

Update and Prayer Letter – July 2023

THE STANSFORD FAMILY

HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH, MARYSTOWN, NL

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Galatians 6:9 *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your faithful prayer and financial support of our family and ministry. The Lord has been good to us. Here are some highlights of what has been happening and our plans for the summer:

Shortly after our last update letter in April, Boyd was able to make a quick trip to Ontario to help out a family member as well as visit a supporting church and give an update. It was a very encouraging Sunday! We are thankful for churches that faithfully support us financially and prayerfully so that we can continue preaching the Gospel here in Marystown.

Over the years we have engaged in several unorthodox 'ministries' (such as snow plowing and roof shingling) to give us opportunities to reach out to people in our community. This summer the ministry seems to be lawn care. Boyd was asked by an RCMP officer to care for his lawn while the officer was on vacation. As well, our new next-door neighbour mentioned how much he disliked mowing his lawn, especially after getting a new job at the local hospital that requires 12-hour shifts. Boyd (who enjoys mowing grass) offered to mow his lawn this summer. The man wanted to do something in return, so he has committed to attend a church service on his next weekend off! Please pray for Brad, Dylan & Meghan to understand the Gospel and be saved.

For many years now we have allowed a local St. John Ambulance representative to use a room in our building to teach first aid courses on a regular basis. In return, he teaches anyone we need to have First Aid for free, and he always gives us a few minutes at the beginning of each course to introduce our church, to 'advertise', and to give out some Gospel tracts. At long last we finally had a family attend one of our services as a result of this outreach. A man that attended a course had recently moved here from Indonesia for work and has been looking for a church for his family. Please pray that Hendri, Melitta (who is expecting a baby soon), and their daughter, Samantha, will understand the Gospel and be saved.

A gentleman that started following our services online during the Covid shutdowns trusted the Lord as His Saviour after watching a service in November of 2021. He eventually contacted us and He and his wife started attending our church in January of 2022. They have been faithfully attending ever since. He offered to mow the grass around our church building all last summer and has been taking care of it this summer as well. They have been a special blessing to us. Please pray for their spiritual growth.

Next week (July 19-23) we will host our annual Vacation Bible School. We had originally planned it for early in July but all of our teen helpers were looking for jobs so we decided to wait a few weeks. We want them to be involved as we need their help, but it is also a great opportunity for them to be able to serve the Lord. Now that we know most of their work schedules we will be begin planning and preparing. This is usually our biggest outreach event of the year so we covet your prayers for an exciting and effective week for the Lord.

Preparation is also in progress for our week of Teen & Family Camp (Aug. 21-24). This is a highlight of the summer for many people here in Newfoundland. Pastor Eli Mctague will be our guest preacher this year, and we are excited about our 16th year at Camp Woody Acres!

In family news, Boyd and Sarah recently celebrated their 26th wedding anniversary. We are so very thankful for our years together and God's enduring faithfulness. Joshua has moved to St. John's and is working full-time. Amy is home from college for the summer and both she and Carly have summer student positions (Amy – full-time, Carly – part-time) at our town's museum. As well, they are both involved in the music ministry each Sunday. Levi and Kalynn are busily enjoying their summer while being involved in all that we are doing. In fact, recently, Levi offered to play the prelude for a couple of our church services (just a couple of songs he has memorized) and has offered several times to clean the bathrooms at church...and has done quite a good job!!

Once again, we thank you for your faithfulness to the Lord and to our family. We appreciate each of you that take time to pray for us and each of you that sacrificially give to support our family and ministry.

WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS,
THE STANSFORD FAMILY