

FROM THE PASTOR'S

DESK



*Community Baptist Church of Greater Milwaukee
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(April 2014)*

Greetings CBCGM! April was a busy but spirit-filled month, and writing this newsletter every month is a labor of love for me. While it requires much time and thought, it is worth every effort to keep you informed of all that is happening in the church. It is a blessing to have ministries active doing the work of the LORD and there is much to share so that you might be informed, inspired and encouraged. It is my wish that every member/disciple reads this newsletter and identifies opportunities to engage and interact in the ministry work of Community Baptist Church.

Deacon's Council

At the monthly meeting of the Deacons' Council held on *Saturday, February 2, 2014* at 9 AM, there were two important outcomes: 1) the occupancy permits have been approved for both church properties at 4242 (Men's Network Ministry headquarters) and 4316 ("The Community Spot/Youth House" next door to pastoral residence); 2) the process for overhauling the church building is underway, which includes updating emergency exits, replacing and repairing light fixtures throughout the church, and updating the heating and cooling system. These important improvements will not only keep our church up to code, but monitoring and making our heating/cooling system more efficient will cut our energy costs significantly. We appreciate very much the work the diaconate is doing to get God's house in order.

Stakeholders Summit

Our second Stakeholders Summit took place on *Saturday April 5, 2014* at 10 AM. At this gathering, 35 church members/stakeholders attended. While I am grateful for the increase from 10 to over 35, we have a membership of over 300. I look forward to the day when at least one-third or more of our members/stakeholders will attend these meetings. Below is a summary of our Stakeholders Summit:

Strategic Coordinator's Report:

The Core Team put together a church-wide engagement survey to get the pulse of CBCGM and make the necessary adjustments for improvement of our communal experience. The participation in this survey helped us focus on developing what is needed to help the growth and stability of our membership as well as attract and retain new members. This was phase one of reaching out to the Community family. Approximately a third of the congregation responded to the survey. We thank all of you who participated in this survey and are prayerful that more will participate in the future. Below is a brief summary of the survey.

Overall themes from the Engagement Survey:

- Evangelism
- Ramp – handicap accessibility
- Church finances
- Fixing the facilities
- Follow up with members when they are missing, sick, etc.
- Teaching the bible

Finance Chair Report

Bro. Willie Jude provided an overview of the quarterly finances of the church. One of the concerns highlighted from the member engagement survey was making the church building handicap accessible. Bro. Jude shared the finance committee's plans and tentative timetable for the completion of this project, which will take the form of a 3-level internal lift system (ground level, basement and first floor). Other items included: 1) Installation of the video system for the sanctuary; 2) Complete other important repairs throughout the church.

Ten-Year Strategic Plan: "Prospering the Vision"

Sister Linda Caples reported on the progress of the strategic plan. While there is much more work to be done, we are encouraged by the work that has been completed. Current accomplishments include:

- ✓ **Music Ministry Handbook**
- ✓ **New Member Handbook**
- ✓ **Teacher Handbook**
- ✓ **Teacher workshop (retreat)**
- ✓ **Sermons online**
- ✓ **Associate Minister's bios online**
- ✓ **Engagement Survey**
- ✓ **Teacher Training**
- ✓ **Evangelism Cards**

UNITY SUNDAY Worship

As is customary for me, I offer gracious thanks to God for the fourth UNITY SUNDAY of this Year! I cannot express enough how much these combined worship experiences have blessed me and other CBCGM members. I felt so inspired and enthused by the spirit-filled worship and congregational reception of the morning message: "**IN HIS HANDS**" (Matthew 14:13-21). In this passage the evangelists reminds us that we, as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, can meet the needs of hungry people – people who are hungry not just for physical food, but also for meaning, purpose and direction in life – when we put these concerns and needs in His hands. The narrative also informs us that we may not have sufficient resources in our midst, but if we place what little we have in His hands, Jesus can multiply our limited resources. In His hands our limited resources can be transformed into that which is sufficient to meet our needs with a surplus left over. I pray that this realization will inspire us as we endeavor to move out into the larger community to engage the work of outreach and evangelism.

Milwaukee AIM Church Staff Workers Consultation

Our third annual MKE-AIM Church Staff Workers Consultation took place on Wednesday, April 23, 2014 from 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM at Tabernacle Community Baptist Church. Sister Sharron Jewel, Director and Ministry Program Coordinator at Christ the King Baptist Church, was the facilitator. The day's topics covered the challenges and concerns of church office staff workers as they seek to meet the needs of the pastor and the

church ministries. While the tasks of office staff workers include clerical and administrative duties, Bible study and prayer is needed to assist them in the expected and even unexpected challenges that arise in ecclesial life. The MKE-AIM pastors were able to share lunch, questions and conversation with the office staff from the AIM churches. The goal of this annual consultation is to make our work more effective and efficient.

Sunday School News

The first in a series of Teacher trainings is in progress. The newly designed five session course is required for all who intend to teach at CBCGM. The first class took place on April 3, 2014 where our own Rev. Patrick Greer facilitated the discussion on Doctrine. Session two was led by our Director of Christian Education, Minister Charlotte Flowers and addressed exegesis, hermeneutics and Bible translations. I facilitated session three (on Thursday, May 1st) focusing on church history. There are two more sessions in this series and I look forward to seeing all our teachers there, learning and working together.

Let us applaud our young people and their awesome job presenting their Resurrection speeches during the Sunday School hour on Palm Sunday. As always, I appreciate the support we give our children.

Community Outreach and Evangelism

Mission: Deacon Floreda Saffold and Sister Bobbie Herron attended a Mission workshop at Christ the King Church. They gave an overview of what they learned during the Stakeholders Summit and are fired up to start the Mission Ministry. Please reach out to Sis. Saffold and/or Sis. Herron should you be led to participate in this restorative effort.

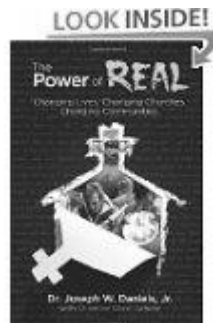
Evangelism: Rev. Anthony Caples developed evangelism cards for the church. Samples of the cards were shared during the Stakeholders Summit. The process for distributing the cards to the congregation with brief instructions will be finalized soon.

Community Outreach:

B.L.A.S.T. (“Building Lives Around Spiritual Truth”) Wednesday Night Youth Bible Study canvassed the neighborhood on Wednesday April 16, 2014 from 6:30pm to 7:30pm, using a special invitation card. They invited our community neighbors to our Resurrection Sunday services on Sunday April 20, 2014. We commend our children, the BLAST leaders and the adult volunteers who accompanied the children for leading the way in Evangelism. This is their second evangelistic effort and they have plans for another outing in August. Their seeds did bear fruit as our church welcomed a few visitors from the community who had received a card. Sister Zumehka McCrary and the BLAST leaders have taken the Wednesday night Youth Bible Study to an awesome level of service to God and the community. Let’s commend and continue to pray for this vibrant ministry for our children.

Bible Study

We resumed our regular study text, *The Power of REAL*, on Wednesday, April 30, 2014. We started chapter nine of the text and will continue with this chapter at our next Bible Study gathering. This chapter deals with the topic of developing a vibrant, enthusiastic and enriching “worship culture.” Worship is the centering activity of all that we do as a church. It is incumbent upon us. Please call the church office if you need a copy of the book, which we will use as our text for the remainder of the year.



National Black Marriage Day Vow Renewal Ceremony

On March 23, 2014 the 2nd National Black Marriage Day Vow Renewal Ceremony took place immediately after our 2nd service. The Rev John K. Patterson performed the ceremony and Married Couples Dance Ministry debut at this wonderful God-filled ceremony. The following couples renewed their vows:

- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Jerry & Beverly Benston
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Anthony & Linda Caples
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Lonnie & Suzette Davis
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Jeff & Mary Harris
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Robert & Nell Jacobs
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Herbert & Betty Renfro
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Clifford & Denise Thomas
- ❖ Mr. & Mrs. Demetrius & Robin Williams



The marriage ministry dancers included:

- James & Rebecca Powell
- Larry Beatty & Sherlon Butler
- Charles Means & Andrea Griffen
- Tommy and Floreda Saffold

I pray that more couples will renew their vows next year; it doesn't matter if you have been married one year or fifty years, please plan to join us next year. Oh by the way, my wife and I will dance next year!

Special Note of Thanks

Pastoral Family Anniversary

I thank you all for participating in the three-day pre-anniversary services, the beautiful pre-anniversary luncheon and finally the afternoon services on Sunday. I pray that you were as blessed, inspired and as encouraged as my family and I were. The tributes by Brother Mike Staples, Sister Betty Walker and Sister Queenie Lock were awesome and truly moved my family and me. I appreciate the tribute that the B.L.A.S.T. youth gave my children. Avianna Davis presented an awesome tribute to Taylor during the Sunday school hour. It is great to know that my children's peers have great things to say about them.

In Memoriam

Finally, let us remember the beloved souls that have passed from our congregation and also the family members of our CBCGM sisters and brothers. Please continue to call, visit and pray for our family members. We offer our prayers and condolences to all. Let us lovingly remember:



Pearl B. Light
Otis Jenkins
Patrick Allen Ware
Wiley James Caples Jr.
Richard D. Rhone
David Williams