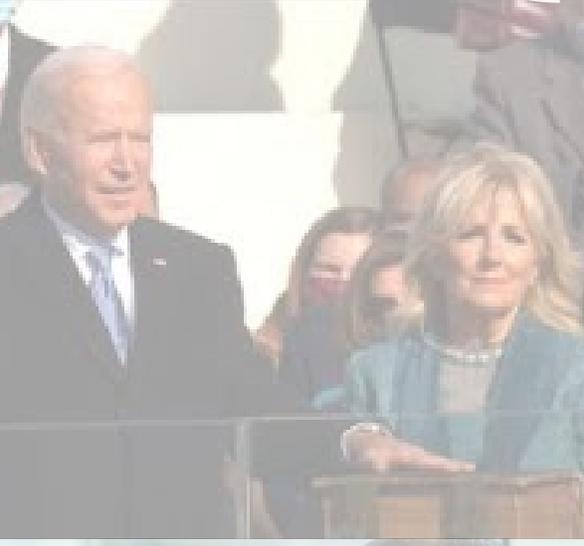




CBF IMPACT



Hindsight is 2020



URBAN YOUTH

SPECIAL NEEDS

UPDATE

MEETING NEEDS IN THE ON-LINE SPACE

THE BLESSING OF LIMITS

MEET 2 NEW FACES

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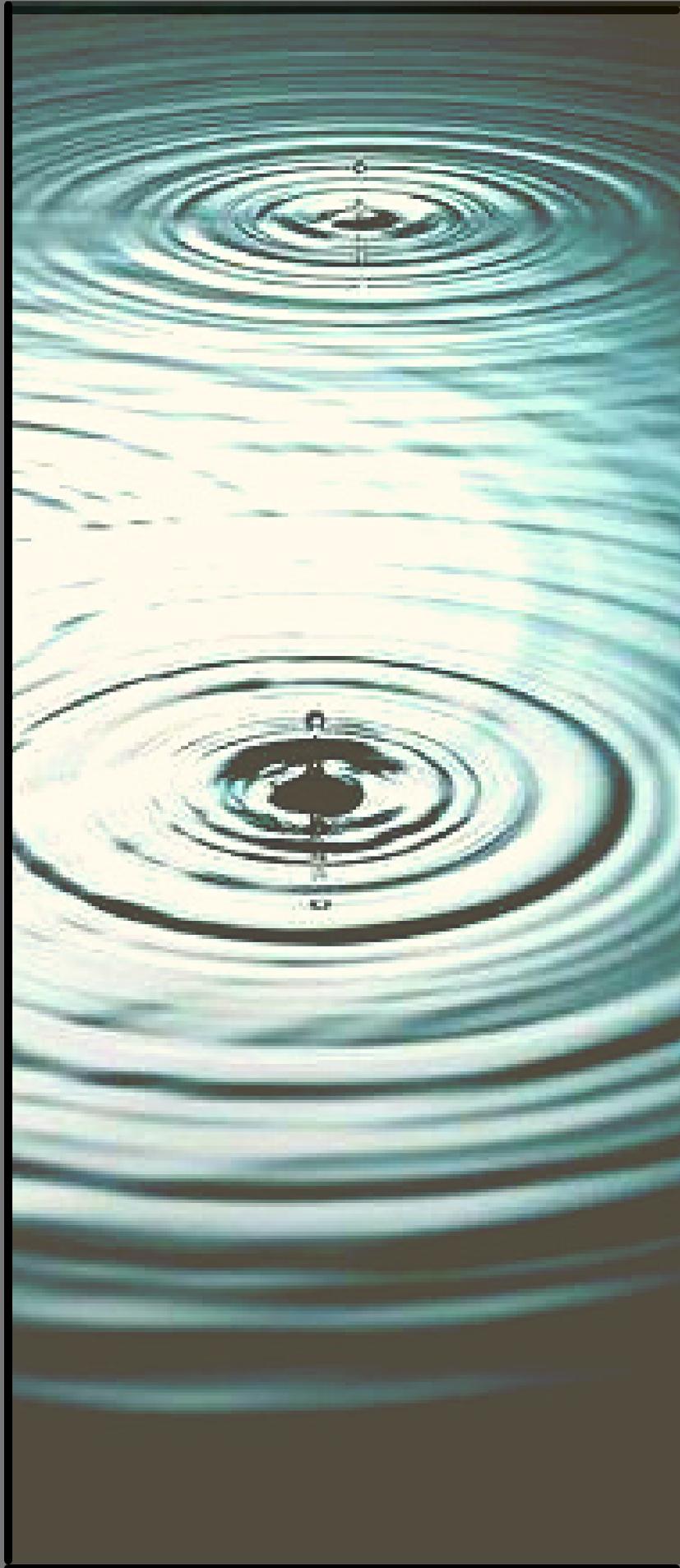
Meet Fran and Dan

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& Thank You

Serve Where You have been Gifted



CEO PERSPECTIVE

They say hindsight is 2020. As we move into 2021 its worth looking back at last year to reflect on what God is doing, and to align our future with His plans. The pandemic combined with social unrest and tumultuous political times can be interpreted in many ways. I don't know all that God is doing but I do know He has allowed events of our day to bring our church activities around the globe to a pause. In this pause, we could strive, fight against, or ignore constraints in our lives. However, while evil is rearing its ugly head, I believe God is calling us to pause, slow down, focus on Him, and find our security in Him,

This sets the stage for 2021 with the ministry of CBF. We believe God has called us to first, focus on Him and allow all of our doings to flow out of our being with Him. Living in a slowed down place of spiritual journey with Jesus brings great freedom, joy, and gives hope. For me personally, I feel like my freedoms are being stripped away; but, as I relax in Christ I find greater freedom than I have ever known in the world. When I read the latest headlines and connect with their narratives, I regularly find myself pulled down the rabbit trail of media addiction and chasing the endless internet black hole. This seems to always lead me to a place of anger and confusion; but, when I slow down and take a fast from media and reflect on God's narrative I feel real joy. As I interact in the body of Christ, I hear disagreements on many fronts. Many times what I really hear is the "hand" telling the "foot" this is how you should walk. In these moments feelings of hopelessness set in. When I take time to slow down and listen to the Head (Jesus Christ), I find hope again - confident that He can unify His body.

Through a renewed slowed down focus on Jesus, I believe CBF is being called to be an ambassador of Hope and Joy as we move into 2021. As you read this newsletter I hope you are encouraged by how God has connected this vision and purpose with our staff and in our ministry programs,

-Sean Stewart

(Sean & Daphne bringing food from the Lakeview Church to Pastor Carlos' Food Distribution in Queensvillage)



Community Partnership

Eagle Scout Project



God blessed us once again through Troop 86., with a much appreciated Eagle Scout Project headed up by Kevin Elliott Jr.

Q: What got you into Scouting?

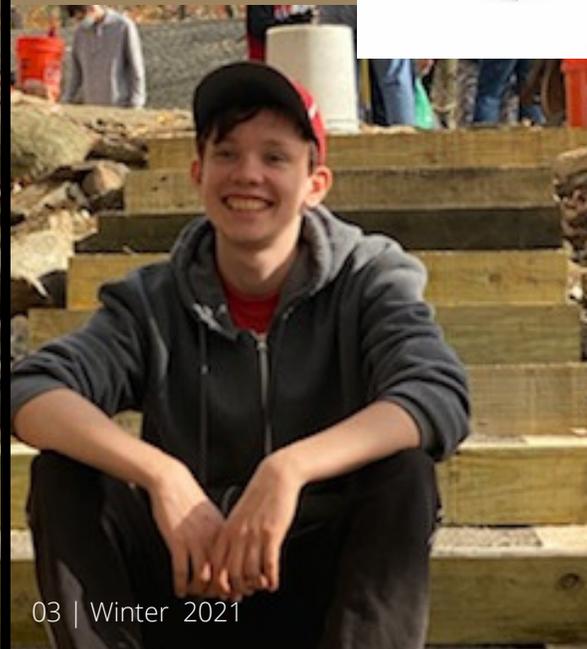
When I was ten, my family moved from the Bronx to Hopewell Junction. I didn't really have any friends or activities when I first moved up here, but then my dad asked me if I would be interested in joining Cub Scouts. We went to a meeting at Pack 227, and I have been in Scouts ever since.

Q: How did being a part of Boy Scouts build significant relationships in your life?

Once I joined Cub Scouts, and then Boy Scouts, I have made many friends with my fellow scouts throughout the years. To this day, I still maintain these friendships, seven years later.

Q: What was the motivation for choosing CBF for your Eagle Scout Project?

Every November, my troop has a Thanksgiving campout at Camp Joy. There are these steps that lead to the upper level of the camp, and I realized as I walked up these steps, most of them were broken, and somebody could slip and injure themselves on the steps. I then thought it would be a great Eagle Scout Project to replace the steps that were broken. I then brought this up to Mr Goldsmith's (my Eagle Scout Project coach) attention, and he said that we should talk to Mr Stewart about it. When we asked Mr Stewart about the idea, he was very happy that I would be willing to replace the steps.



Updates

Retreat Housing

A lot of work went into the demo and clean up. Over the past couple of months a number of skilled volunteers have blessed us with their talents. Floor installation and painting are up next, so come join the fun!



Demolition phase
Bldg #51



Current status
Bld #51

Anne and Wes have been coordinating a partnership with a local horse ranch.

Our Hope guests and urban youth will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of trust, responsibility, and God's provision through directed interaction with these amazing creatures.



On a recent Hope Day Event, some of our girls had a meet-and-greet at the horse ranch. The instant connection and affection for these animals builds a sweet base for learning about God's interaction with His creation!



Dan is turning some of our fallen trees into useable lumber, with a portable sawmill! He has two pieces earmarked for the mantles in Buildings 50 & 51. Can't wait to see what other ideas he has for this beautiful resource!



Anchors



Another year has come and gone. So much has changed drastically for all of us, and yet, so much is the same. 2020 began easy enough, but quickly spiraled into a dystopian nightmare. We've experienced an unabated deadly virus, lock downs, masks, limited social interaction, social and civil unrest, rioting, and the lists goes on. Communities are overwhelmed with fear and hopelessness. The political climate has become so toxic that many no longer see our government as a positive solution.

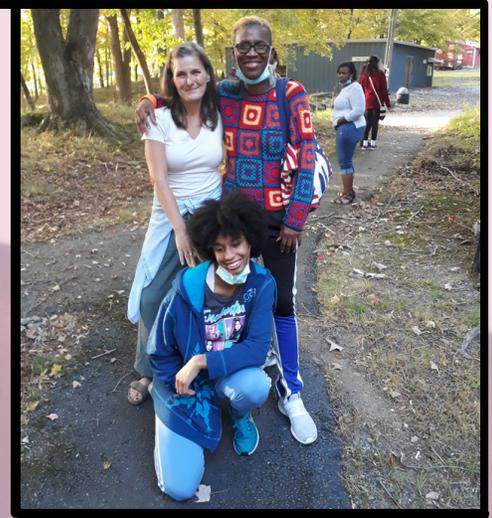
but God,...

Many times, I expect God's blessings to look like **my wants, **my** dreams, and **my** passions. However, I have found God in places most would overlook, and possibly even dismiss. I've found Him in the hard things...In isolation....In sorrow.... In loss...Even in despair. I have found Him in the still, the silence, and the slow. God has not left us stranded. He has stripped away the things we thought we needed. He has slowed us down so we can see Him more clearly.**

Hope Celebrations have been put on hold as the COVID 19 cases spike around us and in NYC. Because of the obstacles we face, we are forced to be attuned to hear God's voice in and through these limitations. This blessing is so easily missed when things run smoothly, and according to our plans.



of Hope



We are continuing our Hope Day events with the utmost precautions. Smaller Hope gatherings have actually helped to deepen relationships and given our Hope participants a safe space to build trust and vulnerability. They are able to express their cares and concerns, and most importantly, to feel God's love for them in a tangible way.

#JustListen has become a spring board for many of our Hope Day Event interactions as relationships have grown through weekly or biweekly phone conversations. We are looking forward to scheduling more opportunities for 'in person' times of encouragement and fellowship. It's important for our Hope community to know that they are valued for who they are and are an integral part of God's family.

I have learned what many families in our Special Needs Community already know - God's greatest blessings are often disguised in limitations. In hindsight, slowing down has been a tremendous gift, allowing me the opportunity to wrestle with my desire's, and to surrender to God's will and His way by submitting to His limitations in my life and in my world. I have been able to experience real community and joy in the limitations, hardships, and loss in this season of fear and hopelessness.

**-Anne Chavarro,
Youth and Special Needs Ministry**



#JustListen

Dan



Johnathan



Staff Perspective

Prior to moving to the CBF Campus, I had joined the #Just Listen program and was paired with a Hope participant named Johnathan. By the time the lockdown hit, we had established a solid connection via “Zoom” and had begun a friendship. I have now been on staff here for just over a year, and in that time, we have become good friends. John is a big guy (well over 6’ tall and not slight). He has a heart of gold, loves to do artwork, and is a huge fan of the CBFNY campus here at Carmel. He loves to eat, cook, work in the kitchen, and does a great job of collecting bottles and cans to earn spending money.

The pandemic has been tough on John, and life has thrown him some tough breaks to go along with the rest of the pandemic woes. Late in the summer, his brother-in-law had been killed in an automobile accident in Tennessee.



We had expanded our interaction beyond the electronic means by then, and I was able to spend some time with John, one-on-one, during this time of loss. He handled the situation very well, and was deeply concerned for the well-being of his sister and young niece. By phone, John was able to talk to them and let them know his deep sorrow and love for them. He even asked several times for others to pray for them.

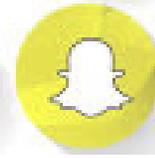
Because of developmental delays, John struggles with self-control issues (don't we all?), and he is honest and open about behaviors that he wants to modify. On one of our Hope Day Events, I found out that John also likes to go bowling (another one of those activities that has been stunted by the pandemic). He did not do as well as he thought he should have, but he successfully dealt with his limits when reminded that it had been a while since he had last bowled.

I have worked with special needs individuals before, and it is easy to see them as people in need, but we need them too. They give us perspective on things we need help seeing sometimes. Each and every one of these people are valuable to God. He would have laid down His life for any one of them. So, I figure they should be valuable to me too.- Dan Faris





Youth:



The Online Landscape

Karl Marx once stated that 'Religion is the opioid of the masses'. He didn't understand the difference between 'Religion' and real relationship with Christ. Today the 'opioid of the masses' is social media/online addiction. The ability to live in a virtual world has exploded in the last 10 years. Studies show that 8.3% of youth are in 'screen time' 6+hrs per day. Since the beginning of the Pandemic 8.3% has jumped to nearly 50% of all youth - a 500% increase!

(ParentsTogether Survey 2020). Families report that social media, along with binge watching shows are filling the void created by lockdowns, isolation, social distancing and other regulations in place because of the virus. Many youth are roaming the internet unsupervised, for at



least 4 hours daily leaving them vulnerable to sexual predators, cyber bullying, racism, extremist views, and unabated advertising targeted directly at youth. Parents have accepted that social media platforms and devices are needed right now, for students to continue their education and stay connected, yet are asking "at what cost".

I have found, in my interactions with Bronx High School students through Elevate NY, that youth are not prepared to live in the real world. Hours dedicated to experiencing 'life' through social media sites sets them up with unrealistic expectations and unattainable goals. They are looking to their virtual world as a model for their future, but are being left with feelings of frustration with normal responsibilities that are outside their preconceived comfort zone.

This virtual fantasy world also leaves them with hyper sensitivity to perceived injustice and/or accountability, yet does not equip them with the ability for personal introspection of real needs. I believe they are headed directly into the 'wall of reality' some call 'the dark night of the soul' (St John of the Cross).

My own journey has taught me that crisis and trauma are often disguised blessings. They are powerful forces that push you to the 'wall of reality'. The Lord uses these 'dark night of the soul' experiences as transition points to real transformational change.

We will have to choose to either escape through social media/video games, drugs, alcohol, porn etc or choose to face our crisis. The 'wall of reality' pushes us to question the voice we listen to – the seductive voice of escape or God's voice of redemptive relationship in the chaos. Youth will find Healing and Hope through acceptance of powerlessness, stepping out of denial, and entering into God's reality: the truth that "we are more sinful than we ever thought we were and we are more loved than we ever dreamed we could be" (Tim Keller). CBF provides a safe place of love and healing when (not if) the 'dark night of the soul' crisis comes.



We know that it takes safety and relationship to move out of denial and into deep inner healing. This will only come as we provide the reality of Christ to students who are hungry for 'the real' in a virtual world. We are expanding as a crisis response ministry for youth, establishing a "roadmap" of opportunity for engagement:

***A safe online portal for deeper discipleship - including a journey inward to address the dysfunction, addictions, anxiety and fear facing youth who are seeking healing.**

***1:1 'in person' Mentoring/connection.**

***Retreats that focus on healthy relationships both with God, self, and others which brings freedom and hope in the midst of the 'Dark night of the Soul'.**

***Building connections for the next generation to the body of Christ through real, safe and vulnerable community groups in their area.**

Though COVID-19 spikes have caused times of 'pause' of direct in-person interaction (which can feel like loss) as a ministry we realize this may be THE greatest mission opportunity to reach youth in our lifetime. We see a tsunami of Crisis that is coming to today's youth. We invite you to continue to partner with us to bring Christ and safe relationships into the 'reality gap' youth are experiencing today.- Anne Chavarro



Team Corner

New Staff Member

Frances Reid-Partner Development

How did you hear about CBF?

Over the past 8 years my children have participated in CBF events in NYC. Also, through my husband's (Rob Reid) volunteering I have gotten to know Sean and Daphne, and I have been given an inside view of the ministry.

What is it about CBF that draws you to want to serve?

When I first read the mission statement, it really resonated with me:

“Helping the church reconnect the next generation and the forgotten to real belonging in the body of Christ.”

A heart for children has been part of my make-up for some time. We were blessed with 5 children; I ran a Daycare for 15 years (Precious People Daycare); Teaching in a Christian K-8 school; Brazilian missions' trip for a Summer VBS program; Highschool Explorer Girls Leader; Sunday School Teacher; Children's Church....etc. Our kids' teen years were the hardest on their spiritual growth. It's definitely a time when we needed voices other than our own leading them to Christ.

How do you feel the Lord led you to the decision to join CBF?

Opportunity and desire. The topic arose a couple of times but things didn't fall into place. In March 2020, a serious bout with COVID made the decision for me, when doctors (who believed I wouldn't survive) made the determination that I could not return to a hospital environment to work. I had my grandchildren for the summer (long story--the Dams failing in Michigan) and we were at CBF often.

As I came in contact with the staff more frequently, my desire to join the mission grew. My husband, and then Sean confirmed this choice.

What is your role at CBF?

My main role is Partner Development, which drives the Communications you see. I am part of managing the relationships, both internally and externally throughout our organization. It is a challenge but, I am enjoying watching the Lord equip me for what He has called me to do, and has actually given me joy in areas that had previously led to frustration.

(FYI-email freid@cbfny.org to get newsletters by email)

Dan Faris- Infrastructure and Hope Ministry

It goes without saying, 2020 was challenging for many. Complaints abound, centered around not being able to do “this or that”. At times I found myself slipping into a pity-party over some aspect of life that changed due to the virus (or at least the fear of one). But, when I stop to look at what transpired over the last year, I must give Glory to God for things that were accomplished which could only have happened in harmony with His will, and His merciful hand on my life.

Late in 2019 God began a transition for my wife Kathy and I to move to CBFNY, in a manner that could only have been explained as “a God thing” (but that is a whole other story). Around this same time, I was diagnosed with aggressive bladder cancer. We managed to complete our move before the first COVID Pandemic lockdown. Figuring out my priorities, here on campus, and coping with the effects of my cancer treatments was a little overwhelming with so much to be done. In short, by the time the pandemic lockdown was in full swing, I was plugged into the ministry. God kept me isolated from most outside contamination sources. By God’s Grace and the right medical procedures, the cancer has now been eradicated.

Did I mention “God is GOOD”?

2020 will be another one of those years that will make itself a prominent milestone in my memory. In spite of the heartache and challenges, I see where God has not only met me every step of the way; but, provided abundantly. For me, “20-20 Hindsight” will be glorifying God’s mercy, grace, timing, and provision. - Dan Faris



INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Construction--Demo\Clean Up--Wood Splitting--Painting--Organizing--Spackling--Sawmilling--

Opportunities abound from skilled to unskilled tasks in all areas of our infrastructure. So, if you would like to participate in the Body at work for His kingdom, then come. Give us a call, and we will get you plugged in where the Lord has gifted you.

HOW TO HELP



Please keep the mission and its partners in prayer as we grow where God has planted us.



Gifts of resource and finance are always welcomed by the mission.

Visit: www.cbfny.org/donate for more information.

Make checks payable to:
Children's Bible Fellowship
250 Nimham Road
Carmel, NY 10512



Consider donating your time and skills during one of our upcoming events. For more information see our website at:

www.cbfny.org/get-involved

