

Page 8

**Be Careful  
What You Wish For!**

A 60-year-old couple were celebrating their 40 years of marriage. During the celebration, a fairy appeared! "Because you have been such a loving couple all those years, I would like to give you each one wish."

The wife quickly chimed in, "I want to travel around the world."

The fairy waved her wand and, POOF! She had the tickets in her hand.

Next, it was the husband's turn.

He paused for a moment, then said shyly, "Well, I'd like to have a wife 30 years younger than me."

The fairy picked up her wand and, POOF! He was 90...The moral of this story - You had better be careful what you wish for because you just might get it! ✧



GERMANTOWN CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY, INC. DBA  
**GRACE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY**

**2024 Fall Festival**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31st**

• 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. •

**610 EAST MT. PLEASANT AVE. PHILA. PA 19119**

As a Halloween alternative, come join us for a fun night with games, prizes, food, and a lots of candies in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your family and friends.

**NO COSTUMES PLEASE**

Contact Persons  
*Bro. Lloyd and Sis. Melissa Glen*

*Words of* **WISDOM**  
From A Previous Generation

Sister Dilys Hart's mother, from her father in Scotland:

**"There is so much good in the worst of us,  
And so much bad in the best of us,  
That it hardly behooves any of us  
to find any fault with the rest of us."**

*If you have "Words of Wisdom" from way back that you would like to share, please contact Pat Clark. ✧*

October 2024  
Volume 11, Issue 3

**In This Issue**

- 1,4 Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Community Connections!
- 1,3 Sunday School Reopens with Great Success!
- 2 Golden Eagles Ministry: A Ram in the Bush
- 2 Missionary Report
- 3 Flashback! – July '22 Evangelism Outreach Photos
- 4 Cartoon
- 5 Salvation Testimony of Javier Gomez
- 6 Making Wise Health Choices
- 7 GCA's 51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary and Recognition of Graduates
- 7 Friends & Family Day
- 8 Be Careful What You Wish For!
- 8 2024 Fall Festival
- 8 Cartoon
- 8 Words of Wisdom from a Previous Generation

# GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Grace Christian Assembly



*Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Community Connections!*

By Cressia Souza Brown

*Ten years of reaching out, connecting people, and sharing the love of Jesus.*

Our Community Connections ministry has been bringing a special flavor to the Spring and Fall seasons at GCA for the last 10 years. Grace Christian Assembly has always been about sharing the love of Jesus. But, in a designed, practical

approach, our leaders sought to build a bridge between GCA and those in the community who do not know Jesus as their Savior by investing in ways to make them feel welcomed and accepted. The answer, "Community Connections" has been a real blessing to many and has helped to reinvigorate Tuesday nights at GCA.

*Continues on page 4.*

## Sunday School Reopens with Great Success!

By Melissa Glen

We are excited to announce the successful reopening of Grace Christian Assembly's Sunday School, on **September 15, 2024**. After a long hiatus, it was a blessing to see both the children and adult classes up and running again.

The children's session started with everyone together, joyfully singing Bible story songs. Then they broke into their age-specific classes, where each group was taught lessons tailored to their developmental stages. The attendance of the children's classes was a wonderful start, with **twenty-one children** joining in, and we are grateful to have had our full complement of dedicated teachers ready to guide them. This revival of Sunday School is a wonderful opportunity for our children to deepen their understanding of the Bible and their relationship with God. We are introducing a new curriculum that is both engaging and age-appropriate, focusing on key Bible stories, life applications and how to live out their faith today.

*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.



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

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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.

# Golden Eagles Ministry

## A Ram in the Bush



On Thursday, September 26, at least 30 Golden Eagles waited patiently for the speaker to arrive for the 10:00 AM meeting about the importance for seniors to be aware of frauds. Shortly before 10:30, we were informed that the speaker unfortunately had been detained. No panic! A lady in the audience spoke up and said she could substitute, since she was familiar with the subject. So, without notes or power-point or hand-out materials Libby Arias got us started. She then moderated voices of experience from the audience. Praise the Lord for His provision of the "ram in the bush"! We also enjoyed lunch. ✧

## MISSIONARY REPORT

*Excerpts from the Pastor's Weekly Updates*



On September 1, we were challenged by the testimony of Ms. Marsha Joachim, a young missionary faithfully serving in Iraq for the past ten years. Marsha's story of God's calling on her life, His provision, and His protection in the mission field exemplifies God's faithfulness to her as she serves in Iraq. As she prepares to return soon to Iraq, let us continue to uphold her in our prayers, asking the Lord to strengthen and guide her in the days ahead.



On September 8, James Nicholson, Jr., GCA's new young missionary, presented a passionate and compelling vision to reach college and university students for Christ in Philadelphia. We are excited to announce that GCA feels led by the Lord to partner with James in this crucial mission. Please keep James in your prayers as he serves to reach the next generation with the Gospel of Christ.



On Tuesday, October 1, we were blessed to have Sister Maria Gusmao, a missionary from Brazil, visiting GCA to share about her mission work. ✧

## GCA's 51<sup>st</sup> ANNIVERSARY AND RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES

*Excerpts from the Pastor's Weekly Updates*

We praise the Lord for blessing us on Sunday, June 9th with a **joyful anniversary celebration!** GCA honored nine high school graduates, seven from the International Christian High School (ICHS) (in northeast Philadelphia) and two young adults from GCA: **Ezra Walton**, who graduated with a diploma in Veterinary Medicine and **Debbie-Ann McKenies**, who earned her doctorate in Occupational Therapy. The students from ICHS had been active in GCA's Tuesday night Youth Group, men's mentoring group, and/or serving in GCA's VBS. It was a joyous occasion as the church family joined the graduates' families in celebrating their testimonies and accomplishments.

The ministry in music by the ICHS choir was truly uplifting and GCA's **Voices of Praise** rendered inspiring music as the church family worshiped God in sincere gratitude for His faithfulness in leading us through another year!

Anniversary guest speaker **Pastor Ricky Wilson** from Coatesville, PA spoke from Mark 6 and delivered a unique message on Christ's character and sufficiency. He exhorted the church to pursue to rediscover Christ as He is revealed through His



**Pastor Ricky Wilson from Coatesville, PA**

blessings to His people. Pastor Ricky pointed out that the Lord does, gives, and blesses because of who He is in His character. If you missed the program, you may go to GCA's church website, [www.gcafamilychurch.org](http://www.gcafamilychurch.org), click on GCA's YouTube Channel banner located on the homepage, and type "2024-06-09" in the search field to view the video.

**A special thanks to Sister Sharon Henry, Sister Lauren Grant, and their teams** for making the anniversary dinner and warm fellowship in the Fellowship Hall a wonderful experience. ✧

10:00 AM Worship and  
Breaking of Bread Service  
followed by a Fellowship Lunch

You're Invited to Grace Christian Assembly's  
2024 Friends and Family Day  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>

Our Speaker  
  
Pastor Brian GRANT

Invite friends & family to come join us for a day of worship and a FREE delicious fellowship meal!



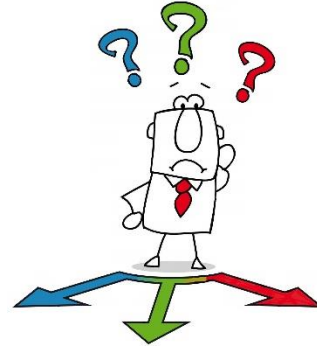


# MAKING WISE HEALTH CHOICES

By Margaret Aitcheson

*"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul."*

3 John 1:2



Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not just the absence of disease or infirmity. It is important to make wise choices to be healthy, to stay healthy, and not take our health for granted.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 states that our body is God's temple and so we should honor God in our body. Choosing a healthy lifestyle is one way to honor God and carry out His purpose for us. It is quite challenging to operate at our best if we are not keeping good health.

Maintaining good health requires a balanced approach that incorporates choices that promote physical, mental, spiritual and emotional wellbeing.

## Here are some key practices:

1. **Have a balanced diet** with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, healthy fats, and controlled portion size. **Stay hydrated**, having about 8 cups of water daily.
2. **Stay active, exercise regularly** and incorporate **strength training**.
3. **Get adequate sleep**. 7-8 hours per night.
4. **Manage stress, stay connected to family and friends and seek help when needed**. Remember, we can cast all our cares on the Lord because He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7)
5. **Make preventive health care a priority**. Get regular screening for common conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, heart disease and cancer.
6. **Avoid harmful habits** such as excessive alcohol intake, smoking, and caffeine consumption.
7. **Stay positive**. Practice being grateful; engage in enjoyable activities.
8. **Make daily Bible reading, prayer, meditation and drawing close to the Lord a priority**.

By following these practices consistently, you can maintain good health and improve your quality of life. ✧

## Sunday School Reopens with Great Success!

Continued from page 1.

**Adult Sunday School** also resumed with much anticipation and exceeded expectations in terms of attendance, especially given it was the first class in years. The adults began with the first of a three-part series on **"Success Principles Taken from the Garden of Eden,"** which focuses on practical principles for success in any aspect of your life, drawn from the lessons of Adam and Eve in the Garden.

As we progress, we will also explore a variety of contemporary and interactive topics such as **Balancing Faith and Technology in the Home; Raising Children in a Digital Age: Screen Time and Social Media; Faith and Mental Health: Supporting Your Children's Emotional Well-being and Raising Kids to be Sexually Pure in This Perverse Generation**. Our goal is to approach these relevant issues from a biblical perspective, providing parents with a clear understanding of God's position on these matters. Through these discussions, we aim to counter the narrative that the world promotes, equipping families to uphold biblical values in today's challenging cultural landscape. We will delve deeply into God's Word, uncovering the rich wisdom and insights it offers.

With this encouraging start, we look forward to even greater participation and growth in the weeks ahead. However, we still need your help! We are seeking volunteers and additional teachers to assist both in the children's and adults' Sunday School programs. If you feel called to serve or teach, we would love to have you join our team and be a part of this exciting new chapter at Grace Christian Assembly.

Let's continue to build on this momentum and work together to nurture and grow our Sunday School ministry. ✧

## Flashback!

Photos from GCA's July '22 Evangelism Outreach Ministry held at Cheltenham and Germantown Ave.



Continued from page 1.

In the beginning, a team of elders and church members led by an incredibly visionary pastor prayed and sought God's voice on how to craft an inviting and relevant program for the old and young. The prayer was also for GCA members and friends to volunteer their gifts and talents as instruments to the Lord. The Community Connections team consists of volunteers in many areas providing food, fun and fellowship for the young and young at heart.

Our evening program starts with dinner, and it is stunning to see all the intergenerational interactions going on in the loving and safe environment of our Fellowship Hall. A phenomenal kitchen crew for every Tuesday night plan, cook, and do their best to accommodate food preferences that range from spaghetti and baked chicken to pizza and Chipotle.

Next, are the Community Connection programs which include Kid's Club; a teens' program; English as a Second Language (ESL); Adult Bible Studies; and topical classes. Kid's Club, a program for children aged 5-12 years old, offers fun and opportunities to make new friends in a very safe environment. Classes introduce children to hobbies like cooking, chess, craft-making and more. The Kid's Club staff are incredible and passionate about the children's ministry. They aim to ensure the children are cared for, valued, and loved by them and by Jesus.

Have you met our teens? The teen's ministry is fantastic and bursting with lots of energy, laughter, and enthusiasm. Our teens have a meaningful time with their amazing leaders having fun and studying the Word of God.

Our ESL staff love to teach. They are very patient, loving and are helping people in Philadelphia and around the world to learn English in the comfort

of their own homes. Imagine being able to teach English and share the love of Jesus to someone in Venezuela or Japan? Incredible! Reaching over eighteen nationalities, the ESL team is GCA's army to spread the love of Jesus globally.

Finally, the adults, young and older, are offered several in-depth Bible studies in a face-to-face format, as well as online, to provide spiritual equipping and encouragement through the scriptures. In addition, classes are available to provide practical skills like personal finance.

An especially important and vital part of Community Connection are those who pray, donate, drive, and offer their time to the ministry. Thank you so much!

We praise God for Community Connections, a beautiful ministry that has been reaching so many with God's love who would not normally come to a regular church service. And with the start of each new season, we look forward to seeing how the ministry will impact children, teens, and adults for the glory of God.

My prayer is that Community Connections continues to expand and reach out to those who do not know the love of Jesus. ✧



Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.  
— REVELATION 3:20 NIV



Growing up, I always believed in God and who Jesus was, but I never knew what Jesus did for us. One day in fifth grade, I was supposed to go to my grandmother's house for Bible study with Ms. Lorraine after school. Instead, I hung out with a couple of friends. We always did things we weren't supposed to, such as damaging other people's properties and messing with other people. We got caught throwing rocks at people's homes and we thought we were going to get hurt by the person who caught us. He ended up letting us go, but I still had to face the consequences.

I ended up going to my grandmother's house after the situation. Ms. Lorraine was there teaching my cousins in the living room. I sat and listened to her teach about what Jesus did for us. After that day, I continued to do all those reckless things; I didn't learn my lesson. In most of my teenage years, I never had my mind on God, and I thought I could do everything on my own. When I turned 17, I tried to get into religion and focus on God, but I was always in and out of it. Every time I went to my grandmother's house, she always asked me to join for Bible study; I was never interested. I wanted to do other things like hang out with friends or spend time with my girlfriend at that time.

Then one Wednesday afternoon I decided to participate in the Bible study with Ms. Lorraine and my cousins. I hadn't seen Ms. Lorraine since the incident I had in fifth grade; that was 7 years ago. I

remember Ms. Lorraine by the way she talks and the way she treats us young people. It is a blessing to have her in my life now. I sat down and asked her if she remembered me, and she said she didn't. We sat down and began to read our Bibles and learn about things that are righteous and unrighteous. The more we read, the more I began to feel weird because everything she was teaching was about all the things I was doing and, like I said, she didn't know me at all. Then I realized that it wasn't her telling me what is righteous and unrighteous, it was the Word of God. After that, we started to talk about the love Jesus has for us. I began to get emotional because she was telling me how Jesus died for us to be saved from the things I liked doing. I was telling myself I was taking life for granted and wasn't grateful for life.

*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock.  
If anyone hears my voice and opens the  
door, I will come in and eat with that  
person, and they with me.*

*Revelation 3:20*

One verse that stood out to me was Revelation 3:20, even had me shed a tear. To me the verse meant that Jesus was knocking on my heart and was waiting for me to let Him into my heart and into my life. I started to think Jesus had been knocking on the "door" to my heart since I was in the fifth grade. But now I can say I am so happy that I finally opened my heart to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That day, I confessed that I was a sinner and accepted Him as my Lord and Savior. Today I spread the Word as much as I can and teach others the love Jesus has for us all. I have learned the true value of life and have this thought: Jesus will always love me and always have my back through it all! ✧