



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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Greetings CBCGM! I asked at the end of the year that we end 2015 strong so that we might begin 2016 strong. Thank you all so much for your cooperation with that request.

We ended strong in ministry, church attendance and finances. Let's keep the momentum going! As a way to get our leaders ready for the coming year we held our first Leadership Retreat at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center (more below). I am grateful to all of those who were able to attend at such short notice, and hope that next year the

numbers will be even greater with more time to plan. Our prayer is that as the leadership increases in commitment, passion and dedication, the affects/effects will be felt among the entire membership. This is why our theme this year is: "ENGAGING OUR ASSIGNMENT: MAKING DISCIPLES." We all have been given an assignment to, "**Go** and **Make Disciples** so that they might be **Baptized** and **Taught**. When we do this, we have the promise that Jesus will be with us always, even until the end of the age! (Matthew 28:18-20) In order to fulfill the Great Command, those who have accepted the call to discipleship must – **Be Present. Be Prayerful. Be Positive. Be Impactful.**

God bless and let's keep the momentum going!

LEADERSHIP RETREAT

We traveled to beautiful Kansasville, WI to the St Iakovos Retreat Center Friday, January 8th to Rest, Reflect & Reconnect. We had 38 out of 55 leaders attend. Below is a recap of the weekend:



Friday evening everyone arrived through what most would say was a very scary driving experience. There was EXTREME fog and virtually zero visibility on a narrow winding road. But God saw fit to bring everyone safely to the destination. AMEN! Once everyone got settled in, we had a nice buffet style dinner that included a soup and salad bar. During dinner we played a game of JESUS Bingo in which participants had to circle the room to get signatures on their paper in the form of a straight line. The first one to yell out JESUS won, and that person was Sis Imani Perry. We then proceeded to complete the entire sheet; boy do we have some competitors in our church. There was a 3 way tie between Sis Mary Lyles, Sis Joenette Kelly-Kidd & our pastor. Everyone truly enjoyed themselves!

After Pastor Williams gave out our homework assignment for the evening after which because Friday was his birthday, we surprised him with 2 cakes, balloons and a gift from all of the leaders in the form of a navy jogging suit with our church's logo imprinted in white.

The evening concluded for a few participants, while the rest of the group retired to the great room to play cards, charades, crochet or chat with one another.

Saturday morning began with intercessory prayer led by Minister E who took the time to reach out to other leaders and ask them to pray for specific things, including:

Prayer for Ministries Working Together, Building Young Disciples Around Spiritual Truths, Our Church Theme: Making Disciples, Restoration, Effective Evangelism-GO YE THEREFORE & Blessings Upon Our Leadership Retreat!

After prayer we feasted on a bountiful breakfast buffet. After which we started our first of 3 sessions for the day by watching a TED Talk entitled: *Should you live for your resume or your eulogy?* Pastor Williams then began to read his eulogy which was the homework given out the day before, inviting others who so desire to share with the group. Needless to say, there was a mutual feeling of love and humility scattered across the room as we soon realized our collective love for the Lord and our uniform desire to serve others and live a life pleasing to our heavenly Father. Sis Yolaunda Campbell surprised us with her version written from the 1st person perspective; it opened a window of opportunity to say what she really wanted people to know about her.

We concluded by watching a video via YouTube entitled *"Beautifully Imperfect Funeral"* in which a widow discusses her late husband imperfections in the most beautiful way. It was very moving; we encourage you to check it out.

We began our 2nd session by watching an introductory video of *"IT: How Churches and Leaders Get It and Keep It"* created by pastor & author Craig Groeschel whose church is the creator of the You Version Bible app. This was followed by a dialogue about what it is and what it isn't and how we plan to use this curriculum for our leadership meetings ultimately spreading and sharing it with everyone we come in contact with!

Our last session was the introduction of our New **M.A.P.** process which stands for **Ministry Action Plan**. While intensive, the information presented provides a road map to success of ministry programs, activities & events all of which ought to have purpose as it relates to the mission, vision & motto of our church. M.A.P. will allow us to do ministry more effectively and more efficiently, decently and in order according to the word of God.

We continued into early afternoon with a rain making activity led by Sis Butler who showed us how ministry can be like the weather. In that we start the year off fairly slow just like rain trickles down in the beginning of a storm then builds up to busy times from Resurrection Sunday thru July just like heavy rain and thunder. This activity gave us the perspective that through it all God is always there to help us weather any and all storms we may encounter. Our retreat ended with a delicious lunch & a devotional prayer led by Pastor Williams. Needless to say, the Holy Spirit was in our midst, the retreat was all that we expected it to be and more. We give all honor, praise and glory to the Lord God Almighty!

TEN-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN: “PROSPERING THE VISION”

Our January meeting was canceled in lieu of our Leadership Retreat; however we resumed on Tuesday, February 2nd. We were most productive in this first CORE Team meeting of the year. We thoroughly went over our strategic initiatives, goals & recommendations using scorecard metrics to see what we have done versus what we need to do. Many items have been accomplished, some are considered on-going with no actual end date, while the remaining were assigned to be completed. Binders were distributed that included documents to help us stay on track as we prosper the vision of Community Baptist Church. Included were SWOT analysis sheets to aid us in making the best decision for which CDC to pursue and invest our time, energy and money into. We do not take this effort lightly; we are prayerful to this charge and will ensure that it is the best fit for Community. Persons with experience in this field are encouraged to contact the office to assist.

FINANCE UPDATE

We have completed the first month of 2016 and we thank God for his blessings. Many of us made a commitment to ourselves that we are going to do better in 2016 than we did in 2015; if this is to be true, God must be first in our lives. The Finance Ministry is committed and dedicated to the financial growth of CBCGM in 2016. We begin 2016 acknowledging that God will do only for us which we are willing to do for ourselves. It is true... We can do all things through Christ who strengthen us, but we must make the effort in faith for God to intervene.

The Finance Ministry will continue to work closely with our Pastor, Associates, Deacons, Ministries leaders, Core Team and most of all, the members of CBCGM to promote the three Strategic pillars. The three pillars are: **1. Leadership Development, 2. Spiritual Growth and 3. Church Unity**. We must continue to keep our Motto in mind as we continue to move forward “*One Voice—One Vision—One Vocation.*” When we make up our mind to move as one body the powers to be will begin to move.

We are moving forward with the second phase of our special projects and with your support and cooperation we will be able to complete those projects in a timely manner. If we all give as God has blessed us, we can accomplish our goal without placing burden on each other. God doesn't expect you to give what you do not have, but he does expect a small portion of what he has blessed you with. What matters to God is that we make good use of what we have been given, whether large or small. **When praises go up, Blessings come down.** If we fail to give God what He ask of us why should we expect Him to give to us? We know that all things are possible in Christ Jesus, but we have to make up our minds to Trust God that He will do what He says. As a special sacrifice, we are asking each member to pledge an extra \$50 per month or \$600 for the year above your tithes and offerings to complete the remainder of the renovations and repairs. **Can we do it? Yes we can!!!** Once again, the Finance Ministry thanks each of you for your ongoing support as we continue to move forward in Christ Jesus.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In January we coordinated with the Men's Network to develop support for a program that will publicize and reduce Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking in Milwaukee. This is an opportunity for CBC to make a difference in the lives of victims who live in our immediate neighborhood. Hopefully by working with the Men's Network this program will develop meaningful relationships with members and leaders of other churches and support agencies. This program has significant potential and we welcome any suggestions and support as it develops during the coming months.

The **CBC Wealth Creation/ Debt Reduction Bible Study** course did not hold any classes in January. I continue to be available to consult on an individual basis to help reduce any worry you currently have regarding your finances. Contact Mike Robertson at 508-561-3921 or email me at, emmyandmike@verizon.net to schedule an appointment. If there is enough interest we can schedule classes during the spring.



The **Love Kindness** program was expanded at Hi-Mount school as they incorporated their kindness efforts with a national Kindness week program. We are in the process of expanding our program by adding more structure to the committee. Awards will continue to be presented whenever we receive nominations so please take the time to record acts of Kindness you observe, perform or receive. While we have received positive input from many members there is much more that we can do if we decide that this is an important ministry of our church. We have plenty of buttons, window signs and bumper stickers to distribute. Please let any member of the committee know what you need and we will get it to you immediately.

During January I attended a number of meetings where the problems Milwaukee is experiencing were discussed by many organizations. The problem with many meetings is that nothing much happens following those meetings. The question we must ask ourselves is where does CBC want to get involved? There are countless opportunities where we can make a lasting difference but only if and when we are fully committed. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and working together there is no limit to what the CBC congregation can accomplish right here in our neighborhood.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



SUNDAY SCHOOL:

There has been tremendous growth in the classes. The growth can be attributed to the congregation's thirst for knowledge and the awesome teachers. As we continue to prepare ourselves to Engage in our Assignment consistent attendance in Sunday School is a great foundation to build upon.

BIBLE STUDY:

“**Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth**” class offering in the afternoon and evening coincides with Pastor's sermon on January 31, 2016 titled The Diligence of Discipleship. The Celebration of Discipleship is a great guide that shows us the importance of and how to meditate, pray, fast and study, which are the inward disciplines which lead to spiritual growth. The afternoon class devoted 4 weeks to study, each person had scriptures and they reported back to class their understanding of the scripture then and now! We have had a glorious time of sharing with each other. The other disciplines are Outward and Corporate. Attendance at Bible Study continues to build on your foundation of spiritual growth.

Please re-read **1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NLT)**

24 Don't you realize that in a **race everyone runs**, but only **one person gets the prize**? So **run to win!** 25 All athletes are **disciplined in their training**. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an **eternal prize**. 26 So I **run with purpose** in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. 27 **I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should**. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

Think about the words in **BOLD!**

Are you disciplined in your training to win the ETERNAL prize?

UNITY SUNDAY

On the first Sunday of January we preached from the new church theme: "ENGAGING OUR ASSIGNMENT: MAKING DISCIPLES." According to Jonathan Dodson in his book, *Gospel Centered Discipleship*, there are three salient aspects of the "Gospel Commission", as he calls it: Go! (*The Missional Aspect*) Where? When? Why? How? Who? Baptize them! (*The Relational Aspect*) Where? When? Why? How? Who? Teach them! (*The Discipling/Learner Aspect*) Where? When? Why? How? Who? What?

What aspect of the Great Commission to you has been missing in contemporary churches? The church has been called to make disciples! Only the verb "make disciples" in Matthew 28:19 is in the imperative form – *mathēteusate*! Noun = *mathētes* The other words, "go", (*poreuthentes*) "baptize" (*baptizontes*) and "teach" (*didaskontes*) are circumstantial participles that are dependent upon the main verb, "Make Disciples!". To disciple a person means: To bring into relationship as pupil to teacher; To accept the teaching of the teacher; To submit to the requirements and commands of the teacher. According to Bill Hull, "Making disciples has nothing to do with wining others over to a philosophy or turning them into nice people who smile a lot. Rather the Great Commission launches a rescue mission; all followers receive orders with full authority to take action wherever they happen to be. Discipleship involves saving people from themselves and eternal oblivion, permitting the transforming power of God to change them from the inside out. **All** is the Great Commission's key word – *all* authority, *all* sacrifice, *all-out* effort, *all* the time, for *all* people." (Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (2006; pp., 26-27)

A transformed person can change the world! According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his classic book, *The Cost of Discipleship* (1937): "Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ." I believe that many Christians want Jesus as *Savior* but not as *Lord*. What's the difference? Non-discipleship Christianity dominates much of the thinking of the contemporary church. Why hasn't discipleship been a priority for the contemporary church? We have spent too much time *making* and nurturing *membership*, instead of teaching and modeling *discipleship*! What's the difference?

Membership ("Attendees"). Members attend church as regular or as comfortable as they feel is possible, give what they feel comfortable with (tithing frightens many church members), are as supportive or as active as they feel is possible. Ultimately non-transformative (lives don't have to change), just a minor "*attitude adjustment*! This model makes too many accommodations for what people "feel". The ultimate goal is ACCOMMODATION! What some people really want is equivalent to ancient pagan religion!

- No scriptures to be concerned with learning
- No orthodoxy demanded (believe in and financially support as many gods/temples as you like!)
- Pagan religions are ritual oriented
- No ethical or moral demands (this is the domain of philosophy in antiquity)
- No obligations for **personal life- or heart-transformation**

In essence, no program of DISCIPLESHIP is involved nor envisioned!

Discipleship (a learner/student/*disciplined one*), on the other hand is:

- Central to the Church's vision and mission: it's INTENTIONAL!
- There is a passion for worship and witness!
- There is a hunger for the Word of God.
- Time, talent and treasure is a cheerful *obligation* (that does not suffer the vicissitudes of church life with its ups and downs).
- There is a commitment to mission and evangelism not just for a particular ministry to do the work, but for the entire congregation!

The ultimate goal of discipleship is **the obedience faith** leading to TRANSFORMATION of heart and life! AMEN.



We dedicate this section of our newsletter to our beloved that have passed from our congregation and also the family members of our CBCGM sisters and brothers. We sincerely offer our prayers and condolences to the bereaved families of the following:

James E. Price

(Uncle of Sherlon Butler)

Mama Annie

(Grandmother of Cheryl Randall)