

## The Power and Legacy of a Faithful VBS

It is believed that the summer ministry affectionately known as Vacation Bible School has been around since 1896. In those early days, VBS programs were typically seven weeks long. You think those VBS songs get stuck in your head now, just imagine if you sang them for seven weeks straight!

In the '50s, it was more common for churches to hold two-week VBS outreaches. Through the '70s and into our present time, most congregations now find that a one-week VBS is the most practical for volunteers and families alike.

Despite or because of continual change, VBS remains an effective way to reach children and their families with the gospel. Churches who give time to prayer and preparation for their Bible school usually see precious fruit from their investment. Many in local churches can give testimony to beginning to attend church or of being saved as a result of attending this special week of fun activities and instruction in the Word.

Churches wisely will continue tweaking VBS to engage the lost in learning about Jesus. In recent years especially, more emphasis has been placed on creating a robust VBS that involves more than just a

kids' program, but also includes opportunities for teen and adult programming, as well as special times for entire families to come and see what the kids have learned and practiced all week.

Says Joshua Mason, the VBS editor for the Regular Baptist Press, "We must be aware that children come to VBS from incredibly diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and many influences compete for their hearts. In the future, I believe children will need the attention-getting impact of VBS more than ever to break through the noise around them. VBS must always be honest with what it takes for children in the real world to grasp God's Word and grow in the Lord."

What follows in this issue are VBS reports from our BCP missionaries. There is fresh encouragement and blessings from the Lord in each and every one. Notice their efforts to meet kids where they are, to teach in an adaptive way according to needs, and to deal with real world topics from the biblical perspective. In one respect, the work of these churches has just begun. What comes now is the important follow-up with the children and their families.

As summer wraps up, please include in your prayers these missionaries, their churches, and the eternal little souls they had the opportunity to witness to. Pray especially for gospel opportunities and salvations to result from their faithful follow-up with kids and parents alike.

Jim and  
Janice Mitchell  
Grace Fellowship Church  
Preston, ID



The theme of VBS at Grace Fellowship this year was the Gospel in Color. The five colors were gold for God is holy, black for we are sinners, red for Jesus dying in our place, white for salvation and green for growth after salvation. We had an exciting group of children who were a mix of church kids and friends of the church. Our main goal was to solidify in the children's minds the true message of the gospel. Several of our teens were able to serve with the adults, and they did a great job. As an aid to memorizing the verse of the day, we taught the verses with sign language. This was a lot of fun as well as a good way to help the verses stick in their minds. We are looking at VBS as the primer for starting our new JOY Club in the fall.

## Tim and Susan Heinrich Crossroads Baptist Church • Tracy, CA

It was just like Medieval Times at Crossroads Baptist this summer. The 40 children who attended the four-day VBS were greeted by Pastor Tim in a church building that had been transformed into a castle by over 20 volunteers who also helped us build a castle float for the city's Fourth of July Parade. The kids traveled into the Keep to learn about two kingdoms: the good kingdom and the evil kingdom. They were presented clearly with the gospel, and one child was saved. Several parents stayed and listened to the Bible lessons, asking questions about death and the afterlife. Crossroads workers taught science lessons, led music, and played medieval games with the students. Our deaf member and ASL interpreters taught Bible verses in American Sign Language, which added a fun memory element to their memorization.

On Thursday night, close to 100 people attended our Medieval Times Family Night. The Crossroads teachers did a battering ram demonstration and a blacksmith demonstration, and the students presented their Bible lesson and verses in ASL. Pastor Tim earned a water balloon battle, and over \$200 was raised for the Tracy Pregnancy Resource Center. Everyone enjoyed a medieval chicken dinner and Kona Ice, and the kids played in the castle bounce house. Many gospel conversations were had with parents that evening, and new connections were made for Crossroads. We praise God for the wonderful week and pray that many more will visit Crossroads because of this outreach.



## Roy and Karen Kinney Pinecrest Baptist Church • Millbury, MA

At Pinecrest Baptist Church's VBS, we lowered the drawbridge, opened the gate, and charged into a world brimming with kings and kingdoms, majestic castles, fire-breathing dragons, and epic battles. Each day, children ages 2 through 8th grade learned how they can be part of God's Kingdom through salvation in His Son, and they were equipped with the armor of God to become Keepers of the Kingdom and stand strong in today's battle for truth! We had 33 children attend, 17 faithful workers, and 58 attendees at our final day closing program where we hosted a lunch and time of visiting. The Lord blessed us with ample opportunities to minister to some new families from the community as well as to the kids already attending our church. Parents told us they greatly appreciated the quality of the program and the relevancy of the topic for their children. It truly was an excellent week of connections, ministry, and outreach.



### MISSIONARY UPDATE

#### Our Latest Missionary Update

Hear more about what our missionary teams are doing and how you can pray for their ministries.



SCAN TO READ  
THE UPDATE

### STAY UP TO DATE

#### Connect Has Gone Digital!

To read it in its entirety and to make sure you don't miss future issues, please...



SCAN TO SIGN UP  
FOR UPDATES