

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY's WORD – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler
to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week
August 1 in the year of our Lord 2018 - #751

Let Them Come...

Reflections on Vacation Bible School week 2018

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’”

Matthew 19:14 NIV

VBS week at Bermudian is always very special. We are not a large congregation but our VBS has built up a reputation over the years for being excellent. And so we draw children & youth from the community in amazing numbers. This year we've had over 200 persons each evening. That includes a youth class of over 40 young people! Amazing! And I've had 40 in my Adult VBS Study on Isaiah 53. Of course it takes a small army of dedicated staff to pull off this VBS miracle! We consider it a privilege! An honor! That God would allow us to minister in this way is NOT something we take for granted! Thank You Lord!

Some reflections:

- **The decorating** of our two buildings has become a major effort requiring lots of hands. We borrow materials from several other churches that have done the same Group Publishing, “Shipwrecked” curriculum. That means hauling things in from here & there. It takes a week leading up to VBS to get it all done. The place is transformed!
- **Goodies!** – We want the children to be blessed by their time with us so every child gets a free CD of the great VBS music and a free T-shirt. Memories for a long time. We hear stories of those CDs being the standard fare in a lot of minivans for a long time after VBS!
- **It takes a lot of food for a VBS this size!** We offer a simple meal each night before VBS. That in itself is a ministry to busy families. On Monday our Kitchen Team served 158 people. Then there are the snacks! A lot of people donate items to help keep the cost down. People donate fresh fruit & veggies. It's ministry! It's a vital part of VBS.
- **Youth!** We're aware that many churches in our area don't offer VBS classes for youth. We do. And boy do they come! Over 40 youth each night this year. We had to move furniture out of the way in Shepherd's Hall to accommodate the crowd. Teacher Terry Sweitzer says he is so impressed with these young people! What a privilege!
- **Adults!** Why should the kids have all the fun? For many years I've offered an Adult VBS Class. This year we are studying Isaiah 53 and have about 45 in our class. I love to watch the smiles on the faces of these older adults during the children/youths' opening & closing times.
- **Giving!** Each year we do a service project for the VBS offering and 100% of what the children give in offering goes to the project. We have fun with stewardship and compete boys against girls. The Bible says the Lord loves a cheerful giver. Well He must be smiling from Divine ear-

to-ear! This year our offering is going to our **Back-2-School-Bonanza (B2SB)** which will be held this Sunday noon, an outreach to families that could use a hand as they get their children ready for back-to-school. Each child that comes on Sunday will receive a new backpack full of school supplies, a New Testament, a Gospel bracelet ... they can even get a haircut while they're here. And lunch!

- **Opportunity!** We are aware that some of these families don't get to church other times. What a wonderful privilege & blessing & opportunity to be able to plant the seeds of Jesus' love in the tender hearts of these children!
- **Team!** Wow it takes a lot of people to pull this off! Crafts, Kitchen, Games, Bible Story, Music, "Herders," Opening, Closing! I see amazing Bermudian Young Adults taking strong leadership roles, I see new Bermudian members jumping right into the fray and getting involved, I see the steady, faithful long time Bermudian members serving in VBS year after year. I see men & women. I see smiles on servant faces. I see weariness by this time of the week. I hear laughter. I hear joy. We are especially thankful for the service of our quiet, humble **Sister Sue Mayle**. She's serving us for her 18th VBS as Coordinator, and her Assistant **Sister Kayla Miller** who is a vibrant powerhouse of a young adult in helping Sue pull everything together.

Jesus said, ***"Let the children come to me"*** and at Bermudian we take that command very seriously as we minister through our VBS. Will you join in prayers of thanksgiving & praise for the blessing & ministry of these special days?

Praising! Pastor Larry <><