

**John Granger, Th.D.**

Director of Missions  
**Emily Boykin**  
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# The Coffee Baptist Vision

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## April 9, 2020

**Rev. Bill Hart**  
 Moderator  
**Rev. John Gunter**  
 Hispanic Missionary  
**Steve Tipton**  
 Vineyard Manager



### A Visit With Dr. John

Someone in his mid-80s said to me the other day, "John, we've never seen anything like this before, have we?" He surely was right.

This is the first time I can remember schools being closed for a couple of months. It's the first time I can remember governmental mandates demanding the size of groups to meet or that non-essential stores be closed. It's the only time I've known when churches could not gather to worship and to pray.

Some pastors and churches have been defiant about the governmental rules. One thing we have to remember is: they are trying to help us do the things that would minimize the spread of the COVID-19.

I am grateful that in our county, we have had advance notice and warning of the concerns we now face. Before any of the Governor's mandates, our EMA Director, James Brown, and others, were helping us to come to grips with the reality of the situation that was about to take place. Some of our churches had already made decisions regarding restricting worship times and numbers because of their voiced concerns.

Quite a few of our churches have resorted to streaming messages or worship on Facebook or YouTube. This surely is not like gathering for worship, but it has helped tremendously. There have to be a lot of people who have heard the word preached or taught that ordinarily would not have done so.

As of March 30, 2020, our office is officially closed. The week preceding that, Michelle and Emily were only here to do needed work. Even now, they will have to come in to do needful things. For instance, today, Emily will have to be here to produce the newsletter and to send out radio messages. Michele will have to come in at some point this week to pay bills and to do other needful things about keeping books.

Although we will not be keeping regular office hours for the next couple of weeks, I still will be in and out of the office, as will Michele and Emily. If I can be of assistance to you, you may contact me on my cell phone, 447-2252. You may contact Emily at the Vineyard number, 762-2256.

At the Vineyard, Steve and Brad are working hard. One friend has left an excavator. They are making the best of its presence with them. Of course, groups who had planned to be at the Vineyard during these days have canceled. So, they do not have interaction with a lot of people. Neither do they have the income that normally would come during these days.

The association is on good footing financially. We are thankful to the churches for support. We are grateful to leaders who have helped us manage well.

Speaking of finances, your pastor probably does not say much about money concerns for the church. It is good for you to know that the churches' bills still come around just like they always do. It is imperative that we be good stewards during this time. If your church has the ability to receive money electronically, that's great. Any of us can mail in our tithes and offerings to the financial secretaries. Our faithfulness in this matter can eliminate a lot of potential problems.

If you have personal need, please speak to your pastor first of all. He may hold some answers you have not considered.

The association has canceled just about all of its programs since the middle of March. In April, we will not have Vineyard Workday or committee meetings, scholarship committee meeting, Military Support Group, Men's Ministry meetings, WMU Banquet, VBS Training, Ministers Meetings, Boys Campout, or Senior Adult Luncheon.

Our churches will not be together as usual this Easter. I know that is a great disappointment to everyone. As Rick Lance has suggested, we may all plan a great celebration service for the first time we are able to get back together. It can have a touch of The Easter celebration in it and a real homecoming of the gathered church.

I want to do my part to protect people around me by trying to stay as isolated as I can. I would hate to know that someone caught the COVID-19 contagion from me. All of us have to be concerned about this. We want to protect people. So we follow governmental guidelines, we observe social distancing, we wash our hands, and be cautious.

All of us need to remember that God will be with us through this trying time. He will help us put up with the odd things going on. He will give us strength to do the work we have to do if we are in the essential group of workers. (Thank God for each one!)

Since this is the Easter season we also can be assured that because Christ lives, we also will live. Even death should not scare us if our faith is in the resurrected Lord!

One of the phrases found a lot of times in the Bible is fear not!" Jesus told his disciples to fear not" or "stop being afraid." The one who had the power to still the storm was in the boat with his men. The circumstances have changed, but the Lord is still the same. He is the powerful, resurrected, ever-living One. We can top that off with the assurance that he loves us. He cares for us.

It may be hard for us to do, but let us seek to put our faith in Christ, who is a very present help in time of trouble. And let us trust in him as the children's song taught us, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

May the Lord's blessings rest upon you, your family, your church!  
 May He bless our nation and our world!

### Calendar of Events

**May**

7 - Vineyard Work Day - 8:00 AM  
 7 - Vineyard Meeting - 3:00 PM  
 8-9 - GA Camp at Vineyard  
 12 - Executive Committee Meeting - 7:00 PM  
 25 - Memorial Day - Office Closed

**CCBA Ministers' Meetings  
 will be cancelled until  
 further notice.**

**WMU Banquet  
 has been postponed.**

**VBS Training scheduled for  
 April 21st has been cancelled.**

**Boys Campout at the Vineyard  
 has been cancelled.**

**Enterprise Military  
 Support Group  
 meetings have been cancelled  
 until further notice.**

**Senior Adult Luncheon for April  
 has been cancelled.**

### Southwest Alabama Mission Trip

June 21-26

Please call our office if you would like to be a part of the mission trip or for more info.



### Incredicamp 2020

July 6 - 8

F.A.R.M

Finding a Relationship with the Master

Vineyard Christian Retreat Center

Registration forms can be found at  
[www.vineyardretreat.org](http://www.vineyardretreat.org)

**Dr. David Allen will be meeting with  
 pastors May 4 at 10:00 AM.  
 Coffee Baptist Center**

### GA Camp

May 8 - 9



Vineyard Christian Retreat

Contact Debra Carnley at 565-3970  
 for more info.