

September 1, 2021

Good Day Germantown Leadership,

I pray this communication will find you enjoying the mercies and blessings of the Lord in a marked way. I wanted to take this time to bring you up to date with what is happening around the church and housekeeping notes relative to where we are headed. While this is being sent via email to you, a video summary of this will be sent out to the membership along with this letter that will be posted to our church's website.

First, as we are continuing with the agreement for in-person worship every other Sabbath, it is important for us to remember the safe practices for public health that guide us. These are in place not to create anxiety but to foster a safe atmosphere for all. I want to thank everyone who has volunteered time, energy, and expertise in helping to continually do what is best for the health and welfare of our church. In light of all that is going on concerning the virus, its variants, and thoughts concerning the vaccine, it is important for you to know where the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist stands in relation to our current reality. I would encourage each of you to read the most recent statement regarding immunization from our global church leadership at www.adventist.org/guidelines/immunization/ for an understanding of the church's official statement. As a part of the sisterhood of churches, the Germantown Seventh-day Adventist Church affirms and supports the counsel of the afore mentioned web article. Therefore, the church will not be able to offer a letter of exemption from immunization based on religious beliefs. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Second, on August 28, 2021, the Executive Committee of the Allegheny East Conference met. One of the items of discussion involved the process of selecting an individual to serve as interim president to finish the remainder of the quinquennium having suffered the unfortunate loss of our beloved Elder Henry Fordham III and his lovely wife, Sharon. An email has gone out from the Allegheny East Conference regarding the results of the meeting. In the next few sentences, I will attempt to provide clarity as the entire constituency will have a part to play in the process going forward. The most current Constitution and By-Laws, voted in 2017, state in **Article 8 Section 3, 3 names should be recommended for an administrative officer and Article 9 Section 2 state respectively that in the event the office of the presidency is vacated by resignation, termination, or other means, the Executive Committee meets to elect an interim president.** At the conclusion of the executive committee meeting, the vote was to allow for 14-30 days of surveying the entire constituency to gauge the desired characteristics of leadership that our constituents would like to see as factors in the executive committee's decision. There will also be a time of prayer and fasting for this important decision. The executive committee will reconvene on September 26, 2021. In the meantime, surveys will be sent out and I encourage each one of you to take the time to fill out the surveys and let your voice be counted in the

process. We are grateful for the Godly wisdom and judgement used in administrating a process that all can take part in to accomplish what is best for our beloved conference territory.

Next, prior to the pandemic, in a duly called business meeting, the church voted \$300,000 for an extensive renovation project. We are in the strategic planning phase while we are waiting for the results of the executive committee's decision on our CURF request. We hope to have an answer for you by the middle of September. I would like to thank Deacons Herbert James, Carlton Clarke, and Bro. Derrick Liburd for the hard work being put into this strategic plan to ensure this renovation project is done as efficiently as possible. Before and during the project, there will be multiple called business meetings and virtual updates so that you can stay connected with what is going on. Thank you so much for all the cheerful giving being done to help us restore the Lord's house to a condition which glorifies God. Every tithe, offering, and sacrificial dollar and cent is appreciated.

Beginning September 22, 2021, prayer meeting will be held via zoom. We will no longer broadcast prayer meeting on Facebook and YouTube. This platform and method will allow us to have a more intimate setting. The zoom info will be available not only for all members but for members to invite others. We look forward to our Wednesday Night Prayer Meetings at 6:30pm. As I close this section, I would like to thank Elder Walt Erskine for leading us through a series entitled, "The King Is Coming!". He will close out this series on Sabbath, September 4, 2021, during our 12pm Worship Experience.

We are blessed to have some initiatives that are the passion of some of our newer and existing members. First, our small groups are almost ready to be presented. We have 4 small groups that will be the inaugural class for our small group journey. Please keep in mind, the purpose of the small groups, in connection with Acts 2, is to grow and make disciples of Christ in a more intimate setting. The small groups will operate on 6-7 quarters and then a break before taking on a new group of members. This is new but an exciting opportunity to experience God at work in a new way. Each group will have its participants pair up so that everybody is responsible to keep in touch with a fellow member. Please keep the small group leaders in prayer.

We also are in the beginning stages of constructing a community garden to be led by Kortneay Logan. If you pass by the church, you will see the progress in clearing away land to accommodate a community garden as well as room for the others to garden if desired.

It is always a blessing to experience the blessings of God in the ordinances of the church. On Friday, September 3, 2021, at 7pm, a replay of communion will be played on our Facebook and YouTube channels for those who may have missed last Sabbath's experience. On September 18, 2021, we will have baptism and a baby blessing. We praise God for these amazing additions to our congregation.

Finally, let us please continue to reach out to one another and keep our church family in prayer. Last night, storms devastated our area and it is important that we do our best to check on each

other. If you follow us on social media just let us know by typing #safe as a reply to the post. Please remember Sis. Lewis and family (loss of her older sister), the Erskines (loss of an uncle), the Shirley's (loss of a niece), Sis. Hazel Mack (loss of mother), and Sis. Margaret Brown (grandson's health). We also remember and continue to pray for those in Haiti, Afghanistan, and New Orleans who have suffered traumatic loss during these turbulent times of our earth's history.

I pray that God bless and keep you all.
God's blessings,
Pastor Orville Brissett

