



common ground montgomery

P.O. Box 1866
Montgomery, Alabama 36102

334.593.5803

www.cgm.life



@cgmlife

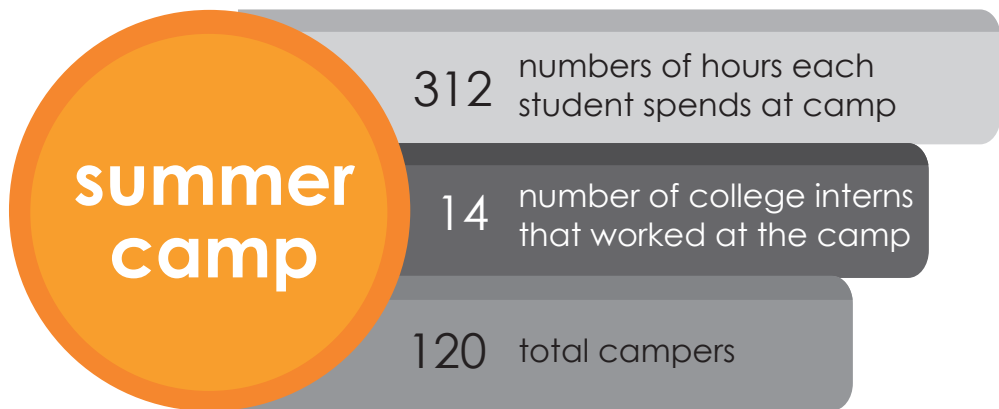
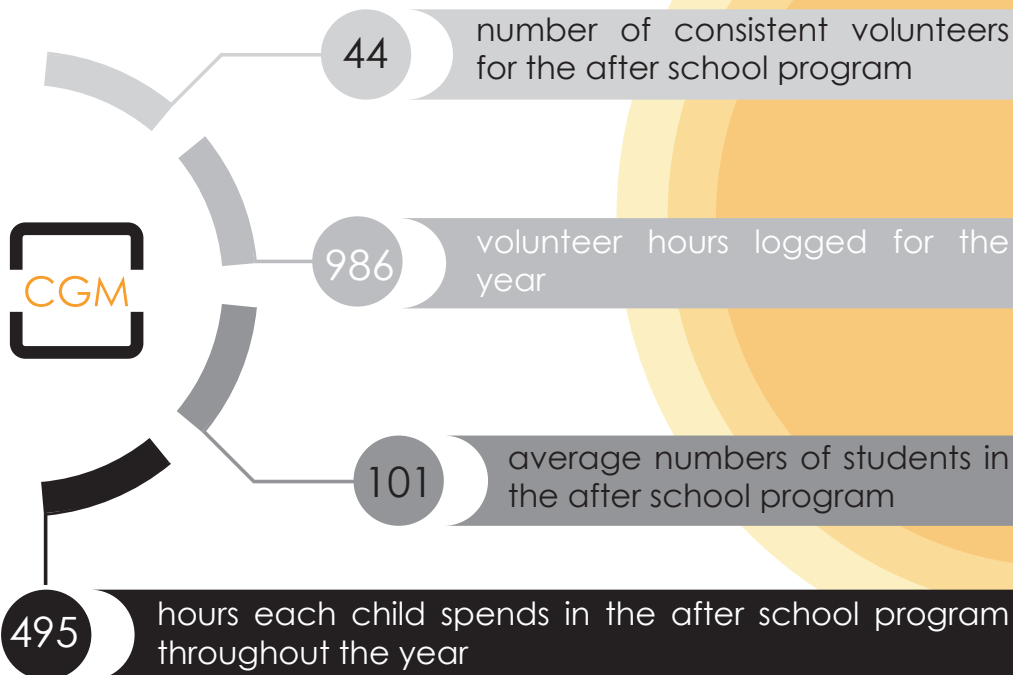
2016

March

newsletter

2015 by the numbers

after school program



christmas store

56

number of volunteers for the christmas store

179

number of families served by the christmas store in 2015

1,050

number of toys distributed through the christmas store in 2015

mentoring

30

number of new mentor matches made in 2015

4-10

hours mentors spend per month with mentees

www.cgm.life

12

people are in our part-time counseling center

CGM's Summer Camp planning is in full swing! We are preparing our calendar and planning field trips, activities, academics and Bible study time for the children. There are several ways that you can get involved and we would love to have you be a part of our summer program this year!

1) Pray! Our prayer is that the Lord would bless our time with the children as we seek to bring them closer to Him and provide a place of safety, security, and fun for them over the summer.

2) Volunteer! One day a week in the afternoons we organize volunteer led



leslie cowell

summer camp planning

enrichment classes for our students. If you have a gifting that you would love to work with a group of students on, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Ava Conley (ava@cgmlife.org), and let her know. Some ideas from past summers are: woodworking, dance, art & crafts, gardening, cooking, sewing, creative writing, and book clubs. We would love to have you come and mentor our students!

3) Give! It costs \$400 for elementary and middle school students and \$500 for high school students to provide this nine week summer camp for our kids. Sponsoring a camper so they can participate is a great way to get involved and support our ministry!



new staff



Leondra Lawry joins us as the lower school director and female counselor.



Laura Bell is the executive assistant to Bryan Kelly.



Dan Scott returns to join us once again, this time in the operations director position.



Shalisa Magee is the new administrator in the mentoring program.



Supporting Common Ground Montgomery is easy and simple! The easiest way to support our programs is to give a monthly donation. Give online once and you won't have to think about it again for the rest of the year. Also with a monthly gift of \$50 or more, you will receive a CGM tumbler and t-shirt.

Donate online : www.cgm.life/donate

Mail in your donation : P.O. Box 1866, Montgomery, AL 36102



spring is here!





bryan kelly

It is amazing to me that the strategy for Jesus' followers to live out and demonstrate his reign and rule over the whole earth was to be neighbors. In the story we refer to as the Good Samaritan, Jesus affirmed the summary of our whole way of life as loving God completely and loving our neighbor as ourself. "Who do you think was the neighbor to the man who fell into the hand of robbers?" The man answered, "The one who had mercy on Him." Jesus said, "Go and do likewise". He expanded the whole misunderstanding and self-justifying view of limiting our neighbors

loving neighbors

to those we think are like us and those we naturally love to simply those who need a neighbor. His example purposefully crossed every relational barrier imaginable and left all of us in this place to go and do likewise; to have mercy.

God's counterintuitive plan for seeing His good news shown to the whole world is to love our neighbors. It includes things like: dying to oneself, loving our enemies, entering into the suffering of others, living out justice, showing mercy, and sacrificing for the sake of others.

Our desire at Common Ground Montgomery is to continue to connect people together across racial, economic, political, cultural, and denominational lines for the glory of God and for all of our good. We know that in these relationships there is potential for a transfer of grace and mutual transformation. Not only does God love to show up in the places of our lives where we realize we need Him most, but He grants grace through these relationships.

When we try to help or even get to know those who are assigned the label "poor," it's hard for those of us with relative stability and material resources to grasp that we need them, and that much of the gift God desires to give us is through their contribution in our lives. Reasonable math would seem to not work that way. We think we have something to give to a low income family, individual, or fatherless child. This is partially true. We do. But God's math doesn't work like ours. He is always doing many things at once, above and below the surface. I know this - I have been helped, edified, and changed by the people I have had the privilege of walking with over the last ten years in Washington Park. My life, marriage, and children have been forever enriched by the different

continued on next page...

people we now know.

This is one reason why we are so excited about our mentoring program. Our goal is to have 120 mentors matched with kids in our program. So far we have 35. Many of these kids do not have an active father in their lives and most live under the poverty line. They face many stresses, inequalities, deficits, and risks. That being said, so are you and I.

If we dare to enter into mentoring relationships with children like those in our community we risk seeing how we might have otherwise been squandering our time and resources on things that simply won't matter one day. We risk seeing how we might be raising our children in an isolated environment where they might not be trained to live outside themselves and in a lifestyle of kindness and mercy. They might unintentionally be so distant and disconnected from knowing how to love across the lines that divide us all - class, race, culture, denomination, and geography - that it escapes their values and core character.

Through our mentoring and other programs we are trying to provide a practical way for people to love our mutual neighbors in west Montgomery. Those who donate and those who come to volunteer all participate in providing a safe, loving space and relational investments into the lives of kids who face many injustices. In our mentoring program there is actually a chance to engraft a child and his family into yours and vice versa. Just as Christ engrafted us into the family of God, you have the potential of seeing the stranger and someone who might be estranged in many ways as your family. Who knows - we may all be delivered from many things in the relationship. Grace might actually flow back and forth. Will you join us in this expression of ministry and neighboring?

Thank you for your much needed prayer and support. We love you and are deeply humbled by your participation.

Psalm 34:3,

Bryan Kelly

