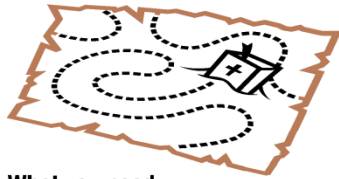


FALL SCAVENGER Hunt

Enjoy searching for seasonal aspects of God's creation!



What you need:

- Family members and friends, divided into groups if desired
- Maps of local areas
- Lists of fall-related items (one per person or group)
- Digital cameras or smartphones
- Prizes

What you do:

1. Hand out maps and lists of items (scarecrow, pumpkin, red leaf, squirrel, apple tree, pine cone, acorn, bug, bird, sunflower, etc.)
2. Instruct participants to walk through their assigned area, find and take photos of the items, and report back at a specific time.
3. When everyone returns, share your photos. Award prizes for the most items found, the most unusual item and so on.

Church Picnic of 2018 (AKA GCA's Family Reunion)

By Lorita Grant

In July, GCA hosted its 4th annual church picnic at Victory Valley Camp.

Members and friends of all ages had a ball!

There was something for everyone even those about to crawl

The grills were lit with delicious burgers and dogs, nice and chargrilled

While others brought dishes to share - we were all thrilled!

The children frolicked at the playground and had a ball

Believe it or not, we didn't have not one fall!

Many splashed in the pool until they saw the frog jump out...

...some were brave but a few of us let out a shout!

Ms. Christine introduced a new game called 5 square

LOTS of fun for those who dared

Others tried boating in the nice little lake

Onlookers had a good laugh watching some get stuck because their legs needed a break

But with cheering and coaching they all made it back from being stuck

That is with God's help - certainly not luck!

Loud slamming was heard during games of dominoes

Others solved word puzzles, who won? Who knows!

Basketball, air hockey, ping pong too

Our Brazilian quartet singing songs to a few

Sharon Henry won best dessert

No one entered best ribs, ouch that hurt

Mildred Cross won best deviled eggs

What will we do next year? Best crab legs?

Hope to see our church family next year

At our 5th annual church picnic, so so near! ✨

October 2018
Volume 6, Issue 3

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GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Germantown Christian Assembly



By Lorita Grant



The church was transformed into a shipwrecked island. This year we shook things up a bit and instead of classrooms the children moved from place to place in small groups of mixed ages called **crews**. As children traveled around the island they experienced science, arts, music, cinema, Bible and interactive skits. Even the snacks were creatively designed with appealing shapes and tastes.

Continues on page 3.



By Roger Walton

What Have The Youth Been Up To These Days?

The youth have been primarily focused on the 3rd leg of their vision – serving others. The other areas of focus are fellowship and spiritual growth.

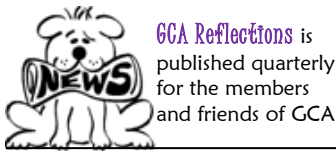
God has been using the youth in a powerful way by serving beyond the church walls. Serving meals to over 150 men at the Chosen 300 kitchen is no small task. The real blessing came at

the end of one event when we gathered to pray. The gospel preacher for the evening asked one of our teens why she was here and her reply was "It's my Christian duty to serve." I didn't hear what was said because I was distracted by something else in the room, so I asked the preacher to repeat what she said. I was encouraged and felt like a proud father.

Continues on page 3.

The Purpose of this Newsletter

This ministry newsletter is intended to support the vision of the church—to be Christ-centered, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to build lives that glorify and worship God by emphasizing the Word, Evangelism, Discipleship and Caring for the whole man. We hope this newsletter will play an important role in encouraging the members of our assembly to fearlessly stand closer together, for the cause of the gospel of Christ.



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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in each of the articles herein are those of each individual author or contributor and not necessarily those held by the GCA Reflections Staff or GCA leadership.

Each issue will be available on the GCA website under “News & Events”.

A special thank you to all who contributed to this issue of GCA Reflections.

TESTIMONY

From A Recent New Member



Dana Prince

Dana, who became a member of GCA, shares this:

I was blessed to grow up in a Christian household raised by two Christian parents who teach by both word and example. I have always enjoyed being active in the church – singing in the Sunday School choir, acting as assistant to the Sunday School Superintendent, volunteering at VBS, ushering during Sister’s meetings/conferences and serving food during conferences.

At the age of 9, I accepted the wonderful gift of salvation and made the decision to give my life to Jesus Christ. Since then growing in Jesus has been characterized by so many wonderful life lessons and realizations. One of the most prevalent realizations for me has been that the Lord is my Shepherd. He leads me through life. He protects, He guides, He nudges me back in the right direction when I’m being stubborn or have strayed from the path He created for me. I know the importance of trusting God to lead me. It is so easy to say that we trust the Lord, but it is another to live our lives in a manner demonstrating that that trust goes beyond words. I live my life knowing that I serve a God that never fails, loves me unconditionally, and has great plans for my life. I understand that the road may not always be perfect, but I am traveling with the greatest of guides. He always has my back, always heals and restores and continues to lead me where I need to be.

As a young girl, positioning myself for adulthood and a career, I’ve always lived with the reminder to trust the Lord’s will for my life and to let Him take the lead in all areas of my life. Throughout this journey the Lord always has ways, whether small or great, of nudging me, reassuring me, and letting me know that I am on the right path and to keep on going.

Thus far, the Lord has taken me through the necessary schooling, started me in the career I’ve been dreaming about since junior high school and has brought me to the Philadelphia region to begin this career.

I came to GCA hoping to find a church I can find my place in and a church family that would embrace me in love and challenge me to continue to grow in the Lord. ✧

GCA’s 45th Anniversary Recognitions

BRO. HERBERT DEAN *(Continued from page 6.)*

meeting, and one of the leaders of the Salvation Counseling Ministry. He also serves as Chairman of the Board of Keiyo Soy Ministries.

We honor Herb for the example he has set, and for his numerous years of dedicated service to the Lord at GCA. ✧

BRO. JIM MCCONNELL

Brother Jim McConnell has been a faithful member of GCA for 30 years. Before coming to GCA, he served as an elder at Roxborough Bible Chapel for 5 years, and served as a deacon at GCA for 10 years and as an elder for 8 years.

His family has had a long history with Brethren Assemblies. A few years ago, Jim had an opportunity to meet most of his living relatives in Canada. It was a unique blessing to discover that all 87 of those present knew the Lord as Savior!

Jim was exposed to the gospel early, and at age 7, prayed to receive Christ as Savior. He was blessed to have a Christian upbringing with strong doctrinal foundation. This would prove to be very important, when at age 23, he went on active duty with the US Navy. Jim was committed to sharing his faith and was able to lead many souls to the Lord. He was asked to help lead a Bible study group, and right on-board ship, this band of believers regularly celebrated the Lord’s Supper. His Navy service also gave him an opportunity for personal growth during visits to several European countries.

Jim worked with the Willet Stained Glass Studios in Philadelphia, the largest company of its kind in the US. Jim had the privilege of making stained glass windows for mainline churches all over the United States. Jim loved his work and researched the beliefs and traditions of each church he worked for, through study and personal talks with the clergymen. This was an amazing experience to learn ‘what they believed’ and ‘why they believed what they believed.’

Jim has given himself to the study of the Word and is a highly regarded Bible teacher. He is frequently called on for his scriptural insights and is fondly regarded as ‘the Assembly Theologian.” He has authored three books and numerous articles on biblical and historical topics.

Brother Jim’s ministry at GCA goes well beyond his Bible teaching. He has mentored several young men and provided a fatherly role for many. He is a key leader of the prison ministry and has provided significant behind-the-scenes help in many organizational aspects of the assembly.

Elder, Bible teacher, author, historian are fitting titles. But in recognition of his past and present work at GCA, it is fitting that we honor Brother Jim with another title - Elder Emeritus of GCA. ✧

SIS. ANN RIDENHOUR

Sis Ann Ridenhour joined GCA in 1981 and wasted no time in using her gifts to serve the Lord. Ann quickly attended teachers training and soon became engaged in children’s ministry.

Ann has been the Director of the Children’s Church Ministry, for as long as most of us can remember, during which time she has had a significant impact on numerous children. She is constantly thinking of ways to make Children’s Church a better experience for the children, always wanting to express the gospel to children.

For many years Ann worked alongside her beloved husband Bill, now at home with the Lord. Bill worked diligently as Director of the Hospitality and Golden Eagles ministries, and Ann was a true partner to Bill in both of these ministries.

As Director of Special Events, she provides leadership and oversight to many special events at GCA, including our anniversary and graduation program. And so today, after over 35 years of ministry at GCA, it is our pleasure to pay special tribute to our dearly beloved Sis. Ann Ridenhour. ✧



To your *health*

By Margaret Aitcheson

Monitoring your



High blood pressure (BP) is called the “silent killer” because there are usually no warning symptoms and it can go untreated for a while before serious problems arise. High blood pressure is a risk factor for heart disease, strokes and kidney disease. It’s best to monitor your BP at the doctor’s office, as well as at home, to alert you of any abnormality so it can be immediately treated. The monitors are easily available at pharmacies, as well as retailers like Walmart and Sam’s Club. If your blood pressure is high, your physician may intervene with medications. If it’s only mildly elevated, certain systematic lifestyle changes could lower it. These can help:

WEIGHT LOSS AND EXERCISE

Losing 5-10% of your body weight can help to lower the BP along with other lifestyle changes. Regular exercise for about thirty minutes, five to seven days weekly, can strengthen the heart and lower the BP. Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, climbing stairs, gardening and, of course, playing sports are good exercises. Toning exercises with suitable weights are also beneficial.

HEALTHY DIET

Decreasing processed foods, saturated fats, salt and sugar, while increasing whole grains, fruits and vegetables, greatly improves the diet. Read the labels on food products to know what is in the foods you’re eating. Use herbs and spices instead of salt to improve the food’s flavor. Limit alcohol and caffeine as these can not only increase BP but reduce the effectiveness of blood pressure medications.

QUIT SMOKING AND GET RESTFUL SLEEP

Smoking increases BP and contributes to lung disease and mortality. Quitting will greatly improve health. Get adequate, restful sleep. Spend time relaxing, even meditating with deep breathing exercises before bedtime. Carefully wind down and make your bedroom comfortable before resting.

REDUCE STRESS

We live fast-paced stressful lives due to demands at home, work and other activities. Stress can increase BP, so observe where you are most stressed and take steps to reduce or eliminate the stress triggers. Focus on issues you can control and resolve them. Prioritize activities, decreasing your workload where you must. Don’t be overwhelmed: take time to do things you enjoy. Have fun with others. Practice expressing gratitude to God, family, friends and others. Surround yourself with supportive people. Be disciplined and take care of yourself. Enjoy your God-given life. ✧

What Have The Youth Been Up To These Days?

Continued from page 1.

As we were walking to the van to head to our next stop, I looked back to see if we were all together (yes, I have mother hen issues). A different teen saw one of the homeless women at the bus stop and she stopped and talked with her. The teen pulled a can of soda out her pocket and gave it to the homeless woman. Some may think of this as a simple act, but I see the kindness of God touching a heart to give.

Our next destination for more fellowship was the skating rink.

In the Gospel of Mark 10:45, Jesus said, “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Should we not have that same mindset? The youth at GCA are putting this verse into practice.

We planned and participated in a block clean-up on May 5th. It was not just a block clean-up, but a great opportunity to share the good news of God’s love. The youth were able to remove an overgrown tree that had blocked passage on the sidewalk. The block captain was very happy to see young people helping to keep our communities neat and safe.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, when we do well, it will reflect on Him and we will get the opportunity to shine the light on God. How easy is that? You might be nervous in sharing the gospel, like we are, but when you do good, like cleaning a block, people come to you and ask you why are you here? They have now given you the go-ahead to share the love of God through Christ Jesus.

Guess what? We are returning to that same block. The youth invite you to join us as we continue to serve our community. Please continue to pray for our youth as they seek to live out the words of Matthew 5:16. ✧



Vacation Bible School: *Shipwrecked*

Continued from page 1.

Our eighty-plus volunteers jumped right in to make this year a memorable event where children would hear the gospel and grow spiritually as they considered how Jesus rescues us when we are lonely, worried, struggling, or feeling guilty or powerless. VBS students had the opportunity to meet children in Haiti via video introduction who are living at an orphanage called “A Place of Hope”. We talked about how these kids are living on a real island and may really feel shipwrecked because they don’t have a family. We prayed for them and raised over \$300 to help share the love of Christ.

During VBS, a ladies Bible study was held every day for parents/guardians who were dropping off children. This study was a blessing to all who attended. On the last day, children and their families met some shipwrecked animal friends right here at GCA. The Philadelphia Zoo on Wheels came to our church!

As we reflect on God’s goodness, we are so thankful for all your donations, hard work, support, words of encouragement and prayers as the church took on the challenge of reaching out to the children and families in our community.

Off to planning for next year!! ✧

GCA's 45th Anniversary Recognitions



Front Row, L to R: **Ann Ridenhour and Helen Curbison**
Back Row: **Herb Dean, Jim McConnell, Merv Caruth, Dr. Darryl Brown**

GCA celebrated its 45th anniversary in June. Several saints were honored at the anniversary banquet on June 10th for at least 30 years of membership and service to the Lord at GCA. We have tried to share some of the Certificates of Appreciation read at the time.

DR. DARRYL BROWN

Darryl started attending GCA in 1981 with his friend Chris Sanchez. The Lord used the preaching of Dr. B Sam Hart to do a work of grace in his heart, and later that year he was baptized at GCA. Since then, Darryl has been a very committed member of GCA.

His love for learning transferred into a love for teaching, and God has used this gift in a significant way at GCA. Darryl has been the primary teacher for our New Members class for several years, and is a dedicated teacher in our ESL (English as a Second Language) program. He is also a regular Bible study teacher and occasionally speaks at special services.

He is loved and highly regarded at GCA and has been an officer and secretary of the corporation (Germantown Christian Assembly Inc.) for many years. His love for the Lord and his GCA family has resulted in selfless service as an elder, and in numerous other ministries.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in showing appreciation to our dear brother Dr. Darryl Brown, as we pay tribute to him today for 37 years of service to the Lord at GCA. ✧

BRO. MERV A. CARUTH

Bro. Merv has been a member of GCA for 36 years of our 45-year history.

Merv's salvation was quite unusual. One Friday evening as he was driving through Fairmount Park, he turned on his radio to listen to a new commercial he was airing. As he turned the dial, it landed on an unfamiliar station. Somehow, the station (Family Radio - WKDN, 106.9) caught his attention. Someone was preaching, and Merv was so captivated, he parked his car to listen. God brought him under strong conviction, and right there in his car, he committed his life to Christ.

Continues on page 5.

BRO. MERV A. CARUTH *(Continued from page 4.)*

Arriving home, he called Family Radio to request a recommendation to a good Bible-believing church. He was given the names of three churches: the furthest of which was GCA in Mt. Airy.

He called his father in Tobago to let him know of his salvation. His father was overjoyed and told him about 2 brothers (the Hart brothers) who had a radio broadcast in the United States. His dad told him, "try and see if you can find their church."

Merv took this as confirmation and started attending GCA in 1982. Later that year he was baptized by Bro. Charles, and every Sunday would make two trips from West Philadelphia to Mt. Airy: the first for the morning service and the second for the evening breaking of bread.

Bro. Merv served as one of the key persons on the deacon board and was actively involved in our planning and construction of the church building.

Bro. Merv has served in many leadership capacities. We pay special honor to Bro Merv Caruth for his leadership, commitment and service to God's people at GCA for over 35 years. ✧

SIS. HELEN CURBISON

Sister Helen started attending GCA in late 1977 along with her four sisters and their families. She became a member of GCA, nestled in and became very active.

GCA was in the process of completing the first building project when Helen, along with her sister Lerah, volunteered to paint the trim around the stained-glass windows. Bro. Charles was not sure their hands were steady enough to paint so close to these expensive stained-glass windows, but they proved him wrong.

Helen has a true servant's spirit and has always been willing to pitch in and help wherever she can; including mopping floors and making sure the kitchen stayed clean.

In 1981, when Thelma McGraw became ill and was not

able to teach her Sunday School class, Helen was asked to fill in as a substitute teacher until Thelma got better. Thelma did **not** get better, and 37 years later Helen is still teaching the same grade level.

Despite many life challenges, including losing her husband and having her own fight with cancer, Helen has remained faithful to the Lord. She has been a member of the Voices of Praise since its inception. She is now an active member of the Golden Eagles steering committee, and has been involved in Community Connections, Homework Help and Kid's Club.

Today, after 40 years of dedicated service to the Lord at GCA, we take great pleasure in paying special tribute to a humble and dedicated woman of God. ✧

BRO. HERBERT DEAN

Herbert (Herb) Dean was born in Macon, GA. After he was discharged from the Army, he and his wife Bobbie moved to Philadelphia, PA.

Herb found employment with Conrail Railroad for 35 years. During those years, Herb met Bro. Andrew Trusty, an elder here at GCA, who invited him to a lunchtime Bible study he was teaching on the job. Brother Trusty also invited Herb to attend church with him at Germantown Christian Assembly. Herb got saved, was baptized and became a very active member of GCA.

During over 35 years at GCA, Herb has played a significant role in our leadership. He served as an elder for about four years, and was a deacon for almost 20 years, serving as Chairman of the Deacon Board for many of those years. Thanks to the support of his beloved wife Bobbie, Herb was able to continue his service at GCA, even after they relocated to New Jersey. Together, Herb and Bobbie have made a very significant impact on our assembly.

Herb is a man of compassion who sought to ensure that the church responded to the needs of the hurting.

Today, he's still very active as a member of the Home Visitation Team, the leader of the Tuesday night prayer

Continues on page 7.