



2021 GCA Church Picnic

Saturday, July 31st
11 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Victory Valley Camp located in Zionsville, PA. The cost includes park entry, burgers, hot dogs, beverages, and access to activities including volleyball, swimming, soccer, basketball, hiking, paddle boats, kayaks and canoes.



Upstate New York

Teens and Youth Getaway

Word of Life Summer Camp
 in the Adirondack Mountains
Sunday to Friday, August 1-6

An exciting experience with lots of fun and loaded with activities for kids and teens ages 6 to 19.



Official GCA Reopening

Sunday, September 19th

Restarting our church the way it was before COVID-19 with all the ministries at work. Redesigning our Sunday schedule.

Legacy Sunday

October 24, 2021

A major event for families. Photo props for family pictures. An opportunity to invite relatives.



2021 Graduates

On the weekend of June 5th, GCA celebrated their 48th anniversary with special guest, Dr. Richard Allen Farmer, a gifted pastor, musician and author. The following is the list of graduates honored on Sunday, June 6th.

Graduate Studies

Andrea Henry, M.A.,
 Johns Hopkins University

Undergraduate Studies

Marlon Henry, B.A.,
 Pennsylvania State University

Nathaniel Thomas, B.A.,
 University of Valley Forge

Timothy Thomas, B.A.,
 University of Valley Forge

High School

Aniya Gentles,
 Hill-Freedman World Academy

Kaya Hargrove,
 Thomas Edison High School

Hannah Walton,
 Abington High School

Nicholas White,
 La Salle College High School

Zamir Williams,
 Abington High School

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In This Issue

- 1, 3 GCA's Evangelism Explosion: Our First Outing
- 1, 2 IF: Gathering 2021 Hosted by GCA
- 2 First Men's Breakfast in Over a Year
- 3, 6 GCA VBS Day Camp - 2021
- 4 GCA's New Awning
- 5 Parenting 2021
- 5 Cartoon
- 6 For Your Health: Lower Back Pain
- 7 GCA Evangelism Report
- 8 Upcoming Events
- 8 2021 Graduates

GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Germantown Christian Assembly

GCA's Evangelism Explosion Our First Outing



By Damon Hobbs

This was our first outing as we were going into the neighborhood in groups of threes Saturday afternoon. Sister Mildred, Sister Ann and I were walking along a long block where we could see in the distance a football team just standing around the entrance gate to the football field. The team was on the opposite side of the street. This was like four blocks in one. As the ladies and I were getting closer to them, I was saying to myself, "There's no need for us to go over there because they aren't going to listen to us." In reality I was scared. There were twenty to twenty-five football players as well as three or four cars full of parents in each car.

Continues on page 3.



By Jackie Swift

IF: GATHERING 2021 Hosted by GCA

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16 NKJV

57 GCA ladies and friends had the opportunity to participate in a recent "IF: Gathering 2021." Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, two options were offered. On Friday evening and Saturday, some attended at GCA which was live-streamed, while others joined online from home. The conference was brought to GCA by Lauren

and Sherry Grant.

What is "IF"? It's a discipleship ministry which exists to equip women with gospel-centered resources, events and community **so we may learn more about who God is and disciple other women right where they are.**

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: gcafamilly@verizon.net
Web Site: gcafamillychurch.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

Editor: Pat Clark and Stephen Washington
Production Artist: Sandy Wheeler
Photographers: Audrey Holett 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.

IF: GATHERING 2021 Hosted by GCA

Continued from page 1.

This year's "IF" conference was called "Even IF."



"Even IF this world is getting darker; **Even IF** the worst happens to us; **Even IF** everything just continues to get worse and worse on our watch, we are okay. Not only are we okay, we are still filled with hope and we are not victims. We still have a job to do. Whether it's good times or bad times, we have a clear mission".

– Jennie Allen ("IF" Founder)

God's Word was shared by guest speakers beginning Friday evening. Four break-out sessions were offered Saturday morning -- "God & Suffering"; "Forgiving What You Can't Forget"; "Why There Is Hope for Your Brokenness"; and "You Don't Have to Be Just Like Her." Everyone at home and at GCA was able to participate.

Saturday continued with more guest speakers, pastors and panel discussions throughout the day, as well as several praise and worship teams. Every aspect of the conference was uplifting and thought-provoking. We were challenged to share the gospel. Also, to come before God asking, "How do You want us to live?"; and to remember it is God working through us that produces change as we yield to Him. Our God has a plan! ✧

First Men's Breakfast in Over a Year



By Dwight Neilson

Over 30 men met on Saturday, April 17th for the first men's breakfast in over a year. Rich fellowship was had over a sumptuous meal prepared by Bro. Dave Johnson and several assistants. The keynote speaker was Bro. Damon Hobbs, who recounted his experience of going through treatment for cancer, from which he recently recovered. He enhanced this discussion with photos of what he went through during various stages of the battle. At the end, he challenged the men to share the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, the gospel, and then led a team that went out that afternoon into the community to spread the gospel. ✧



By Dr. Raphael Thomas,
Director of Missions and Evangelism

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
John 9:4 KJV

As the world becomes even more acutely aware that the end is near and that the time to evangelize will come to an end, we here at GCA have sought to redouble our efforts and refocus our attention on evangelism.

Having started the year with intensified prayer and fasting and having hosted a training in Evangelism Explosion, the assembly was positioned to ramp up its evangelistic outreach.

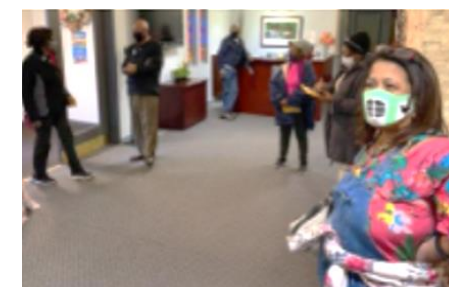


Dr. Raphael and Velda Thomas completed further training in Evangelism Explosion to be trainers of trainers.

Since then, we have been having monthly outreaches. In April alone over 30 persons made salvation decisions through the ministry at GCA.

This includes the regular monthly outreach, a men's outreach led by Bro. Dave Dale and Bro. Damon Hobbs, as well as the other ministries like Community Connections and Sunday services.

The Evangelism Team continues to meet on Friday evenings for "war room" meetings. This includes prayers for new converts, testimonies and further equipping for evangelism.



Returning from the fields with good news.

We are now preparing a core team to assist with follow-up using the material Jump Start. Believers who are willing and available to assist with follow-up are encouraged to log on to ZOOM on Friday evenings for orientation. Can you imagine what would be the result of having 50 "disciplers" or more connecting with persons outside of regular church gatherings?" The pandemic forcefully reminded us that church is not about a building; the church is alive and active when it is gathered as well as when it is scattered. ✧



For Your Health

By Margaret Aitcheson

Lower Back Pain

Lower back pain is one of the most common physical ailments in the US, and about 8 out of 10 adults will face this at some point in their lives. The spine or the back muscles may be the source of the pain and can be costly to treat. Most lower back pain is the result of an injury such as muscle strains or sprains due to sudden movements or poor lifting techniques while handling heavy objects. Doing heavy work in the house or in the yard, an old sports injury or a chronic condition such as arthritis may also result in muscle strains or sprains.

Lower back pain may be the result of diseases such as cancer of the spinal cord, ruptured or herniated discs resulting in compression of the nerve after lifting heavy objects, twisting the back, sciatica, kidney or spinal infections. Acute back pain can last a few days to a few weeks and chronic pain greater than three months. The pain is more likely to start occurring in individuals between 30 to 50 years of age due to changes in the body related to aging. As people get older, the fluid content between the vertebrae in the spine becomes reduced and the spinal discs are easily irritated. Some muscle tone is also lost which makes the back more prone to injury.

Strengthening the back muscles and the abdominal core through stretching exercises as well as using good lifting techniques are helpful in preventing lower back injury and pain. Maintain a healthy weight and good posture. Over-the-counter pain medications or medicated creams with menthol, camphor or lidocaine may be beneficial. Remember to always consult your doctor if you have any health concerns. ✧

GCA VBS Day Camp – 2021

TREASURED! Discovering You're Priceless to God

Continued from page 3

Kids discover that they are priceless to God. Treasured is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences that kids see, hear, touch and even taste! Team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that helps faith flow into real life.



In the afternoon, kids had a blast by taking classes such as baking, creative arts, chess and soccer. For a whole week, they were immersed in two activities of their choice.

We wanted VBS Day Camp 2021 to be a week filled with fun, learning about Jesus and children developing new hobbies. But above all, we wanted VBS Day Camp to be a time of fellowship between the children, their teachers and all the staff. This was time for us to show the children how God loves them through our actions, our smiles (even with a mask) and the time we dedicate to them. ✧

GCA's Evangelism Explosion

Our First Outing

Continued from page 1.

Well, we were about fifteen paces from them when Sister Ann said, "Should we go and talk to them." I said, "No." Sister Mildred immediately said, "Come on, let's talk to them. That's what we're here for." So we crossed the street and as we approached and were about five steps from them, Sister Mildred said to me, "Go on." I looked at her with disbelief. I thought she was going to do all the talking. So I walked in the middle of the crowd and just said, "Do you all have a minute?" I looked around and they all just stopped what they were doing, and to my surprise, all eyes were on me. Then I said, "I want to tell you about the gospel of Jesus Christ." I paused for a moment because I truly thought they were going to tell me to get lost. But I was astonished! Not only did I have the football team's attention, everyone in the cars listened as well. Now I tell you I was stunned for a moment because I didn't think they would listen. So I began to speak with my mask on. My words were muffled so I took off the mask and that's when the Holy Spirit of God began to speak. I said to them, "They are killing you. People your age. I know you heard the news. You are not promised tomorrow. If you were to die today, do you know where you are going? There is no such thing as purgatory. You can't pray someone out of where they are after they die. You either go to heaven or hell. There is no in-between. Now, I'm not telling you that you will see tomorrow. But what I am telling you is that God promised you if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved and He promised you will be with Him in Heaven and not go to hell." I explained to them what sin was: when you think the wrong thing, say the wrong thing and do the wrong

thing, God calls that sin. At that moment I began to ask, "Who wants to be saved? Raise your hand." I quickly caught myself and realized these are kids--don't put them on the spot. So I just said, "If you want to be saved, just bow your head and close your eyes and repeat after me. Don't worry about who's next to you. This is for your life!" I closed my eyes and said, "Repeat after me. Dear Lord God..." I tell you the truth I didn't think I would hear anyone say a word. I heard the whole team say all together, "Dear Lord God..." My heart just stopped--I was so overwhelmed I almost forgot how to lead them to Christ. So they all said the "sinner's prayer" and afterwards the sisters and I gave each of them a *Romans Road* tract and also gave them to the parents and people that were in the three or four cars. All took them and none rejected them.

I'm telling you, I could have gone down to the Schuylkill River and walked on water. To God be the glory! ✧

GCA VBS Day Camp – 2021

TREASURED! Discovering You're Priceless to God

By Cressia Sousa

Our church has always invested in and hosted great VBS programs. This year, as we were praying for VBS 2021, we were reminded of the children enjoying and learning about Jesus. So, to expand our summer ministry to children from saved and unsaved families, we were encouraged to take a new approach. This year we have decided on a day camp format for VBS. Many families look forward to summer camp for their children, and the Lord has given GCA a beautiful, camp-like yard at the Mission House. We also have many talented and amazing people willing to share their gifts and time with the children. Our full day program ran from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. June 21-25.

In the morning, the VBS program theme was, "Treasured."

Continues on page 6.

GCA's New Awning

By Clive White,
Chairman of Deacons

Yeah!!! The new awning is finally installed. Praise the Lord!!! It has been a long and daunting task but on April 2, 2021, the morning of Good Friday, the Lord allowed us to see the completion of this project.

When the Lord placed this project on our hearts, we thought our main concern would be raising sufficient funds to cover the cost of installation. However, that turned out to be the least of our concerns as the Lord, through His people, would provide the funds to cover the cost through our special anniversary offering. The Lord always provides.

I want to say a hearty thank you to my fellow deacons and especially to Bro. Carlton Henry. Carlton was the deacon placed in charge of this project and I must commend him for his patience and determination to see this project through. It was so complicated that we had to retain the services of a lawyer to help us through the legality of working with City Hall to obtain a permit. At times, we felt that if we had known this would be so difficult to achieve, we would have probably not sought to have the awning installed.

But it was at these times that we were reminded of the reasons we felt it was necessary to have an awning over the ramp door entrance. It provides shelter entering and exiting the building. There were times when it was raining and someone in a wheelchair needed to be taken into the building or out to a waiting vehicle and they would get soaked in the process. I would then hear the comment, "I wish we had an awning that would provide covering from the rain." The same can be said for when there is a funeral and the casket is unloaded from or loaded into the hearse.

The awning also adds beauty to the House of the Lord. Since its installation, I have heard many comments on the added beauty to the entrance of the church building. I must add, I believe it was worth the wait and the challenges we faced along the way.

We thank and praise the Lord for this addition to the church and trust its presence will be greatly appreciated. ✧



Parenting 2021

On Mother's Day, Pastor Brian preached a message entitled, "A Marriage Made in Heaven." He equipped the saints with "Five Important Things We Need to Teach Our Children." If you haven't heard it, you can go to our website, www.gcafamilychurch.org and click on our YouTube channel image which will take you to our YouTube videos. As a follow-up to the message, GCA's teen leaders hosted a parenting forum on Sunday, May 22nd.

To help lead the way, we invited parents with tons of experience to serve on a panel. Who did we invite? Our GCA elders and their wives! We had a diverse group who came out to this event ranging from parents with children in elementary school all the way through college. We even had grandparent representation.

We started off by sharing our funniest parenting stories which had everyone in stitches. Then we engaged in a lively discussion around monitoring our kids' electronics use, as well as helping our children stand for Christ in a culture where Christianity is viewed as "close-minded" and "outdated". Other topics covered were, "What do you do when your child no longer wants to go to church?"; "When does parenting stop?"; and "How do you parent when your child is in college?"

The parents had many questions and concerns that they are dealing with right now including bullying in school. We had some debates throughout the session, but our elders were there to steer us back on track :-).

We had a lot of fun, but we also walked away feeling more knowledgeable. A few of the many takeaways include:

1. Parents have the most influence in their children's lives.
2. Grandparents have the second most influence; above peer influence.
3. Parents should start teaching their children Christian principles at a very early age; even before we think they can understand.
4. We must model what it means to live for Christ.

At the end of the two-hour forum, no one was ready to leave. It was very clear that we needed to do this again! We are happy to announce that for the next parenting event, we will partner with GCA's Children's Ministry! Stay tuned for more details :-).

GCA Teen Leaders,
Nick, Rita & Lauren Grant,
Marlon Henry and Judy Barrett ✧

