

CGM



common ground montgomery

June-July 2014

P.O. Box 1866
Montgomery, Alabama 36102
334.593.5803

CGM

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CGM Life

newsletter



summer interns arrive

Ten college students have arrived and participated in a full week of orientation, training, neighborhood and civil rights historical tours, historical teaching about our neighborhood, and the mission, history, philosophy, and theology behind the ministry of Common Ground Montgomery and our partners.

They have come from colleges in and out of Alabama and will live in our community and help run our daily Summer Camp with around 80 kids, and be trained by our staff in biblical perspective and practical ministry in the evenings. If you would like to provide a meal and perhaps even sit in on one of the evening bible studies/ training times please let us know.

We are still trying to raise Summer Camp sponsorships for each of the 80 kids that we have accepted into camp this summer from our neighborhood.

It costs us approximately \$400 per camper to have them with us all summer every week from 9:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. The cost covers their activities and travel expenses each day locally, and one week away at the end of the summer at Camp Blue Lake in Andalusia.

help sponsor a summer camper

Common Ground Montgomery's Summer Camp is a great opportunity for you to help us love our community and make a big difference! Consider the benefits:

PHYSICAL: Children in the Summer Camp are kept off the streets and away from destructive behavior to be loved on and invested in during the eight-week program.

SPIRITUAL: Our staff will teach weekly Bible studies to help the campers learn and live out the gospel. As part of our Summer Resident Missionary Program, we have college students come to live in the community as they lead small groups and mentor children in the program. We also bring in Junior Interns who are high school students who have participated in our After School Program. These students work with the college interns and receive guided leadership opportunities.

ACADEMIC: We have a focused academic program to help combat academic deficiencies that many of our children have as a result of our impoverished and neglected community.

SOCIAL: Not only do we bring in a diverse group of volunteers for this camp, but also we take the campers outside the community so that they experience others and learn how to biblically relate to them as well.

To donate visit: cgmlife.org/camper-sponsor
Or call us - office phone: 334.598.5803

The logo for CGM (Creative Gospel Ministries) is located in the top left corner of the first image. It consists of the letters 'CGM' in a gold, serif font, set against a dark grey rectangular background.

bible study during the first week of summer camp



cgm staffers kevin king, justin hampton, and ava conley in the main office

summer theft and vandalism

You may have already heard on the news or on social media about our facility being vandalized and stolen from.

Over a two-week time period, we had to replace windows that had bullet holes through them in our bus and lobby. Then, thieves stripped out copper from six of our seven air conditioner units at our facility. The deductible made it not worth it to claim the windows (but it was \$1,500 worth of damage).

Our insurance covered the cost of replacing the air conditioners but we decided it was best to have cages built around the units and cameras placed on the sides of our facilities. We still have not raised the cost for the windows, cages, and cameras.

If you would like to help donate toward these costs please donate online (cgmlife.org/donate) or you can send your donations to:

Common Ground Montgomery
P.O. Box 1866
Montgomery AL 36102

On your check, please write in the memo line: “windows/cages/ cam”. Or if you are donating online, use the “Ministry Building” under the FUND drop-down menu, and in the comments sections write: “windows/ cages/ cam”.

The logo for Common Ground Montgomery (CGM) is displayed in a dark square. The letters 'CGM' are in a large, bold, orange serif font.

connect with us:

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do you want to be a teacher in the after school program?

Common Ground Montgomery will be hiring teachers for their After School Program beginning on Monday, August 11, 2014.

The After School Program involves students 1st-5th grade, Monday through Friday, from approximately 3:00 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. These positions pay \$10/hour.

Please contact Leslie Cowell at leslie@cgmlife.org with any questions or interest. You can find the application for the ASP teacher position on our website at: cgmlife.org/teacher





Bryan Kelly

These last three weeks have been heavy. As stated in our last update, two senseless shooting deaths have left us hurting and working hard to be present and seeking to demonstrate the love of our God in the neighborhood.

The murder of Mr. Manik, a local store clerk, was extremely sad, deeply disturbing, and frankly, as cold blooded as any I have heard. I was proud that our neighbors chose to provide the information that led to the arrest of the

sharing in the suffering of our community

shooter. Many times, this is not the case. He, and his family who own the store, have a lot of respect from so many of our neighbors.

The accidental shooting of LilRodney Hurst, a 17 year-old who grew up on our street between my house and Kevin's, has shaken up all of us. He was one of the first boys we had in our first summer camp 6 years ago. Many of our staff and volunteers have enjoyed a relationship with him and his family since the day we moved here.

Two experiences have marked me, since his death.

First, I attended a youth-led candle light vigil in the park a few days before the Summer Camp started. I was amazed at the honesty and transparency of so many young boys and girls as they shared their grief, their desire to see the end of senseless gang violence and waste of life in our community, and the leadership that many of them demonstrated in the vigil. Boys from rival gangs even spoke about how senseless the loss of this young man's life was and how they even wanted change.

One young man who has come to Christ through the witness of many in our CGM family boldly declared the Lordship of Jesus and his own commitment to be a follower of Him to everyone standing around the candles. His cousin's death, to him, was not going to be wasted. In his loss, he wanted others to know His God.

It was painful and beautiful at the same time.

Then, minutes later, as we left, the parking lot was full of hostility,

hate, and destructive intent as many of the young men looked to attack opposing gangs. They couldn't even lay aside the foolishness for one night to honor the life of LilRodney.

The second notable experience was that I had the honor of being one of a few asked to speak at the funeral. I was amazed to see the hundreds of people who attended. I looked around at so many young boys and girls suffering. I looked around the room and reminisced at the relationships and time God has granted us with so many. I looked at the young boys I was close with when they were 10 and 11 years-old that are now 17 and running out of control in gangs. I looked at others that we knew early on who haven't chosen that path and who seem to have a trajectory of godliness and constructive choices as a result now. I saw the faces of mothers who live in the fear and chaos of their kids being destroyed by the influences of our streets.

I literally had many moms afterward beg us to let their kids come to our programs (some whose kids have no desire to do so). The desperation was so thick.

Time spent with the family of LilRodney before and after the funeral by me and our other CGM family members reminded me what a gift it is from God to be able to be present in the middle of all this through time tested relationships and shared experiences. This is the context for love and mutual change. No program can create that. That is a gift of God and is the beautiful result of intentional sharing of life together.

May God bring deep healing to our community and raise up godly leaders from our little community for His Kingdom.

Psalm 34:3,

Bryan Kelly

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