



# JUNE 2020 UPDATE

## **FELLOWSHIP DENVER FAMILY AND FRIENDS:**

A lot has changed in three months. Those feel like the most inadequate words I've ever written, but I don't know how else to summarize the upheaval we're all experiencing.

When I penned this letter in February, we were just weeks away from the widespread breakout of COVID-19 turned economic turmoil. And we were just a couple of months away from the breakout of racial injustice, turned more trauma for the Black community, turned grief for all Americans. "Stay at home" and "lockdown" and "social distancing" and "curfew" and "let's Zoom tonight" were not our way of life.

As our City of Man is shaking, I'm experiencing something else, more subtle perhaps, but really real: The City of God is not. In our little outpost of the Kingdom, it looks like this: God is still with us and we are still being the church. We're praying, "gathering" for worship and fellowship, helping the hurting, discipling children, counseling the grieving, learning about race and justice, working on our life with God and life together.

I supposed I shouldn't be surprised by this because I'm a church historian. But it still amazes me! The Church has often gotten better under pressure. The Lord has often used the fragility of the surrounding social word to purify his people.

One more example we've seen of the church's resilience is your steadfastness in generosity. When we started First to the Lord in December 2019, we had no idea what 2020 held. In hindsight, I can see that the Lord was preparing us to be the church in these days! In the pages that follow, you'll see just a few snapshots of He's still working IN us and THROUGH us. I hope it gives you hope that the best is yet to come.

With love,



Hunter Beaumont  
Lead Pastor

# THE LORD'S WORK **IN** US

## JONATHAN & BETHANY'S STORY

Trusting the Lord is a whole-life process. When we trust him with one part of life, it often helps us trust him with other parts too. That's what Jonathan and Bethany Kuenne have been learning on their First to the Lord journey.

"I've not really been part of a church before Fellowship for any length of time," explains Bethany. "I didn't grow up in the church and have never been a member of a church before." Because of this, she didn't know what to expect when we started studying generosity. "I think some of my anxieties around it didn't come until after we had committed. Then we were sitting in Fellowship Group one night and the weight of a dollar figure hit me."

"One of my bigger skills is self-preservation," adds Jonathan with a wry grin. "We struggled with the question, 'How much is too much?' How much do we have to protect ourselves financially compared to how much we want to give? This process tested my self-preservation and my tendency to say 'no' and consider myself first."

Since then, the Kuennes are having to trust God in other ways. Bethany was already living with lupus, a chronic auto-immune disease. When the COVID-19 outbreak hit, they had to isolate to protect her health. Then their income was impacted too.

How do you trust God with all of that? Bethany explains it like this: "God had been working in my heart to allow him to be God to me – all parts of him! Not just the God who provides and sustains but also the God who comforts! I was really afraid to bring to him all of my pain and fears. I was questioning why I didn't feel comforted by Him. I knew he was loving, but I didn't feel comfort. My counselor charged me, 'Have you let him? Have you brought him anything you're upset about? Your lupus? Your fears? So that he can comfort you?' I realized I had learned that through First to the Lord. ***I can bring him everything, including my pain. That's an ongoing process. At first it was about lupus, now it's about COVID and being isolated. But now I have a way to engage my God through my fears.***"

*Jonathan and Bethany Kuenne live in Ken Caryl with their daughters Loma (5) and Lina (4).*



# THE LORD'S WORK **THROUGH** US



## RESPONDING TO COVID-19

When COVID-19 shutdowns started, we began setting aside a portion of all First to the Lord giving to help people in need, both inside and outside Fellowship Denver.

## ▼ RESPONDING TO COVID-19 *(continued)*

Through a Temporary Financial Assistance program, we've provided grants from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. Here's what some of our neighbors and church family are saying about their experience:

- *"Even though I am not a member of Fellowship Denver, I have rendered child care services for parents attending either trainings or meetings at church for about 6 months and was registered to continue with this service before the shutdown...**I will ever be grateful for this assistance and pray that God blesses you as you become His feet and arms in reaching out to those in need.**"*
- *"I've never had to choose between which bills to pay before and it had me confused, frustrated with God, depressed and ignoring my friends, family, and bible study group. I am so lucky I joined the Monday Night Immortals...A couple of the ladies reached out and one of them told me about the opportunity to receive money from the church. I couldn't believe it! **Just when I was doubting God and His plan, He showed me another way.** Thank you all so much for making it possible and being His shining lights that fill up the darkness of doubt."*
- *"I am an international student from Bangladesh studying at Denver Seminary. Due to the coronavirus crisis, I have recently lost my source of income because the seminary needed to close. This put me and my family from Bangladesh who support me in additional financial stress. **Your donation tangibly helped me pay my urgent medical, car, and housing costs. I thank you for offering practical hope and lessening our burden.**"*
- *"I truly appreciate the help and look forward to being on the giving end rather than the receiving end as quickly as possible."*

## ▼ INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHURCH LEADERS



All hospitals care for the sick. Some hospitals add another line to their mission statement – to train and prepare the next generation of doctors. These are often called “teaching hospitals.”

Fellowship Denver was started by the generosity of a “teaching church,” and it's always been our hope to not only do ministry but also train future church leaders. Last summer, we started an internship program with this in mind. Interns are paid a stipend, work alongside our staff in an area of ministry, and participate in Core Track training alongside other young leaders.

This summer, we graduate our first two interns and welcome five new ones! Our graduating interns are Angi Pratt and Eric Bloom. Angi is joining our staff as Children and Family Ministries Coordinator. Eric will be helping plant Radiant Hill Church in Westminster.



New interns joining us in August will be:

- **Clare Hickey** – Student Ministries
- **Jessie Hartley** – Family Ministry
- **Larry Phillips-Thomas** – Pastoral Ministry
- **Rashide Russell** – Pastoral Ministry
- **Saada Hilts** – Pastoral Care

# FIRST TO THE LORD ➤ PROGRESS

**FIRST TO THE LORD IS A TWO-YEAR  
INITIATIVE TO ACCELERATE GOSPEL  
MOVEMENT IN DENVER  
AND BEYOND.**

## UPDATE

DECEMBER 1, 2019 – MAY 31, 2020

GOAL TO DATE:

**\$1.63M**

ACTUAL TO DATE:

**\$1.58M**



- Grow our pastoral staff so as to fully **equip and release our members for ministry**
- Fuel our transition to a **multi-congregational church**
- Supply start-up costs and pastoral leadership for our **second congregation in North Metro**
- Support church planting and **missions** in Colorado, the western U.S., and around the world
- Resource local ministry to our **most vulnerable neighbors**

### HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT GIVING?

Contact [lia@fellowshipdenver.org](mailto:lia@fellowshipdenver.org) or 303.862.4082

### AUTOMATE THE IMPORTANT

Set up a weekly or monthly giving schedule at [fellowshipdenver.org/give](https://fellowshipdenver.org/give)