

YEAR END WRAP UP FOR THE OASIS YOUTH/CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AT EBENEZER UCC

The year 2010 for the OASIS ministry was one full of successes and triumphs as well as opportunities that showed us all where we could improve as a whole. We took the year 2010 to make sure that we firmed up the basics of our Christian faith to ensure that in everything we do as a ministry we never lose sight of the thread of Christ which is what connects us to our service and not just doing 'things' for things sake. I am very pleased with the efforts that we have made in the area of Christian Education, as well as making attempts to connect with the young people outside of the context of the Church. Our youth staff has attended recitals, games, pageants, internet chatting, awards days ceremonies, visited during lunch hours, made hospital visits to the tune of over **1000** visits this past year. I believe these efforts have greatly contributed to giving us more validity and relevance in the eyes of our young people making us more effective ministers because people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. We were also able to create opportunities for our young people to be poured into in unorthodox settings from different voices very much in tuned with the climate of young Christianity. Our youth conference, youth revival and pre-revival events, young men's conference, even our shelter feeding were great investments and efforts for the youth and children of this church and they were very much enriched thereby

With the good, however, there is always the not so good. Poor planning and proper gauging of time often times left our backs against the wall having to crunch at the last minute to get things done barely pulling off events by the skin of our teeth. Exhaustion and frustration birthed out of events and moments have charged me to make sure that these things do not carry over into the 2011 calendar. Our efforts to Follow-up improved but could still stand to be much better as our goals to be able chart the young people's attendance habits and send corresponding encouragement materials to them went unmet. The need to establish a youth leadership committee has been in our sights for quite some time now and I'm happy to say that the Youth Council will begin its service in the first quarter of the 2011 year. I'm also very excited about the potential that The Place has to become a viable ministry in this church and in the community. Making its presence felt in this community is one of my priorities for 2011

Below listed are some of the things we look to accomplish this coming year:

- Youth Council Board established
- Follow-up (for membership/visitors, New Commitments, Outreach Efforts)
- Quarterly Mission Service opportunity
- Summer Trip/Retreat
- Place promotion and programming
- Youth shadowers for the Media Ministry
- Fellowship with other youth groups
- Creating a Children's Church Zone
- Youth praise team
- Healthy spiritual edification given to the youth/children's ministry as a whole

Rev. Brandon Dawson, Youth Pastor & Director of Family Life Ministries