The Journey

The Brownsville Church of God Quarterly Newsletter October-December 2023

A Message from the Pastor

Pastor Victor Johnson

Over the recent quarter, God has richly blessed the works and ministries of the Brownsville Church of God. Our people are intentionally building deeper relationships across ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Thank God, on August 20, 2023, as a church, we celebrated 145 years of service in the community. We shared the following information to the congregation. The community where our church was founded was once called Africa. The community was a place of refuge for free slaves and slaves fleeing from bondage. The church and community played a role in the Underground Railroad.

At Brownsville, our desire is to see men, women, boys, and girls from diverse ethnicities and backgrounds joining God in His work to build a church patterned after His heart and design. God wants people to live together, work together, worship together and serve together regardless of ethnicities, backgrounds, or cultures.

Scripture tells us the following, ***Genesis 1:27 (NIV)*** *So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.* He created all mankind in His image, as equal, persons to be valued and respected. Our goal at Brownsville is to respect and value all people in and outside of the Church. God's desire is that we share the gospel of Christ and that we intentionally live the gospel. *Come and join us on the journey.*

Pastor Vic challenges each of you to take personal responsibility to work for the greater good of all humanity as God has intended. Each of us have a role to play in the fulfillment of God's plan. This must can done through the following:

1. **Be a *Living Example*** of the Christian Faith**.**
2. **Be a *Voice Against*** racism and stereotyping.
3. **Be a *Bridgebuilder. Intentionally*** meet and bring different people together.
4. **Be a *Continuous Learner*** and **a person of Self-Reflection.**

Thank you for your service and all that you are doing at Brownsville in order that God's mission is fulfilled. Join me as we look to the future, seeking God in prayer that souls are saved growing in Christian maturity.

Blessings to each of you.
Pastor Vic

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

SUNDAY
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service - 10:30 a.m.
Nursery provided for all the above.

WEDNESDAY
Bible Study - 7:00 PM

New Members and Visitor Luncheon: SERVE YOUR CHURCH WITH YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

On August 26, 2023, a near-perfect warm summer afternoon, 50 people gathered at Brownsville Fellowship Foyer for a delightful “New Members & Visitors Luncheon”. The luncheon was sponsored by the newly formed New Visitor Team. This activity was initiated by Pastor Victor T. Johnson.

The pastor wanted the new members & visitors to know that being a member of BCOG means more than simply signing a piece of paper – it expresses their commitment to our inspired family. A family that worships together, grows in faith together, and serves one another.

The luncheon served as an introduction to our church, to clearly explain who we are, what we believe and how we work together to grow in Christ and reach people. Finally, it presented an opportunity for connecting to small groups and areas of service.

This brings to mind a principle in business called the “Pareto Principle”. Essentially, it means that 20% of the people do 80% of the work or specifically, 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. This is true in business and churches, but it shouldn't be. God has blessed us all with spiritual gifts, and the purpose of your gift is not to hoard it, bury it, or use it to make yourself look awesome, but to steward it well by edifying God and His church.

Pastor Johnson challenged the new members “What's your spiritual gift? Teaching? Hospitality? Singing? Leadership? USE IT.”

Talk to someone about getting involved and serving. Whatever you do, don't bury the gifts God has entrusted to you.

Submitted By:
New Members/Visitor Team

BSR Scholarship Committee Announces New Board Members

The Scholarship Foundation of Brownsville Church of God is pleased to announce and welcome new members and officers to the board of directors effectively July 19, 2023. Joining the board are Lynn Small and Karen Baugher.

Lynn Small, (Lynn's Tax Service) registered & insured tax preparer, will serve as Assistant Treasurer. Karen Baugher, United States Postal Service and Certified Nursing Assistant, will serve on the Ways & Means Committee.

The scholarship board is looking forward to working with these two new board members.

Submitted By,
Betty Spoonhour Scholarship Committee

Gary & Tanya Francis, Members of the Brownsville Church of God celebrated 10 years of marriage at a Vow Renewal Ceremony performed by Pastor Victor Johnson on Saturday, September 9, 2023.

BCOG Youth News

Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF)

From Dan Russell, Director, Franklin/Fulton Counties

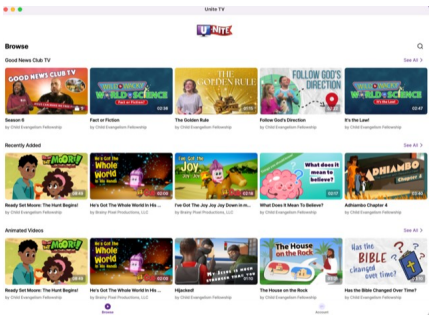
The two main ministries of CEF are Good News Club and Good News Camp. You are familiar with Good News Camp because the Brownsville Church of God parking lot is a bus stop for camp the week of July 4. Clubs, too, are familiar because every Wednesday during the school year, the Good News Club for Fayetteville Elementary meets at your church. In past newsletters, I have shared stories and photos from both club and camp.

There is a lesser known resource of CEF that works along side these ministries that I want to share about this time. It is called U-Nite. The name refers to the way we want to unite kids with Jesus Who is the Good News. Like clubs & camp, U-Nite uses songs, stories, and verses, but the difference is that it has a digital format. So, kids don't have to ride a bus to hear the Gospel, they can watch evangelistic videos on the web or through the app.

The easiest way to use U-Nite is with the app. You can download the app at unite.cefonline.com or use the QR code in the newsletter. To ensure children have a parent's permission, an account has to be created to view videos on the app; however, there are no charges, no personal information is collected, and there are no ads. A person can also go to YouTube and watch the content on the U-Nite channel, but you may also have to watch ads.

CEF wants every child in every nation to spend time with God everyday. To accomplish this goal we need a digital ministry that uses the lessons and activities of club and camp, but it delivers them to children on a computer, tablet, or phone. CEF also want churches, like yours, to be able to access these resources and use them in your children's programs. We pray that God will bless your congregation as you reach out to boys and girls!

Dr Dan Russell, CEF Director



Braylen K. Davis to Take Part in *Envision's* Junior National Leadership Conference

Chambersburg, PA – This summer, Braylen K. Davis, from Chambersburg, and other outstanding middle school students from across the nation participated in a unique academic and career-oriented development experience: The Junior National Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Junior National Leadership Conference is one of the *Envision by World Strides'* family of programs (www.envisionexperience.com) that enable students to explore their interests and to learn beyond the classroom.

Braylen K. Davis would like to give an update on what God has done in his life and to thank those who have helped him to get involved in this opportunity:

"This school year I will be entering the 7th grade at Chambersburg Middle School – South. I was nominated to the program by my 6th grade Western Hemisphere teacher, Ms. Heather Brindle. I am an active church member at Brownsville Church of God; involved in band and play the flute; Boy Scouts Troop #136 and am a Tenderfoot, also an avid Lacrosse Player-Midi, for the MD-North Rebels LC. I currently have aspirations to join the military and/or play professional Lacrosse. I was very excited to attend the program to learn more leadership styles, being able to express myself in a new environment and meet new people that would become friends. I am the eldest son of Ms. Tyson B. Davis and brother to Bennett, a kindergarten student at Fayetteville Elementary and grandson to Kenneth and Jocelynn Davis. To all who made a contribution to this extraordinary experience for me: THANK YOU. Next year, I will be considered an alumnus and hope I am able to continue with this new adventure."

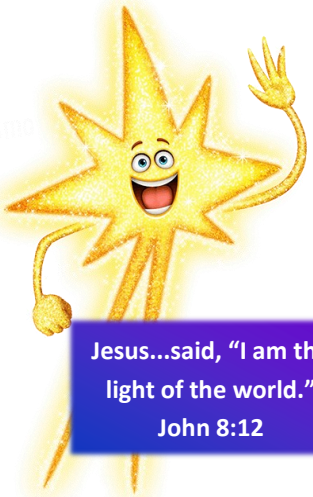
For over 35 years, Envision by World Strides has empowered extraordinary students to become their best selves through programs that enable them to discover their passion, explore a career, and positively impact their world. In 2018, Envision became part of the World Strides family. The largest provider of educational travel and experiences in the United States, World Strides works with over 50,000 educators each year to help more than 550,000 students see the world—and themselves—in new ways.

BCOG Youth News

Vacation Bible School:
"Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light!"

This year's Vacation Bible School at Brownsville Church of God was an outer space theme Stellar, Shine Jesus Light! We had 66 youth registered from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade and over 60 volunteers.

The daily themes included: When life feels dark, When people don't get along, When good things happen, When people are sad, When people need help – all followed by "Shine Jesus Light!" Youth were encouraged by Bible Stories, Bible Verses and Songs. It was a great uplifting week for all.



Jesus...said, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12

Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. John 14:1

Due to the extreme heat, the games station was moved into the Sanctuary. We thank all those who moved chairs to make this possible.

Let your good deeds shine...so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. Matthew 5:16

Shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth! Psalm 100:1

Shine a light on Jesus' love!

Live in harmony with each other. Romans 12:16

BCOG Youth News

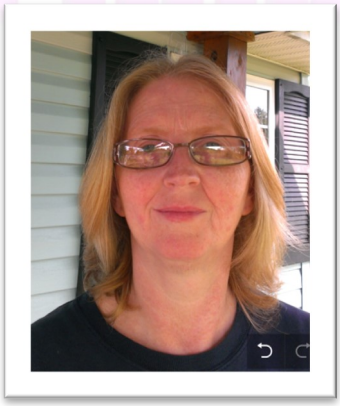
YoliJwa Winter Retreats

It's a "Blast" to "Breakaway" and have a "Bash"!

Can't wait till camp next summer? Neither can we! During our winter retreats at Camp YoliJwa you'll have a blast doing many of your favorite activities from summer like crafts, team games and Bible lessons plus you'll get the chance to go sledding and ice skating. One of the best parts is the return of some of the counselors from summer to lead you through the weekend activities. Each weekend is designed to strengthen our faith in Christ and deepen our walk with Him. Whether this will be your first time at Camp YoliJwa, or you are a seasoned camper, we would love to see you here for one of our winter retreats!

Junior Blast	Grades 3-5	Dec. 1 - 3
Jr. High Breakaway	Grades 6-8	Dec. 8 - 10
Sr. High Bash	Grades 9-12	Dec. 15 - 16

Registration forms can be found online at https://campyolijwa.org/winter-retreats.



Meet Karen Baugher, our new CIA (Camp Information Agent) for our church camp, Camp Yolijwa. See her for answers to questions you may have. However, she may need time to research some answers.

Kids Corner

Come and join us as our kids experience God's presence through His Word.

Children going into kindergarten through 2nd Grade are invited to come to ***Kids Corner*** every Sunday during Worship Service. An area is reserved in the back of the sanctuary. We will leave the sanctuary during offering. Parents are welcome to sit with their children until they leave.

We are also looking for those interested in serving as teachers or helpers. Sign up in the lobby.

Letter from the
EDITOR

We're Excited to Hear Your Voice!

by Michaela Tasker

Dear Brownsville Church of God family,

As you may know, this is the first issue of the BCOG newsletter that I have edited. I'm excited about embarking on this journey! You might wonder why, so let me start back at the beginning:

Ever since I learned to write, I have been fascinated by the power of words. I've wanted to become a writer ever since I was a child, and I have been drawn to various forms of creative expression over the years. My mind is filled to the brim with words, stories, and ideas that I can't wait to share, and writing has been a wonderful outlet for me.

I tend to have difficulty expressing myself out loud in social situations, but I have always had so much to share with the world. It can be frustrating to have a mind filled with ideas while finding it challenging to express them in the way most people do. However, my lifelong love of writing and the creative arts has allowed me to express myself to others in an easier way.

Each of you has a voice to share, even if you haven't found a way to express it yet. Maybe you have tried to express your voice, but the world has tried to shut it down. God has placed ideas, stories, thoughts, and perspectives within each of us, even if we express them in different ways. Whether you've been told that your unique voice is "too quiet," "too loud," "too out-of-the-box" or "too ordinary" ...no matter what you've been told about the way you were designed to express yourself, *we love to hear your voice.*

The BCOG newsletter can be the chance for you to share what God has put in your heart. This could be through an article, a story, a testimony, a poem, or a praise report.

Your unique voice is a gift that we treasure. Thank you in advance for sharing it with us!

Through Him alone,
Michaela Tasker

Women's Prayer Partnering Ministry

Greetings ladies in the name of Jesus!

Romans 8:26 ESV: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words."

My name is Sister Mary Dennis, and I'm part of the Women's Prayer Partnering Ministry. Our ministry meets every Sunday morning at 8:30AM and the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00PM.

This is a time to grow a closer relationship with God and other ladies. All discussions are held in confidentiality. If you're looking for a timeout away from the hustle and bustle of life, meet us every second Wednesday of the month. We have a relaxed and judgement-free atmosphere. If this sounds like something you'd like to be a part of, pray about it, then join us. All ages welcome!

Love and blessings,
Sister Mary Dennis

FAITH AND POPCORN SERIES
SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER

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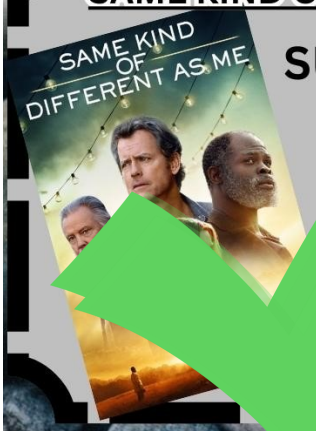

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BEN-HUR (2016)

SUNDAY, NOV. 12
4 P.M.

SAVING CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY, DEC. 10
4 P.M.

the connection
CONNECTING WOMEN WITH GOD & EACH OTHER

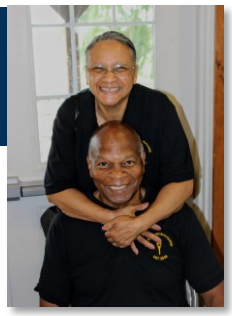
Morning Star
A Perfect Gift

TICKETS: $7
INCLUDES POPCORN!!

WAYNESBORO THEATRE 75 W. MAIN STREET

TICKETS AVALIBLE ONLINE OR AT THE BOX OFFICE

Final thoughts



Pastor Victor & Sis. Katherine Johnson

The theme of this year's Vacation Bible School, "Stellar: Shine Jesus' Light" was held the week of July 24. We had 66 youth registered from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade and over 60 volunteers.

On Sunday, August 13, "Promotion Day" all children and youth were invited up on stage during service. Some, who attended Sunday School classes, said goodbye to classmates and teachers as they moved (were promoted) to their higher grade level class. They were welcomed to their new class by their new teachers and new classmates.

On Saturday, August 19, BCOG Ministry to Youth and Family had a Celebration Appreciation luncheon for teachers and their families. All received words of appreciation from each other.

On Sunday, August 20, we celebrated our 145th Church Anniversary along with Friends & Family Day. The Church's rich history was shared and celebrated.

On August 26, the Visitor Follow-up Work Group held a luncheon to celebrate and recognize our newest members and visitors. A variety of team leaders shared information about their teams.

The Betty Spoonhour Rideout Scholarship Committee held an Essay Contest August –September 10th. Winners of that contest will be announced in the next newsletter.

On September 16, the Youth Education Ministry sponsored a trip for the youth to Lake Tobias. An article on this will be published in the next newsletter.

On September 17, a Lunch and Prayer walk took place after service. After lunch, different groups of volunteers – adults and youth – went to pray at schools in the community. More on this will be in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Events

Men's Breakfast /Bible Study
Every 2nd Saturday at Brownsville Church of God
10:00 AM

Neighborhood Door Hang
Saturday, October 28th

Annual BSRS Envelope Campaign
Sunday, November 5th

Annual Gospel Concert
Sunday, November 18th

Christmas Caroling
Friday, December 15th

Christmas Eve Service
Sunday, December 24th

Layout/Design by Priscilla Shirley

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

Brownsville Church of God

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