



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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I would like to begin this newsletter by discussing a seemingly forgotten subject in today's world – character. What follows is a small portion of my presentation at the Milwaukee-ALM Christian Educator's Institute, held February 26-27, 2016 (I presented on Friday evening). I think this topic is extremely important given the recent political debates and our own ministry emphasis on "Making Disciples." The building of and recognition of character is exceedingly vital.

What Is Character? The etymology of the word character is quite telling. It derives from the Greek (kharakter), which means, "engraved mark," "symbol or imprint on the soul/psyche," and "instrument for marking," and can be traced further back to the words for "to engrave," "pointed stake," and "to scrape and scratch." The word came to be associated with "the sum of qualities that defines a person." These qualities included a person's intellect, thoughts, ideas, motives, intentions, temperament, judgment, behavior, imagination, perception, emotions, likes, and dislikes. Character can be defined as "your moral self," the "crown of a moral life," and referred to as a "**moral structure**," something you build through virtuous behavior. Starting at the beginning of the 20th century, however, the ideal of character began to be replaced by that of personality. In place of defining themselves through the cultivation of virtue, people's hobbies, dress, and material possessions became the new means of defining and expressing one's self. In the culture of personality and self-realization, personality was split into famous and infamous. Sadly, in a "culture of personality" you can become famous without having done anything to earn it

(i.e., "Reality T.V. Stars"). The words most associated with character in the nineteenth century were "citizenship, duty, democracy, work, building, good deeds, honor, reputation, morals, manners, integrity." The words most associated with personality in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are "fascinating, stunning, attractive, magnetic, glowing, masterful, creative, dominant, and forceful." There's nothing wrong with the cultivation of personality. It can help one navigate the world, form relationships, and become successful. But personality is absolutely no substitute for character, which should be the foundation of every person's life, especially that of a Christian/Disciple. Good character can help build up the church!

As always, Be Present. Be Prayerful. Be Positive. Be Impactful.

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Our ministry leaders resumed our regular meeting on Saturday, February 6th at our normal meeting time of 10:00am. Bro Marcus Patton, member of our CORE TEAM read scripture coming from **Ephesians 4:11-13**

"11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ."

One of our great prayer warriors, Evangelist Naomi Jackson led us in a prayer to prepare our hearts and minds for the work of the day. Pictures that were taken by Min Charlotte Flowers & Sis Anita Scott were put into a presentation and shown while we ate breakfast. An overall consensus taken from our evaluation was given that everyone wants to do the retreat again, possibly at the same location or maybe in Lake Geneva. Some leaders wanted us to do a bi-annual retreat to be able to enjoy some outdoor activities the centers offer.

Sis Suzette Davis attended on behalf of the Finance Committee to provide a snapshot of how we did in January. She reported that January 2016 was the BEST Month we have had in 5 years we were up 60%!!!

We then shifted our focus to **IT!** We watched chapter one followed by a discussion of what is **IT?** We determined that first of all, God makes **IT** happen; **IT** comes from Him & is for His glory! **IT** = Transformed lives. It was described as energetic, kind, thankful, humble, spiritual, joy, unashamed, warm, welcoming, passionate, and the feeling of the presence of the Lord. When asked have you ever seen **IT** and who do you think encompasses **IT**, the first

name that was shared was that of our beloved Senior Queen, our latest Love Kindness Award Recipient, **Deacon Pearlie Carr!** Who can argue that she most definite has **IT?** Deacon Carr is consistent in her constant demonstration of what it means to have **IT.**

Pastor concluded the meeting with his thoughts, sharing with us his overall experience of how people will often accept God as Savior, but not as Lord. This is not pleasing to our Heavenly Father; the Holy Spirit grieves when we operate in our flesh. When we don't have forgiveness in our hearts, we are not operating in Love. But fret not Brothers & Sisters, **WE ALL HAVE THE I POTENTIAL!** Pastor encouraged us to bring **IT** with us everywhere we go, when we go to school, when we go to work, when we come to meetings, when we come to church. The great thing about it is that it can rub off, just like a light to a flame on a candle. Let us all make a decision to grab it every morning when we get up and keep it with us, no excuses, isn't God with us all the time?

TEN-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN: "PROSPERING THE VISION"

We were able to meet just shy of the publication date of this issue of the newsletter on Tuesday, March 1st. We went to work using a CDC checklist to aid us in this process. Now that we have our elevator in and running and our bathroom renovations are the next immediate need, it's imperative that we plan for the future of our church. In looking at our history, we've had quite a few Community Development Corporations including:

- A Credit Union
- A Clothing Bank
- A Foster Care Site
- A Breakfast Program that fed over 10,000 people
- Community Vision Academy School
- Community Village that owned several houses in the area used for various purposes including housing for women recently released from Taycheedah Correctional
- A Thrift Store Venture with Northshore & Wauwatosa Presbyterian Churches

In the future we need to have sustainable entities that will enable us to not only connect with the community by providing jobs and suppling a need, but also provide funding so we can continue ministry on another level in God, **Making Disciples along the way!** We are diligent in this effort and do not take it lightly, we are prayerful to stay in alignment with the will of God and the order of His church. Any persons who have experience in this field are strongly encouraged to contact the office to assist. If you have a passion or a suggestion, feel free to share that as well.

FINANCE UPDATE

We have completed the second month of 2016 and we continue to thank God for his blessings. Many of us are fulfilling our commitment we made to ourselves that we are going to do better in 2016 than we did in 2015. It is our sincere hope that all of us will

endeavor to do better in 2016 than we did in 2015 as God has blessed us. The Finance Ministry is committed and dedicated to the financial growth of CBCGM in 2016. We clearly understand that progress is impossible unless we strive to improve ourselves as individuals. We acknowledge 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 first do what we can for ourselves.**

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.*" Together, we will make a difference in our church, our homes and in our communities.

We are in the first phase of planning to renovate our bathrooms facilities. We will be sharing the designs with the leadership and members of the church on or before April 1, 2016 and with your support and cooperation we will be able to complete the project in a timely manner. If we all give as God has blessed us, we will accomplish our goal and beyond. When Praises go up, Blessings come down. But if we fail to give God what He ask of us why should we expect Him to give to us? We have **465** members and only **38** members have started contributing toward their pledge of an extra **\$50** per month or **\$600** for the year above their tithes and offerings to complete the bathrooms as well as other repairs. We are strongly encouraging the rest of our members to get on board. **Can we do it? Yes we can!! We believe that all we have is a gift from God and that generosity is an expression of our faith.** Once again, we thank you for your support and cooperation as we continue to move forward in strengthen our Church family.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In February, the Men's Network helped Nancy Yarbrough, the founder of Fresh Start Learning, form a 501c3 non-profit corporation. The office at 4242 West North Avenue was cleaned out and beginning on March 1st will be the used by Nancy as she continues her program of publicizing and reducing Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking in Milwaukee. Initial funding is being provided by Community Outreach and the Men's Network as we make a difference in the lives of victims who live in our immediate neighborhood. We expect that this program will develop meaningful relationships with members and leaders of other churches and the many support agencies Nancy has been working with during the past two years. Human Trafficking is something we need to identify and reduce and partnering with Nancy and Fresh Start Learning Inc. is a great first step. I hope and pray that you will get to know Nancy and offer her the prayers and support her courageous ministry deserves.



We did not hold any **Wealth Creation/ Debt Reduction** classes in February but I am 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 msrobertson23@gmail.com to schedule an appointment. If there is enough interest we will hold classes during the spring.

The **Love Kindness** program is continuing to have an important impact at the Hi-Mount school with awards and bulletin boards emphasizing the importance of kindness. In addition, I made a presentation at a church in Franklin that has adopted the program as their Lenten focus. 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. We have plenty of buttons, window signs and bumper stickers to distribute and will be adding other Love Kindness promotional items during the coming months. Please let any member of the committee know what you need and we will get it to you immediately.

During February I continued to attend meetings where some of the problems Milwaukee is experiencing were discussed by many organizations. There are countless opportunities so we have to decide just where we believe CBC can make a lasting difference right here in our neighborhood.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Milwaukee-AIM Christian Education Institute the weekend of February 26th hosted by CBCGM was well worth attending. The theme was: “ **‘UNTIL CHRIST IS FORMED IN YOU’; Christian Education as the Crafting of Christian Character**” (Galatians 4:19).



On Friday night Pastor Williams challenged us by asking the following questions:

- 1. How would you define the goal/purpose of Christian Education?**
- 2. Is it different from secular education in general? How so?**
- 3. How would you describe the means or methods of achieving the goal of Christian Education as you understand it?**
- 4. Why is Christian Education important to you?**

We were challenged to re think and understand why we do what we do, but more importantly does it make sense in today's culture.

Whether you teach Sunday school, afternoon bible study, New Members class, or Vacation Bible School to adults, youth or children; as we prepare to stand before God's people we should do more than think about the above questions but we should answer for ourselves. When we know the purpose/goal, the difference in secular education, know, evaluate, maybe re-define the means/methods of Christian Education then and only then can we honestly say Christian Education is important to me because....

Saturday morning and afternoon was equally inspiring; the facilitator Dr. Keri Day, covered 5 areas which help Christian educators know who they are through exploring:

- 1. Vocation vs task of Christian Education**
- 2. The importance of Spiritual Autobiography**
- 3. Sharing Spiritual Autobiography**
- 4. Forming Faithful People through Christian Education: Jesus as Master Pedagogue**
- 5. Developing the Virtue of Moral Courage**

This was a wonderful time of sharing with others, so we all walked away with a sense of bonding with each other and the formation of new relationships.

This Al.. M. Christian Educators' Institute was a fantastic opportunity for Christian Educators to be taught, encourage and renewed for continue service to the Lord as they minister to the people.

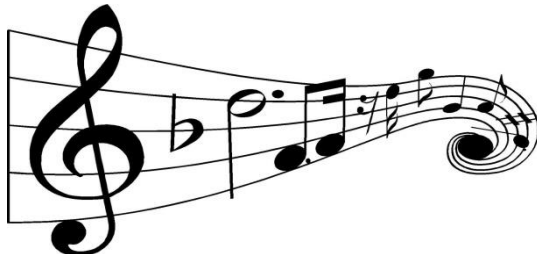
MEN'S MINISTRY

By Deacon Melvin E. Grisby Sr.

Greetings to all, this is the first addition of the Men's Ministry of CBCGM News Letter. Our mission is to provide a ministry based on relationships rather than activity that empowers men to be the spiritual leaders God has called us to be. We want to Build Strong Godly Character through Integrity and Accountability with one another and Help men assume their spiritual role of leadership at home, in the church, in the work place and the community. The desire is to provide opportunities for men to connect with one another as well as with other men to fulfill the purposes of Fellowship, Ministry, Discipleship & Worship.

We have a number of Events and Activities planned for 2016!

- Our Par 3 Golf Outing on 21st of May**
 - Annual Fish Fry on the 17th of June**
 - Men's Musical on the 18th of June**
- Just to name of few.



We connect with other Men in the city every Tuesday from 8:30am till 11am through our weekly Men's Breakfast. We currently have men from 11 difference churches as well as from the community who attend on a regular basis. Our other areas of fellowship and ministry include Game Night on the 3rd Friday of the month, Male Chorus Rehearsal at 9:30am every 2nd and 3rd Saturday in which we sing on the 3rd Sunday during 10:30am Worship. We hold our Brotherhood Meeting on the 3rd Saturday of the Month at 10:30am.

Moving forward we will use the newsletter to provide CBCGM members with information to keep everyone aware of the Great things that we are doing in the name of our Father. Remember, we need **ALL MEN** of CBCGM to work together with us as we embrace our theme "**Engaging Our Assignment: MAKING Disciples.**"

UNITY SUNDAY

The UNITY SUNDAY message addressed the topic: "***The Diligence and Discipline of Discipleship: In It to Win It***" (1 Corinthians 9:1-23). This long passage precedes Paul's use of the athletic metaphor employed in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, which alludes to the Isthmian and Imperial Games at Corinth that were held biannually. Before getting to the gist of Paul's argument, it was important to explore the context of the metaphor (9:1-23), in which Paul discusses his "rights" as an apostle, and his "freedom" not to use them! He refuses the right to marry, to refrain from working and to financial support from the Corinthians (vv. 1-14). This is paradoxical and counter-intuitive. **Why refuse rights that have been freely given?** Why indeed? Because he is under obligation (v. 16; Greek: ananke, "necessity"). Thus, he refuses to exercise his "rights" and "freedoms" because he has been "entrusted with a commission"! (v. 17; NRSV) Like the other apostles (and the ancient prophets) his goal is to preach the gospel free of charge; thus he refuses to exercise his full rights (vv. 15-18). His argument is actually against some of the Corinthians whose claiming of "rights" is fragmenting the community (cf. 4:8-13; 6:12-13; 8:8-9; 10:23). Some Corinthians also feel that their "liberty/freedom" in Christ has allowed them to transcend the "necessity" of exercising constraint and self-control in body and practice (cf. 5:1-2 for example). Thus, again in vv. 19-23, Paul refuses his apostolic "rights" in order to win some and save others (i.e. for edification [oikodomei], "to build up the community"). Building up the community should take precedent over personal rights and freedoms! Paul argues this in several places throughout this letter:

- "Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that 'all of us possess knowledge'.
- 'Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.' (8:1)
- "'All things are lawful', but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful', but not all things build up." (10:23)
- "He who speaks in a tongue edifies ["builds up"] him-/herself, but s/he who prophesies ["preaches"] edifies the church." (14:4)
- "...strive to build up the church." (14:12)
- "Let all things be done for edification." (14:26)

This is why instead of exercising his freedom, he has opted for servitude (9:19 – “For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them.” cf. Phil. 2:5-11. NRSV) Why would Paul submit to voluntary “enslavement” in terms of exercising his apostolic rights (v. 23)? He says, “I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I might share in its blessings” (“share” = synkoinonos, cf. Phil 1:5-7). **Let us too, do all that we can for the sake of the gospel, so that we all might also share in its blessings! 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:

Zeolia McDaniel

(Grandmother of Imani Perry)

