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**Kerl June 2020 Prayer Update**

1 message

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**Kerl Prayer Update**  
**June 2020**

Greetings from Lyon! As we begin this Prayer Update we acknowledge the tragic death of George Floyd and all that his death represents concerning systematic racism present not only in the United States but in many countries around the world. We lament George Floyd's death and pray that the current worldwide outrage will unleash real change to address deep seated racism wherever it exists.

**BLACK LIVES MATTER....ALL LIVES MATTER!!!**

A few thoughts from Letha:

*For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. Isaiah 41:13*

There is a lot to be fearful about in these days, Covid-19, racial injustice, riots, the economy, loss of jobs & community, transitions, and the list could go on. This verse has been a comfort to me during these tumultuous days. I... we, don't have to walk alone in the present nor the future. He takes our hand. We have definitely sensed the hand of God upon us during these past months of social isolation and much uncertainty.

In March our travels came to an abrupt stop. Multiple trips where canceled.

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31				
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			1	2	3	4									1	2	3	4	5	6
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26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER						
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26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Our cancelled trips for 2020

As the world slowly takes steps back into some kind of normalcy, so does France. With the easing of restrictions and nicer weather people are gathering outside. There seems to be a hunger just to be around other human beings. I am observing more acts of kindness and also explosions

of negativity from stress of all kinds. I am noticing a humanness in a country that is often viewed as a reserved and private society until you are invited in. People respond to a greeting, there are knowing looks of relief and open joy of being outside. Maybe one of the good things to come from this pandemic and time of confinement is an appreciation of what we have in our relationships with one another.

During the past months we have stayed connected with our Serve Globally colleagues and built a closer Europe team community by meeting regularly on Zoom. During 2 months of confinement we met each day from 4-5pm on an optional daily Zoom call with our Serve Globally teammates who serve Europe. We have widened our borders to have a closer connection with our Covenanters in Global Service (CIGS), Covenanters who are serving with other ministries such as InterVarsity throughout Europe in countries such as Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Greece. We have shared prayer requests, meditated on scripture, listened to how God is moving during this time and encouraged one another. We have invited our colleagues from our Serve Globally office in Chicago to meet with us on these ZOOM calls in order to get to know them better and at times to have mini workshops. We have realized how much we can do together even while we are apart. Through breakout rooms via ZOOM we have met regularly to work on projects and define our goals for our 5 spheres of ministry in Europe.

- **Evangelism in a Post-Christian Context**
- **Church Planting & Church Revitalization (Church Vitality)**
- **Ministry in the Arts**
- **Ministry in Human Trafficking**
- **Ministry among Refugees, Immigrants & Asylum Seekers**

We have strategized and sharpened one another's thinking in each area of ministry. This time has been rich and fruitful. It has been an opportunity to corporately listening to God, refining our focus in ministry which better prepares us to move into the future.

## **BIG NEWS!!!**

In late November John and I began a discernment process. My (Letha) parents' health continues to decline and their care is becoming more intense for my sister Penny, with whom they live. My father turned 95 on June 12<sup>th</sup> and my mother will turn 90 on December 30<sup>th</sup>, the day after my parent's 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. My mother has advanced dementia and my father is slowly failing. Our original plan was to return to the States in the summer of 2021. In light of my parents growing needs we have made the decision move our going back up a year and to permanently relocate back to Bellingham, Washington this summer so that we can participate in their care. Please take a moment to watch this short video announcement of our decision that we prepared for our home church, Bellingham Covenant, (password: Kerl)  
<https://vimeo.com/425969266>



**Letha's parents at her dad's 90th birthday celebration in 2015**

We will be shipping our personal belongings on June 18<sup>th</sup>. We move out of our apartment on June 24<sup>th</sup>. We fly out of Lyon on June 30<sup>th</sup> and arrive in Seattle on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Our flights back to the States have been cancelled twice. Please pray that our current flights reservations hold and that we are able to fly out on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Traveling in the midst of COVID-19 is proving to be very challenging!

This is obviously a big transition and we would appreciate your prayers for us. We are not retiring but simply relocating to Bellingham. So much

of our ministry is able to be done through e-mail, phone, SKYPE and ZOOM. We will make strategic visits back to Europe as needed. Being located back in the States will allow us to be more available to visit Covenant churches and share about the ministries taking place in Europe.

### **One more piece of news....**

Many of you have probably seen on Facebook that last week Letha fell while we were on a walk and broke her ankle! Not good timing when we are in the midst of an international move....but there never is good timing to break one's ankle! This is especially challenging for us as we are in the midst of packing down for our BIG move and facing four change of flights! We can definitely use your prayers in these coming weeks!



**Letha and her broken ankle at hospital**

### **Financial Update**

Thank you all for your continued support both financially and in prayer. We are acutely aware that many face financial challenges during this time. Please let us know how we can pray for you. During this time of financial uncertainty our support has dropped about 20% If you are interested in helping towards our support please click on this link: <https://www.covchurchgiving.com/p-271-missionaries-john-and-letha-kerl.aspx>

### **Praises:**

- Our staff have remained healthy and very busy with their various ministries
- All of our 3 children have been able to continue to work during this time
- We have enjoyed a rich time of fellowship with God during this time of limited movement.

### **Prayer requests:**

- For Letha to fully and quickly recover from her broken ankle
- Our move, that all goes well in the midst of the challenges of moving with Letha's broken ankle!
- Landing and settling in Bellingham
- Readjustment to living in the States

Thank you for following us on our journey. We are so grateful for friends and family like you who are walking alongside us and praying for us on our journey. May God bless and protect each one of you!



**Saying au revoir to Lyon!**

With grateful hearts for each one of you!

God's peace & protection,

John & Letha

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