

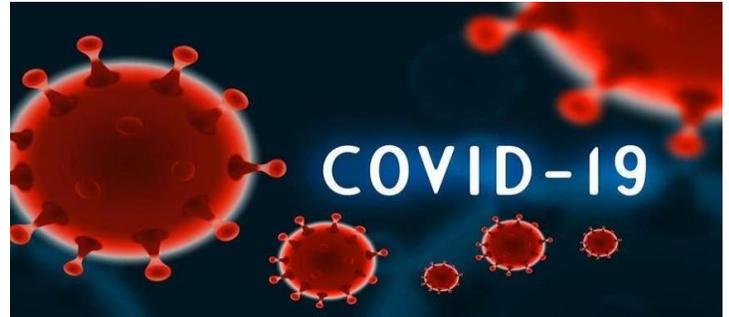


# CONNECTOR

#41 June 2020

## Covich-19 Issue #1

June 4<sup>th</sup> we sent out an email to all of you to respond by the end of June to the following questions:



- what you are experiencing during this unique time in the world's history?
- what is God teaching you?
- what are you doing differently now?
- what advice would you give to pastors and leaders of the church today?



The results have been great. Many have responded from across the country and so we decided we would put this out in the middle of June and hopefully it would inspire those of you who have not responded to do so now. We want to have a second addition. We do want to hear from everyone. Let us know you are still breathing and that God is still giving you days to Display Him well with the struggles and challenges

you are facing.

Betty and I (**Wayne & Betty Kerr**) have been weathering this quite well. To counter the temptation of eating more, and thereby casting a larger shadow than usual, we are into a lot of walking. A lovely forested conservation area sees us tramping the 5 & 7 km routes 4-5 times a week plus I am cycling 100+ kms per week. What a delight to see a barren forest change day by day with foliage, trilliums blooming and jack-in-the-pulpits unfolding. I am doing some mentoring/coaching/encouraging church pastors and



elders by taking them out for a cycle rides. If they want to talk they have to catch up to me!?????????. Multi-tasking is good.



It was great to get an email from one staff person saying "I left encouraged and challenged! I appreciate it and you very much!" That was so kind of him.

We do have the challenge of not seeing our daughter and family in Cincinnati due to border closure.

Six months is a long time but we are grateful for phones, texts, facetime, Zoom to keep connected.

We are well connected with friends, a small group we attend and one that we are co-leading. Just recently as the ability to gather moved from 5-10 people, we had a BBQ to encourage a Liberian couple we are helping and who are in our small group.

Now churches are starting to open up and frankly, I have enjoyed watching more than one service on Sundays while still in my pajamas. I really do think I could continue such a practice though the face to face corporate gatherings are greatly missed. This is going to be hard for some people.



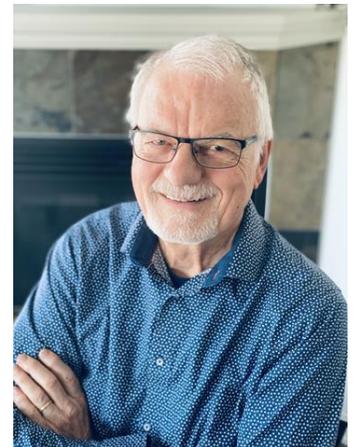
We have been blessed in connecting with IWs in Spain, Congo, Cambodia by Facetime. It is great to sit in our porch and just connect with these (according to their time)

As you can see I finally got my hair cut today.

## Floyd Grunau:

Being an avid reader, this pandemic has proven to be an opportune time to read my favourite authors in mystery fiction and also to start rereading authors like Willard, Tozer and Thomas a Kempis.

I am used to meeting with men on line for spiritual direction but do miss meeting face to face with a few local men who would normally come to my place. I do miss going to senior homes to sing. Meeting on Zoom has become rather wearisome for me.



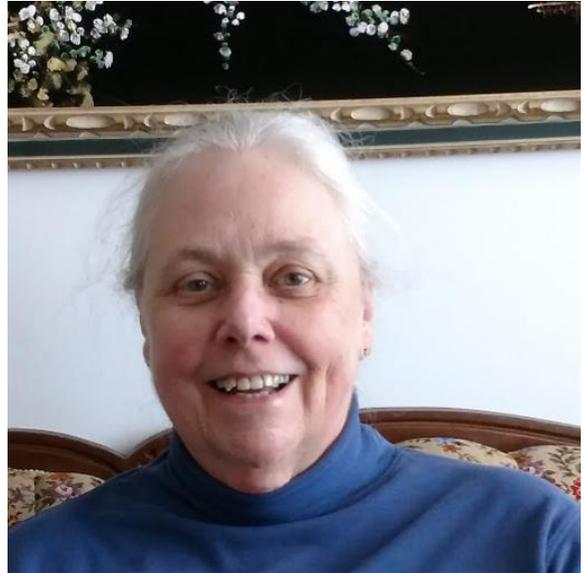
Tonight we lead another meeting of our house church. I feel the need for grace so we may all be drawn together by the Spirit. God is teaching me to recognize and enjoy the opportunities he provides to speak with people, to have patience and to feel compassion for those who struggle with the virus or with finances due to loss of income. I am thankful our loving Father has all things in hand.

- Floyd Grunau, DMin Certified Spiritual Director/Coach [www.souljourney.ca](http://www.souljourney.ca)

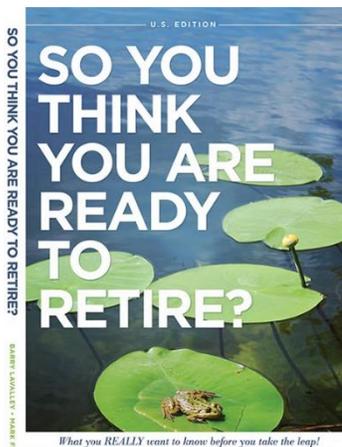
## Penny Hall

I am extremely busy these days, juggling local and global ministries, all online.

Since the beginning of this year, I was appointed to be the one responsible for the English Ministry at Emmanuel Alliance Church of Ottawa. As an English Ministry in a Chinese church, in January we already were aware of what was happening in Wuhan, China, but not really expecting that corona virus to result in a pandemic. During January and February I settled into my role at church, preaching through I Peter in the worship services. This local ministry was added to my global consultancy work with seminaries and Bible schools, much of which I was doing online during the winter months when I try to keep travel to a minimum.



Then March arrived and by the second Sunday of that month it was obvious that we would not be able to maintain in person meetings. In fact, that Sunday we both held a service at the church and simultaneously live-streamed it online. By the next week, we had moved entirely online. I had thought that this would perhaps lighten my load in ministry, but I was very wrong. I have never been so busy. Moving online has brought a plethora of meetings, of online courses available, of personal contacts, and many unexpected other activities that needed to be managed by remote control. Now as we consider how to move forward, many challenges are present.



I praise the Lord for the technology that has permitted us to continue to minister to people online, but it is not easy to keep up with everything and everybody this way. I know that this is a common experience among all who are in ministry at this time, so do pray for all pastors, church leaders and professors in our theological institutions who are being stretched to meet the pressures brought about by Covid-19. I believe that going forward life will be different and there are yet many adjustments before us. Please keep praying!

(I hope this note will point out the fact that **many of us on the Power Team are not really retired!**)

Blessings on you, Penny *Rev. Penelope R. Hall, Ph.D. Consultant for Theological Education and Resources*

## Beverly & Wally Albrecht

Wally and I are sensing a deep sorrow for the many people in countries all over the world who have had to suffer severe illness and in many cases death among their friends and family! We are especially sorry for those in crowded poor countries where there has been such a high death rate!

We, ourselves are doing well and feel protected and cared for by our Heavenly Father! God is teaching us how to be **“still and know that He is God!”** It is amazing to see how a tiny virus can bring the whole world to a standstill!

We are listening more carefully to God’s words about the future! We have more time to listen, to meditate on His word and to pray! From that perspective, we feel very blessed!



It has been encouraging to join online with our National, District and local church’s services and prayer meetings which have made us feel connected to our fellow believers! There have also been multiple online prayer meetings that have given us an encouraging connection with some we haven’t known before!

We are grateful for our pastors and leaders who have worked hard to bless us and to keep us joined together in a new kind of fellowship!

Mostly we are experiencing a new kind of freedom and surrender to His sovereign will!

Blessings to you 🙏

## John & Kee King -Edmonton

### Living Through the Challenges of Covid-19 Pandemic

What You Are Experiencing?

One of the medical experts explains that COVID-19 affects women and men differently. The pandemic makes existing inequalities for women and girls, as well as discrimination of other marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and those in extreme poverty worse, and risk impeding the realization of human rights for women and girls. My wife Kee and I try as much as possible to stay home and keep away from direct contacts with other people, and maintain the practices of



social distancing, as well as washing our hands often, not to touching our face, especially eyes and mouth. Keeping house, body, and clothing clean as advised by government and health cares.

### **What Is God Teaching You?**

One of the most frequent commands in the Bible is not to fear. The reason we can contain our fear is that we believe we belong to God in both life and in death. Nothing can separate us from His love and faithfulness. Inconveniences or suffering produces endurance and hope.

### **What Are You Doing Differently Now?**

We attend pray meeting, Bible studies, group fellowship, and Sunday worship online regularly. Loving others and neighbors by phone and social media whenever we can. Loving our church and helping spread the gospel with church by social media and online, for example: I set up daily spirit food sharing with the heading of "Today's Spirit Food" with a daily new topic and related scriptures supplied by one of the brothers and sisters among this 101-people congregational audience online in the website with the YAN AI ZHI JIA from my home church in Edmonton, Alberta. One of the daily sermons and sharing in the topic of "The Relationship Between the Vine and the Branches" is illustrated and followed towards the end of this article as requested.

### **What Advice Would You Give to Pastors and Leaders of the Church Today?**

Keep on praying persistently. *Do not give up! Use Bible verses on endurance and perseverance to comfort your faith and encourage yourself when you feel like things are getting too hard to do with the pastoral works and church administration. Accordingly, Paul encourages that, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6: 9-10 NIV), as well, "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope". (Romans 5: 3-4 NIV). Amen!*

### **Henry & Helen Wiebe** -Chilliwack.

With the restrictions on public events I have spent more time as a caregiver for my wife, Helen, who was diagnosed with Parkinsons 15 years ago. The housekeeping, meal preparations and caregiving have been a learning curve for me.



In addition, I took the time to organize and edit a collection of about 260 of the 280+ weekly 'column' articles I have supplied to the on-line *Oliver Daily News* for the last 5 years. I grouped them into 18 themes (chapters) and they are being published as a book by Friesen Press. The mandate for those articles is to be uplifting and inspirational from a Christian perspective. I try to make them SMART (Short, Meaningful, Appealing and Articulate, Relevant, True and Timely).

I also invested a significant amount of time in reading and preparing for possibly teaching a small group fall course on Hebrews, the Book of Better Things. Meanwhile it has vital truths for me.

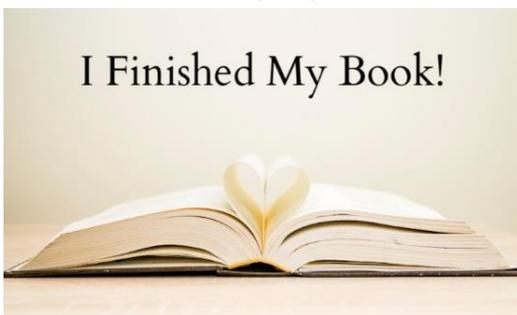
## Miriam Charter -Calgary

A lockdown in a pandemic is hard by any measure. For someone who self-identifies as an extrovert and is single, it is a very difficult experience.

SO, **on the one hand**, is the struggle with being alone — during these 12 weeks, whole days would pass when I would not see another human being in the flesh. Yes, saw people on Zoom but no one can tell me that virtual community is as satisfying as actual, face-to-face community. I experienced “Zoom fatigue” as I tried to continue with the various ministries that bring lots of fulfillment in retirement — teaching several ESL classes, doing Alpha (and the spin-off meetings with group members who are seeking), mentoring younger believers, and keeping up with immigrants whom I could no longer visit in a face-to-face way — all on Zoom. As restrictions ease, I’m beginning to at least visit with my Syrian family in their back yard and walking (physically distanced) with those I often walked with. But being on the extrovert end of the scale, COVID19 lockdown has been wearying.



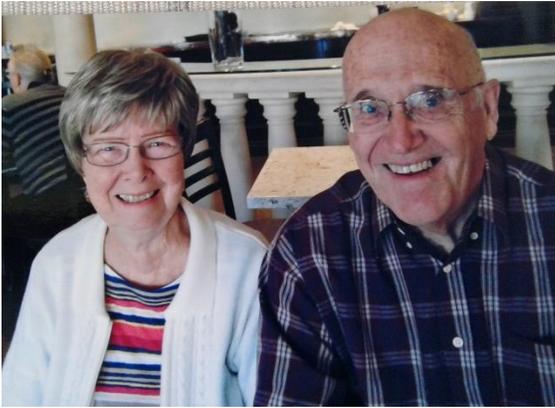
**On the other hand**, not much has changed. I’ve often said that writing a book is brutal for an extrovert as it just doesn’t happen if one doesn’t pull back and work in long periods of “aloneness.” So, COVID19 provided me with a great opportunity (excuse?) to work long hours, sometimes 8 hours a day, on my book with few temptations to go out! Yes, it still is a lonely pursuit but somehow easier when there are few reasons to leave the house legally if everyone you want to see cannot spend time with you. So, during these weeks I’ve finished the second draft of the manuscript and submitted it to a theological/content edit (otherwise known as a “beta” edit). The results of that edit will be returned to me tomorrow and from there I’ll be launched into what I hope is the final draft. Timeline? I hope the book is in print by the end of 2020 (though a friend who recently published a book told me this week that a COVID19 world is no time to launch a book.) I am resting in the faithfulness and provision of God. Would love to bring the book to churches across Canada during 2021. Your church? I also rest in God’s Sovereignty. The book is a book of stories from the dark days of Communist Europe in the 1980s, written for people who fit the description of many of you who read CONNECTOR: you love



missions, you love your missionaries, you love stories, you love learning! But it is also written for the next generation of those who will respond to God’s call and take the Good News to Hard Places in our world. Be on the lookout for a book with a title having something to do with “**Living on Mission between The Rock and a Hard Place.**”

## Arnold & Joan Downey -Kelowna

Joan and I are doing well during this season of isolation. We do however miss the opportunity to gather physically with the body of Christ and think that it might be some time before that opportunity will be ours again.



We are on the Care Team for our church so we are keeping in touch by phone with many of our senior members especially those who are living alone. We have also met with some of them in an outdoor setting sitting in our lawn chairs six feet apart. We have a list of seniors with medical problems, some of them terminal that we remember in prayer each evening.

As I watch our church and others with services on line I cannot wonder who else might be watching. Are there people who would hesitate to enter our church building but with a hungry heart in the safety of their home might be watching? Because of that I wonder if we are not missing a great opportunity to share the Gospel and then give them some means of connecting with us to give them further spiritual help. I think if I were a Pastor today, I might put an ad in the local paper inviting people to watch our service and then be sure that each message had some mention of how to enter into a relationship with Christ.

## Danny & Vera Kuranji -Serbia & London Ontario

Hard to believe that we have been in London close to 3 months. All that was planned long time ago, speaking in churches, connecting with people and family... all that has been put on hold. And we are aware that everyone is experiencing similar daily challenges.

As I was thinking what could be said about this period, number of things stood out.

Phil. 4:6 ***“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God”***

We, the leaders, the doers, the planners, the organizers.... have been learning how to just sit, trust, wait, let go and let God....

This has been great pause. Looking back and remembering how many times, and in so many ways He performed miracles. Remembering what He did for us, through us and for people around us... has been so good.

He is the One that is here in our NOW and will go into the future. So, we wait, we praise and we trust. Day by day, moment by moment.



## Bob & Wendy Beasley

Wendy (April 25) and I (May 29) have both hit our 65<sup>th</sup> during this pandemic so we are now legally seniors! I'm going to keep on keeping on serving with Bible League Canada for the foreseeable future. The Lord hasn't released me from ministry and neither has Bible League Canada. I've dropped 40 pounds since my diabetes diagnosis last October, and Wendy and I are biking daily. I'm feeling better and have more energy than I've had in many years. Wendy is retiring at the end of the June. With the new regulations in place for churches, she might get one more Sunday with her church family, outdoors, before the end of the month, which would be a nice way to end her 11 years as pastor at St. Clair Community Church (EMCC) in Sombra Ontario. She is looking forward to having the time to enjoy our home here in Pain Court (Chatham-Kent) and to be a full-time mom and nana to our three sons, their wives and our 7 grandchildren.



## Ron Baker -Kindersley Sask.

Fifty years ago (1968-1969) a plague struck our world. It was euphemistically called "sleeping sickness", or as some referred to it - "The Hong Kong Flu". Between one and four million people died in the pandemic!



Our family was hit with the flu, my brother to the greatest degree – he was initially paralyzed from the waist down. Months-long rehab helped to restore his movement.

Meanwhile, at the same time, the world was full of unrest. Much discontent was generated by the baby boomer generation (of which I am a part). Riots were rampant and national guards were called for in the United States – with an infamous shooting by those policing the riots - "Four Dead in Ohio".

Youth were also seeing the need for God. The Jesus Movement was in full swing and the call for relationship with God and with others was strong! The structure of the institutional church was teetering on the edge – a new day was coming.

A half century later, we are looking at another monumental change in our world. I have been inundated with enough articles, examined enough news and taken enough online "courses" to know there is a "new normal" coming.

What have I learned these last few months? In many ways the biggest takeaway - ***there is nothing new under the sun.***

I join with the biblical writers in assessing the situation. Jeremiah 9:23-24 tell us to not trust in wealth, wisdom or power. Our great priority should be knowing God. The writer of Ecclesiastes says, while there is a time for everything, our greatest focus should be fearing God and obeying His commands.

Jesus, God and human, reminds us he is the way, the truth and the life in the midst of death, dying and upheaval.

There is little to be gained by obsessing over daily headlines, restrictions and fear. There is much to be gained by obsessing over God, doing what pleases Him and seeking to be like Jesus!

## Carol Rose -White Rock BC



Thankfully I'm not alone during this season. A widow friend from church (Rina--the other grey-haired lady in the pictures) is bunking in with me temporarily and I'm so very grateful, as I would be going absolutely crazy being all alone and unable to travel to visit my family or be around people at all!! Rina needed to move out of her suite here in White Rock by the end of March and was having difficulty finding a place to live. Even before Covid-19, I told her that she could move in with me temporarily until she found a new home. And that's exactly what happened. I truly believe that the Lord

prevented her from finding a suite because He knew I needed company. She put her furniture, etc in storage and is still looking, but in the meantime is God's provision for me!!

Here are two things we're doing.

We have expanded our "bubble" to include two other single gals and have formed our own little house church. For all but two Sundays since semi-lockdown, we 4 gals have gathered at my condo for church and actually have spent the whole day together!! We call ourselves "**Golden Girls Alliance Fellowship**"!! We have decided to heed the admonition in Hebrews 10 to "not forsake the assembling of ourselves together" as a "higher" directive than that given by the govt!! Of course, there are only four of us and we're very careful!!



We gather at 10:00 am and watch our church's online service, sing a bit, have a light lunch, and hang out all afternoon. If the weather's nice, we'll go for a walk, just sit and talk, even take naps, play games, watch an uplifting DVD or YouTube, and have supper together as well. One of the gals has embarked on a "mask making" business and often brings her fabric, scissors, and pins and we all chip in to help. That's what the gals are doing in the picture on the patio. These Sundays together have been so "life giving".

Another life-giving and spirit-lifting thing we're doing is--

memorizing Psalm 91 with a group of ladies led by Dee Matheson. We meet together every Tuesday over Zoom and have memorized that Psalm and are going to begin memorizing Romans 12 beginning this week.

## Dan Goldsmith -Abbotsford

Around the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, I was pondering what epistle I might consider for a book study. At about the same time, an employee of my son in law John, phoned him one morning and said, “Johnny, is this the end of the world?” That question, plus some other factors prompted me to do a verse by verse study of the Book of Revelation, instead of an epistle.



Verse one of chapter one says: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants- things which must shortly take place...” We all know that Revelation speaks about the end times, but it is more than a book of prophecy. In the very first chapter it reminds us what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us, complementing many other verses in the New Testament.

He “**loved us**,” 1:5. He “**washed us** from our sins in His own blood,” 1:5. He “**made us** kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1:6. This book is about our Lord Jesus Christ and for the child of God there is great hope, fullness of joy and the promise of a glorious eternity. I am only half way through, as I share these words with you, but I have been abundantly blessed.

I have been thinking when I complete this study, I will have to use the old cassette player and listen to my sermons on the Book of Revelation. Back in the early 1980’s I took over 40 Sunday mornings to preach through Revelation. Maybe I’ll learn something more. Haven’t listened to them since the days they were delivered]



This is not the only journey that I am doing at the moment. My verse by verse study of the Book of Revelation is done during the day. **I have a night time project.** I have been on Hormone Therapy for prostate cancer. Just had my third and final injection last week. The first was October, second one in February and now this last one in June. There are several side effects. The three predominant ones that have hit me are insomnia, hot flashes and a weakness and weariness that has sapped the energy out of me. This being the second time that I have had hormone therapy, had it in 2014, I knew what to expect. Knowing that I was in for several sleepless nights, I decided back in October to choose a project to work on. Not being raised in a denomination where we recited The Apostles Creed, I decided to do a study of this creed. I called it my Mid-Night Meditations. Not midnight, but mid - night, for if I wake up at 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning and sleep has vanished, I get up and work on the same. Sometimes I am up for two hours or more, before I begin to get weary, at which time I often take a warm milk with honey and crawl back in bed.

Blessings on you. I just turned 89. Where have the years gone? Dan

**Deb Wilkins** -London,



Remembering Mike, on this the second anniversary of his earthly race coming to an end.

I wish I had Mike's gift of writing to put into words the impact he has had on my life - 41 years together. So very grateful to God for all those years! There is rarely a day when a topic comes up, that I don't think about how Mike would respond or help me to respond.

As time passes, the memories are all the more special. **"the more beautiful and full the remembrances, the more difficult the**

**separation. But, gratitude transforms the torment of memory into silent joy. One bears what was lovely in the past not as a thorn but as a precious gift deep within, a hidden treasure of which one can always be certain."** Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Mike & Debbie pastored the West London Alliance Church for nearly 30 years before cancer took his life 2 years ago. We do pray for Deb in remembering the significant ministry Mike had alongside the great loss she is journeying through. Deb continues to have a significant ministry at Compassion Canada.



Dan Goldsmith passed this message on to me. **AN ABSOLUTE MUST SERIOUSLY!!!!**  
"Quite a message for the present, considering all the protests and anger".

We join with Dan in saying this is an important message for all of us to listen to in what we as Christians and churches are going through during this pandemic. Listen and pass it along.

The message is **"What The World Needed then, And Now"**: The book of Acts (from North Coast Church)

<https://youtu.be/-mole-t9UdE> -go to minute 12 to start the message



What will church look like now. Check this out: "Post-Lockdown Church" on YouTube <https://youtu.be/flfItkvCVfA>

**Deadline is still the same.** We invite you to contribute to COVID-19 #2 Issue



**-end of June**

Send to Wayne & Betty Kerr

[waynebettyk@rogers.com](mailto:waynebettyk@rogers.com)

(most of this CONNECTOR is unedited from what people have submitted, so please send your submission)

**Guideline** is to answer the following:

- what you are experiencing during this unique time in the world's history?
- what is God teaching you?
- what are you doing differently now?
- what advice would you give to pastors and leaders of the church today?

*Wayne & Betty*

-National Volunteer **POWER Team** Coordinators

-CONNECTOR -compilers

-647-408-4204

[-waynbettyk@rogers.com](mailto:waynbettyk@rogers.com) -reply and submit

It's been a great blessing to be at home with the wife these last few months. We've caught up on everything I've done wrong in the last 20 years.

How LONG is this social distancing thing supposed to last? My husband keeps trying to come into the house.

People are scared of getting fined for congregating in crowds. As if catching a deadly disease and dying a horrible death wasn't enough of a deterrent.

People are scared of getting fined for congregating in crowds. As if catching a deadly disease and dying a horrible death wasn't enough of a deterrent.

Whoever decided a Liquor Store is more essential than a Hair Salon is obviously a bald headed Alcoholic.

Anyone else getting a tan from the light in the fridge?