and a straw. These were far and away my kids' favorite treat for the weekend.

For Easter luncheon, I prepared two desserts: a lemon curd pavlova, and my piece de resistance, a berry chantilly cake. Pavlovas are one of my favorite desserts, and while not always ideal for our humid climate, this one was very fresh and springy with the lemon curd, and the blueberry garnish. The berry chantilly cake stole the show, however. The delicate white cake was layered with raspberry preserves, fresh berries, and a mascarpone cheese frosting, and boasted a fresh berry garnish on the top, which my berry-loving son thought was most especially for his benefit.

I had a great time baking up a storm for Easter, to me perhaps the most meaningful of our holy days, as I pondered afresh the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I hope everyone else had a blessed Easter as well, and feel free to give me a shout if you're interested in any of my recipes!

Q: If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring?
A: Pilgrims.

Q: What goes up when May rain comes down?
A: An umbrella.
From Orlando & Mabel Penner:

Orlando and I spent a quiet Easter Sunday at our home. The weather wasn’t favorable to be outdoors either. We listened to our Emmaus live-streamed Easter service with Pastor Tim Mace, music, Scripture reading and prayer. Then we listened to Dr. David Jeremiah’s sermon. At 12:30 we worshipped with the Clackamas Bible Church in Portland, OR where Sheldon & Susan Penner attend. Sheldon does the video-taping for their service to be on YouTube. With the 2 hour difference in our time zones, we are able to worship at both services.

By now it was almost mid-afternoon so our noon lunch was simple. It was Hot Cross Buns that I baked on Saturday. Making Hot Cross Buns for Easter is a tradition I grew up with and have maintained it all our married life. I snip the top of the rolls with a scissors in the shape of a cross just before baking. It is then easier to frost them since the cross shape is already there, using red to represent Christ’s blood or white to represent the risen Christ’s white grave clothes.

For our Easter supper, our daughter Noreen brought us food she fixed for all of us. With the other good food, it included deviled eggs the grandchildren had dyed on Saturday.

Easter was special again as we would frequently say to each other, “Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!” even as the two of us celebrated together alone in our home.

A favorite song of Orlando & Mabel

Come Praise The Lord With Me

Chorus:
Come praise the Lord with me,
Come praise the Lord!
Worthy is He to be praised and adored;
Let us together His glories proclaim,
Joining our voices to honor His name!
Cruel was the death
He died when He was crucified;
Pardon He did provide - pardon He did provide.
Though in a tomb He lay,
Death could not hold its prey;
He tore the bars away - He tore the bars away.
Tho' in His body He carries the scars,
“He is alive” we can shout to the stars!
Shout to the stars!
Someday He's coming from heaven's bright throne.
Coming earth's kingdoms to claim as His own,
Coming in glory with banners unfurled!
All eyes shall see Him!

Ending:
He'll rule the world!
Jesus will rule the world!
Come, praise the Lord!

CCLI Song # 2320
John W. Peterson
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He is risen!

From Doug & Helen Wiebe:

Doug and I have always invited our children and grandchildren over to celebrate Easter. However, this year our Easter Sunday has lasted for quite a few weeks! Because of the 10 or less rule, we decided to invite each family on a different Sunday.

This year only the families that lived around our area came.

Ben & Kristen did not come because of his responsibilities at the Blue Mound Church, plus the COVID 19 rules (traveling too far away from home).

Jon and Staci did not come either because of the responsibilities with their Commercial Feedlot, plus the fact that they now are foster parents to eight children ages 2-12 years. That group alone already numbers 10!

When we had each of the children and grandchildren over for watching the service together, we invite them for Brunch at 10:00 a.m. and then the noon meal at 12:30 p.m.

We did miss the time when we and all the children and grandchildren could be together at one time.

We need to remember the best thing about Easter is remembering Christ’s dying for our sin, and rising again to give us everlasting life for all who believe in Him (John 3:16). For Christ’s deep, deep love for us we are truly grateful.
From Bruce & Enid Penner:

None of our normal Easter traditions were possible this year. On the Smith side for many years the family has gathered at my parents’ house in Wichita on Saturday and the cousins colored eggs and then we had several rounds of egg hunts. For many of those years, we had a baby or 2 coloring their eggs on the tray of a highchair. Then we had supper together, which included deviled eggs and potato salad with a tint of color. As the cousins got older, they still clung to their beloved tradition. On the Penner side, for years the extended family met at Walter and Evelyn’s on Easter Sunday for a midday meal. There everyone brought plastic eggs filled with candy for the egg hunt. In recent years, others have hosted the celebration, but without small children, the egg hunt did not survive. There was, however, still candy at the Bruce house.

This year we had a small group for supper on Saturday evening with Evelyn, Toby, Julie and Wes. When I asked if they wanted to color eggs, they said, “No, without any cousins, it won’t be the same.” It’s about the people, I guess. There had to be potato salad, but it was just regular; no color.

I’m sure the Penner gathering will be back next year. And my mom has said they will host the coloring and hunting, but not at their “house.” A new tradition will start at their new independent living apartment in Hesston.

HAULING HORSES TO ALASKA - Jared Thiessen

Early on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, my younger brother, Randall Thiessen, and I left for Alaska to haul six horses up to Victory Bible Camp. Brad Busenitz had been working on gathering just the right horses for the past six months and we loaded them up early in the morning in the middle of one of the first spring storms. We had an uneventful first leg of the trip to Wes and Andrea Busenitz’s place in Wyoming. After getting fed and spending the night there, we left early in the morning, hoping to make it to the Canadian border. We encountered a lot of unexpected snow that ended up closing some interstates, but thanks to some backroads, we did make it to the border.

Crossing the border was by far my biggest concern leading up to the trip because crossing with horses can be quite the hassle (just ask my dad)! Thanks to a lot of people praying, the Lord allowed us to get through easily and without any delay. That night we stopped at Joel Sewells (a missionary friend in Southern Canada) and woke up to twelve inches of snow. After putting on winter tires and blanketing the horses, we drove to Ft. St. John and stayed with some friends there. That night the temperature dropped to 35 degrees below zero. From there we made the 36 hour drive to Victory with two quick stops to rest the horses and swim in a natural hot springs in the middle of the Yukon. The Alaskan border also went well and we arrived at Victory Sunday evening, March 15. We unloaded the horses at the barn and Caleb Hein was very glad to see them safe and sound at their new home. Randall and I spent a few days in Alaska visiting friends and snow machining, but our trip was cut short due to the possibility of the borders closing. We made a very quick trip back home, and Randall even got a few hours driving. Thanks so much to all who took time to pray for us and for those who gave financially to make this happen. We are excited to hear about the ways God uses these horses to bring campers to Him in the summertime.
Ngina DeJong
Hobbies: Sleeping, cooking, baking, and eating
Plans for next year: The plan now is for her to stay out of school for a year and we are praying she can find a job and work for the year.
Favorite food and/or candy: Pizza, sour patch watermelon

Abbie Entz
Hobbies: Reading
Plans for next year: Attend Butler Community College and get involved in a Bible study on campus. During the summer I am looking forward to spending time with my family and friends, as well as counseling at Camp Good News.
Favorite food and/or candy: Ice cream and anything chocolate

Paul Fasnacht
Hobbies: Riding horse
Plans for next year: Work and missions trip, possibly Torchbearers
Favorite food and/or candy: Pizza and Reese's
Jared Harder

Hobbies: Flying RC airplanes, Anything motors — working on four wheelers, motorcycles, you get the idea!

Plans: Will be attending LeTourneau University this fall to major in Professional Pilot with an emphasis in Aviation Maintenance. While at LeTourneau, Jared is excited to be part of the Jazz and Pep band, as well as Automotive Society.

Favorite food and/or candy: Mountain Dew, honey buns, Cheddar popcorn, carrot sticks (WAY just kidding on that last one!! 😁) BBQ ribs, hash brown casserole, pizza, red and white pasta, bosco sticks.

Brooke Wiebe

Hobbies: Playing sports, doing calligraphy

Plans for next year are still unknown.

Favorite foods and/or candy: Twix

Editor’s Note: Brooke was named a Class 1A all-state honorable mention in girls basketball by the KBCA. Congratulations!

Youth Retreat
June 26-28
with speaker Ryan Adams
LIFE STORY OF HELEN BUSENITZ

Helen Justina Busenitz was born on February 4, 1941, to William L. and Emma (Wiebe) Busenitz. She grew up on the family farm southeast of Whitewater, Kansas.

Being the third-oldest of eleven children as well as the first daughter, she learned responsibility early by helping care for her eight younger brothers and sisters. The twin brothers were born when Helen was seven years old, and she and her younger sister Theresa helped a great deal in their care.

The family faithfully attended Sunday School and church at the Emmaus Mennonite Church. God used daily family devotions, annual summer Vacation Bible Schools, Whitewater revival tent meetings, and the daily Back to the Bible Broadcast radio programs to help her realize she was a sinner and needed God's forgiveness.

At the age of eleven, on the last evening of the Missionary Conference in her church, Helen trusted in the work of Christ on the cross as her only way of being saved from sin. When she was sixteen, she was baptized and became a lifelong member of the Emmaus Mennonite Church near Whitewater, Kansas.

After doubting the assurance of her salvation for many years, she expressed her concern to one of her teachers, who explained 1 John 5:11-12 to her. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life. And this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” This verse confirmed her assurance of having eternal life.

Helen attended the one-room Claypool School in Butler County for grade school and attended high school at Berean Academy in Elbing, Kansas, graduating in 1959.

Her desire to be a missionary began in childhood. For further Biblical education to prepare for mission work, she attended Grace Bible Institute (later Grace University) in Omaha, Nebraska. It was during her last semester, while attending a weekend retreat for college students at Gospel Missionary Union headquarters (now Avant Ministries), that the Lord laid Ecuador on her heart. She claimed John 15:16: “Jesus said, ‘Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.’”

After graduating in 1964 with a Bachelor of Religious Education degree, Helen applied to and was accepted by Gospel Missionary Union. This was followed by a year of Spanish language school at Rio Grande Bible Institute in Edinburg, Texas. She arrived in Ecuador, South America, on August 17, 1966, and lived most of her 46 years of service in Ecuador in the coastal city of Babahoyo.

As she began her missionary career, her motto verse was John 15:16, quoted earlier. When hard times arose, Helen would rely on the truth of this verse. No person convinced her to go, but rather the Lord had laid that country on her heart. God gave peace confirming that this was her place of ministry. A second verse which helped her to remain faithful in difficulties was 1 Corinthians 4:2: “Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.”

Helen loved the Ecuadorian people and invested many hours preparing and teaching Bible studies and lessons, annually organizing DVBS weeks held in her home, and making her own flannel graph and song visuals for the children’s classes. She taught all age levels, from pre-kindergarten children to young people to university students and adults.

In June, 2012, Helen retired from Ecuador after 46 years of service. She retained a deep concern that the believers she had taught would remain true to the Lord and to the truth of the Bible.

Once back in the United States, she made her home at the Presbyterian Manor in Newton, Kansas. After the evening meal at the Manor, she spent hours at the computer keeping in contact with her Ecuadorian friends and praying for them.

Helen leaves behind siblings and in-laws William Busenitz, Fran Busenitz, Henry Ortmann, Arnold and Velma Busenitz, Emma and Arlowe Becker, Barb Busenitz, Patti Busenitz, David and Isabelle Busenitz, Kady and Jan Schubert, Christina Busenitz, many nieces, nephews, their children, and a host of friends in Ecuador and the United States.

Waiting for Helen’s arrival in heaven were her parents, Willie and Emma Busenitz; her three brothers, Gilbert, Robert and Herbert Busenitz; her sister Theresa Ortmann; and sister-in-law, Grace Busenitz. Helen passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 18, 2020, at the age of 79 years.

The last seven years of Helen’s life, she was not able to walk. But on Saturday she left her wheelchair behind and is now walking with Jesus hand-in-hand.
GOOD NEWS CLUB UNDER “HOUSE ARREST”

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.” Ephesians 4:1

The lessons were about Paul. The last one taught the principles that Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the Armor of God. The previous week we learned how Paul had been sent as a prisoner to Rome, being brought there by God even through a shipwreck. Now he was there, but still a prisoner under “house arrest,” probably in a regular house, but not able to leave, guarded by a soldier. He could not get out to visit with people that he had taught before. So … he got creative. He did the next best thing: he wrote a letter.

As I told the story, I could not help but draw the parallel to our current situation. Here we were, each in our houses, not able to get together in person, but getting creative about how we continued to interact. I was in my own home, talking to my phone for a video Good News Club!

In March, our Good News Club at Peabody-Burns Elementary School had our last Club before Spring Break. Jessica Busenitz and I waved goodbye – “See you in two weeks!” – or so we thought. We were two lessons into the stories about Saul/Paul. That day we had tried an experiment acting out the story of Paul and Silas imprisoned, singing at midnight, and ending with the salvation of the jailer and his family. The experiment was … well, a bit chaotic … but I think they enjoyed it. And then … the Spring Break That Never Ended happened. No more school for the year. No more Good News Club.

We had started having church virtually … so why not have virtual Good News Club? CEF put together recommendations for using the Zoom app for continuing Clubs, but that sounded a bit too complicated to me. I anticipated a few too many “glitches” to make it seem like a viable option. Sending a video via email I knew would not work as the file would be too large. YouTube was a little too public for my taste. Emmaus was using Facebook Live videos successfully by then, so I decided that is what I would try. I sent messages to all the parents and guardians, and received some positive responses, so I set up a private Facebook group and Jessica was on board to continue the verse instructions as well.

We decided to “go live” on Thursdays at our regular time, and did so for the remaining three lessons. There were a few glitches (like realizing that verse visuals on selfie mode turn out backwards on the screen!) but all in all it was a fun adventure.

A few of the children joined us “live” some of the time. But a few more have gone back to watch later at their convenience. I followed up by mailing out a packet of the papers for the week, with maybe a small treat. This past Monday I put together “goodie bags” for each of the children, including a paperback Bible I had planned to give each at the end of the year, a couple small tracts and a string “friendship bracelet” in Wordless Book colors, along with some trinkets and edible treats of course! I let them know ahead of time, and then drove around to all of their homes and was able to connect with most of them and some of their moms outside in their yards and on porches. I rigged up what I called my “Hug-o-Matic” – a pair of pool noodles with cardboard cutouts of my hands taped to the ends – to “hug” them and give “high fives” from a safe distance! They all seemed to get a kick out of that.

Ministry and connection does not stop as we have seen time and again in our community. God provided a way to stay connected even in the midst of “social distancing.”

Thank you for all your prayers and encouragement as we have now gone through two years of Good News Club at Peabody-Burns Elementary School. When restrictions ease, I hope to invite them all to a gathering at the park. And please pray that Camp Good News will be allowed to go on as planned. I believe we have four children planning to attend! - Ellen Rohl
SMALL TOWN SCHOOL MAKES BIG SPLASH IN KANSAS THEATRE WORLD

Nestled among the trees, on the north side of 45th Street, sits a school known as Sunrise Christian Academy. This school is no stranger to the spotlight, with its many athletic success stories. However, what many may not know are its many successes on the stage as well. For 26 years, Sunrise has produced high quality drama productions and for the last 18 years, since the founding of the Jester Awards Program, Sunrise has received nominations every year.

On the weekend of March 14th, Sunrise performed its spring musical, Hello, Dolly! with Grace Harmon as its leading actress. A favorite in the theatre world, Hello, Dolly! is the story of Dolly Levi, a matchmaker, who involves herself in the lives of Horace Vandergelder (Josh Kelley) and Ambrose Kemper (Zach Garraway). Hello, Dolly! is filled with hilarity and romance and was presented well by the Sunrise Drama Department. So well, that they received 13 Jester nominations, the most of any participating school.

The Jester Awards Program was created by Music Theatre Wichita as a way “to honor excellence in high school musical theatre”. The highlight of the Jester Awards Program is the awards ceremony that takes place each spring. The 2019-20 season of the Jester Awards includes 48 schools who competed in 25 different categories. While this year’s ceremony will be broadcast May 3rd, online, the Hello, Dolly! cast and crew will be in their homes, watching and listening. They’ll be sitting in anticipation as the winners are announced in the categories of Leading Actress, Supporting Actor, Ensemble/Chorus, Overall Production, Production Number, Technical Achievement, Scenic Design, Stage Crew, Artistic Guest, Sound Design, Lighting Design, Costume Design and Program Design. Whether they win or not, each member of the Hello, Dolly! cast and crew can walk away knowing they have contributed to the legacy of excellence that is the Sunrise Christian Academy Drama Department.

*Our own Lori Goebel is up for Costume Design.

BUSENITZ COVID GOLF CLASSIC

Pastor Tim encouraged us to be "creative" during this time of the "stay-at-home" order so that is what Russ Busenitz and his boys did one Sunday afternoon. They decided to have their own Busenitz Covid Golf Classic. All of them enjoy the game of golf, but since we were suppose to stay at home they decided to have their own golf challenge in the field adjacent to our place. They put flags in the field and used an artificial, portable green to drive off of. For those of you who know golf terminology, they played "closest to the pin." As I saw it, there were a lot of "roughs", "hooks", and "slices", but not much "birdies", "pars", or "bogies." Whatever you want to say, they were creative and they did have a lot of fun. And yes, they are looking forward to the time when they can all play together on a REAL golf course.
SOME THOUGHTS ON THE 1918 FLU PANDEMIS FROM RALPH CLAASSEN

One evening several weeks ago, Harris Entz called me to refer to me a question that his son Blake had asked him, “Did the older generation of our youth talk about the flu pandemic of 1918?” Harris did not recall any reference to it and asked if I did.

My reply was that, yes, I did and so I told him of the stories I had heard. Because of that conversation, I proceeded to call several older people (finding people older than myself is becoming increasingly difficult!). To my amazement, I found that almost no one remembers stories from their parents or grandparents about the 1918 flu.

So I will first relate stories that I heard, then I will tell what I learned from others, and then I will compare the differences between our present situation and 1918.

There were four people in this area that I know of that died from the flu of 1918. The first was Dora Claassen, the 10 year old daughter of Abraham and Lena Claassen. Abraham was the brother of John H. Claassen, my grandfather and also the father of Arthur G. Claassen who was 8 years old at the time. Since Dora was a cousin to my uncles and aunts you would have thought that they would have talked to their children about her.

My mother told me that Aunt Lena, Dora’s mother, was very ill also and when she learned that Dora had died, she was ready to give up also.

The second person from this area to die was Henry Regier, the uncle of Daryl Regier, Carolyn Busenitz, and Selma Entz. He was 24 years old.

The third person was Mrs. John H. Regier, the grandmother of Eleanor Wiebe, Velma Claassen and Verna Unruh. She was also 24 years old.

The fourth person was John Watson from the Potwin area. He was the great uncle of Jerry Peterson, former manager of Circle E Feedlot. He was a draftee at Fort Riley, Kansas and Walter Claassen, Donovan’s father was also up there and accompanied John’s body home on the train.

There were five young men from Emmaus who were drafted to serve in World War I who were held at Camp Funston in Fort Riley as conscientious objectors. They were Walter Claassen, C. P. Regier (Daryl’s uncle), Emil Wiebe (Elvin’s father), Gus Dyck and John Andres (Edwin’s father). The significance of Camp Funston is that it is generally regarded that the pandemic started there and spread throughout the world as a result of troop movements to the war front in Europe. While these five young men were held there, none succumbed to the flu although some may have gotten sick. My father also told me that his father had helped care for neighbors who were ill.

I have learned a few more stories from some people. Agnes Harder told me that the director of the Historical Library at Bethel College had done a search of the college student newspaper for the fall and winter of 1918. The college closed school for a few weeks in early November, then opened up for two weeks and closed again on December 8 as many students were getting sick. If they had not closed, the dormitories would have had to become field hospitals because of the surge of illness. It was during this time that Henry Regier got sick and died. Also, of interest to us is that two students, Ella Wiebe and Justina Wiebe were hospitalized. Ella was the aunt of Wilbert Wiebe, Walter Busentiz and Paul Entz and Justina Wiebe later became Mrs. Ernest Claassen.

The differences between 1918 and 2020 are very great. First, 1918 was influenza; 2020 is not. Second, in 1918, it was the young people who died. The life expectancy in the United States fell by 12 years as a result of the 675,000 deaths in this country. In 2020, it is older people who are more likely to die because Covid-19 attacks many other organs besides the lungs.

Third, the Covid-19 virus is the most infectious virus in our lifetime. This is because a person can become infectious up to 48 hours before they show symptoms or they may never show symptoms. But others may be hospitalized or sick for a month or more. Of the 950,000 cases in the U.S., only 110,000 have recovered.

Fourth, the death rate in 1918 was 17 per 1000 cases. The death rate for the seasonal flu that we experience each year is 1 per 1000 cases. In the first two months of this pandemic, it was estimated that the death rate was 34 per 1000, although some in this country thought it would only be 10 per 1000. I am keeping a running total of cases and deaths for the US and the world. As of today (April 26), the rate is 56 per 1000 in the US and 70 per 1000 for the world. Both ratios continue to go up each day. Two weeks ago, it was 39 for the US and 61 for the world. These figures show that 2020 is almost four times as lethal as 1918 was.

If anyone has more stories about 1918 or if you want to discuss the 2020 pandemic, please call me at 620-752-3639.
COVID-19  It appears that the stay-at-home will soon end. We don't know what the next part of the picture will look like but as Pastor Tim has encouraged us tirelessly, these words from Mark Binder were also an encouragement to me and hope they are to you. "Many of you have had your life routines significantly impacted as well. In the midst of all the changes and uncertainties there is One who never changes. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His kingdom has not closed, His harvest still needs workers, His loving kindness still never ceases, His power is still uncontainable, His love is still unfathomable, His glory still fills the universe, His light still overcomes the darkness, He is still the refuge and strength in time of trouble, His presence still is with us, He still knows each and every detail about us, He still cares for us, He still is the beginning and the end, He still is all in all, and He is still all we need. Our celebration of Easter this year was with a smaller community, but it is still true that the resurrection of Jesus changes everything. HE IS ALIVE! I was struck again this year by how futile it was to guard His tomb. No power on earth or anywhere else could keep Him dead. That same power is at work still today in us. No restrictions can ever keep us from the newness of life we have due to His resurrection from the dead. Nothing can separate us from His love, and nothing can ever change His victory. The works He has prepared beforehand for us to do have not been stopped by a virus. They may look different than we thought, but that is okay because we serve at His command. He knows, and that is enough."

Q: Why did the farmer bury all his money?
A: To make his soil rich!

Q: How do you make a waterbed more bouncy?
A: Add spring water.

Eden Bonnie Busenitz
April 10, 2020
Parents: Austin & Krista Busenitz
Grandma: Barb Busenitz

Finley Claire Busenitz
April 22, 2020
Parents: Aaron & Leah Busenitz

Madison Faith Pearce
April 28, 2020
Parents: Randall & Emily Pearce
Grandparents: Jim & Liz Pearce
Doug & Julia Entz

MISSIONS CONFERENCE
JULY 19-22, 2020
WITH KEITH & JEANNETTE SHUBERT

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