

CHRISTIAN ONE-LINERS

A RIDE

Never give the devil a ride -- he will always want to drive.

WORRY

Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop.

FISHERS

Be ye fishers of men. You catch them - He'll clean them.

PROBLEMS

The problem ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us.

ANGER

He who angers you, controls you!

NUTRITION

The best vitamin for a Christian is B1.

PROMISES

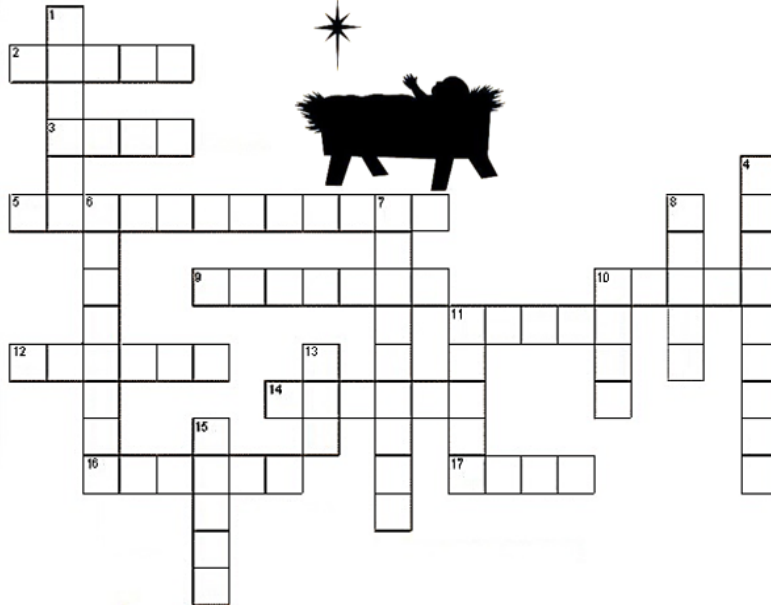
God didn't promise a calm passage. He promised a safe landing.

THE CALL

God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.



Crossword Puzzle THE BIRTH OF THE KING



Across

2. Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem to pay these.
3. A precious metal; one of the gifts from the 3 kings.
5. A fragrant gum used to make incense; one of the gifts from the wisemen.
9. The 3 kings from the east.
10. A pungent tasting herb; a gift from the wisemen.
11. Bethlehem is here.
12. Mary's husband.
14. These appeared to shepherds and told them about the birth of Christ.
16. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a _____, which is Christ the Lord.
17. This led the wisemen to Jesus.

Down

1. An open box to hold food for livestock; Mary laid Jesus in one.
4. The city of His birth.
6. The Roman emperor who taxed everyone.
7. Angels told these guys about His birth while they were watching their flocks.
8. The king of Judea when Jesus was born.
10. His mother.
11. And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name _____.
13. He was born in a stable because there was no room in the _____.
15. We celebrate His _____ at Christmas.

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Volume 8, Issue 2

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GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Germantown Christian Assembly



By Gerardine Elie

We Are Overcomers 2020 Young Adult Retreat Review

In light of everything going on in the world, the Young Adult Ministry leadership which involved Carl Richards, Lauren Grant, Marlon Henry and Gerardine Elie, led by Darryl Brown, was very uncertain that a retreat would be possible. Though we doubted that the Lord would provide people, He doubled our numbers from last year!

Continues on page 3.



Children's Ministry Report

"Let the little children come to me..." (Luke 18:16a)

By Cressia Souza,
Director of the Children's Ministry

2020 was another year that Germantown Christian Assembly demonstrated its commitment to investing in the lives of children in various ways. We believe that children are valuable, and we want to be a part of building up a new generation for Christ as we share the Word of God and show them the love of Jesus.

We began 2020 with a lot of plans and expectations for the ministry. We were looking forward

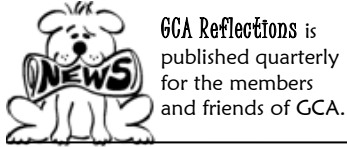
to the exciting things we could achieve. But the pandemic hit and suddenly we found ourselves asking, "What are we going to do?"

We praise God that nothing can catch Him by surprise. Hallelujah! In the midst of all the uncertainties, He strengthened us and showed us a way to keep ministering to those precious young ones.

Continues on page 2.

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.



GCA Reflections is published quarterly for the members and friends of GCA.

Germantown Christian Assembly
610 East Mt. Pleasant Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19119

(215) 242-5550
FAX: (215) 247-5389
Email: gcafamily@verizon.net
Web Site: gcafamilychurch.org

Elders:
Brian H. Grant, Pastor
George Peters, Pastor
Jim McConnell, Elder Emeritus
Dr. Elijah Korich
Sitting with the Elders:
Dr. Raphael Thomas

GCA Reflections News Staff

Editors: Pat Clark and Stephen Washington
Production Artist: Sandy Wheeler
Photographers: Audrey Hallett and Others

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.

Children's Ministry Report

Continued from page 1.

We found ways to re-invent our Children's Ministry through videos, Zoom Bible studies, delivering gifts to children's homes, VBS, Children's Church, the Hallelujah Festival, Playdate, Kids' Club, letters and being an in-person witness; and were blessed to realize that no matter the situation we're facing, God will always make a way for us.

Now let me tell you about the opening of Vacation Bible School this year. It was a tough decision to make. I always try to make decisions by faith and not by circumstances, but I must confess, this time it was really hard not to ignore the huge challenge we were facing with the pandemic. But God, once again, led us in a mighty way and gave us the confidence to have VBS 2020. Holding on to Psalm 127 in one hand, and the CDC guidelines in the other, we pressed forward.

Looking back, this year our VBS was a tremendous experience that I will never forget. The teachers, volunteers, parents and their children came by faith. Some of the kids were from extremely broken homes, but as one of them said: "I won't fear, God will be with me as He was with Daniel." Our theme was "Dare to be Different – Lessons from Daniel." What an encouragement it was for all of us!

Despite the challenges, the Lord continually lead us. We were encouraged to do whatever it took to bless and to reach out to the children who are unbelievably valuable and precious to us and to Him. We praise God that no reports were received regarding any of the children getting infected with COVID-19 in our program.

Finally, I thank all the teachers, teenagers, volunteers and parents for stepping out in faith with us to build the kingdom of God among the children. I also thank all of the prayer warriors who stood with us at home and in person the whole time; thank God for you. We also praise God for our pastor and the entire leadership for their tremendous faith in supporting the mission to expand the kingdom of God.

We are ready for 2021!! ✨

New Members Classes by Zoom--During COVID!

Our New Members' Class is meeting on Zoom. Pastor Brian Grant and Pastor George Peters are teaching the new members' class with four new members on Wednesdays and Dr. Raphael Thomas is teaching two new converts in his Jump Start class. ✨

GCA Photo Snapshots



Voices of Praise, Limited Edition



Tuesday Eve. Live Bible Study

The Debut of Marlon & Friends



Sunday, November 29, 2020 Commendation Service
Dr. Raphael and Sis. Velda Thomas (their sons Timothy & Nathanael)

GOGF Unity Conference

Continued from page 8.

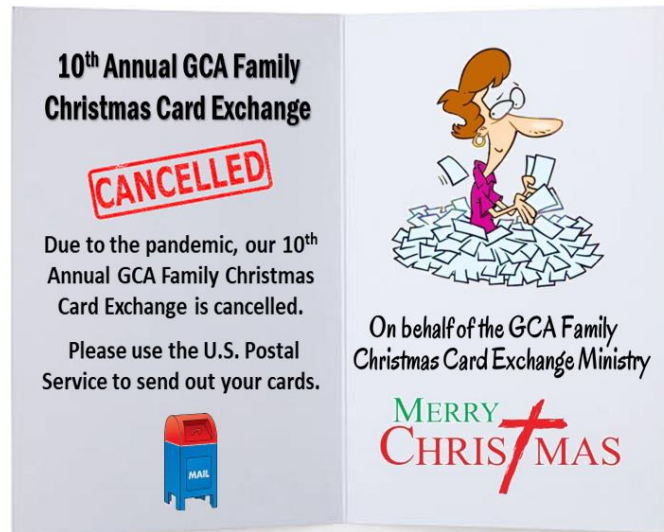
Jonathan also ministers and serves alongside his father Pastor Tony Evans in Dallas, Texas.

Both these men of God gave excellent messages focusing on unity among the believers and the need to share the gospel both locally and globally even during a pandemic. Pastor Lepine spoke on the passage in Ephesians 4 regarding unity in the body of Christ. He stressed the need for believers to treat each other and those they serve in ministry with dignity, civility and humility. Jonathan Evans' message was based on Genesis 6:14 when God instructed Noah to build an ark of gopher wood, make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. He pointed out that the gopher wood used to build the ark was able to withstand the battering of the flood and winds against the ark and how God kept those inside the ark safe. The rooms in the ark were prepared specifically for anyone who heeded the warning and decided to come into the ark for safety. The ark represents Jesus, who still has power to save even during a pandemic and the "pitch" used for the ark represents Christ's atoning work. We always need to remember that we have the words of hope for a dying and lost world and can point people to Christ, especially since so many people are dying daily from the virus during this pandemic. This really resonated with me and challenged me to use every opportunity to share this message of hope with others.

Other featured events during the conference were a live presentation of an achievement award to a missionary couple who has served in ministry for many years in Africa, and a panel discussion of local pastors which focused on and answered questions regarding the challenges of presenting the gospel amidst racial tensions and relations within the churches and our communities today. We also had a live chat room

to ask questions or make comments during the conference and there was a live drawing for a prize awarded to one of the registered attendees toward a future GOGF mission trip in 2021.

The attendance (over sixty) was one of the largest in the history of the conference. May the Lord be praised for the blessing we received from this year's conference and may we heed God's call to "Go and make disciples...." ✧



We Are Overcomers 2020 Young Adult Retreat Review

Continued from page 1.

We went up to the beautiful Refreshing Mountains Retreat and Adventure Center in Lancaster, PA October 16-18. Our speaker for the weekend was none other than Pastor Thomas A. Troutt, Sr. – lead pastor of Philadelphia Bible Fellowship, a sister assembly out in the northeast Philadelphia area. Pastor Troutt's messages centered around our retreat theme "A Real God for an Impossible World." He started off by giving us a 'heart check' by asking three questions:

1. Do I have the heart to wait on God?
2. Do I have a heart to want what God wants?
3. Do I have the heart to be a true worshipper?

Pastor Tom continued throughout the weekend emphasizing that when we have a heart for God, He will take us through impossible situations. He encapsulated the theme of the weekend with his final message; when God puts us through the impossible, it's so we can depend on Him.

And when we're doing work for God, there are three stages God will bring us through: **IMPOSSIBLE, DIFFICULT and DONE.** This resonated with us as a ministry because we went through those exact stages while planning this retreat, and we all consider it done because of Jesus.

The retreat schedule was young adult centered with varied activities including prayer walk devotions. Another feature was a Saturday evening communion campfire. This was a moving service as many young adults were able to have space and freedom to speak on whatever the Lord laid on their hearts. Data from the online survey to retreat attendees revealed that among the target age demographic, 100% would definitely recommend the GCA Young Adult Retreat. The Young Adult Ministry has a heart of gratitude for all the support we received from our church family and for all the people that were willing to join us that weekend. It was at a difficult time to plan a retreat, but we were cautious and adamant about daily temperature checks and the wearing of masks at all times. We also went the extra mile and provided everyone with individual hand sanitizers and Clorox™ disinfecting wipes. God took us through the **IMPOSSIBLE, DIFFICULT and DONE.** ✧

WHOM DO I CONTACT?

At the September GCA business meeting, an updated chart of Elders' responsibilities was shared:

Pastor Brian Grant ➔ Pastoral

Pastor George Peters ➔ Director of Discipleship and Member Care

Dr. Elijah Korich ➔ Director of Counseling

Dr. Raphael Thomas ➔ Director of Missions and Evangelism

Q: So, whom do I contact?

A: Well, if you want to help out in the church in a practical way during this pandemic, you may contact Brother Clive White. If you want to get involved in evangelism, contact Dr. Raphael Thomas. Need therapy and counselling? Dr. Elijah Korich is the person to see. If spiritual counselling is needed, you may contact any of the elders listed above. ✧

TESTIMONIES

Three new GCA members of 2020 share their testimonies:

"My experience at Germantown Christian Assembly has been a very good one. I had been attending Germantown Christian Assembly for years before becoming a member. The process of becoming a member was so different.

"Let me put it this way: you taught who you are, you taught what you do and why. You taught what was expected of me as a member. Your teaching has encouraged me to continue my discipleship as a way of life. Thanks for all the Bible teaching."

Opera Tolbert

"In retrospect, we recognize that it was by the providential hand of God that we were led to Germantown Christian Assembly more than a year ago. Although individually and separately, we both sensed the Lord was redirecting our lives to a new place of worship, spiritual growth and service. So, as the journey began, we visited several churches without any idea of our final destination. Then it happened! We remembered how Venice Jackson, a member of GCA and our friend of twenty plus years, had spoken previously so highly of where she fellowshiped.

Wow! Wow! Wow...What an awe-inspiring experience on the Sunday of our very first visit! Pastor Grant's message, *A Time of Revival*, revived us indeed as well as confirmed what the Lord had been speaking to us. We had committed ourselves to fast and pray for twenty-one days during our search for a new church home. Accordingly, the points Pastor Brian made in his message were regarding fasting and praying. Also, we were greatly impacted by how welcoming the people of God were toward us. We were filled with excitement as worship and praise filled the atmosphere – Hallelujah... Glory to our soon coming King! We were ready to join the fellowship that same day! However, remembering Proverbs 19:2, "Enthusiasm without knowledge is no good; haste makes mistakes", we instead decided to first attend New Members classes, Sunday School, Midweek Bible Study classes and all other studies and fellowships available as we positioned ourselves for hearing the heart of God in the matter.

As God called us to take a major step of faith, we trusted that He had a plan. Today, we are indeed very grateful to be counted among GCA's membership, and desire to walk in His will while fulfilling His assignment to us.

Because of Calvary!"

Larry and Cindy Watson

GOD WORKS IN SPITE OF THE PANDEMIC

The live streaming of our worship services goes out through various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. These platforms are new outlets for us (in addition to what is already being done through our church website) that make our church ministries available to a much larger audience. This ministry can expand even further if our saints share the link each week to their family members and friends who are not part of GCA!

Here are just some of the things God has been doing through these social media outlets:








From Individuals Who Are Not A Part of GCA

- A regular viewer became comfortable enough to call us from Massachusetts seeking marital help.
- Since we started streaming, a few viewers have participated in several of our Bible studies. Some have even participated in our Breaking of Bread service.

Church Sharing

We have shared messages with two other assemblies that have presented them to their church members on ZOOM.

Response from Certain Messages

-  **From the message – Eyes on the Prize**
"Tremendous message this morning. It was very challenging."
-  **From the message – Who is God Looking For?**
"Pastor Grant, please pray for me. I want God to use me."
-  **From the message – What to Do When Trouble Comes**
"I needed this. Thank you so much for this word of encouragement."
-  **From the message – Faith for Troublous Times**
"This service was great. Powerful and appropriate message."
-  **From the message – Hope for the Hurting Heart**
"Thank you. This was a real blessing."
-  **From the message – Grace for the Fallen**
"Thank you for God's message. I had no idea I was blocking my spiritual growth by being prideful. I have asked God for His forgiveness." and "Thank you for your willingness to not compromise the Word and to tell it like it is."
-  **From the message – In the Eye of the Storm**
A Caucasian lady called thanking us for our ongoing ministry and to let us know how much she was touched by a story Pastor Grant told about a racial incident when he was surrounded by a group who seemed bent on harming him; but God sent a Caucasian lady to help. ✨



GOGF Unity Conference

By Sharon Henry

GOGF (Grand Old Gospel Fellowship) Ministries held its first virtual Unity Conference this year on October 24th, 2020 from 9 am-12pm. This year has been an unprecedented year for many churches and Christian organizations in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the pandemic, restrictions have been placed on social gatherings in many states throughout the United States. Dr. Tony Hart (GOGF's Ministries President) still heeded the call to proclaim the gospel as well as build up and challenge the saints through a virtual conference.

It was evident that there was hard work and tireless effort in planning by the organizers and its participants to produce a virtual conference. The Lord provided many capable and willing persons to accomplish His work. I was impressed to see how it all came together. There were some glitches with

transmission of the live webinars for some attendees, but it was sorted out thanks to our invaluable online technicians at our very own Germantown Christian Assembly (GCA).

As conference program moderator, Dr. Tony Hart introduced each item live from GCA's sanctuary. Special music was by the Norton Hall Band whose members are based at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. Their music consisted of many of the well-loved hymns of faith in a contemporary style. The first speaker during the conference was Pastor Bob Lepine, who is the senior vice president of Family Life and co-host of Family Life Today, a national syndicated radio program. The second speaker was Jonathan Evans, mentor, author, speaker and former NFL fullback.

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Presenting a Business Meeting in a Most Unusual Way

Continued from page 7.

We thank God for the way He orchestrated the meeting from start to finish. As a result of the meeting, a family that recently started visiting GCA decided to become members of our church. They are now in our new members' class. PTL!!!

We are all praying that our next business meeting will be back in our familiar surroundings in the fellowship hall. As we all know, our meetings are not just a get-together, but they are more of a fellowship of like-minded saints. Will you pray with us? ✧

GCA's Marriage Night Out

A simulcast event presented by **RightNow Media.**



By Eddie and Brenda Wilford

Since this past March 13th's announcement of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, and after months of "stay at home," social distancing, responsible mask wearing and hand washing, GCA's Saturday, September 12th "Marriage Night Out" was our first return as a couple to an in-person event hosted at GCA. We were both excited to have a meaningful couples' night out and anticipated being "fed" spiritually and seeing brethren we had missed seeing and greeting (even from a distance) for months.

Someone notable (oh, Naomi--our daughter--just reminded us it was Maya Angelou) once said, "I learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." So even now as we looked back on that evening, nearly three months ago, we can vividly embrace this...

Due to the pandemic, the orators in the video were not on a stage "performing" before a huge unknown audience as they do at previous Marriage Night events. What was especially appreciated at this event, was that the video aired couples who spoke to us (the viewers) from their own living rooms. This "at home" atmosphere enabled each husband and wife team to appear more relaxed as they sat and listened to one another, then admit and share. They seemed more personal and genuine, as though they were speaking more directly to each of us ---- couples socially distanced, listening intently as we personally related to the discussions made that night at GCA.

One of the couples in the video encouraged a "**good fight**," which is a conflict that seeks to bring a couple to the deeper CORE of growing and transforming (both as individuals and as a couple) to a glorifying godly marriage via the C.O.R.E. of **Cooperation, Ownership, Respect and Encouragement**. As the speakers continued to share with transparency, infused with God's Word in a way that each of us could honestly relate to, it seemed each couple left encouraged and glad to have joined our couples' evening out together. ✧





For your *health*
By Margaret Aitcheson



Maintaining mental health is vital; it affects how we think, feel and behave as we cope with the issues of life. It determines how we manage stress, relationships and choices. This year, in addition to handling all the various problems that we encounter from day to day, we are also coping with COVID-19 which appears to be never-ending. This has taken a tremendous toll on our mental health due to the sickness and even death of family members and friends, loss of financial well-being, social isolation and the uncertainty of when the disease will be eradicated.

Mental health is just as important as physical and emotional health and when that area is out of sorts, the others are adversely affected. Check yourself regularly about how you are feeling or behaving. Are you reacting well to the challenges of life? Are you irritable and angry, lashing out at co-workers, family and friends? Are you maintaining a good balance between work and the rest of your life? If you are having problems in these areas, think about what adjustments you can make to live a better life.

How is your relationship with God and others? When these are out of order, your mental health is also affected. Developing a healthy relationship with God by reading, studying, applying His word and praying effectively are the best steps in enhancing mental health. Submitting all your concerns to Him and trusting Him to guide you will greatly minimize your stress. Try to resolve conflicts with others.

There are other things you can do. Speak to your physician about any appropriate concerns. Maintain a positive attitude. Watch any negative self-talk and counter it with affirming words from the Scriptures. Surround yourself with people who will listen to you and build you up. Ensure you are getting enough rest and adequate sleep. Exercise regularly and eat nutritiously.

Spend time outdoors; engage in your favorite hobbies; watch good movies (including comedies). Laughter is therapeutic. Be kind to others. Maintain a gratitude journal. Know that there is hope. Protecting your mental health is one of the best things you can do to help you live an abundant and productive life. ✧

Germantown Christian Assembly

ESL

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced
Classes For Adults Age 18+

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. EST (Eastern Standard Time)

By ZOOM

For more information, visit our website at
www.gcafamilychurch.org



By Clive White,
Chairman of Deacons

Presenting a Business Meeting in a Most Unusual Way



We all have certainly experienced a lot of unusual situations this year. We really don't know what the norm is anymore. When the topic of our business meeting came up at our Joint Leaders Meeting, we were faced with the decision of whether we should proceed with having a meeting at all in this pandemic era as we realized it could not be conducted in our normal way. I remembered there was a unanimous affirmative among the leaders, that it was necessary (and our responsibility) for the Lord's work to go on in spite of the circumstances. The challenge was how we could make this happen in a productive and God-honoring way. With the help of the Lord, we moved forward and trusted He would work out the details. We pondered different options and decided to try what was presented to the congregation on October 4th.

Special thanks to Bros. Carl Richards and Nick White for their help in making this presentation possible. From a technical standpoint, the meeting went as we hoped it would. All our members who could not physically join us in the sanctuary, but desired to be a part of the meeting, were able to do so by way of ZOOM. Praise the Lord!

There were many matters on the agenda, and we hoped the meeting would move along in a timely manner. We introduced two brothers to the GCA leadership: Bro. Raphael Thomas to sit with the

elders; and Bro. Kirk Wheeler to sit with the deacons.

Pastor Brian was elected the President of the GCA Corporation, replacing our dear Bro. Charles Hart. Brother Elijah Korich was confirmed as an Elder and Bro. Carlton Henry as a deacon and Treasurer of GCA. In accordance with the GCA Constitution, the time had come to reaffirm four deacons: Brothers Nicholas Grant, Stephen Washington, Clairmonte Richards and yours truly. All were reaffirmed.

There were a few amendments to the GCA Constitution that were proposed, all of which were ratified. Many saints asked questions and some time was spent answering them. I believe the saints appreciated the transparency of leadership.

Yours truly gave an update on the existing projects and announced upcoming projects.

Bro. Carlton gave us a positive financial update. We learned that the Church finances were in good standing. God continues to be gracious to us.

Pastor Brian introduced an updated leadership assignment chart and announced our anniversary offering target of \$20,000 for this year to be going toward renovations at the Mission House, among other announcements.

Continues on page 8.