



VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

SEPTEMBER 2011

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Challenges

Summer Camp Pictures

UPCOMING DATES

9/10/11
11th Annual Community Festival and Job Fair, 12-4pm

October 2011
Adult Education Classes:
Mon.-Thurs. evenings
5pm and 7pm

October 3, 2011
Out of School Program
Mon.-Thurs.
3-5:30pm

Every 2nd Tuesday
Board Meeting, 7-9pm

All events located at 900 E. Howell Street unless otherwise indicated.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

The challenge with writing a newsletter about a ministry such as OCCCDA is it easy to fall into the trap of "bigger is always better" reporting. Such reporting tend to focus on the "big things" such as new facilities, the number of current ministries, and the number of persons receiving services, etc. Don't get me wrong, all of these along with other measurements are valuable and important and they need to be shared and celebrated in newsletters reports such as this.

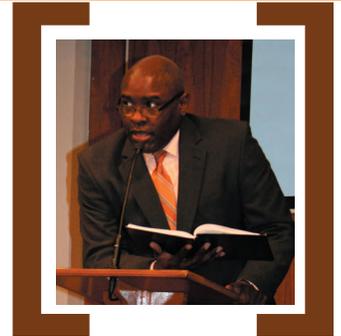
However I would also submit that if we do not every now and then pause and recognize the "little things" or seemingly "insignificant movements" we may miss out on witnessing the whole story of what God is up to:

In June a near neighbor stopped me in our parking lot and passionately shared that

while she sat in her kitchen sipping her coffee the Spirit of God came upon her and "compelled" her to contribute a "small" financial gift to OCCCDA. She shared that though she doesn't attend our church, she recognizes and sees us as her "community church" seeking to extend the love of Jesus here.

In July in the midst of another hot and humid Philadelphia summer we held our annual 6-week Summer Art and Education program. On one of the trips to the nearby park two parents whose kids attend the camp were talking and it was overheard that "this camp is one of the few in the city that is affordable and they are teaching my kids to cook and read!"

Lastly in August we were blessed to have a work team (in partnership with Kingdom Builders Construction) remove



all the barbwire that surrounded most of our property fence. Though I agree that "good fences" can make "good neighbors", I am less convinced that excess measures such as "barbwire" is helpful in communicating our desire to be a place of "healing and hope".

These 3 stories are small but I would surmise they are indeed significant!

It is these "small yet significant" stories and countless others here at OCCCDA that continue to confirm for us that indeed the "Kingdom of God" is not only about enjoying, reporting and sharing the beauty of the "very large" but it is also is about the "very small"; those significant "mustard seed moments". Amen.



Praise God for another wonderful summer filled with fun. Reading unlocks the doors to wisdom and knowledge. "Wisdom is the principle thing, in all thy getting, get understanding." This summer we had an amazing time learning and understanding the parables of Jesus Christ.

Our children read about the parable of the "Good Samaritan" (Lk.10:25) Did you know that a good Samaritan is a person that helps his neighbors or strangers? In order to for this parable to resonate

However, these feelings and emotions weigh on our family, friends and neighbors. Their buckets became too heavy to carry. One of the activities we made was "Fill My Bucket" Our students created their own buckets to fill. The campers used love, peace, meekness, patience, temperance, humiliation and peace to fill other campers' buckets. Additionally, we made "Helping Hands" that stretched throughout camp.

The children were excited about reading the parable of the Sower of the Seed.

Challenges are Only *Changes in Reverse*

By Mrs. Capers
Literacy Instructor

in the hearts of our campers we read "The Lost Boys" This book told the story of many children in Africa who were displaced from their homes because of the war. Many of the older children had to carry the younger boys on their backs for miles and miles. The boys had to walk late night in the dark forest to get to the refuge camps. Children as young as five had to walk over five thousand miles. The parable was further expounded upon with the introduction of the book "Have you filled my bucket today?"

Every year we fill people's imaginary buckets with anger, hate, slothfulness, and disloyalty and malice.

Mt. 13:3:9 Our students learned about how seeds grow.

For our activity, we've allowed some children to plant seeds in soil, gravel, and straw. It would appear that seeds planted in soil would have grown. However, the seeds were not planted on good soil. We had some "faith walkers" that planted their seeds in granite and straw. Surprisingly, these seeds grew.

Finally, our children explored the parable of, "The Rich Young Ruler". The children wanted to know what happens to people whose faith turned cold. Our students agreed to give up some of their favorite things for a day.

"The best part about class was planting the seeds. It was funny when some people's seeds did not grow in the soil."
—Kianna Byrd.



AH HA MOMENTS

BOOK IT!

Our students really loved this challenge. Each team of readers had to randomly read five books. They had to identify the author's name and five facts from the book the first team to complete this challenge had to yell "BOOK IT!"

LETTERS TO GOD

The children went on a nature walk around the neighborhood. They collected small leaves, twigs, and bugs. They carried their notebooks and pencils with them. They were instructed to write all of God's creations, and then write a letter to God explaining how they enjoyed all of His creations.

My personal highlight throughout this journey, focused on Jacob Prunes. He won the book challenge this year, but decided not to accept the prize. Instead he asked that someone else wins; that was being a Good Samaritan.



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A Summer Camp that Inspires



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*To extend
healing and hope in the
Oxford Circle community,
believing that God's
purpose of reconciling
all people to Jesus
leads us to minister
on spiritual, physical,
social & economic
levels.*



NOTES FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

We have the following ministry and resource opportunity opportunities and welcome your participation!

Prayer needs: Contact Anita Lyndaker-Studer @ occcda@verizon.net or (267) 265-1709 for info.
• Please join us in praying for newly revised out of school programs that the participating children and their families would know the peace and joy of Jesus. Please contact us if you would like to be a prayer partner for a child/family. We are also looking for sponsors for participating children. Cost for OCCDA is approx. \$35/wk per student of which families provide \$10/wk per student. We are excited to have been awarded two AmeriCorps slots. Please pray that we would find the right persons for these positions, the needed volunteers, and funding to support these programs.

• Please pray for wisdom and guidance as we begin additional family support and adult programs this fall/new year (2012) which include GED/ESL, Financial Management, and Bridge of Hope (1 year intensive support program for homeless women and children). We need prayer both that we reach the families in need of these ministries and that they would know the love of Jesus. We also need your prayers to find the staff, volunteers, and funding needed to support these programs. We are also looking for donations of 10 wireless capable laptop computers and a media storage unit on rollers to hold them.

• Funding to begin to pay down our loan debt so we can pay for our growing ministries.

Human resources:

- AmeriCorps Youth Coordinator – Full-time position available to begin October 1. For more info contact Chantelle Todman-Moore @ chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com or (215) 288-8504
- After School volunteers—Contact Chantelle Todman-Moore @ chantelle.oxfordcircle@gmail.com or (215) 288-8504
- Adult Education Tutors and instructors – Contact Joe Beech @ ajataylor1@yahoo.com

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