

For Christians, THIS WORLD is the closest thing to hell we will ever experience.
For unbelievers, THIS WORLD is the closest thing to heaven
they will ever know—and hell will be far worse.
Accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior NOW, while there's still time.
(John: 3:16, Romans 10:9)

GRACE CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY
Invites You To ...

WORSHIP Night

COME EXPERIENCE THE LORD'S PRESENCE AS
WE WORSHIP TOGETHER!

11.20.2026 7:30PM | 610 EAST MT. PLEASANT AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19119

INSTAGRAM/TWITTER: @GCAFAMILYCHURCH
FACEBOOK: GCA
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Learned a lot from Noah's Ark



- 1) Stay fit. When you're really old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
- 2) Build your future on high ground.
- 3) Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
- 4) Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
- 5) For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
- 6) Don't listen to the critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
- 7) Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
- 8) No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.



A Joke About Creation

An atheist scientist came to God and said, "We've figured out how to make a man without you." God said, "OK, let me see you do it." So, the atheist bent down to the ground and scooped up a handful. But God stopped him and said, "Oh, no you don't. Get your own dirt!"

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GCA Reflections

Quarterly Newsletter of Grace Christian Assembly

VBS
DAY CAMP 2026
Another Milestone Year!



By Raisha Hoilett

VBS Day Camp 2026 was nothing short of amazing! We welcomed more than 90 children, with an average daily attendance of 68 campers, all supported by over 30 dedicated volunteers who faithfully served throughout the week. While the numbers are impressive, the greatest victory came in the lives that were changed for eternity.

Eight children accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior during VBS Day Camp 2026! There is no greater reason to celebrate. Watching young hearts respond to God's love reminds us why this ministry matters so much and why Vacation Bible School continues to be one of the most powerful outreach opportunities in the life of our church.

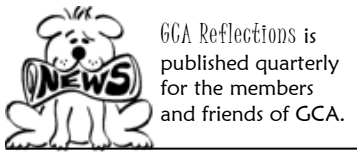
Vacation Bible School is more than games, crafts, and activities, it's a place where seeds of faith are planted, relationships are built, and

children encounter the love of Jesus in a personal way. Throughout the week, campers learned biblical truths, memorized Scripture, worshiped together, and discovered that God is always present in every season of life.

It was evident that God was at work. Each day was filled with praise, learning, and fun! Every morning began with energetic praise and worship, helping campers focus their hearts on the Lord before starting the day's adventures. Through uplifting songs and joyful worship, children were reminded that God is worthy of all praise and that His love never fails. Campers rotated through a variety of exciting stations designed to engage their minds and strengthen their faith. They explored science and nature; discovering how God's handiwork can be seen throughout creation.

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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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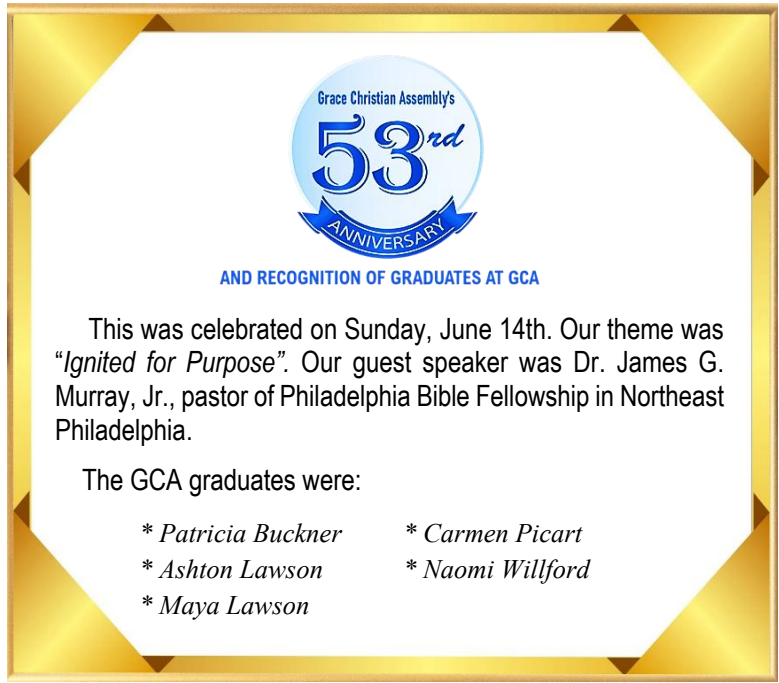
A special thank you to all who contributed to this issue of GCA Reflections.
 Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in each of the articles herein are those of each individual author or contributor and not necessarily those held by the GCA Reflections Staff or GCA leadership.
 Each issue will be available on the GCA website under "News & Events."



Four adult Bible studies are being offered this fall, providing several opportunities to grow together in the knowledge of Christ in His Word. **Bible Prophecy** will be held on Tuesdays at 6:45 PM in the sanctuary, with the study also available via ZOOM. Two studies will meet on Tuesdays at 7:30 PM and will be available only via ZOOM:

- **The Letter to the Romans, Part 2**
- **Exodus, Part 2**

In addition, we will have a Ladies-Only Bible Study on Wednesdays at 8:00 PM via ZOOM. This study is based on a book by Linda Dillow, **Satisfy My Thirsty Soul**, and will be taught by various GCA ladies. We trust that these studies will provide meaningful opportunities for spiritual growth, and fruit-bearing. ✧



This was celebrated on Sunday, June 14th. Our theme was *"Ignited for Purpose"*. Our guest speaker was Dr. James G. Murray, Jr., pastor of Philadelphia Bible Fellowship in Northeast Philadelphia.

The GCA graduates were:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| * <i>Patricia Buckner</i> | * <i>Carmen Picart</i> |
| * <i>Ashton Lawson</i> | * <i>Naomi Willford</i> |
| * <i>Maya Lawson</i> | |



Located in northern Kentucky, the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter are two sister attractions designed to promote a literal "Young Earth Creationist" interpretation of the Genesis narrative. Both exhibits were constructed by the apologetics organization, Answers in Genesis (AiG), led by Ken Ham. Look for "Answers in Genesis" on YouTube.

Day 1 - The Ark Encounter

On our first day in Kentucky, we were shuttled up to the elevated site where the structure sits. We walked under a bright rainbow archway that frames the massive ship in the distance.

Opened in 2016, measuring 510 feet long, 85 feet wide and 51 feet high. You will be walking 1500 feet

after you get into the Ark; this does not include the walk to get to the ark. This vessel was built with the help of skilled Amish craftsmen using traditional timber-framing techniques. It is recognized as one of the largest timber-frame structures in the world. Stephen and I made it through the whole exhibit in one day missing only Noah's interview.

Day 2 - We decided to take in the Answer Center Auditorium videos and lectures.

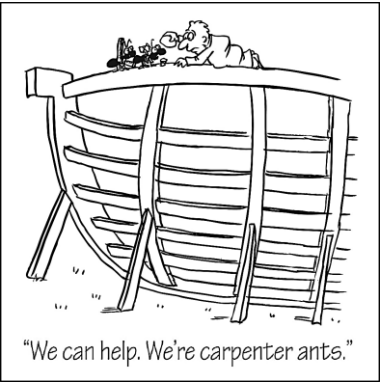
Videos: The building of the Ark Encounter, Nature's Proclaims, and the lectures unraveling the human family tree back to Noah (We are all cousins.). You can also find this lecture on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQ0ocwMbluU>. We went back to the Ark to see Noah's interview. If you would like a detailed tour, without walking 1500 feet, I found these two videos on YouTube:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| The Ark Encounter Tour, Part 1 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=288ZLoKCgno&t=1s |
| The Ark Encounter Tour, Part 2 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EoUWP1ut78 |

Day 3 - The Creation Museum

Opened in 2007, the 75,000-square-foot Creation Museum presents an alternative account of natural history. Its exhibits argue that the universe, earth, and all living organisms were created in six days approximately 6,000 years ago. The museum features dinosaurs coexisting alongside humans in Eden, life-sized Biblical dioramas, a planetarium, and an extensive insectarium; a lot of bugs.

The museum's interior is organized around seven major themes based on Biblical history: **Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross, and Consummation**. There are videos on the Creations Museum on YouTube as well. Note: Noah is 10 generations down from Adam and Eve. ✧





By Diane Davis

Let's Talk About CHOIRS

As most of you know, I am in our church choir and have been for many years. I thank God for the talent He has given me and will use it for His glory for the rest of my life wherever I am.

I have been in choirs since I was a child. In grammar school, I was in a choir with blind children. After that, I was in choirs with sighted people. In the last couple of years, I directed the choirs we had both in Herndon camp in Herndon, PA and the National

Church Conference for the Blind (NCCB), held in various states each year.

The question was raised as to how a blind person can teach a blind choir. Well, after discussing this with my friend who is blind and directs the choir in her church, this is what we shared. In rehearsals, sighted directors use hand and body gestures to direct the choir. A blind director uses her voice, without gestures. A blind director would make sure that braille copies were made for the choir if need be, just as the sighted director would provide printed music for her choir. Also, if they had a piano or a recorder, the blind person as well as the sighted person would hear it and perhaps start to memorize the song.

"Let us sing to the Lord a new song from our heart, for His glory and don't forget ... " (from "Bow the Knee" by Chris Machen and Mike Harland). ✧

STRESS, WORRY AND YOUR BODY



By Margaret Aitchison



difficult to manage. When these issues exist, you don't have to pretend that all is well.

In Philippians 4:6-7, the apostle Paul encourages us not to be anxious about anything but to bring everything to God in prayer with thanksgiving. Then we should allow God's peace to guard our hearts and minds while going through these difficult circumstances. Also in Hebrews 13:5b, God says He will never leave or forsake you. This means He is going to be with you through the struggles. If there are health concerns, it's good to see your doctor or other qualified professionals. In addition, regular exercise, adequate sleep, nutritious meals, relaxation, enjoyable hobbies and activities, talking to trusted people and reducing commitments can help.

Remember, it is most important to take care of your body, guard your heart and mind and nourish your spirit with God's Word. You don't have to carry those heavy burdens alone. ✧

Life can feel difficult and overwhelming at times when faced with all kinds of problems. There is worry about finances, family issues, illness, work pressures, grief, uncertainty about the future and concern about loved ones. All these may cause stress, which can affect emotional and physical health. When you are constantly worried, your body remains in a high state of alert and over time you can experience headaches, muscle tension, tiredness, difficulty sleeping, changes in appetite, irritability, poor concentration and anxiety. Ongoing stress may also contribute to high blood pressure which makes existing health problems more

VBS Day Camp 2026: Another Milestone Year!

Continued from page 1.

Through Bible lessons, they learned about David and were reminded that God is our refuge and strength during times of trouble. Using their Bible Buddies and daily memory verses, campers connected with important biblical truths and practical lessons they could carry with them long after camp ended.

HIGHLIGHTS

One of the highlights of the week was learning about our missionary in Brazil, Ms. Maria. Campers gained a greater understanding of global missions and enthusiastically participated in raising funds to help provide a new vehicle for her ministry work. Their generosity demonstrated that no one is too young to make a difference in God's Kingdom. Through the children's generous offerings, we raised \$300.

The excitement continued each afternoon with a variety of day camp activities, including arts and crafts, praise and worship dancing, board games, and baking. These activities provided opportunities for creativity, teamwork, and lots of laughter.

RECOGNITION

Special recognition goes to our incredible team of over 22 teens and young adults who played a vital role in making VBS Day Camp 2026 such a success. They facilitated games and VBS stations, led camper groups, managed check-in, helped resolve conflicts, ensured snacks were delivered on time, filled staffing gaps, and stepped in wherever support was needed. Their leadership was especially evident during the first two days when rain forced us to quickly adjust our plans and move activities indoors. Despite the unexpected challenges, they remained flexible, positive, and solution-focused, helping ensure the

program ran smoothly and campers stayed engaged. They became the backbone of our daily operations and my go-to team for just about everything. I am incredibly proud of the maturity, servant leadership, and Christ-like attitude they demonstrated all week. They are not just the future of our church; they are making an impact today.

THANK YOU!

A heartfelt thank you also goes to our incredible kitchen team. Their delicious lunches kept everyone energized and quickly became a highlight of each day. I am especially grateful for their hard work and loving service. In addition to our wonderful teens, young adults, and culinary team, I extend my deepest appreciation to our pastor, elders, deacons, church office staff, crew leaders, van drivers, VBS station leaders, day camp leaders, crossing guards, sound room technicians, prayer warriors, and our entire church family who helped make VBS Day Camp 2026 possible. Your dedication created an environment where children could learn about Jesus, grow in their faith, and make lasting memories.

COMPLIMENTS

Perhaps one of the greatest compliments we received came from both the children and their parents. Many asked if VBS Day Camp could be extended to **two weeks** because they simply did not want it to end! Hearing both children and parents ask for VBS to continue for another week was a testament to just how meaningful the experience was for everyone involved.

As each day ended the same way it began, with praise and worship, campers were reminded of one powerful truth: **Our God is an awesome God. He reigns forever and ever, and He is worthy of our praise!** ✧



(From the Pastor's Weekly Update)

What a wonderful and blessed weekend the Lord granted us! We give all glory and praise to God for His faithfulness as Grace Christian Assembly embarked on our very first SummerFest Outreach.

Our weekend began on **Friday evening**, July 10th, with an inspiring **Worship Night** in the sanctuary. Brother Nicolas Grant welcomed the large gathering as our sanctuary, beautifully prepared with dimmed lights and an illuminated stage, came alive with heartfelt praise and worship. We were richly blessed through the ministry of our guest artists, along with our own Lauren Grant, Debbie Ann McKennis, Brother Patrick Muir, and friends. For nearly two hours, God's people lifted their voices in worship. Brother Patrick Muir shared a brief but encouraging message, followed by a passionate gospel invitation by Brother Gavin Lawson. It was truly a powerful evening in the presence of the Lord. To God be all the glory!



Saturday's SummerFest on Mt. Pleasant Ave. was nothing short of remarkable. The event officially began at 12:50 p.m. after the street was closed on the Stenton Ave. side. A large stage was erected at the Crittenden Street end, with a spacious 100-foot by 30-foot tent providing seating for over 500 people. Throughout the street, several ministry tents featured volunteers sharing information about the many ministries GCA offers for children, teens, young adults, seniors, and families in our community.



More than 650 people, including many children, participated in the festivities. Prayer, counseling, and free health screenings were available, while faithful servants of the Lord shared the gospel, leading many to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Families and neighbors from East Mount Airy, Germantown, Cheltenham, and surrounding communities joined us throughout the six-hour celebration. The musical program, coordinated by Bro. Jerome Lang, Bro. Patrick Muir, Sis. Lauren Grant, and Dina Lawson

featured a variety of musical styles and included guest artists such as Busta Fields, along with our own GCA Youth Choir and Voices of Praise. Following moving testimonies, Pastor Brian Grant and Dr. Raphael Thomas presented clear gospel invitations.



We are especially grateful for the city's generous support in providing the stage, excellent sound system, and technical team. The presence of private security and the police sheriff's department created a safe and welcoming environment for families to enjoy exciting games, face painting, the bounce house on the Mission Center lawn, and an entertaining magic show by Randy Shine. We were also honored by a visit from Councilwoman Cindy Bass, who greeted residents and thanked GCA for hosting the SummerFest.

We are especially thankful that God graciously spared East Mount Airy from the severe storm damage experienced in other areas, where trees were reportedly uprooted. We praise God for His protection and abundant blessing.

To every member of the GCA family who prayed, volunteered, served, gave and participated in any way—thank you! Your labor of love made this outreach possible. Together, Grace Christian Assembly went into the streets to proclaim the presence and power of God's Kingdom.

God truly heard our prayers and richly blessed this endeavor. ✨