

METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

December 2017

A Fall Fest for Kingdom Kids



Last month our congregation in Holmesburg held a neighborhood Fall Fest. Young children and their families played some games, made some crafts, had their faces painted and enjoyed some food. It was great to connect with neighbors!

Some new friends have been participating in the Kingdom Kids ministry that meets on Sunday mornings. Teachers are

speaking into the lives of young children, building relationships with parents and making a difference in the lives of urban families. This month, Kingdom Kids will be collecting hats and gloves to share with needy students in the local elementary school. Please ask the Lord to provide more teachers to serve in this important ministry.



Popcorn and a Movie

Mike and Margarete Connor led an outreach event with our newest church planting team in Rhawnhurst. It was great to see the team serving to connect with neighbors. Hundreds of invitations were distributed in the community. And the team worked together very well, each handling various responsibilities. About forty people participated, including twelve first-time visitors. Though the result was modest, we're praying for continued contact that might lead to conversions. One teen boy who was a first-time attendee at Movie Night has come for worship and expressed interest in further involvement. Pray for Rich; ask the

Lord to use him to bring others to Christ and Crossroads.

Thanks Giving

Last month, the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches changed its name to Charis Fellowship. It is a joy to serve the Lord in the city with those who share our commitment to Biblical truth, relationship and mission. It was great to gather with five Charis Fellowship congregations for a combined Thanksgiving service! (Grace Community Bible Church, Crossroads Bridesburg, Crossroads Holmesburg, Crossroads Rhawnhurst, Crossroads Wissinoming)



Thank you for supporting MetroGrace this month! Please include this cut-off with your next gift and use the back to indicate any changes to your contact information.

Name: _____

Enclosed is my gift to support:

Jim and Lisa Brown \$ _____
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 Dr. Jim Brown,
 Executive Director**

A knock at our door at 3:00 in the morning!

We all have a plan about what we're going to do or say the next time something happens. In that plan we are articulate, plan to say things that we know we must say and do things that must be done—avoiding the errors that we definitely will not repeat. And then the situation that we half-expect will happen comes at a time that we least expect it—as expected—but not quite the way we thought it would. Caught off guard, we say and do what we think is right in the moment—whether or not it was the way we planned it or the best and most productive course of action.



This happened to my wife and me when a woman from our congregation showed up at our door at 3 a.m. She was with another woman whom she had only met a few days prior, who both were freezing to death, trying to sleep in a van they had broken into earlier that night. For whatever reasons they were both homeless and found it appropriate to knock on the pastor's (my) door in the middle of the night. When my wife and I awoke to the sound of the doorbell we had a pretty good idea of who it would be, but did not expect to see a stranger with her who was also in need of lodging.

Now, this is where you might interject in your own mind what you would do in that situation. Thinking back over the situation, and presented with yet another opportunity, my wife and I may have handled it differently; but, in the moment, we decided to invite them into our home to sit down at the table and have some coffee. Privately discussing, in the other room, what we ought to do we decided to let them stay the night and invited them to join us for worship at our Bridesburg location at 9 a.m. and again at our Wissinoming location at 11 a.m. that morning. Our dilemma was that we didn't know this other lady and didn't feel comfortable going back to sleep with her staying in our home. We chose to allow them to sleep as we stayed up watching and waiting for morning. It didn't take long for my wife, the saint that she is, to tell me to go back to sleep, that she would stay up and check some emails while she stood watch so that I would be alert and refreshed for leading worship and preaching later that morning.

I wish I could say that after the worship services we had a good conversation with these women and that they had both enrolled in programs to get help to find housing and all the rest. But what is sometimes true of us was true of them, that after finding temporary relief and comfort, the urgency was no longer there to seek help, and they both promptly left following the second worship service.

I don't know what ultimate good was accomplished, if any, in the story, but my wife and I decided long ago that we would serve the Lord in whatever circumstance He placed us in. Occasionally that includes serving the Lord in ways that are not always familiar or comfortable. It isn't important whether we know what the ultimate outcome will be for these women and their life circumstances. What is important to me is knowing that I married a woman who shares my passion and desire for serving the Lord in whatever capacity we are able; and, who will occasionally take one for the team. I couldn't have planned that, but clearly, the Lord did. And somehow He led us both right here to serve Him together in urban Philadelphia. Isn't that the spirit of Christmas? Giving, loving and caring enough to be uncomfortable for the glory of God.

The Christmas season provides great opportunities for ministry! This year, Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. The four churches started by MetroGrace plan to host seven worship opportunities that day. Please ask the Lord to use our congregations to share the love of Christ in the urban neighborhoods we serve.



Jesus laid aside the divine representation of His glory and left the comfort of heaven to love and care for those in need of a Savior. Pray that some would trust Jesus this Christmas season.

Thank you for prayerfully supporting our work in the city!

May the Lord bless you richly during this season of joy!

I would like to add or change my address, phone number or email address: