

# GCA ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Continued from page 7.

On March 20, 2026, we completed the fall series, which examined biblical figures including David, Solomon, Elijah, and Jehoshaphat, drawing from 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 2 Chronicles. The current spring season focuses on the ministry of Jesus. It included special Passion Week lessons presented the Sunday before Good Friday and on Easter Sunday. Average attendance in the Adult Class has been 20-25 participants, with several Sundays exceeding 40 attendees.

Looking ahead, our goal is to establish a weekly rotation of three to four brothers teaching the Adult Class. Brothers David Poehler and Chet Carter have been added to the teaching team. We would also like to establish a regular teaching rotation in order to fully reboot the Teen Class. In the Children's class, once the current materials are exhausted, movement to a church-wide curriculum can occur.

We thank the Lord for the encouraging and favorable response the Adult Sunday School Class has received. This fall, at the conclusion of my 1-year tenure, an evaluation will be prepared to help inform planning for the future GCA Sunday School ministry. ✧

**Word of Life Camp**



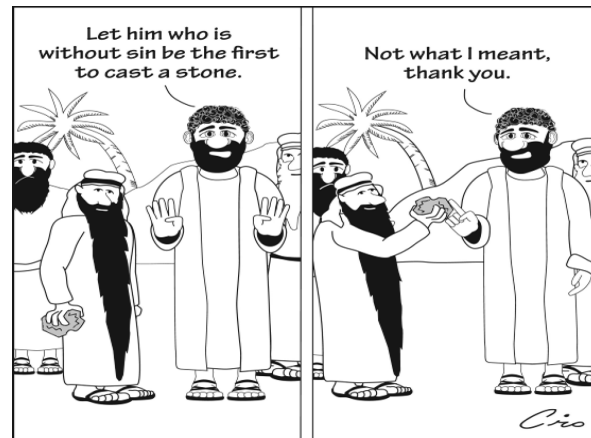
We invite all teens to join us for another week at Word of Life Summer Camp from July 12 to 18. Contact Sis. Rita Grant for more information.

**USE IT OR LOSE IT CAMP**  
**JUNE 29TH TO AUGUST 21ST**  
**8AM TO 4PM**

**IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A SAFE INTERACTIVE SUMMER CAMP FOR YOUR CHILD AGES 7-12, THIS CAMP IS FOR YOU!**

**EMPHASIS ON MATH COMPUTATION, READING COMPREHENSION, SELF-AFFIRMATION TECHNIQUES, WEEKLY TRIPS AND MORE!**

**AT**  
**GRACE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY**  
**610 EAST MOUNT PLEASANT AVENUE**  
**PHILADELPHIA, PA 19119**



May 2026  
Volume 13, Issue 2

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# GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Grace Christian Assembly



By Dr. Raphael Thomas



GCA will be hosting a major community outreach on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. This event will be held at the church on Friday evening from 7:30 to 9 p.m. in the 600 block of East Mount Pleasant Avenue and on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. It will provide opportunities for connection and interaction with community members through a wide variety of exciting activities including:

- ◆ Live Music & Singing
- ◆ Food Trucks
- ◆ A Bounce House
- ◆ Face Painting
- ◆ Health Fair
- ◆ Testimonies
- ◆ Prayer & Evangelism
- ◆ Sign-up for Back-to-School Drive

This event is planned to coincide with the celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America as well as to share the gospel with our community. This is a great opportunity for serving and giving to enhance the lives of our neighbors.

Please be praying much for this endeavor. ✧



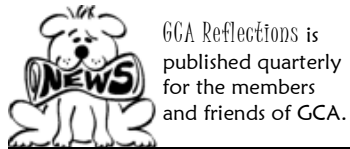
By Margaret Aitchison

## Gratitude A MENTAL HEALTH TOOL

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV)

Scripture encourages us to live with gratitude in our hearts; not only when things are good, but in **all** circumstances. Gratitude is more than saying "thank you" — it is the practice of recognizing blessings, both big and small; a daily decision to notice and appreciate the good in our lives in what we have rather than what we lack. *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.



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

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."

# Gratitude

## A MENTAL HEALTH TOOL



Continued from page 1.

Research shows that gratitude has powerful effects on the mind. When practiced regularly it can:

- Reduce stress and anxiety as it calms the mind and helps us feel less overwhelmed.
- Improve mood as we focus on good things. It lifts us emotionally and increases our joy.
- Defeat negative thinking by breaking the cycle of constant worry and discouragement.
- Build emotional strength. Grateful people are more resilient during difficult times.

When we practice gratitude, the brain releases chemicals such as dopamine and serotonin which helps us feel relaxed and happy. Overtime, gratitude trains the brain to look for positive things more naturally. So, the more we practice gratitude, the easier it becomes to feel hopeful and at peace. Gratitude does not mean we ignore pain or pretend everything is fine. Life will bring challenges, loss, stress, uncertainty and hardships, but even when things get difficult, we can still recognize God's help, remember past victories and hold on to hope. Gratitude strengthens our relationship with God and reminds us that He is still working, still providing and still caring for us, even when we cannot see the full picture.

### Simple Ways to Practice Gratitude:

1. Write 3 things you are grateful for daily in a Gratitude Journal.
2. Thank God throughout the day for little and big things.
3. Tell people what they mean to you.
4. Focus on what went well in your day rather than what went wrong.

May your days be peaceful, your mind calm and your heart full of gratitude. ✧



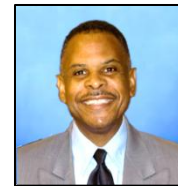
community football match. The Missions and Evangelism Department provided training in altar counseling to prepare more counselors for those who respond to the presentation of the gospel.

### Hurricane Relief in western Jamaica:

The churches in the east gathered much needed supplies for their Hurricane ravaged members in the west. Many of us traveled there to witness the devastation firsthand. We also gave monetary contributions for building supplies to help rebuild

churches and homes that had sustained terrible loss. On the 31st of December, we held a Watchnight Banquet inviting many members of the community and their family. Several people received salvation and some rededicated their lives to the Lord.

The Missions and Evangelism Department remains committed to evangelistic outreach in an attempt to fulfill the Great Commission, strengthening discipleship and follow-up, and expanding our reach into the other communities for the glory of God. ✧



By Dr. Darryl Brown

## GCA ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL



FaithWeaver NOW Publications

For me, the idea of taking on a leadership role in Adult Sunday School began last summer when Cressia and I invited Pastor Brian and Sister Sherryl Grant to our home to discuss Cressia's plan to resume her role as GCA Children's Ministry Director. At the same time, following the model of husband-and-wife joint ministry leadership previously established by Lloyd and Melissa Glen, I proposed an approach to reboot the Adult Sunday School which would provide continuity across these ministries. We jointly proposed to assume leadership responsibility for one year. The Sunday School reboot officially began on October 5, 2025, with a breakfast designed to introduce the saints to a new teaching approach centered on a church-wide curriculum that could be implemented across children's, teens, and adult classes. A second goal was to move away from a sermon-style mode of teaching. Instead, teachers would develop Bible-based lessons presented systematically using the *FaithWeaver NOW: Adult Leader Guide*, with an optional devotional guide for participants. A third goal was to engage and train more teachers for the ministry.

Over the past seven months in leading the Adult Class, we have sought to employ a Socratic method of teaching and learning—an approach I have honed through my 20-year experience as a university professor. In practice, during each 50-minute session, participants are guided through Scripture-based instruction and discussion questions that encourage reflection, critical inquiry and, ultimately, reinforcement of the tenets and practice of our faith. All of this takes place in a welcoming, fun, and often humorous environment, complemented by a light continental breakfast graciously provided by Sisters Cheryl Abney, Gwen Kelly, and Carol Pessoa.

Continues on page 8.

# A GCA MUSIC MINISTRY UPDATE

Continued from page 5.



I know that many of you are blessed by the music ministry, and we in turn are blessed by the many words of encouragement and expressions of appreciation for songs that minister to a heartfelt need, or one of comfort and reassurance of God's enduring love. We know that our ministry is not in vain, and it is helping to build God's kingdom, not only in the church, but also to our online community. I sometimes meet people, or they will call, that tell me how much they loved and appreciated a particular song, and how it ministered to their hearts. This is what it is all about, it's ministry! ✧



## 2026 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL DAY CAMP

Plans are underway for an exciting week of Vacation Bible School (VBS) June 22 to 26 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for children ages 4 and 5, and from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for children in grades 1 through 7. You may register online at our church website ([www.gcafamilychurch.org](http://www.gcafamilychurch.org)). Volunteers are needed in all categories: teachers, crew leaders, culinary, craft, security, crossing guards etc. The contact person is Sis. Raisha Hoilett. ✧



By Margaret Aitchison



When I returned to Jamaica in 2021, I was primarily involved in teaching Sunday School and VBS as well as visiting and ministering to the shut-in members of First Missionary Church where I attended. In 2022, I was appointed to Director of Missions and Evangelism.

My team and I thank God for His grace and guidance for opening many doors for the gospel, discipleship, and service to the surrounding communities. Throughout the year, several prayer walks were done in the urban areas of Parade Gardens and Rae Town communities. We engaged the people in the area in conversations, heard about their struggles, and offered prayers, encouragement and the gospel.

In June, we partnered with the men's fellowship and had a domino tournament. Many men and a few women from the community turned out.

We also partnered with an overseas missions' team of 17 who visited from North Carolina. They held Bible classes and conducted a Sunday worship service in Kingston and St. Thomas. Several children gave their lives to the Lord. Furthermore, they held a Community Prayer Walk, gave out packages of hygiene items to adults and bracelets to the children. The gifts were gratefully received. The team attended a



By Lisa Lambert



## Two New Missionaries

Praise God that Grace Christian Assembly (GCA) supports missionaries from diverse cultures and situations. Recently GCA took on two new missionaries:

### Bro. Paulose



Although Brother Paulose ministers in the state of Assam in Northern India, he is originally from Southern India. The majority of the population of Assam is Hindu. It has a significantly growing Muslim population and a small Christian population of 3.74%.

The state of Assam has many tribal groups. Paulose shares the gospel with 3 groups, one of which is the Munda tribe. Many tribal groups worship nature.



Brother Paulose is also involved with the youth at his church. He has served the Lord for many years. He was mentored by Pastor George Peters and has been commended by the Assemblies but does not receive any financial support. He is a retired schoolteacher, married with 3 children. Pray for him and his family.

### Bro. James Nicholson, Jr.



Brother James Nicholson, Jr. is our youngest missionary; being still in his 20's. As a home missionary, he serves Every Nation Campus (ENC) at Drexel University in West Philadelphia.

He shares the gospel to college students on campus and around the city.

Brother James attended GCA's daycare as a small child. He was a Vacation Bible School missionary in 2025. He was really an inspiration to the young children. Pray for this young man. ✧

### 2026 GCA YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY



### RETREAT

"Running the Race"  
Hebrews 12:1-2

Weekend of September 10-13<sup>th</sup>

Green Gables Estates  
123 Forbes Drive in Cresco, PA 18326

Cost: \$450 per person  
Includes accommodation and 6 meals.

Final Payment: Due Friday, July 31<sup>st</sup>  
Contact Person is Sis. Debbie McKenies



Mrs. Trusty was honored at GCA during Black History Month on February 22, 2026. Abraham Heggs and Patricia Buckner gave the presentation.

Emma Marie Harris Trusty, one of 18 children, was born in rural Hopewell Township, Cumberland County, New Jersey in 1936. Her early education began at Hopewell Elementary School and continued in Salem County, after a house fire forced her family to relocate. She continued her education at Bridgeton High School where she earned an academic scholarship upon her graduation in 1955. She then enrolled in the nursing program at Harrison Martland Medical Center, formerly Newark City Hospital, and maintained a GPA in the 94th percentile until her graduation in 1958.

In that same year, following her marriage to the late Andrew David Trusty, Sr., Sister Trusty continued her studies at Temple University, earning a bachelor's degree in education. She then became the first African American nurse to work at Bridgeton Hospital in New Jersey. An avid learner, Mrs. Trusty continued her studies at LaSalle University, earning a master's degree in family counseling.



Mrs. Emma Marie and Mr. Andrew D. Trusty, Sr.

Some years later, Sister Trusty and her husband, now with two children (Andrew, Jr. and Deborah), were led to serve as missionaries in Liberia, West Africa. As a registered nurse, she provided medical care to the local community, managed the clinic, and treated patients with common illnesses as malaria, dysentery, and parasitic infections. Sister Trusty also walked twice a month to Loma with a partner, Dorothy Evans, to evangelize and share the gospel. While on the mission field, Sis. Trusty gave birth to her younger children, Nathan and Daniel, and home-schooled the two older ones.



Sister Trusty enjoys writing and was drawn to poetry after her sister, Hannah, passed away. For Sister Trusty, this was therapeutic. She seemed to gain inspiration from gardening and composed several poems. One titled "A New Day Dawning," written in 1993, appeared in her novel published in 1999, *The Underground Railroad: Ties That Bound Unveiled - A History of the Underground Railroad in Southern New Jersey from 1770 to 1861*.

With a focus on Southern New Jersey counties, the book, which took four years to complete, highlights the determination and efforts of slaves to secure their freedom by utilizing safe houses and with the help of others. Her research began with the discovery that slaves seemed to vanish once they reached New Jersey. She also noticed that free

people of color seemed to only marry other free people. Yet no one was willing to explain how they escaped, particularly in South Jersey.

Continued research led Mrs. Trusty to Wilbur Siebert's list of Underground Railroad operators, whom he had identified as white. However, Mrs. Trusty's research revealed that they were Black people. She also found stories of her ancestors and their involvement in the Underground Railroad and discovered that one of the named operators was David Mapps Trusty, one of her husband's ancestors. Historians have stated that the book is the most comprehensive historical account of Southern New Jersey counties and it is used as a reference today.

Emma Marie Harris Trusty has been a member of Grace Christian Assembly, formerly Germantown Christian Assembly, since 1975. We are blessed to honor her for her service to the Lord as a missionary, nurse, counselor, AWANA teacher, Community Connections tutor, author, historian and poet. ✧



By Sherryl Grant



In Psalm 150, we are encouraged to "praise the Lord in His sanctuary; Praise Him in His mighty heaven! Praise Him for His mighty works; Praise His unequalled greatness!" The chapter goes on to name instruments that can be used in this musical praise, and then it ends with, "Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord! Praise the Lord!" (NLT) This encouragement is not given to specific people, but to everyone. Whether you're in the choir, involved in the music ministry, or sitting in the pew, everyone enjoys some type of music. The psalm sets no boundaries or limits as to what type or style of music should be used, but it definitely should be God-glorifying and honoring.

That being said, we count it a great privilege to be used as 'instruments of song' for the glory of God and the blessing of our online and church family each week. **There are many opportunities available to anyone who can keep a tune and desires to become involved in this ministry.** You don't need to have a soloist voice to praise

the Lord with us. If you're thinking about the **Voices of Praise Choir**, we encourage adult and young people 16 years old and up to join — we'd certainly love to have more young people joining us. We are also in need of tenor voices. We meet once a week on Thursday evenings for rehearsals and usually sing 3 Sundays a month with a summer break from mid July to mid September. We are very thankful for the ministry of our pianist, Patrick Muir and drummer, Janel Arrington.

There are also opportunities to be considered for the **Praise & Worship Team**. You need to be willing to come early on a Sunday morning to go over the songs for that day and come with an attitude of praise and thanksgiving to encourage the congregation in corporate worship. There are other areas of need with **The Male Chorus**, youth ensemble and the **King's Kids**, helpers as well as participants. I would also like to say that if you play an instrument, we are willing to audition you and work to use your talents in the appropriate areas. *Continues on page 6.*