



Mark Van Andel and Nate Bull as you most often see them these days... on a video conference (this time was for Hesed Discipleship Class).

Hesed Community Church is a ministry of the Urban Apostolic Network  
under the guidance of the RCA and CRC  
led by [Nate Bull](#) and [Mark VanAndel](#)  
(click on a name to send an email)



Just like all of you, our lives and ministry has changed radically as a result of COVID-19. Our city has been hit hard with sickness and death in this pandemic. Although no one affiliated with our Hased community has become sick as of this writing, we are personally connected to people who have died from this virus. Grief is a lingering guest in Detroit, but it seems to have taken a more permanent residence in these days.

Although we've had to adapt significantly, our neighborhood ministry has continued to be responsive to the needs of the neighborhood. We have used text messaging, phone calls, video conferences, front porch visits, and even prayerfully driving up and down the streets to connect with our Hased friends.

In order to keep our Thursday pattern of serving lunch and holding Bible study,

we've gone to delivering lunch to neighborhood porches and sharing Bible study on a video chat. And our Discipleship group keeps meeting online on Fridays as well, so we've been able to maintain our "normal" programs.

But a crisis like this requires extraordinary responses as well, so we started with initiated grocery deliveries to families. Food insecurity has consistently been an issue in our communities, but there is more urgency around it in this season. We also determined that school-aged children needed to stay connected to their educational process through technology. So we have been connecting people to technology and internet resources and providing tablets and chrome books to ensure that children can participate in distance learning. We also have helped adults register for their stimulus checks and other available resources.

During this challenging season, we have also discerned that we need to be pursuing trauma and grief counseling for our Hased community. So we've initiated conversations and opportunities with trained trauma counselors to provide healing space for our Hased friends.

Through all of these endeavors, we have had the support of many individuals, churches and foundations who have empowered us to do this work within our neighborhoods. We appreciate all the support that our Hased friends are giving to us!



We lost a dear friend in the Brightmoor neighborhood last month. Eugene was a faithful participant in Bible Study, cleaned the ministry house on many occasions, and on a few nights slept on the couch or spare bed. He was a

known and loved part of our community, appreciated for his sense of humor and humble insight into our bible study. His appreciation for a 1/2 inch thick peanut butter sandwich was legendary.

Fortunately, this week we were able to gather a handful of neighborhood friends together in a vacant lot to honor the life of Eugene. We will continue grieve the loss of this gentle giant who brought so much joy to our community.



Although our ministry hasn't stopped, we still miss gathering around a table for good food and sharing love. We anticipate starting outdoor gatherings in small groups within the next month (with adequate distancing and safety measures).



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The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,  
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
and provide for those who grieve in Zion—  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,

the oil of joy  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
a planting of the LORD  
for the display of his splendor.

They will rebuild the ancient ruins  
and restore the places long devastated;  
they will renew the ruined cities  
that have been devastated for generations.

**Isaiah 61:1–4**