

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2016LOTS OF FUN AND PLENTY OF ACTION:  
A DIVE AT DEEP SEA DISCOVERY

An amazing group of kids joined us at Vacation Bible School from July 11<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. We had 30 children registered this year, averaging about 25 children each day. Our week-long deep sea dive was all about discovering some very important things about God, but, most importantly, that God watches over us and is with us wherever we go! The children dove deep into God's Word and experienced a wide variety of activities during the week – great lessons, music, crafts, games, delicious snacks, many service projects, and our Deep Sea Discovery Celebration on Friday.

This year's lessons all had to do with water and were about someone that needed God's help. Each day Pastor Sherwindt introduced the daily lesson and theme to start off our morning. Then our daily dive discoveries followed.

Each day we dove deeper and deeper into God's Word! On Monday's dive the children discovered that *God KNOWS Me*. The Bible Memory Verse that day was Psalm 139:1. "You have searched me, Lord, and you know me." The Bible story was from Genesis. We learned about Noah, about how he built an ark following God's instructions. God knew Noah's heart, and saved him, his family and the animals on the ark from a great flood. God knows us too! He sees everything we do, good and bad. He loves us no matter what, and we can show our love for Him by following His instructions. We can serve God by doing the right thing ... just like Noah did!

On Tuesday's dive the children discovered that *God HEARS Me*. The Bible Memory Verse that day was 1 John 5:14. "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." The lesson was about the prophet Jonah. Instead of going to Nineveh to deliver God's message to stop their sinning, Jonah got on a boat and sailed in the opposite direction. God sent a great storm that put the boat and all onboard in danger. Jonah had the others throw him overboard. God sent a large fish – a whale – that swallowed Jonah. Jonah prayed to God, and God heard him. God hears us too. He loves us, is always with us, and always listens to our prayers. We can show our love for God by caring about the many others around us who need God, and by praying for them, too!

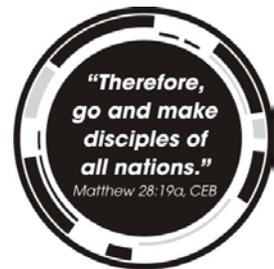
On Wednesday's dive, the children discovered that *God STRENGTHENS Me*. The Bible Memory Verse that day was Psalm 28:7. "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and He helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise Him." The lesson was about Peter, one of our Lord's disciples. Jesus sent His disciples out in a boat that encountered a storm. Jesus strengthened Peter in the storm. He helped Peter walk on water, and pulled him up when Peter started sinking. God strengthens us too! He helps us do hard things that we couldn't do on our own, what is more, God is with us wherever we go. We can serve God by encouraging others who are facing hard things and difficult challenges.



## MORE GOOD NEWS ABOUT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (CONT'D)

On Thursday's dive the children discovered that *God LOVES Me*. The Bible Memory Verse that day was 1 John 4:9. "This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only son into the world that we might live through Him." The lesson was once again about Peter. In this lesson, Jesus found some of his disciples fishing one morning. They had been up all night and had caught nothing. From afar, Jesus told them to throw their net on the other side of the boat. When they did, the net could not hold all the fish they caught, one hundred and fifty-three of them. Right away the disciples recognized their Lord and joined Him on the shore for breakfast. After breakfast, Jesus spoke with Peter about love. Knowing His death on the cross was the ultimate example of love, Jesus challenged Peter to love God and love others. God loves us too, and we can serve God by sharing His love.

On Friday's final and deepest dive the children discovered that *God SENDS Me*. The Bible Memory Verse was Matthew 28:19-20. "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." The lesson was about Paul who preached fearlessly in the name of the Lord, making both enemies and friends for himself. On the island of Cyprus a sorcerer confronted Paul and tried to turn others against the faith in Christ that Paul taught and inspired. God struck the sorcerer blind, as Paul had promised, and the event brought people to Jesus. God blessed and protected Paul as he sailed throughout the land. God sent Paul to speak, and Paul spoke of God's love and glory. God sends us too! He has a special plan for each of us to make a difference in the world. We can serve God by telling His story!



Thanks be to God for such wonderful lessons! The kids experienced God's presence in their lives all week long with everything that they did, both here at Vacation Bible School and at home, too! They learned that God is with them wherever they go and that they can serve God by serving others. What great lessons for kids of all ages to learn, trust, and celebrate.

We had an awesome group of teachers this year at Deep Sea Discovery: Carley Frank, Nathan Fox, Jeremy Fox, and Connie Riffle, with Emma Shaheen as their helper; Janet Slease and Nicole Milek, with Kat Milek as their helper; and Renee Keith, with Max Schroeter as her helper. Everyone put a lot of time and hard work into making this year's program such a great success. I am so grateful to them for the amazing job that they did! The children learned so much and had a great time, thanks to these teachers!

As always, music was one of the favorite parts of Vacation Bible School, thanks to our two great music leaders, Kevin Walters and Annie Reiss. They did an amazing job with the kids, teaching them the songs, motions and dancing. They also put together a wonderful program for the Ice Cream Social, which parents, family and friends truly enjoyed. We saw a lot of group hugs and smiles all week during the music rotation. The children really enjoyed this year's songs, which were fun and had great meaning. I am sure they will be singing and dancing to these songs for a long, long time! Thanks, Kevin and Annie!

## MORE GOOD NEWS ABOUT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (CONT'D)

Our crafts were outstanding, as always, thanks to the creativity and patience of Connie Frank, Cheryl Roman, and Carol Rossbach. This year's craft room involved crafts and service projects that included quilt squares, pompom whales, *in-the-belly* whales, painted t-shirts, handprint fish, CD sea creatures, jar aquariums, and Traveler's Mix. The finished products were great! Thank you to Connie, Cheryl, and Carol – the 3 C's – along with their great group of helpers throughout the week!

This year's outdoor games & snack rotation was led by Eric Dague, Cassie Frank, and Sydney Pepper. The kids loved going outside to play a variety of games and activities that included relay races, variations of tag, and more. The games and activities encouraged teamwork and reinforced the daily themes in the decisions the children needed to make while outside. They also made some fun snacks to enjoy during the week like Twinkie Deep Sea Divers and Graham Cracker Fish Scenes. They were not only adorable, but also delicious!

Thank you, Darlene Milavickas, for heading up our snacks all week and thank you to the lunch crew on Friday. We appreciate everything that everyone did to keep the kids full and hydrated while they were with us. We also had a traveling popsicle and ice cream cart throughout the week, which the children waited for anxiously and with delight during one or another of their rotations! We also shared ice cream treats with the quilters and our staff throughout the week.

This year we were very blessed to have a special guest from the North Canton Fire Department. Ken Brown, North Canton Fireman, joined us on Thursday, and spent 30 minutes with each of the classes. He talked about fire safety and how he serves the community. He also brought his fireman gear and let the children try on his jacket and hat and boots. It was a great session that the kids really enjoyed and everyone had lots of great questions. We are very grateful to Ken for his spending time with us and for his service and dedication to our community!

We finished out our week with Family Night and the Ice Cream Social on Thursday evening and our Deep Sea Discovery Celebration on Friday. Thursday night's program was a great success. The kids did a great job singing and dancing; the highlight video was enjoyed by all; and the ice cream was a delicious end to the evening! We extend our thanks to Janet Slease, Darlene Milavickas, and Laura Thompson for taking care of the kitchen for the Ice Cream Social. Friday's Deep Sea Discovery Celebration was a warm and beautiful sunny day with lots of great water activities, which included water relay races, water balloon toss and tag, the big water slide, and the slip-and-slide. Everyone was getting soaked. It was a blast! Then we enjoyed a pizza party, carnival games, and more water fun. It was a perfect ending to celebrate a great week of diving into God's Word and learning that God is with us wherever we go; and it was a great way to celebrate all the kids' hard work!

Finally, a special thank you goes out to Carol Rossbach for all of the awesome decorations she painted and created this year. There were submarines, fish, and sea creatures that we used to decorate our underwater adventure. They're still up! So please take the time to check out the classroom doorways in the back hall, which she turned into a shark, an octopus, a whale, and a submarine. The church looked great, and the kids really enjoyed all of the decorations.

WE THANK OUR DIVE STAFF AT "DEEP SEA DISCOVERY"

Zion's Vacation Bible School is such a great success because of the contributions and commitments of all involved – the staff, the children, their families, the many volunteers, and the congregation. Thank you to everyone who donated supplies, food, money and time! The following is a list of staff and volunteers who are invaluable to me and Zion! Many of these people did more than the category they're listed in. Everyone was willing to help out wherever they were needed! All I can say is thank you, thank you, thank you!

**Teachers:**

*Pre-K & Kindergarten:* Carley Frank, Nathan Fox, Jeremy Fox

*1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades:* Connie Riffle

*3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Grades:* Nicole Milek, Janet Slease

*5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grades:* Renee Keith

**Music:** Annie Reiss & Kevin Walters

**Crafts & Service:** Connie Frank, Cheryl Roman, Carol Rossbach

**Outdoor Games:** Eric Dague, Cassie Frank, Sydney Pepper

**Snacks & Ice Cream Cart:** Darlene Milavickas

**Our Youth Helpers:** Eric Dague, Cassie Frank, Summer Heller, Kara Martin, Kat Milek, Chrissy Nicholson, Sydney Pepper, Emma Reiss, Max Schroeter, Emma Shaheen, Delaney Snodgrass, Casey Walters

**Other Volunteers:** Jeff Frank, Dean Fox, Darlene Milavickas, Dana Reiss, Kay Reiss, Melissa Riffle, Don Roan, Doug Roman, Pastor Sherwindt, Laura Thompson, Ron & Linda Tvorik, Mark Votaw, Brian Walters

**Quilters:** Kay Davis, Joyce Gibeaut, Helen Heller, Linda Lancashire, Darlene Milavickas, Kay Reiss, Donna Roan, Carol Rossbach, Pat Stayer, Betty Tracy

**Special Guest Speaker:** Ken Brown, North Canton Fire Department

**Registration:** Vicki Givler

**Photography:** Summer Heller

**DVD Production:** Kevin Walters

**Daily Newsletter:** Debbie Fox

**Decorations:** Carol Rossbach

**Ice Cream Social:** Darlene Milavickas, Janet Slease, Laura Thompson

This year was once again truly amazing! Because of the people listed above, our program was a great success. Zion is blessed with a great group of volunteers, who make our Vacation Bible School program one of the best! Everyone's flexibility, time commitment, and hard work are invaluable! I could not do it without everyone's help and support, and for that I am grateful from the bottom of my heart! I am also very grateful for the lovely flowers and generous gift cards I received as a THANK YOU on Thursday evening from everyone.

Thanks again to all involved!  
Debbie Fox, VBS Director

## SERVICE WITH A LASTING PURPOSE AT DEEP SEA DISCOVERY

The children were involved with many service projects during VBS. We had an enthusiastic, caring, generous and loving group this year, which made our projects a great success!

**The Offering:** The boys and girls had a contest to see who could collect the most money during the week. All week they filled up jars and collected \$445.71. The girls collected a total of \$219.74 for the week; and the boys, \$225.97. This money will be donated to *Akron Children's Hospital* and *Zion's Food Pantry*. We stressed each day that the contest was a friendly one and that the real winners are the charities that we chose. Our kids did a great job! Thank you to all!

**Zion's Food Pantry:** The children also brought in food items to fill our submarine in Luther Hall. These items will go to Zion's Food Pantry to help out those in need in our community! We once again gave the kids a *Food Pantry Challenge* to help collect items that are greatly needed by the pantry. We asked the kids to bring in cereal, spaghetti sauce, macaroni & cheese, peanut butter and jelly all week long. The kids once again met and exceeded this challenge and served their community so generously! Thanks to everyone for your support!

**Quilt Squares:** Another one of the great and favorite traditions at our VBS are the quilt squares that the children and volunteers design. Zion's quilters were able to sew eight beautiful quilts from the squares the children and VBS staff created. Seven of these quilts will be sent to Lutheran World Relief to help those in need across the globe. Jacob Cregan, a student in Miss Renee's class, was the lucky winner of the eighth quilt in this year's quilt raffle. Congratulations, Jacob! Special thanks go out to our quilters for all of their hard work and time to sew these beautiful quilts. We are so grateful! Also, thanks to our "Quilt Square Crew" for the many squares they designed this year, and thanks to the children and the rest of the volunteers for your great art work and hard work!

**Daily Service Projects:** The children also worked on special projects throughout the week that stressed how important it is to share God's love by serving others. In addition to the projects listed above, the kids brought in school supplies each day to help both Zion's pantry families and the families that rely on the Urban Ark Ministries in downtown Canton. We are so grateful for the large amount of donations received this year. The children also made a *prayer chain* on Tuesday to remind them that God always hears us and wants us to help others by praying for them. On Friday, the kids made traveler's snack mix to remind them to go out, serve, and share God's love. The snack bags were donated to the North Canton Police Department as a *thank you* for their service and dedication to our community.

**Daily Homework:** The children were challenged each day to do homework, that is, to serve God in ways that reinforced the discoveries they made each day at Vacation Bible School. Each morning they reported back and received a *service fish* for their amazing efforts! These fish were put up on the hallway walls so that everyone could see the amount of great service work that was done all week. The children also received *service fish* for every service project during the week, both at Vacation Bible School and at home. The walls at church are filled with colorful fish! Make it a point to check them out! We are so proud of all the kids and volunteers!

HERE'S SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Happy Birthday to:**



**UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

**Sunday, September 4:** *Rally Day* marks the beginning of yet another Sunday School Year

**Sunday, September 4:** Yes! We will enjoy another edition of our End-of-the-Summer Party!

**Sunday, September 11:** The *2016-17 Sunday School Year* begins with classes for all ages!

**SUNDAY SCHOOL REMINDER FOR PRE-K THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL**

We are taking a break this summer from Sunday School. There are no Sunday School classes for Pre-K through High School this summer. We will start up again in September when we kick off the Sunday School year with Rally Day on Sunday, September 4, 2016; and classes will start up again on Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**THE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS WILL MEET ON AUGUST 14!**

On Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, Pr. George Murphy, who will be preaching that day at Zion, will be leading an adult forum between our two services. The topic will be *From the Small Catechism to the Big Bang*. We'll discuss the Christian understanding of creation, beginning with the way Luther spoke in the Small Catechism about God's presence and work in our daily lives. We will then take what we've learned for a quick trip back to the beginning of the universe, about 14 billion years ago, to see what God is up to. Pr. Murphy's books *Toward a Christian View of a Scientific World* and *Models of Atonement: Speaking about Salvation in a Scientific World* will be available for those who want to purchase copies. Make it a point to be there!

**DON'T FORGET RALLY DAY AT ZION ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4!**

We will kick off the new Sunday School year with Rally Day on Sunday, September 4, beginning at 9:15 a.m. and continuing through the Sunday School hour. There will be snacks and fun activities planned for the kids! It will be a great day of fun and fellowship for all.

**ONE FINAL THOUGHT: THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!**

**Thank you again to everyone for your support of all our service projects during Vacation Bible School! This was truly a week of service with a lasting purpose, and we made great strides in all that we achieved. All of us could see that God is with us wherever we go; and there's just no substitute for that. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you, again!**

AND NOW, A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

I have very good news! The Steering Ministry has negotiated an arrangement with Pastor Hal Robarge to be our Interim Pastor; and Council is getting ready to cross the t's, dot some i's, and approve it! Pastor Robarge came to the June Council Meeting. He immediately challenged us to treat the time between pastors as a time for reflection and growth rather than a time of stagnation and contraction. He asked a lot of pointed questions that left me feeling a little sheepish, but terribly excited about what Zion can be.

Pastor Robarge was ordained in 1959 and has served congregations in Norwalk, Girard, Canton, and Greenville, Ohio. He has done significant work in the area of conflicted congregations. He retired from congregational ministry in 2006 and has served as an *intentional* Interim Pastor for congregations in transitional situations since then. He has served congregations in Greenville, Dayton, Middletown, Pittsburg, Canal Fulton, Madison, and New Philadelphia, all in Ohio, both in the Southern Ohio Synod and Northeastern Ohio Synod. He has been a leader in helping the wider church to think about Interim Ministry as a crucial part of a congregation's life.

The first thing he said at our council meeting was this: "If you are looking for someone to be a part-time placeholder until you can get a new call together, then I am not your guy. But if you want help to discern your path, address the issues, and grow during this period then we might have something." All of us thought that sounded like the choice we wanted for Zion.

Pastor Robarge and his wife live in Uniontown. You met him when he celebrated communion here at Zion on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July. He will be back to preach and preside at worship on Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>. Please come out and welcome him to Zion. Pastor Robarge will be starting officially as our Interim Pastor on the first of September; he will be with us at worship on September 4<sup>th</sup>, after which we will welcome him with a "Welcome the Pastor" Great Grill-Off, which is our annual End-of-the-Summer Party.

Council President,  
Mark A. Votaw

I've got one final point, for now. The Treasurer's Report shows that we have six months in the books, and we've managed to run a small surplus of \$141.26. That's great, but the next few months are when it gets tricky. We are in the process of staffing the Church Secretary position. This is something that has been budgeted for, but we've been saving money by relying on volunteers and Pastor Sherwindt. While we move through the interim period, we will need someone in the Church Office who can help maintain a sense of continuity and order as we keep things moving forward.

An Interim Pastor will cost a little less than our full-time Pastor; but this fact is already reflected in the budget. The long-and-short of it is this: We are in good shape, but we need to be careful. I will be keeping you up to date as best I can. I want to thank you for your continued support. Your generosity always amazes me. The parsonage is ready to rent. We have been advertising it; so I am hoping we will have a tenant and some rental income soon. That will help ease the burden on the operating budget. Keep up the good work.

## COUNCIL NEWS & MORE

**Treasurer's Report:** We have held our own through June. Our financial facts show a slight surplus in June and year-to-date:

June Income	17,748.58
June Expenses	<u>17,557.07</u>
<b>June Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 191.51</b>
Income through June	135,622.11
Expenses through June	<u>135,480.85</u>
<b>2016 YTD Surplus</b>	<b>\$ 141.26</b>

**Women's Monthly Bible Study:** Our final summer session will lift up *Reconciliation as New Creation* as we continue to focus on *The Heart of the Matter*. The Little Pentecost in John 20:19-23 promises peace; and the church is the place where God gives us the gifts we need to make God's grace come alive through the forgiveness we shared and the joy of new life that follows. Join the Women of Zion on Tuesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m. in the Resource Center.

**IT'S A GREAT WAY TO  
WELCOME PR. ROBARGE**

**ZION'S "END OF THE  
SUMMER" PARTY!**

**LABOR DAY WEEKEND  
SUNDAY AFTERNOON  
SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2016**

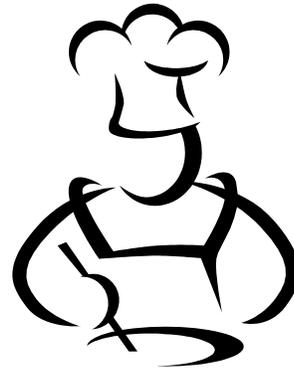
**WE'VE MASTERED THE PLAN  
WORSHIP: 8 am & 10:30 am**

**SNACKS at 12:30 p.m.**

**FOOD at 1:00 p.m.**

**Clean-up at 3:30 p.m.**

Pulled Pork, Beef, Chicken,  
Fish, Shrimp, and More  
Hot Dogs, Hamburgers  
Baked Beans, Cole Slaw  
Lots of Great Desserts



Good Fun, Great Food, Fabulous Fellowship  
A Fun Way to Raise Funds for a Good Cause

## A FINAL WORD FROM THE PASTOR ON RETIREMENT:

Entering retirement invites reflection on the whole of my professional life of ministry as a Lutheran pastor. Like most pastors, and many professionals, I was drawn by the call to make a difference with my life. That's what documenting one's sense of call with those essays seminary applications requires was intended to get at. I didn't go right into parish ministry from seminary. I decided, instead, to pursue doctoral work at Notre Dame. I studied with scholars who encouraged me to fall in love with what the church could be. We all fell in love with the possibilities for the church that we read on the printed pages of so many books. I had been offered teaching positions at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus and Luther-Northwestern Seminaries in St. Paul; but I chose to head into parish ministry with the many hopes I had cultivated and the difference I thought I could make in the life of the church.

What I discovered, along with so many others, is that reality often resists the initiatives we bring with us as we try to make a difference. Despite the love, and hope, and faith we bring, the world and the church have a way of remaining pretty much the same over time. At my first call, the Lutheran Church of the Cross in Cincinnati, I learned that no matter how many doors I knocked on, no matter how many visitors I followed up on, no matter how we arranged the words on our sign and in our ads, if you don't have parking, people who like to get around by driving aren't going to be worshipping with you! That first call was something. There was no parking. We were an aging congregation in an inner-urban neighborhood, where the wider church had just started a mission where most of our members had moved to, and had also located a fully-funded Lutheran Campus Ministry six blocks away on the campus of the University of Cincinnati. I loved the idea of urban ministry; but no one had sent me the memo that the Lutheran Church of the Cross was on life support, only there was no life support!

I took a leave from call to finish dissertating, and over the next four years I learned to enjoy a life of ministry from the periphery, working without a call, but employed by several churches at the same time. I was the Interim Pastor at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sunman, Indiana, and I was the Evangelism Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Hamilton, Ohio, and I was an Assistant to the Pastor at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Crestview Hills, Kentucky. These three churches offered great variety in terms of congregational settings: a comfortable rural church in Indiana, a large stately downtown church in Hamilton, and a growing suburban church in Northern Kentucky, which, at that time, was the fifth fastest growing suburban area in the country, and had just benefited from Great American Insurance buying Chiquita Banana and importing thousands of Lutherans from the Chicago area! I capped off this period of multiple ministries by serving a two-point parish east of Cincinnati, Peace Lutheran Church in Hillsboro and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lynchburg. I invested the same amount of time and energy at Peace and St. Paul's. One grew nicely; the other continued its long pattern of slow decline.

I learned my most important lesson in parish ministry. No, it wasn't that love covers a multitude of sins. Actually, growth does. It wasn't the infinite wisdom contained in the age-old observation that while the early bird catches the worm, it's the second mouse that gets the cheese. What I learned at Peace and St. Paul's became my mantra in ministry: "I cannot help you accomplish what you do not have the will to do." I brought a lot of gifts and skills to the challenges of parish ministry; and I've needed every one of them. Parish ministry is quite an adventure. But it is very humbling because reality has a way of resisting the hopes with which we try to change it.

## A WORD FROM PASTOR SHERWINDT ON RETIREMENT (CONT'D)

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