# the journey

**The Brownsville Church of God Newsletter** **April - June 2021**

*WE EXIST for the purpose of Worshipping God, Loving all people, making disciples for Christ.*

*Our Vision: We envision a community of faith where: People are coming to Christ, finding love, acceptance, forgiveness, and experiencing Christian growth.*

## *Regularly Held Services*

(All classes are suspended until further notice.)

**SUNDAY**
Worship Service - On-site
9:30 AM and 11:00 AM

Worship Service - Online
(Facebook)

**WEDNESDAY**
Youth (PreK - 5th grade) Class
6:00 PM. - Online (Zoom)

Bible Study - Online (Facebook)
7:00 PM

**THURSDAY**
Bible Study - On-site
7:00 PM

Brownsville Church of God
6390 Lincoln Way East
Fayetteville, PA 17222
717-352-9535
www.brownsvillecog.com

Churches of God
General Conference

# *A Message from the Pastor:*

## *Christ is our Passover*

Pastor Victor & Sis. Katherine Johnson

In the Old Testament, Exodus 11-13, we find that God told Moses to prepare for the last plague that was to touch Egypt. It would touch every home in Egypt. Every firstborn of all households including that of Pharaoh's was to die. The tenth plague was to be like no other.

Each Hebrew household was to kill a lamb and sprinkle its blood over the header and side post of their doors. By doing so, the plague of death would pass over them and their firstborn would not die.

The killing of this Passover Lamb was a picture of Jesus' coming to deliver humanity from an eternal death and the bondage of sin.

**Moses' Description of the Sacrificial Lamb:** The Lamb chosen for the Passover offering was to be unblemished. Jesus was in all points tempted as we are, but without sin.

**The Lamb was to be killed in the evening.** The Passover Lamb was sacrificed between the ninth and the eleventh hour. Jesus was crucified at the ninth hour. As the Passover Lamb was slain on the eve of the Passover, Christ was slain on the eve of the Passover Feast.

**Christ is our Passover.** John the Baptist makes reference to Jesus being the Lamb of God who would take away our sin as he sees Jesus coming. In John 1:29 (KJV), referring to Jesus, John says....*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* Why did John make such a statement?

Peter records in 1 Peter 1:18-19 (KJV), *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

As the blood of the Lamb saved the first born in Egypt from death, the blood of Jesus cleanses mankind of sin and saves him or her from an eternal death and separation from God. Death no longer has reign or power over us. We are redeemed through the blood of Christ.

*Continued on next page*

# The Prayer Bowl

On a separate table outside the Secretarial Office sits the Brownsville Church of God Prayer Bowl. This bowl replaces the metal box that was located outside of Room 102.

The Prayer Bowl has a slit in the top for inserting your prayer request form. Prayer request forms are located in the slot in the back of each chair in the sanctuary.

There's a lock on the Prayer Bowl so that all prayer requests are kept private. Your prayer request will be shared with and prayed for by the Brownsville Church of God Prayer Team.

***Continued...A Message from the Pastor***

***What does it mean to be redeemed?*** It means to be loosened from bondage and set at liberty. It means that the price to free the slave – the unbeliever in Christ, has been fully paid. In Christ we have been ransomed by His blood.

- Redemption is a costly payment. Colossians. 1:14 (KJV), *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*
- The blood of Christ brings to us God's atoning grace. Romans 5:9 (KJV) *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him*. His blood has redeemed us from the wrath and judgment of God upon our sins.

Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures. Through faith in Him, our sins are forgiven. To the unsaved, God is seeking a response from you – acceptance of His Son, Jesus Christ.

CelebrateRecovery®
A CHRIST-CENTERED 12 Step program

The goal of the Celebrate Recovery Ministry is to lead all people through a biblically balanced, 12-step program to heal their Hurts, Hang-Ups, and Habits. Our Vision is to move people forward through the saving power of Jesus Christ. To accomplish this we worship God, study His Word, fellowship with one another, and celebrate God's healing power in our lives.

We have just completed the class Life's Healing Choices which is a study of the Beatitudes from Matthew chapter 5. We will offer a 12-Step Study whenever there is interest enough to form a study group. Both classes are a continuation of the discipleship program at Brownsville Church of God.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the vestibule outside the Administrative Office. There are pamphlets in the rack on the wall next to Room 101 for those who are interested in looking at the various topics that are covered in Celebrate Recovery.

For more information you may see Sister Mary Margaret Bittle between services on Sunday or Bible study on Thursday. You may also call her at 717-597-4777.

The Chambersburg Police Department has formed the Chief's Advisory Committee. It was made up to serve as a liaison between the police department and the community. What started several months ago with a vision by Chief Roland Camacho at a joint meeting at Brownsville Church of God has now come to pass. The Advisory Committee will work with Chief Roland Camacho and his team to build strong relationships and strengthen communications between the police and the community by making recommendations, promoting public awareness, and offering suggestions.

In a meeting on March 24th at the Chambersburg Borough Police Office, Chief Roland Camacho and Sergeant Jon Greenawait presented Pastor Johnson, Pastor Jenkins and Pastor Waters of Unity in Christ Church with a medal of appreciation for working with the Police Department to form the Advisory Committee. Pastor Waters was helpful in the process but was unable to attend.

# *Have You Asked God What You Should Do About Getting The Covid-19 Vaccine?* *by Vanessa Davis*

As a Registered Nurse who worked throughout covid-19, I was not one that cared to get the vaccine. I am not one that uses medicine much, and I refuse the flu vaccine that is offered every year at my place of employment. I am the example of "Nurses don't make good patients." Throughout 2019 to present, I have been in contact with people who have tested positive. My husband, Ralphiel and I work in the healthcare industry. I work as a Registered Nurse in Dialysis and Ralphiel as a Switch Technician at Inova Hospital. I have been around patients (within less than 6 feet) that were ill and tested positive the very next day. I flew to Chicago and shared a class with another RN that tested positive the day after everyone flew home. I have looked the Coronavirus in the face several times and just refused that I would get it. In my mind I had determined that if I were to get the virus, it would allow for me to have a much needed vacation because I assumed that I would get the virus that affected your taste and smell, not that I would get sick to the point of hospitalization or even die. However, I prayed over my house and my family when it hit and I fully trusted God then and trust God now in regards to me and my family not catching the Coronavirus. Now let me emphasize that does not mean anyone who contracted the coronavirus lacked faith. I am simply speaking for myself here. I just felt that God has protected me thus far and if I am to get the virus then God has allowed me to get the virus.

With all of that being said, I remember telling several people that I was not getting the vaccine when I was asked. I could feel the Holy Spirit nudging me each time I did as to say "You shouldn't say that as you may influence someone to make a decision based on your response." So I stopped giving that response and when asked I would say, "Pray and ask God what He wants you to do and then go with what He gives you to do."

As time went on I remember a tug within my soul drawing me towards getting the vaccine. I was clear that could not be God because I knew where I stood regarding getting the vaccine. I remember it as clear as day. I was driving home on a Friday afternoon and I prayed a silent prayer that went like this…"God if you want me to get the vaccine, can you please confirm it with me?" I remember getting home that day and being very tired. On a Friday night I went to bed at 7:30 pm! I woke up Saturday morning to the following text message that came in at 7:32 pm that same Friday evening, January 29th 2021:

**"Hi Vanessa,**

**In order for UPMC to schedule your COVID-19 vaccine, please complete the form using the following link. After you complete the form, you will be able to select a date and time for your vaccine."**

Please understand, I had not reached out to anyone regarding a vaccine. My job was not offering them. I could not believe that! I did not hesitate. I knew this was God saying for me to get the vaccine. I didn't ask questions. I didn't ask who made it, which one I was going to get, how long it had been studied, what was the point, or is it safe? I just knew God answered my prayer that fast and that plain! So I simply set up my vaccination appointment. I realized in talking with my parents they were on several waiting lists and could not get the vaccine. Since I had no clue where my link came from, I sent it to them. They still were not able to get signed up. About 2 days later my parents had gotten information from a church member and were signed up to get their vaccine at Rite Aid in Fayetteville.

My original date for my first vaccine was March 2nd at 8 a.m. I started asking other co-workers where they got their vaccine, and I was trying to get rescheduled elsewhere, faster. I said, "**I am getting the vaccine but I don't want to wait until March for the first one".** So every door closed to move it up until I received a second email that said, **"There was a mistake when you scheduled your first vaccine with us. We are doing them on February 12th not March 2nd. Please give us a time that works for you to get your vaccine."** I was able to receive my first vaccine on February 12th at 9:00 a.m. in Harrisburg and ran into a Sister in Christ from another Church of God that I had camped with at several women retreats. She happened to be the intake nurse. On February 11th my parents received their first vaccine and ran into my elementary school gym teacher. The only side effects we experienced were sore arms the day after the injection. I took Motrin and that helped. My parents received their 2nd vaccine on March 11th and I received my 2nd vaccine on March 12th. The soreness of the arm was not bad at all and we had zero side effects. We received the Moderna vaccine.

I want to share what I experienced out of this:

1. I should have asked God what He would have me to do regarding the vaccine and not just assume that I knew what He wanted. Our Father would like to be asked and consulted on our decisions. Maybe God's answer will not be as blatant as mine; or you might even get a blatant "NO". The problem is I had never asked God what He wanted me to do regarding the vaccine even though that's what I started telling people to do when I was asked and not willing to share my choice.
2. I shouldn't say what I will or won't do because God may have a totally different plan regardless of how I am thinking at the time.
3. I believe that by being obedient in regard to my vaccine, it opened the door for my parents to get an appointment for theirs. Maybe your obedience isn't just about you; maybe your obedience is about someone else.
4. Once I made my decision and appointment and tried to speed it up, God already had a time frame ready; I just needed to trust that.
5. God places people in your path as another confirmation that you are where you are supposed to be at the time you are supposed to be there.

Finally, in order to know if you are or are not to get the vaccine, the best way to know is to ask God. Nothing can happen without God saying yes and that means Covid-19 and the creation of a vaccine. Don't leave things to chance by assuming you are making the right decision. Seek God for your answer and then be obedient to whatever He gives you to do. (See James 1:5-8 AMP)

# BCOG Youth News

## THINK SUMMER!

Looking for something fun to do with your family this summer? Consider Family Camp! Family Camp will be held June 20-26, 2021 at Camp Yolijwa. Camp Yolijwa (Youth Living Jesus' Way) is a camping program that is part of the Eastern Regional Conference of Churches of God. Camp Yolijwa is located in the beautiful mountains of Doubling Gap, Pennsylvania, not too far from home. Camp Yolijwa has been leading children and youth to Christ since 1934.

Besides attending a camp, there are many opportunities to get involved with the Camp Yolijwa program. Camp Yolijwa is currently accepting applications for its paid summer positions. All positions include room, board and salary. Contact the camp for current openings. Offered positions are: ●Activity ● Music ● Craft ● Nature ● Lifeguard ● Kitchen ● Technology ● Maintenance

Visit the Camp Yolijwa website for a full list of available camps and activities at www.campyolijwa.org.

**Save the Date!**

**Vacation Bible School**

**July 26-30, 2021**

## Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF)

*From Dan Russell, Director, Franklin/Fulton Counties*

### Spike in Good News Club Attendance!

When we hear the word "spike" today, it brings up negative feelings. However, with Good News Clubs we have actually seen a spike in kids attending since Christmas.

In St. Thomas, 12 new kindergarten children signed up for Good News Club. If any more come, then we will need a second bus - Just FYI, we have another bus and driver lined up for when that happens.

In McConnellsburg, we have so many children coming that we had to get a second hour of club so that we could use the same room twice. As you can see in the picture, the kids sit every other desk wall to wall.

In Waynesboro, we had to split the club up into boys and girls and use two rooms. Praise the Lord! God provided us a second teacher, who is pictured in the front of the fellowship room, so that could happen.

These blessings would not be possible without the prayers and support of churches like Brownsville. Please continue to intercede for us during this time.

# *final* thoughts...

On Sunday, February 14th we received Terrance and Rose Frye as new members. We are grateful to add them to the family here at the Brownsville Church of God.

On Sunday, March 21st, during our 11:00 a.m. service two of our members who had been in training as deacons were ordained to formally serve. They are Joseph Dennis whose wife is Mary and Ryan Gaither whose wife is Sarah. On Sunday, March 28th, Gregg Garman was ordained as an Elder. We are blessed to have these men serve in these capacities at Brownsville Church of God.

Our Congregational meeting was held on Sunday, March 21st following the 11:00 am service. The current budget and spending were shared along with the future budget. The five-year strategic plan was also presented.

Five new Administrative Council members were voted in – James Boyd, Vanessa Davis, Charles Henderson, Ron Weaver, Brad Rock. Council members who have served their time and will be coming off are Kenneth Davis, Mary King, Mike Tasker and Granville Washington. We thank these outgoing members for their service on the Administrative Council.

**Upcoming Events**

Our next baptism is tentatively scheduled for June, 2021. This will be our first baptism in our new portable baptistry.

*Editor, Valenceia Prather*
*Layout/Design by Priscilla Shirley*

*Newsletter article submissions may be sent anytime to the Editor at vbpra123@gmail.com. Articles for the next newsletter are due June 18th.*

## *Congratulations to Donna Rae and Granville Washington on their 56 years of marriage!*

"Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2:24.

We give honor, praise, and glory to our heavenly father for what he has done! There is no way we would have or could have made it without him. God's presence in our lives has made all the difference. Love, patience, forgiveness, and perseverance came from him. We can take no credit for any of it...if left to us, we would have failed long ago. We cannot thank him enough for blessing us on February 17, 2021, to have celebrated fifty-six years of marriage.

He's given us six children, ten grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

-Donna Rae and Granville Washington