

# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

June 2023



***ALL YOU CAN***



***MOVING INTO 2023***



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**

CONNECTING WITH  
GOD



## ***Connecting With God***

by Sheryl Phillips

*“Stay joined to me and I will stay joined to you. No branch can produce fruit alone. It must stay connected to the vine.” (John 15:4)*

We all need to connect. That need to belong gives us a feeling of wholeness and being associated with something bigger than ourselves.

In today’s world, so much can cause us to lose connection with each other. COVID-19 caused us to retreat into our homes, and that loss of human connection has created severe mental issues in our society among old and young alike. The lack of trust in humanity,

the prevalence of mental illness, and the increase in crime in our community have allowed fear into our lives that keeps us guarded and reduces our trust in others.

To develop a spiritual connection with someone, you must feel secure emotionally and physically. Sharing a spiritual relationship with someone helps keep you calm and emotionally safe when you experience threatening situations. You know you have someone you can turn to. It is vital to have a network of individuals to turn to in times of emotional need.

Our relationships with the people in our lives are much like our relationship with God. It means to know God and to be known by Him. It is fellowship, love, and trust between you and Him.

*(cont’d on next page)*

## **Up Coming Events**

### ***Church of the Evangel, UCC***

- *Women of Evangel Bus Trip*  
July 8, 2023
- *Faith & Wellness Ministry, August Fest*  
August 12, 2023

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## Connecting With God

(cont'd)

It is much more than going to church or reading the Bible.

Connecting with God should be a natural part of our Christian walk. Just as the branch must be connected to the vine to maintain life and growth, we must remain connected to God to grow spiritually, bear, and share the fruit of the spirit.



Developing a connection with God takes work. It means studying and meditating on the word, not just reading the Bible. It means communicating through prayer, setting aside time daily for spiritual reflection and contemplation, joining a group of like-minded believers, performing service to others, and seeking and developing your spiritual gifts. It can be meditation, yoga, communicating with nature, and experiencing the wonder of God's creation.

As we follow the life of Jesus, our ultimate example of how to live a connected life, we see that He frequently took time out to refresh and connect with His Heavenly Father.

After Jesus' baptism, He retreated into the wilderness of Judea, where he could be alone

to prepare to begin His mission here on earth—a place where he could connect with His heavenly Father and draw strength for the task ahead.

He fasted for forty days and nights, drawing the strength he needed to fight against Satan's temptations. In addition, we see Jesus, after a long day of teaching, retreat into a quiet place to pray and reconnect with His Heavenly Father.



We also see Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane before being taken away to be crucified. That was a glimpse of the personal relationship between Jesus and His heavenly Father. Jesus, being fully human, went to His Father with a burdened heart and was not afraid to cry out to Him. He trusted God's plan for him even when He knew it would cost Him His life. He trusted the Father to guide, strengthen, and work through Him, but He still needed to connect to gain strength to face His eminent crucifixion.

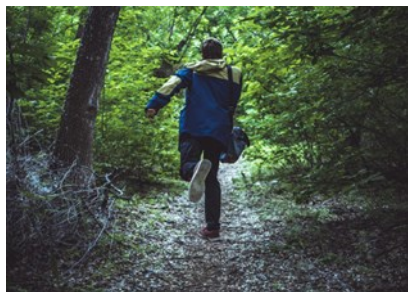
Jesus taught the disciples to live their lives the same way, even as it was nearing the time when He would be crucified for the sins of the world.

We also see Jesus bring only a few disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane with Him for support; Peter, James, and John. This act is a lesson for us. We need to have a core person or persons we can turn to in challenging times, not as a substitute for God but as a source of comfort. In times of sadness, in difficult times, we need our closest friends around us for support, companionship, and prayer.

Developing a close connection with God is critical for our spiritual growth, so set aside time daily to spend in prayer, spiritual reflection, and contemplation, read and study the Word, have a core group of believers you can turn to for spiritual support, have a prayer partner, meditate, and spend time in nature.



We live in a socially connected world, but are you missing the most important connection of all?



## ***Stop Running From God***

by *The New Men's Fellowship*

Running from God means saying 'no' to love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

How can we live our best lives without those life-enhancing qualities only God can provide? We can't! Yet, we think we can. Jonah tried it, and he ended up in deep water.

God has called you to do something for Him and others, but you don't want to. You are running in the opposite direction by delaying, partially obeying, or disobeying. This is one time when 'going for a run' is unhealthy.

If you encourage yourself with the chant, "Run, Run, Run," you will soon realize you are running in the wrong direction. Could you be refusing to deliver and share some of the mercy God gave to you? Is there some Jonah in you?

We know Jonah ended up in the water when the ship's crew threw him overboard, but did you throw yourself overboard when you didn't respond, "Yes, Lord, Yes"?

You have been running away for a long time. It's time to stop running, stop sabotaging yourself and your future. It's time for your rescue. God doesn't forget His plans for you, so expect Him to continue to call on you. It's time to grow up as He gives you another chance to get rid of that fishy smell.

You need to be ready to commit right now. You need to instill in your life, the right kind of thinking to move forward, yoking yourself to God because He has already made a way for you to do what He called you to do. You must give it your best because you are the best person for the job. That's why He spoke to your heart.

Often, we don't see things as God does, but we should not hold a grudge against Him and become despondent about our lives.



What God has for you is ahead of you, so move forward in His grace, embracing His help. He helps those who help themselves.

We tend to think that answering God's call adds to our load, so we toss it away, like cargo off the ship, hoping we will lighten our load. But

that doesn't keep us afloat. Instead, it causes us to sink, as the waves of disobedience beat against us constantly. The storms in our lives get worse. Because of our egos or emotions, we create our tough times.

When we answer "Yes, Lord, Yes," we have a running partner who knows the course He asks us to run.



Running away never works. Jonah realized there was nowhere to run in the big fish. Now, he's back on land and doing the will of God.

What others went through because of disobedience should be good material for teaching us.

Stop running from God! His will for us will be done. All because He cares about us. He has blessed us with a church home, a place to come together with Him and each other, and has presented us with several 'in-house' opportunities to show that we care about what He cares about.

Today, we need to stop hiding our fear in comfort or busyness.

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## Stop Running From God

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2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us that “God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity but of power, love, and self-discipline,” so you need to step up and into God’s calling and His purpose for this season of your life. He wants to move you into an environment without limitations to your service. He has already blessed your efforts and will increase your confidence.



Expect Him to stretch you. That’s how He gets the dysfunction out of us, so we can function as the good stewards we say we are and do the work needed in those open positions in our church.

Stop running from God and answer His call to be the best *Church Clerk* you can be, the best *Assistant Treasurer* that God inspires you to be, and the best *Assistant Financial Secretary* He will shape you into being.

When you do, you are no longer running from God, you are running with God, enjoying love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

You are a winner!



You are equipped and empowered! Let today be the day you do something new.



by *The Faith & Wellness Ministry*

Let’s make time to go outside, soak up some sunshine, and involve ourselves in outdoor activities. That’s good physical and emotional medicine for us.

Three months of family time filled with outdoor activities could be just what the doctor ordered. One outing per week will certainly keep the family active and entertained. Remember, others get bored just as we do, so let’s get involved in outdoor activities.

Simple and inexpensive activities like outdoor crafts in the backyard, picking fresh flowers and arranging them outdoors, gardening can be creative and fun, group walking in the park, and fishing are great ways of appreciating the stillness and peace of nature and basking in the sunshine.

When we are creative with

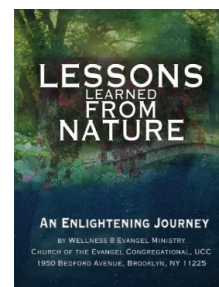
our summer activities, we introduce joy into the activities, making them extra special. That wireless speaker for playing music creates an atmosphere throughout our outdoor sessions.

Don’t forget the blind taste test. One by one, as you blind-fold each other, test your tasting abilities with your favorite desserts, drinks, or condiments. See if you all can identify some summer treats without looking.

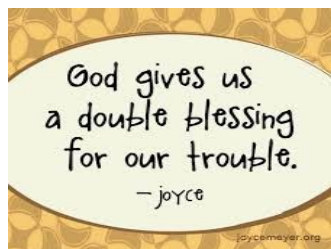


And we can’t overlook the ever-stimulating book that’s the ideal ingredient for a relaxing time outdoors. We highly recommend *Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey*, 50 stories by people who have matured and grown spiritually from their many experiences with nature.

Contact Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com) to purchase copies for yourself and your friends.



Be among the readers who continue to express great reviews. We are sure you will see yourself in several of the stories. Enjoy!



## Double Blessing

by Brian Ward

Have you noticed that a victim mentality always comes knocking at our door when we go through a loss or someone harms us?

It's hard to see victory in our loss, but that's the time for us to choose. Will we live bitter, discouraged, and defeated, believing we are victims of our circumstances? Or will we believe that God is in control, working everything out for our good as we continue to believe in Him? Can we see Him implementing His plans for our prosperity, despite our circumstances? He is still working on good things for us and asking us to trust Him to order our steps into the future.

The seventh verse of Isaiah 61, *"Because you got a double dose of trouble and more than your share of contempt, your inheritance in the land will be doubled, and your joy will go on forever,"* tells us that God is setting us up for blessings far beyond our expectations or understanding.

But instead of having a victim mentality, we must switch to a victor mentality to align ourselves with Him to

receive His downpour of blessings into our lives.

We should not allow that 'bad' break and a victim mentality to end our story prematurely. No! God is still writing our story.

God says He will pay us back **double** for the unfair things that have happened to us. If we are to see God make it up to us with the double reward He promised, we have to stay in faith.



He knows our hurt and our loss. He knows all about us and what is causing us to struggle. He has assured us that He's not going to just bring us out of our struggle, but He's going to bring us out better than we were before our struggle.

But our thinking has to continue to be Godly thinking with the understanding that the struggle has set us up for promotion, increase, and God's favor.

He's actively working on our situation and will bring us success over our hardships. We are not victims. We need to believe that we are Overcomers, as God describes us.

But His giving doesn't end with us. God takes care of us so

that we can take care of others. He teaches us through our struggles that we need to raise our standard of giving. In our hardship, we will see Him show up and bless us. He will bless us so we can bless others, raising our standard of giving.

In our situations, God's double blessings alter how we see and relate to Him.



So, as we give thanks for what is to come, we can say out loud, "Father, You never leave us stuck with the label of victim, but You always lead us to victory. Help us see our situations of loss as springboards for the things You want us to do with the double blessing You provide. Thank you for making up for our losses in ways that far exceed our expectations. Thank you for inspiring us to operate in those places of blessing to others. Each of us is blessed to be a blessing. In Jesus' name, we give thanks! Amen."





## ***Where Are You, Jesus?***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

Are you afraid to cry out to God in your times of need? The Psalmist David was unafraid to do so in his times of need. In Psalm 22:1, when he felt neglected and alone, he cried to the Lord, saying, “Why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me?” He was worried that God didn’t hear his prayers. Maybe he thought there was a spiritual disconnect present.

In Psalm 10:1, he questioned why the Lord was not close to him in his time of trouble but seemed to be hiding from him. All of us can relate to David’s feeling of disappointment.

We hear David crying out to the Lord again in Psalm 13:1-2. His suffering seems long-lasting, so he asks when his hardship will end. When can he expect the help he needs immediately? “How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and have sorrow in my heart, day after day? How long will my enemy triumph over me?”

David’s anguish is heard throughout the Psalms, and we

all have had seasons where we can identify with his predicament. We, too, ask where are you, Lord? Where are you, Jesus?

Our world seems to be spinning out of control. As you listen to the news, you hear of tragedy after tragedy. Child kidnapping, gun violence, and car crashes leaving parents to mourn the loss of their young children; hundreds dying in train derailments and collisions; tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, the Ukraine/Russia war leaving broken families and many children without parents; the Israel/Palestine conflict, mass shootings in our schools, churches, hospitals, shopping malls, and movie theatres.

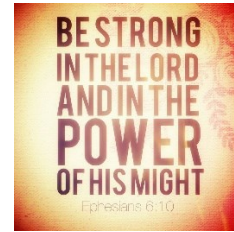
That is enough to ask, where are you, Jesus? You promised to take care of me. You promised to always be with me, supplying all my needs and protecting me. Where are You? I can’t feel you. Where are you, Jesus?

He is in our spirits speaking to us, but we are preoccupied with life’s challenges, our agenda and not listening. He is directing us, but we are not following His directions. We must stop and listen to His still, small voice guiding us in the right direction. He is here, listen!

We will hear His voice saying, “I am here where I promised to be.” We must allow

ourselves to slow down, show faith, not fear, pause, and feel His presence.

Our question about His presence will be answered when we focus on Him rather than on those things that muddy our thinking.



The more we tune in to His frequency, the better we will hear Him and the less we will ask, Where are you, Jesus?



**Fit**  
**Self-Care**  
**Into**  
**Every**  
**Day**





## **Servant Leaders**

by Deacon Stephanie Bennett

*"Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Honor her for all her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."*

(Proverbs 31:29-31, NIV)

Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America*, 2011 says that "Women were expected to sit in the pews, receiving messages from men in the pulpit. Their role was to recognize God in their pastor, not to expect or demand that he recognizes God in them".

Although this may be a fitting description of women in some churches, it does not fit our growing body of servants here at Evangel. The women at Evangel have been and continue to be very vocal and visible in their various leadership roles. They have met the call to serve without complaint, doing their best and encouraging others, including men, to serve.

We are solid and faith-driven women who strive to please God in all we do. We understand the need to put our faith into action and live not by words alone but by our Godly deeds.



The Women of Evangel Ministry has worked diligently to meet our spiritual and financial commitment to our church. We ask each woman to contribute \$100.00 yearly to the Women of Evangel line item on the church's budget. This donation complements the monies raised from the various fundraising activities we sponsor to help us meet our financial obligation to our church. Our goal is to raise \$5,000.00 for 2023, and Our Lord has been leading us to this accomplishment.

The COVID-19 pandemic limited efforts, but in 2022, we held our annual and much appreciated Tea Party, thanks mainly to the Inniss family members as they shouldered the revival effort encouraging church members and friends. The Mad Hatter Tea Party, held on December 10, 2022, featured highlight events led by a Hat Parade fashion show, delicious food, a raffle, and great fellowship.

We are excited to resume our normal activities this year and are off to a good start with a successful Bake Sale on Easter Sunday. On July 8, the women are sponsoring a Bus Trip to Philadelphia for a luncheon

cruise and shopping. We are already looking forward to this year's Tea Party in October.



A focus on further spiritual growth activities is present as we prepare for a future that will strengthen our bonds as a women's ministry.

We invite all women to increase their participation in the Women's Ministry and the bi-monthly Prayer Conference calls held on Wednesdays. Rev. Christine Valentine, a long-time friend, and supporter of our church, continues to lead these calls. We are so grateful to have her as our Prayer Call Servant Leader.

We continue to recognize those women on whose faith we continue to build. Valiant women, pillars of the church, left and live values that are the cornerstone of a loving faith community. We continue to hold on to God's unchanging hand, knowing that our hope is in the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Thanks to all the women who have served as Women of Evangel officers and those who unselfishly give of their time, talent, and money, but most importantly, our greatest appreciation to those who give their love to our church and our ever-present and merciful God.

## Ministry Corner



### **Who We Are, What We Do**

by *The New Men's Fellowship*

The New Men's Fellowship has things to do as a collective.

Developing the desire to try something new is at the forefront of our actions to 'do better and be better.'

Our 'Develop Developers Program' continues to grow, meeting the needs of our church since COVID-19 changed the way we fellowship. Evangel embraced the challenge to maintain fellowship by using Zoom to keep our church family and community together.

Today, we have a hybrid (online and in-house) worship service and meetings for which we have developed methods and people's talents.

We applaud and commend Darrell and Lennox for recognizing the desire, and the intense feeling of worth, in Talia Mabry and Anthony Paul and nurturing

them to grow their potential to be the future of Evangel's audio/visual ministry.

Young Talia and Anthony are developing their talents while providing high-quality broadcasts to our in-house and online congregations on Sunday mornings and special occasions.



*Lennox Grant, Anthony Paul, Talia Mabry, and Darrell Walker*

As their mentors, Darrell and Lennox have been shepherding and developing their talents and highlighting one of the ways we serve our church and community by collectively using our skills and talents to make a difference in others' lives.

Anthony is the voice that greets us with a warm welcome at the start of our Sunday morning service.

Let us step up and be the helpers we know we can be, strengthening our connection with Our Heavenly Father and allowing Him to use our time for His purpose as we see the investments Darrell and Lennox are making.

We are doing His good works when we open our hearts and engage others with our time and talent. We are living how God wants us to live and act.

Mentorship is alive, and our collective efforts enable us to help others live up to their

potential and fulfill their purpose.

As God-centered men making a collective effort, we support other ministries, with members active in the Prayer and Bible Study Ministry (PBSM), the Deacon's Ministry, the Faith & Wellness Ministry, and various leadership roles.

Darrell Walker has led the PBSM for several years with the support of fellow members Lennox and Donald and the Women of Evangel, delving into God's Word and encouraging others to live purposeful lives through fellowship with each other.

We are to be good, nourishing seeds for others.

God wants to do much of his teaching through us, and "God has something great in your future." (Isaiah 43:19)

*Prayer: Lord, help me be a shining light and live in a manner worthy of your calling on my life. Amen.*







Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey is an excellent compilation of fifty Nature stories. It will inspire you to appreciate God's majesty and splendor and learn the many lessons He wants to teach us.

Paperback  
**\$15.00**

eBook  
**\$3.99**



Available on Amazon or you can contact Sheryl Phillips, or any Wellness member to order from the church.

## Word Search

### SELF-CARE

H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	E	A	T	I	N	G	P	T	X
Z	E	M	E	D	I	T	A	T	I	O	N	R	E	S	T
N	W	A	O	H	R	S	Y	H	U	C	A	N	E	V	F
O	U	M	L	T	E	M	E	P	Y	Y	X	A	L	E	R
I	F	R	I	T	I	A	B	L	E	G	O	U	S	M	I
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A	H	L	L	T	D	W	S	R	Q	A	G	O	Y	T	C
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O	O	E	V	M	S	S	E	N	L	U	F	D	N	I	M
S	G	S	S	E	L	F	A	W	A	R	E	N	E	S	S

- Calm
- Emotional Health
- Faith
- Healthy Eating
- Health Literacy
- Healthy
- Love
- Meditation
- Pamper
- Prayer
- Relax
- Rest
- Self-help
- Self-awareness
- Silence
- Social Connection
- Sleep
- Wellness
- Exercise
- Friends
- Hygiene
- Mindfulness
- Nurture
- Pause
- Peace
- Refresh
- Solitude
- Socialize
- Self-love
- Yoga



## **Steelpan Praising Our Lord**

by *The New Men's Fellowship*

Were you there when... the steelpan enhanced our worship and praises?

As if Our Lord said, "I have good things for you, Evangel. recognize and enjoy the new ways I speak to you and fill your hearts with praise and worship."

It all happened at our Men's Day/Fathers' Day fellowship on June 18 when a steelpan player elevated the worship service. Making a joyful noise unto the Lord, pannist Rawle Mitchell flavored the Men's Day fellowship on his double-tenor pans.

The renditioning of hymns and jazz on the steelpan sweetened our worship experience, adding a new dimension to Evangel's praises, as the steelpan has been doing in churches throughout the Caribbean and North America.

Evangel, expect to be lifted in spirit even further as we move into the second half of 2023. The steelpan's presence will showcase the beauty of this gift as we rally around it in our worship on Sundays.

We have that open invitation

to enter God's gate with thanksgiving in our hearts, and we give thanks to Him as He works through the steelpan art form, adding variety and comfort to our worship experience.

Amen.



## **Obedience and Its Rewards**

by *Brian Ward*

The river was flooding! Yet, they still did it.

The Lord told them to do it, so the priests took the 'ark of the covenant,' their most precious possession, into the middle of the raging Jordan River as the people crossed.

They recognized God's seriousness, and as they obeyed His instructions, He rewarded the pursued and fleeing Israelites by parting the waters. He allowed them to cross over on the dry ground of the river bed.

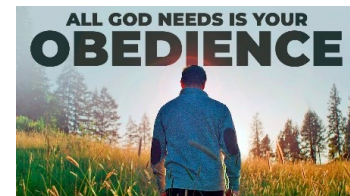
Do you see yourself walking in faith, on dry ground, not being bogged down by the muddy conditions of your situation? You ought to because you will be enjoying the reward for your obedience.

Is this your 'hour of decision' where you begin to obey God's direction for your life, moving

through life's circumstances into your future?

Even though what He has placed on your heart is good and pure, do you still linger in unbelief in God and yourself? It's time to trust Him to make a way and follow Him as He leads you along the way He created for you.

Stepping out in faith is today's obedient act. Let us think appreciative thoughts, speak respectfully, and move in ways He directs us to serve. As we do, blessings and rewards flow to and through us creating paths for others and us.



Try obedience today and walk like the Israelites, on dry ground, through your river of hope, into the future God has prepared for you.

Unexpected favor awaits you but it's not always easy to obey because it requires sacrifice. Abraham took sacrifice to another level. You have to give up something, but blessings will overflow your life when you do.

Developing a lifestyle of obedience needs to be a treat we give ourselves daily, understanding that when we live the way God wants us to live, He brings the things we desire to our lives.

Let us follow his directions.

## My Perspective Is My Passport



### Is it time for a renewal?

by Brian Ward

My perspective is the way I look at a situation or challenge; my point of view. It's my *attitude*, as my grandfather would say.

Sometimes, setbacks or unsuccessful attempts tend to discourage us to the point of 'doing nothing more.' We think we have failed. Our self-esteem is dented, so our self-worth begins to devalue, causing us to retreat in disgust. So, is my perspective outdated, invalid, and no longer serving who I am? Do I urgently need a change, a renewal, and an upgrade to bring my perspective in line with my purpose to bear fruit?

When I have an outdated and expired perspective, I cannot bear fruit. I have become the fruitless fig tree in the parable, "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now, I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use

up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

We have two perspectives expressed there... 'cut it down' **and** 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it.' The first requires a 'one-time' action, but the next requires work...constant attention to 'keep the soil fertilized.' So, which is my perspective? If there is to be growth in my life and the lives for which I have the responsibility, I must have the proper perspective to fertilize the soil for growth.

My perspective is very much a reflection of who I am. A farmer's son looks at cow manure as something he must endlessly shovel out of the barn to get rid of it—**a pain in the neck**. The flower gardener, on the other hand, looks at that same manure as free fertilizer. He's delighted to get the stuff. He shovels it around the flower beds with **joy**—a simple matter of perspective.

Much like those 12 spies and the conflicting reports they brought back after assessing the land God gave to them (Numbers 13:31-33). Joshua and Caleb said, "We *can* overcome the inhabitants," but the other ten spies said, "We *cannot* overcome; we are like ants to those giants" ...

different perspectives, actions, and outcomes.

Someone else's perspective (passport) cannot help me. I cannot piggyback on that person's calling. I have to do what's assigned to me, specifically.

Today, I need a fresh perspective. I must identify where the 'drop off' happened and correct the situation. I need to get back into 'action,' becoming involved again, boldly taking inventory of what I can do and control, beginning with my attitude and taking charge of my thoughts. I decide what goes into my mind and life.



I have a new perspective. One that does not fear failure but allows me to become stronger and rise above negativity.



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Photo by Ray Raman

### CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION



## Faith & Wellness Ministry

The purpose of the Faith & Wellness Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### AN OPEN INVITATION

#### Our Faith & Wellness Ministry

Welcomes You

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

### PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386



*These candles burn in loving memory of our pastor, Rev. Cynthia Jackson.*

*They also burn in loving memory of our church members who went to be with the Lord in recent years.*

*They burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters, and for victims of gun violence.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*

# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

March 2023



***ALL YOU CAN***



## ***MOVING INTO 2023***



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**

### **Up Coming Events**

#### ***Church of the Evangel, UCC***

- *Palm Sunday Service*  
April 2, 2023 @ 10:30 am
- *Maundy Thursday Service*  
April 6, 2023 @ 7:30 pm
- *Good Friday Service*  
April 7, 2023 @ 12:00 pm
- *Resurrection/Easter Sunday Service*  
April 9, 2023 @ 10:30 am

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*Rev. Cynthia "CJ" Jackson*

May 25, 1952 – February 1, 2023

### ***A Fitting Send-Off for a Servant***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

Here today, gone the next day, but we believe Rev. CJ was prepared to transition. We, too, need to live lives that prepare us for transition. Rev. Cynthia Jackson (CJ) lived a prepared life.

Rev. CJ quietly went to be with her Lord and Savior on February 1, 2023.

She was a wife, a sister, an aunt, a mentor, a friend, a pastor, and a woman of unwavering faith. She impacted

the lives of so many in her lifetime, as evidenced by the packed physical and virtual sanctuaries populated by family and friends nationwide and internationally.

Representatives from the Metropolitan Association, New York Conference, and national organizations celebrated her life and supported her family, including her church family. Their tributes revealed her impact on many lives.

Celebration filled the Church of the Evangel, celebrating the life of someone loved by many.

As the choir sang her favorite song, "He's an On-Time God," the sanctuary sang, clapped, and moved to the music, as Rev. CJ did countless times. In your mind's eye, you could see her upfront directing the choir, having a great time of praise.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## ***A Fitting Send-Off for a Servant*** (cont'd)

Music and singing were essential facets of Rev. CJ's life. It was fitting that music and song were abundant as we celebrated her life.

On Sundays, I enjoyed her bursting out in song after a sermon. She was a humble and down-to-earth individual. One of her favorite sayings was, "there was life before ministry." She would always say it with a smile as if to say, 'wouldn't you like to know?'

The tribute given by her Soros demonstrated their love for her and the impact she had on the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Fitting tributes poured from the Metro Association, New York Theological Seminary, Grace Congregational Church of Harlem, Fellowship Moravian Church, Fenimore Methodist Church, and of course, from her church (Evangel) family.

One of Evangel's youth, Anthony Paul, shared how Rev. CJ impacted his life with her special love for developing the youth. Seeing her legacy in good hands was beautiful.

Alfre Johnson-Ragins, a dear friend of Rev. CJ, eloquently read her obituary, and The Rev. Dr. Reuben Tendai, mentor, and friend of Rev. CJ, delivered the eulogy, which was a fitting tribute to Rev. CJ.



It was ideal that Rev. Dr. Ruby Wilson led the celebration of Rev. CJ's life. Dr. Wilson hosted and chaired Rev. CJ's installation at the Church of the Evangel seven years ago.

Rev. CJ, we love you. May your soul rest in eternal peace.



**Accelerating  
Opportunity**  
A Breaking Through Initiative

## ***2023, the Year of Opportunity and Acceleration***

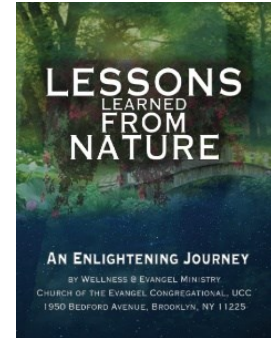
by the Faith and Wellness Ministry

Yes, 2023 will be a year with some uncertainty but filled with opportunity and acceleration throughout. It will be another breakthrough year for the Wellness Ministry.

Our Theme for 2023 is, "Be the best you can be moving into 2023." We invite you to embrace this theme and allow

God to work out His purpose for your life. There are lives waiting for your impact, we cannot rest on past successes.

2022 was the 'Year of the Book.' Evangel wrote and published its first book, *Lessons Learned From Nature – An Enlightening Journey*.



It's a compilation of fifty testimonies of God's presence in our lives, inspired by nature.

Writing this book taught us that with encouragement and support we can do so much more. You can purchase copies for yourself and your friends on Amazon.com for \$15. per copy, and you can also get your copies from the church. Contact Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com) for the in-house special of 8 copies for \$100.

"What's next," you ask. Evangel's second book! We invite you, our church family, to be one of the authors. Let's make this an Evangel project for 2023. Don't be intimidated by thoughts of 'not a writer.'

*(cont'd on next page)*

## 2023, the Year of Opportunity and Acceleration

(cont'd)

You have meaningful stories to tell. Just start writing from your heart today. Your 2-page account about each of the teaching/learning experiences you and God have shared, as He reminded you of His presence in your everyday activities, will benefit others as they read the book. Envision yourself as a published author. What an accomplishment that would be.

Send your stories for editing and book preparation to Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

“What’s next?” *Praise & Worship* dance will feature again in the Church of the Evangel’s Sunday services. All persons interested in participating can contact Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com). Our goal is to create activities that will enhance the worship experience for youths. So, speak to the youth in your life and encourage them to come and share their gifts, and talents and be part of the growth of the Church of the Evangel.

“What’s next?” Church of the Evangel (C.O.T.E.) *Tutoring Program*. The Wellness

Ministry is finalizing a Tutoring Program and should unveil details soon. Should you have the desire to participate by contributing ideas and/or time, please discuss with Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com). This will help to carry on Rev. Jackson’s legacy of promoting youths.



Our quarterly newsletter, CONNECT, is an important tool we use to reach our community. It is usually packed with educational, and inspirational messages, keeping us informed about church and other activities.

If you are inspired to write about any topic, we will be delighted to publish your article. It could be your original article, or it could be your response to a particular article that impacted your life. So, start writing and reach out to Sheryl with your article for publication.

We welcome your growth ideas as they inspire an atmosphere of purpose and achievement. Open up your tool box, dust off the tools you have not used for a while and be willing to contribute to the life of the

Church of the Evangel.

Together, we move into 2023 being the best we can be.



## Celebrating Two Bright Lights

by Sharon Reid

It’s Women’s History Month, a time of celebrating the contributions of courageous women. Enjoy this brief look into the lives of two bright lights in their eras.

In 2022, **Anna May Wong** was honored when the U.S. Mint released a quarter with her face on it.



The first Asian-American movie star to be honored in the American Women’s Quarters Program.

Born Wong Lu Tsong in January 1905, in Los Angeles, Anna’s career began in Hollywood’s silent movies and blossomed on the big screen and television with her first lead role in the film, “*The Toll of the Sea*,” in 1922.

(cont’d on page 5)



**eat right.** Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

## ***March Is National Nutrition Month***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

Fifty years ago, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics created a nutrition and education campaign to educate the public about making informed food choices, healthy lifestyles, and the benefits of regular physical activity. We can develop these habits all year long.

During March, the Academy also promotes its services and the services of its members to the public and the media as the most valuable and credible source of timely and scientifically based food and nutrition information.

The 2023 theme for National Nutrition Month is “Fuel for the Future.” We are encouraged to eat with sustainability in mind, but what does that mean? As we walk from aisle to aisle in the supermarket, sustainability is not something we would consider. We usually base our decisions on the foods we like, the price, and convenience.

As the interest in climate change grows, so should our interest in educating ourselves about making food choices with sustainability in mind. We are encouraged to avoid damaging our wasting natural resources, which means we need to produce food that protects the environment while using our natural resources efficiently and avoid compromising the needs of future generations while fulfilling our current needs.

Sustainable food is not just about the food, so as you make your food choices at the supermarket, think about how the food was produced, distributed, and packaged. Did the food item travel a long distance to get to you, or was it locally grown?

Think about the impact producing that food has on the environment. Are farmers just mass-producing food, or are they conscious of protecting the fertility of the soil for future food production?



Thankfully, more farmers are moving to more sustainable farming practices so that we can enjoy food products grown locally more sustainably. We must eat more with the environment in mind, enjoy more plant-

based meals, purchase foods with minimal packaging, buy seasonal foods, shop locally, and patronize the farmers’ markets in our neighborhoods.



Sustainable farming practices avoid the use of artificial fertilizers and pesticides as well as genetically modified organisms. Many of us are meat lovers but do we consider the process of farm-to-table? Think about the treatment of the animals. Are they allowed to roam naturally, or are they held in cages and holding pens? Are they treated with care and respect?

Sustainable food is safe and healthy food produced without hazards, pesticides, chemicals, or growth-promoting supplements that can adversely affect our health.

Making the change to foods considered sustainable may seem complicated but educating yourself and making small steps get you on the journey to making informed food choices and eating with sustainability in mind.

*(cont'd on next page)*



## **March Is National Nutrition Month** *(cont'd)*

Here are some ideas to help you to eat and live more sustainably:

Reduce your carbon footprint by consuming less meat, fish, and dairy and increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables.

Consume foods in season. This usually means it does not need to be artificially ripened or most likely does not come from overseas. Manage the amount of food you prepare to help minimize food waste or find creative ways to use your leftovers. Eat a variety of foods and limit your intake of processed foods. Grow your herbs, fruits, and vegetables if possible. You can experiment with planting in pots.

Plastic is used for packaging many food items, which adds to the sustainability problem. A lot of energy goes into producing and recycling plastic, so limit your use of plastic.

Food is the fuel that keeps your body running smoothly, so give it the nutrients it needs by making informed and healthy food choices while limiting the intake of substances that could negatively impact your health.



## **Celebrating Two Bright Lights** *(cont'd)*

Limited opportunities forced her to move to Europe, where she played lead roles in several films produced in Berlin and London. Anna returned to Hollywood in the 1930s and again faced racism. One executive said she was “too Chinese to play a Chinese,” so she was not considered for several roles that could have been ideal for her. Over a forty-year period, Anna persistently worked to develop her career, never allowing the winds of discrimination to overpower her. Her role in the 1951 primetime television series “*The Gallery of Madame Liu-Tsong*” returned her to public attention.

Anna died in February 1961. She had a star on the Hollywood walk of fame and will have her struggle highlighted in a forthcoming movie dramatizing her life.



**Henrietta Mays Smith** was born in Harlem, NY, in May 1922. Her mother was a domestic worker, and her father, a chef, worked on riverboats on the Hudson River. Her parents always stressed education, and Henrietta went on to receive a BA in English and

History from Hunter College, her BSLS from Columbia University, and an MSLS.

She flourished as a library science professor and school media librarian.

In 1946, Henrietta moved to Tallahassee, Florida, served as a cataloguer at Florida A&M for two years, and returned to NY in 1949. She married Isiah Smith, a civil rights lawyer who later became a judge. She returned to Florida, where she had two children, Cynthia and Robin.

Shining the light on the life of Henrietta Mays Smith reveals a professor, historian, scholar of African American children’s literature, librarian, and storyteller. She was the first African American faculty member of the University of South Florida. She served in numerous capacities within the American Library Association and won the Coretta Scott King Virginia Hamilton Practitioner Award for Lifetime Achievement.

A founding member, first president of the South Beach county alumnae chapter of Delta Sigma Theta in 1984, she was honored as ‘Woman of Excellence’ in 2011.

Here is some more about this trailblazer. She was the mother of our late pastor, Rev. Cynthia Jackson. Mother and daughter, history makers alike!





## ***Creative Faith of Friends***

by *Brian Ward*

Yes, we find examples of faith throughout the Scriptures, but this story highlighting the faith of several on behalf of one person always paints a bright picture for me.

We find the story in Mark, chapter 2.

This Scripture is a story of genuine friendship where four friends put their paralyzed friend on a stretcher and carried him to a house where Jesus was preaching the message to a gathering. Their actions said, “We’re taking you to Jesus. You may not believe you will ever walk again, but ***we are believing for you. You can borrow our faith.***”

They arrived at the house with their friend but couldn’t get in to see Jesus. The people listening to Jesus had packed the house. But that didn’t deter the four men. They didn’t give up. Instead, they got creative. They carried their friend to the roof, ripped a hole in it, and lowered him to Jesus. The Scripture says that ***when Jesus saw their faith, He told the***

*paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”* He healed the man. It wasn’t the faith of the paralyzed man but ***the faith of his friends*** that Jesus recognized.



Friends lifted their friend and carried him. They believed ***for*** him and never gave up. ***Their faith*** turned their hands into claw hammers, and they ripped a hole in the roof.

Sometimes, we have to get creative because God continues to strategically put people in our life so we can use our faith to uplift them. We must not miss those opportunities to put our faith to work. We must not become so occupied with our needs and agendas that we miss the opportunity to carry someone to their healing, lift a discouraged person, or pray for a hurting friend. It’s in those times that we must ***let them borrow our faith.*** That’s why we must keep renewing our faith daily. So we can be helpers, sharing our faith.

Like that man’s four friends, we must not be afraid to be creative. Barriers should

inspire our creativity. Since God called us to it, He will inspire our creativity to achieve His purpose.

Let us also be aware that many times, when our faith is low, it’s the faith of others that lifts us back to our feet.

We must strengthen our faith by putting it to work and acting on the encouraging message of 1 Timothy 4:14, ***“Do not neglect the spiritual gift in you.”***



***BE THE BEST  
YOU CAN BE  
MOVING INTO  
2023***

***NEVER  
be afraid to try  
something new,  
because life gets  
boring when you stay  
within the limits of  
what you already  
know.  
- Unknown***



## ***Seasons of Doubt and Drought***

by *Brian Ward*

You found yourself in a season of doubt; now, you must endure a drought. Could there be a connection between the two seasons?

Is it likely that you don't create, produce, or prepare in a season of doubt because of your uncertainty or disobedience; thereby, you enter a drought season, lacking what you need to move forward?

Frustrated and disappointed, you now feel regret and anger about lost opportunities. There doesn't seem to be any rainfall in your life and adapting to drought positions you closer to that rabbit hole of depression.

Many of the miracles Jesus performed required an act of obedience. When He turned water into wine at the wedding, He told the staff to fill the large stone pots with water. It's unlikely that His instructions made sense to them, but they obeyed.

Like many of us, they could have said, "We need wine, not water. Water can't keep this party going." But they didn't.

Instead, they stepped out in faith, doing as instructed, filled the stone pots with water, and witnessed the miracle of water changed to wine to keep the party going.

Jesus intended the miracle of wine to fill more than empty cups.



He designed it to open and fill hearts. Hearts that did not believe, trust and act on the promptings they received.

It may seem as though the drought is confined to us only, but when we don't forge ahead, we are not growing and producing; therefore, we are not feeding and nourishing other lives. We are creating drought in their lives.

You may think you've missed your season, but it's not too late. There's still time. Is God asking you to step out in faith into a new adventure? It may appear more beneficial to others, but your obedience is what God is looking for in you. Your willingness to stretch forward and not be discouraged by doubt produces the 'wine' others need while filling your cup with faith.



Watch! God does fantastic things in your life when you obediently jump right in, even when it seems complicated. It is challenging to do alone, but this is your season to overflow with blessings and joy beyond your understanding.

Now you have to persevere and stick with it. Your first attempt may not produce rain. Elijah sent his servant seven times to look for signs of rain; it was the seventh time he saw the miracle. Encourage yourself. The woman with the issue of blood encouraged herself for 12 years. She fixed her mind, and there was no more doubt. Her drought ended.

Your drought will end *as you move* into your new season. You can't think about producing *after* the drought (lack) is over. You bring your drought to an end through your 'producing.'

Don't allow doubt to lead you into a drought season.



## Ministry Corner



*Rev. Christine Valentine*

### **Know Who You Are**

*by the Faith and Wellness Ministry*

Using our gifts and talents helps us to know who we are.

In her sermon on Sunday, March 12, celebrating Wellness @ Evangel's 13<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Rev. Christine Valentine led us in identifying our gifts, exercising and developing them, and making them into talents that we need to use for the betterment of others.

We saw signs of agreement, saying, "Yes, I can, Yes, I will," to her encouragement to practice doing the things we love and accepting the challenges to do the things we doubt we can do. Having the faith to move us into action will see us living the purposeful life designed for us.

She encouraged us to allow prayer to guide us when we are unsure and need to determine our talents. Also, we need to recognize the godly people Our Heavenly Father placed in our

lives to advise and counsel us. They help us identify our purpose, which may be shrouded in something we already do through our love for giving. We must allow those talents that bless us to be blessings to others. Our Lord is ready to perfect our abilities as we use them in the ways He desires and directs them.

We must commit ourselves to practice listening for direction and following His guidance and wisdom, especially when we think differently.

Are we actively looking for opportunities to serve God? We should be doing so, and as we do, doors will open up for us to walk through, shedding light on our purpose.



Wherever He sends and leads us, it's always to help somebody. That's why He gave and continues to provide us with gifts, develop our talents, and move us into service. The world needs us.

So, we must identify our God-given gifts, and as we use and develop them, our purpose will come into focus, helping us to know and appreciate who we are.



### **Praise Dancer Moves Evangel**

*by the Faith and Wellness Ministry*

Life has a rhythm and dance has rhythm. Ermine Brown has rhythm.

Using her praise & worship flags so expertly, she danced her way into the hearts of Evangel's congregation. Ermine's flag dance set the tone for praise and worship, celebrating Wellness @ Evangel at our 13<sup>th</sup>-anniversary service on Sunday, March 12.



Our Evangel family added another blessing to our lives as Ermine lifted our praise and worship with her spirited music and dance.

The Church of the Evangel extends an open invitation to you, Ermine, welcoming your inspiration to enhance our praise and worship.





Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey is an excellent compilation of fifty Nature stories. It will inspire you to appreciate God's majesty and splendor and learn the many lessons He wants to teach us.

Paperback  
**\$15.00**

eBook  
**\$3.99**



Available on Amazon or you can contact Sheryl Phillips, or any Wellness member to order from the church.

## Word Search

### FUEL FOR THE FUTURE

A	B	X	B	T	K	U	S	N	A	E	B	G	N	U	M
N	L	E	N	T	I	L	S	L	I	O	E	V	I	L	O
C	U	M	N	S	E	I	R	R	E	B	P	S	A	R	S
H	E	T	O	D	D	A	C	B	K	C	E	V	S	E	O
O	B	B	X	N	I	Q	R	U	T	M	B	T	N	A	I
V	E	R	D	O	D	V	O	L	U	I	S	I	T	U	H
Y	R	O	C	V	T	S	E	G	G	S	R	S	W	S	C
U	R	W	R	O	O	A	E	U	R	A	H	I	K	L	A
C	I	N	W	Y	E	L	Y	R	T	A	Y	C	Z	C	T
A	E	R	M	V	Q	M	B	C	W	O	P	T	A	U	S
Y	S	I	O	C	W	O	E	C	I	M	A	E	A	E	I
E	L	C	Q	U	I	N	N	A	L	N	C	I	S	A	P
K	K	E	F	I	R	T	X	V	D	K	P	M	S	A	R
R	I	C	S	N	A	E	B	O	R	A	D	I	S	H	T
U	O	T	U	N	O	C	O	C	I	N	N	A	M	O	N
T	W	A	L	N	U	T	S	A	C	H	E	D	D	A	R
W	O	V	H	O	N	E	Y	D	E	W	F	T	Y	M	A
I	L	O	C	C	O	R	B	O	P	E	P	P	E	R	S

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| Almonds     | Anchovy     |
| Avocado     | Beans       |
| Brown Rice  | Blueberries |
| Bulgur      | Broccoli    |
| Cheddar     | Cinnamon    |
| Coconut     | Endive      |
| Eggs        | Grapes      |
| Honeydew    | Kefir       |
| Lentils     | Legume      |
| Mung Beans  | Nectarines  |
| Oats        | Olive Oil   |
| Peach       | Peppers     |
| Pistachios  | Quinoa      |
| Raspberries | Soy Milk    |
| Salmon      | Turkey      |
| Tuna        | Wild Rice   |
| Walnuts     | Yuca        |

  
**AN EVENING OF APPRECIATION**  
 LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL WHEN WE HAVE FRIENDS LIKE YOU



## ***Under the Love Umbrella: Appreciation***

by the Faith & Wellness Ministry

“I love you. I love you.”  
Saying “I love you” to our friends was significant, but most importantly was expressing ‘why’ I love you.

Last month’s *Evening of Appreciation* saw the unrestricted flow of love from hearts. Hearts poured lavishly, all the love they held for those who nourish lives in various ways.

The evening was a two-way street of guided love from the Father, so there were no collisions, but we heard and saw collaboration with each outpouring.

We painted pictures in bright emotional colors allowing others to see the hand of love grasping the hand of need to provide sustenance. We saw the hands of love positioned under armpits to keep others on their feet, moving forward. We saw pictures painted showing love’s

characteristics remodel lives, little by little. But most of all, we identified that the heart generated every act of love. That was the atmosphere. Love was in the air as we saw tears flow, expressing all that our words could never be able to.

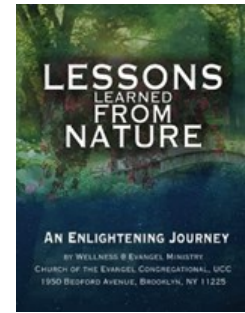


Dionne Warwick’s ‘*That’s What Friends Are For*’ was the red carpet on which every expression moved toward its intended heart.

“You were sent in my time of need by an on-time God.”  
“I would be nowhere without you.” “You were there when I needed a friend, and you are still here today because of our undeniable friendship.” That’s a sampling of the remarkable expressions of love and appreciation because people showed they cared throughout the years and loved each other as they loved themselves.

We are blessed to live lives where we and others enjoy the nourishment of kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and love flowing into and out of us daily.

We love and appreciate each other!



## ***Lessons Learned From Nature***

by the Faith & Wellness Ministry

What a journey this continues to be! We are so excited that you are enjoying this reading journey with us and experiencing similar blessings.

Among these 50 stories are several that you relate to immediately through your experiences. Many will lead you down a path of reflection on the goodness of God.

Each story invites us to hear God as He petitions us to connect with Him through the vastness of nature He provides us.

Identifying this book as appropriate for enriching lives, several group leaders nationwide purchased multiple copies for their programs and activities.

Ideal for enriching the lives of your friends, the offer to purchase eight (8) copies for \$100 is extended to you also. (*\$15. each on Amazon*).

Contact Sheryl Phillips at [sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com) to order your copies.

## ***POETRY CORNER***

### ***In Memory - Reverend Cynthia Jackson***

by Karen Benjamin-Abrigo

Reverend Cynthia Jackson, a woman of Compassion  
Yearned to know more about God and share the word.  
Not withstanding the daily challenges or obstacles  
She Trudged forward because of her unyielding faith in  
God.

She embodied Humility and Grace, never fussing about  
anything

Internalizing her discomfort and pain.

Assuring us all that she was ok.

This amazing woman, gifted with the anointing  
Shepherd Evangel's congregation over the last seven  
years

Stood for righteousness for which she lived

Her messages taught us the importance of God's Love  
And to be submissive to his Word.

Our Pastor, Our Teacher led by example

A humble soul, quiet resilience, stood resolute in her  
faith.

Reverend Jackson was funny and enjoyed a good joke.  
She loved children and shouted their praises.

She was passionate about social Justice and stood  
resolute

In her belief in equality for all.

She admonished those who abused power for grandiose  
purposes.

And showed gratitude and appreciation for those who  
lead with wisdom.

Reverend Cynthia Jackson, the Church of Evangel  
appreciated your...

SPIRITUAL WISDOM...SUPPORT...STRENGTH...LOVE and  
DEDICATION.

*May Her Soul Rest in Eternal Peace*



MINISTRY  
SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

### ***How Will You Serve Your Church?***

by Sheryl Phillips

How will you serve your church? God is calling you to use those skills and talents He gave you for this particular purpose.

He's ready to grow you and our church as you step up and take your place in His service. Those skills He has been crafting in you, enabling you to take care of your needs are needed to take care of your church, especially now in the absence of a pastor.

Our Christian growth is seen in the different ways we serve, making a difference in our lives. Our service helps Evangel fulfill her mission to serve our community in diverse ways. Hence, the unlimited and varied skills and talents we have been given.

Be ready to experience God's presence in new ways as you serve, and see firsthand, how God works in the lives of others. God gives us the tools to do the job He assigns to us; we need to be willing to use our gifts to bless others as our gifts have blessed us.

One of our Christian responsibilities is the development of others. It gives us a real sense of community. Our focus changes as we meet the needs of others. Jesus came to serve, not to be served, and as we follow Jesus' example, we must be willing to serve.

So, speak with a Deacon and make the decision to serve at Evangel, and be the best you can be moving into 2023.

## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

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Photo by Ray Raman

### CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

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### WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION



## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

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### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

#### **Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

**Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

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### **PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386

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*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

*They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.*

*Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters, and for victims of violence.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

December 2022

**DID SOME NEW  
THINGS IN 2022**



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

## Up Coming Events

### Church of the Evangel, UCC

- *New Year's Day Worship Service*  
January 1, 2023 @ 10:30 am
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry -  
An Evening of Appreciation*  
February 18, 2023 @ 4:30 pm
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry-  
Anniversary Service*  
March 12, 2023 @ 10:30 am

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## Reflections of Evangel 2022

by *Pastor Cynthia Jackson*

Evangel family and friends, I am proud of you, and thank you for all those efforts that flowed from your hearts of gold in 2022. Your actions led us to have a breakout and breakthrough year in our lives and the life of our church.

Your willing spirit to be involved took you outside of yourselves, leading you to reach out and bring light into many lives.

You have been busy bees, reaching out and doing whatever is needed, moving from achievement to achievement. You may not remember some of the flowers of success you pollinated throughout the year,

so I'm pleased to remind you of a few.

I lift up our Audio-Visual Ministry. They are a livewire connection, making it possible for those at home to be present at meetings, Sunday services, social events, and celebrations. No one is left out. We also remember the movies and discussions they brought to inspire us.

Plus, the Audio-Visual Ministry has created a sermon vault from which we can access past sermons to enhance us and anyone we want to uplift with a sermon message. Evangel's Audio-Visual Ministry is doing many new things, with God leading us along a new path.

*"How beautiful are they that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things."* (Romans 10:15)

*(cont'd on next page)*

## **Reflections**

### ***of Evangel 2022 (cont'd)***

Some other fruits of your labor! In February, inspired by the Faith and Wellness Ministry, you reached out. You brought people from various U.S. states and the Caribbean together via Zoom to thank them and publicly show appreciation for their presence in your lives. Thanks to you, Evangel's annual *Evening of Appreciation* continues to be a five-star event, as the outpouring of love brings a sense of worth to people's lives.

Again, you gathered on Zoom for another annual *Cultural Festival* in July, along with invitees. For this five-star event, you went around the Caribbean and within the U.S., sharing each other's culture. One love!

This year, in grand style, we celebrated our 115<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of commitment to each other and service to our Flatbush community. Again, you reached out and invited family and friends to participate in the life of our church. We continue to express gratitude to God for nourishing our hearts to act responsibly in our caretaker season of the Church of the Evangel.

At our Anniversary Service on October 23rd, speaker Reverend Dr. Eric Jackson emphasized in his sermon that Evangel's growing community

footprint proves that "The Work Must Go On." He highlighted Evangel's strategic location to meet the needs of a changing and growing community.

Rising from nearly three years of COVID restrictions, we came together in our Community Hall to celebrate and recommit to providing services to our community. Our memorable luncheon after the Anniversary service and time of worship was a visual of your commitment to continuing the work that even COVID couldn't stop.

You created an inspiring Anniversary theme, '*Church of the Evangel serving God and its community while standing on God's promises,*' which inspires and gives direction to our continued efforts to be flag wavers in Evangel's Outreach efforts.

Our volunteer team of walkers was among the thousands of people participating in this year's "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk," as we do every October.

Evangel's friends and family made a substantial donation to the treatment and eradication of Breast Cancer, but we understand why it's essential to walk the "Cancer Walk."

With our annual *Faith and Wellness Seminar*, another five-star event held in November,

you reached out to the people in attendance, providing guidance on self-care and focusing on physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Responding to a call from the Lord, the Evangel family developed relationships with Hollis Congregational Church in Queens and Fenimore United Methodist Church in Brooklyn. We combined efforts to distribute food to those facing food insecurity in the challenging times we have seen recently. Once a month, through the generosity of Hollis Congregational Church, Evangel partners with Fenimore United Methodist Church in operating a food pantry.

This year-long partnership has been an effective Community Outreach path in 2022.

You see the need; you attend to it, collecting and distributing dozens of coats over the last several weeks in November and December to help those in need as winter approaches. Our annual Coat Drive is yet another Outreach path.

*"And the angels said unto us. Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."*  
(Luke 2:10)

*(cont'd on page 3)*

## Reflections of *Evangel 2022* (cont'd)

Our recent community in-person/virtual event, the *Mad Hatter Tea Party*, was testimony to serving others through celebration.

There is still much to be done throughout our communities and God's world, but "(We)...rejoice greatly...thankful for the opportunities to participate, given to us by the Lord. *For, behold the King of Kings will cometh unto us, and He (our Emmanuel) will be the righteous Savior. He will cover us in the salvation of our Holy Father,*" and *He shall speak peace into the world from the four winds to the seven seas.*"

We see the power of God's Son, our Savior, become more present in our everyday walks. For we hear in Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "*Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*" (*For the Lord our God has promised this, and we will see the changes take place in our lives each day when we open ourselves to what the Lord has planned for us.*)

As we move closer to the day when the Holy Father calls us to His eternal Kingdom, let us remember the brothers and sisters who departed before us this year. They can now serve forever in the many places God calls them to be in their eternal journey. In 2022, we gave and

continue to give thanks for the lives and Christian service of Sister Jean Ward and Sister Diane Cummings.

For the blessed lives they shared while here on earth, we now lift up our God's consecration upon them: Hallelujah. For the Lord God omnipotent reign...and He shall reign and cover you forever and ever King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah.

All through 2022, we showed that we are 'All In' in the business of helping people. There continues to be an unbroken thread... people... connecting every effort and highlighting every success that Our Lord has inspired.

*"Thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ."* (1 Cor. 15:57)

Friends and family, your latest achievement shows me that you are willing to be led by the Holy Spirit. Writing and producing a book of 50 stories on the impact nature has had on your lives is a huge accomplishment.

*Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey* is a compilation of testimonies of your awareness of the presence of God in your lives and awakening others to His presence in their lives.

You have allowed God to use you as instruments of blessing as He fashioned a fantastic and unique Outreach

path in your hearts. Giving this book to someone will certainly position and encourage us to have the discussions our Lord wants us to initiate with them, as His ambassadors.

This literary masterpiece indeed widens *Evangel's* footprint as God directs this publication into the hands of thousands, solidifying His presence in their lives. It is truly a God-inspired Outreach tool created to grow us further in 2023 as we help nourish thousands of people's spirits. I understand that we can expect a second edition in 2023. That confirms to me that our Lord has enlarged *Evangel's* territory.

Let us journey into 2023 knowing that we serve a mighty God who continues to inspire us to do the work He calls us to do, daily.

I am proud to lock arms with you, multiplying our Outreach efforts in 2023.



Thank you, *Evangel*!





## ***And Loving It!***

by *Brian Ward*

Some of us may remember the expression, “*And Loving It!*” It was the victory cry of a good man in a television program from the mid-1960s called *Get Smart*.

The show is a spoof of the daily battles between good and evil. The good guys are agents (foot soldiers) of the CONTROL organization. Their job is to ensure that goodness remains in control. The bad guys are from an opposing organization called KAOS. Their purpose is to eradicate goodness so that chaos (KAOS) would reign supreme and dominate people’s lives.

The leading CONTROL foot soldier, Maxwell “Max” Smart, would appear to be bruised and battered after being in a fight with KAOS agents. But Max always wins the battle. When his associates tell him how battered he looks with torn clothes and a missing shoe, Max always replies, “*And loving it!*”

That mindset is available to us daily, during, and after every challenge. We can be committed to facing our challenges, like Max, “*and loving it!*”

The show begins with Max

going through several doors before arriving at his ‘chief’s’ office, where he gets his assignment for that day. Each door opens as Max approaches, and he never adjusts his purposeful step as he walks towards the next door. Max is confident the next door will open for him.

Do we approach our day with the confidence that our Lord will open doors, clearing the path for us to go forward and do the good things that will dominate our day?

Do we have the mindset to do it again tomorrow, even though today’s challenges may have left us feeling battered, bruised, and tired?



Doors will be opening for us again today! We should be willing to go into today confident in our walk “*and loving it!*”



- *Develop sound prayer habits.*
- *Prayerfully exercise every day.*
- *Surrender to God.*
- *Develop new life habits.*
- *Our walk is our anchor.*
- *Pour wisdom, godliness, and strength into others.*



by *the Faith & Wellness Ministry*

If you didn’t hear the world expressing gratitude to you on ***World Kindness Day***, it would have been because you were busy bringing kindness to the lives of others.

Just as those receiving from you appreciate your presence in their lives, Evangel’s Faith & Wellness ministry recognizes and respects your willingness to be a bearer of joy and comfort through your kindness.

Kindness is about being friendly, generous, and considerate. But kindness is a unique display of character that requires a willing heart. Our lives will be judged by what we do, and it’s good to see the two-fold benefit when we share love, respect, and kindness for others.

Giving kindness also opens our lives to release jealousy, anger, stress, negativity, and hate. The kindness we show others can be the bridge that leads from depression and darkness to light.

Love is the key to happiness, and as we reflect on our vital assignment to “*love one another as you love yourself*,” we should feel good about spreading a little joy. Human life is precious.

*(cont’d on page 12)*

**Lessons Leared from Nature: An Enlightening Journey** is an excellent compilation of fifty Nature stories. It will inspire you to appreciate God's majesty and splendor and learn the many lessons He wants to teach us.

**Paperback \$15.00**

**eBook \$3.99**

**LESSONS LEARNED FROM NATURE**  
AN ENLIGHTENING JOURNEY  
BY WELLNESS @ EVANGEL MINISTRY  
CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL CONGREGATIONAL, UCC  
1950 BEDFORD AVENUE, BROOKLYN, NY 11225

available on **amazon**

The members of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry of the Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC, invite you to experience the thrill and excitement of Nature. This excellent compilation of fifty nature stories, *Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey*, will inspire you to appreciate God's majesty and splendor, and learn the many lessons He wants to teach us. Expect an awakening in your spirit as you reflect on God's nurturing and hear Him speaking into your life through nature.

We were blessed to have some amazing reviewers read our manuscript, and here are some of the comments they made.

"God Inspired"

"A book for the times"

"A masterpiece"

"Just right for every day"

"You deserve this book"

"You need to read this next"

"Unlike the gym, you'll keep going to this book"

"New perspective for the new year"

This is the first of a series of books being published by the Faith @ Wellness Ministry of the Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC.

**This is an ideal gift for your family and friends.**

**Email Sheryl Phillips with your orders: [Sheryl.weightlosssolutions@gmail.com](mailto:Sheryl.weightlosssolutions@gmail.com)**

***Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey*  
will also be available on Amazon soon.**



## **Pick It Up**

by *Brian Ward*

That's what we need to do, pick it up!

David did! When he went out to face Goliath, all he had was a slingshot. On the way, he picked up five smooth stones. There was nothing special about them, but God breathed on David. He went on to defeat Goliath and later became the king of Israel.

Moses also picked it up. He picked up an ordinary stick from the ground. When he held it in the air, the Red Sea supernaturally parted. God breathed on him too.

When an army of soldiers surrounded Samson, he did the same thing; he picked it up. He picked up the jawbone of a donkey and defeated a thousand men. God breathed on him also.

What He has done for others, He can do for you and me when we take what He has placed in our hands and allow Him to direct our actions.

Whatever we have in hand may seem as ordinary as a stone, stick, or bone, but God breathes on us as we use what He has given us. Our actions,

directed by Him, become significant.

He will give us something small to begin the work, small beginnings. We need to embrace each of those beginnings, deny our negative thoughts and insecurities, and watch God do great things through us.



Did we drop the ball on that last situation He placed on our hearts? It's time to pick it up! Maybe we turned our backs and didn't commit to the assignment or left it undone, creating hardship for others. We need to pick it up and follow through. God will breathe on us.

He's ready to take us from mourning to dancing in victory over our challenges. So, how badly do we want to conquer our insecurities? God wants to distinguish us. That would mean cooperating with His plan for us, especially when the opposition looks formidable in skill, talent, and experience or seem more gifted or when we choose to devalue our worth and ability.

As God presents us with opportunities to distinguish ourselves, He breathes accomplishment into us, giving us all we need to rise higher and

excel.

Another person who picked it up amid adversity was Daniel. Relocated to a new country by his captors, he didn't dwell on his situation but became excellent in his work and *distinguished himself*.

When we read Daniel 6:3, NIV, we see dedication, accomplishment, and reward. *"Now, Daniel distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps (governors) by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom."*

God breathed on him, and Daniel *distinguished himself*.

We are at the threshold of distinguishing and becoming all God created us to be. Our attitude toward our call to serve will determine if God breathes on us, moving us through that door of opportunity.

Let us not drop what is in us but should it happen, let's pick it up now and use it in the manner it's meant to be used as we *distinguish ourselves*.





## Stewardship

by Nikketia Gildarhie

I firmly believe that being a good steward is a way of living, not a checklist. Being a good steward of the spiritual blessings God has given us is about finding ways to serve the Lord. We are blessed with a beautiful example of this in our congregation.

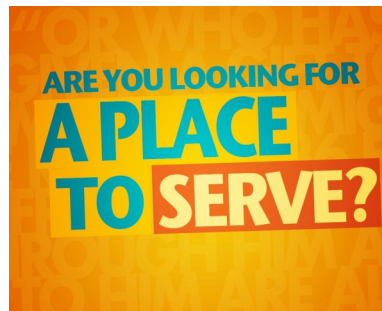
There is no such thing as a talent so small or insignificant that it cannot be used to serve our Heavenly Father. The question is whether or not we are putting out the effort to use our talents for the cause of Christ and whether or not we are putting out the effort to grow the spiritual gifts God has given us.

God has blessed us all so richly. He has given us so much financially, physically, and spiritually. What are we giving back to Him? Have we been giving to God all that we have and all that we are, or have we, without even realizing it, only been giving God our leftovers? Let me encourage you to strive daily to give God the best of all that you have and all that you are.

Stewardship begins with the understanding that everything

we have is a gift from God. It is the way of life, honoring God in everything we do and having the heart to give back out of love, a share of every gift God has provided us.

As Christians, we must take on the responsibility of being good stewards. Stewardship brings us rewards that last forever. Therefore, we should continue living lives centered on God rather than ourselves.



## How Will You Serve Your Church?

by Sheryl Phillips

How will you serve your church? God is calling you to use those skills and talents He gave you for this particular purpose. He expects you to be good stewards of those gifts and talents He has blessed you with.

He's ready to grow you and our church as you step up and take your place in His service. Those skills He has been crafting in you, enabling you to take care

of your needs are needed to take care of your church.

Our Christian growth is seen in the different ways we serve, making a difference in our lives. Our service helps Evangel fulfill her mission to serve our community in diverse ways. Hence, the unlimited and varied skills and talents we have been given.

Be ready to experience God's presence in new ways as you serve, and see firsthand, how God works in the lives of others. God gives us the tools to do the job He assigns to us; we need to be willing to use our gifts to bless others as our gifts have blessed us.

One of our Christian responsibilities is the development of others. It gives us a real sense of community. Our focus changes as we meet the needs of others. Jesus came to serve, not to be served, and as we follow Jesus' example, we must be willing to serve.

So, speak with Rev. Cynthia Jackson or Deacon Stephanie Bennett and step into your stewardship role, and use those gifts and talents for God's service.



## Ministry Corner



### Tea, Fashion, Fun, and Fanfare at Evangel

by the Faith & Wellness Ministry

They did it! Yes, they did. Chrystal, Nicole, and their hands-on team of volunteers did what they set out to do.

Most enjoyably, declaring Evangel is open to community activities, this hard-working group treated church and community to an evening of socializing that everybody needed and appreciated.

We filled the Fellowship Hall and were on Zoom, 'All In,' participating in the evening's activities.

The Master of Ceremonies was masterful, entertaining his audience and presenting the evening's participants and their performances, all of which exceeded our expectations. Evangel's DJ Darrell, a man for all seasons, created a relaxing atmosphere with musical gems that excited the audience. The tone was set, 'Tea for Everyone.'

We had choices of unlimited teas and pastries, evidence that Chrystal, Nicole, and their team didn't set out to do a good job; they intended to do the *best* job possible, entertaining the community.

Two young sisters serenaded us with voices of gold. They were so well appreciated, and we expressed our love with loud applause.

The organizers named the event, Mad Hatter Tea Party, and some thoughtful and creative hat designs were on parade.



The Spirit of the Lord was felt as joy flowed from person to person during the evening.

We paraded on the red carpet, proudly displaying our creations but, more so, thankful for the opportunity to connect and bond again. Being in each other's presence was an embrace long missed and longing for.

But the efforts of the organizing team moved the evening's delights to another level with a raffle and several beautiful gift baskets.



Saturday, December 10, was Mad Hatter Day at Evangel. We were blessed and inspired by Chrystal, Nicole, and their volunteer team, who never considered 'good' as being adequate to give but chose to be at their 'best,' as they gave 100% effort to enrich many lives as we enjoyed 'Tea, Fashion, Fun, and Fanfare at Evangel.'

The Church of the Evangel embraces your spirit of service to the community and recognizes you as servants of our great God.





**Congrats!** Sheryl Phillips, MPH, RDN, CBC, CDN

Congratulations, you stepped out of your comfort zone and published two books in 2022. *Steps to Weight Loss: My Weight Loss Journey*, and *Steps to Weight Loss: PAUSE*.

You did an excellent job of providing guidance, encouragement, and partnership to the many who have committed to improving their health and wellness.

Your innovative approach to using a journal to track progress, building on the small steps, will be a confidence builder. PAUSE, your most recent publication is an ideal journal to partner with anyone through your health improvement journey. PAUSE helps you to gain a different perspective on life situations. It helps you pivot, change course, and develop a different plan of action to achieve your goals. Pausing allows you to think about your situation and consider several options, so your decision complements the hard work you have been doing. This journal is not only beneficial for your health journey but it is adaptable to all of life's challenging moments. When life demands a recalculation of your focus, PAUSE.

We commend you for having the desire and discipline to encourage others to achieve their goals of better health and wellness and to develop these useful tools.

*Steps to Weight Loss: My Weight Loss Journey*, and *Steps to Weight Loss: PAUSE* are available on Amazon.

**GRAB A COPY NOW!**  
Paperback (\$20.00)

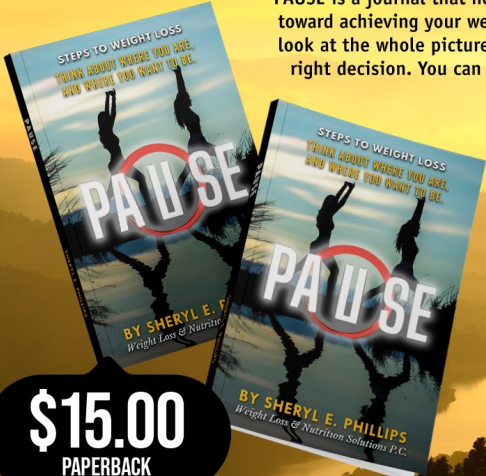


**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**  
Sheryl E. Phillips is the CEO and founder of Weight Loss & Nutrition Solutions, P.C. She is a Registered Dietitian, a Certified Diabetes Educator, and a Certified Personal Trainer. She has been published in several magazines and is a frequent speaker at health fairs. She is also a member of the American Association of Dietitians, the National Association of Nutrition Professionals, and the International Board of Standards and Practices for Certified Personal Trainers. She has been published in several magazines and is a frequent speaker at health fairs. She is also a member of the American Association of Dietitians, the National Association of Nutrition Professionals, and the International Board of Standards and Practices for Certified Personal Trainers.

*Steps to Weight Loss: My Weight Loss Journey is a comprehensive three-month journal designed to help you track and document your journey toward achieving your wellness goals.*



PAUSE is a journal that helps you reflect on your daily decisions toward achieving your wellness goals. PAUSE helps you to stop, look at the whole picture, consider your options, and make the right decision. You can apply PAUSE to all areas of your life.



**\$15.00**  
PAPERBACK

available at **amazon**



## Get Out of that Box. Do Something New!

by Sheryl Phillips

*Do Something New in 2022.*

That has been the spirit of the Wellness Ministry this year. Collectively, our spirit challenged the desire to be comfortable and limit our growth.

Doing something new suggests growth, movement, and change, but we cannot achieve any of them if we put a lid on ourselves or allow others to limit us.

The proverbial 'box' confines and limits our thinking, decreasing our movement. It keeps us in our comfort zone and causes us to miss out on the many blessings God has in store for us. We should not always play it safe. God is saying, *Get out of that box.*

So, what box are you hiding in? It can be said that we are born into some type of box. As we grow, others place us in certain boxes, and for our comfort, we, too, place ourselves into some boxes of confinement.

Society tends to dictate what we are allowed to do because of our skin color, and we tend to accept the limitation and allow ourselves to be placed in the

*race* box. We have become comfortable with so many restrictions based on race. We don't have to continue to allow them to define us. So, get out of the race box.

We often use the *age* box as a hiding place so that we don't have to be active. We often say, 'I am too old for that.' But that's just an excuse to be inactive, not to follow God's leading? Along with the age box comes the *retirement* box. The retirement box tells us that we have served enough, worked enough, and now all we want to do is nothing. We close the windows of opportunity for ourselves and others whose development and future are linked to our awareness and activity. We choose to forget that we have a responsibility to nourish others.

Can we retire from God's service? Consider Noah; how old was he when he followed God's instructions and built the Ark?



The *fear* box can stop us from growing. Fear stops us from stepping out of our comfort zone, stepping out of the box that confines us. It limits our actions. We fail to get involved, including being active with the ministries of the church or even community activities.

We are encouraged not to

be fearful, for God is with us always. We must fight fear with faith. David did not allow the size of Goliath to stop him. When everyone around him retreated in fear, David stepped up, knowing God was with him, and boldly went up against Goliath and won.

*Complacency* is another box in which we place ourselves. We become so pleased with past accomplishments that we retreat into the box of complacency. We get comfortable and stop growing as we rest on our laurels.

Spending time in the quiet of God's presence, learning to listen to His voice, and allowing ourselves to be refreshed and rejuvenated by the Holy Spirit should be a conscious and deliberate act. God will show us the way out of the box we are in. He will help us to spread our wings, to be active in His service, and to touch the lives of many. We can make a difference when we get out of the box, whichever one it is.

Step up, step out and do something new for Christ. You don't know the effect you may have on the people around you. You may create a ripple, a wave, or a tidal wave, but you must get out of that box and do something new.





by the Faith & Wellness Ministry

Are you ready for today's test? Often, when God sends us a challenge, it's about practicing, in public, what we preach.

The idea that we are being tested is usually hidden from us at the time, but He reveals it later.

Did we pass our last test?  
Did we practice the stuff we can repeat, like words in a song?  
Did our character receive good grades? Or did we not see a test situation but an interruption of our comfort?

Sometimes, we lose sight of the message in Matthew 7:1, "*Do not judge, or you too will be judged?*" We say it selectively, 'There I go but for the grace of God,' but does the message linger within us, allowing us to examine the comforting presence of God as He 'keeps' us from being overwhelmed by situations and circumstances?

In situations, it's sometimes difficult to hear God's voice, so our Lord would connect us to someone who would speak to us on His behalf, ensuring that His guiding light shines on us and our path, allowing our spirit to see the way forward. As deliverers and receivers of His word, He

orders our steps, guiding us, walking beside us, and making us stronger and wiser.

Do we remain available because we expect God to show up at any time? We write our daily plans in pencil, submit them to Him to erase or modify as He sees fit and replace them with the blueprint He has for our lives. Again, today, we remain aware and available.

Being our brother's keeper involves re-igniting the flame of faith that has gone out or may not be warm enough to give hope and restore belief in Jesus Christ and self-confidence in themselves.

When our low confidence levels keep us from acting positively, that's the ideal time for us to shout, "Lord, help me overcome my unbelief!"

Before God gave us the work to do, He created that work specifically for us to do. It has our name on it. And we know that He's not a God of failure. Therefore, we can be sure that He will make our efforts successful as we put our hands to what He has laid upon our hearts.

We must remember that our test focuses on the person, not the situation. When we revisit the case of the father, his son with the spirit that seized him, and Jesus (Luke 9:14-29), we see that the father never considered the 'deaf and dumb' spirit as being his son. The father

believed that the situation would be corrected. He focused on the boy. Scripture tells us that Jesus took the boy who was as good as dead and helped him up.

*'Everything is possible for one who believes,'* said Jesus to the father. Jesus speaks the same message to us, so when He sends us to situations and sends situations to us, we should see the person and not the situation and believe that with Him working through us, success would be the result.

The prophet Jeremiah focused on the situation and experienced doubt about his ability to pass the test God presented to him. His test was to deliver a warning of the destruction that was ahead for the people of Jerusalem. He did not have the self-confidence to do it, so he told God that he was not up to the task.

His assessment was based on his belief in his inability. And he was right; with such un-inspiring belief driving his lack of self-confidence, he could not pass the test. How do we feel about the task/test we have to remedy today? Are we saying, "Yes, Lord, yes," or will God have to remind us as He reminded Jeremiah, "*I chose you*"? (Jeremiah 1:5)

*(cont'd on next page)*



(cont'd)

Are we telling ourselves and God all the negatives that keep our confidence and belief buried? We can be assured that as He spoke to Jeremiah in verse 7, He would have a few more inspiring words to say to our hearts.

Each of our tasks/tests is an opportunity to be a blessing to someone and certainly a confidence boost to us. It's about us entering into somebody's storm – in their head – and being the pipeline through which God chooses to pour His comfort and wisdom. It's part of our journey. Be a Good Samaritan.

We don't have all the answers. God is aware of that. He will provide what is needed for the person and us. We should not depreciate our value when God wants to increase our value. We need to feel worthy of the opportunity.

We need to feel that 'wellness' in our souls.



### ***Diane Cummings: Faithful Servant***

***10/10/1937 – 11/03/2022***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

We entered the Church of the Evangel on December 3, 2022, and there she was, glowing in elegant photographs on the altar and the television screen, ushering us into the sanctuary, just as she did on so many Sundays and occasions through the years.

Diane, the woman with a loving, caring, and giving heart, was there to help friends, family, and church family celebrate her life.

You could feel her presence in the sanctuary as Diane's family and friends expressed the majesty of her life, touching their lives through the years. In each reflection, you could see her pouring the love of Jesus Christ into the person's life. It was apparent that she never denied anyone their particular need or service at the time.

With her unique touch, Diane impacted lives, leaving a legacy that will live on in her family and friends.

It was a fitting outpouring of memories of her remarkable life

in the service of others.

Diane Cummings, a faithful member of the Church of the Evangel family, took pride in serving as an Usher, welcoming everyone coming through the church's doors. You felt the glow in Diane's "Good morning, welcome!"

A loving and giving individual, Diane will constantly challenge us to pour love from our hearts.



### ***World Kindness Day***

(cont'd)

Not all acts of kindness are preplanned, as most are random. Praise, politeness, patience, and appreciation are random acts that lead to a sense of well-being. Amelia Earhart said, "A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees."

Contrary to our beliefs in other things, few of us would disagree that love and care for each other connect us all as human beings. They bridge the gaps between cultures and nations worldwide. We even acknowledge that love and care are keys to happiness.

We should never miss a chance to perform even the smallest act of kindness. Because no matter how small it is, it will be valued.

Let's make every day ***World Kindness Day!***



## **Preserve Your Mental Health**

by *Sheryl Phillips*

In this COVID world, we must be proactive in preserving our mental health.

'My mental health is just fine,' you may think. But the truth is, we all experience different anxiety levels, making it all the more important to preserve our mental health.

When we are not feeling well, one of the first checks we make is our temperature. Having a fever indicates that something is not quite right. If you could take the temperature of your mental health, would it be over one hundred?

The coronavirus pandemic caused a significant social change. Soaring unemployment, longer food pantry lines, and an increase in mental health issues have been linked to increased homelessness and led to a rise in suicide rates and an increase in violence on the streets.

The temperature of our anxiety rises each time we venture out of our homes, as no place is safe from violent acts. Our schools, churches, hospitals, shopping malls, and movie

theaters are no longer safe havens. So, as we go through our day, we ask for God's protection and thank Him when we get home safely.



Up goes our level of anxiety when safety becomes our constant focus. Sometimes, our suspicion of the people around us, fearing our interaction with strangers, becomes our default and safe position. So, how do we maintain good mental health and do God's work, loving and caring for our neighbors when we initially and continuously look at others as suspicious?

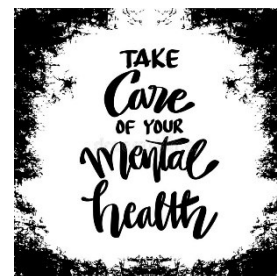
Even if we don't have a mental health diagnosis, the current uncertainties caused by the coronavirus, climate change, natural disasters, the Russia/Ukraine war, and the increased level of violence in our communities are enough to raise the temperature of our mental health.

Your stress level can trigger other health issues; therefore, you must implement strategies to preserve your mental health.

- Get regular exercise. A daily walk of 30 minutes can help boost your mood and improve your health.
- Eat healthily, have regular

meals, and stay hydrated.

- Get adequate amounts of sleep.
- Try a relaxing activity.
- Set goals and priorities.
- Practice the attitude of gratitude.
- Focus on positive emotions.
- Stay connected to family and friends.
- Strengthen your mind by lifting up God's word through the day.





by *Andrea Monica Folkes*

I want to introduce you to a church mouse. Here she comes. Meet Monica, the church mouse.

“Hey, church mouse!” That’s how a friend calls out to her in a sarcastic manner. That’s because Monica chose to prioritize worship and service over other activities in her life. Her friend, let’s call her Mavis, disagrees with her choices and wants Monica to be available to participate in her activities schedule. Hence, the verbal attacks of ‘church mouse.’

Mavis thinks Monica is hiding in the church, like a mouse, and sets out to shame her with verbal attacks intended to make her feel less human. Monica prays about the situation with her prayer partners and is aware of the enemy at work, trying to destroy a long friendship.

When we reprioritize our lives, moving away from worldly activities, the enemy will use those closest to us to lead us off track. Character assassination is one of his weapons.

Monica is using her talents and time in the service of the Lord and is not allowing the

naysayers to change her focus or deter her from pursuing happiness in the house of God. She is active as the best church mouse she can be, having a greater purpose and serving God.

Monica, the church mouse, stays focused on the Bible verse, *“I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”* (Psalm 84:10). What a joyful place to be! She is at peace doing His work.

But Monica knows that Mavis is not at peace and prays for ways to help her access the spiritual comfort she could enjoy. Monica could not give up on her friend. She knows the expression ‘church mouse’ is a cry saying ‘help me.’ She understands that her friend’s life is worldly and wants her to experience a life of fulfillment.

Mavis has since gone home to be with the Lord. Yes, before passing, she accepted Jesus Christ as her savior. Monica’s prayers for a more rewarding life for Mavis here on earth were answered.

Church mouse, the name meant to harm and weaken Monica, strengthened her and encouraged her to reach out to Mavis, whose attacks came from a place of envy and jealousy.

Mavis did not despise Monica but felt the desire to grow as she saw Monica grow in the Lord.

We should never allow words to harm us, derail us, or destroy our relationships.



## **Embrace the Spirit of Achievement, Today**

by *Brian Ward*

A frightening sight when this is how we see and feel about our challenges; vast and overwhelming.

But we can avoid that crushing feeling and shout, ‘Victory is mine’ when we begin our day with spiritual surrender to God instead of stepping into the ring to wrestle our giants.

“So, Father, we place all of today’s challenges into Your hands for You to sort out.” Surprisingly, as we re-surrender our lives daily, we don’t have overwhelming battles to face. Yes, we have challenges, but we are not beaten down or drained of our confidence, nor have our wisdom trampled because God is leading, guiding, walking beside us, ordering our steps, and making us stronger and wiser.

*(cont’d on next page)*

## ***Embrace the Spirit of Achievement, Today (cont'd)***

A voice inspires our positive behavior today, and we say, 'Speak, Lord, we are listening.' Because we have aligned our hearts with His presence, we listened to the advice and direction of someone He sent to guide our speech and actions today. Did you recognize and welcome that person?

Today, we can maximize our effort as God shapes our attitude through His unique ways and directions.

Embracing the Holy Spirit isn't about receiving only. That act toward us, for which we are thankful, was also meant to encourage us to pass it forward and be a blessing to others. We can be beacons of light providing hope, faith, and wisdom. We have a voice through which we can offer words of hope and encouragement to others facing challenges.

Often, we permit fear and frustration to scare away our faith. At those times, it's strengthening to read Jeremiah 1:5-8 a few times, allowing the message of the Word to confidently bring us to our feet, stepping out in faith, prepared to move mountains.



The Scripture begins with the reassuring statement by God, "I chose you!" (GNT). Sometimes, that's the pep talk we need to hear, reminding us of our value, uniqueness, and purpose. God is talking to Jeremiah's inner being as the prophet is unsure about his ability to fulfill his assignment. He has no confidence in himself and visualizes a challenge the size of a Sumo wrestler.



But when we read and internalize verse 7, "Do not say (especially to yourself) that you are too young but go to the people I send you to, and tell them everything I commanded you to say," we hear God telling Jeremiah, when you follow my script, you will have overflowing confidence.

Then in verse 8, God ties the package of confidence, trust, faith, and recognition with His bow of assurance that seals;

*"Do not be afraid of them, for I will be with you to protect you. I, the Lord, have spoken."*

With His assurance, we have everything we need to function at the highest level, embracing the spirit of achievement, stepping out in faith, and pursuing what God has placed on our hearts. Watch as He raises you higher and higher.

*Prayer:* Help us to hear Your voice, Lord, heed Your advice, and lean not on our understanding. Thanks for freeing us from the stress of worry as we embrace the spirit of achievement today. Amen.



### ***DO SOMETHING NEW***

- *Take time for selfcare.*
- *Try something different. Take a risk.*
- *Learn a new skill.*
- *Remember to enjoy the small things.*
- *Inspire someone.*
- *Explore new places.*
- *Face fear. Don't let fear hold you back.*
- *You can make a difference in the lives you touch. Don't underestimate yourself.*
- *Break a bad habit.*
- *You will never get bored when you try something new.*

## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

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Photo by Ray Raman

### CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION



## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

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### AN OPEN INVITATION

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

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### PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386

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*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

*They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.*

*Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters, and for victims of violence.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

September 2022

CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL CONGREGATIONAL, UCC



1907



2022



EARLY CONGREGATION



## **Happy 115th Anniversary, Church of the Evangel!**

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

We are moving into a time of celebration that is special to the Church of the Evangel this year, 2022.

Reflecting upon Evangel's founding in 1907, I think of Rev. Cox, the first pastor, and the Godly vision he must have received for Evangel and its surrounding community to grow and connect in the love of the Lord.

As I serve at this historical faith institution, I have witnessed our Lord bestowing such loving favor upon the Evangel family and community. One hundred and fifteen (115) years of testimony that the generations before us were also blessed as they overcame many challenges and continually evolved into this body of Christ we have today. As such, we've had the opportunity to keep building and reflecting on God's gifts that have lavished Evangel in our time.

Our history highlights spiritual service to the

COMM-UNITY, always with open hearts, inviting others to come and be refreshed, and nourished in Christ. As we look to cultivate others in this 115th year and move forward into the years ahead, we seek to extend the Christian invitation to new residents. It is God's desire and ours that more of God's beloved come to be a part of the Evangel family, just as we were invited and have enjoyed lives filled with blessings.

In Evangel's life journey, an essential part of each of our ministries has been to help others where needed so that God's greatest commandment given to us by Christ: *"Love the Lord and love your neighbor as you love yourself"* (Matt 22: 37-39) continues to be alive in us.

This responsibility of caring for one another continues to be one of our most outstanding faith calls and moves Evangel to implement it daily. When we provide the nourishment to develop healthy spiritual lives, Evangel's expression of faith, hope, and love will encourage more people to serve in helping others.

Church growth requires more people to work in the fields. In this season of our responsibility, you have proven that it's not impossible when every congregation member steps up and fully commits to winning the hearts and minds of those willing to listen to the

Lord's message. *Let us hold firmly to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to encourage one another in love and good deeds, not abandoning our gatherings together which is the habit of some; instead, encourage one another all the more (to be as one.)* (Hebrews 10:23-25)

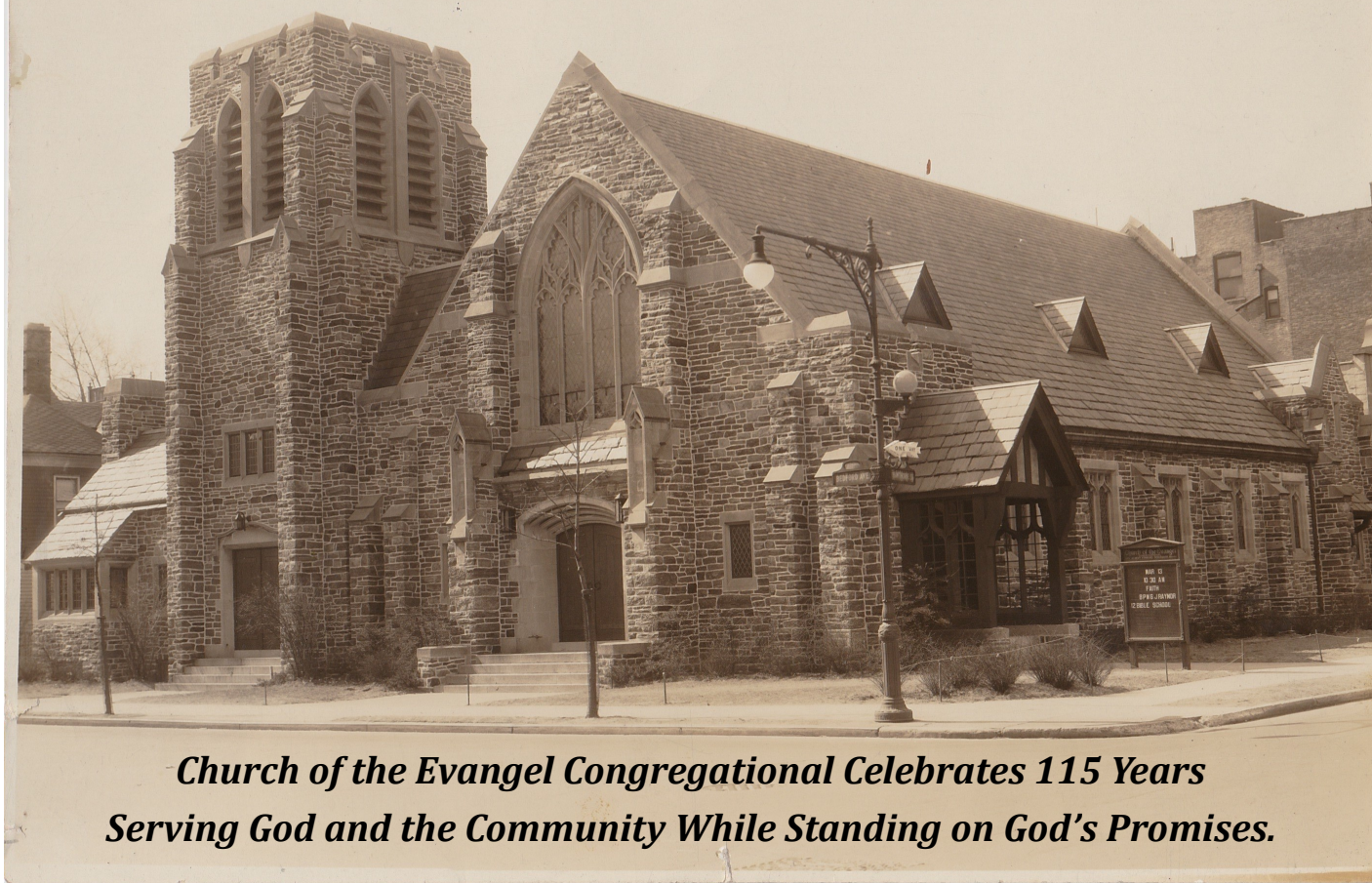
Evangel's 115 years represent the history written thus far. In the years ahead, we look forward to staying on track as we continue to engrave our signs of service to God in His world.

We want those following our lead to be proud to show God's love even 115 years later. Keeping Evangel's doors open for this lengthy period required overcoming challenges, and we have been in the middle of an incredible one over the past three years. Still, God has shown us, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you,"* and we are blessed to stay true to our mission to do the Lord's work.

There is so much ahead of us, and it lifts my heart. I hope your heart feels lifted as well, so we can go forth to continue our assignments from the Lord.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL CONGREGATIONAL, UCC



***Church of the Evangel Congregational Celebrates 115 Years  
Serving God and the Community While Standing on God's Promises.***

As your pastor, I draw inspiration from the works of the parishioners in the past, and I rely heavily on you as we will keep the fires burning, so that warm hearts for our Lord will always occupy our community. As our congregation goes through a season of transformation, let us welcome the new residents who do not have a home church and would appreciate a visit to the Church of the Evangel.

As they begin to put down roots in their new community, they are part of our new

community. 1950 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, can become that sacred place they call home.

In the future, no matter where I am, I pray that I can convey the vision that the Church of the Evangel fulfilled. We continue to steadfastly work toward spreading the message of love for our neighbors. Each of us travels the purposeful path God has called us to serve.

We serve a Mighty and Awesome God and I believe He will make it possible for the

Church of the Evangel to celebrate this anniversary and many more anniversaries in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As Tye Tribett sings: If He Did It Before - He'll Do It Again!

Let the Evangel COMMUNITY of the Lord say, Amen!

**Happy Anniversary**



## ***Technology @ Evangel: Welcome to Church***

by *Lennox Grant*, Deacon

Before COVID-19, we embraced each other in Christ with praise, worship, and passing of the Peace. We celebrated with a warm welcome, as warmth is the personality of the Church of the Evangel.

COVID-19 came, and we developed new ways of staying together, celebrating each other, and maintaining the warmth in our spirits.

Out of COVID's darkness came opportunities and newness in our worship experiences as we started to worship from outside the church building walls.

Our living rooms and dining rooms became our pews as the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) and our governing body, the United Church of Christ, offered guidelines for continuing to worship but in new ways.

On Sundays, as we 'sheltered in place,' we initially used the 'Free Conference call.com' for worship. Needing to overcome the challenge of dropped calls

and difficulty hearing the music and the message of the day, I introduced the church to Zoom, a better medium for staying connected during the worship service.

Members were eager to fellowship with each other so getting everybody acquainted with Zoom was not difficult. It was fulfilling to see each smile when people got onto Zoom. With a bit of time on my part, combined with a little effort on their part, we created a more friendly, welcoming, and collaborative worship experience. We have connected with members and friends from the comfort of our homes and do ministry safely.



Now, we meet for our council meetings on Zoom. Geography no longer limits participation in our Christian activities, as we have had participation from people throughout the United States, the UK, Canada, and the Caribbean.

Our Faith & Wellness Ministry hosted some very-well-attended activities on Zoom. In 2020, 2021, and 2022, their 'Cultural Festival,' 'Annual Evening of Appreciation,' and

'Faith & Wellness Seminar' were all via Zoom. The Women's Ministry also held its annual Tea Party and Fashion Show on Zoom.

As soon as we could return to the building safely, we introduced our 'hybrid' worship experience, allowing Zoom attendees to see us online during live service. Now, we record the pastor's message, and Darrell Walker prepares it for upload to YouTube, making it accessible worldwide.

Rev. Linda Jarvis has been a tremendous help with our website and assisting with uploading our recorded messages via YouTube.

As we look to the future, we will continue to improve our global service by having ministers bring the Word to us from their homes and possibly share a Bible study experience with other church ministries.

Yes, the pandemic has changed how we do ministry now, but we are expanding our ministerial vision, knowing we can share our church with the world via the Internet.

We embraced this change in our ministerial worship service, and not only did we thrive in this new environment, but we are also looking to do it better.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## **Technology @ Evangel: Welcome to Church**

*(cont'd)*

God already ordained our hybrid worship experience to be part of Evangel's growth and development. He has more blessings for the Church of the Evangel as He leads us into the future utilizing technology.

*"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."*  
Matthew 28:19

Jesus gave the great commission to his disciples, who did not have today's technology to spread the message of God's love, but they did it. Today, we have the technology to take it further.



Let us continue to trust in our Creator, bless the great sacrifice that forgave our sins, and continually show us that all things are possible with God.

As individuals and a church, we are growing but not outgrowing God. We will always need His guidance, protection, provision, love, forgiveness, sustenance, encouragement, grace, patience, compassion, justice, healing, and so much more.

He has lifted us to a new era of worship that will continue to

grow and bear fruit.

Reflecting on our 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary makes me thankful to serve as those before me.

Blessings in Christ.



### **Growing with Evangel**

by *Jesse Palmer*, Deacon

Church of the Evangel has always nurtured me, increasing my spiritual growth as an individual, a husband, and a father as my wife, Johnnie, and I raised our children, Jeffrey, Janine, and Jason.

Evangel provided guidance and inspiration for us in happy times of baptisms and weddings. My Evangel family was also there for us in those times that challenged our faith and strength; times of sadness when my family mourned the deaths of my son, Jeffrey, mother, brother, sister, and mother-in-law.

Throughout the years, I was encouraged to serve in various capacities, including as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, teaching the New Member class, and part of the Simon of Cyrene mentoring program for boys in the church and community.

My experiences and teachings over fifty years with my church contributed to my growth as I learned never to miss the opportunities to 'go and treat everyone better.' As the goodness of God poured into me, it also flowed from me into others when we crossed paths.

As we celebrate 115 years of service to our community and plant seeds for future years, we should remember those who planted a seed and inspired us with their lives. Through Evangel, I met public figures such as Cornell West, Leonard Jeffries, Yvette Clarke, Eric Adams, Marty Markowitz, Carl McCall, Yvonne Delk, and Barbara Essex. All of them inspired me by the lives they lived. They focused on developing people and communities to bring change and empowerment to lives.

I challenge you to think about those who have poured into you so that you can be an agent of change and empower others through your service to our church and community.

Legacies are lived and created every day, including yours. Our legacies are entwined with Evangel's legacy as a life-shaping community center.

All we build during this 115th year of service advances Evangel into the future.





## **115 Years and Counting: The Legacy Continues**

by Sharon Reid

*"The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together, and a little child will lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)*

It speaks about how animals could live together in peace, and even though they are not domesticated, a child will lead them to that peace that awaits them and all of us.

My affiliation with Evangel began when I sent my son to Sunday school at the Church of the Evangel. The urge to ensure he was safe led me to go to the church to check on him. As I got there, I met with the pastor, Rev. Edward Goode. He listened to my concern, showed me the Sunday school session, and invited me to church.

This was not my first encounter with Rev. Goode. He lived in the parsonage. He was a wonderful person and pastor and was well known in the community.

I went to church the following Sunday and the Sundays after that. To my surprise, after visiting a few

times, Rev. Goode asked me to become a Sunday school teacher. I was immediately flabbergasted and traumatized.

"Me?" I asked. "I don't know how to do that. What will I teach them?" To my relief, Rev. Goode offered to pair me with Jesse Palmer to teach the first-to-third-grade class. The Church of the Evangel chose me.

I accepted, and until this day, that has remained the most rewarding position I have held at the Church of the Evangel.

I soon realized motherhood had prepared me to guide and teach those children, and with Jesse's help, I committed to the responsibility. I have always believed I learned more from that group of children than I taught.



That was the first of many life experiences at the Church of the Evangel. I became a member in March 1996 and was blessed to serve as a deacon, a member of Sisters in Action, a mentor group for young girls, chairperson of the Women's Ministry, Church Clerk, member of the Board of Trustees, member of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry, the Bible Study Ministry, and the Sassy Seniors Ministry.

Throughout the years, I witnessed Evangel serve our community through Hawthorne Corners Day Care Center by providing space where essential Pre-K services for kids have been available for decades.

Evangel has opened her doors to be a meeting space for community groups like Narcotics Anonymous.



The church had a large Boys' Scout troop, providing guidance, leadership, and support to boys in the community. Later, Simon of Cyrene continued the mentoring legacy, providing support and structure to the lives of more boys in the community. Likewise, Sisters in Action provided mentorship to young girls.

Our Community Hall has been a gathering place for all types of social gatherings, health fairs, and a polling site for voting in local and general elections.

Evangel sponsored many events, including clothes and food drives, movie nights, block parties, Fish Fry fundraisers, Super Bowl parties, and an Empty Soup Bowl luncheon.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## 115 Years and Counting: The Legacy Continues

(cont'd)

God's blessings have flowed into us and through us for 115 years in this space. We will see His continued blessings through the commitment of each of us to being that "little child" in Isaiah 11:6, serving, educating, and promoting His goodness in our community.

**Happy Anniversary,  
Church of the Evangel, and  
may your legacy continue.**



**“Believe in the power of getting a little bit better every day, that it will compound over time...We overestimate what we can do in the short term, and underestimate what we can do in the long term.”**

– Tim Brown,  
Co-Founder, Allbirds



### **Serving God Through My Church**

by *Brian Ward*

We often need to remind ourselves that God has provided everything we have and will provide everything we need in the future.

The Bible tells us that every Christian has been given at least one spiritual gift to use **in service to the** body of Christ. So, why do we have difficulty acknowledging that we should use our God-given gifts/talents to serve God through our church?

Take a look at 1 Peter 4:10-11 and grasp Peter's message about the importance of serving God. *“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides so that in all things, God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”*

In that message of awakening, Peter makes it clear that we have received our gifts from God for two purposes—to serve others and to bring praise to

God. We must stir up and use those gifts/talents He placed inside us for service. Serving isn't about us receiving attention or glory; it's for Him to receive recognition.

Now is the time for the action Paul calls us to in Romans 12:2, *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you can test and approve God's will—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Renewing our minds will place us into a **real** relationship with God, and as we know Him, our desire to serve Him will bloom.



Right now, we have opportunities to bear good fruit, allowing God to prune our lives, removing whatever prevents us from flourishing, including those thoughts that deter us from using our God-given gifts/talents.

This is a rescue as today, we are *transformed by the renewing of our minds.*





## ***Breast Cancer and God***

by *Jean Ward* (32-year survivor)

**B**eautiful mounds of rounded flesh.

**R**est gently on risen chests.

**E**ach one uniquely shaped.

**A**dmitted by our loving mates.

**S**teals stares and glances, like conversation pieces, they start acquaintances with the opposite sex.

**T**ogether, they create oneness of romance, love, happiness, and, most of all, a source of nourishment for our bodies.

**C**autiously, we do mammograms, breast self-examinations, and check-ups.

**A**nxiously, we await the results.

**N**ervously as negative thoughts fill our minds, fear causes us to cry out to God.

**C**onsultation, surgery, and treatment may weaken us, but our bodies adjust – we have passed the ultimate test, we have regained our strength, and our hair is back.

**E**nergized and determined, we have the will to survive.

**R**ealize that we have one life, and to the fullest, we will live with God by our side.

## **AND**

**G**ive thanks and praise to our Lord and Savior; place our trust in Him for all our needs.

**O**ffer support to other survivors in need of comfort.

**D**o believe we have the strength to overcome.

We are not victims of breast cancer but proud survivors. We are not dying as we have lots of living to do. The diagnosis drives us to our knees. That's where we need to be, where we will find the strength to ask for the help we need, as breast cancer makes us feel hopeless.



Many of us don't feel loved at this time, but we must learn to love our scars as they are the trophies of our strength.

This is a season for holding hands. God is holding our hand. Whose hands are we holding? Into whose life are we speaking comfort and providing support?

A fire in our spirit warms us. It's a fire that destroys negative thoughts and moves us to speak hope into others, planting new seeds.

Yes, we have the right to remain silent, but when we give up our right to remain silent and we speak up, our encouragement saves lives from depression. Depression keeps us bitter.

God's love makes us better.

A new beginning awaits us when we allow God's love to promote patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control, all collaborating to create joy in our lives.

We should be comfortable when we are supportive of another person, for that is what *agape* love does. It gives us and others comfort as we release our passion, regardless of our season.

Survivors are unique people who reach out to others, never ashamed of their scars. Our scars have healing power, so we must give up the right to be silent. It's tough to do, but it's therapy for us too.

As survivors, 1 John 3:17-18 need to fill our hearts, *"But whoever has the world's goods and sees his brother (sister) in need, and shuts up his heart from them, how does the love of God abide in him?"*

We can be living examples to other survivors and those who have not walked that road. Don't be bitter – glitter! Be the best (breast) friend to someone.

*In Loving Memory of  
Jean Valma Clarke Ward*



*June 5, 1942 - June 21, 2022*



**CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL  
JOIN THE FIGHT  
JOIN THE TEAM**



**CHURCH OF EVANGEL:  
WALKING BY FAITH  
MAKING STRIDES AGAINST  
BREAST CANCER WALK  
OCTOBER 9, 2022  
Walk begins at 8:00 AM  
CONEY ISLAND  
Maimonides Park**

**Make your donation by  
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Church of the Evangel  
1950 Bedford Avenue  
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Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor  
or

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Making Strides of  
Brooklyn Page.**

Look for  
**Team: Church of Evangel:  
Walking by Faith**



***A Church Is Born***

by *Karen Benjamin-Abrigo*

Christened Church of Evangel Congregational,  
115 years old, has a story to be told.  
A small portable building in 1907, lit a torch for  
This majestic, antiquated landmark  
Uniquely poised at the corner of  
Bedford and Hawthorne Street  
Welcomed a congregation yearning for the truth.

Look, at man's ingenuity inspired by God  
The architecture, true brilliance of one's creativity.  
This building has a history  
In this church, many couples vowed to love one other  
To uphold each other when things go wrong  
And celebrate in times of joy.

This church that stands on solid ground  
Has blessed and offered up many babies  
In the hope that they will grow up accepting God's Grace.  
Returning to this place of faith, united with a family who cares.

Over the years, friends met sharing tea and drink  
Laughing, talking, and not thinking of time.  
Leaning into comfort, catching up on lost time.

Many have said goodbyes to their loved ones, in this church  
Reminiscing on the good old days and praying that they are  
one, with the king.  
A life after death experience, conceived by what we believe.

In this church then and now, we commit our lives  
To serving a living God, One who promised never to leave us  
nor forsake us.

115 years later, this church continues to honor God in spite of  
the challenges.  
So, we salute the founding fathers for planting the seed  
And thank God for fulfilling the need.



**COMING SOON**

***Something New in 2022***

**Lessons Learned  
from  
NATURE**



**An Enlightening Journey**

by Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC  
1950 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225

When was the last time you stopped to appreciate God's majesty and splendor around you?

Here is your invitation to take a closer look at the garden in which God has placed us and appreciate some of the ways He interacts with us. He never stops interacting with us!

The members of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry of the Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC, invite you to experience the thrill and excitement of Nature.

This excellent compilation of fifty Nature stories, *Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey*, will inspire you to appreciate God's majesty and splendor and learn the many lessons He wants to teach us.

Expect an awakening in your spirit as you reflect on God's nurturing and hear Him speaking into your life through Nature.

Nature is a fantastic teacher, and this eye-opening read will share lessons of patience, perseverance, love, teamwork, tolerance, commitment, and surrender. It also highlights pausing to enjoy life and acknowledging that there is a purpose for each one of God's creations. It will help you glean new perspectives that may inspire new relationships with the different life forms surrounding us daily in Nature.

Our Lord wants to prosper us in every aspect of our day. He speaks to us through Nature.

*Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey* will be available soon.

Contact Sheryl Phillips at:  
[Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)  
to pre-order your copies today.

Be inspired!





## **Happy Anniversary, Church of the Evangel!**

by Sheryl Phillips

Now in our 115<sup>th</sup> year of service, the Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC, continues to work at our mission of making disciples as we respond to human needs by providing loving service.

In 1999, under the leadership of Rev. Ronald R. Winley, our church implemented a Wellness program to enhance the health and well-being of Evangel's members and the wider community.

Growing beyond its initial focus on physical health, the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry today focuses on total wellness, incorporating emotional, spiritual, financial, and environmental well-being into our program as we continue the mission to attend to the community's needs.

Promoting an integrated approach to health, the ministry continues to educate its members on good Christian living, integrating mind, body, and spirit to achieve total personal wellness. Now that our meetings are on Zoom, we can

serve a broader community every Monday and Friday evening from 8:00 pm.

In 2020, we transitioned to Zoom when COVID-19 was interrupting lifestyles and closing in-person meeting places. We became available to meet the need to relieve stress and provide relief to the physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges that many more people were experiencing.

Our meetings are described as 'therapy without co-pay,' and our Book Club continues to be one of the exciting avenues of support for each other. Our efforts to stay true to our mission to care for and develop each other have led us to host many events contributing to lifting our brothers and sisters, as we have been called to do in service to our church and our God.



Our yearly Wellness events include an Anniversary Service, an Evening of Appreciation, an Evening of Prayer, a Fitness Party, a Health Fair, a Faith @ Wellness Seminar, a Plant Sale, a Multi-Cultural Festival & Auction, and an International Dinner.



Through our collaboration with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Wellness Ministry hosts training sessions to provide participants with up-to-date knowledge and materials on self-care. The training makes it easy to practice wellness techniques in our homes and share the information to help others navigate their mental and physical challenges. We continue to make self-care our focus and encourage our members to focus on total wellness.



This year, we have been focusing on the theme 'Doing Something New in 2022', and we have developed a new skill: writing. In our soon-to-be-published book, *Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey*, you will immerse yourself in fifty exciting testimonies (lessons) written by our members.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Happy Anniversary, Church of the Evangel!

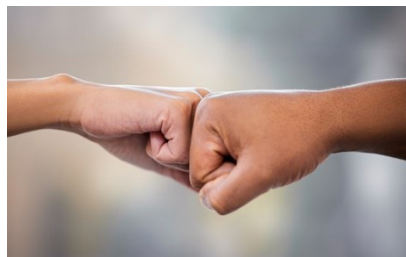
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This exciting compilation will encourage you to reflect on your experiences with nature. Read about how God has raised our awareness of His presence throughout the day. Drawing us closer to nature, we have become better listeners to His voice as He awakens us. *Lessons Learned from Nature: An Enlightening Journey* will soon be available for your collection, and it's ideal for gifts.

The Wellness Ministry recognizes our growth and service as worthy of celebrating as a significant aspect of the 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our church fulfilling its mission. Such a historic achievement means that the Church of the Evangel embraces the newness that encourages growth. Let us take advantage of the growth opportunities God places in our path.

Join us in trusting God to inspire each of us to be the message that excites and inspires others in the days and years ahead.

Happy Anniversary, Church of the Evangel!



## Developing an Attitude of Gratitude

by Brian Ward

We pray, asking God to increase our faith.

In record time, He answers our prayer. But we wouldn't know He responded to our prayer request and increased our faith. So, He sends us a few situations/challenges to 'try on' to determine if we can identify an increase in our faith.

We are now complaining about our predicament because He may have simultaneously sent two of our challenges.

These challenges were specially designed for us as He wants us to understand that increased faith is not a magical thing, but it develops with our willingness. God does not wave a wand and immediately gives us an abundance of faith.

Instead, He may allow specific life challenges so that we can measure and chart our growth (faith increase). Now, we have a barometer to *test* our faith. The test brings forth our development and growth if any.

We can expect challenges that require us to survive some humiliating experiences. Some challenges may seem never-ending. They drain us physically, emotionally, spiritually, and often financially, so where are

we on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest increase in our faith?

Have we identified any growth in our faith to hang in there, continuing to stay yoked to Him?

What is our attitude like as we deal with those challenges that have our name on them? Do we ever connect them to our prayer for increased faith and adopt an attitude of gratitude? Does Paul's advice about giving thanks 'in' all things push our appreciation/gratitude to the surface?

Many of us prefer not to have challenges and enjoy an easy life. Our prayers tend to lean toward God moving things from our path or moving us around things. But He wants us to test the quality and quantity of our increased faith, so He takes us through the challenges and gives us even more faith to support our efforts. It's all part of His will for our lives.

What are we saying to God and ourselves when our joy seems to be an occasional experience? Did we pass this faith test? We pray for Him to draw us nearer yet tend to think He's not there in our times of challenge. Another faith test; passed or failed? When everything seems wrong, we pray for patience but are we aware that we no longer have those fire-cracker emotions as in the past? We passed this faith test.

(cont'd on next page)



## ***What Church of Evangel Means to Me***

by *Stephanie Bennett*, Deacon

In 1985, when I walked into the Church of Evangel with my 8-year-old son, Brian, we were not attending church then, but my sister, now the Reverend Veronica Jefferson, an active member, insisted that I return to church.

I was convicted when she reminded me that our parents sent all of us to church every Sunday, rain or shine. When I entered the sanctuary, its impressive beauty was overwhelming, and I felt the peacefulness of its atmosphere.

The pastor welcomed us, and I felt comfortable singing the hymns I grew up with during the church service. At the end of the service, a member approached me and invited me to join the choir. I was surprised because I was not a member. You had to be a member to sing in the choir in the church I came from, but he assured me this was not the case at Evangel.

After a few months, I joined the choir and immediately felt a sense of belonging. I became a member of Evangel

the next year and was again encouraged to serve on a committee. At the time, I was reluctant to voice an opinion and did not feel equipped to take on any church responsibilities. Now, I am very vocal, and I consider doing church work a privilege, and it brings me joy.

The Church of Evangel is not the building. The congregation comprises its members, friends, and visitors. They bring their various personalities, highs, lows, and, just like me, their strengths and weaknesses.

We are a community of faith that shares God's love and each other. We are a church that strives to extend radical hospitality, as our denomination, the United Church of Christ, encourages.



What does this church mean to me? It's like a village helping to raise a beloved community of faith. It is a safe space for all, no matter where you are on life's journey.

Evangel has allowed me to put my faith into action. It has helped me to strengthen and persevere on my faith journey with God.

I pray that God will continue to use Evangel to glorify his name and that the peace of God will always be with us. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.



## ***Developing an Attitude of Gratitude (cont'd)***

We will build on our fundamental faith as we better understand God's ways.

Positive changes reflecting goodness, like praise, patience, wisdom, self-control, perseverance, brotherly kindness, godliness, and love, are promising signs of increased faith.

All of the above can be habit-forming; as we observe our actions, we understand why we should not be stressed when we face our challenges.

Those tests develop our faith, and we see our increased faith through our efforts.





### Three 'P-Words'

(perseverance, practice, prevail)

by Brian Ward

The words we choose to speak to ourselves shape our thinking and lead to our actions. Our actions are our behavior, and our behavior shows how we spend our time.

Three 'P-words' that tell us how we use our time every hour, every day, are **perseverance**, **practice**, and **prevail**.

If we live a victorious life in Christ, we have to deal with anything that keeps us from being our best. One of the challenges that keep us from being our best is weariness. God knows how easy it is for us to become weary and tell ourselves that we are tired. Tiredness causes us to lose our sense of pleasure and not feel the enjoyment we should.

We are doing the right thing but not seeing the right results. Sometimes, we become weary because the battle takes longer than we thought.

In the ninth verse of Galatians 6, there is an encouraging message, "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we don't lose heart...*"

Another term for "if we don't lose heart" is **perseverance**. It may seem like a long, complicated word, but its message says, 'Hang in there!'

We need to take hold of the strength that God is providing us. Encourage ourselves because our "*due season is on the way.*" Perseverance is not stationary; it's not about settling where we are or giving up. Perseverance is action. It's about "*doing good*" and not allowing weariness to grow in our spirit.

By being an action, perseverance requires us to **practice** the activities that help us to overcome battle fatigue (our second 'P-word'). As we practice daily, we are speaking encouraging words to ourselves. Those are words of inspiration our Lord is pouring into our hearts, changing us from thinking like the tail to behaving like the head.

God says, "*Let him take hold of my strength.*" (Isaiah 27:5). His strength is available, but we must take hold of it.

No more thoughts that the situation is never going to change. Now, we are saying, "I know my time is coming. Jesus armed me with strength for this battle. I can do all things through Christ." As we practice positive thinking about Christ's presence and strength in our lives, we will notice that our actions and behavior align with the new season into which He

has moved us. Jesus nourishes our thinking, shaking off our weariness.

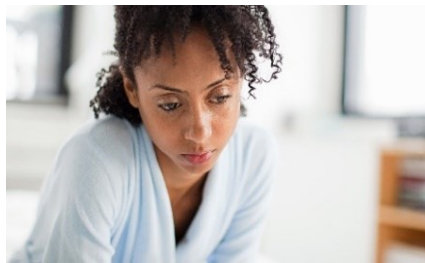
We are energized and singing a new song. **Prevail** is our third 'P-word.' God is speaking to our hearts, saying that the things we have been struggling with are ending. We can make Isaiah 42:9-10 our daily banner statement. "*Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare...Sing to the Lord, a new song, His praise from the end of the earth.*"

The hurt, bad habits, and disappointments are about to end as God does a new thing in us, but we have to sing a new song. No more singing about what we can't do, don't have, and negative thoughts about our future. No more defeatist behavior. No more self-pity. He has turned our mourning into dancing; we must be dancing every day, all day long.

He is leading us through our former situation, and as we prevail, we sing new songs of praise every day. We are no longer blind as we have new dreams and visions.

Should things seem slow in changing, we need to be patient and understand that He is carrying us and revealing to us at the pace He knows is best for us. He will make us as sure-footed as the turtle.





## ***The Pretenders***

by Brian Ward

*“Oh-oh, yes, I’m the great pretender, pretending I’m doing well. My need is such that I pretend too much.*

*I’m lonely, but no one can tell.”* Some identify those words as the opening lyrics of the Platters’ 1955 hit, *The Great Pretender*.

Many of us can identify with the emotional turmoil that those words express.

We feel sad and depressed and don’t know why we feel that way. Why should we be depressed? Life is ‘good’ and ‘easy’ compared to the lives of other people we know.

We have not suffered the loss of a loved one, a job, or even a divorce, so why do we have this feeling of not being happy? As we look at others around us, they seem happy, so even though we feel depressed, we pretend to be happy and satisfied.

We dress in our happy costumes and faces, the ones we hope will make us happy and satisfied with ourselves. We don’t want to seem sad or down in our spirit because that will make us seem like a liability and not of value. We stifle the urge to speak out about our feelings

because we fear the changes that may result in our professional lives and relationships. Indeed, we don’t want our bosses labeling us as ‘not trying hard enough,’ so to avoid the stigma, we don’t talk about our challenges because we believe others, including our spouses and families, won’t understand.

Now, we are becoming efficient and effective at the blame game because we have judged and declared ourselves guilty. Feelings of being a burden are at war with our sense of independence. When we think about the ripple effect on our family, we often see ourselves as ‘unfit,’ so, as the song says, *we pretend we are doing well* in our depression.

*We are lonely, but no one can tell* because we diligently work to hide how we feel. We look OK on the outside but inside, it’s KAOS.



We must rethink how we think and focus on identifying the causes of our depression. There may be more than one cause, a combination of factors. We must understand that depression is a medical condition, and chronic pain and tiredness can contribute to our depressed state making it

difficult for us to be comfortable daily, thereby wrecking our lifestyles.

We have to anchor our rethinking in our belief that we deserve better, so we will embrace the work we need to do and the changes we need to make.

Treatment is there for us, but first, we must discuss our challenges. Lifestyle changes could be a significant aspect of our treatment program.



We want to live the best lives possible, so it’s not only that we need to treat our depression; *we deserve treatment*. We owe it to ourselves to be at our best for all whom we hold dear.

The emptiness of irritability, guilt, lack of energy, a sense of helplessness, and worthlessness must be addressed immediately. If not, we are encouraging their presence and allowing them to dominate our lives.

Let’s allow ourselves to do well without pretending.



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Photo by Ray Raman

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

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**WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION**



**Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

**AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

**Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

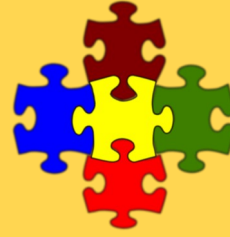
Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386



**CONGREGANTS OF CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL & FELLOWSHIP MORAVIAN**



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

June 2022

## DO SOMETHING NEW IN 2022

### Thoughts on the First 6 Months of 2022

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

*"Faith is the assurance that something we want is going to happen; It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us even though we cannot see it ahead." (Hebrews 11:1)*

Greetings!

Welcome, CONNECT newsletter family, to another feast.

I pray you all have been able to realize and carry with you each day the importance of having our precious Lord in your daily journeys.

In the first 180 days of this year, I have experienced the Lord, my Savior, and Holy Spirit showing me a new side of myself. He has moved in my life, using words from Scripture to lift me to a new level of understanding and awareness of His presence and goodness. As our sister Hannah prayed in 1 Samuel: "My heart

*rejoices in the Lord; my horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies because I rejoice in what You (God) have done for me."*

In addition to the COVID crisis, so many ungodly events and sinful happenings over these past six months have weighed heavily on me, just as they would have burdened you.

By God's grace, we have been able to endure as we see love and compassion rise to superior heights over the dreadful acts committed. Our mental health is under attack by the regularity and severity of such atrocious acts that make us fear walking the streets, going to school, to church, the supermarket, riding the trains and buses, and sitting on our porches. Our adult sisters, brothers, and young ones have lost their lives.

*(cont'd on next page)*



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

#### Church of the Evangel, UCC

- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry Plant Sale*  
June 18, 2022 @ 11:00 am
- *New Men's Fellowship Celebrate Fathers' Day*  
June 19, 2022 @ 10:30 am
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry Cultural Festival*  
July 23, 2022 @ 5:00 pm

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## **Thoughts on the First 6 Months of 2022**

*(cont'd)*

Emotionally and physically, we are in lockdown, but spiritually, we must remain exalted.

Humankind treats one another as if our Risen Savior had never given His life for us or any directions on how we are to live. We've been living in ways that are so misconceived and so NOT of God.

Through the blessing of private prayer and several prayer lines, my soul is slowly being strengthened anew by the Lord. He aims to improve me as an avenue of support to you and increase your strength as we travel into the days ahead together.

I am reaching out to family and friends in a new way. Christ has awakened me to be more mindful that each of us will not be here forever, and we need to take time as best we can to listen to one another and pray with each other. In following this path the Spirit has placed ahead of me, I can hear and learn more about the directions the Holy Father is giving and how to move forth in God's time with these lessons.

You would have experienced a 'newness' in your life as you walked with Christ, allowing Him to lead you through these turbulent times. Reach out to me; let us talk

about your challenges and commitments, as we are not always as prepared as we believe we are to take the steps we think we see before us.

The events of the first 180 days of the year have revealed that I'm not as prepared as I think I am and that I need the Lord's help to get on the right path and keep moving in the right direction.

The first verse of Hebrews 11 has been filling my heart recently. Faith is not believing that God can. It's knowing that He WILL. God is not through with me or with you yet. There is still so much I have to do, and I know as my Savior walks with me in the days that I will be blessed to serve. I will continue to grow as God has promised.

Church of the Evangel, you will continue to serve in the vineyard where God has placed you. As Dottie Peoples' song tells us, "He's An On-Time God, Yes He Is." He may not come when you want Him, but "He'll be there right on time."

With this encouragement from the Lord, I look forward to all my Creator, Savior, and Holy Spirit has in store for me in the coming 180 days of 2022. I encourage you to do likewise and embrace His blessings. Expect Him to show you a new area of growth in your life. Whatever comes will undoubtedly be a journey to look forward to because God will be

taking us there. Could we ask for a better guide? I don't think so!

For "... with God, all things are possible..." (Matthew 19:26)



### **Trusting God's Timing**

by *Brian Ward*

How do we get things to happen as fast as we think they should occur?

Time is running out. There is a deadline. We impose many deadlines on ourselves because we don't understand that what we see is just one small frame in the big picture. We need to appreciate the importance of our part to the whole picture and allow God to reveal things to us.

In this busy life we live, we find it difficult to wait for something; wait to meet the right person, wait for a dream to come true, and wait for the resolution to a problem, so we become frustrated and often act in desperation.

*(cont'd on page 5)*



## ***Honoring Church of the Evangel Graduates***

by *Stephanie Bennett (Deacon)*

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*  
(Jeremiah 29:11)

We celebrate our Evangel graduates Anthony Paul, Christian Jeremiah Michel, Huntah Anarkelda Finnie, Nikketia Gildarhie, and William Finnie III.



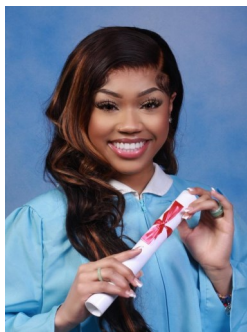
Anthony, our Church Greeter, graduated from Norma Adams

Clement Academy (PS 6). He will be attending Gladstone Atwell Middle School (MS 61) and wants to study engineering.



Christian graduated from Daniel Mucatel (PS 115). He has

been accepted to Medgar Evers Gifted Program and has expressed interest in law.



Huntah graduated from Brooklyn

High School of the Arts, where she was a drama major. She has featured in several productions, including *That Damn Michael Che, P-Valley Season 2*, and the upcoming independent film, *Under Thy Wings*. A member of the Journalism Club, Peer Advisory Group, and Women’s Club, Huntah started the first Black Student Union in her High School.

Huntah will be attending Howard University to major in Psychology and minor in African American Studies. She hopes to create a dramatic therapeutic practice serving at-risk youth and aspires to develop housing for sexually abused women and women victims of domestic violence.



Nikketia graduated with honors, Magna Cum Laude, from

City College of New York with a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology. She will be attending LIU Post Graduate School in the fall to pursue a Master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

This accreditation will position her to earn a clinical mental health counseling license and begin her career serving people in need of mental health care.

Nikketia is the youngest member of the Church of the Evangel. She was baptized, and joined the church in 2014.



William graduated from William

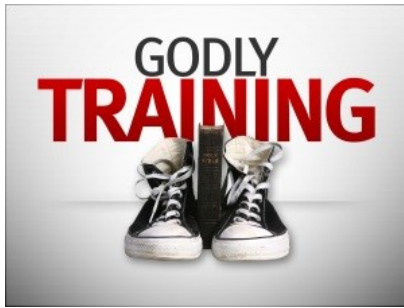
Penn University and holds a dual Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and Criminology. He was a member of the William Penn University basketball team.

William’s goal is to be a mental health counselor. He identifies with the need for Black men to become more in touch with their feelings rather than conceal them.

Church of the Evangel prays for God’s comforting power in their lives.

Father God, we pray that you will fill these graduating students with your wisdom. Give them direction, purpose, and perseverance as they enter the next phase of their lives. Grant them success for their efforts at every turn and guide their feet to follow Your ways. Amen.





## **Keep Yourself in Training for a Good Life**

by *Brian Ward*

*“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” (1 Timothy 4:8)*

Having a mentor and role model puts us in an advantageous position. As Timothy did, we too have the apostle Paul as our role model mentoring us and should be taking full advantage of his advice to keep ourselves spiritually fit. Keep ourselves in training for a godly life.

The foundation for our godly training is in prayer. We cannot live godly lives without having a good prayer life. As we develop sound prayer habits, we build the discipline that’s our springboard every day to immerse ourselves in honesty and integrity and develop good reputations that will make us role models for others. Like us, they want to have lives filled with joy and light, so they look to us.

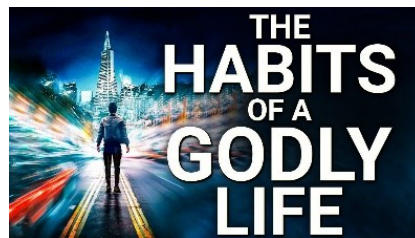
Are they seeing our patience and faithfulness in God’s plan for our lives as we wait? Do we

explain why it’s necessary not to be ashamed to swallow our pride and accept God’s discipline in whatever form He chooses? Are we explaining that living a godly life means that we have surrendered to God all we do, doing it as His will and not ours?

Discipline is all about developing good habits. Discipline also weans us off those habits that no longer fit our developing lifestyle. Throughout Scripture, we are reminded that God has given us everything we need to live godly lives and grow in godliness.

Godliness is simply doing what God would do. It’s about being faithful to our calling by doing the good works He expects us to do. Our works are evidence of our faith, and our godliness is gradually seen in our words, behavior, attitude, relationships, and values.

Walking the talk keeps us from drifting away. Our walk is our anchor. That’s how we keep from drifting.



Paul tells us that our walk keeps us away from arguments, greed, corruption, and other troubles. We should be stepping into love, joy, peace, goodness, and other fruit of the Spirit.

When we munch on those nutritious qualities as we walk the talk, we become energized to move our training to the next level.



We are running a race of ‘service’ to others as we are the conduits through which wisdom, strength, and godliness are poured into them, creating daily habits of goodness for them and us as part of our daily lives. As mentioned earlier, godliness is simply doing what God would do.



- *Develop sound prayer habits.*
- *Prayerfully exercise every day.*
- *Surrender to God.*
- *Develop new life habits.*
- *Our walk is our anchor.*
- *Pour wisdom, godliness, and strength into others.*



## ***Trusting God's Timing***

*(cont'd)*

An excellent corrective thought is there for us in Psalm 31:15, *"My times are in your hands...."* Six words, but that phrase leads to blessings 60 times those six words because it positions us to do a 360 in our thinking, a complete turn-around.

Turn around and let Him give you an insight into the solution He has for you, beginning with His peace. God's will for us is always hand in hand with His timing.

That opportunity He has for you, He will reveal it according to His timing; trust Him. He has already set a time for your next promotion in His service. That situation you have been worrying about, He has established a set time for it to turn around. He hasn't forgotten your healing. A time for your recovery, He has already set.

Expect your breakthrough. It's all part of God's promise to prosper us. He may do it tomorrow or next week, but when you understand that He has already set the time, it takes all the deadline pressure off you. You won't live worried, wondering when or if this will ever happen.

When you have your morning fireside chat with Him, be a good listener, and you will hear the things that He has

taken off your To-Do list because He has already done those things for you. Even if you tried to do them, you could never duplicate His efforts. So, why frustrate yourself?

We know that He's working behind the scenes on our behalf. It's not enough to just trust God; we have to trust His timing.



So, it's time to work on the things He has spoken to us about doing at this time today.

As we involve ourselves in those things, notice the peace of mind that comforts us.

No more pressure!

- *Allow God to reveal things to us.*
- *His timing is connected to His will.*
- *Wait patiently.*
- *Expect your breakthrough.*
- *Don't frustrate yourself.*
- *Everything hinges on doing what He asked you to do.*



## ***Just Do Something!***

by *Brian Ward*

Even the scarecrow is busy doing something. What about us?

The scarecrow is not alive, but its loose clothing, flapping in the breeze, gives the illusion of a person moving. It's doing its work. It's disheartening to know that something that's not alive behaves as if it has life and we who have life act lifelessly.

The scarecrow has an assignment, a purpose, to scare off crows, blackbirds, and other birds from feeding on newly planted seeds and young crops as they are sprouting.

Scare off the birds that come to steal the fruits of the farmer's labor. That's his plan for the scarecrow.

So too, our Lord tells us that He has plans for us, plans *"to prosper us and not harm us, plans to give us hope and a future."*

History shows that we do nothing to uplift others too often because the act may require a one-time financial output or a commitment of our time over an extended time.

*(cont'd on page 11)*



## ***Are You Walking on the Other Side?***

by Sheryl Phillips

In the book of Luke, Jesus told a parable in response to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" My neighbor is the Good Samaritan, who stopped to help a stranger in need.

God expects us to be our brother's keeper, but we often avoid helping others and pass by on the other side during our day.

When we cross to the other side, are we aligned with God's will for our lives?

"Do Something New in 2022," the Wellness @ Evangelical Ministry's theme for this year, encourages us to step out and do things differently. God has a purpose for each of us. Are we living out God's purpose for our lives, or are we walking on the other side hoping that someone else will do the work, help the helpless, feed the hungry, and provide comfort to someone in need?

Stop thinking you cannot make a difference because the problem seems too big.

Sometimes it takes little acts of kindness to make a significant difference in someone's life. Just saying good morning, have a wonderful day, can make a difference to the person who feels alone. We may never know the difference we make in someone's life, but God knows.

In this parable, a man is robbed, beaten, and left to die. This man did not have a name. He represented the least among us, the poor, the homeless, the sick, the lonely, or the person just waiting for someone to lend a helping hand. Are you walking on the other side? The Levite and the priest both walked by on the other side, not wanting to get involved. Both wrapped up in their world, focusing on their journey, and passed by on the other side, refusing to lend a helping hand.

God calls in so many ways. Sometimes His call is obvious, and other times He calls in subtle ways. We need to maintain close contact with God to learn to identify His voice. Accept our assignment and trust God as we step out in faith and do something new.

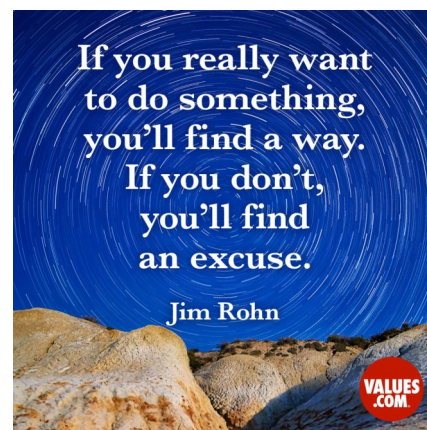
The Good Samaritan was open to hearing God's direction and was willing to put aside his plan to do God's bidding. He was ready to go the extra mile for God. He could have just as quickly passed by on the other side as the priest and Levite did.

But he was willing to delay

his journey to help the stranger in need.

How often do we pass by on the other side and refuse to get involved? God is saying, I need your hands and feet, I need your talents and gifts, I need you to get involved, volunteer to help your neighbor, serve on a church committee, get involved in your community and live out my plan for your life.

The opportunities to serve are there. Look for them and embrace them. Don't just walk on the other side, away from them.



- *You are your brother's keeper.*
- *Help him up.*
- *You can make a difference.*
- *Tomorrow, it may be you in need.*
- *Don't be consumed by this world.*
- *Listen! God is calling you.*
- *What's your answer?*





### **Three Wise Men**

by Brian Ward

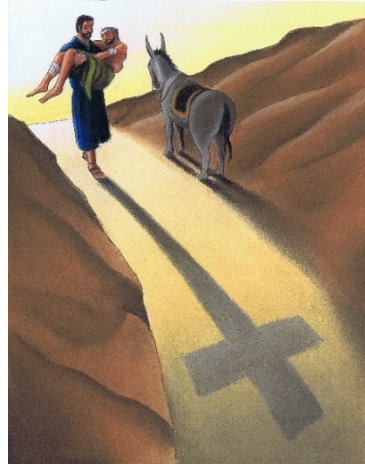
The three wise men! No, not those three, the other three. The priest, Levite, and the Good Samaritan.

The priest and the Levite were 'wise in their own eyes,' as Proverbs 3:7 would describe them. We see them behave in a manner that Jesus tells us is prideful and advises us to avoid it at all costs. They refused to show brotherly love and compassion to a man in need

This man did not ask and could not ask for help because the robbers left him with a battered and bruised body. The priest and the Levite had an opportunity to help but turned their backs on a dying soul, refusing to show compassion and brotherly love.

These were two 'men of the cloth' whose hearts were not on helping others, so they walked on by, leaving the battered man for dead or for somebody else to help, possibly.

Somebody came along and helped the man in need of medical attention. He was a Samaritan, and because of his kindness and the goodness in his heart, we address him with respect by calling him the Good Samaritan.



Friends, we have a role model, someone whose behavior we would be wise to practice. Scripture has awarded him the medal of wisdom for his humility and for displaying the content of his heart which said 'others before self.'

We see where his initial act of stopping to help and doing whatever he could at the scene graduated to transporting the injured man to a place where he could receive further aid. Even then, he did not divorce himself from the situation. He paid the innkeeper to nurse the man back to health and promised to pay any additional charges for his services.

Maybe, we should rename this story 'Two Wise Men,' honoring the Good Samaritan and the Innkeeper as they

showed us how to love our fellow man with dignity and respect, even if his bruises aren't visible.

The ills of our society have robbed, beaten, and left many for dead, but their spirits are alive, waiting for us good neighbors to come along, stop, help them up and give them the hope that begins to heal them.

Our mission is to be kind, and our responsibility is to expand our sense of to whom we need to extend our help.

Like a good neighbor, we are there! We understand that pride is fool's gold. Thankfully, we don't assess our wealth by what we receive but by giving.



Today we choose: wise in our own eyes or wise in God's eyes as He directs us.

- *In whose eyes are you wise?*
- *Embrace that opportunity. It may not return.*
- *Did you hear, see, and feel the cry for help?*
- *Allow the goodness in you to shine.*
- *Be a good neighbor.*



# Ministry Corner

## Do Something New In 2022!



### ***Whatever You Are Not, God Is***

by the Faith & Wellness Ministry

It's always a challenge to do something.

We face the challenge of doubt to do something *new*, as doubt says, 'that's not you.'

For several weeks, at the beginning of the year, we discussed the idea of writing a book as one of our *new* projects for 2022. Initially, we didn't embrace the concept because doubt told us that we were not writers. But the idea never died.

We realized the abundance of knowledge we accumulated through our years of experience as we discussed the idea. That knowledge was testimony to God's goodness in our lives in the many ways He kept us. We found the inspiration to grow the concept into a desire and share our testimonies in writing. We have written our book.

Evangel's Faith & Wellness Ministry has written and will soon publish our first book titled, *Lessons Learned from Nature*.

We had to deal with doubt; not deny it or succumb to it but speak to it with the words, 'Whatever we are not, our God is!'

We will see the fruit of achievement when you and I add our determination to our belief in ourselves and our faith in God, who has provided all we need.

Our God fires up each of us to believe that all things are possible and act on our beliefs.

*"Therefore, I want to remind you to stir into flame, the strength, and boldness that's in you..."* (2 Timothy 1:6, TLB).



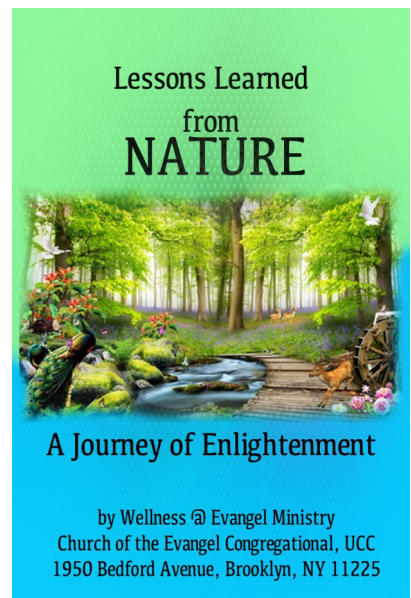
We didn't know that we had a book inside us until we put pen to paper. Soon, a few stories grew into a dozen, and the ministry is delighted to announce that in September, you will be able to read fifty stories when you acquire your copies of *Lessons Learned from Nature*.

We share stories of teachings from aspects of nature, big and small, from tornadoes to ants,

and how they realigned our thinking and reconnected us with the presence of God in our lives. They remind us of how much we appreciate Him.

Many stories may remind you of your experiences and your appreciation of His presence in your life. Whatever you were not, in those times, He was.

We are all fired up about living godly lives in union with Him in 2022! Are you?



50 stories presented by members of the Faith and Wellness Ministry of Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

**Coming Soon**





**Congrats!** Sheryl Phillips, MPH, RDN, CBC, CDN

Congratulations on the recent publication of your first book, *My Weight Loss Journey – Steps to Weight Loss*.

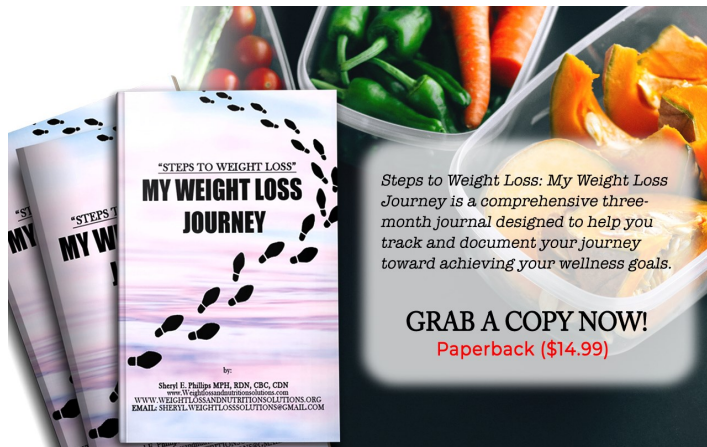
You did an excellent job of providing guidance, encouragement, and partnership to the many who have committed to improving their health and wellness.

Your innovative approach to using a food journal to track progress, building on the small steps, will be a confidence builder.

We commend you for having the desire and discipline to encourage others to achieve their goals of better health and wellness.

Best wishes in your future endeavors.

Wellness Ministry



**DO SOMETHING NEW IN 2022**

- *Take time for selfcare.*
- *Try something different. Take a risk.*
- *Learn a new skill.*
- *Remember to enjoy the small things.*
- *Inspire someone.*
- *Explore new places.*
- *Face fear. Don't let fear hold you back.*
- *You can make a difference in the lives you touch. Don't underestimate yourself*
- *Break a bad habit.*
- *You will never get bored when you try something new.*

**Word Search**

**Words Associated with Spring**

S	P	R	I	N	G	F	E	V	E	R	O	B	I	N	Z
E	P	V	B	X	R	Y	A	D	S	R	E	H	T	O	M
S	T	R	B	L	U	E	S	K	Y	T	A	B	C	B	E
S	U	E	I	M	O	S	W	L	D	F	R	L	J	A	M
A	L	N	Q	N	R	O	F	D	Y	C	T	O	M	S	O
L	I	U	S	E	G	R	M	A	T	S	H	S	F	E	R
G	P	J	W	H	E	C	M	S	H	T	D	S	L	B	I
N	S	O	N	T	I	W	L	I	C	C	A	O	O	A	A
U	H	I	T	B	O	N	G	E	R	E	Y	M	W	L	L
S	J	U	E	B	S	N	E	S	A	S	X	S	E	L	D
E	B	E	N	D	I	G	K	R	M	N	L	V	R	I	A
I	S	I	E	D	U	M	E	A	A	I	I	X	I	L	Y
G	A	E	D	B	E	B	Y	T	D	R	B	N	N	I	S
R	S	U	Y	L	M	D	U	O	S	S	A	R	G	E	U
E	B	D	I	E	N	R	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	S	C
L	A	R	C	I	E	F	U	M	B	A	E	L	L	A	O
L	P	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R	E	L	N	I	A	R
A	D	A	N	D	E	L	I	O	N	S	D	U	O	L	C

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| April           | Allergies    |
| Bees            | Budding      |
| Blooming        | Blossoms     |
| Butterfly       | Baseball     |
| Blue Sky        | Clouds       |
| Crocus          | Daffodils    |
| December        | Daisies      |
| Dandelions      | Earth Day    |
| Flowers         | Flowering    |
| Green           | Grass        |
| Insects         | June         |
| Lilies          | Ladybug      |
| May             | March        |
| Memorial Day    |              |
| Mothers Day     | Nature       |
| Rain            | Rainbow      |
| Robin           | Showers      |
| Sunshine        | Seeds        |
| Sunglasses      | Spring Fever |
| Spring Cleaning |              |
| Tulips          | Umbrella     |
| Weather         | Windy        |



## Grocery Shopping

by Sharon Reid

When it comes to grocery shopping, we want to be able to fill our carts. But you'll agree that we are looking for quality and items with a long shelf life in addition to quantity. We want value for our money and our time.

We look through our flyers from Associated, Key Foods, Western Beef, and several other grocery stores, identifying the items we need while comparing the prices and quantities offered.

Sale! We are always thinking 'sale,' so we do our comparison shopping before leaving home. Most of us need to shop at three groceries before filling two bags with the essentials.



Recently, a friend sent me a flyer from another store called Heaven's Grocery Store. She attached a note telling me about her experience visiting Heaven's Grocery Store. She described it as 'one-stop shopping, fresh

produce every day, unlimited supply, open 24 hours with excellent service and delivery service.'

My friend insisted that I look through the flyer, and I'll see the fantastic offers. I did, and I realized that I needed several things. So, I went shopping at Heaven's Grocery Store.



As I entered the store, the lighting was so bright. I could see my way. Then my eyes were drawn to a compelling message on a sign. It said, "No limits – All You Can Carry! I liked that!

So, you may want to do like I did and walk down the first aisle and get some *patience* and *love* when you go. Then, I picked up some *understanding*. You can pick up some, also. We always need that. Don't forget to stock up on the *wisdom*, too. It's in the same aisle. I encourage you to get a couple of boxes. So often, when I think that I have some left, I can't find any. Next to the *wisdom*, you will see *faith*. I picked up a couple of bags. Help yourself to as much as you can carry. Remember, you always come back for more.

There is a special on the *Holy Spirit* every day. You will find Him in every aisle. Don't forget

to fill up with *strength* and *courage* for your day's activities and challenges as you run this race of your life.

My shopping cart was filling up, but the *Holy Spirit* put some *grace* into my cart. He knows my needs. He moved things around a little, created space, and added some *salvation*. It was free!

When you are shopping, I suggest that you ask Him to show you the nutrients for building a healthy spirit.

Those items filled my cart, but it wasn't burdensome to move toward the cashier. Thinking I was finished shopping, I saw the shelf with *prayer*. So, I moved things around in my cart, just as the *Holy Spirit* had done a little while ago.

I created a space for *prayer*. I got for myself, some to send to other people immediately, and some to store so my prayer cupboard would no longer be bare. When you pack your bags, keep some prayers to the top. Like me, you may need to become prayerful as soon as you leave the store.

Many people were shopping, so as I got into the check-out line, I had an opportunity to open one of my boxes of *patience* and nibbled on it as I 'waited in the Lord,' giving thanks.

(cont'd on next page)

## ***Grocery Shopping (cont'd)***

But, I soon realized that my shopping was not over because positioned in that aisle were *peace* and *joy* for all shoppers to stock up on while they waited. My cart (life) had appeared to be full, but I found space to add *peace* and *joy*.

I saw *songs* and *praises* hanging there, at eye level just above a sign that said, 'Nourishing to the heart,' so I made more space in my cart (life) for bags of *songs* and *praises*.

I cannot remember waiting in a check-out line with such patience and a joyful spirit. The atmosphere within this store renews your spirit and your mind.

Then I met an angel of a cashier who was filled with the spirit of service. He complimented me on my choices and stamped "Paid in full" on a receipt. But I hadn't offered him money yet.

At Heaven's Grocery Store, money is not accepted. Just your presence. Shop at Heaven's Grocery Store, see and taste for yourself, and tell others about the shelves that are full of **everything** Christians need as they answer their calls to serve.

*(Inspired by the poem, Heaven's Grocery Store.)*



## ***Just Do Something!***

*(cont'd)*

What we have lost are opportunities to influence positive change in the lives of others. That may have been how we were supposed to use our time to prosper others and give them hope and a future.

Are we scaring away healing, keeping others from freedom, contributing to further hardship, and denying someone the opportunity to smile? Are we interested in the things which interest our Lord? God smiles on those willing to sacrifice for the causes He holds dear.

Conditions in our lives and the lives of others are never improved when we do nothing. Circumstances in our lives remain the same when we do nothing, so we need to be doing something, the little things that have been placed on our hearts for us to do, the things that please God.

Maybe Nehemiah may have considered his massive rebuilding project scary in getting it done. But we see when someone is willing to do something, give something, and help others with the rebuilding of something, it can be done, with the help of God, in record time. Fifty-two days! Nehemiah had the right attitude, and God provided the labor, the materials, and the cooperation, which was no small thing.

Shouldn't we be cooperating with what has filled our hearts and not be purposely scaring away ourselves from our purpose?



Nehemiah, who was not an architect, agreed with God's instructions to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem so that her people would be protected.

Sometimes, people's overwhelming message within their community is 'can't do better, can't be better.' Our presence may be the spark to influence a change of thinking, bringing about hope and the willingness and ability to raise heads again.

The decision to *do something* or do nothing will give some insight into our alignment.

- *Become lively. Scare yourself.*
- *Use your time to grow yourself and others.*
- *Develop interest in God's interests.*
- *Create a new record for achievement.*
- *Cooperate and God will qualify you.*



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Photo by Ray Raman

### CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION



## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

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### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm  
on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

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### **PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386

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*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

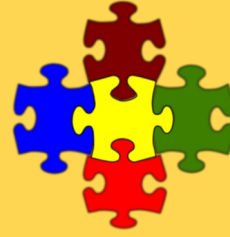
*They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.*

*Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters, and for victims of violence.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*

# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

December 2021

## Make Self-Care a Priority

### ***With Our God, There Is Always Hope***

by Pastor Cynthia Jackson

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”*

*Romans 15:13*

To our family and friends of Evangel, it is indeed a blessing for me to bring these blessed words to you. The challenges were different for each of us this year, but our blessings are testimony that we serve such a mighty God. It has only been with the steadfast hope God has offered and placed within us that we are at a place now where we can face the days to come in 2022.

As each of us goes forward, let's keep the importance of **hope, peace, joy** and **love** at the forefront of our life journeys. We need **hope**, especially in this season when brothers and sisters worldwide are struggling with the loss of loved ones, facing unexpected

variants of COVID-19, unemployment, and loss of homes due to evictions and natural disasters. I am sure that it was indeed difficult to keep the flame of **hope** burning each day. But here we are, and let me say that we are all privileged to have our lives filled with the incredible blessing of Christmas, the time in which we are called to lift our levels of **hope** and give thanks to our ever-loving God.

Immanuel (God is with us) is telling each of us that we do not have to wait until tomorrow or next year for **hope** to be with us. **Hope** is available to us from our Steadfast, Unchanging God of promise in this very moment as you read.

If we believe we have **hope** as our Holy Creator tells us, a change in our circumstances can and will come.

*(cont'd on next page)*



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

- *Church of Evangel, UCC  
New Years Sunday Service  
January 2, 2022 @ 10:30 am*
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
An Evening of Appreciation  
February 19, 2022 @ 4:00 pm*
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
Anniversary Service  
Sunday, March 13, 2022 @10:30 am*

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### Inside this issue:

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<i>Financial Self-Care</i>	3
<i>Emotional Self-Care</i>	4
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<i>Practicing Nutritional &amp; Physical Self-Care</i>	6
<i>Team Work Makes the Dream Work</i>	8
<i>Word Search</i>	9
<i>Spiritual Self-Care for the Soul</i>	10
<i>Campaign of Generosity</i>	12

## ***With Our God, There Is Always Hope***

*(cont'd)*

The true **hope** that God intends us all to experience exceeds the commotion and the ways so many folks “celebrate” Christmas. The **Christ** in Christmas has been pushed aside and the focus is now on the *Mas*, which in some languages means more. More gifts, spending more money that we don’t have, and more attempts to please people instead of our God become our priority.

We need to be filled with joy for this gift of the **hope** God gives each of us. **Hope** made available to us because of the little child born in Bethlehem. We have to draw our eyes away from the tree decorations and lights, the turkey and stuffing, material gifts, and gatherings for us to be filled with sincere gratitude. We need to be thankful for our Heavenly Father’s promise of a Savior’s coming who will rescue us from despair, isolation, and the hopelessness of sin that can continue to run rampant in our world today.

So, what **hope** do you have as you prepare your spirit in this new season of our Lord?

I have **hope** because Jesus, the Son of God, will be born and live among us, God’s beloved people, and He will sacrifice himself on my behalf and rise again. A more precious gift

I could not receive!

The prophet Isaiah lifted **hope** in this way when he wrote of our coming Savior; *but He (the Messiah) was wounded for our transgressions, He was crushed for our wickedness; the punishment for our well-being will fall on Him, and by His stripes (wounds) we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each one, to his own way; but the LORD has caused the wickedness of us all to fall on Him [instead of us]. As a result of the anguish of His soul, He shall see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge, the Righteous One, My Servant, shall justify the many before God, for He shall bear the iniquity of us all.*

In these closing days of 2021, there is such a sweet **hope** for us who may have found the sorrows of this life almost too much to bear. That hope is available to us now. But rest assured, our Lord does not make promises in a willy-nilly way. Very soon, when we bring our struggles and sorrows to our Holy Intercessor, they will be swept away—because of the **faith, hope, and love** we have in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

In the time before us, **hope** will grow stronger in our spirits. As you prepare for the new year, take time to think about the perpetual **hope** we all have within because of

Immanuel. Recognize it! Accept it! Place your faith in it!

For the Psalmist tells us in Psalm 43:5 - *Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!*

May God bless us throughout the remainder of 2021 and in the days ahead that we are blessed to see.

In the blessed name of our Lord.



## ***Keeping the Right Perspective***

by Brian Ward

A goal for us in 2022 could be **keeping the right perspective**. Not just having the right perspective (attitude/mindset) at times but keeping it throughout the year. It’s possible!

Joshua and Caleb did. They kept the right perspective for 40 years. If you are looking for a role model, I offer these two guys for your consideration. They are worthy of being on your shortlist.

From very early, those guys understood and embraced favor over fear. God’s favor! Recognizing the privilege of being chosen for that dangerous assignment into the

*(cont'd on page 8)*



*Joseph A.V. Semper, RVP*  
 Presenter at 'Committed to  
 Wellness: Self-Care Is my  
 Responsibility' seminar  
**Financial Self-Care**

Bad things will happen whether you like it or not. That's just a fact of life. So you have to be prepared, just in case those hard times come calling on you.

When the COVID-19 virus invaded our lives, the initial attack was upon our health, our physical well-being. Our emotional and financial well-being soon became victims of the daily attacks. More and more, we continue to hemorrhage financially, as the virus refuses to release its hold on society, creating crisis after crisis.

Because of the safety protocols, many of us could not work, but those who had financial investments working for us were a little more at ease during the COVID pandemic.

Hope is not lost. We can do a lot to strengthen our financial base and better position ourselves in this ongoing crisis and for future challenges to our financial stability. "What Can I Do," you ask.

You can start to build today from where you are, working with what you have and focusing on what you want. Statistics show that 95% of people struggle (fail) financially because they do not have financial education, a financial game-plan, and a financial coach. These are all forms of personal protective equipment ('PPE') to help you withstand future economic attacks.

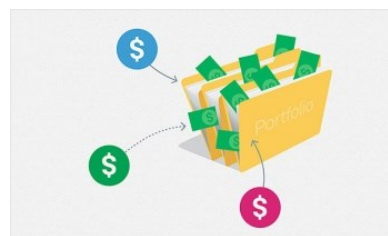


People with a well-coached game plan will see how penny-pinching is always an affordable and a reliable way to prepare for the unexpected. The next time you discuss investments with your neighbor, be able to tell him about the things you have learned from your COVID experience, how you were affected, and what you have done to protect yourself from unexpected future financial challenges.

What works for your neighbor may not be suitable for you. His situation would not be identical to your situation; therefore, your investment and decisions should be based on your situation.

Your financial coach is your financial doctor committed to your financial well-being as they advise you on things like

the drawback of being *Balanced* against being *Diversified*. Expect them to guide you to be a diversified investor in several companies and not in one company. The message here is don't put all your eggs in one basket. If that basket falls, you will have nothing to eat. As good as one stock or company may be doing presently, history tells us that many good companies have gone out of business. Every successful investor has a diversified portfolio. Their money is invested and growing in various companies.



Successful people plan!  
 They are proactive! That's you!

#### Questions to Consider...

- Do you have a plan?
- Do you have a Roth IRA?
- Do you have a 401k to rollover?
- Do you own your policy or does your job own it?
- Do you have enough life insurance?
- Do you have an Emergency Fund?

*Please don't hesitate to call  
 Joseph A.V. Semper at  
 718-713-7383, if you need help!*



**Excerpts from the presentation, Emotional Self-Care**

by Professor Stephen Phillips

Were you there...at the 2021 Faith and Wellness Seminar in November? Yes, then you were part of the sharing in the discussion about external and home-grown behavior that sabotage our caring for ourselves and others.

Through a few personal experiences, we did a deep dive into recognizing the 'triggers' that cause our peaceful state of mind to 'blow up,' opening a floodgate of sad, angry, fearful, shameful, and disgusted emotions, to name a few, that fill our day with emotional stress.

If you weren't able to share in the open forum discussion in November, we bring you highlights now.

One of the shared experiences into which we did a deep dive was the reaction of one person when a second person, sitting at a nearby table in a restaurant, was speaking loudly on a cell phone and using profane language. The peaceful and serene emotions were 'blown up' by the external behavior from the next table.



The much anticipated, enjoyable dinner experience was ruined. Feeling the need to vent, when leaving the restaurant, the patron told the manager about the **upsetting effect** of the other person's behavior.

The distasteful experience revealed the **stressor**, one of which triggers all of our emotionally stressed situations. In this case, it was the loud talking and the profane language. It caused the emotion of **stress** to build up within the patron. If we reflect, it wasn't that long ago when something simple or crucial triggered our emotion of **stress**. Plus, just like the restaurant's patron experienced a **behavior** change when the dining experience was ruined, we too have had unwelcomed external behavior or unexpected situations cause a **behavior** change in us.

Imagine a Pit Bull is charging at you. Immediately you become extremely stressed and filled with **fear**.



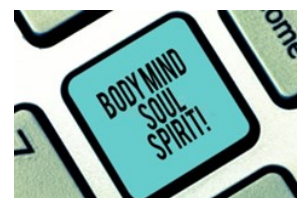
You are undecided in your behavior. Should you run or should you take some alternative action to protect yourself?

**Fear** is a common trigger of our emotional stress and the way we cope with our emotional stress is somewhat learned and somewhat automatic. If we are among those who are more resilient to stress, that will serve us well. But most of us are people who become stressed, easily. Those regular, long-lasting periods of stress highlight that we need to pay more attention to our self-care.

During those times when we are experiencing stress, our blood pressure, and heart rate increase, digestion can be interrupted, and our immune system can become inactive. Chest pains, headaches, panic attacks, and many other reactions can be our bodies' reactions to **negative stressors**.

Often times, similar to the restaurant's patron, we too face two forms of stress. The **immediate stress** brought on by anger, which the patron felt, and the **lingering stress** that keeps us massaging the hurt feelings that drain our energetic spirits, just as the patron described.

That chronic, lingering stress contributes to heart diseases, hypertension, strokes, diabetes, and even makes us vulnerable to viral and bacterial infections.



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## ***Emotional Self-Care***

*(cont'd)*

There are three elements to ***emotional stressors*** and ***stress***. Our ***individual*** ability to cope with stress; how our ***body*** automatically reacts to stress; and our ***behavior*** related to the stress.

The way each of us reacts to the ***stressor*** (our ability to cope) is different but the longer we remain in stressful situations, the less we are caring for ourselves. So, we need to identify and respond urgently to our stressors, otherwise, we could be facing serious health consequences.

We have choices! The most effective one may be avoidance. If we can avoid being in the presence of the ***stressor***, avoid toxic people, when possible, we can avoid being 'stressed out.'

In those times when the ***stressor*** may be a life situation, it's still affecting and being toxic to our person, until we devise a way not to internalize it and give it power and control over our life.

A combination of ***avoidance*** and our ***positive reaction*** to stress could help us to avoid self-wear and focus on self-care.

Through lifestyle changes that involve relaxation, we can embrace the emotions that illuminate our lives. Let us choose to live with the emotions that make our lives happy events, every day.



### ***A Church Is Born***

by *Karen Benjamin-Abrigo*

Christened Congregational Church of Evangel,  
114 years old, has a story to be told.  
A small portable building in 1907, lit a torch for  
This majestic, antiquated landmark  
Uniquely poised at the corner of  
Bedford and Hawthorne Street  
Welcomed a congregation yearning for the truth.

Look, at man's ingenuity inspired by God  
The architecture, true brilliance of one's creativity.  
This building has a history  
In this church, many couples vowed to love one other  
To uphold each other when things go wrong  
And celebrate in times of joy.

This church that stands on solid ground  
Has blessed and offered up many babies  
In the hope that they will grow up accepting God's Grace.  
Returning to this place of faith, united with a family who cares.

Over the years, friends met sharing tea and drink  
Laughing, talking, and not thinking of time.  
Leaning into comfort, catching up on lost time.

Many have said goodbyes to their loved ones, in this church  
Reminiscing on the good old days and praying that they are  
one, with the king.  
A life after death experience, conceived by what we believe.

In this church then and now, we commit our lives  
To serving a living God, One who promised never to leave us  
nor forsake us.  
114 years later, this church continues to honor God in spite of  
the challenges  
So, we salute the founding fathers for planting the seed  
And thank God for fulfilling the need.





## ***Practicing Nutritional & Physical Self-Care***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

We live in a world that is so demanding of our time that we sleep less, work more hours, and we put our vacation on hold. There are so many tasks on our To-Do list on any given day that we can't respond efficiently to all the demands on our time.

As we become wrapped up in our society's demands, we forget to take a breath of fresh air, we forget how to live in the moment, and we don't slow down and appreciate life. We become so busy taking care of family members and friends and spend very little time taking care of ourselves.

So, how should we be taking better care of ourselves to preserve or improve our health? How do we shift our focus from the busyness of life to taking care of ourselves so we can stay healthy and accomplish the things that nurture our happiness?

We begin with making good, healthy choices that are important to our general health and wellbeing. Our choices are all linked to acts of 'desire and

obedience.' We will do different things from person to person, but our desire and commitment to follow through with the appropriate activities is the common thread linking our efforts to better self-care.

One person may enjoy going to the gym, while someone else may enjoy just taking a walk in the park; still, others may want to curl up on the sofa with a good book but not become couch potatoes. So, what does self-care mean to you? What have you been doing for self-care?



One form of self-care essential to overall happiness, and everyone should practice is nutrition self-care, which means filling our bodies with essential nutrients. Eating healthy is a crucial part of self-care. Good nutrition is good self-care. It means providing our bodies with the basic things they need to function: high-quality proteins, healthy fats, vitamins, carbohydrates, minerals, and water for adequate hydration. Remember, the better hydrated the body is kept, the better it functions.

We need to make deliberate

food choices to increase our intake of fruits and vegetables, which are excellent sources of vitamins and minerals. Using fresh herbs and spices adds flavor to our foods and so limits our use of sodium. Accepting the smaller plate as our friend will gradually control the desire and commitment to reducing portion sizes.

Other deliberate food choices include adding healthy fats, lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and low-fat dairy products. Limiting our intake of processed/refined carbohydrates and high sugar foods fits 'hand in glove' with reducing our health risks.

When we integrate whole, plant-based foods into our diet, including a variety of colorful vegetables, whole grains, and fruits, we will help to reduce the risk of chronic disease. We can actively maintain blood pressure levels, lower cholesterol levels, promote better blood glucose control, reduce cancer risk, improve brain health, promote healthy weight, improve mood, and promote overall health.



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Making the right food choices is essential, but another part of self-care is maintaining a healthy gut to enjoy all the health benefits. So, what does it mean to maintain a healthy gut? The body is home to trillions of organisms, making up our microbiome. These organisms are all over our body, but they reside primarily in our intestines (gut). Our microbiome plays an active role in our health. The beneficial bacteria help to keep the harmful bacteria in check. The proper balance of bacteria in our gut is vital to a healthy heart, kidney, brain, appetite, feeling of hunger or fullness, skin health, dental health, reduction of inflammation, and overall health.

So how do we develop a healthy microbiome that works in our favor? A good balance of prebiotics and probiotics is essential for our gut health. Prebiotic foods like bananas, greens, broccoli, onions, garlic, asparagus, artichoke, whole wheat, jicama root, berries, apples, and dandelion greens, should be consumed regularly. Probiotics are live active cultures found in foods like yogurt and aged cheeses, also fermented vegetables like

sauerkraut, kimchi, kombucha, and tempeh, all helping to boost our immune system.

Another part of self-care is being mindful when eating. What kind of mood are you in when you are eating? Is eating a relaxing activity for you? Do you enjoy the taste and flavor of the food you eat? Do you eat slowly, and do you thoroughly chew your food? Are you distracted, or are you focused on what you are eating? Part of mindful eating is stopping when you are satisfied, not when you are full. If you are 'in the moment,' you will enjoy your meals more and avoid overeating.



Self-care also involves participating in regular physical activity. Physical activity should be a part of our everyday routine as it's a cornerstone for many health benefits. Good physical self-care is also about getting enough sleep. Sleep increases our focus, energy, and concentration, and this can make us more productive. Studies show that lack of sleep can lead to mood disorders, depression, and anxiety. The recommended eight hours of uninterrupted sleep daily should be our goal.

God has gifted us 24 hours daily. We spend our waking hours on the go. How much of that time do we spend taking care of our physical, emotional, and spiritual selves? How many hours do we spend with God? Matthew 22:37 reminds us that we should *"love the Lord [our] God with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul and with all [our] mind."* Taking care of our bodies and minimizing ill-health so that we can fulfill our Godly purpose is an ideal way of showing our love for Him.

We should never deny ourselves that self-care. We should be taking the time for self-care in all its forms.

Remember, self-care is not selfish. Self-care energizes our efforts to take care of others emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Taking care of our bodies puts us in a much better position to take care of each other.

Beginning with this holiday season and continuing through 2022, let us further develop the desire and strengthen our commitment to better care for ourselves.

How many hours do we 'love' ourselves daily?

Happy Holidays!



## Ministry Corner



*"If you do everything alone and never partner with other people, you create huge barriers to your potential."*

– Anonymous

2021 has been another greenhouse year for Evangel's Faith & Wellness Ministry, proving that behind every successful unit or organization is the **team** of people who made it successful. As members of the Wellness Ministry, we congratulate and thank each other for bringing their experiences and ideas to the table. We leveraged those contributions and created accomplishments throughout the year proving that anything is possible when we cooperate and collaborate.

Also, we thank you, all of our supporters. You are part of the Wellness team. You showed up, participated in every activity, and allowed us to brighten and strengthen your lives. We have been blessings to each other.

At the end of 2020, when planning and brainstorming for 2021, we needed a storm to blow away the dark, negative emotions brought about by the

pandemic. We received that booster shot when we reminded ourselves that God works where there is an attitude of faith. Being champions, we nourished our spirits with the inspiration from 2 Timothy 1:6, which reminded us, ***"...to stir into flame, the strength, and boldness that is in you..."*** We had our voice for 2021!

Our voice would not be a passive voice but a very active voice demonstrating that the flame of the Faith & Wellness Ministry was burning bright every day. We were busy as bees planning and hosting:

***An Evening of Appreciation  
Anniversary Service  
Cultural Festival and  
Faith & Wellness Seminar***



We are 'tooting our horn' because the **commitment** by every person closed the door on negativity whenever it tried to put out the flame of the dream. Commitment was our adhesive, bonding us together, over long hours, in preparation for every venture. It was that individual commitment that generated the teamwork to make our dreams come true.

Every event hosted and every meeting held virtually was seasoned with team-work and collaboration, making it possible

for us to declare 2021 a season of favor. Yes, we enjoyed another year of the Lord's favor in every aspect of our lives and if we were the conduits that our Lord shaped us to be, then His favor was poured into the lives of others, also.

Fortune favors the brave. As we face the challenges of 2022, all of us need to encourage ourselves and others to take bold actions and keep the flames of achievement and prosperity burning bright.

We will share in the rewards, together, as keepers of the flame.



### ***Keeping the Right Perspective (cont'd)***

Promised Land (enemy territory) as 'spies,' they focused on community development in the new life ahead. Joshua and Caleb never allowed self-interest to diminish the prospect of developing a new lifestyle in a new place for their migrant community. We are inclined to identify our role models by their behavior and decisions. When we look below the surface of their behavior, we see the characteristics that come together to form the behavior that attracts us.

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**Keeping the Right Perspective (cont'd)**

That’s the nourishment we need to develop and keep the right perspective. The thing about choosing our role models is that we soon become role models for our peers and the younger generation who need the right nourishment to bear good fruit.

The spies brought back evidence of the good fruits that grew in the Promised Land, but 10 of the 12 spies did not return with the **attitude of good seed** to sow good fruit into their community of two million people. They were ready to sow fear instead of favor.

Could you imagine keeping the fire of favor ‘burning in your belly’ for 40 years as you live in a community that’s fearful of the

future? With us, one of two things would likely happen. Either we would move out of the community, or the ‘fire in our belly’ would go out as we conform to the ways of others. But Joshua and Caleb have proven that we don’t have to give in and give up. For 40 years, they did not acknowledge defeat. They had God’s favor molding their behavior and cultivating role models that others were emulating and becoming role models themselves.

During their time of waiting, God kept the fire in their bellies burning as He was grooming a new generation for the journey into the Promised Land.

God gave Joshua and Caleb that second chance. Scripture tells us that they were of a different spirit, an **excellent**

**spirit**. That sounds like us. Just as Joshua and Caleb had the **right perspective** of who God is, so do we.

How have we been learning from our role models? Have we been developing into good role models, keeping the right perspective?

Forty years after their disappointment, Caleb said, “I’m stronger and more determined than ever to take this land.” Bring on the giants!

After our setbacks, this year which were actually ‘set ups’ intended to develop us further, are we ready to fight the ‘negative reports’ that kept us from planting good seed?

Can we **keep the right perspective** as we march into 2022?

**Word Search**

**Words Associated with Christmas**

P	M	E	S	S	I	A	H	K	S	T	Y	F	S	A	B
E	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	D	V	N	N	E	A
A	N	G	E	L	S	S	A	I	W	N	O	M	O	L	B
C	J	M	A	N	G	E	R	C	S	S	S	T	W	D	Y
E	I	O	E	P	O	H	Y	N	A	L	H	C	F	N	O
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L	S	T	A	R	A	E	B	S	A	V	I	O	R	D	A
E	E	F	X	V	I	H	O	A	G	N	I	G	N	I	R
B	J	O	S	E	P	H	P	N	G	B	I	X	G	T	F

Advent	Angels
Baby	Bells
Bethlehem	Candle
Celebrate	Christ
Christmas	
Frankincense	Gabriel
Greeting	Heavenly
Host	Holly
Holiday	Hope
Holy Night	Immanuel
Jingle bells	Joseph
Jesus	Joy
Merry	Mary
Manger	Messiah
Myrrh	Noel
Peace on Earth	
Peace	Ringing
Star	Shephard
Season	Snow
Savior	Silver Bells
Snowflakes	Thankful
Tidings	Wisemen



Rev. Carolyn C. Blair, C.A.S., M.S. Ed.

## ***Spiritual Self-Care for the Soul***

Often, our Lord and Savior sends us with a message for others, and there, He surprises us with an outpouring, so spiritually nutritious, for us to take back to others as a means of developing healthy attitudes and habits among them.

That's how I felt when I participated in the Faith and Wellness Virtual Seminar with dozens of other people. With everyone bringing something to share at the ***Committed to Wellness: Self-Care is My Responsibility*** gathering of the minds, there was a lot to take back to nourish the people for whom they are responsible.

In her invitation, Sheryl Phillips highlighted that the seminar would be a 'playground' for all in attendance. She invited us to be part of the evening's interactive style of enjoyment while we contributed and nourished each other, improving our well-being.

Improving our well-being includes Spiritual Self-Care for the Soul. So, what is Soul Care? Soul Care is essentially learning to live our life with God. Soul Care is not about us doing; it's

about what God is doing within us and how we connect with God. We simply place ourselves in a position for God to care for us, attend to our souls, and let God's plan supersede ours. It is a space where we allow the lover of our souls to have His way – to tend, care, nurture, correct, and guide – to renew our inner beings and fill us to overflowing with God's love and care.

Most of us are ***care GIVERS***, and we are constantly pouring our souls, our gifts into others. We don't receive the necessary replenishment at the rate we give, so we become not only physically but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually drained. In my work with pastors and clergy, many don't realize how exhausted they are, spiritually, from listening to the concerns of their congregants, praying for and dealing with the sick and dying, and especially during this pandemic, the many who have had deaths in the family. (My husband and I stopped counting our death toll earlier this year when we reached 100 people between us.)

So, added to clergy having to deal with all of that, they are also dealing with their family issues, personal and financial, and their own life pursuits, but yet, they keep pushing and pushing.

The Spiritual Life and Practice Committee of the

UCCNY Metropolitan Association, which I chair, has the tagline ***'Let us help you feed your soul as you feed others.'*** It's both an invitation and a reminder that, yes, each of us must care for and feed our soul, and build up our spiritual stamina, but we also need to be aware that we are not alone in our efforts.

The lively and generous interaction of the seminar's participants raised the awareness about ***helping to feed your soul as you feed others***.

When our soul grows weary from all of life's challenges, we must make sure that we turn to Christ, who restores it. Soul Care is focused around Christ and spending time with the Father when we begin to grow weak. He is our source and strength. Spiritual Soul Care requires the same effort you put into self-care – a better diet, exercise, setting boundaries, and personal enjoyment time.

Let's build a ***Spiritual Self Care Soul Pack***. You can use it every day to build stamina when you need it.

***Pay your tithes on time*** to God through worship, prayer, and reading. There are 24 hours in a day and if you are awake for a minimum of 16 hours (with 8 hours for sleep), give God 1.6 hours which is 96 minutes per day. Intentionally, devote your time to God in worship.

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## ***Spiritual Self-Care for the Soul (cont'd)***

***Pray and Praise without ceasing.*** Make it a practice to commune with God every day and feel His presence in your life, all day. As a part of the 96 minutes or however you tithe your time, intentionally in the middle of what you are doing, you can give thanks and ask God for continued guidance. Specifically, pray for yourself. Show God that you love yourself so that you can love your neighbor as yourself.

***Read the Bible.*** You cannot be armed with energy, stamina, or fulfill your needs if you are not re-energizing yourself with God's Word.

*"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4, ESV)."*

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."*  
(Proverbs 3:5-8, ESV)

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*

*12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. Ephesians 6:10-20.*

***Exercise.*** My hubby and I have a 10-cent challenge asking people to intentionally set a goal for 10,000 steps per day ( Ask Rev. Cynthia how she's improving her health by walking.) We say we will PUSH and WUSH (Pray Until Something Happens

and Walk Until Something Happens.)

***Have a Day of Temperance*** and intentionally give up something, maybe food. Unplug and make it a low-tech day as you turn off your television, computer, cell phone, and other electronics.

This is only a glimpse of the journey to Spiritual Self Care for the Soul. Take it seriously and rest in the arms of God.

Source: *Soul Care vs. Self Care? The Differences & Similarities Explained (justdisciple.com)*  
Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles for a Healthy Soul by [Dr. Rob Reimer](#)  
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<https://www.facebook.com/devasingercarolyn>



*Merry  
Christmas*

*Happy New Year*



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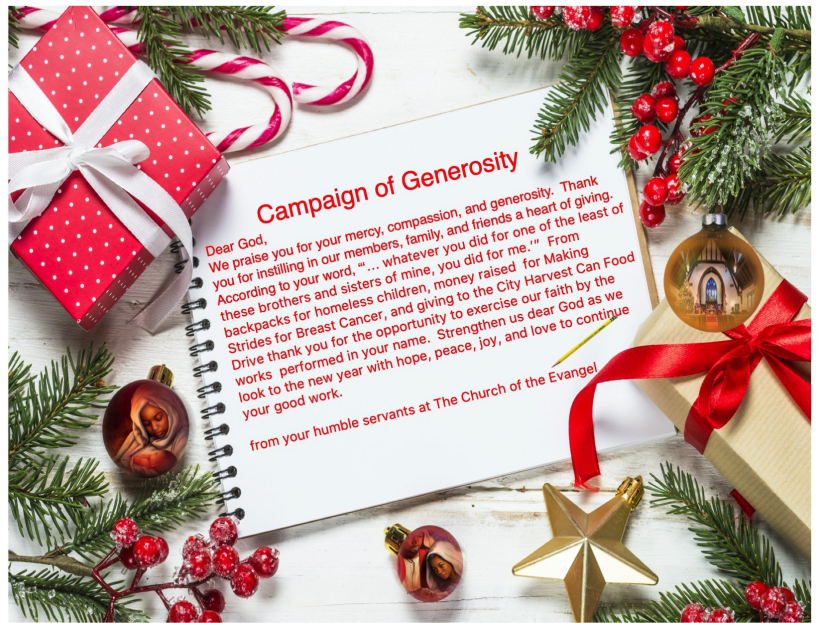
Email: [churchofevangel@optonline.net](mailto:churchofevangel@optonline.net)

Web:

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)



Photo by Ray Raman



### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom  
(2022 sessions begin on January 10th)**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

### **CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

### **WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION**



### **PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

**Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386**



*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

*They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.*

*Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

September 2021

## Make Self-Care a Priority



### Let's Walk & Talk About Who it Impacts

by the Wellness Ministry and  
Darrell Walker

Again, we *Walk* because it's necessary but let's *Talk* because we **must** do that. Let's speak into the lives of each other, female and male.

The impact of a diagnosis feels like a knockout punch. But we overcome that 'punch to the gut' by sharing our diagnosis with others in confidence and beginning to build a support team for 'fighting cancer.' We have a new title with a new focus, Survivor!

There are over 3.5 million breast cancer survivors in the United States, and every year the number is growing. But, deaths from the disease continue to decrease due to early detection and treatment. Our awareness, support, and contributions go a long way towards a victory for every survivor.

So, yes, participating in the October *Walk* is necessary for us to do, but we **must** do the *Talk* from January to December. Breast Cancer brings hurt; we have to speak healing into our own lives and the lives of other survivors, filling them with hope and showing our support. Sharing can be emotionally draining, but as we pour out, we receive emotional and spiritual sustenance that energizes us, physically and emotionally. Expect it, receive it, accept it!

*(cont'd on next page)*



Church of the Evangel,  
UCC

### Up Coming Events

- Church of Evangel, UCC  
114th Anniversary Service  
October 3, 2021 @ 10:30 am
- Breast Cancer Walk  
October 10, 2021 @ 8:00 am
- Women of Evangel: Virtual Tea Party  
October 30, 2021 @ 4:00 pm
- Wellness @ Evangel Ministry  
Virtual Faith & Wellness Seminar  
November 13, 2021 @ 2:00 pm

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## ***Let's Walk & Talk About Who it Impacts*** *(cont'd)*

Since 2015, the Church of the Evangel has participated in the *Walk*.



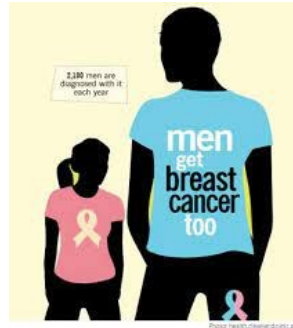
That year, we joined the 3,500 people dressed in pink tutus, some with pink hair, all sorts of pink accessories, on the *Walk* around Manhattan, into Brooklyn, and back into Manhattan, ending on Randall's Island to complete the first day's 26-mile *Walk*.

In sisterhood, those brave women walked to fight breast cancer. Some walked with one breast, some with none. Many walked with the fear of having breast cancer. Others walked in memory of loved ones.

Powerfully, they all walked to aid in finding a cure. They walked carrying inspirational banners and signs: THE POWER OF 39 IS IN YOU; EVERY BLISTER SAVES A SISTER; SAVE THE BOOBIES; SUPPORT THE FIGHTERS, ADMIRE THE SURVIVORS, HONOR THE TAKEN, throughout the long 26 miles on the first day and the additional 13 miles on day

two. Their power, generosity, compassion, and goodwill propelled them in their commitment to end breast cancer.

### **Breast Cancer Across the Sexes**



Breast cancer in men is rare, but it's real. Men have breast tissue, and cancer cells can develop in almost every part of the body. Male breast cancer is just as serious as female breast cancer. Of the estimated 2,500 new cases of breast cancer in men, every year, approximately 460 lives are lost. (*American Cancer Society*). Men diagnosed with breast cancer have a worse survival rate than women. ***Call your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms:***

A lump in one breast, a nipple that pushes inward (inverted nipple), discharge from the nipple, pain in the nipple, redness, scaling, dimpling, or other changes to the skin over the breast, redness or sores on the nipple and areola (the colored ring around the nipple), or swollen lymph nodes under your arm.

*How men can reduce their risk*

*of breast cancer*

Many risks for breast cancer, like family history and age, are beyond our control, but we can control some risk factors, including obesity.

Here are some tips to help lower our odds of getting breast cancer:

*Keep our weight within a healthy range.* If we're overweight, the hormone balance in our body can shift, making us more likely to get breast cancer. We need to talk to our doctors and dietitians about changing our eating and exercise plans.

*Daily/regular exercise.* A lack of physical activity can alter our hormone levels, making us more susceptible to cancer.

*Avoid or limit alcohol.* There is a link between having two or more alcoholic drinks every day and an increased risk of breast cancer in women. The link isn't as clear in men, but we should still consider cutting back on the daily drinks.

### **Breast Cancer Support**

Being the partner of a survivor puts you "in the thick of things" as a care provider. Brother, when the lady in your life carries the title, Survivor, that's a badge of honor that you are required to respect and visibly support. Be thankful, proud, and encouraging to her! Your understanding and  
*(cont'd on next page)*

## Let's Walk & Talk About Who it Impacts

(cont'd)

support are invaluable as her emotional therapy, and they are equally vital to the survivor as chemotherapy.

Her doctors space her chemotherapy treatment over weeks, but her emotional therapy, you will realize it's needed every day, throughout the day.

Your lives have changed, so your expectations need to be adjusted. You need to understand that the lady's energy level will be low during treatment, and this will continue after treatment, so your helping hands and compassionate attitude are essential.

Sister, when the man in your life becomes a Survivor, the Lord develops in you the

discipline and tolerance to be his primary caregiver. You have a new purpose for which you will receive the wisdom and the strength to make the necessary changes to complement the one you are already embracing. Yes, there will be ups and downs but believe that the Lord ensures everything works together for your good. Trust in the Lord and do good throughout the day.

### Coney Island Walk

We invite you to join us for the 2021 *Walk* on Sunday, October 10, at Coney Island as we continue the fight to end breast cancer.

Click on the link below to join our team and/or donate.

[Church of the Evangel Walking by Faith](http://main.acsevents.org/goto/ChurchoftheEvangelWalkingbyFaith)

(<http://main.acsevents.org/goto/ChurchoftheEvangelWalkingbyFaith>)

Let us continue to be a blessing to others because, as it is written, *"And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news'"* Romans 10:15.

We dedicate this year's *Walk & Talk* to the memory of Rubie Malone who continues to inspire us all.



## JOIN THE FIGHT JOIN THE TEAM

[Churchoftheevangel-walkingbyfaith](http://Churchoftheevangel-walkingbyfaith)

MAKING STRIDES BREAST CANCER WALK  
OCTOBER 10, 2021  
Begins at 8AM  
CONEY ISLAND  
Maimonides Park

Make donation by mail, drop-off or QR code  
At

Church of the Evangel, UCC  
1950 Bedford Ave.  
Brooklyn, NY 11225  
718-287-1189

Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor





## ***The Black Woman Rests in Her Wellness***

by the *Wellness Ministry*

We keep going because we think *we need to*.

Achievement and expectation drive us, so *we keep going*. Are our lives similar to a roundabout, nowhere to pull aside unless we create that place that will be the 'rest stop' for us?

We often don't recognize our health and wellness as being high on our value totem pole. Society has given us a lifetime of teachings that achievement and performance should dominate our values.

Achievement and performance are like hand-in-glove, dependent on each other, and only when there is a visible physical injury do we see that they cancel out each other. When our ability to perform and achieve is challenged by a mental 'drop off,' and we choose to ignore it by working through it, our performance negatively affects our achievement, and we are hurting ourselves. It's time for healing, short-term, and maybe for a bit longer.

This year, so far, we have seen two young athletes choose to go to the 'rest stop.' Naomi Osaka, citing mental health issues, including depression, withdrew from the French Open Tennis Tournament.



Many criticized her for withdrawing from the tournament, saying that she should have been able to work through her wellness challenges, being a well-paid professional.

A few months later, at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, Simone Biles chose not to participate in a few events, citing mental challenges. She, too, had some criticism leveled at her because of her decision and her professional status.



We witnessed two young women who knew their power and value but correctly respected their body signals to stop and rest to heal. The world applauded these two role models for their bravery and wisdom as they correctly prioritized their well-being.

What about us, the decisions we make, the way we live our lives also make us role models. Are we showing that we have the willingness and power to stop and rest from our busy schedules to attend to our mental wellness challenges? Or do we believe our lives will devalue if we stopped for healing?

We are exhausted and have not taken a break. We are programmed to produce under conditions that create mental 'drop off,' leaving us stressed and depressed. We are no longer whole. We are out, working, or we are outworking someone or doing both. We might think it's income, but it's a mental expense for us. Why are we working so hard? Have we visited our values lately?

Naomi and Simone made the choice of mental wellness above notoriety. Let's add our names to the list to receive healing, also.

We have value; our lives matter to us and those who are already learning from the legacy we are living. We need to be whole again in body, mind, and spirit. Let us embrace our need for mental wellness.



## ***Pray Without Ceasing***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

*Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.*  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

We often question if it is possible to pray without ceasing. I don't know the true

*(cont'd on next page)*

## ***Pray Without Ceasing***

*(cont'd)*

answer, but we could explore the possibility together. How do you spend your day?

The twenty-four hours God has gifted you. How much of it do you spend communicating with Him. How much of that 24 hours do you give back to God? We can communicate with God in many ways; praying, reading and meditating on the word, singing, listening to music, even by just being quiet and listening instead of speaking. So often, we talk more than we listen.

Listening is an essential skill if we are to reach the world as God commands us to do.

So how can we effectively use our 24 hours? Most of us have the beginning and the end covered. We usually start the day with Jesus in our morning devotions and end the day with Him in our devotional and quiet prayer time before bed, but what happens during the hours between rising and going to bed? Do we think of our Heavenly Father? Do we communicate with Him? Are we so busy with life's activities that we forget to communicate with Him? If He is our best friend, why do we fail to connect during the day? He is our constant companion, so why do we act as if He is not there? He promised He will be with us always, yet so often, we do not acknowledge His presence.

God promises that He would not give us challenges we cannot handle. Instead of believing in God's promises, we doubt and complain, accusing God of abandonment, not acknowledging that he had been carrying us all the time.

When we have a challenge or good news to share, who do we call? We call our best friend because we are looking for that instant response. We neglect to turn to our Heavenly Father, our best friend who promised He will be there, always. If we communicate more often, He will be on our minds, and more and more that praying without ceasing idea will come to life.



## ***Bridging the Disconnect***



*Simone Biles, the greatest gymnast of our time – or any time in history.*

by the *Wellness Ministry*

Simone Biles has won more World Championship medals than any other gymnast, male or female.

Which photo connects you with that truth; the one above or the one at the top of the next column?



When Simone announced her decision not to compete in a few events at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics but to focus on her health instead, did she have our 'wholehearted' support?

Health vs. Celebrity! Making history meant 'pushing the envelope' mentally and physically throughout the years, continuously. Keeping mind and body synchronized, at all times, living up to external expectations, and being driven by the personal desire to achieve had to be a continuous 'pressure' situation.

All of us have been there, or maybe, we are like Simone, experiencing a tug-of-war between expectations and our health? Which one is of more significant concern to us? Are we willing to stop being the performer and be the person, and how do we achieve that?



*(cont'd on page 7)*



## ***The Sound of Music Helps My Self-Care***

*Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; celebrate God's lovely name with music. Psalm 135:3*

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

After several months of 'beat down' by the pandemic, I had an eye-opening, foot-tapping moment, remembering something that was sadly lacking in my day, music.

I love playing music and listening to music as it has been instrumental in uplifting my spirit throughout the years, giving me that comfortable feeling.

I started playing musical favorites from my collection, and soon, I was returning to my 'upbeat' nature and kick-started my self-care. Feeling a difference in my body, I was moving into a more relaxed state of mind. Reaching back into my season as a DJ and allowing the Staple Singers and James Brown to get me 'on the good foot' again was a great encouragement to walk up and down the

36 stairs in the apartment building, two or three times a day and work on my heart rate.

When I ventured outside, the walk to the corner store or 125th Street was like a musical adventure as I was encouraged by hits from Sly and the Family Stone and Kirk Franklin, inspiring me to feel better about myself. There was 'pep in my step,' doing 'the Hustle' as in the disco days, and a smile on my face, behind my mask. The combination of my headphones and cell phone filling me with positive musical messages was a means of release from some of the stressful experiences that previously seemed unavoidable. Now, I was connecting with a joyful feeling that never ran out.

Sitting at my keyboard and playing gospel and classical music (Mozart, Bach, and others) was reconnecting with the Cynthia that the pandemic was trying to make into a non-factor. Playing some of the organ selections I learned as a church musician added to the relaxation of my body and mind. My stress level was decreasing.

Reconnecting with my music helped me to realize how blessed I have been and continue to be. My mood was better than good; it was encouraging. I confess that in my preparing for Sunday Services and my studies, I would 'keep the music playing.' Music has been leveraging my daily

activity, boosting my mental and emotional self-care. Music encourages my spirit to desire more time outdoors.

You may have had a deep love for music, dancing, or maybe poetry, and the attachment may have been severed lately. I encourage you to reconnect to that positive and inspiring element that brings music and joy to your spirit.

In the past 580 days of the pandemic, it may not seem like there was much to sing praises about, but God's gift of music has truly made a positive difference for me. I urge you to reconnect with your gift because it will significantly boost your self-care each day of your journey.

The way my 'On-Time God' has made me so appreciative and super blessed with the Sound of Music, He will also bless you as you use your gift.

Thank you, Lord, for the multitude of gifts you've given us!



## Self-Care

*Does it matter who I am?  
Do you see the silent tears?  
The scars, the pain, the shame  
That is eating away at my soul.  
Did you care to ask, why the change?  
Who cares?  
But, that was yesterday!*

*Today, I reclaim my life, fixated on the new  
Speak to my inner soul  
Breathe, the breath of fresh air  
Reclaim the energy stolen from me.  
I know who I am!  
I am beautiful, I am worthy, and I am valued  
I can reflect and correct.*

*I allow myself to forgive and forget  
To be kind to me and others  
To dream big and conquer my fears  
Quiet my mind to hear  
The soft whisper of those who care.*

*By: Karen Benjamin-Abrigo*



Others are experiencing similar situations. So, let's invite and encourage them to join you and us, and let us all learn together how to 'bridge the disconnect gap' in a safe and respectful forum.

We will be learning about necessary life changes and coping strategies to keep us at the top of our game, strengthening our decision-making to put us in a position to be the best we can be.

November 13 will be a gold medal day in our lives as we learn from each other, the techniques that will create better balance emotionally and physically, making us winners every day.

We encourage you to bring a team. No COVID protocols to dissuade or deny anyone participation.

Contact Sheryl Phillips at [Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com) with the names of your team members.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Faith & Wellness Seminar**  
**Theme:**  
**Self-Care, My Responsibility**  
**November 13, 2021**  
**Donation: \$20.00**

## Bridging the

### Disconnect (cont'd)

On November 13, at our Wellness Ministry's Virtual Health & Wellness Seminar, "Self-Care, My Responsibility," healthcare professionals will help us bridge the emotional disconnect that many are experiencing. Our emotional 'drop off' will be one of the many self-care topics we will be

addressing, so we invite you to 'join in' and learn better ways to prioritize and remain connected emotionally, physically, financially, and spiritually.

2020 COVID created an actual 'pressure' situation for us and continues to keep us in an atmosphere of 'disconnect' where it's still difficult to grab on to reality.

## Ministry Corner

### ***The Crops at Evangel Are Ripe and Ready for Harvesting***



**TOGETHER  
WE CAN DO IT**

by Pastor Cynthia, the Wellness Ministry, and the Prayer & Bible Study Ministry

Our church needs more volunteers. Volunteering at Evangel is a way to get our eyes off of ourselves (no selfie-ism) and strengthen the body that God created through Christ.

We have heard the call to serve, and when we take on the roles God has given us, we are moving closer to being that single body He intends for us to be.

The lack in several action areas at Evangel has reduced our effectiveness, making the message of 1 Corinthians 12:26 true but also filling us with hope, *"...if one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is praised, every part shares its happiness."*

God intends that every one of us be a church volunteer: *"Now you are the body of Christ,*

*and each one of you is a part of it."* (1 Corinthians 12:27) so, as we step up, voluntarily, contributing our time, we are the 'workers' needed for the crops that are ripe and ready for harvesting at Evangel. (shades of John 4:35).

As our graphic suggests, pulling together enables us to be more efficient as a body. Efficiency breathes encouragement, and when we feel encouraged, we become willing and soon realize that we're able to do the things we are blessed to do and move Evangel along. Everything we do must be helpful to our church.

Each of us has helped our church weather the storms of 2020. We 'showed up, opening umbrellas of hope doing **'everything'** that we could in our efforts to support each other, serving not just in any capacity but in **every** capacity, as was needed, and truly appreciated.

This new season in which we are operating requires continued 'hands-on' attention from all of us to willingly and diligently serve, as we are blessed to do. God gives all of us the ability to do what He wants us to do, says 1 Corinthians 12:6.

We are **essential workers** in the garden at Evangel. We have been learning and teaching valuable lessons of 'service' for the sake of survival as we continue to make the well-being

of each member of the Evangel family and our community our given responsibility.

Evangel is on a drive to lift the willingness of everyone to work towards a future harvest. You are invited to participate in *"More Hands Needed"* throughout the upcoming months in 2021.

Our earlier statement about God intending for each of us to be a church volunteer is worthy of repeating as it describes our responsibility to be an active part of the body.

Volunteering as workers gives us that 'hands-on' opportunity to do essential things, and it also raises the awareness of the crucial support needed to provide for each other.

As volunteers, we are increasing our self-esteem, sense of purpose, and desire to contribute while highlighting our willingness to put in the work that produces good fruit.

Evangel is reaching out to you, encouraging you to reach out and be trailblazers in any of the ministries or/and the daily general responsibilities of our church. We see where the principles highlighted in the parable of the faithful servants dominate the thinking of each of us. Serving is giving back some of the *"much that has been given to us."* We have proven that we

*(cont'd on next page)*



## The Crops at Evangel Are Ripe and Ready for Harvesting *(cont'd)*

do not have “slothful” hearts, and we have so much for which to be thankful.

As we avoid thoughts of ‘I don’t know,’ and “I can’t do’ and realize that God knows; that’s why He calls us, so that He can do exciting things through us.

Let’s talk to Rev. Cynthia, expressing our enthusiasm to serve. She will show us where our skills and talents are needed immediately. Our deacons will position us for success, allowing us to unfold our initiatives and ideas for this new season at Evangel.



by Donald E. Nieuenkirk,  
Men's Fellowship

Brothers, sisters, thank you for your overwhelming support over the years, the latest being your response to the 2021 Fathers' Day appeal.

During the unyielding COVID-19 pandemic that did not allow for our yearly fundraising efforts, your response was especially significant in this time of great need, extending yourselves to help the church meet and honor

some of its financial commitments.

Women of Evangel, you continue to support our efforts which could not be as successful without your participation. We recognize and appreciate you!

Brothers, sisters, may God's blessings continue to fill your lives.



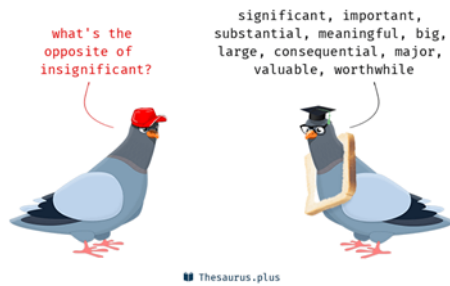
*To all the men who came out to give the Church's fence a face lift. We appreciate you!*

## Word Search

### Words Associated with Coronavirus

C	P	R	E	V	E	N	T	I	O	N	E	G	A	H	R
O	N	E	T	U	H	X	G	N	I	T	S	E	T	L	M
U	A	V	X	Z	G	L	J	D	S	M	Q	T	E	S	A
G	R	E	W	E	B	I	S	A	I	K	Z	V	T	N	P
H	E	F	S	Y	S	F	T	I	T	V	O	A	E	E	R
D	Z	M	S	U	O	I	G	A	T	N	O	C	B	E	O
A	I	E	H	V	A	C	A	K	F	L	N	C	Z	Z	T
E	T	H	D	E	F	N	I	P	A	A	O	I	R	E	E
R	I	C	E	T	R	Y	E	M	T	R	F	N	J	H	C
P	N	A	T	M	C	D	V	S	O	P	W	A	T	Y	T
S	A	D	C	A	O	J	I	N	Y	T	R	T	U	T	I
E	S	A	E	S	I	D	A	M	T	M	U	E	O	I	O
H	I	E	F	K	L	V	E	N	M	A	P	D	L	N	N
T	C	H	N	A	I	Z	I	R	S	U	G	T	L	U	O
P	K	V	I	R	U	S	R	S	N	S	N	C	O	M	P
O	V	C	U	D	A	E	R	P	S	A	E	I	R	M	X
T	O	S	C	O	N	G	E	S	T	I	O	N	T	I	S
S	D	E	L	T	A	V	A	R	I	A	N	T	T	Y	B

- Coronavirus
- Covid
- Contagious
- Cough
- Congestion
- Disease
- Delta Variant
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Get Vaccinated
- Herd immunity
- Headache
- Immunity
- Infected
- Janssen
- Mask
- Moderna
- MRNA
- Nausea
- Novel
- Prevention
- Pfizer
- Protection
- Roll out
- Social distance
- Sick
- Symptoms
- Spread
- Sanitize
- Sneeze
- Stop the spread
- Taste
- Testing
- Virus



## Feeling Insignificant?

by Brian Ward

We have all had the experience of being made to feel petty and not worthy of consideration.

People will see us as insignificant, thinking that we are too small to face the challenge or not important enough to bring about change. They look at us and believe that we are without the power or influence to make a difference. Therefore, they tend not to give us the encouragement, recognition, and their blessing, but we can't let that bother, distract or deter us.

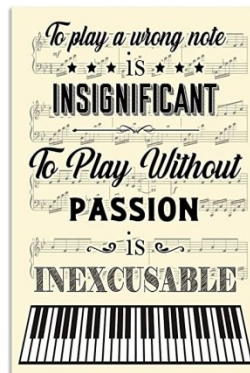
We can't allow them or their lack of vision to turn us into becoming insignificant. Such negativity and disbelief run off of us like water off a duck's back. Daily, we show them by our commitment and determination that a superior power source drives our passion, and it never runs low.

Our determination, grit, and focus are sourced from 1 Samuel 17:37 where, when he was telling Saul, I'm the real deal, David said, *"The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the*

*lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."* And Saul said to David, *"Go, and the Lord be with you!"*

Just like David, we are anointed to be courageously answering our call, just as he did. As we *"Go"* as God moves us, He will be with us, as promised. The negative titles that others gave us were all dissolved when God called us Overcomers.

Paul tells us that all of those things, the lack of vision, discouragement, pettiness, and negativity that others channel our way, will be used for good. We are being used for good in significant ways.



We have to be passionate about our tasks and assignments. David was sincere in his task as a sheep-herder, and he fought the hardships of attacks by a lion and a bear. What he was doing meant something to him as he was regularly conversing with God and singing praises to Him. Those victories over a lion and a bear were huge victories that positioned and propelled David towards his next challenge, Goliath, which he ran towards, never feeling insignificant.

David knew God had his back.

David seemed to be a big fan of 'answered prayer.' We see him writing songs of thanks, and about God's greatness each time God rescued him and even in advance of God's rescue. David recognized God's significance to his life. Maybe we should take some time and do likewise, identifying and acknowledging that God also has our backs as He continuously delivers us from some life-challenging situations.

Our relationship with God should be highlighting His significance in our lives as He makes us Overcomers.

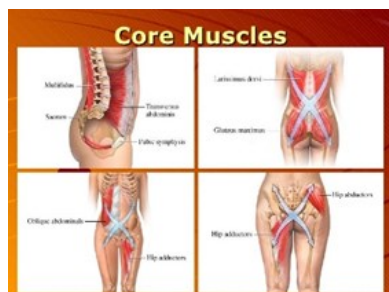
Like David, let us consider that quiet time we spend with God as *significant, important, substantial, meaningful, big, large, consequential, major, valuable, and worthwhile*, increasing our faith for today's battles.

## A Call to Service

### Join Our Team

1. Church Clerk
2. Trustee Board Member
3. Deacon
4. Treasurer

Bring your skills to any of our church ministries and do your part in continuing our legacy of service.



## Strengthen Your Core

by Sheryl Phillips

If you speak with any Personal Trainer, Exercise Instructor, or Physical Therapist long enough, you will learn of the importance of strengthening your core; the mid-section of your body. They will talk about developing your abdominal and lower back muscles and stabilizing your spine. A strong core strengthens our balance. It helps us to avoid falls and injuries in our everyday activities.

Tying our shoelaces, picking up an object from the floor, reaching to get something from a shelf, bathing, dressing, twisting, sitting, or standing for extended periods, playing golf, tennis, and swimming all require a strong core. Strong core muscles are necessary at any stage in life.

As we strengthen our physical bodies by engaging in exercises, we are strengthening our core muscles. Remember, *Wellness* is not just about physical strength. *Wellness* also focuses on our spiritual strength. We need to meet with God, our Spiritual Trainer, regularly to develop our spiritual muscles. Mark 12:30 reminds us we must

love the Lord with our heart, mind, and soul, our spiritual core muscles. These three muscles enable us to love God wholly and completely, but we need to exercise them to become strong spiritually. We must spend time in prayer and Bible study as a daily exercise to strengthen our spiritual muscles to avoid becoming weak, complacent, and lukewarm Christians. Spiritual fitness gives us the strength to handle life's challenges and respond with a strong heart, soul, and mind. Being strong emotionally/mentally is vital in helping us deal with the many challenges life throws at us.

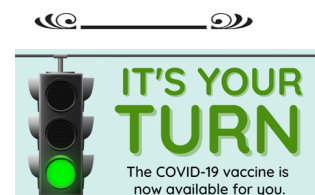
Being spiritually fit is no less important than being physically fit. We must exercise our spiritual muscles daily. Spending time in prayer and Bible study, not just alone but in small groups, helps us understand the Word better. We need to memorize verses reminding us of God's love and His many promises, and we need to trust Him to keep them. Trusting God is a daily exercise. Spending time in quiet reverence with God and allowing Him to pour His spirit of love into us will give us the spiritual strength to be the message and share His Word with the people we interact with daily and do so with confidence.

Spiritual strength equips us with the tools we need to battle life's inevitable storms. God's promises are our life vest and

our lifeline in the storms of life.

The world appears to be in turmoil. There is so much uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus, the loss of family members and friends, the increase in violence in our communities, and the change in weather patterns. Our emotional stability is continuously challenged, but we focus on God, believing in His promises, spending quiet time daily, meditating on His word. Involving ourselves in activities that bring us joy will help restore our emotional strength.

We know that the enemy does not want us to succeed. He is busy throwing obstacles in our path, so we must always be prepared physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The enemy does not want us to be strong. Still, we must continue our daily exercises, consume a healthy diet, both naturally and spiritually, so we can be ready with a strong core, with God's help to withstand life's challenges.



It has never been easier to get a COVID-19 vaccination in New York City. New Yorkers, 12 years and older, can now get the COVID-19 vaccine at sites across the five boroughs. To find vaccination sites and to make an appointment, visit [nyc.gov/vaccinefinder](https://nyc.gov/vaccinefinder) or you can call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

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Photo by Ray Raman

### CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

### WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION



## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### AN OPEN INVITATION

#### Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

Welcomes You

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

### PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

Contact Darrell @ 917-689-0386



*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.*

*They burn for the families who lost loved ones.*

*They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.*

*Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.*

*These candles burn in memory of the lives lost in recent natural disasters.*

*The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*

# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021

## Make Selfcare a Priority



*We take care of our dental health but not our mental health.*

### **Coping with COVID-19 and Other Stressors**

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

*"I wish my life could be the same as it was "several" months ago, when God watched over me and cared for me." (Job 29:2). That's the inner feelings so many people, including me, continue to express, after more than a year of psychological trauma.*

Recently, while reading the Book of Job, that good and loyal follower of God, my thoughts were invaded by this scenario.

*How often is our mental health affected when our lives undergo drastic changes? My answer would be, "It's always affected! It may be for a short time or the recovery*

*period may take much longer than we would like but many times, our recovery is linked to an available listening and advisory resource plus our willingness to reach out and share our daily emotional experiences."*

Like so many others, I've seen changes in my mental mindset since the COVID-19 pandemic moved into my everyday life in March 2020. During the months that followed, just like Job, I've wanted my life and its surroundings to go back to being less traumatic; to be "normal" again (whatever that may mean).

I praise God for making my spiritual confidants available because, more and more, I've needed to have them speak a stabilizing and reassuring word into my life. I think of our many brothers and sisters who are going through similar challenges, needing someone who they trust and  
*(cont'd on next page)*



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

- *New Men's Fellowship: Father's Day/Men's Day June 20, 2021 @ 10:30 am*
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry: Cultural Festival July 24, 2021 @ 5:00 pm*
- *Wellness @ Evangel Ministry: Faith & Wellness Seminar November 13, 2021*

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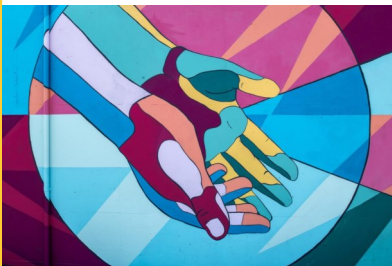
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## ***Coping with COVID-19 and Other Stressors***

*(cont'd)*

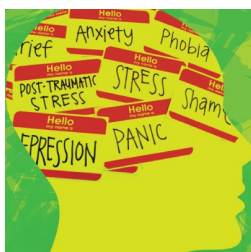
feel able to turn to when they have the need to share a situation, but unfortunately, they do not have such a person on speed dial.

The United Church of Christ (UCC) Mental Health Network is dedicated to serving this extraordinary need that seems to show its face more and more each day in the media.



The UCC Mental Health Network is following Jesus' lead, reaching out to the least, the lost, and the lonely, helping our fellow sisters and brothers restore balance to their lives and is there for anyone in need.

The UCCMHN recognizes God's call to us to see a future in which people with mental illnesses feel welcomed, supported, valued, and included in their communities.



This month of May, recognized as Mental Health

Awareness Month, is close to its last day but our mental health needs will not end on May 31 but will carry over into the coming months as the traumatic effects continue to be felt.

Whether COVID-19 has caused or compounded our trauma, it is equally important to know what is going on with those of us who are dealing with mind challenges; our families, friends and others we may come to know as we provide support.

It's unlikely that we can recover from stress, anxiety, depression and other stressors without care from others. Scripture tells us about the man who was mentally unstable, disconnected from his community and living in the cemetery. Jesus stepped in and healed him, returning him to community living, once again.

Our caring and compassion can help others reconnect with dignity and respect, and begin to resume some normalcy in their lives. We should not be ashamed to ask for assistance or show acceptance and understanding to someone who may be struggling in their recovery.

Even if we haven't experienced a mental illness ourselves, it's likely that each of us knows someone who has, and we can play a part in changing society's mindset to view mental health in the same

way that we view physical health.

Let us begin with having open dialogue with the person and lead them to receiving the care that they need.



## ***Understanding Your Purpose***

*by the Wellness Ministry*

When one is able to understand his/her purpose and not give in to selfish thinking, it puts that person on the way to having a good day, every day.

The apostle Paul, in his writings to the Philippians in the church, told them that he was being "*pulled in two directions.*" All of us can relate to that feeling.

Paul went on to explain his predicament of wanting "*to leave this life and be with Christ, which is a far better thing; but for your sake, it's much more important that I remain alive.*" (Phil. 1:23-24)

Then he gave them the assurance of being 'All In' with them, in their fight, when, in verse 25, he said, "*I am sure of this, and so I know that I will stay. I will stay on with you all,*

*(cont'd on next page)*

## ***Understanding Your Purpose*** (cont'd)

*to add to your progress and joy in the faith."*

There was no more selfish thinking about what was best for him, at that time, but it was about how he, Paul, could best **serve** the people in the church.

Recently, our Wellness Ministry has been focusing on 'walking the talk' of being the Message that we, you and I, as modern-day disciples, are called to be. Like Paul, we are called to pull ourselves away from selfish thinking and galvanize our efforts to better serve and uplift others, bringing confidence, encouragement, courage, strength, love, and comfort to the many lives to which we can contribute.

Paul couldn't offer the Philippians money but he gave them the confidence to win their battles, every day, as he emphasized that the important thing is that their way of life be as the gospel of Christ requires...standing firm, with one common purpose...with one desire...fighting together for the faith of the gospel.

Does that correspond with what is important to us?

He urged them not to be afraid of their enemies ... always be courageous and they will win because God will give them the victory.

As we build confidence

within each other and strengthen each other in the Wellness Ministry, we are 'walking the talk' like the disciples of yester-year and the Philippians who understood and believed Paul's written message to them. They already had history with Paul and he was now delivering refreshing inspiration.

We need to be building history with those we are uplifting, just as Paul did. Without the Internet and social media, it had to be extremely difficult for Paul to keep his people interested, filled with enthusiasm, and being active in doing what was best. With you and me, those limitations don't apply unless we apply them to our thinking and behavior.

Paul understood his purpose and he was continuously blessed with the wisdom, strength, and fortitude to live as he was called to live.

As we fellowship with the Holy Spirit, understanding our purpose, we too will enjoy that strength and wisdom, and kindness for one another, as compassion pours from us.

There is no selfishness and boasting, now we live in humility, considering the well-being of others, being the Message. It's not our belief that makes us into better people, it's our behavior, so in our joyful union with our Lord, let us walk obediently, trusting Him.

God is always at work in us, making us willing and able to do what He has called each of us to do...to be the Message.



## ***Have a Bulldog Attitude***

by *Brian Ward*

We need to have a bulldog attitude; one that says, "I refuse to give up," as the apostle Paul had.

From morning to night, we will be coming up against all types of opposition to keep us from our God-given purpose but we have to show that we are better than any type of opposition. Paul always found a way to defeat his opposition and achieve his purpose, doing what God had called him to do.

When he had planned to spend time with the Thessalonians, meeting with their leaders and advancing the Gospel, he encountered some opposition as he described in 1 Thessalonians 2:18 as 'being hindered by Satan.' Satan attempted to derail all of Paul's attempts to bring light into the lives of the Thessalonians but Paul never stopped, never gave up.

He had that bulldog attitude that never allowed for crying and thoughts of failure when doors seemed to be closed. Because of the threats on his life and threats of imprisonment, he could not stay in Ephesus to fulfill his purpose but being committed to his purpose, he moved to Miletus, invited the leaders to meet with him there and he accomplished his purpose.

*(cont'd on page 5)*

## In Loving Memory



*Cromwell Marcus Barrington Morriah*  
Oct. 12, 1929 – Feb. 2, 2021

*“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”*

(Mark 8:36)

Bro. Cromwell Marcus Barrington Morriah spent many years faithfully serving at the Church of the Evangel.

His strong Christian upbringing prepared him to lead the life of faith and service which he encouraged others to live. Prior to joining the Evangel church family here in Brooklyn, N.Y., Marcus worshipped at the Mission Chapel Congregational Church, in New Amsterdam, Berbice, Guyana.

At Evangel, Marcus served on the Finance Committee. A team player, he worked tirelessly with others to raise funds on the much-talked-about “Pew Rally,” a highlight event on the church’s calendar. His voice blended with those of the other men in the Male Choir on Fathers’ Day, singing praises to

the Lord.

His service in the Guyana Police Force included singing with a select group, the highly renowned Police Male Voice Choir, who sang nationally. A volunteer at heart, Marcus volunteered wherever it was necessary.

Marcus was born in the farming community of Hoptown, on the West Coast of Berbice, Guyana, and after graduating from school, he joined the then British Guiana Police Force, where he had a distinguished career, retiring at the senior rank of Superintendent. During this period, Marcus married Greta Celestine (nee, Wilson) and they were the proud parents of six children.

Following his retirement from the Guyana Police Force, Marcus and his family migrated to the United States of America. His expertise in law enforcement served him well as he made a career in the security industry.

Marcus retired after the passing of his wife. Regrettably, after a period of failing health, Marcus Morriah reunited with his wife on February 2, 2021.

May his soul rest in peace, eternally, and rise in glory!



## **Hoarders?** by Brian Ward

Are we hoarding our blessings? Are we consciously or unconsciously limiting our growth and denying others God’s goodness for their lives?

Shouldn’t we be extending our prayers of thanks to include thanks for using us and our blessings to make a difference in somebody’s life? What are your thoughts about the expression, ‘If I can help somebody, as I move through life?’ All of these questions we will answer by our actions, by the way we live, not the words we speak.

As conduits, we are expected to be channels for the flow of blessings to strengthen, comfort, and provide for those they were intended to nourish.

In his book, *Kingdom Man*, Dr. Tony Evans asked the question “If you are not willing to be a blessing to others through what God has given you, then why should He consider you as a good candidate for further blessings?”

Something to think about as we count our blessings!





## ***“Let them talk; let them talk about her”***



by *the Wellness Ministry*

We knew that they would be the topic but they didn't! We wanted to 'talk about them'... not behind their backs but in their presence, that's why we brought our mothers, in our hearts, to our Mothers' Day session, two weeks ago.

There we were, smiling, laughing, and sharing lots of memories about how our mothers shaped our lives and continue to speak into our lives, influencing us.

Admittedly, the fruit certainly didn't fall far from the tree; in fact, our sharing proved that in many ways, we are still attached to our tree, emotionally. Our session turned into a second evening of appreciation, this one for our moms, thanking them for their never-ending efforts, and the lessons they taught us, plus the notable encouragement they always provided.

A common thread in our sharing was our moms' faith and daily dependence on God which they taught us. They answered the call to go and make disciples, starting with

raising their kids. Now, we are adding to the legacy by being women of faith and living the 'teachings' of our mothers, beginning with the love for God.

Imagine being among a group of appreciative, very thankful, teary-eyed people showing photographs of their moms and telling about the life-time lessons mom taught. We had a very candid get-together with our moms, honoring them.

We should have known to invite Kleenex and Puffs. Oh, well, next time!

This is how members described the evening : "Therapeutic, like group therapy, comforting, inspiring and faith based, nostalgic, heartfelt, a time to reflect and ponder on the lessons taught by our mothers."

It was Therapy Without a Co-pay.



**You are invited...**

**Church of the Evangel  
Congregational, UCC**

**invites you to join our Zoom  
Worship Service on Sundays  
at 10:30 am.**

Dial-In number: 929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 880-4062-5764#

Password: 019995#

## ***Have a Bulldog Attitude (cont'd)***



At times, we need to reassess how we will achieve our purpose when we face obstacles. There is more than one way to accomplish our purpose which may be the simple act of speaking up about an issue or situation.



The obstacle may not be external pressure being applied but it may be our fear of offending someone. We need to find ways to overcome our fears and not give in and accept defeat.

We need to find a way to do what God wants us to do. The Holy Spirit gives each of us the courage we need to do our work.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**Cultural Festival  
July 24, 2021**

**Donation: \$10.00**

## **Boosting Our Immune System**

by Sheryl Phillips

In Psalm 139 verse 14, David wrote *"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well."* (NIV)

As human beings, we are not compartmentalized; we were created with a mind, body, and spirit, all inter-connected to make us unique. God created us with an amazing network of cells, organs, and proteins that work together to defend our bodies against illness and disease.

When we speak of the health of our immune system, we are talking about the need to ensure connection of our mind, body, and spirit to maintain our overall health. The two major roles of our immune system are to provide an effective barrier between us and the outside world and when that does not go quite right, its function is to kill any bacteria and viruses that can cause disease.

In other words, our immune system is a disease and germ-fighter that fights diseases, including cancer, that attempt to keep our bodies from functioning effectively. Our immune system operates in an environment that we can't begin to understand, neutralizing those things that are harmful to

us, as soon as it recognizes them.

Our bodies are under attack every day from many unseen enemies (viruses, bacteria and other pathogens) and it's because of our strong immune system that we are able to survive and remain in good physical and mental health.

We do our best to keep our homes clean but there are still numerous microscopic germs that our naked eye can't see. When we add those that we are exposed to in the places we visit, we can begin to appreciate the never-ending work that our immune system is doing. However, let's not give all bacteria a bad name. There are billions of good bacteria and we need them in our fight to develop a strong immune system.

Diseases like cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, or any condition that causes the body to mistakenly identify its own tissues as harmful (autoimmune disease) can cause a reduction in the effective functioning of our immune system. Medical treatment such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and some other medicines can weaken our immune system. So too, smoking, alcohol use, and poor nutrition.

Being conscious that our immune system is always on the job, and will always need our 'supportive input,' we need to

consistently find ways to boost its ability to function, not just during cold and flu season, or when we have a major illness.

Maintaining a healthy immune system is tied to our changing to and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Changes like consuming a nutritionally balanced diet consisting of lots of fruits and vegetables that are rich in vitamins and minerals, like zinc, selenium, iron, copper, folic acid, and vitamin A, B6, C, D, and E help to strengthen our immune system and its ability to function. In addition, there are some herbals like echinacea, garlic, turmeric, and green tea that have been suggested as having the ability to boost the immune system. Overdosing on immune boosting supplements can happen, so we need to be careful.

In addition to a healthy diet with adequate hydration, preferable water, regular physical activity, managing the stressors in our lives, getting adequate sleep, maintaining a healthy weight are all important in maintaining a healthy immune system.

We can't overlook our spiritual and emotional health as they also play significant roles in maintaining our healthy immune system. So, how do we boost and support our Spiritual Immune System?

*(cont'd on next page)*

## ***Boosting Our Immune System*** (cont'd)

Having a strong Spiritual Immune System helps us to survive life's daily challenges and use those challenges as growth opportunities.

Our walk with Christ is always under attack just as bacteria and viruses are constantly attacking our physical immune system. So, we need to protect ourselves from those attacks by boosting our Spiritual Immune System.

A spiritual dietary plan is essential to our spiritual growth. We need to devote adequate time to fasting and meditating on God's word so that we develop the spiritual stamina to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, using our shield of faith (Ephesians 6:16). When we ingest a regular diet of God's word, we will be able to defend ourselves against the attacks of the enemy. Having a close relationship with Christ will help to build up immunity for coping with fear, loneliness, doubt, worry, anxiety, lack of confidence, sorrow, and discouragement, all germ warfare attacks on our hearts and minds.

Building stronger relationships with each other, as we support each other, create a 'bonding' that makes us stronger. When we participate in small group ministries like Prayer and Bible Study, and

Faith and Wellness, we are developing herd immunity which has been proven to be an effective spiritual immune booster. There is strength in numbers as those numbers "*form one body and each member belongs to all the others*" (Romans 12:5).

In addition, being an active participant in the life of your church can be a rewarding experience in so many ways.

People who develop a strong sense of purpose generally live longer, healthier lives. So, let us continue to pursue God's purpose for our lives, understanding that our efforts are boosting our overall Spiritual Immune System.



### ***Sheryl Phillips, Church of the Evangel's own, honored with Safe Haven, UCC Hope Award***

by *Judith Jones*, Safe Haven, UCC

On March 21, 2021, Sheryl Phillips of the Church of the Evangel was an honored recipient of the **2021 Hope Award** presented by Safe Haven, United Church of Christ.

The Hope Award was

developed by Safe Haven, UCC as a way to put legs and feet to its mission of being a haven of help, healing, and hope.

Even though having been birthed in the home of two of its members and moving from place to place, over the years, Safe Haven, UCC never lost sight of its mandate. Without a permanent space from which to offer programs and do God's work, it was decided that this community of faith would financially support organizations and individuals who are doing the work of the Lord and thereby upholding the mission of being a haven of help, healing, and hope.

Over the past 22 years, Safe Haven has awarded over \$33,000.00 to deserving individuals and organizations. This year, Church of the Evangel's Sheryl Phillips was given the award for her humble, supportive, and inspiring devotion to doing the Lord's work. This is evident in her direction of the "Wellness" ministry, her serving on the Board of Trustees, the publishing of the newsletter, "CONNECT," her participation in all aspects of church life, and by her faithfully texting an inspiration or prayer everyday. Safe Haven, UCC was honored to recognize the work of Sheryl Phillips as the true embodiment of being a haven of help, healing, and hope.



## Ministry Corner



Dr. Rubie Malone

### ***A Life Well Lived***

by *Stephanie Bennett* (Deacon)

On April 25, 2021, Dr. Rubie Mae Smith Malone (Deacon) transitioned from this life to her eternal rest. With her family surrounding her, she gracefully slipped away during the early morning.

Born on November 8, 1939, the eldest of twelve children and living in Tampa FL and Atlanta GA, Rubie was relentless in the pursuit of her education. That continued when she moved to New York where she began a 32-year career at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, and completed her Doctoral Degree in Social Welfare at Columbia University. She retired earning the title of Professor Emeritus.

Rubie spent her career

ensuring that young people, especially those of color, had opportunities to get a good education. Many have expressed their appreciation for her encouragement, crediting her with their successful careers and lives.

In her early years in New York, Rubie met and married the “love of her life,” Dr. James Malone. Their love for each other was visible when you saw them together. They prayed together and together they walked with the Lord.

Rubie and Jim joined the Church of Evangel Congregational on June 1, 1975. When asked what brought them to Evangel, she said her children did. Tracy and Sean were active in the church’s community youth group. Both Rubie and Jim became devoted members of the Evangel family.

Rubie’s dedication and commitment were visible in her years of service as a deacon and as the chair of the Deacon Board, serving several terms. She served tirelessly and her love for God was seen in her never-ending, uplifting attitude.

For over 45 years, she generously shared her talents, time, and joyfully provided financial support for her church. I will always remember her culinary skills. Yes, she was an excellent cook and if you were a ‘regular’ at Evangel, you would have tasted and loved her carrot

cake, as I did.

Being a people person, Rubie was a ‘lightning rod,’ inspiring growth and service within the several organizations with which she was affiliated, and the people loved and respected the woman who cared about them.

Three groups were very close to Rubie’s heart. *Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.*, dedicated to public service, which she joined in 1958, later becoming a charter member of the Brooklyn Alumnae Chapter, and also serving as president. In 1968, she joined *Jack and Jill of America Inc.*, a national mother and children’s organization for African-American families. In 1989, she joined *The Links, Inc.*, an international organization of friendship and service for African-American professional women.

At her Home-Going Service, representatives from these organizations spoke, highlighting her powerful presence which was felt even in her gentle demeanor. Leading with professionalism and kindness, Rubie strived for excellence, expecting the same from those with whom she came into contact.



*(cont'd on next page)*

**A Life Well Lived** (cont'd)

A Scripture that speaks to Rubie's life says, "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." <sup>30</sup> Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.<sup>31</sup> Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise..."

(Proverbs 31:29-31)

By knowing Rubie, you knew a woman of distinction and class! Thank God for her life which was well lived. Her legacy will continue to be lived.



**REST IN PEACE, DEACON RUBIE**



**Spring Is Here**

by Jeanne Ungar

*I come and go as I please,  
I am a zephyr of breeze.  
Working my way through the blossoming trees.*

*The sky is grey and filled with rain.  
Still the crocuses appear in a flowery chain.*

*The Hyacinth fills an aroma in the air  
A riot of colors chosen with care.*

*The path that leads us to the bay.  
Is lit by the moon to guide our way.  
Spring is here in the passing of days.  
Where the sun makes patterns as the robin plays.*

**Word Search**

**Books of The Bible**

S	R	E	V	E	L	A	T	I	O	N	C	V	U	Y	P
U	O	A	R	H	E	B	R	E	W	S	M	L	A	S	P
T	B	N	G	S	H	R	A	E	N	X	K	L	B	V	A
I	A	W	G	Q	T	Y	D	A	S	A	E	S	U	E	B
T	D	N	A	S	G	J	I	D	S	U	S	C	S	K	G
S	I	C	L	B	O	H	N	R	M	N	Y	O	M	C	E
K	A	F	A	H	T	F	E	A	A	B	H	C	I	R	N
H	H	S	T	N	T	B	S	M	R	P	E	T	E	R	E
F	M	B	I	M	M	K	O	O	K	D	R	F	E	Z	S
R	J	R	A	U	D	R	M	S	L	W	C	M	C	R	I
E	O	E	N	G	E	Q	H	T	S	O	C	T	A	S	S
C	B	V	S	T	C	A	W	I	L	X	M	I	C	H	A
H	T	O	S	U	I	R	H	E	P	R	S	O	H	A	D
G	U	R	R	M	Y	C	I	J	H	I	B	T	N	G	A
X	E	P	E	A	A	K	U	O	A	T	U	M	A	G	N
M	M	R	B	L	E	D	F	H	S	R	T	J	H	A	I
S	E	A	A	Z	E	C	M	N	O	W	Z	A	U	I	E
J	A	M	E	S	N	O	I	T	A	T	N	E	M	A	L

Amos	Acts
Corinthians	Ezekiel
Ezra	Esther
Genesis	Galatians
Hebrews	Hosea
Haggai	Isaiah
Jeremiah	John
James	Jude
Job	Kings
Luke	
Lamentations	
Matthew	Mark
Malachi	Micha
Nahum	Numbers
Obadiah	Peter
Psalms	Proverbs
Romans	Ruth
Revelations	Samuel
Songs of Solomon	
Titus	



by Rubie M. Malone Ph.D.  
(Reprinted in memory of Rubie)

*“Lives of great men all remind us we can make our live sublime, and departing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time”* (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow).

This has been a favorite saying of mine for a long time. Looking back at a time in my life when as teenagers, my sister and I would go to bed early excitedly sharing our thoughts and dreams, I see it how it may have presaged my future. I could have never foreseen how my hopes and dreams would expand to go beyond myself to impact others later in my life. How was I to know this was the beginning of building my legacy?

I define my legacy as what was present in my life and what I wanted in my life to contribute to others in an energetic, passionate way, for it is truly a gift from God and a legacy that would go from generation to generation. After all, I recognize God is the first legacy. His legacy has come down through the ages from his death until now. Generations of people have followed Him without ever physically seeing Him; thus, like

many others I hold on to Him, follow in His word believing that God will direct my path and order my steps if I allow Him.

My life is a clear example of God’s work. I graduated college with a degree in Mathematics simply because I liked the subject and loved the problem-solving methodology. I didn’t have any idea of how I would use the degree. After completing student teaching, it was clear my interest was not in teaching high school. Since I was clear about what I didn’t want, this meant I had to consider leaving Florida because if I didn’t, that was the career I would have to enter.

Now the question became, what can I do? After some extensive thought I decided that I would relocate to New York where I had an uncle and could also be exposed to more options. I had no job or job offer but it never occurred to me that I should be anxious or afraid. I just confidently made my plans. I had faith that I would find a job and begin building a career I would passionately enjoy. Within a couple of months, I found a job. I began to learn new information which led me to start making plans for a career. In the interim, I learned that God had other plans for my life.

I met the person who was soon to be my husband; he was working in the New York City

Department of Social Welfare. I wasn’t knowledgeable about that career, but I observed him as he worked with clients. I asked questions, listened intensely and learned. I became so interested, I decided I would try that career.

Many of my friends asked how do you move from Mathematics to Social Service? I thought about it, then I made my connection, both career areas dealt with solving problems; that was the enthusiasm I felt. I became very interested as I delved into the career and decided to pursue the Masters, and Doctorate Degrees in Social Work, which was a more in-depth psychological and sociological aspect of the Social Services field.

I thought maybe I had found my gift since I felt such satisfaction in my studies. Something unexpected happened. Instead of looking for employment in a Social service agency, I was introduced to the idea of applying to City University for a counseling faculty position in the Special Education Program at one of the colleges. Ironically, the educational institution I fled earlier in my life had returned but at the higher educational level where I felt comfortable. It proved to be a great move.

*(cont’d on next page)*

## ***Living My Legacy Life***

*(cont'd)*

Over 34 years, I was promoted from my entry level up the ranks to a Vice President position. I made significant impact in the faculty and administrative positions with students, colleagues and the university. Looking back, I can see how my gifts, which enlightened the lives of others, have the ability to affect many generations from both the institutional and personal levels.

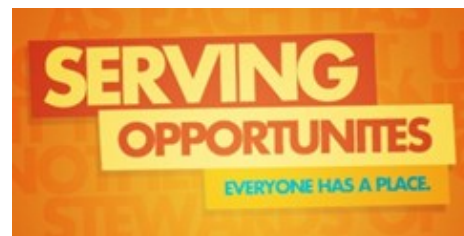
The lessons I learned from my life story are that God has been with me all the way. He heard my early teenaged wants and desires. He knew my need to find that place where the gifts He gave me would move me to help those who were in need.

I also confirmed for myself that God has a purpose for each of us and He prepares us to reach the goals of that purpose. We know He is with us and will never leave us. He is the set of footprints aligned with ours as we tread our pathways along life's journey. Sometimes, the footprints are behind us because He is pushing us along, sometimes there is only one set of footprints because He is carrying us but all in all, He is ever present.

I look at awards/honors I've received over the years, such as joining my husband to have our names placed on the college's

student government conference room, commendations, certificates, plaques which are recognitions for my work. Yes, these awards/honors are prestigious, and I appreciate them. However, what I treasure most as my legacy is the real satisfaction of helping to create changes in institutional policy and direction which produced positive changes to improve conditions and programs for students/persons in their communities, and presenting material that open young people's eyes and minds to possibilities that can be of personal help to them and also passed on to family members and others they encounter in their lives.

I have built and lived my legacy to help so many and used God's gifts in the ways He intended, to apply a deep sense of significance to measuring the value of worth of services extended to others and quality of life purpose rather than be only satisfied with recognition and prestige. Indeed, my legacy is blessed by God and will pass from generation to generation.



## ***We are called to serve in different ways***

1 Peter 4:9-11 says, *"Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

### **Join Our Team**

1. Church Clerk
2. Trustee Board Member
3. Deacon
4. Treasurer

Bring your skills to any of our church ministries and do your part in continuing our legacy of service.



### **To the Malone family, the Jackson family, and the Morriah family**

*Wishing you hope in the midst of sorrow Comfort in the midst of pain*



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Photo by Ray Raman

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

**WE APPRECIATE YOUR DONATION**

## ***Wellness @ Evangel Ministry***

The purpose of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind, body, and spirit to achieve total wellness.

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### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

**Welcomes You**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

Contact Sheryl Phillips:

[sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)

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**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

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These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.

They burn for the families who lost loved ones.

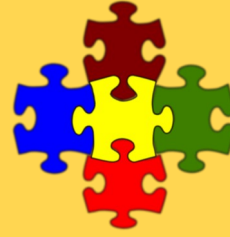
They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.

Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.

The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2021

## Ready for a Time of Change

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

*“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*

(Matthew 11:29:30)

Blessings to you, Beloved Evangel Family and Friends! It has been a while since I last wrote to you in our wonderful newsletter. So, let me take a moment and bring you up to date.

The past 12 months have been so very different for me (“tell us something new, Pastor.”) I feel like I have watched my life just go topsy-turvy in this totally unusual time. The one unchanging thing that I am so grateful for is that I can thank Almighty God each day that I wake up and I let Him know that I feel blessed to still have breath, and I am able to move my body. I have been sending up thank you after thank you for keeping me safe

from the COVID-19 monsters.

Yes, I also faced the challenges of staying in the house while wanting to get outside, allowing wisdom to prevail. Sometimes, I wondered if wisdom was trampling my motivation because I really felt I needed to get out for air and just circulate a little.

So, when I was spending my time with Jesus early in the morning, having my little energizing talks with Him, I appealed to Him to help me with these challenges. This season seemed to be one that required me to seek additional comfort from the Holy One. I believe it was the struggle I was having as I tried to understand and deal with the changes taking place in my life, in this unexpected pandemic period.

*(cont'd on next page)*



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

- *Wellness @ Evangel: Anniversary Service*  
March 14, 2021 @ 10:30 am
- *Maudy Thursday Service*  
April 1, 2021 @ 7:00 pm
- *Good Friday Service*  
April 2, 2021 @ 12.00 pm

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## **Ready for a Time of Change** *(cont'd)*

However, over the last four weeks, I have been making small adjustments and these changes are slowly taking hold in my spirit. I have spent more time studying Scripture and reading two 28-day devotionals, focusing on prayer and hope.

I believe that this positive activity is giving me a new vision and a renewed feeling of trust in the promises of God. I have been reaching out more and connecting with family and friends. Our chats have been helping to lift me. During my conversations with others, I have been realizing that I am not alone in having these up and down moments in this totally different and scary time we are living in.

And guess what folks? I am actually making time to listen to some of the sermonic messages shared with you each week. They are speaking life into my days just as they would for you, so I urge you to listen to them on Facebook and YouTube and draw upon God's wisdom and strength that's there, already packaged for you, in this time of change.

Most important, I recognized that I needed to take time for prayerful rest just as Jesus did in his ministry. In order to be able to walk and follow the path Jesus has given to help me be a more committed servant in God's vineyard, I must get myself rested and physically together (i.e., walking, Wellness exercise.)

So, day by day, I am slowly making changes in my spiritual behaviour and so can you. We know change is not going to happen overnight, as it is a process but Jesus Christ is letting us know that it will happen as long as we keep our hope and trust in Our Father's promises.

Paul's letter to the Philippians was intended to remind them to trust their practices and the process:

*"Do not be anxious about anything but...by prayer and petition, and with thanksgiving present your needs and requests to God."*

It is with this important option given to us that I encourage you to speak to your heart:

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

God bless you Evangel family and friends and thank you for being a part of my restoration process.



## **Building on 2020**

*by Brian Ward*

2020! What a uniquely challenging year it was for all of us. We left so many things 'up in the air,' unable to act on them or complete them last year. When we closed 2020, hopefully we made peace with others and ourselves, giving us the momentum to move forward into 2021.

Jesus advises us to, *"Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown."* Solid advice! But first we need to know what we have. Let us make the effort to identify and count those blessings we have taken into 2021. Our lives have experienced a complete make-over and we see God's favor continuing to flavor our lives, creating a path of stability for us; something that was difficult to maintain last year. 2021 gives truth to the expression, 'nothing stays the same' as we take stock of how we have grown during 2020.

We have 2020 dreams that are in suspension but we can still bring them to reality in 2021, as we rethink them.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Building on 2020

(cont'd)

There are achievements with our names on them, just waiting to be lowered into place. Reaching up, extending ourselves, and grabbing hold of those dreams is well within our capability. There are blessings in those dreams; blessings for many others and for ourselves.

We are God's hands and feet on this earth. We are an essential service. We are builders. All of us have been building stronger relationships with God during 2020, and that had us building more relationships with others than we have built in any other year. We have brought that blessing into 2021. The lives we are involved in developing need to be grounded in the Holy Spirit so as the turbulence of 2020 continues to blow through 2021, those lives may bend but not collapse. Neither will we collapse!

We wear that crown of glory, placed on our heads when God breathed life into us. It represents His favor on our lives and we wear it proudly in our daily interactions with those to whom we reach out.

The adversities of 2020 have not stopped us, "*so then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another,*" in 2021.

(Romans 14:19, NASB)



## Always Light

by Brian Ward

Young poet laureate, Amanda Gorman, made the connection between **light** and **bravery**, as she addressed the world, at the 2021 inauguration of Joseph Biden and Kamala Harris as President and Vice President of the United States of America.

Amanda issued a challenge to each of us to **see** and **be** the light for so many others who, in this season of our lives, need the light. She challenged us to **be brave**, and "*stir the strength and boldness that is in you,*" as the Apostle Paul challenged his protégé, Timothy.

The present and the future rest upon us pouring into others what has already been poured into us so that the darkness of depression and lack of self-worth will not find accommodation because we'll be shining our light into their lives, always leaving a light on so that they can be brave, and strong, and courageous as they walk into the future.

Amanda challenges us to grow in our awareness of the fact that each of us is an instrument of light, purposely positioned to be a conduit so

that the goodness of God will be felt and seen, as He intends it to be. There is always light! We have to flip the switch to "ON" and commit to shedding light into the lives of others as light is also shed upon our lives.

She challenges us to commit to be **being brave**, day after day, remaining a power source, a role model, a light, never reducing in our intensity and so lighting the lives of countless others, providing hope. "*Now that we know it... we owe it, to show it*", Amanda challenges us.

'The Hill We Climb' calls each of us to be the message of unity with a purpose; showing up, committed and prepared, each morning to reach out to each other, putting aside yesterday's differences and working towards victory over all that divide us.

The challenge, be all that we are called to be, requires that we **see** ourselves, victorious, in our various roles as we **be** the change makers we have been equipped to be.

Be the **light, bravely!**



## ***Your Blessing Is Around the Corner***

*by Sheryl Phillips*

“Keep going, you can’t stop now!” What are you hardly doing right now because you are on the verge of giving up? Don’t stop! Are you losing faith? Keep going, keep digging, keep fishing, keep sowing, keep serving, and most of all, keep trusting God. If we are true to ourselves, we can identify so many more things we need to ‘keep doing’ because if we stop we will never reach our goal, we will never be successful. What causes us to stop? We often get tired of waiting on God’s promises, and we lose faith. When we stop, we will never know if success was right around the corner. If we dig just a little deeper, we might hit water. If we keep going, the answer we need may be right around the corner.

In Luke chapter 5, there is an intriguing story of obedience and perseverance. The story tells us about the level of faith and trust that His disciples had in Jesus. The disciples were fishing all night, catching nothing. Now, they were busy putting away their fishing gear, declaring their day as unproductive. Then Jesus directed Simon Peter to go back out, into deeper water and keep fishing. “Let down your net,” Jesus said to Simon Peter. Jesus told him to keep fishing. In a most

respectful tone, Simon responded, “we have been fishing all night and caught nothing.” “Continuing to fish would be futile but, if You say to go, I will go back out and let down my net.” Though Jesus’ command to Simon Peter appeared futile, he obeyed and the catch was so large that it nearly sank his boat and his partners’ boat, also.

Simon learned a huge lesson in having faith in God’s Word. So can we! Quite often, when God’s commands don’t fit within our understanding or is contrary to our desires, we choose not to obey and go our own way, and we miss the blessings God intended to give us. We need to feast on God’s Word so that we can discover the answer He has for our situation and faithfully believe that He will supply our needs. So, keep fishing, keep serving, keep sowing, and keep digging. Success is just around the corner.

Throughout our lives, we are faced with many obstacles. We run into many walls that block us, challenge us and sometimes, slow us down. Walls that challenge our faith in Christ and our determination to stay committed. The woman suffering with the bleeding problem was confronted by a wall of bodies surging around Jesus as He walked along. Yes, she realized that the crowd was thick but she intended to get

close enough to Jesus to touch Him. You see, she believed if she could touch even the hem of Jesus’ coat she would be healed. So, she kept pressing in. She would not have received healing if she had stopped pressing. Whatever you are doing, keep doing it. Your blessing may be just around the corner.

When the Israelites were faced with the mighty walls of Jericho standing between them and their success, the situation looked bleak. The walls were high and thick and appeared insurmountable. God’s perspective was quite different. He saw Jericho already delivered to His people. God told them to march around the city for seven days. They were promised a miracle on day seven. God promised the walls would fall, at their shout, on the seventh day and He delivered the miracle in His time.

We need to keep our eyes on God’s promises, understanding that any and all walls and barriers will come down when God is ready. Our job is to keep marching, keep fishing, keep reaching, keep trusting, keep worshipping and following Christ. Your blessing is just around the corner. God will pour out His blessings in His time.

**Your blessing is  
around the corner.  
Keep moving forward.  
God is faithful!**





## ***Managing Our Stress***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

The coronavirus added more stress to our already stressful lives. Fear of unknowingly contracting the virus, dealing with the fear of embracing others, the growing anxiety about getting on the bus or train, and the fear of passing this disease on to our loved ones have us living with elevated levels of stress.

While being fearful is normal, there are things we can do to reduce the level of stress and anxiety we experience daily. It's important to follow the recommended guidelines of wearing a mask or face covering that covers both our nose and mouth. Frequent hand washing and keeping clean and sanitized surroundings, and limiting physical contact with others are important guidelines to follow.

The more we listen to the news and follow social media, the higher our stress level rises. We need to limit our screen time as this helps to prevent information overload.

Our choice of television viewing should be towards shows that will make us laugh, or help us to relax. We need to become active in some level of

exercise, and make time to meditate and clear our minds. Listening to uplifting music and engaging in a hobby or some other activity that we enjoy will certainly reduce our stress level. Prayer and meditation are effective ways to switch our attention from our life challenges, and clear our minds as we begin communicating with the Holy Spirit.

We are called to 'social distance' ourselves, but let us not interpret that to mean we should not stay in touch with our family, our friends, all those who give meaning to our lives. We need to maintain 'outside' contact, as that's one effective way of taking care of ourselves and each other.

Let us take each day's challenges as they come, gradually learning and developing our coping skills, as we take care of ourselves. Let us be comfortable with the understanding that it's normal to feel anxious but let's develop our ability to focus on the things we can control.

Remember, we are not alone. God is always with us and He has positioned many 'helpers' in our life to provide the support and reassurance we need.



## ***March is National Nutrition Month***

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics hosts National Nutrition Month®, an annual nutrition education and information campaign that focuses on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

During this month of celebration, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics promotes its services and its members to the public, and to the media, as the most valuable and credible source of timely, scientifically based food and nutrition information.

The 2021 theme is **Personalize Your Plate**. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to nutrition and health. We are all unique with different bodies, goals, cultures, and tastes, so "Let's Get Cooking" and create meals to meet our individual needs. We are encouraged to plan to make some changes in our eating habits, during the month of March.

*(cont'd on page 12)*



## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

by *Sheryl Phillips*

Everyone is invited to join in the celebration of our eleventh year of *Wellness @ Evangel*, at our church service on March 14, at 10:30 a.m., on Zoom.

We continue to thank God for His shared wisdom in the development of programs and the growing number of services that our Evangel family and community have been enjoying. In fact, now that the Wellness Ministry has moved the program to a virtual platform, due to COVID-19, our good Lord has been channeling to us, new participants, who are in need of some reassurance in their lives.

Yes, we continue to describe our goals by umbrellas, namely, physical, emotional, psychological, financial, and spiritual wellness, but over the past year, people's lives have been so strained that the umbrellas' services are reaching across and providing wellness across the spectrum of each other, under one big tent of Wellness.

We continue to meet on Monday and Friday at 8pm, providing a virtually safe place to cry together, laugh together and even deal with some

difficult life situations. By participant demand, our exercise sessions are again an integral aspect of our Wellness activity recognizing that physical activity is a vital part of our quest for wellness.

We will always recognize our founding members, some of whom are no longer with us as we cannot ever overlook their contributions to the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry. We celebrate them.

Our Book Club, started four years ago, has developed into a *'learn more about myself'* development project where we read and discuss, every year, a different book, relative to our overall growth, as God's children.

We continue to embrace our new normal, trying to adapt our usual activities to the Zoom platform. We have already hosted our annual Evening of Appreciation which was held on February 20, 2021. We are grateful that you will be helping us celebrate our annual Anniversary Church Service on March 14, via Zoom.

As we move further into 2021, you can expect to hear more about our other activities, including our Fitness Party, Plant Sale, and Faith & Wellness Seminar.

Our members deserve all the credit for keeping Wellness @ Evangel going, maintaining the program as their spiritual hub,

and expressing that fellowship on one day of the week, Sunday, is not nearly sufficient.

The past year has been a year of challenges but as each challenge was met, there was inspiration, commitment, support, and growth. Our members have experienced significant spiritual growth as is evidenced in the text messages, emails, FaceTime calls, and our diverse Monday and Friday sessions.

I thank God for all of the people who have helped and continue to support God's leading to grow this ministry.

I say to the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry members, your efforts are not in vain. As we move forward, let us continue to embrace our new normal and live with the mind of Christ.

### ***Happy Anniversary, Wellness Members.***

God's continued blessings will flow over you!





## The Thread of Continuity

Within the first month of 2021, there was celebration, grounded in hope and achievement, shedding a brand new light on the future.



Kamala Harris, Vice President of the United States of America. Being the first in many categories, VP Harris is living proof that history is not necessarily only about what was done but it's about what is being done so that so much more would be able to be done.

The lifeline connecting us to those who suffered but persevered, and breathed hope into us, also connects us to those who are being inspired by us. Young poet laureate, Amanda Gorman, addressing the world at the 2021 presidential inauguration of Joseph Biden (*President*) and Kamala Harris (*Vice President*) informed and reminded everyone that *"there is always light,"* and it will shine through, *"if only we are brave enough to be it."*

Are we willing to challenge ourselves to *"be the light"* that shines throughout the years and so give meaning and direction to our lives and countless others, just like Cicely Tyson did?



Cicely Tyson, at 92, received the Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama on 11-22-2016.

What better award or reward could there be than being recognized as a "groundbreaker," "one who broke barriers," and "one who couldn't keep still," as Cicely was described.

Cicely, Kamala, and Amanda, three of many women and men who empower us by their life work and journeys.

No weak links in the Thread of Continuity.



## Evening of Appreciation Celebration – "Over the Top"

by *The Wellness Ministry*

Those who were there experienced, once again, that nobody can host a celebration like our Lord and Savior!

There was Spirit, not spirits (the drink) from start to finish.

It was truly a holy time spent in the presence of the Holy Spirit who did as He always promised He would... He brought out the best in us.

Everything was 'over the top.' Preparation...over the top! Presentation...over the top! Participation...over the top!

We celebrated our annual *Evening of Appreciation* by inviting our friends, near and far to receive virtual bouquets of flowers, expressing our love and appreciation of their presence in our lives plus the inspiration they provide for us to continue to do kind things for others, as we grow to know our Savior, better and better.

Inspired by the sweet sounds of the music from our resident DJ, Darrell, there was sweetness flowing from our hearts and lips to everyone's ears on Saturday, February 20, 2021.

The springs of joy were gushing up from deep within us and our love poured out upon each other, as our Savior poured out His love on us.

It was truly a time of recommitment... recommitment to each other and to our Heavenly Father, as we expressed our appreciation for His saving grace in our lives.



## Ministry Corner



### ***Dynamic Trio: Portraits in Courage Standing up and Stepping up!*** by CONECT

Every Sunday, we check our emails expecting a link that would connect us to our church family. We don't even think of the behind the scene's preparation that makes it happen. We don't see them doing what is necessary but they continue to do it, unselfishly, so that all of us can remain connected, inspired, and uplifted as a church family when we meet. These are the people who open the virtual doors for our congregation and keep them open.

They do the weekly preparation...the heavy lifting, so that our 'family time' is inspiring and enjoyable...and this Dynamic Trio demonstrates that they are 'All In,' week after week.

Using their talents, catering to our needs every week, Evangel's Dynamic Trio of Stephanie, Darrell and Lennox represent our portraits in courage while demonstrating a high level of team work. We recognize their commitment to the uplifting of all of us, in this season of change and growth.

We see that the seeds of their lives are planted in fertile ground, so they lead by example, finding the strength and courage to inspire hope in all of us, as we keep stepping up.

Noble qualities, achievements, and courageous acts are a few of the well known definitions of a hero but CONECT offers this one that describes our heroes: "Someone who does something new or good for which they are greatly admired by lots of people."

In labeling our Dynamic Trio as heroes, we surely considered **motives**. Genuine heroes seek to help others; they don't serve others for their material gain. True heroes are compassionate and caring. The actions of our heroes have been having ripple effects, as 'family members' have been stepping up, stepping out of their comfort zones, and answering the calls on their hearts; becoming active in serving.

An outstanding fact about our heroes is this...they stepped up and made meeting on Zoom possible, they are doing

something they couldn't have imagined would be necessary, but they continue to run toward the need, every week. Our heroes show that they willingly serve and the Evangel family appreciates every one of them.



### **We are called to serve in different ways.**

1 Peter 4:9-11 says, *"Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."*

### **Join Our Team**

1. Church Clerk
  2. Trustee Board Member
  3. Deacon
  4. Treasurer
- Bring your skills to any of our church ministries and do your part in continuing our legacy of service.





These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost to COVID-19.

They burn for the families who lost loved ones in the past year.

They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.

Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.

The memory of our loved ones will continue to glow in our hearts.

## Black History

### Black History Word Search

J	E	S	S	E	J	A	C	K	S	O	N	B	D	J	B
O	A	L	I	A	M	A	B	O	H	N	Y	R	U	O	O
E	L	C	S	R	A	N	E	R	R	A	A	M	K	N	O
L	T	Z	K	T	X	I	E	E	B	A	R	M	E	E	K
E	H	Y	E	I	S	K	K	S	W	R	E	R	B	S	E
W	E	S	K	S	E	A	K	E	I	D	I	T	I	U	R
I	A	L	E	N	N	R	R	N	G	X	T	D	T	S	T
S	G	B	N	T	A	D	O	A	J	I	M	I	G	A	W
I	I	A	D	P	C	T	E	B	E	T	H	U	N	E	A
U	B	A	A	E	O	V	C	H	I	S	H	O	L	M	S
O	S	S	E	R	E	W	X	N	Q	N	U	W	V	O	H
L	O	S	J	R	G	M	E	E	I	O	S	B	J	A	I
R	N	T	S	Y	L	L	S	L	L	E	S	O	R	I	N
H	A	R	P	O	L	I	P	E	L	N	U	R	N	L	G
A	W	E	C	A	O	O	G	R	E	N	I	X	V	E	T
Y	P	L	R	B	J	N	A	W	E	E	O	Y	M	Y	O
A	A	Y	U	S	A	H	O	R	T	B	O	Y	K	I	N
M	A	D	A	M	C	J	W	A	L	K	E	R	I	C	E

Ailey	Angellou
Althea Gibson	Ali
Allen	Banneke
Bessie	Baker
Booker T. Washington	
Bethune	C. Drew
Corretta	Du Bois
Duke	Gates
Harriett	J. Owens
Jimi	Joe Lewis
Jackie	Robinson
Jesse Jackson	Joplin
Jones	King
K. Harris	Louis
Medga Evers	Maya
Malcolm X	
Madam C.J. Walker	
Obama	Boykin
Oprah	Powell
Perry	Rice
R. Bridges	Rosa Parks
Charles	Chisholm
Sojourner	Toni
Tubman	

## 3 LEGGED RACE



by Brian Ward

My father was an athlete. His Heavenly Father is an athlete. Dad would tell us a story about running with his Heavenly Father, every day. They would run a race called a three-legged race, where Dad would tie one of his legs to one leg of his Heavenly Father. He described the ‘attaching’ as being yoked to his Heavenly Father.

Being the good storyteller Dad was, we, as members of our boys club would soon have a mental picture of them running together. Dad taught us how to run the three-legged race, always leading with the legs strapped together, showing oneness in our purpose. But he would always tell us that even when we are grown up, we will still not be perfect at it.

It was always comical when Dad would say to us that the first and most important thing is that both runners must be facing the same direction so that they run in the same direction. That would be obvious, wouldn't it? As we try running our three-legged race, are we facing the same

direction so that we can run in the same direction? He would tell us that even though we were now joined in pairs, that would not be sufficient as we run this race. We needed to be partners and develop a partnership over time, if we wanted to be good at this race.

He suggested that we put our arm around each other's shoulder, as a sign of trust in each other.

Today, we say, *“put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea,”* as He is our senior partner and the one in whom we trust. It's from Him that we take our cue, trusting Him to direct our steps as He stays true to His promise to love and prosper us.

We will have some ‘practice runs’ with our senior partner as He teaches us to think with the mind of Christ, becoming one with Him, developing that relationship and so be able to act in compliance with how He speaks to our heart. That's how we learn to stay in step with Him.

### THREE-LEGGED RACE



One of the fantastic things about choosing Him as our running partner is this...we don't have to figure out everything. All we have to do is believe that He is working

everything out for our good. When we step as He directs us to step, even though we may stumble, we will not fall, as His strong, supporting arm is on our shoulder.

We yoke ourselves to our senior partner so that we don't operate independently of Him. We keep our hand in His hand so that we receive that download of wisdom and direction, and maintain that feeling of shelter, provision, and His presence. We don't become overwhelmed by the challenges of our race. All of us can attest to the variations in our daily race that truly present some unique challenges.

We are able to look beyond the negative connotations that are attached to the expressions, “accomplice to the fact” and “acting in concert” as we see what it's like to being yoked to Christ and living in unity with Him. We feel relieved that the decisions He makes, on our behalf, always work in our favor.

The three-legged race truly tests our teamwork skills. As we maintain a willing attitude, without complaining and arguing, we can truly enjoy running today's race.



## ***2020 – Where Is God, In All This?***

*by Karen Benjamin-Abrigo*

*2020 has happened. Yes, it's in the past!  
A tumultuous year of twists and turns  
Of lost time, and space  
The gory details of sudden deaths and school closures  
And the news- A preponderance of news and more news!  
Oh yes, Uncertainties reigned.  
Some asked? Where is God in all this?*

*Did you hear of the family who sat at the table together,  
after being married for ten years?  
Who found the time to celebrate, the little things that they once shared?  
To do the laundry and keep a well-run home  
On less, rather than more?  
So to answer your question - It was God's hand in this!*

*Many feared the dangers of an interrupted education.  
It's Remote, its Blended, its's All In, It's All Out, It's What?  
But, could this be the kids of a new advanced generation?  
Who became more accountable, and entertained themselves in writing?  
An emergence of new leaders who benefited from a slower pace.  
Who showed compassion and empathy to the less fortunate?  
The first time interaction of parents, teachers and students.  
So let me answer your question – It was God's hand in this!*

*What about those we took for granted?  
The health care workers, librarians, teachers,  
Truck drivers, cashiers, sanitation workers just to name a few.  
Who persevered and showed unimaginable courage  
And placed our lives above their very own  
While we grumbled about being sheltered in!  
And you dared ask – Where is God?  
Believers...It was God's Hand, in All this!*



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Photo by Ray Raman

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

[churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com](mailto:churchoftheevangelucc@godaddysites.com)

## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness at Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind body and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

**Welcomes You**

**FREE FREE FREE**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**

## **MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH® (cont'd)**

Include a variety of nutritious foods in your diet. Include foods from all of the food groups, load up on fresh fruits and vegetables and hydrate, healthfully. Plan your meals ahead of time. Use a grocery list to shop for healthy foods. Try new foods and food flavorings, and practice skills to create tasty meals.

Be adventurous! Always include different colors, textures and flavors to make your plate attractive and take

the time to enjoy your meal. Also, don't forget to include some physical activity in your day. Take time for selfcare and manage your stress level.

Enjoy Nutrition Month!

**PERSONALIZE  
YOUR  
PLATE**



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

## ***Reopening Evangel***

by *Rev. Cynthia Jackson*



### **Church of the Evangel, UCC**

Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

#### **Up Coming Events**

*Wellness @ Evangel Ministry:  
Faith & Wellness Seminar 2020  
November 14, 2020 @ 1:00 pm  
On ZOOM*

*Theme: Committed to Wellness:  
Maintaining Physical, Spiritual,  
Emotional, and Financial Health  
Despite the Coronavirus.*

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Evangel family, we hear you asking, "When are we going back to our church?"

As New Yorkers, we are patiently and wisely awaiting the green light to reopen our church. But, while we are waiting, we are actively preparing a safe place for our church family and friends. Your health & safety are our top priority. Soon, we will be providing additional updates on the 'new and improved comforts' we have prepared for you and your guests.

We are implementing NYC guidelines and United Church of Christ (UCC)

guidelines to ensure that when you come back home, you truly feel comfortable in your home.

Evangel's reopening plan involves a robust and continuous cleaning of all community areas and washrooms, and essential social distancing guidelines that will be easy to practice.

Our new procedures will be along new 'people-friendly' practices. Your neighbor may be beyond arms length (no hugging) but we want to ensure that our unique Evangel neighborly atmosphere continues to be enjoyed by everyone.

Thankfully, your well-known unique personalities cannot be hidden and they will be our main identifiers, as we will be wearing our fancy face masks in a glorious display of our love and respect for each other.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## **Reopening Evangel** *(cont'd)*

Our masks will be saying to each other, *"I care about you."* We will not lose our 'closeness,' even when we are observing the social distancing guidelines geared to ensuring that we have a safe and rewarding time of fellowship with each other.

Our ushers will be giving a whole new meaning to the greeting, 'Welcome' and providing 'four-star' service to all present. We want our 'illustrious choir' to continue to minister to us in song so we are looking into ways to make this possible.

We are all eager to be 'reunited' at 1950 Bedford Avenue so the necessary planning and preparations will continue as we want everyone to enjoy the new Evangel fellowship experience when we 'come back home.'

As members and friends of the Evangel community, let us continue to fellowship on *Zoom*, as we have been doing for the past few months until it is safe to return to our church building.



## **Pastor Appreciation Day Message from Church of the Evangel to Rev. Cynthia Jackson October 11th, 2020**

*<sup>11</sup>So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup>to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...*  
Ephesians 4:11-12 (NIV)

Pastor, when Jesus celebrated his victory over sin and death, He chose to send gifts to those he set free. He could have, of course, chosen to give us anything: Knowledge, spiritual growth, protection from the evil one, or even comfort during trials. In the end, though, when Jesus celebrated his victory over sin and death, He chose to give us all these things because, Pastor, He chose to give us, you.

*by Daniel Sherman*

### **To Lead and Guide**

I see the hands that hold God's word, and fold in prayer to seek His will.

I see the feet that walk the path, and offers of praise as from a lofty hill.

I see the hands that serve Him well, the ears that seek to hear His call.

The mouth that speaks truth and wisdom, the busy feet that carry the message to all.

I see the heart that was pricked and entered when God's woman answered the gospel call, and yielded her life as a humble servant, a woman who is willing, as was Apostle Paul.

I see all of this as she stands in the pulpit, an instrument through which God speaks the words of wisdom, of love and peace, to lead and guide all those whom God seeks.

*by Judy Crowe*



Evangel Family & Friends



## ***Giving God Elbow Room***

by *Brian Ward*

Oh, how we cherish our space! Sometimes, we kill for our space. We don't want anyone in our space...not even God, it seems.

ER, Elbow Room is the *freedom to do what you want to do or need to do* in a particular life situation or in life, in general.

As servants of God, we need to learn to make room for Him...*to give God "elbow room" to do what He wants to do in our lives.* When we don't, we stifle our growth and kill opportunities designed to generate prosperity in our lives and the lives of many others.

The desire to change from 'freedom to think my own thoughts and do my own thing' is the beginning of giving God elbow room to work in our lives. Elbow room is all about space for movement; turn around movements and extension movements that grow us.

In reality, creating elbow room is actually inviting God to do some work in our lives.

An open invitation that requires us not to look for Him to come at 10 o'clock, but *do look for Him*. He may not come when you need Him but always make room for Him. He will come at the right time. He's our on-time God who basks in surprise. He's our "Suddenly" God who shows up knowing that we have made room for Him!

By keeping in touch with Him and living in a state of expectancy, we will be able to recognize His 'surprising, breakthrough power' as He applies healing to our ailing. The presence of elbow room weaves together His 'willingness to give' with our willingness to receive, providing the perfect blend of goodness in our lives.

ER, elbow room, is character shaping and it encourages us to open up as we talk with Him. This is when our new values lead to proper decision making as our personal relationship with Him becomes appealing and electrifying.

Like the apostle Paul, our spiritual life will not be measured for growth in spite of our circumstances but in and by our circumstances.

Elbow room...incubation space for our new growth.



## ***The 'Notorious' RBG***

***Ruth Bader Ginsburg,***  
*Supreme Court Justice*



*1933-2020*

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, (RBG), the second woman to serve on the Supreme Court, passed away at age 87. RBG was a liberal powerhouse who remained on the Court for 27 years. The feminist and cultural icon leaves an unforgettable legacy.

Ginsburg, a graduate of Columbia Law School, was nominated to the Supreme Court in 1993 by President Bill Clinton. The small (in stature) but mighty (in wit) lawyer made a name for herself championing equal rights for women in the workplace.

*"She won equality for women and men, not in one swift victory, but brick by brick, case by case, through meticulous careful lawyering. She changed the course of American law."* said Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt, describing Justice Ginsburg's legacy.

R.I.P. RBG!



## Breast Cancer Awareness & COVID

by the Wellness Ministry

Breast cancer continues to be the second leading cause of deaths among women in the U.S., affecting all of us, survivors, spouses, children and friends daily, as does COVID-19.

In 2020, we'll have more than 3 million survivors, in the U.S. alone, thanks to early detection and treatment. Sadly, more than 40,000, women and men, will not win the battle.

Early detection beats intervention. Detecting any problems, early, should be our priority. We shouldn't allow our fear of the COVID-19 virus to prevent us from scheduling and keeping our mammogram appointments, because sometimes, people with breast cancer do not have symptoms and the cancer may not be big enough to feel in our breast self-examinations.

It's normal for us to have concerns about having a mammogram done, but we shouldn't permit our fear of COVID-19 to delay or dissuade

us from taking care of ourselves. Instead, let's discuss our concerns with our doctor who will advise us of the extra steps being taken to make our visit a safe one.

We shouldn't feel overwhelmed, instead we should encourage a friend to also make her mammogram appointment and hold each other responsible while keeping each other strong. The fight against cancer is not done alone but in unity.

As important as it is for us to 'spread breast cancer



*Evangel's Women visibly supporting the eradication of Breast Cancer.*

awareness' – the most important thing we can do this month is to 'schedule our mammograms, keep our appointments, and encourage our loved ones to do the same.' We need to show our awareness by our actions.



In this COVID-19 season, there is so much that we can't make a decision on. Thankfully, making an appointment for a mammogram isn't one of them. We have the power to act on our own behalf, in our own best interest. One in eight women will develop breast cancer during their lifetime and most can survive breast cancer if it's found and treated early. **Early detection is the key to better outcomes.**

As you and I commit to increasing awareness in Breast Cancer Awareness Month 2020 – let's make it meaningful. Let's follow through with our mammogram appointments.

It's a one-hour time investment that could save your life.



### Walk the Talk

*"I think it's because most of us talk one way and live another. There are few people who truly, truly walk the talk."  
- Olympia Dukakis*





# OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

This year's Breast Cancer fundraisers will look a little different but our commitment to raise money for the fight against breast cancer remains undaunted.



Join the team **Church of the Evangel-Walking by Faith** and help us reach our goal of \$1000.00.

With a donation join our Garden of Hope Pink Flag Campaign. You can dedicate a flag to a loved one lost, someone currently battling cancer, or anyone who's overcome it.

You can donate on line by going to Making Strides of Brooklyn and search for our team- CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL WALKING BY FAITH.

Or drop your donation at the church. Make checks payable to CHURCH OF THE EVANGEL.

We are tentatively scheduling a walk with friends and family on Oct.18, if we have enough interest.

Join us.

Thank you for your generosity. Stay safe.

Contact Darrell Walker at 917-689-0386 for further information.



# HELPING HANDS

## *Rescue Mother and Son*

by *Brian Ward*

*“Don’t worry...but first, make a small loaf with what you have and bring it to me, and then prepare the rest for you and your son.”*

1 Kings 17:13 (GNB)

by *Brian Ward*

“Did I hear you right? You want me to make a small loaf for you, using the little I have for our last meal?”

That’s the widow of Zarephath responding to Elijah’s request. He wanted his loaf before she fed her son and herself. Was he being greedy or was he working on restoring her faith? She had reconciled herself to death by starvation because her cupboard was just about empty of food stuff.

Elijah was rescuing her from the depths of despair but he needed her to get back in touch with the principle of ‘others before self.’

When she brought his loaf to him, that act told him that she was refocused; she had climbed out of her pit of despair and most of all, once again, she saw herself as an ‘Overcomer’ with the desire to

give; to serve. As her faith was being restored, she realized that the first helping hands needed to be hers.

So often, when we are in need, we tend to forget how powerful and resourceful we are. The extent of who we are and what we can do depends on how and where we focus our thinking. We lose the understanding that our satisfaction is not simply based on our receiving. There is a ‘giving’ aspect that fills us with purpose when we become helping hands.



Elijah’s words, “Don’t worry” certainly refreshed the widow’s dying faith and made her believe that everything was going to be alright. Her heart was being prepared for the miracle that was about to take place in her life but she needed to be an active participant.

What ‘kind’ words would you have had for Elijah as you reminded him that your cupboards were bare? During those times when there is more month than there is money; when we can see the back of our cupboards; when, like the widow, we don’t know where the next meal (solution) will come from, are we

inspired to take the focus off of ourselves and direct it to someone else’s situation? Do we hear Elijah saying, “Don’t worry; somebody needs you right now. Reach out to them.”

When we do, our faith gets stronger.” The widow’s **actions** started a landslide of activity and blessings that quickly erased her deflated mental outlook and statement to Elijah, “**All I have...**” Just as she was assured by Elijah, neither her flour nor her oil ran out, providing all of them with enough food for many days.

In our times of depression and weariness, our God sends us an angel, an Elijah, to wake us out of our funk and help us to dial up our faith again. He restores in us, a willing attitude. Our Lord works where there is an attitude of faith. Isaiah 40:29 testifies to the fact that He gives power to those who are weary in spirit and increases their strength.

If that describes you, then say “Yes, Lord, Yes” and come into agreement with the way He wants to use your helping hands today.

When life’s situations blur our focus, let us refocus on our ‘walk by faith,’ as the widow did.





## ***Sarah Laughed, Unbelieving***

by *Brian Ward*

*“And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”*

(Genesis 17:16, NKJV)

Yes, Sarah laughed! Was she laughing at both Abraham and God when Abraham told her what God said to him? Sarah and Abraham, her husband, were very old. She was 90 years old and had been barren her whole life; not able to have children.

We know she was filled with doubt and unbelief, possibly, she had even accepted that it would not happen but under all of that, could she have had a glimmer of hope, even though she could not have seen how it could happen?

It happened! For Sarah, that elusive achievement became a reality. She had a son. God was saying, “Sarah, what I put in you is more than you can imagine.”

He is saying the same thing to us today, we should not ‘write ourselves off’, we

should not allow our circumstances to deflate our hopes and talk us out of our dreams when we have the potential. Granted, we cannot see how things will work out but God’s plan is already in action through those seeds of greatness He put inside us.

We need to nurture those seeds into opportunities as God’s favor is there in abundance.



## ***What’s Your Approach?***

by *Sheryl Phillips*

As young children, we quickly learn which parent to approach when we want something. We decide when to approach Mom or Dad, and we adjust our approach, based on our desire and expectations for success. Sometimes we would come right out and ask and other times, because we feel the answer might be “No”, we spend some time ‘thinking through’ our approach. We make sure all of our chores are done, and we rehearse what we are going to say. We may even ask our brother or sister to help us to develop a successful approach. Even with all that hard work, we still run the risk of hearing a “No” to our request, which is disappointing. A reply of

“Maybe” leaves us feeling encouraged but it’s that “Yes” that gives us the satisfaction of feeling that Mom or Dad loves me. They said “Yes.”

Just as we develop our strategy to approach our earthly parents or use a sibling to intercede for us at times, so too we need to remember that we have the Holy Spirit to intercede on our behalf when we approach our Heavenly Father.

Think about it! What is your approach like as you come before the Throne of Grace? Are you humble? Do you approach with thanksgiving? Do you acknowledge your shortcomings? Do you approach with faith, knowing that God promises to supply all your needs? Do you approach God with reverence? Do you approach Him with awe, with thankfulness, and with the willingness to surrender to His will? Most of all, do you come before God with the confidence that Hebrews 4:6 advises, *“let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need”*.

We can also substitute confidence with boldness, praying without fear or  
*(cont’d on page 9)*

## Ministry Corner



### Our 'Wilderness Wandering' Minds

by the Wellness Ministry

Deuteronomy 1:2 talks about some folks who 'got lost,' were wandering in the desert, and were late in making the 'crossing'. In fact, they never made it to the 'crossing.'

In our Book Study/Bible Study/Me Study, the Wellness Ministry has been evaluating our individual 'wilderness wanderings' and surprisingly, identifying why we missed some of the crossings we could have made. But collectively, we looked at our numerous times of trials and difficulties in our relationship with our Lord.

Our *attitude* toward the Word of God has been the determining factor in how high and how far we have gone in life, and how far we will go. Like those on that

11-day/40-year journey, it has been our 'uncooperative attitude' towards the Word of God, while on our journey, that has hindered us.

Because our thinking has been like 'waves in the sea,' never really setting our minds in one particular way of thinking, we developed that 'wilderness mindset' toward our trials and turned them into difficulties.

We went around and around the same mountain instead of making progress. We have been stuck in a place, became too comfortable, and eventually were too afraid to leave. A breakthrough wasn't necessary then because we created a 'comfort inn' that we called victory.

Each of us stayed at that mountain too long but we did 'break camp,' moving toward where we need to be. It required a new way of thinking, identifying and consistently working on breaking those behaviors that were repeat patterns, binding us to false victories, weakening our belief that we could be *strong and courageous*.

Our individual challenge was to develop (work on consistently) a different mindset, one built on 'growing faith' to "*set our minds and keep them set on what is above*

*(the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth."* (Colossians 3:2, Amplified).

The way we set our minds on the things above is by reading and meditating on the Word of God, allowing the Word to provide direction and develop in us, the cooperating attitude that is essential. It changes our character, making us willing and able to enjoy the abundant life that's ours, if we want it.

It's not enough to have come out from where we were 'stuck,' now we have to get into the promises of God. No more low-level thinking. No more grumbling and complaining but instead having the willingness to endure everything, with patience. We are done with being pitiful, now we are exploring being powerful.

Yes, we go through the wilderness and at times it may not be bad but it's not our final destination. That's not our mailing address!

Our discussions, so far, have revealed that the wilderness can be a good place for learning the lessons our God wants us to learn when we continue to practice a positive and obedient attitude.



## What's Your Approach? (cont'd)

hesitation, trusting that our prayers will be heard. To pray with *boldness* or *confidence* is to pray with *unwavering faith*. Hebrews 11:6 reminds us that without faith it's impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

So, each time we need to come to God, we need to come with faith, believing that He will supply our needs. We ought not to make the mistake, however, of thinking that whatever we ask for we will receive. God promised He

will have mercy, that there is always forgiveness, that there will always be a hearing ear and an understanding heart, even though His answer may be "No" or "Not now." He always keeps His promises. He knows what's best for us and His answer to our prayers is always on time. We often get impatient, thinking that God is not listening, but rest assured, He is listening and will answer in His time. Being the truthful and merciful God that He is, we can and should develop the habit of going to Him with high expectations and displaying that willing-

ness to use the gifts He has given us, so that the lives of others would be enriched.

We need to be patient and we may not like His answer but He knows what is best for us. So, how's your approach to God's throne? It needs to be with confidence, knowing that He is always available.



### Acts and Attitudes of Coming to God in Prayer

## Word Search

T	W	P	R	E	P	E	E	K	E	S	I	M	O	R	P
H	H	O	L	Y	S	P	I	R	I	T	N	E	P	E	R
A	O	R	B	E	L	I	E	V	E	Z	J	B	L	V	A
N	L	C	O	E	F	Q	M	X	S	Q	D	L	U	E	Y
K	Y	O	A	N	U	D	L	E	I	Y	A	Y	V	R	E
S	C	D	W	E	E	H	T	I	A	F	A	T	H	E	R
G	O	R	S	A	D	O	R	E	R	R	E	I	S	N	F
I	N	T	D	S	P	Y	F	G	P	J	T	N	S	C	U
V	F	T	S	U	R	T	E	G	F	Y	A	T	D	E	L
I	I	I	B	L	A	I	A	F	O	B	R	E	N	T	R
N	D	C	O	E	I	L	R	V	G	D	T	R	A	A	E
G	E	R	L	E	S	I	L	R	N	E	S	C	H	C	D
E	N	E	D	N	E	M	E	O	I	G	O	E	D	I	N
L	C	W	N	K	A	U	S	N	R	A	R	D	E	L	E
B	E	S	E	E	C	H	S	O	E	R	P	E	T	P	R
M	W	N	S	F	A	I	T	H	F	U	L	L	F	P	R
U	A	A	S	S	E	C	C	A	F	O	C	N	I	U	U
H	E	C	N	E	D	I	F	N	O	C	E	R	L	S	S

- Awe
- Adore
- Beseech
- Boldness
- Confidence
- Fall
- Faithfull
- Father
- Humility
- Holy Confidence
- Honor
- Kneel
- Offering of Praise
- Promise Keeper
- Pray
- Plead
- Prostrate
- Repent
- Supplicate
- Throne of God
- Trust
- Thanksgiving
- Yield
- Access
- Answer
- Believe
- Bow
- Courage
- Fearless
- Faith
- Humble
- Holy Spirit
- Intercede
- Lifted Hands
- Praise
- Prayerful
- Reverence
- Request
- Surrender



## Who Are You Listening To?

by Brian Ward

“No! Don’t do it, Peter! It’s too dangerous! Don’t go out there, Peter,” the other disciples pleaded.

Peter replied, “Don’t worry. I’ll be OK. Watch, you’ll see! Jesus told me, “*Yes, come!*” So, Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on water.

With that step, Peter became the ‘walking billboard’ for many of our daily survival strengths like, increasing belief, staying focused, listening to the Voice, being obedient, having **courage**, taking risks, increasing accomplishments, and fullness of life. His decision to step out of his comfort zone and show his faith in Jesus was a life-changing event for Peter then and it continues to be a life-changing experience for us, today.

That’s how we deal with our challenges, we step into them. Easy or Challenging? That seems to be how life presents choices to us. Should we play it safe with something

easy or risk failing at something challenging?

Packed into Matthew 14:29 is a story of **encouragement**. As he sees Jesus walking on the stormy waters, Peter needs to know if he could do likewise and Jesus **encourages** him to try. The various upheavals in our communities require us to **try** something to make a difference. Choosing to play it safe and ride out the storm, doing nothing, is no longer a viable option.

Like Peter, we are called to step out of the comfort of our own practices, schedules, and places, and go into the waves, reaching for the hand of Christ. We are called to be **courageous** and be there for others who are being overwhelmed by the waves of life’s challenges. This means responding to Jesus’ invitation to step out of the boat and into the storm.

We may not be called to build an apartment building but every day, we are called to offer our talents to build hope, and **courage**, and confidence in our neighbors. Touch hearts with our **encouragement!** We can certainly do that.

We have confidence in the One who is always working in us. The One who said, “*Take heart; do not be afraid*”

(Matthew 14:27)

We shouldn’t be afraid to respond to that nudge to make a risky choice for good today. So, whatever it is that the Holy Spirit is tugging at your heart to do, be **encouraged**. Step up! Step out of your comfort zone and onto the water. God is waiting to **encourage** you. Trust Him and do not be afraid! Have faith...the size of a mustard seed will get you started! He will never leave you...to drown!

Every morning, step out of the boat onto the water, faithfully believing that you can do the thing you think you cannot do.

Matthew 14:29 is a story that each of us is encouraged to live. All of us have that ‘one thing’ that, like Peter, we really want to know if we can do it. It’s time to get our feet wet.

One day, you will tell your story of how your faith grew from the size of a mustard seed and became bigger than your fears. Be an **encourager**.

## FAITH

IS TAKING THE FIRST STEP EVEN WHEN YOU DON’T SEE THE WHOLE STAIRCASE.

-MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

## What's Happening in Your Mind?

by Sheryl Phillips

In many of our discussions, the Wellness Ministry talks about the “Monkey Mind.” We discuss the idea of monkeys taking over our minds, and the need to quiet the monkeys in order to hear God’s direction and purpose for our lives.

There is an ongoing battle to control our mind and to keep us distracted. Heaven and earth intersect in our minds. Good and evil meet in our minds. We are constantly required to make “Yes” or “No” decisions about issues. Do I go to church today? Must I go to work today? Is it safe? Who do I trust? How do I pay these bills? Can I afford to send my children to college? How do I cope if a family member dies? Am I spending enough time praying? I can’t pray like Mary so I don’t want to pray out loud in church. What does he or she think of me? Would I fit in? Are my actions pleasing to God? What would Jesus do? Why does God allow bad things to happen? On and on, our mind is filled with chatter; mostly negative talk. God is saying to us we need to learn to shut out the world and focus on His presence and enjoy His Peace.

Spending time communicating with Christ

gives us strength and helps to quiet our mind, filling our spirit with life and peace. The world and its activities create a constant downward pull on our thoughts and can leave us sad, depressed, worried and fearful. When we stay in constant communion with our Heavenly Father and we face our challenges, we will not be knocked off course because with God as our pilot, He will lead us in paths of righteousness. He will provide comfort and guidance. He will help us to look at the positive side of all situations. He will help quiet the chatter in our mind if we keep our mind focused on Him.

So, what’s going on in your mind right now? Are you having godly thoughts? Are your thoughts positive? Are you confused about what is happening in the world today? 1 John 2:15-17 says, *“Do not love the world or anything in the world...the world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”* So take time in you day to really communicate with God, shut out the chatter of all the negative things happening in the world today and renew your mind.



## Who's Talking to You?

*“Speak, Lord; your servant is (I am) listening.”* 1 Samuel 3:10

by Brian Ward

The ‘eager waiting’ did not allow him to go back to sleep. He may have been feeling like those draftees on NBA or NFL Draft Day, eagerly anticipating the call by a team, to join them and learn their playbook.

Samuel was waiting in his bed to hear the Voice again, as Eli told him it was very possible that he would hear his name call again.

The Voice was not familiar to Samuel but Eli realized that it was the Lord calling Samuel, so he advised him, *“...and if He calls you again, say, ‘Speak Lord, I am listening.’”*

The Voice of the Spirit is always calling us, either awakening us from our physical sleep or keeping us awake when we are slow to show our willingness to listen to the invitation to a relationship with Christ Jesus.

Sometimes we need the encouragement of an Eli to say, *“Speak Lord, I am listening.”*



## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

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Brooklyn, NY 11225

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Photo by Ray Raman

### FAITH & WELLNESS SEMINAR 2020

**Saturday, November 14, 2020**

To register, email Sheryl with your name,  
phone number and email address.

**[Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com](mailto:Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com)**

## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness at Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind body and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

Welcomes You

**FREE FREE FREE**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm on Zoom**

**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on Zoom**



*These candles burn in loving memory of the thousands of lives lost due to COVID-19.  
They burn for the families who lost loved ones in the past ten months.  
They burn in solidarity with all the teachers who continue to put their health on the line  
to light the path for our children. They burn for all our essential workers.  
Their sacrifice is appreciated. They will continue to be in our prayers.  
The memory of your loved ones will continue to glow in your heart.*



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

## *Living Your Legacy*

**CREATE**  
*Your*  
**LEGACY**

by Sheryl Phillips

When we hear the word 'legacy,' it's generally associated with a person's death. It's used to describe the impact that person made when he/she was alive. So, what do you hope your family and friends say about you when you are gone? What qualities would you like to be remembered for? What would people miss most about you? What possible attribute will you be associated with? These are all questions we must answer. You see, a legacy must be developed, it must be lived.

Each of us has the ability, and should be motivated to strive to leave a

mark on our family, community, and our world. In order to do so, we must take targeted individual actions. We must decide what contribution we want to make to the world.

Should you be told that you only have one year to live, what would you do with that time? Would you lay around moping and feeling sorry for yourself, or would you make every minute of the year count? We have no control over how long we will be on this earth so we need to be actively living our legacy.

Just think about how many people died in America in the past four months as a result of the Coronavirus; over one hundred thousand. Some had plans for a bright future and others had already made a significant impact in their community.

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**Church of the Evangel, UCC**

Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

- *Due to the coronavirus pandemic and the closing of the church, all activities have been postponed until further notice.*
- *Worship Service: Sundays at 10:30 am on ZOOM. Dial-in number is 929-205-6099 Meeting ID: 880-4062-5764# Password: 019995#*

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## Create Your Legacy (cont'd)

Because life is so uncertain, we should be actively living our legacy, right now.



Set goals and determine the steps to accomplish them. Identify the things that mean the most to you and build your legacy around them. Be kind to others. Simple acts of kindness may make a huge impact on someone's life. You may also build/live your legacy by serving; serve your church, your community, possibly by volunteering with a charitable organization.

You can also support the people and causes that are important to you. Be willing to share your blessings with others, mentor young people, spend more quality time in prayer and Bible study, apply God's word to your everyday life, and live life with passion, purpose, and gratitude.



What legacy are you living? How will you be described? What positive attribute will you be associated with? Look at your life as living a legacy rather than leaving a legacy. Your legacy is the path you take here on earth, the goals you set and accomplish, and the impact you make on the lives of the people you meet each day. Invest in others, never stop learning and growing, and creating memorable experiences, find your mission, find your passion, put a stamp on the future and just live your legacy.



by Rubie M. Malone Ph.D.

*"Lives of great men all remind us we can make our live sublime, and departing, leave behind us, footprints on the sands of time."*

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

This has been a favorite saying of mine for a long time. Looking back at a time in my life when as teenagers, my sister and I would go to bed early,

excitingly sharing our thoughts and dreams, I see how it may have presaged my future. I could have never foreseen how my hopes and dreams would expand to go beyond myself to impact others later in my life. How was I to know this was the beginning of building my legacy?

I define my legacy as what was present in my life and what I wanted in my life to contribute to others in an energetic, passionate way, for it is truly a gift from God and a legacy that would go from generation to generation. After all, I recognize God is the first legacy. His legacy has come down through the ages from his death until now. Generations of people have followed Him without ever physically seeing Him; thus, like many others, I hold on to Him, follow in His word believing that God will direct my path and order my steps if I allow Him.

My life is a clear example of God's work. I graduated college with a degree in Mathematics simply because I liked the subject and loved the problem-solving methodology.

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## *Living My Legacy Life* (cont'd)

I didn't have any idea of how I would use the degree. After completing student teaching, it was clear my interest was not in teaching high school. Since I was clear about what I didn't want, this meant I had to consider leaving Florida because if I didn't, that was the career I would have to enter.

Now the question became, what can I do? After some extensive thought I decided that I would relocate to New York where I had an uncle and could also be exposed to more options. I had no job or job offer but it never occurred to me that I should be anxious or afraid. I just confidently made my plans. I had faith that I would find a job and begin building a career I would passionately enjoy. Within a couple of months, I found a job. I began to learn new information which led me to start making plans for a career. In the interim, I learned that God had other plans for my life.

I met the person who was soon to be my husband; he was working in the New York City Department of Social Welfare. I wasn't knowledgeable about that career, but I observed him as he worked with clients. I asked questions, listened intently and learned.

I became so interested, I decided I would try that career.

Many of my friends asked how do you move from Mathematics to Social Service? I thought about it, then I made my connection, both career areas dealt with solving problems; that was the enthusiasm I felt.

I became very interested as I delved into the career and decided to pursue the Masters, and Doctorate Degrees in Social Work, which was a more in-depth psychological and sociological aspect of the Social Services field.

I thought maybe I had found my gift since I felt such satisfaction in my studies. Something unexpected happened. Instead of looking for employment in a Social service agency, I was introduced to the idea of applying to City University for a counseling faculty position in the Special Education Program at one of the colleges. Ironically, the educational institution I fled earlier in my life had returned but at the higher educational level where I felt comfortable. It proved to be a great move.

Over 34 years, I was

promoted from my entry level up the ranks to a Vice President position. I made significant impact in the faculty and administrative positions with students, colleagues and the university. Looking back, I can see how my gifts, which enlightened the lives of others, have the ability to affect many generations from both the institutional and personal levels.

The lessons I learned from my life story are that God has been with me all the way. He heard my early teen-aged wants and desires. He knew my need to find that place where the gifts He gave me would move me to help those who were in need.

I also confirmed for myself that God has a purpose for each of us and He prepares us to reach the goals of that purpose. We know He is with us and will never leave us. He is the set of footprints aligned with ours as we tread our pathways along life's journey. Sometimes, the footprints are behind us because He is pushing us along, sometimes there is only one set of footprints because He is carrying us but all in all, He is ever present.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## *Living My Legacy Life*

(cont'd)

I look at awards/honors I've received over the years, such as joining my husband to have our names placed on the college's student government conference room, commendations, certificates, plaques which are recognitions for my work. Yes, these awards/honors are prestigious, and I appreciate them. However, what I treasure most as my legacy is the real satisfaction of helping to create changes in institutional policy and direction which produced positive changes to improve conditions and programs for students/persons in their communities, and presenting material that open young people's eyes and minds to possibilities that can be of personal help to them and also passed on to family members and others they encounter in their lives.

I have built and lived my legacy to help so many and used God's gifts in the ways He intended, to apply a deep sense of significance to measuring the value and worth of services extended to others and quality of life purpose rather than be only satisfied with recognition and prestige. Indeed, my legacy is blessed by God and will pass from generation to generation.

## *"You Go, and Do Likewise"*

by *Brian Ward*



You may not have seen it but you need to know about it. On a Louisville, KY street, there was a public display of the realization that "...we have been given the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16) ...plus a new heart and spirit."

The police came with a show of force to disrupt the peaceful protest marches in the city, earlier last month. One officer found himself 'alone and cornered,' with a mob moving in on him. Suddenly, according to the news report, a Black protestor rushed to the aid of the officer, standing in front of him, attempting to protect him from the fury of the mob.

One Black man deciding to help one White man soon grew into a barrier of interlocking arms of Black men protecting

and possibly preserving the life of that White police officer. To help one of the 'enemy,' these 'unlikely allies' physically positioned themselves in the path of the angry mob that was screaming, "Why are you guys protecting him?" They became targets of the mob but they resisted and remained standing, protecting their new 'neighbor.' 'Right thinking,' on their part, showed that they understood that this was not a time for 'distancing' but for locking arms and embracing their 'neighbor.'

Scripture tells us that a law expert confronting Jesus (Luke 10) asked Him "*who counts as a neighbor.*" In His usual, unique style, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan and the 'individual' behavior of the three men who came by. Jesus then asked, "*Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who was beaten and robbed?*" The lawyer answered, "**The one who showed him mercy.**" So Jesus replied, "*You go, and do likewise*" ([Luke 10:37](#)).

That's what those pictures show...acts of mercy being done by Good Samaritans. We see the behavior of "*loving your neighbor,*" the *godly* way. As we understand that being 'neighbors' has nothing to do

(cont'd on page 9)

## *Leaving a Christ-filled Legacy in Our Life Journey*

by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

*“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” — Ephesians 2:10*

Blessings to Evangel's family and friends:

I'd like to share a few newsletter moments with you about how we prepare and fulfill the planned action of our God in helping each one of us to create our life's sacred legacy.

Everywhere we go, we leave traces of ourselves. If we look at our hands, we will see fingerprints that were formed well before the day we were born. Everywhere we go and in everything we do, there is evidence of our lives that we leave. Make no mistake about it: we were created to leave a mark to show what kind of impact and legacy we are placing in God's world! The question we must ask ourselves each day is, “what kind of mark am I going to leaving in Christ's name on this day?”

God wants us to make a difference in our journey every day. As Paul shared in his letter to the church at Ephesus: *“God has created each of us in Christ Jesus, so we can do good works that God planned for us long*

*ago”* (Ephesians 2:10). God saved us and made us to leave a good mark on this earth.

When we sincerely commit ourselves to serve Almighty God we seek to lean on the teachings and ways given to us by his Son, Jesus Christ. We learn more and more of the traditions that enhance the growth of our spiritual paths so that we bring a legacy into God's record books and impact others in their Godly life travels. So, on this day, Evangel family and friends, the questions that I would pose to myself and to each one reading this article right now are these:

Have I given thoughts today about the life I am leading in God's world?

Have I thought about the kind of legacy that will be found in my life when I have gone home to God's glory?

Will the legacy that's imprinted with my name be one that says, "I did all I could to live to the purposes God wanted for my life?"

As we live out the days which God will bless us to see, it is my hope and prayer that we will find that those we loved and touched in our lifetime will be able to truthfully say these words written by our dear sister, Maya Angelou:

(In this lifetime) “I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

What will we hear our brothers and sisters say after we've spoken to each other day in and day out? How will they say we made them feel?

Will it be said of us that we were generous to others with our time, our talent, our Godly love? For God our Creator tells us in Psalm 37 and Psalm 39 that we must *“Be careful how we act, for these are difficult days.”* It is not always so easy to act as God calls us to, but we must make the effort none the less. Look at the many protests that are being instigated throughout the world now, the unexpected virus pandemic, and the many other hurtful human acts that have been committed in just the first 6 months of this year 2020.

How will we be able to give care to one another as our Compassionate God desires if our primary concern and worry is only about what we have or don't have materially from the stock market and not about

*(cont'd on page 9)*



## ***Evangel 2020: Not Elimination but Illumination***

by *Brian Ward*

There continues to be truth to the expressions, *Life is a stage and we are the actors; everyone has a part to play.* It's when we *'put our foot in the water'* that the path opens up for us.

At Evangel, we have a unique opportunity to give new meaning to 20/20 vision. How do we see ourselves in 2020? "*Evangel 2020*" is all about teamwork.

Each of us has our choice example of teamwork. Mine is the collaborative effort of Moses, Aaron, and Herr. When Moses was struggling to keep his hands lifted up so that the battle would remain winnable for the Israelites, Aaron and Herr stepped up and provided the support Moses needed. They provided Moses with a place to sit and they *held up his arms* (Exodus 17:12).

That's the support our pastor needs as she leads us through the muck and mire that has so far been 2020, addressing all of our concerns

and fears. It's kind of funny that after Moses helped out Aaron with the idol-building scenario, Aaron was there for him in a time when Moses needed 'a hand or two' to steady him as he was demonstrating his responsibility to lead his people to victory.

All of us, during our times of 'leaning to one side,' have been supported by Rev. Cynthia. We cannot pretend that we don't understand that the fight she has ahead of her, on our behalf, is going to be long and tiring. She needs Team Evangel supporting her efforts and collaborating all throughout 2020.



She needs all of Evangel to be her Dream Team, sharing the dream and bringing it to fruition.

Just as Aaron and Herr stepped up, we have to step up to support our shepherd throughout 2020 as she leads us to a victorious year, similar to the victory the Israelites won.

Scripture didn't tell us that Moses called for help but I believe that we see ourselves as Aaron and Herr did, as 'essential workers' on whose behalf Moses was fighting, just like our Rev. Cynthia is

fighting.

There are so many ways that we can be supportive and collaborate with our church leadership. The pooling of our skills and talents will provide Rev. Cynthia and her leadership team with the growth ideas and ability to keep Evangel unified, winning battles, and moving all of us in the right direction, in a timely manner.

One hand cannot clap; it cannot make a sufficiently strong noise. Two hands, certainly! Four, six, eight, ten hands, the stronger the effort will be!

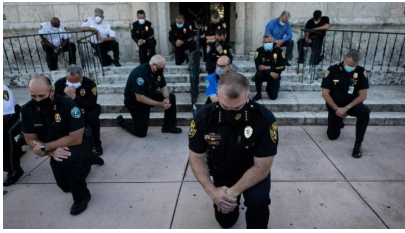
Call Rev. Cynthia, let her know that she is not alone; help is available; you are with her. Discuss with her what you can bring to the *Evangel 2020* journey and learn about the various ways you can *hold up her tired hands*.



Leaving a legacy of faith means desiring to give someone your best, but recognizing the best we can give is not of us. We make our greatest impact on others by living a life that points others to Him.

[www.renovatedfaith.com](http://www.renovatedfaith.com)

## “... *Lives Matter!*”



*Police officers ‘take a knee’ in solidarity with Protestors.*  
by Brian Ward

“I saw it! I saw it, said one eyewitness. “Me too! It’s happening in my state, too,” chimed in thousands of other ‘witnesses’ around the country.

Did you witness a turning of the corner in relations between two groups of people who were ‘instrumentally’ adversaries? Could what we all saw be a conscious belief and ‘observation’ that *Black Lives Matter*, **in value**, just as much as White lives? Are we seeing a re-programming, a ‘renewing of the mind,’ like Romans 12:2 advises us to do, so that we “don’t conform to the patterns of this world?”

Is it that our hearts are no longer listening to the voice that tweets, “dominate” violent protestors and use aggressive tactics. If you don’t dominate, you’re wasting your time. They’re going to run all over you. You’ll look like a bunch of jerks,” but we are now hearing that ‘still, small voice inside of us’ urging compassion and self-control.



Images like the ones above demonstrate a total ‘difference in thinking’ to the tweets of “We are strongly looking for arrests. You have to get much tougher.”

The universal statement, *Black Lives Matter* does not imply that Black people think that their lives matter *more* than the lives of other people. It’s an expression that Black people feel like other groups have treated them like Black lives matter *less*. The message is that *Black Lives Matter too*.



The ‘taking of a knee’ is a demonstration of ‘My heart hears you, so help me to help you.’ While we are on our knees, no one is physically turning their back on the other person so let us take this ‘oneness’ into a state of

dialogue about the fact that there is no ‘oneness’ in the way we experience our freedoms. The ‘taking of a knee’ by White police officers was acknowledgement to that fact.

Yes, we all want to draw attention to the ‘inequalities’ in opportunities, respect, and behavior, but we are a bit nervous. Today, we are seeing police officers who, not so long ago, would not have crossed the ‘blue line’ because they were nervous about departmental repercussions, now ‘taking a knee’ instead of aiming a gun.



Are we playing our part in our history in the making? Are we willing to study past behavior, especially in human affairs and promote a new and changed thinking and behavior?

We are all in this  
**TOGETHER!**



## Ministry Corner

### ***Evangel's Prayer & Bible Study Ministry: Alive & Well***

by *Darrell Walker*

The Bible is a collection of 66 books inspired by God to equip the believer for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible is a living, breathing collection of small stories filled with the Holy Spirit that lights the path to Christ (Psalm 119:105). Ultimately, 66 small stories reveal one big story of God's path to salvation for man.

Being a part of the church's Bible study is a way to strengthen our faith and challenge us to be better Christians as we let the word 'dwell' in us 'richly'.  
(Colossians (3:16)

*Oh, how I love your law!  
I meditate on it all day long.*

Psalm 119:97

Scripture directs us to meditate, to study the word daily. Group study provides a way to share our understanding and to enlighten us on what the passages mean as we pull back the layers. A deep dive into the Scripture

certainly is a challenge but it can be extremely rewarding, individually and collectively.

Words of Scripture are alive, giving life and breath to our small group's understanding of God's promises. Proverbs 27:17 states, "*As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*" So, we fellowship in the word to sharpen our understanding so that we may not merely listen to the word but apply the word to our lives, in real time.  
(James 1:22)

*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am with them."*

(Matthew 18:20)

*The group is alive and well as we stand on God's promise that He is in the midst.*

*Join us; celebrate with us on Thursdays @ 5:30 pm via ZOOM.*



### ***A Pandemic Can't Stop This Support Group***

by *Wellness Ministry*

"God never shuts one door without opening another." As soon as Evangel's doors closed

during the pandemic, God opened 'virtual' doors for our Wellness Ministry and there hasn't been any 'distancing,' whatsoever!

Without missing a beat, we moved from roundtable to 'virtual' style for our Monday and Friday evening sessions. Now, having the 'opportunity and convenience' of participating, several more people have since joined our virtual wellness sessions that range from applying Bible principles to our lives...to current affairs...to providing therapy for each other. We practice, '*all for one, one for all*' as we continue to fully support each other, during these times of uncertainty and anxiety.

No self-isolation or depression here! Instead, we have lots of 'virtual socializing' and motivating, creating a good fit for each person with everyone having an 'outlet.' No one is alone. As we are living through something completely surreal, we are CONNECTing!

Daily, we are supporting and strengthening each other as we share our prayers and uplifting messages, staying CONNECTed!

What was meant for harm (pandemic), God is using for good.

Wellness for body, mind and spirit!





## Leaving a Christ-filled Legacy... (cont'd)

how we can ensure we help and care for one another in the most human ways.

There is good that we each have been created to do. So, what will be the mark that we will create in our life's journey? God gives us opportunities, continually. So, let's make it a point by the end of the week to smile and say good morning to someone we don't know. Let's share with someone in need, show compassion, do something good for another. Just do whatever you can to leave Christ's marker of love in your everyday travels!



## "You Go, and Do Likewise" (cont'd)

with our zip code or with others but the act has everything to do with who *we* prove to be when we are *with* those others.

We don't have to agree with everything that our 'neighbor' does but our willingness to be compassionate to an 'unlikely ally' motivates us to 'stand up' for them instead of against them.

The *godly* practice of loving our neighbors is alive and well and its positive effects are being seen and felt, thousands of times, every day. As Black and White protestors march together, and protestors

and police step up their willingness to understand the need to be 'neighborly' to each other, our 'right-thinking' will shape our actions and our actions will position us to be right where Jesus wants us to be.

Each of us has something to contribute and our God-given responsibility is to be there for each other, being inclusive and promoting dignity to each other with our actions.

In our hearts, as "*we look to the hills,*" we need to be mindful that the help we need may come from the person we least expect.

That's just God's way!

## Word Search

A	U	N	W	I	N	D	L	U	F	E	C	A	E	P	L
R	C	O	P	I	N	G	N	I	L	E	S	N	U	O	C
O	S	T	R	O	P	P	U	S	L	A	I	C	O	S	A
M	K	I	C	K	B	A	C	K	L	Y	B	S	A	I	L
A	I	T	G	C	M	U	S	I	C	E	E	F	Z	T	M
T	O	I	G	A	M	Y	G	R	E	N	E	G	X	I	G
H	F	M	N	B	L	V	M	H	U	K	N	P	D	V	N
E	Q	E	I	D	U	E	A	P	C	I	W	R	E	E	I
R	N	M	O	E	F	N	S	S	H	I	H	C	I	A	T
A	O	A	G	E	T	E	S	T	I	K	O	G	R	T	A
P	I	N	Y	F	S	R	A	W	E	P	B	O	R	T	E
Y	T	A	S	O	E	E	G	Q	Y	S	B	Y	U	I	Y
O	A	G	A	I	R	S	E	B	R	H	Y	X	H	T	H
G	T	E	E	B	E	L	I	E	F	V	T	D	N	U	T
A	I	M	P	C	L	R	S	Q	A	X	K	L	U	D	L
P	D	E	V	B	A	T	N	E	I	T	A	P	A	E	A
Q	E	N	U	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	S	T	E	E
D	M	T	O	Q	U	I	E	O	H	E	R	A	P	Y	H

## Stress-Free Related Words

- Aromatherapy
- Belief
- Calm
- Coping
- Deep breathing
- Energy
- Easy going
- Healthy eating
- Healthy
- Kick back
- Massage
- Music
- Positive attitude
- Peaceful
- Quiet
- Rest
- Sleep
- Social support
- Safe
- Time management
- Therapy
- Unhurried
- Biofeedback
- Counseling
- Exercise
- Faith
- Hobby
- Loosen up
- Meditation
- Patient
- Restful
- Relax
- Serene
- Tai Chi
- Unwind
- Yoga



## **COVID-19: Coping with the Emotional Storm**

by *Sheryl Phillips*

The sun is shining! It's a beautiful day! Suddenly, the sky becomes dark, the wind picks up and there is a heavy thunderstorm. The coronavirus is that thunder storm and it seems the storm will not let up.

In January 2020, we all made plans for the new year. The weather was calm, and suddenly there was thunder in the distance: the news of the coronavirus spreading in China and across Europe, then the heavy rains began to fall. The coronavirus was here, in the United States.

As we think of the deaths resulting from the virus and the fact that there were so many unknowns about treating the virus, the social isolation and social distancing, the financial insecurity, and the anxiety we feel when mingling with the public have left us in an emotional storm.

The fear of leaving our homes, the anxiety we

experience when taking public transportation, or going to the supermarket, the uneasiness that wells up inside of us when someone near to us coughs or sneezes is enough to keep us off balance, emotionally.

Imagine the emotional storm in the minds of the first responders and the essential workers who face this storm head-on daily to keep the rest of us safe. They show up for work, despite the storm. Even though many of our first responders are trained in handling stressful situations, nothing in their training prepared them to handle the traumatic experiences they face as they treat coronavirus patients.



We all have a breaking point, despite our training and life experiences.

There are so many people dying alone as family members cannot visit them while they are hospitalized. In addition, with limits on the number of persons who can attend a funeral, for many the grieving process is affected and this poses an additional emotional strain.

So, how do we deal with this emotional storm? We hold on to our faith. We spend quality time daily in prayer and Bible study. God has promised to never leave us or forsake us.



Healthy eating is important; avoid sugary snacks that can cause excess weight gain. We need to keep our lives as organized as possible, staying busy and maintaining some type of routine. Where possible, develop a new skill. Always have a plan for your day. Daily physical activity is essential; try to get outside for some fresh air, at least a few days of the week.

Exercise, yoga, deep breathing, guided imagery, progressive muscle realization and listening to music are all ways to help manage your stress. Getting adequate sleep is also another way to manage stress. Regular chats with family and friends, and individual or group counseling may be very helpful for some. Writing or keeping a journal is also an excellent way to unload your emotions and help you to stay healthy, emotionally.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## **COVID-19: Coping with the Emotional Storm** *(cont'd)*

Remember, God does not give us more than we can handle and know that He's right beside us, walking with us, every step of the way!

So, despite social isolation, stay connected to your Heavenly Father, knowing He will provide the strength to weather this emotional storm. Stay connected to family and friends and don't forget, your church family can be a great source of emotional support.



### **My Legacy**

by *Karen Benjamin-Abrigo*

In this lifetime  
I want to touch lives significantly.  
Connect with souls and show care  
For everyone far and near.  
A beacon of hope, a ray of sunshine  
That transcends the globe.  
To be an agent of peace, love and tranquility.

I want to leave this world a better place  
Free from racism and hate.  
To be remembered for my bold stand against injustice.  
For pushing youths to be entrepreneurs of their dreams  
Opening their eyes to see the wealth of education  
And be socially aware of their emotions.

To leave this world better than when I came in  
Be remembered as a teacher of the Word  
One who showed God's love, Mercy and Grace  
To the people I encounter and embrace  
A legacy of Peace, not hate.



by *the Wellness Ministry*

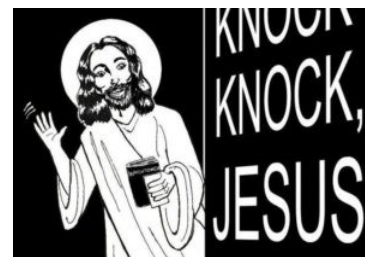
As children, we had so much fun creating and telling 'Knock-Knock' jokes. When we gathered, we were so anxious to tell a new one we created that there was an atmosphere of 'challenge' when we shared it. You just had to answer the challenge to outdo each other, to *"tell me one that's better than mine."* Good laughter!



Decades later, we are still doing 'Knock-Knock' in the Wellness Ministry, but with a different twist. We are telling each other about the different times and the different ways that Jesus Christ has done a better 'Knock-Knock' in each of us, so much better than we could have ever done or imagined.

We willingly share with each other, Jesus' 'Knock-Knock' experiences with us, testifying to His ability and willingness to make us laugh and rejoice about our life situations, even though we may still be in the midst of those situations.

Every morning, we answer that knock on our hearts, expecting to hear from Him, knowing that His goodness for us today far exceeds any that we could have planned for ourselves. Our challenges to ourselves have been replaced by our daily invitations to Him to *"tell me one that's better than mine."* In a most therapeutic manner, He does.



*(cont'd on page 12)*

## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

1950 Bedford Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11225

Phone: 718-287-1189

Email: churchofevangel@optonline.net

Web: www.churchoftheevangelucc.com



Photo by Ray Raman

### **PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

Thursdays @ 5:30 pm on ZOOM

**For information  
contact Darrell Walker.**

## **Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

The purpose of the Wellness at Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind body and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### **AN OPEN INVITATION**

**Participate in our**

**Wellness @ Evangel Ministry on ZOOM**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 8:00 pm**

**For more information**

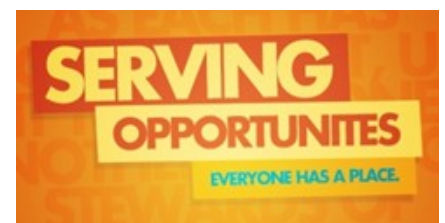
**contact Sheryl Phillips at**

**Sheryl.weightlossolutions@gmail.com**



feeble attempt we may make.

Jesus does 'Knock-Knock'  
better than any of us.



### **Join Our Team**

1. Church Clerk
2. Trustee Board Member
3. Deacon
4. Treasurer

Bring your skills to any of our church ministries, and do your part in continuing our legacy of service.



(cont'd)

We laughed, back then, at our creativity and our 'wit,' and the ease with which we were able to come up with those 'Knock-Knock' expressions. Today, in our gatherings, we still get a good laugh...at ourselves, as we tell each other about the ones that He does. The ones that are so much better than any

# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry: Celebrating 10 Years of Service



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**

Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### Up Coming Events

- *Wellness @ Evangel: International Dinner*  
*Postponed until further notice*
- *Maudy Thursday Service*  
*April 9, 2020 @ 7:30 pm*
- *Good Friday Service*  
*April 10, 2020 @ 12.00 pm*

### Inside this issue:

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### Unselfish Service

-by Rev. Cynthia Jackson

"...by speaking the truth in a spirit of love, we grow up in every way to Christ... all the different parts of the body fit together, and the whole body is held together by every joint with which it is provided. So when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love..."

(Ephesians 4:15-16)

Throughout its history at 1950 Bedford, the Church of the Evangel has been blessed with people serving in different ministries and who continue to serve God's people in our community. While focusing on different activities, the primary mission being sought by the Church family is to have the ministries offer a place of belonging in Christ's name.

In this month of March 2020, the Church family celebrates with the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry, it's **10th Anniversary.**

Since 2010, this ministry has been helping members and friends learn and appreciate the importance of taking care of our spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being as God calls to do. When coming together each week, all who share in this time find it possible to build up themselves and be more dedicated in their physical and spiritual growth and feeling more comfortable as they know God is truly making a home in their hearts and souls. Building up the body with love!

Over the 10-year life of the ministry, family and friends have come to different events which help

*(cont'd on next page)*

## ***Unselfish Service***

*(cont'd)*

demonstrate the sharing of God's blessings and love. Have you had the opportunity to enjoy the Evening of Appreciation; or maybe have your toes curl as you devour the wonderful food of the International Dinner or learn new life lessons at the Annual Faith & Wellness Seminar? If you haven't, you really ought to put these events on your calendars because you will be receiving some character strengthening and life purpose direction, all because you decided to attend.

As pastor of Church of the Evangel, I am very grateful for this ministry along with each of our other serving ministries here. I am glad for the impact they have brought to our community thus far and I look forward to seeing and initiating even more efforts, in God's name, so more of God's beloved will find Evangel to be an embracing body of belonging for all who come through our doors.

Congratulations Wellness @ Evangel Ministry! May we be blessed to see you serve in God's name for many more years to come!

## ***Rest In Peace***



### ***Margaret Boyce: A Faithful Servant***

*"Her worth is far above jewels!"* Proverbs 31 teaches us about a virtuous woman who serves and fears the Lord. Margaret has been such a woman.

You would think that after living for 76 years she would have made someone mad or someone didn't like her. But we know that's just not the case. Everyone you talk to willingly speaks praise for Margaret, because she was a woman who feared the Lord.

For more than 35 years, Margaret was present, serving at Church of the Evangel in so many capacities, encouraging new growth. Her presence was inspirational, teaching

'proper etiquette' as she served, tirelessly.

Margaret's church family at Evangel will miss her soft heart, caring spirit, and her willingness to enjoy life. And enjoy life she did as her Sassy Seniors sisters will testify. She knew how to take the bad and make good come out of it.

Margaret "made the good come out..." A legacy befitting "... *worth...far above jewels!*"



## ***Women's History Month***

Evangel celebrates Women's History month reflecting on the contributions of women throughout history; amazing women who made significant contributions to the world's economy, politics, culture and discoveries, and deserve recognition. We recognize the abundance of incredible women in the Bible. Women of great bravery, trust, patience, and unwavering faith who made their mark on the Christian world!

Women like Mary the mother of Jesus, Ruth, Mary Magdalene, Rachel, Hannah, Deborah, the only judge mentioned in the Bible, Queen Esther, Sarah and Elizabeth, Priscilla, a good example of a Godly wife, and Mary the sister of Martha, who always put Jesus first.





## ***The Negro Travelers' Green Book***

*-by Darrell Walker*

Evangel's celebration of Black History Month featured the viewing of the 2019 Oscar-winning film, *The Green Book*, the story of Black pianist, Donald Shirley and his white driver and friend, Frank Vallelonga, as they traveled the South on a year-long concert tour. The movie's title is based on an actual African-American travel guide called *The Green Book*, created by Victor Green.

*The Green Book*, considered the bible of Black travel during the Jim Crow era, served as the 'Where to Go Guide' for Black travelers, providing them with safe places to eat and sleep as they traveled throughout the country, particularly the South.

In their efforts to avoid segregation, discrimination

and insult on public transportation, many Blacks purchased automobiles. But that created another hardship, that of accessible service stations to purchase gas for their vehicles and rest houses where they would be safe when 'on the road.' Neither need was easily available as white-owned businesses refused to give them accommodation or serve them food, and also refused to sell them gas or repair their vehicles.

Entering these whites-only "sundown towns" where blacks were banned after dark, was simply asking to be a victim of violence so Black travelers would pack food, extra fuel and any personal necessities needed to avoid those towns and not risk being beaten or killed.

Being able to find lodgings, businesses, and gas stations that would serve them along the road was key to where, and how far, the Black traveler could go.

Green founded and published *The Green Book* to avoid those life-threatening problems, compiling resources to give

the Black traveler information to keep him from running into difficulties, embarrassment and to make his journey more enjoyable.

It was said the *The Green Book* was a 'best kept secret,' as outside of the African-American community, few knew about it. But in the 1950s and 1960s, Black highway travelers didn't dare leave home without it. The book's listings covered 'available havens' in every state, illustrating that racial segregation was not limited to the South.

First published in 1936 by Victor Green, *The Green Book* published its last edition in 1966-67, two years after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which banned segregation on the grounds of race, religion or national origin at all places of public accommodation, including courthouses, parks, theaters, restaurants, sports arenas, and hotels.

Victor H. Green, Harlem-based postal carrier, creator of *The Green Book*.



## What Members are saying about the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry!

I have found the Wellness Ministry to be a guiding ministry. I have been guided and encouraged to make worthwhile decisions about my physical health but I also continue to learn that there is a strong connection between my physical health and my mind and spirit.

Learning to make better food choices and changes in how I prepare my meals were definitely challenges. Changes in my meal times, especially dinner, were difficult in the beginning but good habits take time to form. That includes regular physical activity! Our exercise sessions on meeting days are all for the improved health of our bodies, so I look forward to our exercise time. Sheryl, our fearless leader, reminds us that our bodies are temples and they are sustained by the sustenance we put into them, so we need to be mindful of how we treat our bodies.

Our exercise hour leads us into our 'around the table' discussion time. 'Reading for meaning' has been our goal over the years, lifting each other and ourselves through our reading and discussion of several inspirational books, and other meaningful articles focused on living a better life.

The spirit of our relationship with one another is undeniably unique. I can say we have spiritual chemistry. In our discussions, I have shared personal life challenges with the group; situations that I have never mentioned to anyone before. We speak our minds without ridicule or judgment, all in an atmosphere of confidentiality. Sharing as we do is what I consider to be therapy without a co-payment.

In this, our tenth year, we continue to grow in our commitment to actively participate in Sheryl's vision; a passion that has been overflowing her heart for the past ten years. Every year has been a growth year for me as I receive, give, and learn from friends with different backgrounds but with 'one love' for our Lord.

We are here, for you too!  
All are welcome.

-by Sharon Reid

Utterly rewarding and fulfilling! That's what the Wellness Ministry has been to me.

When I tell you that I don't look at our sessions as 'meetings' but as 'information exchanges soaked in inspiration,' you can under-

stand why I credit participation in the group with my improved outlook on life. Thanks to my Wellness family, I have been meeting my exercise targets and I have also grown spiritually and emotionally.

We discuss a host of different topics and there is always the 'laugh,' that creates a bond and sometimes there is the 'laugh and cry' that have the needed therapeutic effect.

We connect as a group and that keeps me going. The Wellness Ministry is a great ministry. I invite you to attend a few sessions. You will not regret it.

-by Maralyn Lewis

Thankfully, our Wellness sessions don't end when we leave the building. New thoughts and even the improvement of some of my existing practices have me learning 'new skills' to manage different areas of my life. I thank my Wellness family for their support.

We exercise, learn to make healthy food choices, including tips for healthy food preparation. Our lively discussions are always teachable moments as

(cont'd on next page)



## ***What Members are saying about the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry!***

I learn something new every session. I am healthier physically, emotionally and spiritually because of the sharing, teaching and practicing of the new skills to which my friends in the Wellness Ministry hold me accountable.

*-by Betty Filmore*



Thank you, friends! We came together, formed a group and we have been encouraging each other as we encouraged ourselves. We have been enjoying a level of wellbeing that all of us knew we were lacking. Ten years later, it has been so rewarding.

Being a member of the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry has helped me to be exercising regularly plus helped me to change my food choices and how I prepare my meals. I am also mindful of my beverage choices. I like the fact that our meetings are like a sacred time beginning with exercises for an hour which is meditation for me; reducing my stress. We then move into our discussions which always have life-changing messages and practices that help us grow, spiritually. I feel comfortable discussing challenges I am facing knowing that sound advice is always forthcoming.

Through many events like

our Fitness Party, International Dinner, An Evening of Appreciation, friends and family experience the Wellness atmosphere as they come and spend time with us.

If you like being in a family atmosphere, Wellness @ Evangel Ministry is the place to be. We believe that you will enjoy Wellness, Evangel style. So come and grow with us. We meet even in bad weather.

*-by Eurolene Innis*



My Wellness family has been there...for me and with me...through different life challenges. The family spirit in the group has allowed me to give them the privilege of 'speaking into my life,' providing advice, support, and their continued prayers.

Life challenges brought about the need for changes in my lifestyle. Participating in the 'exercise hour' opened doors within the same Wellness program, inviting and encouraging me to challenge myself to be all that I wanted to be and no longer live according to my excuses.

My 'new' nutrition program is allowing me to think healthy thoughts and follow through with activity that has given me a confidence

upswing. Our 'sit down' meeting hour, after exercise, teaches me more about myself and further encourages my decision to make wise choices in other areas of my life, also.

This program has been what I describe as "timely intervention" for me.

*-by Arlene Twells*



One of the things I'm most proud of is joining the Wellness group. I came to join the exercise class but soon, I began to learn about 'eating healthy.' When I heard how proudly the other women talked about the changes they made in their eating habits, I was encouraged to improve my eating habits, also.

The second hour of our Wellness session is when we discuss the mental, emotional, financial, and spiritual aspects of our lives...without shame but with respect. We talk openly and honestly about our feelings.

Only the strong survive so, together, we are committed to making each other strong. I am finding out how good a listener I can be and how much wisdom I am able to share.

My Wellness family looks out for me and it's that caring that keeps me in their company. It's comforting to know that my friends are there when I need them.

*-by Martha Bailey*

## ***What Members are saying about the Wellness @ Evangel Ministry!***

Our weekly sessions are a 'think tank' geared to learning and living our purpose in our particular season of life, and nourishing each other by sharing wisdom, inspiration, and love. I like that.

It's amazing how our different backgrounds and the sharing of our life experiences benefit each other and aid in our own personal healing. Our meetings are like 'brown bag' sessions where 'everybody brings something' to add to the pot of good stuff called hope and peace of mind.

Our topics, study material and discussions are a series of 'injections' for me as I am encouraged and energized. Our full, "All In" participation is our testimony that we have given each other permission to speak into our lives.

I enjoy the challenge of focusing on progressive thinking and movement... understanding where I am in my thinking and entertaining ideas on how I can continue to grow, every day.

The group support through prayer continues to be the ideal nourishment for me as I make changes into new life habits. I am thankful to be among the many lights in our Wellness group.

*-by Brian Ward*



It is my sincere feeling that the Lord has blessed me by bringing me to The Church of the Evangel. A big part of that blessing has been the providence for my participation in the Wellness Ministry. It was the perfect location for exercise and to receive information on health and nutrition. The extra added attraction, and the part of the Wellness ministry I'm most grateful for is the support and encouragement I received from my participation as a member of this group that has contributed to my spiritual and emotional growth.

I was inspired to set goals, and make great strides in these areas through group discussion stemming from selected assigned readings (books, articles, topics, etc.) that gave rise to introspection, exchange of ideas and feelings among the members.

Working together to prepare for Wellness functions was at times challenging as it was a new type of activity that I had to interject and schedule in my life, but the results were rewarding.

I appreciate and I am grateful for the time and the vision of our program developer and leader Sheryl Phillips, and the skillful assistance of member, Brian Ward.

I am proud to be part of a group that offers activities and opportunity for growth and enhancement of the spiritual and emotional well being of the Evangel family and the community at large.

*-by Olga Baly-Noel*



### ***Coronavirus:***

#### ***What I need to know!***

*-by Sheryl Phillips*

Turning on the TV drops you right into the constant coverage of the Coronavirus outbreak as it spreads worldwide. With each update, we wonder, "when will they get this thing under control?"

In the midst of it all, we need to ensure that common sense prevails. Being a new virus, information is limited so it's important that we follow simple, everyday, sanitary practices to help prevent the spread from person to person. Having limited contact with each other, without alienating each other is important, to minimize the possibility of contracting and spreading the

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Forgive and Move On



It's inevitable! Some-body will hurt our feelings and we'll be tempted to behave in similar fashion! But as Mark 11:26 reminds us, if we don't forgive others, neither will our Father, who is in heaven, forgive our transgressions.

How we choose to deal with our hurt is important. When we choose to let go of our anger and stop holding grudges; when we choose to be the 'first' to forgive, we are removing roadblocks stopping us from receiving what God has in store for us.

It won't be easy and may seem to be unfair to you when you did not initiate the conflict. But if you and I want to keep our joy, we have to forgive others, whether or not they ask for our forgiveness.

When we forgive, we'll feel a new strength and we'll be guided along straight paths. God's daily favor and His blessings are directly linked to our willingness to forgive others.

Forgiveness opens doors to other good decisions and blessings. Forgiveness is always a good decision.



## Fun Raising

-by Sheryl Phillips

Testimony flowed as person after person gave thanks to friends who shed light on their path, making their lives more fulfilling.

Telling others, face-to-face, how we are living in victory because of their love and caring was so satisfying.

Evangel's fifth annual Evening of Appreciation, appropriately themed, "*You Add Light to My Path*" was the ideal fun reminder that we are all in this life together, and we should be depending on each other, being willing to provide that daily, nourishing word or deed that will be uplifting to each other. As we shed light on the path of others we are also creating light for ourselves.

We heard and saw evidence of the promise in John 15:26 to 'send a Helper,' who worked through the lives of others as they were willing to be used to bring comfort to their friends.

When we nurture them, good habits become woven into our character and they always make their presence felt in the lives of others.

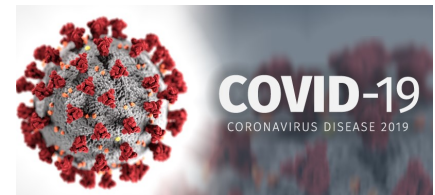
## Coronavirus:

### What I need to know! (cont'd)

virus. The symptoms of the Coronavirus include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Should you have a history of any respiratory problems, be exceptionally vigilant by taking the precautionary steps that have been recommended. Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, paying close attention to under your nails. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 65% alcohol, only if soap and water are unavailable. Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then *throw the tissue in the trash*. Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are frequently touched.

Choose a variety of healthy foods including lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, get enough rest, and stay hydrated to help boost your immune system.



For more up-to-date information about the virus, visit the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



## Ministry Corner

### **Wellness @ Evangel Ministry Celebrates 10 Years**

*-by Sheryl Phillips*

Twelve years ago, the good Lord showed me how to weave a plan He gave me into a Wellness program at Church of the Evangel. I was searching for a way to serve my church but because I was unsure of how the idea would be received, I shelved it. Two years later, and after much soul searching, one of my church sisters and the then Pastor considered my proposal to be worthy and needed, assuring me that it was God-inspired. I decided to introduce Evangel to the Wellness Program, and to me.

I remembered Rev. Robinson's words of being "god-inspired" but the night of that first meeting, I walked into the community hall, nervous, entertaining doubt about my ability to do what I believe I was called to do. I had always tried to avoid public speaking, but here I was, in front of a group of people launching a Wellness program.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that several people were eagerly awaiting my arrival. They wanted to hear about this Wellness concept and what it could do for them; how it could improve their lives. They were looking for benefits. The inviting looks on their faces told me they were eager to learn and the teacher instinct in me came alive. I was ready to teach about the importance of nutrition and exercise.

Since that night, we have had so many people come and make valuable contributions to the lives of others, and ultimately the program, as we enjoy out tenth year of service to our community. I consider each one of our supporters to be an angel touching the lives of the group members.

Monday and Friday evenings are highlights on my calendar as I have to 'prepare to serve' our members in group meetings. We exercise for the first part of the session then we engage in discussions, addressing all aspects of Wellness. We have read and discussed several inspirational books and articles, and members take turn leading the discussion. The goal is to help each member grow and develop new skills, while recognizing that our amazing life experiences factor into our

strengths, also. It's not uncommon for our discussions to become intense at times as we talk about any topic imaginable.

We plan and host several events throughout the year including, An Evening of Appreciation where we provide the opportunity to show appreciation to people who have impacted our lives, our Anniversary Service, our International Dinner, providing the opportunity to sample foods from different cultures, our Fitness Party, when we take an afternoon to exercise and socialize, and our annual Faith & Wellness Seminar when we discuss all aspects of Wellness, how they interconnect and interact for our well-being.

Each year, we choose a theme and we focus on ways to live the quality of life that theme inspires. Our 2020 theme is "Why I should Commit!" and of course, our word for 2020 is **Commitment**. We close off each year with a celebration of our achievements and a review of our 'work in progress' areas, as that gives us targets for overcoming in the new year.

Through the years, as the plan evolved from a program to the Wellness @ Evangel

*(cont'd on next page)*

## Wellness @ Evangel Celebrates 10 Years *(cont'd)*

Ministry, we have all grown into more focused and inspired people.

As the Servant Leader, thanks to the challenges of my calling, I have grown, significantly, as our members keep me faithful and committed to the service. Our meeting preparation testifies to the fact that we look forward to each meeting, as we are ready for fruitful discussions. Each person brings an ingredient to the table and we all partake of the meal, and leave, full, refreshed, satisfied, and motivated.

The Wellness ministry has impacted our lives in so many ways. Several of our members have branched out to serve in other ministries. Growing confidence is visible as many are now more willing to pray out loud without being self-conscious. They freely give of their time and talents which is obvious when you have attended any of our events. We love and support each other, and do not hesitate to provide the answers to difficult questions, even in 'hard on the heart' situations. Honesty flows! The Wellness ministry is a family. We thank God for

the opportunity to touch lives.

Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Wellness @ Evangel Ministry!



This year, the Wellness Ministry has chosen to focus on the word **COMMITMENT**. God expects us to be committed, to be open to follow where He leads us. Please join us as we explore Why we should commit to exploring God's plan for our lives.

## Healthy Eating Word Search

S	A	L	M	O	N	D	E	C	I	R	N	W	O	R	B
D	W	A	L	N	U	T	S	S	T	O	R	R	A	C	Z
N	B	E	L	L	P	E	P	P	E	R	S	C	X	I	S
O	O	L	E	K	V	S	N	S	L	I	T	N	E	L	G
M	L	A	Z	T	M	Q	E	A	E	T	N	E	E	R	G
L	I	K	U	X	P	C	Z	N	Q	U	I	N	O	A	E
A	V	A	C	A	D	O	W	L	I	E	P	A	R	G	D
N	E	S	C	H	S	P	T	E	L	D	C	E	N	Z	A
U	O	P	H	S	I	U	I	A	H	D	R	A	A	M	M
T	I	A	I	T	R	A	Q	N	T	B	R	A	X	R	A
I	L	R	N	U	F	C	S	M	O	O	R	H	S	U	M
U	O	A	I	N	X	S	A	E	B	A	N	A	N	A	E
R	N	G		A	T	v	L	A	E	M	T	A	O	G	H
F	I	U	B	E	A	N	S	T	P	D	S	K	E	E	L
I	O	S	E	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	S	E	E	D	S
W	N	B	L	U	E	B	E	R	R	Y	R	E	L	E	C
I	S	E	L	B	A	T	E	G	E	V	Y	F	A	E	L
K	I	D	N	E	Y	B	E	A	N	S	T	I	U	R	F

## Healthy Food Choices

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| Almonds          | Avocado      |
| Asparagus        | Beans        |
| Banana           | Broccoli     |
| Blueberries      | Bell Peppers |
| Beets            |              |
| Brown rice       | Chia seeds   |
| Carrots          | Celery       |
| Eggs             | Edamame      |
| Fruits           | Grape        |
| Garlic           | Green tea    |
| Kiwifruit        | Kidney beans |
| Kale             | Lentils      |
| Leeks            | Lean meat    |
| Leafy vegetables |              |
| Mushrooms        | Orange       |
| Onions           | Oatmeal      |
| Olive oil        | Pear         |
| Pumpkin seeds    |              |
| Peanuts          | Quinoa       |
| Salmon           | Sardines     |
| Sweet potato     | Tuna         |
| Walnuts          | Zucchini     |



## ***Retirement! Say it Ain't So, Mike!***

-by *simplythepen*

How can you do that? Retire! You can't retire, Your Airness! Think about those glory days, Mike!

That day, back in 1993, my life changed significantly when Michael Jordan announced his retirement from the 'Game.' Number '23 & 45' was leaving professional basketball. His announcement hurt me even more than Muhammad Ali's retirement. By now, you would have realized that I enjoy hanging out, mentally, that is, with the best, the greatest.

That day was a dark day for me. The thought of Michael Jordan retiring is enough to ruin any day but it didn't deter many others from blooming in their careers. I will get to that 'open door' shortly but right now I am in the world on which retirement shut the door. I am comfortable here.

Mike nurtured his many small visions, building on success after success, growing

into his dream of being the best that he could be and ultimately, the best player in the world.

His achievements, over his 15-year career with the Chicago Bulls, were a yardstick that many, yes, including me, used to measure our growth. We feasted on Michael's achievements. "*I want to be like Mike*". That expression was not mere words but a spirit-inspiring dream that generations nourished, as was seen by their never-ending hours on the basket-ball courts, practicing... "*to be like Mike*."

During his brilliant career, Mike won 6 NBA Championships, earned a total of 14 MVP awards, was selected to 14 All-Star games, won 10 scoring titles...and the list of his achievements goes on and on.

Mike became the best, largely because of his work ethic and the fact that he played with and against other athletes who also worked hard "*to be like Mike*." Every arena in which Mike played was sold out on the day that season's tickets went on sale. Why? Because Mike had glory! He had the unique ability to do things that even other top players found amazing. That's what glory looks like.

Countless players have developed their game based on Mike's work ethic. Mike strengthened parent/child



relationships as more parents took their kids to see the Bulls...and Mike.

Mike inspired kids, young adults, and parents to 'think above the rim,' dream the impossible dream, and work, defiantly, against every obstacle, but most of all, against self-limitation...not believing in themselves.

Glory was there for them too but glory is a by-product created from showing everyone else how remarkable you are. Doors open with that determination "*to be like Mike*." Mike showed us that it was impossible to stop him when he decided that the ball belonged to him.

Your dream belongs to you. Don't let anybody stop you. Mike bloomed on the court where he highlighted his skills. Thousands of people are highlighting their gifts and are blooming in other arenas of life. You can bloom where you are planted. What is your work ethic like? How are you highlighting your skills?

## George & Louise ask:



### How Are You Serving?

-by *simplythepen*

Lyrics in the theme song go like this, “*Moving on up...to the top...to the deluxe apartment in the sky...*” And the accompanying behavior of George Jefferson, as we see him from behind, is one of achievement and self-worth as he walks with confidence and swagger through the lobby of the building where he now calls home.

The hit sitcom of the 70s tells us that George, a black man, has no problem being a servant. In fact, George wants to be *the* servant to as many people as he possibly can, that’s why he owns five or six dry-cleaning establishments throughout the city.

George was faithful with one outlet and so the good Lord faithfully prospered him throughout the years with increase. He gave George additional outlets to serve the hundreds of customers who He was sending to those outlets. George’s customers received excellent service and so further promoted his business by word of mouth.

We laugh, entertainingly, when George either refuses to tip Ralph, the Doorman or he gives him a meager tip.



But, could that ‘sideshow’ behavior be causing us to lose the messages of commitment to service, love of people, fairness, and honesty, all honoring God. It’s because of his daily principles of practicing God’s behavior that George continued to grow in God’s blessings... additional outlets to serve more people.

As viewers, we are swayed toward the comedy of George but we never pull back the curtain to see behind the scenes, his earlier years when, for him, it was not comedy, but his attitude then was “come ready” to face each day, serving, learning, growing in the Spirit, exhibiting his understanding of service. Lyrics in the theme song expressed, “*it took a whole lot of trying, just to get up that hill...*”

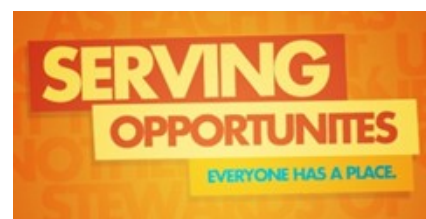
The reward for his faithfulness was more dry cleaning outlets to serve more people. George was in the people business, just like God.

Your call may not be as

George was called to do... operate a five-outlet dry cleaning business. You may be called to be of faithful service to one person which would soon increase to several more, giving you the joyous reward and God, the glory.

George’s reward began through the process of addition. Soon, God multiplied George’s blessings because of his faithfulness! What God can give through you, He will give to you. Ask George!

What does your “*deluxe apartment in the sky look like?*”



## Join Our Team

1. Church Clerk
2. Trustee Board Member
3. Deacon
4. Treasurer

Bring your skills to any of our church ministries and do your part in continuing our legacy of service.

## Church of the Evangel Congregational, UCC

1950 Bedford Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11225

Phone: 718-287-1189

Email: churchofevangel@optonline.net

Web: www.churchoftheevangelucc.com



Photo by Ray Raman

### SAVE THE DATE

**TRIP TO HAIGHT-BROWN VINEYARD, Litchfield, CT**

**Saturday, July 18, 2020**

## Wellness @ Evangel Ministry

The purpose of the Wellness at Evangel Ministry is to create a Faith-Based Health and Wellness program that focuses on Education, Health, Exercise, Nutrition, Stress Management, and living a Spiritually rich life.

There is a direct relationship between Spirituality or faith and health. God made us with a spirit, soul, and a body and they work together in amazing ways. Our program is designed to teach individuals about an integrated approach to health; living a healthy life based on Christian principles, and an integration of mind body and spirit to achieve total wellness.

### AN OPEN INVITATION

**Our Wellness @ Evangel Ministry**

**Welcomes You**

**FREE FREE FREE**

**Mondays and Fridays @ 7:00 pm**

**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

**Thursdays @ 5:30 pm**

**EAT RIGHT**



**BITE BY BITE**

National Nutrition Month®  
March 2020

Academy of Nutrition  
and Dietetics

## NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH® 2020

National Nutrition Month® an annual campaign created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is celebrated during March. It focuses on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The theme for National Nutrition Month® 2020 is *Eat Right, Bite by Bite*.

So how do you do that? Setting goals and following through is important. Remember, goals are accomplished one step at a time. Some steps to follow, as you participate and reap the benefits this year: Include a variety of nutritious foods in your diet, make healthy beverage choices, read and understand food labels, practice portion control to prevent food waste, and take time to really savor the

flavors of your food. Don't be afraid to experiment with fresh seasonings in cooking your delicacies. Family meals are the ideal forum for encouraging participation by others, so plan and commit to encouraging family meal time," and remember to focus on making healthy food choices when dining out or traveling. Consult a Registered Dietitian to help you manage your health challenges, and experience the benefits of good Nutrition practices.



# CONNECT



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2019



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
*HAPPY NEW YEAR!*

## *Thoughts from the Pastor*

### **Living God's Giving Example**

***"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."***  
*(Proverbs 11:25)*

The faith family here at Evangel is truly blessed. We are a community who appreciates the many kindnesses God showers upon our lives. Since coming to Evangel as its shepherd servant, I've had the opportunity to consistently see our members reflect the characters of being active as much as possible; contributing as much as possible, and being committed in the good and the not-so-good times.

Evangel was blessed to have a team of more than

20 family and friends participate in the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on the Coney Island Boardwalk, in October. We were also able to reach our fundraising goal of \$500, twice over. Living God's Giving Example (being active, contributing and being committed) was real. In November, our church family was able to bring the Example to life again by sharing a Thanksgiving meal (with lots of good food) and time of fellowship with our community, as well as donate slightly used coats to our visitors for warmth in the winter days ahead.

While these activities mean a lot and demonstrate commitment to the Example, there is still much for us to do. It's important that we seek more ways to bring others into God's circle. Let's prove that the power of the invitation is unlimited by inviting friends and family to come and see, and consider being a part of Evangel's continuing legacy. In our September issue of CONNECT, we had a very inspiring article highlighting how we are blessed and God  
*(cont'd on page 4)*



**Church of the Evangel, UCC**  
Rev. Cynthia Jackson, Pastor

### **Up Coming Events**

- *Welcome 2020 by joining us for Sunday Service*  
January 5, 2020 @ 11:00 am
- *Wellness @ Evangel: An Evening of Appreciation*  
February 8, 2020 @ 4:00 pm

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### **Inside this issue:**

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## It's Only for a Season

by Sheryl Phillips

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (ESV)

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Just as Spring follows Winter, Summer follows Spring, Fall follows Summer, and Winter follows Fall, so God has carefully designed and ordered the seasons of our lives. We do not always understand God's plan, but every detail of His purpose for our lives is carefully planned. Every season in our life is a vital step in our journey, a seed sown waiting to germinate and bear fruit in the next season. One season preparing us for the activities and challenges of the next season. God is doing a greater work in you than you realize, work that is

preparing you to handle the challenges of each season. It could be growing your faith, patience, tolerance, your ability to forgive, trust, or some other virtue. Just as we enjoy some seasons more than others, so some experiences in our lives can be more enjoyable than others. Some seasons bring showers, drought, snow, excessive heat or floods so in our lives we experience joy, sorrow, mourning, pain, and laughter. Though it may be hard, we are encouraged to embrace the season we are in, knowing that God is with us and He can use every situation, every season to achieve His plan for our lives. Keep in mind that there is an endpoint to every season.

My first winter in the United States was a culture (season) shock for me. I was not prepared for the cold, and that winter was cold and a significant amount of snow fell. Coming from the Caribbean, where you only experience dry and rainy season, to a country where there are four distinct seasons, required some adjustment. One significant change for me was the change in wardrobe. I can still vividly remember one morning during that winter, I awoke to the sun shining brightly through the oversized window of my dorm room. I thought it was

going to be a nice sunny day until I opened the front door. Then, I realized that although the sun was shining brightly, it was cold outside. I learned a valuable lesson that day. There are adjustments we have to make for each season. I realized I needed to change my wardrobe. In fact, I learned that for every season thereafter, I had to change my wardrobe, accordingly. I learned to embrace each season because I learned what I needed to do to prepare for each change in season.

In life we also experience different seasons. Just as we know that winter does not last the whole year so we are reminded that our experiences, whether good or bad, difficult or enjoyable, do not last forever. Psalm 30:5 (ESV) says *"for his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."* Have you lost a loved one? Trust God to give you the strength to deal with your pain. God promised He would never leave us comfortless. We are never alone, God is always with us, no matter the situation.

Are you going through a health challenge? Remember, God is the great healer.

*(cont'd on next page)*

## It's Only for a Season (cont'd)

You may not have a miraculous healing experience but through your illness, God can still teach you valuable lessons, if you are open to learning. So often, our focus is on the pain or other negative emotion rather than trusting God to bring us through that experience. Every season of our life is a vital step in our journey here on earth, all necessary for our Spiritual growth.

God has given us the tools needed to live out every season of our life whether or not we understand how it fits into God's plan for our lives. The Holy Spirit is in us to guide us in the right direction if we allow ourselves to be led for our circumstances to change. God promised to bring us through the storms of our lives. You must go through the storm to really appreciate the calm. You must be ill to experience the joy of healing.

There may be times of struggle but remember, it is only for a season. Trust the Holy Spirit to bring good out of your pain. Each season is an opportunity for growth, to run to the arms of God, an opportunity to repent, confess, receive forgiveness, to celebrate God's love and forgiveness, and to stand strong on God's promises. Though Paul was in prison, he did not focus on himself but he was concerned about others. He remained faithful; he did not become discouraged in his faith. His example encourages

us to be strong when faced with life's challenges, when we go through the different seasons of our lives.



### Take the Limits Off



We tell ourselves, "This is the best that I can do." So we stop.

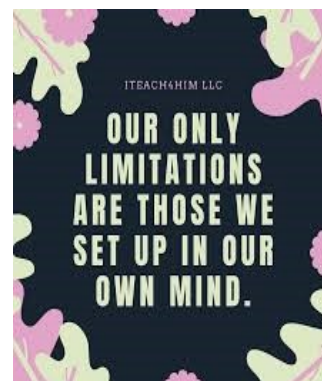
We tell ourselves, "This is the most I'm willing to do." So we stop growing.

We tell ourselves, "This is the most that I can be in my life." So we stop growing and we stop living.

Sometimes we think so small that it's a wonder that we can see ourselves. We limit our possibilities and our potential, we stunt our growth, and we choose to live in caves, afraid of the sunlight. The only thing that's increasing in our lives is 'the vote of no confidence' in ourselves that we add to every morning. We have no need for God's grace and favor in our lives but He 'provides' them,

knowing that we can become what He sees in us.

We already know what we are so how about discovering what we can be? First, you have to open your heart and take the limits off your life because you are limiting God's ability to lift you to a place where you can see your true potential. Choose thoughts of faith and expectancy to build a new 'vote of confidence,' allowing God to work in your life. He is waiting on you to take the limits off, step out and step up into your desire for an abundant life with Him. Choose to take the limits off and experience victory and increased blessing.



The 'old' you lived in lack because the limits you chose kept you from growing. The 'new, limitless' you is allowing you to rise higher and enjoy that abundant life God has prepared for you.

Enjoy the sunshine!

## Living God's Giving Example (cont'd)

wants us to be an active, contributing, and committed family, not just today but far into the days ahead. Let us begin, today.

*God, Our Creator* has shown us time and again that His nature is to give. So, we must *"take delight in the Lord and God will give us the desires of our hearts."* (Psalm 37:4) The lesson that I believe we are called to recognize here is that God loves to give because giving shows love and as we know from the gospels – **GOD IS LOVE.**

With the special love we receive each day from God in Christ, we can share with others how much it means to be loved this way. Offering ourselves to help others, spreading the Good News of Christ shows that we don't have to be influenced by the ugliness and meanness we see and hear so much of in the world today. It's important to keep in our spirits that we want to Live God's Giving Example.

For we are told by our Savior, *"A new commandment I give to you. Love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another."* (John 13:34). By loving one another, we are saying we're willing to sacrifice ourselves for another's good. Committing ourselves to this commandment could certainly make God's world a much better place than we have today.

I pray that these

thoughts I've shared will be reflected upon in the days ahead as we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Son of God. For I believe, none of us wants our living to be in vain. Thus, our living needs to follow God's Giving Example, as best as we can do it.

How? Being grateful for our blessings, not taking them for granted! Being willing to share our gifts in Christ's name, without looking for adoration in return!

And quite importantly- remembering that you can give without loving (Ugh) **BUT YOU CAN NEVER LOVE WITHOUT GIVING.**

Thank you, Evangel family, for the love you share with me. As we travel together in the days ahead, let's reflect on the ways in which we have and will continue to actively give while working in God's vineyard – contribute our gifts to help bring growth – and be committed to making a difference in this life's journey. In the name of Jesus, who is God-with-us,

Pastor Cynthia



*Share*  
the Spirit of Giving

EVERYTHING IS  
FIGURE OUTABLE.

Some years ago, I had a manager who once told me, *"When you come to me with a problem, don't forget to bring along possible solutions."*

At first, I thought he wanted me to do his job but as I did what he suggested and began looking for solutions to my challenges, I realized that he was helping me to do my job. So often, when we are challenged, we move into a state of 'avoidance,' we 'pass the buck,' and we feel comfortable. We actually go into hiding from ourselves. We lose opportunities and the experience to 'figure out' things.

We need to ask questions of the problem because it's out of those questions that the solution will eventually present itself. We should be pleased when two or three possible solutions are available for us to wade through, as these would allow us to widen our scope of consideration, as the solution may actually be components of the different possibilities.

Be confident that you can apply the best solution. No more avoidance. You can 'figure it out.'



## Having and Keeping the Right Perspective in 2020

In Numbers 13 and 14, the 12 spies who Moses sent into the Promised Land all saw the same thing – the land was indeed “flowing with milk and honey,” but they also saw challenges. They saw giants and heavily fortified cities. As they discussed their observations, all but 2 of them concluded, “This take-over will not be ‘a walk in the park.’”

In 2019, many of us faced some of those giants. Some of us chose to think like the other 10 spies who brought the negative report and so, they did not listen to Joshua’s words of encouragement, “*Do not be afraid of the people of the land because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid.*”

Just as the report of the negative-10 kept 2 million people from believing they could conquer the Land, our negative thinking kept us from moving into many blessings in 2019. But, in 2020, one year later, just as He did with Joshua and Caleb, God gives us a “*second chance*” because now, we are of “*a different spirit.*” Thankfully, we don’t

have to wait 40 years like Joshua and Caleb did, for a second chance.

But, we have to make an attitude adjustment, just as Joshua told the younger generation they would have to do, if they wanted to be victorious. They needed to think for themselves and not be puppets of others and their ‘defeatist thinking.’

Joshua delivered an attitude-shaping message to them. “*Choose for yourself, this day, who you will serve.*” He was saying, “*Every day, you can choose the way you see life. Choose today, how you are moving into your blessings; how you see your journey into the Promised Land.*” Joshua understood the need for them having and keeping the right perspective both for the duration of the conquests ahead and for their new life, in the future.

2020 is a new season for all of us but a change of perspective is needed, if we are to grow. This new season is all about walking through new doors that have been opened. It’s about identifying and embracing new opportunities. We are good candidates for these new opportunities. With these new growth opportunities come more responsibility and decision-making. A significant part of our attitude adjustment about ‘wanting more’ in 2020 is our willing-

ness to accept the added responsibility. That’s how we grow in our maturity!

A change of perspective is usually shaped by an acceptance of what God wants to do next in our lives but not necessarily a full understanding of His plan for us, at that time. With that Godly focus, we can aid Him in preparing our hearts for wherever He leads us.

Our new ‘attitude adjustment’ involves stepping out in faith, courageously, and being happy about the opportunity. It’s not just about us but it’s also about the many whose future we will be hindering if we didn’t have and show the right perspective. Our showing may be similar to Joshua’s message so that others who have the willingness to grow could be encouraged.

Changes in season usually mean changes in our roles. Joshua was 1 of 12 spies, initially, but when he was given that “*second chance,*” he was the leader of the forces. 2020 has new and exciting roles and experiences for all of us. My role has changed...and so has yours. My perspective has changed. Can you answer “Yes” to the question, “Has your perspective changed?”

**CHANGE YOUR  
PERSPECTIVE IN 2020**

## Ministry Corner



### God's Feeding Program - Evangel's Wellness Ministry

The Wellness Ministry in one of God's feeding programs, here at Evangel.

As the ultimate Dietician, He prepared a table for us at our Wellness Seminar on November 16, serving a meal so balanced and nutritious that it deserved the 5-star rating it received by those who sat in His presence.

The Master Chefs, assigned by Him to nourish His flock, combined to serve a 4-course meal that was second to none, obviously.

Chef Sheryl Phillips served a platter of Health, Nutrition, and Physical delicacies, all essential to our efforts to live long and healthy lives. She encouraged us to develop a mind set, "taste buds," for the necessary changes that will give us that taste of achievement of our health, nutritious, and physical goals.

Sheryl filled our plates with five 'slices' of change; the 'denial or don't care' slice, the 'not quite ready' slice; the 'planning' slice, the 'see positive results' slice, and the 'making it a habit' slice. Then, as an 'extra,' she added the 'set back' slice, which she explained, "we will taste, more than once," as we deal with our day-to-day life challenges.

Then, Chef Rev. Cynthia Jackson, encouraged those around the table to be 'hands on' in changing and developing their spiritual goals. As patrons contributed to flavoring the platter by adding their 'two cents worth' of how to achieve goals, Rev. Jackson peeled away the gray areas, giving encouragement to the desire to 'taste and see' our spiritual goals move to the front burner.

From the table came the suggestion that adding a prayer partner would increase our Spiritual flame and bring our Spiritual goals to a boil. Rev. Jackson reminded all that such Spiritual support and uplifting is available, immediately, through participating in the Bible Study group. This second course of our meal truly complemented the first one and we were experiencing a Spiritual high when it was time to be nourished by another chef.

Chef Dr. Joseph Semper served up a financial platter, rich in advice that was nutritious to our financial

well being. Our financial goals should always be something that excites us, he said. Those goals should always be encouraging us to become leaders in our daily financial management.

He fed us on the wisdom of having an Emergency Fund, a Debt Eliminating Program, and Short-Term Investment goals, among other financial necessities.

Our next featured Chef, Rev. Christine Valentine, continued our meal by reminding us that we must not forget to satisfy our Social/ Psychological needs. The benefits of social gatherings and the opportunity to touch the lives of others. Putting these two ingredients together produces a well rounded and balanced personality, showing compassion, being a good servant, being loving and forgiving.

After a totally filling meal, we had more table talk as we served up Safety goals and Stress Management as our dessert. We challenged ourselves to become more safety conscious about our homes, our church and our community and also to be aware that how we feel mentally has a big impact on our physical feelings. Social support is important in managing our stress levels. Overall, we had an enjoyable and balanced meal dipped in 'wellness.'



# Word Search

Away in a Manger

Choir of the Bells

Dominick the Donkey

Frosty the Snowman

Holly Jolly Christmas

Jingle Bell Rock

Jingle Bells

Let it Snow

Little Drummer Boy

Little St. Nick

O Holy Night

Rudolph

Santa Baby

Silent Night

Silver Bells

The Christmas Song

The First Noel

Winter Wonderland



S	G	R	D	A	M	A	F	C	I	F	Z	Z	X	F	K	U	H	J	X
W	A	W	A	Y	O	B	R	E	M	M	U	R	D	E	L	T	T	I	L
C	K	M	B	H	P	L	O	D	U	R	J	T	G	J	I	H	Z	N	O
Z	D	W	T	Z	E	D	S	Y	E	L	C	B	Y	R	T	G	C	G	K
G	N	O	S	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	E	H	T	I	J	L	L
Q	A	N	K	O	I	D	Y	A	L	F	D	G	I	R	L	N	B	E	D
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I	I	Y	E	K	N	O	D	E	H	T	K	C	I	N	I	M	O	D	S
L	W	B	T	K	S	L	L	E	B	E	H	T	F	O	R	I	O	H	C
U	I	M	U	Y	F	C	J	H	B	X	B	V	R	U	M	Q	C	Y	B

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Photo by Ray Raman

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An Evening of Appreciation

Saturday, February 8, 2020

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Welcomes You

**FREE FREE FREE**

Mondays and Fridays @ 7:00 pm

**PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY**

Thursdays @ 5:30 pm

## Maintaining Wellness Over the Holidays by Sheryl Phillips

The holidays can be a very challenging time to maintain your health and wellness goals. You attend family and community events where many of your holiday favorites are served; food items that no longer support your health and wellness goals. You get so busy with holiday activities that you fail to meet your physical activity goals. Sometimes, with limited financial resources, you still try to please everyone by giving items you can no longer afford, so you add to physical, emotional and

financial stress. Here are some tips to help you maintain your health and still enjoy some indulgences during the holiday season.

1. Eat mindfully. Fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables then add whole grain and protein. Limit desserts.
2. Enjoy the meal; eat slowly and savor the flavors. After that one excessive meal, plan for the next meal.
3. Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, or visiting family

and friends.

4. Learn to say no. You don't have to accept every invitation.
5. Maintain your physical activity schedule.
6. Make time for self-care. Don't allow the holiday madness to take a toll on your mental and emotional health.
7. Take time to relax and unwind, and focus on family, friends and fun instead of food.

Have a Merry Christmas and a healthy and Prosperous New Year.