



Community Baptist Church of Greater Milwaukee
2249 North Sherman Boulevard
(May 2013)

Dear CBCGM members, the month of May has finally come and brought with it more sunshine, blue skies and, as promised, May flowers (I say this as I watch my wife, Robin, planting beautiful flowers around the house). Soon the summer months will be upon us. As we vacation and get in some fun and family time, let us remember to do our best to keep our church afloat during this time of travel and leisure. We can do it. I believe that God is faithful!!

Deacon's Council

The monthly meeting of the Deacons' Council was held on Saturday, May 4, 2013 at 9 AM. While there were important ministry reports and the monthly review of finances, we thank and commend the diaconate also for taking notable steps to address some other important issues: making improvements on the existing church edifice. The Diaconate Ministry in cooperation with the Finance Committee is planning to move forward in seeking financing to: 1) install handicapped accessibility (further discussion and plans are needed to determine the nature of the accessibility; that is, whether it is an elevator that is accessible from the outside or some other kind of accessibility structure. We simply pray that the church is **patient through the process**, so that we might make the best and most cost effective decision!), 2) make renovations to the kitchen (which most likely will include some updating of the gymnasium and reorganization of the classrooms spaces), and finally, 3) renovation and updating of the men's and women's bathrooms. With all of this said, the church will need the continued financial support of all the members to support these projects.

Leadership Council

At the Leadership Council held on Saturday May 4, 2013 at 10:30 AM several ministry reports were given. One in particular that stood out was a report given by brother **Mike Staples**. Brother Staples leads the Community Baptist Church Home Improvement classes. His class has swelled to about 20 or more students. His concern is that there are only about 3-4 members from CBCGM. He would like to see more CBCGM members take advantage of these opportunities. To be sure, these skills can be used not only as a foundation for a career for several of the young men and women but also used to bless our efforts on the physical improvements to the church. We commend his work, in addition, because it has attracted the interests of several young men from the larger community. Through gentle witness to these precious souls they may soon become members and grow into a relationship with the Lord. We pray that this work will continue to produce fruit.

Another important part of the Leadership Council was the presentation and discussion of the criteria of “good standing” for church ministries and membership. This is a significant part of fulfilling our strategic plan. Here are some of the results (in process):

1) What is a Ministry in good standing?

- Must hold monthly/quarterly meetings
- Must submit meeting minutes within two weeks of the meeting
- ***Must submit completed ministry summary and ministry team agreement by September 30th
- Must submit event dates no less than 90 days in advance of the event
- Must submit event budgets and check requests no less than 90 days in advance of the event

What are the benefits of being in good standing?

- Access to church funds
- Ability to put events on the church calendar
- Visibility for the ministry - website, bulletin, facebook, ministry fair, etc.

What are the consequences for not being in good standing?

- No access to church funds
- No ministry events on church calendar
- No visibility for the ministry
- Potential retirement of the ministry

How will they know the benefits and consequences?

- Announcement at leadership meeting
- Newsletter
- Email to leaders

When will they be informed?

- Starting in April 2013.

When will these criteria go into effect?

- ***All materials are due September 30, 2013!
- ***All ministries that do not meet good standing criteria will be retired as of October 1, 2013!

How to we help people meet these criteria?

- One-on-one training sessions.
- Special meetings with ministry groups

2) What is considered a member in good standing?

- No age minimum (Note: under further consideration)
- Join by letter, Christian experience, watch care, candidate for baptism
- Must be baptized by immersion in water
 - Believe in God
 - Believe that Jesus is the Son of God
 - Believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead for the remission of our sins

- Support with church with
Time (attend Sunday services, bible study, and church events)
Talent (service to the membership and community)
Treasure (financially)
- Complete all sessions of new members class
- Those who are out of fellowship and not financially supporting the church for a minimum of six (6) months are no longer considered a member in good standing. [Reinstatement is necessary]
- Exceptions include: (these exceptions must be communicated to the church office) Out of town college students; The ill, aged; Incarcerated; Active Duty in the military; Temporary work assignment relocation

What are the benefits of being in good standing?

- Access to benevolence funds
- Special support (if needed) for widows and widowers
- Reduced fees for use of church facilities for: Repasts; Weddings; Events
- Free or reduced costs for Christian Education Materials

What are the consequences for not being in good standing?

- Loss of all benefits

How will they know the benefits and consequences?

- New Members Class
- Membership Refresher Course
- Business Meetings
- Mailed letters to homes

When will they be informed? Fall 2013

When will these criteria go into effect? January 1, 2014

How to we help people meet these criteria?

- Associate Ministers and Deacons will be assigned members to work with.

Under current consideration in the “good standing” categories are: **“What is a minister in good standing?”** and **“What is a deacon in good standing?”** Please be prayerful as we seek to provide further criteria for “getting God’s House in order.”

Ten-Year Strategic Plan: “Prospering the Vision – 2013-2023”

Time is moving quickly toward our upcoming **Ministry Fair** in September, which is conceived and designed to get God’s people working toward ministry and service. One of the salient goals of our strategic plan is to get more CBCGM members actively involved in at least one church ministry. This is the goal of the **Ministry Fair** and this is why we must have each ministry submit the team agreement and purpose statements ASAP! Since we want each ministry to have the opportunity to grow and prosper in the vision and to be recognized and supported by the church, our Strategic Coordinator, Linda Caples, will be holding meetings with various ministry leaders to assist them in their strategic responsibilities. We do not want any ministry to feel abandoned or neglected in the process. If any ministry leader has not signed up yet, please do so ASAP! The success of the strategic plan depends on the willing cooperation of all.

UNITY SUNDAY Worship

The Unity Sunday Message was, "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" (Luke 14:15-24). In the Lukan narrative Jesus is invited to the house of a leader of the Pharisees and the host and his invited guests are surprised by Jesus' candid exposure of their classism and arrogance. To be sure, they were really not aware of "who was coming to [their] dinner [party]!" Moreover, Jesus further instructs the host and his guests with a moving parable about who will be invited to the Messianic Banquet. In this narrative the theme of reversal of expectation is apparent – those who are invited will not make it in because of their EXCUSES! The unexpected guests are the lost, the left out and the overlooked! One might title this parable, "Guess Who's Not Coming to Dinner?"

Moreover, we learned from this parable that God wants God's "house to be filled!" So the host in the parable (God) instructs the servant (us) to go into the highways and byways and compel men and women to come. This is comparable to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 – "Go ye into all the world...." This is why I pray for and encourage us to come out to Unity Sunday one and all so that God's house might be filled! Let's do it this June and beyond! To do this, please invite un-churched friends and family and also mark your calendars and remember **that every first Sunday is now UNITY SUNDAY** – Sunday School starts at 8:00 AM and Worship starts at 9 AM! There are still some who come late and/or forget!

Covenant Sunday!! – June 2013

The first Sunday of June is UNITY SUNDAY and it will also be "**Covenant Sunday**" for all church leaders to make their pledge of faithfully supporting the church with their financial pledges. We certainly encourage all members to join in this act of faithful stewardship, but we have planned the month of December 2013 as the month of covenant for all church members. Deacon **Alex Hardy** is the leader of the strategic aim committee that will instruct and inform the larger membership of this strategic aim. In the near future, he and his team will hold small group meeting with the membership to provide information and encouragement in fulfilling this significant aim of providing financial faithful support of the church through pledging. Let's all remain prayerful of our giving and ask that God might bless us to trust him with our finances. God is faithful!

Bible Study

There are only a couple of lessons left in Waiting for Water: 2013 Easter Journey with Jesus, edited by Dan Stevens. This study has been a great blessing for me and I hope for the Bible class as well. When this text is completed, we will study the three letters of John until our summer cessation period (July-August and resumes in September). We want to encourage all of our members to "make his/her faith more effective" by growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! (2 Peter 1:3-15)

In Memoriam

Finally, let us remember lovingly the beloved souls that have passed from our congregation and/or also the family members of our CBCGM sisters and brothers. We offer our prayers and condolence to all.

Let us remember:

Mother Gloria Harris

