



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Reverend Dr. Demetrius K. Williams, **PASTOR**

## *Community Baptist Church of Greater Milwaukee*

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### **(DECEMBER 2016 Edition)**

The winds of change are in the air. Some changes are good. But not all change, however, represents progress. Whichever way the political winds of change might blow, we trust in the one who can still and quiet the storms of life – Jesus is the captian of this vessell, this “Ship of Zion.” To be sure, many of us are uncertain of what the future might hold given the results of the recent election (with recounts taking place as I write in Wisconsin as well a few other key states to follow), but we can be confident that history is guided by the providential hand of God. This is the same God of whom Paul assures us: “And **we know** that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.” (NLT) Let us continue to be mindful of that purpose as the weeks and months go by. We will continue to “Preach, Teach and Reach” as we work cooperatively “to build community transforming ministries” united as a church with “One Voice, One Vision and One Vocation.” As always:

**Be Present. Be Prayerful. Be Positive. Be Impactful!**

## **TEN-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:**

### **“ADVANCING OUR VISION”** *By Sis Ebony S. Hagler*

Tuesday, November 1st approached ever so quickly as the end of the year is near. The Core Team members eagerly gathered together to further discuss how we can engage our assignment in advancing the vision of our church. With the election just one week away there was a sense of urgency in the room to get busy doing work in our community. Someone even suggested reading the book by Michelle Alexander entitled “The New Jim Crow” a book that changes the way we see the world and helps to fuel a nationwide social movement. However in order to spark change on that level, we must start where we are and ignite our immediate community and grow from there.

As with every meeting, we started by praying and again read Luke 18:1 that states “**One day Jesus told his disciples a store to show that they should always pray and never give up.**” It’s vital that we do not lose sight of the entire picture for even though it might seem like challenges and trials are big, our God is much, much bigger!

We took a look at what we are currently engaged in as it relates to supporting our vision. We determined that while there were some consistent efforts put forth by some that there is much more we could be doing to be effective. Thus in order to serve others and meet their needs we have to know what those are and what better way to know than to ask. So we have added to our 2017 church calendar a few town halls in an effort to establish that connection as well as started planning a health symposium to educate and engage our community. However it is equally important to gage our progress with measurement tools which will be done through consistent evaluation and disclosure of said results.

Our focus as we move forward is to:

**1) Make our church the epicenter of the community,**

**meet the needs of the people**

**2) Transform our environment thru respect,**

**pride and love in our neighborhood**

**3) Engage & empower young people through sports,**

**health education & resources**



All of which will lead us toward fulfilling the vision:

**To Build Community Transforming Ministries  
Committed to Serving God & Others.**

## **LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

We held our November meeting on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>. The entire congregation was invited to come for our budget hearing presented by Deacon Willie Jude. He reviewed the September Dashboard from January to September and took a look at Income Comparisons from 2013-2016 which showed a total increase of \$35,437. God is good!!! In looking at our Proposed Budget Assumptions, there were small increases in some ministries while there were reasonable decreases in others totaling 86% yet remaining consistent with actual spending. Overall, the 2017 Budget is consistent with the 2016 Budget with the exception of special projects for capital spending which is inclusive of improving acoustics in the Fellowship Hall, upgrading the internet system, completing the office space next to the choir stand and exploring ways to reduce our energy cost.

Information about our 2017 Leadership Conference was discussed; the total fee is due December 1<sup>st</sup>. We will once again travel to the St. Iakovos Retreat Center the 1<sup>st</sup> weekend in January to pray, fellowship, eat, convene, play games & get to know each other better. We then shifted our focus back to IT! Rev Patrick Greer presented on Chapter 7:

**Innovative Minds: You'll Do Anything For It.** The key take away was that God has given us our innovative minds, what are we doing with them? Minister Charlotte Flowers followed with a presentation on Chapter 8: **Willingness to Fall Short: You Fail Toward It.** We cannot take failure personally, we must take a step back and evaluate what worked and what didn't work and why. We must determine to do better next time because the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. We have to surrender to fear of failing and stop crawling through ministry because we don't believe something will happen, we must be fearless and soar on like eagles because that is how God created us. What risk does God want you to take?

We concluded our meeting with Observations from Pastor Williams. Coming to meetings is great, however are truly null in void if leaders do not only take the work of ministry serious but also take the time to apply learned principles and implement them within every ministry. Faith without works is dead. If you want to walk on water, you have to get out of the boat.

***“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”***

~Warren G. Bennis

## **FINANCE UPDATE** *By Brother Willie Jude*

### **This is the Season of Hope and Great Expectation**

Our current political climate as well as our present economy condition means tough times for most of our people. We are going through some trying times and we are feeling the impact in some way or other. As believers of Jesus Christ, **(The reason for the Season)**, we know we are not immune from the cares of this world, but **we know that God will provide a way out if we trust in Him and follow His principles.**

Deuteronomy 8:18 tells us **“Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”** One of the ways God enables us to create wealth is by rebuking the devourer and keeping Satan away from destroying our finances. But there is a condition we must follow - we must bring our tithes into the storehouse (the church). Most believers know this and many already do so. However, when money is tight and the bills are greater than your income, tithing is unfortunately usually the first to go. Many of us believe if we cut back on giving our 10%, we would have more money left to pay our bills and we know God will understand, right?

Not necessarily. The problem is that God and His principles do not follow our logic. God's teachings often appear backwards from what we would naturally believe (the first will be last, if you want to be great then serve, etc.). So while it may seem logical that cutting back on tithing would help your current financial situation, the truth is, this actually leaves you behind.

*If you are struggling with tithing, on a tight budget or have stopped tithing altogether, we encourage you to start again as soon as you can. Even if you start with only a small percentage and work your way up. God knows your situation and that tithing is not always easy, but He knows it works and that it blesses you and leaves you better in the end.*

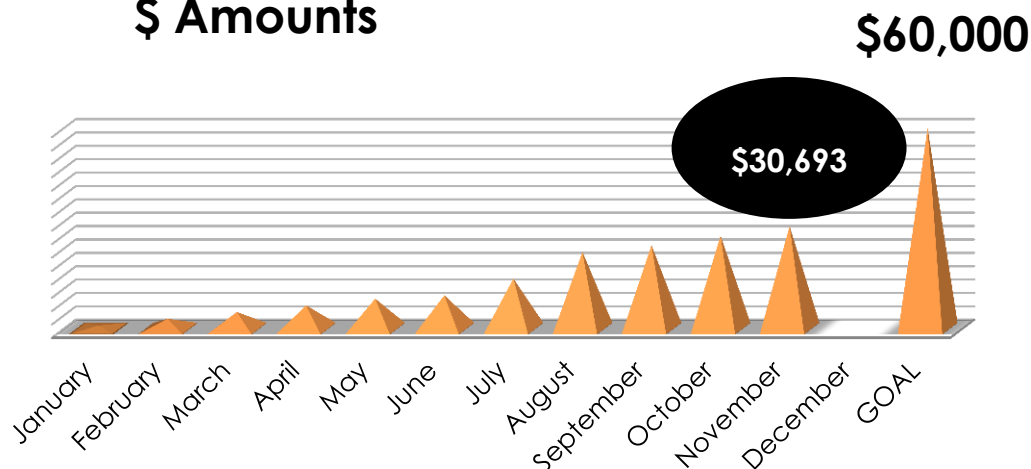
The second phase of CBCGM Handicap Accessibility Project (“the Bathrooms”) is moving forward. It is your faith in God and generosity that is making a difference in the growth of our church and in the lives of our members. We are in the **last month of the year** and we pray that each member will give a little extra toward the Bathroom Project. If you were not able to give the **\$600** dollars for the year, **please give what you can.**

Once again, on behalf of our great pastor Rev. Dr. Williams and the Finance Ministry, we want to thank each of you for your continuous commitment and dedication to the financial growth of CBCGM.

Remember-

**God love us so much that He gave his only son and His son Jesus love us so much that he gave His life that we might have eternal life. That’s Love!**

## 2016 Special Projects \$ Amounts



## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH** *By Reverend Mike Robertson*

During November we visited **Washington High School** with Common Ground and other community residents to see what opportunities might exist for CBC to assist in expanding their educational, athletic and community programs. We agreed that this is an exceptional facility that has the potential to have a significant impact for good in the Sherman Park neighborhood. Our proposal to have the Milwaukee Rotary Club adopt this as a special project was turned down but we hope to generate significant individual Rotary member support in the future.

**Fresh Start Learning Inc.** moved into the first floor of our 4325 West North Ave. building and Nancy Yarbrough is in the process of obtaining the office furniture needed to make this expanded space fully operational. She is hoping to be able to hold an open house/blessing during December. A bible study group in Caledonia presented Nancy with a van that they completely renovated to look and run like new. The presentation was made at Zararte Auto and Chanel 6 was there to report the presentation which they broadcast during the evening news on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. The CBC missions committee gave Nancy more than 30 purses that they had filled for her purpose filled purses ministry. Nancy is reaching out to those trapped in human trafficking while making people more aware of the extent of this crime here in Milwaukee. Volunteers are always welcome and if you want to know more just call Nancy at 414-544-2649 or visit the office.

The men's network Tuesday breakfasts continue to attract young men who recently expressed an interest in setting up an investment club. There are a number of seniors who have expressed the willingness to provide help and advice and we will see if this is something that actually happens. There are currently no **Wealth Creation/ Debt Reduction** classes scheduled but if anyone is in need, I can help call me at 508-561-3921 or email at [msrobertson23@gmail.com](mailto:msrobertson23@gmail.com).

The **Love Kindness** program at Hi - Mount School continues to be a success and the [www.lovekindness.org](http://www.lovekindness.org) website is live and generating traffic, be sure to share it this holiday season! Please nominate anyone you believe is especially kind and share any stories regarding specific acts of Kindness you receive, observe or perform.

We continue to work with other organizations and will report on these when we have something to share as we continue to follow God's instructions to "**Love each other.**"



## **BEREAVEMENT** *By Minister Charlotte Flowers*

This year is quickly coming to a close, Thanksgiving has already past and the Advent season is now upon us. These two holidays are times when families and friends come together to celebrate by sharing and embracing each other to show expressions of appreciation and love.

For those who have lost a love one, this season of good cheer can bring on stress, sadness and unresolved grief. Some find it difficult to see, enjoy or express the love and joy this season usually brings. This is a normal process of grief especially if it's the first Thanksgiving and/or Christmas without a beloved one that has fractured a family's traditions, this can often make families and friends feel disjointed and confused. But be of good cheer there are ways to handle/manage the disengagement and return to the joy and love during this Advent season and the other holidays that seem to make you relive the grief associated with the loss of a loved one.

Below are suggestions that may help you get through the holidays:

### **CONTINUE PRACTICING YOUR FAMILY TRADITIONS**

For example: One of my family's traditions during Thanksgiving is we would hold hands around the dinner table and each person had to say one thing they were thankful for. My younger brother would always be the last to pray. This is his prayer: "Lord thank you for the food and the cooks, I'm hungry let's eat! Amen." The family would laugh and the feast would begin. My brother past two years ago, a week before Thanksgiving. Now one of our siblings say the same prayer on Thanksgiving, we all laughed and began to share stories about my brother. A younger nephew asked what was so funny, the family had an opportunity to share the history of my brother's prayer and tell the importance of continuing this family tradition, in remembrance of his uncle. This past Thanksgiving the same nephew asked to be the last to pray and he repeated my brother prayer. What was so great about this was I overheard him explaining to one of his cousins that this tradition is in memory of their uncle.

Keeping family traditions bonds families together and helps celebrate the life of the deceased and is a positive way to share the memory of that person with the younger generation so the traditions/bonds continues.

Think about a tradition that celebrates the life of your love one(s) continue them for yourself & the younger generation to create lasting loving memories of your loved one(s).

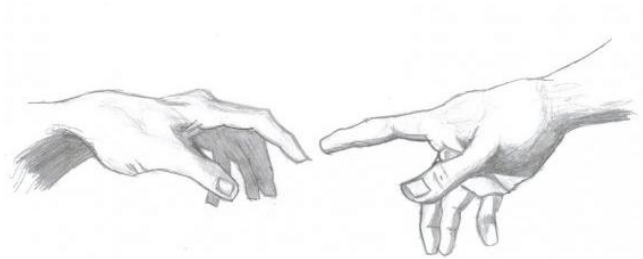
If you don't have a family tradition, start one. My nieces in memory of their mother, grandmothers, and aunts; who are deceased; have started a family album of pictures which they put on display each Mother's Day and add pictures of family gatherings on subsequent Mother's Day. The younger children especially love this and ask questions about the pictures; especially of the deceased. What a wonderful way to create lasting memories and reinforce the importance of family.

## **YOU CAN HELP**

If you know someone who is struggling with their loss you can help.  
The suggestions below are for children and adults.

### **What To Say / Do:**

- Listen
- Warm Embraces Are Comforting
- Give The Person Permission To Grieve
- Share A Pleasant Memory Of The Deceased
- Send An Encouragement Card
- Do Something Fun With Them: Bake, Decorate Etc.
- Encourage Them To Write A Letter Or Poem About Their Feelings To Their Loved One
- Create A Memory Scrapbook, Quilt, Drawing Or Memory Box That Everyone Can Contribute Notes Or Pictures Of The Love One. Remember To Bring Out Each Year And Add To It.
- Show Love, Kindness And Patience
- Listen, Listen, Listen



### **What Not To Say / Do:**

- I know how you feel
- how are you doing
- don't cry
- be strong
- time heals all wounds
- you will get over this or the holiday(s) will be over soon
- avoid the person because you don't know what to say

I hope this is helpful and if you want someone to talk contact the Church office so we can connect.

God, bless you and your family as you continue a journey that we all will/have travelled. Remember you are never alone.

Minister Charlotte Flowers;  
Director Bereavement Support



## **WOMEN'S RETREAT RECAP** *By Sis Mary Lyles*

Every year that I have attended the Woman's Retreat, I've always been asked by a member of the church, "How was the retreat?" In the past, my answer has always been, "It was ok," followed by some derogatory remark about someone or something that took place at the retreat. What an obscure, spiritually immature, incomplete, and negative response. My response was indicative of my spiritual walk at that time.

This year when asked about my retreat experience, I was anxiously ready to respond. My response was exuding excitement and joy. I wanted to tell everybody about my retreat experience. I thoroughly enjoyed the women of CBCGM and guests of the retreat. I enjoyed listening, crying, cleansing, learning, connecting, eating, praying and getting closer to God and the women of CBCGM.

This year was particularly different for me. This year I came expecting "something." This year I was open to what God has in store for me. This year I am vigorously hungry for the Word and how I can walk in it and share it. This year I connected with women in a different way. This year I heard their story, listened to their pain, felt their pain and prayed for their pain and healing. This year, THE MASK CAME OFF and I continue to peel back the layers of the mask and open my heart, mind, and soul to God and His plans for my life. It is a joyous and relieving feeling to be able to peel back the layers and expose the real me to me & others. I can no longer hide behind the mask!

I thank God for the women of Community Baptist Church. I thank God for Pastor Williams who teaches what God commands of us all – to love one another! I can now love freely, forgive easily, forget completely, and grow continuously.

## **YOUTH MAKING DISCIPLES OF THEIR FRIENDS** *By Sis Savanna Samuels*

Matthew 28:18-20 says: 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Good morning Community! Thank you for that great introduction. I am Sister Savanna Samuels and first I would like to give honor to God, who is the head of my life. And to my pastor and this wonderful church. I was given the assignment of using our church theme: Engaging Our Assignment: Making Disciples and putting it into a youth friendly context.





The idea of making disciples of our friends is how to go about reaching your friends and telling them about Jesus Christ. It is more than a conversation, rather a conversion. Jesus calls all of us to do more than convert souls. As stated in our church theme: Matthew 28: 18-20, Jesus tells us to go and make disciples, teaching them to obey everything He has commanded us.

We are not just supposed to be about bringing people into a relationship with God, but we are to help them become disciples who make disciples. I want us to say this together: **“DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES.”** We must continue this process in order to be good disciples and grow God's Kingdom. With that being said, here are the ABCs of making disciples of our friends.

- A- **Accept Christ as your Lord and Personal Savior.** Let them know when you confess with your mouth and trust in Jesus as your only hope of salvation. You become a new creation.
- B- **Belong to a church.** The New Living Translation states in Hebrew 10:24-25 “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works, and let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” We need to keep teenagers connected to Christ. Involve new stimulating programs that attract teenagers. Not only to church but to Christ. Giving them a feeling of belonging so that they can learn to follow Jesus and have strong roots planted in the Lord.
- C- **Commit:** Teens who come to Christ and connect to a church should be challenged to commit to the cause of making disciples. We must be equipped with the knowledge to spread the Good News. If we are not well equipped, then we must be provided mentors to help develop us into disciples. Like the song says, “It's the God in me!” We want our light to shine so that our friends can see the light of God through us so they shine bright too.

For example, my friend Mariah attended church with me a few years back. Now she tells me that she attends church and it was because of me asking her to come with me that one Sunday. At one point she rarely attended church except for on Easter, and now she goes almost every Sunday. Stories like that are here to show and tell us that going out and making disciples works and is in effect as long as you get out there and let them know how God can help them. So here's how the ABCs of making disciples work in this situation: She accepted Christ, now belongs to a church, and is committed to Christ. I'm here to tell you, my fellow teenagers, don't be afraid to share the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

In closing, Romans 12:16 states “Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people.” This means get out and connect with anyone. You never know who needs saving. I, as a member of Community Baptist Church, will do my best to encourage my friends and associates to help me help them make them a disciple. Thank you.

## **MEN'S MINISTRY** *By Deacon Melvin E. Grisby Sr.*



Greetings, this is the December edition 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 and Worship.

We are moving forward and with the help of God and the support of each other we will continue to serve God and each other. Let us remember, its men working, playing and praying together that will make a difference in our lives, the life of our Church, our Families and our Communities.

The Ministry hosts a Youth Forum every **2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday** of the month from **8am to 11am**. We invite all of the youth of Community to join us and bring a friend or family member at the white house across the street.

Under the Leadership of Minister Eastern, we have continued to reach out to the community **every Friday evening from 6:00pm to 7:00pm** at Sherman Park. Thanks to all of the men who have participated, there's always room for more, we welcome everyone!

Remember, our weekly **Tuesday Breakfast** is from **8:30am - 10:30am** at 4242 W. North Ave. **Game Night** is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at 6pm and the **Males Chorus Rehearsal** is the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday** of each month at **9:30am** and sing every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday.

Our Brotherhood Meetings are held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday** of each Month at **10:30am**. Remember, we need ALL MEN of CBCGM to work with us as we embrace our theme "**Engaging Our Assignment: MAKING Disciples.**"

## **FIRST SUNDAY**

The Sermon for FIRST SUNDAY, November 6, 2016 was titled, "**He's in the Boat**" (Mark 4:35-41). There are many individuals who were worried about the election. This was an important election and I advised all of us to vote. It was a historic election if either candidate wins: the first woman president of the U.S. would be historic; the first reality T.V. billionaire outsider would be historic. But many were afraid of what might happen if their particular candidate was not elected. I'm not worried because whatever way the political winds blow, I know that Jesus is still in the boat, guiding the ship.

Sometimes in life we can feel that we are trapped in an emotional rut? Stuck in a place that you did not want to be? Have you found yourself agonizing because no matter how hard you try, how hard you labor, it feels as if you are just spinning your wheels? There are times and situations in our lives when we know we are not where we want to be or where God wants us to be. We want to make it to the other side of our situation but we find it difficult to get over to the other side. We struggle to make progress from point here to there.

**You are HERE. Here is a place of dissatisfaction, a place of need, a place of inadequacy and frustration.** We as human beings can get lodged into an emotional place of imprisonment because of life's circumstances. We can feel mistreated and abused at the job, by family and friends, and we can grow bitter and move into a place of isolation and insulation. Instead of positive pro-action we get locked into a negative situation of reaction. This can be a real place of pain and frustration. And we want to get over it, but that's easier said than done.

Sometimes in our personal career goals, our vocation ("calling") we can experience a sense of stagnation and lethargy. When our gifts and talents are not respected or appreciated and our performance begins to diminish because our enthusiasm has dwindled. Going to work becomes a chore and just thinking about work gives you a headache. This can affect everything else that you do – whether at home, church, or anywhere else. Your world has been clouded by these pressing circumstances. More importantly, it affects your witness for Christ and effectiveness in life. When you should be exhibiting joy and excitement, you instead exuded sadness and frustration

Interpersonal relationships can become a source of great frustration and pain. Relationships are important because our God is a relational God, and we have inherited this inclination from our creator. We want to be in a loving and committed relationship but every time we are open to the possibility of a new relationship, it's like the only available options are a mixed can of nuts. We determine within ourselves that we will never allow ourselves to be hurt like that again – we say, "Never again!" Then we find ourselves right back in that place again, saying, "Never again," once more. Sometimes the pain of loss through death or a broken relationship can cast us into a dead zone. We feel numb and empty. We walk around like zombies with no real purpose or direction. What we are trying to do is to get over to the other side.

**We want to go THERE. There is a place of satisfaction, a place of plenty, a place of adequacy and stability.** There is where we believe that God wants us to be. Over there is where we find fulfillment and a sense of wellbeing. There you can find your destiny and fulfillment in life. You need to get over there so that you can be where God wants you to be. The shortest distance from here – a place of dissatisfaction, a place of need, a place of inadequacy and frustration – to there – a place of satisfaction, a place of plenty, a place of adequacy and stability – is a straight line. But there is a problem getting from here to there... Oh, I'd like to tell you that the road is smooth and unobstructed. But the

reality is that there is usually something blocking your path, which makes getting from here to there and uneventful and smooth transition. This is some kind of obstacle. You see an obstacle is something that blocks one's way or prevents or hinders progress; it is a barrier, a hurdle, a stumbling block, an obstruction, an impediment, or a hindrance. Whenever you want to make progress there is often some meddling obstruction and hindrance that makes "getting over to the other side" so difficult. See, "to meddle" means, tending to interfere with, interrupt, mess with other people's business". This meddling obstacle can come in various forms.

- In the Exodus sage the meddling obstacle manifested itself in the personage of Pharaoh. He tried to block their freedom and interfere with their worship. Here on this side of Israel's situation there was oppression and misery, hard labor and hardship. There on the other side lay freedom and liberty, opportunity and possibility. They did not have the power to "get over to the other side" without God's miraculous intervention. Therefore, God supplied them with some help: God called Moses (elaborate).
- The Red Sea was another obstacle but God revealed His glory by parting the sea and the people passed through on dry land. After God liberated Israel and things became a little more difficult, some wanted to return to the other side – that is, back to Egypt because they had a slave mentality! This lets us know that not everyone wants to get over to the other side. Some people like drama! Some folks can function with some friction. Some folks don't want any help getting over to the other side because on the other side there are more challenges. But when you get over, you have the strength to become an overcomer!
- King David loved the Lord and the people of Israel. When Goliath, a giant and the champion of the Philistines, confronted and challenged the army of the Lord, they shrunk back in fear. This brought about shame and dishonor to the nation. Goliath stood between the pride and victory of Israel's army. David could not stand back and allow this to happen, so the record states that he challenged the champion of the Philistines. (elaborate)
- Sometimes the meddling obstacle is more emotional and internal. I want to loose weight and be healthier, but the meddling obstacle – my appetite and lack of self-control – gets in the way of my goals.
  - Sometimes the impediment is the poor choices we keep making! This is what has gotten us in the place that we find ourselves. We want to blame everybody else, but we are our own worse problem!
  - Somebody deserves a raise and a promotion but some mean supervisor or boss is standing in their way.
  - Somebody is looking for a good spouse but too many knuckleheads are blocking him/her.

- Somebody has gone through some pain in the past and the memory of that pain and loss is hindering them from getting over to the other side. Folks keep telling you to “just get over it,” but it is easier said than done.

The reality is that we are all trying to get over some obstacle that is hindering our happiness, blocking our blessing, holding up our hope, and preventing our praise. But I'm so glad that we have some help. We are not in this boat alone. **Jesus is in the boat too!**

**Because Jesus is in the boat of life with us, getting over to the other side is challenging but possible.** Jesus told us that, “all things are possible to those who believe.” This is what I believe Mark is trying to tell us today. The story is not really about what Jesus does, but what the disciples have to learn. Jesus said, “Let us cross over to the other side.” I like this. He didn't say, “go by yourselves,” or “meet me on the other side.” But, Jesus said, “let us.”

- This means that **Jesus is with us on the boat**, in the storm and through the situation. He is our “Emmanuel”.
- It means that **he wants and desires us to get over the hump**, the hurdle, and the hill. He wants us to get over to the other side.

Jesus wanted to go over to the other side because of the crowd, the multitude. There is nothing wrong with getting away from the crowd. Sometimes one needs the peace of other shores to recoup and to revive. However, soon after they launched to go to the other side, a storm arose. Why would Jesus ask us to go over to the other side and then *allow* a storm to arise? He knew a storm was brewing!

- I believe that Jesus allowed the storm to come for various reasons:
  - 1) To Teach, Inform
    - He wanted his disciples to know who he was, and that he was sufficient to get them through the storms of life!
    - While we may not like it, there are lessons to be learned from our storms!
  - 2) To Strengthen
    - The disciples had more fear than faith! It's easy to trust when things are going well, but what about when it seems that all is falling apart?
    - Faith that is untested is faith that is insufficient. Only facing and overcoming the nagging tentacles of doubt can produce lasting faith.
  - 3) To Make Us Thankful (appreciative)
    - “You don't miss your water, till your well runs dry”
    - “Rain helps you to better appreciate a sunny day”
    - Sickness will help you to appreciate being healthy!
  - 4) To Purify Us As Through Fire
    - Fire can have purifying qualities; gold, glass, ceramics – all have to go through the fire before they can be used

- This can happen to us too; there are some issues and challenges in our lives that must be purified by the fire of the storms of life. God can't use us until we've gone through the cauldron and the dross and impurities removed. Then God can use us!
- The reality, however, is that we are either about to enter a storm, are in the midst of a storm, or coming out of a storm. **Storms are a permanent part of life.**
- If we trust in God, we know that, "In the world [we] will have tribulation, but be of good cheer; [Jesus has] overcome the world!"

## CONCLUSION

Jesus wants us to know that **He is with us** and that we should not allow the storms of life (the meddling obstacles) to keep us from going over to the other side. Remember that Jesus *told us* to go over to the other side **because He is also in the boat with us!**

I know something about storms, both literal and figurative. Sometimes you can flee a storm and at other times you just have to bunker down and ride out a storm. What I love about it is that if you decide to flee, Jesus is with you; and if you decide to bunker down, Jesus is with you. He will be with us in both situations.

So I'd like to leave you with three suggestions for getting over to the other side in spite of the obstacles, hindrances, impediments, and the storms.

- **When you are stuck here and want to get over there – PRAISE HIM!**
- **When you are facing a difficult obstacle and it seems you're not going to make it – PRAISE HIM!**
- **When you by the grace of God make it over to the other side – PRAISE HIM!**

We may not understand why certain storms and obstacles rise, but we'll understand it better by and by!

For now, I'll thank him and praise him in advance. I'm going to make a deposit in my praise account before the storms come and the winds blow. I don't believe we've all opened a praise account yet! Let me tell you how it works:

- When you wake up in the morning, clothed and in your right mind, you can say thank you for one more day – that's a deposit!
- When you were diagnosed with a terminal disease and you are still here, despite what the doctors have said, and you can say, "glory to God" – that's a deposit!
- "When you lost your job and you didn't know how you were going to make it, but by God's grace a new one came just in time: and you can say "halleluiah" – you just made another deposit!

You see, when God makes a way out of no way, when God blesses you to get over to the other side, that's "earned income" in God's economy.

I recommend that you make several daily deposits because when the storms rise again, and they will, you'll have enough gratefulness and thanksgiving in your praise account to weather the storm.

**SINCE YOU ARE ALREADY HERE AND HAVE A PORTION OF HEALTH AND STRENGTH,  
I THINK YOU SHOULD JUST MAKE A DEPOSIT RIGHT NOW!**

I've got a feeling that we're going to make it by God's grace from frustration to jubilation!  
From heartache to joy

From lethargy to energy

From pain to peace

From darkness to light

From doubt to hope

From this side filled with negatives, to the other side filled with positives!

**Be like the woman with the issue of blood.**

**She didn't allow the crowd to block her blessings...!**

We should never give up hope. We're going to make it because Jesus is with us. And we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us! **AMEN**



## *In Memoriam*

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

**Dorothy Carr**

*(Sister of Deacon Pearlie Carr)*

**Elsa Graham**

*(Former Member)*

**Karen MacLin**

*(Sister of Steve MacLin)*

**Lillian Howard-Miller**

*(Sister-In-Law of Deacon James Gore)*