

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - 2012 - OPERATION OVERBOARD!**

It doesn't seem possible that this wonderful time was 6 weeks ago! This report was given to the Christian Education Committee and the Session, but I wanted the congregation to know about this wonderful time!

Following the theme of this UNDERWATER ADVENTURE, the children and their leaders journeyed through a Wild and Wonderful Week! Each morning the "divers" began their day with the Dive Chief (DC) and his buddy Ocho, the Octopus. **David Narigon and Jonathan Pachter** coordinated this at the opening and close of each day. DC and Ocho also were able to encourage the children/divers to be more mindful of our responsibility to the world God has given us, by providing information about recycling. Ocho also followed the request to be safe during recreation and wear tennis shoes! **Jackie and Curt Koman, and Chick Carlisle** provided the necessary expertise with the technology to make all parts of the week more "alive."

Each day, the 122 "divers" rotated to various stations with activities that centered around a Bible story, a scripture, and an "ocean insight." The five groups of children were escorted by: **Jessica Ashmore, Kayla Baxendell, Rachel Betzner, Kathy Brennen, Amanda Burchett, Sharon Burchett, Michael Bury, Sarah Cole, Betty Crompton, Dick Crompton, Rachel Hrutkey, Julie Kelley, Tara Knight, Nancy McCreight, Jacob Metts, Paul Phillips, Rachel Phillips, Sierra Scott, Nicole Silbaugh, Lindsay Smith, Laura Smith, Seth Sumney, Alexa Weaver, Amanda Weaver, Baylee Weaver, and Nate Weaver.**

The stations provided activities to teach and reinforce the Bible story for each day. Choral Reef (music) was led by **Darla Pepper-Miller** with assistants **Sarina Jones and Jordan Wright**. Aquatic Arts (crafts) was led by **Carrie Justice, Bonnie Lushen, Robynne Moessner, and Shirley Desmond**. The children used the paper towel rolls to make rain sticks as one of the crafts to accompany the story of Noah. Underwater Passage was where the Bible Story for the day was told. **Shelly Armstrong** coordinated this station with help from **Isabella Armstrong, Madison Maxwell, and Sydney Bury**. High Tide Hangout (recreation) found the divers participating in various games led by **Elizabeth Flynn and Don Nixon**, with the help of **Brandon Bruce, Austin Armstrong, Kayla Baxendell, and Derrick Jones**. Exploration Station is a popular part of this Cokesbury curriculum providing a science connection to each Bible story. **Jeremy Zajdel** led the activities here with the assistance of **Ben Artuso and Madi Zajdel**. No VBS is complete without yummy snacks and the "divers" found that to be so at Diver's Diner. Snack time was coordinated by **Cookie Namie** with assistance from **Peg Caesber, Barb Knight, Jackie Grantz, and Connie Hornickel**.

Decorations are important in setting the stage. **Lindsay Smith** shared her artistic talents to draw the various sea creatures found in the Covenant Center. Painting was done by **Laura Smith, Rachel Phillips, Stacy Phillips, Linda Grimm, Pat Sanders, Skip Hornickel, Paul Phillips, and of course Lindsay**. Additional assistance was provided by **Jerry Smith**. **Debi Nicolella** created the various signs and programs and post cards. The decorations in Diver's Diner were created by **Peg Caesber**. The decorations and signs will be used again next year in Indiana at the church of Rev. Kevin Bowers, a son of our congregation. Recycling!

Registration was coordinated by **Camille Braun** with help from **Barb Knight, Peg Flynn, Rachel Gladden, Joel Braun, and Suzanne Ashmore**.

You will be seeing video clips during our fall stewardship campaign from the week as **Joe Stammerjohn** filmed the various activities.

Friday evening about 75 children shared a Closing Program with their families and friends. What a joy to see the children singing and praising God and sharing the Good News they had learned! Yummy snacks were provided by the Diver's Diner leaders!

This thank you list would not be complete without listing the names of the remainder of the Covenant staff - **Dr. Stuart Broberg, Cyndi Barney, Ralph Farabee** - were instrumental in providing all the behind the scenes set up and support.

Now this is a lot of names, but the important thing to remember and give thanks for is the time and energy and effort these folks provided to the children of the VBS. It would not have happened if these folks had not found it in their hearts to step forward - some taking vacation time or rearranging work schedules to be present to share **GOD'S LOVE** with these children! One of the leaders told me - "this is the most important ministry we do - reaching out to children!"

May God continue to bless and use these leaders as representatives of The Church of the Covenant!

SAVE THE DATE FOR 2013!

July 15-19, 2013

YOUTH STUFF

Five of us returned from Mission-EX (July 15-19) having experienced the best of both worlds. Ben, Connor, Gabe, Noah and I spent much of two days in Johnstown working at the St. Vincent DePaul warehouse. We cleared out part of the building they are selling (You know, it's a challenge to take a heavy grocery cart full of wood scraps down a steep ramp!) and sorted clothes for their store. We also toured a soup kitchen that feeds a couple hundred people each day.....a good reminder of how blessed we are and how we are to respond to genuine need.

Back at Pine Springs Camp there was swimming, survival games, food, music and some powerful cabin times each evening. Believe it or not, four middle school boys slept well each night....so did their leader!

We've had a great summer of activities and spiritual challenge. A couple dozen new kids have come to check us out....many will be returning. The next chapter will involve a great fall schedule of Sunday evenings and also other events like a hay-ride, retreats and service. We'll soon be making the entire fall schedule available.

It all comes down to making passionate disciples for Christ. If that truly happens, not only will their lives change, but their impact will be felt far beyond the walls of the church as God uses the youth from The Church of the Covenant to change lives forever. ~ Don Nixon

RALLY DAY! ~ SEPTEMBER 9, 2012 is the day!!

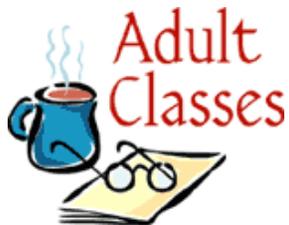
What is **RALLY DAY**, you may ask? Well, it is the day when the Sunday School classes begin for **ALL** ages! Remember, Sunday School is not just for children! We **ALL** are **lifetime learners** - children, youth, **AND** adults! **Classes for children and youth** will meet during the 11:00 hour.

*Classes for children: Preschool (ages 3 & 4); Kindergarten/1st Grade; 2nd & 3rd Grades; and 4th/5th Grades.

*Classes for youth: Middle School (Grades 6-8) and Senior High (Grades 9-12).



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP



The opportunities are quite varied and are still being planned at this writing! Sunday morning will find **“The Parlor Class”** led by Andy Kluczynski returning at 9:30, and **“Bible Study in the Parlor”** led by Dr. George Jones returning at 11:00.

Two **ADDITIONAL** options will also be available Sunday mornings.

1. At 8:45-9:45, Jonathan Pachter will lead a class called **“The Lord of the Rings Trilogy—Lessons in What Movies and Modern Literature Can Tell Us about Our Faith.”**

2. At 11:00-12:00, Donna Carlisle will lead a **Women’s Bible Study** small group.

Sign up at the Welcome Center if you are interested in either of these.

Last spring’s **Experiencing God Small Group study** opened a lot of hearts and minds. Many were not able to participate and have asked if other groups may also go through the study this fall. **YES!** Please sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office if you are interested in being a part of an **EXPERIENCING GOD** small group this fall. Every effort will be made to accommodate schedule options: Sunday morning, weekday, or evening. Please indicate which would be most convenient when you sign up.

Some of the small groups have decided to continue meeting. Other options are also being made available.

* Tuesday evening, (7:00-8:00) Steve Warren will be leading a small group study of **Mere Christianity** by CS Lewis. If this is something that you would like to be a part of, please sign up at the Welcome Center.

A sign up sheet will be made available if you are interested in another class or small group. Please include a topic you are curious about.

Please help with the planning process, by signing up at the Welcome Center for any of these classes or small groups so that adequate materials can be purchased. If you have additional questions or ideas, please do not hesitate to contact me! Janet Nevin - 724-222-0190 x 15.

Look for more information about the **Mid-week Speaker Series** which will begin in October!

“Tiptoe through TULIP” will be the topic for this fall’s **3 CHURCH** event. This series is a result of the collaborative effort of clergy, lay leaders, and staff from The Church of the Covenant, Faith United Presbyterian Church, and First Presbyterian Church, 1793. Plan to attend this event, **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13TH 9:00 am - Noon** at **FAITH UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** (900 East Beau St). **TULIP** is an acronym for the famous five doctrines of the Reformed Christian faith influenced by John Calvin. The presenters will be The Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg, Rev. Jason Hefner, and The Rev. Dr. L. Stephen Smith, Jr. Registration forms will be available in September at the Welcome Center.