

### Truth was Alive at Vacation Bible School!

There are some traditions we should be willing to revoke or change and those would be identified by our Lord in Mark 7:8, "*For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men....*" Paul also paid his respects when he said, "*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*" (Colossians 2:8). A test to whether a tradition should be embraced or shunned is given to us in the wording of Jesus when He pointed out the Pharisees had put aside the commandment of God to fulfill the commandment of men.

There are some traditions that should be held, embraced and promoted. Sometimes the old saying "If it ain't broke, then don't fix it!" really applies. One of the finest traditions of the Church has to be the annual Vacation Bible School. Paul said, "*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle*" (II Thessalonians 2:15).

We are thankful for this year's Bible School! Our theme has been "Truth Alive." Our visiting evangelists from Pensacola Christian College have done a fantastic job! Our young firebrands were Rob Brown, Ben Schettler, and Travis Wirt. They have faithfully preached and illustrated the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; for this we are most appreciative. Again, we are reminded of this promise, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...*" (Romans 1:16).

This week our special "penny offering" has been one of the most worthy causes of our two decades of tradition. This week our gift has been designated to one of our local mission efforts, The Care Net Pregnancy Center. This is a very important time of the year to give to Care Net because at this season their contributions are down. This is an organization dedicated to winning lost young mothers and mothers-to-be to Jesus Christ and also very importantly, to the saving of unborn babies. So our offering has been given with this view in mind, "Kids Saving Kids." How precious to know that our Vacation Bible School has been instrumental in saving the lives of the unborn. Our dear children have given in their special offering, \$1,662.70 to Care Net. Aren't we proud of them? "*...and a little child shall lead them*" (Isaiah 11:6).

We want to say a big thank you to our executive secretary, Victoria Lord who helped organize our Bible School. Her time far exceeded her normal duties. She never complained; she did what was necessary to get the job done.

Thank you to Barbara Pope who for 22 years has served as our Bible School pianist, who has played songs that sometimes did not have the music provided, but just plugged along, by heart. I use the expression by heart, because she did more than play by ear, more than music committed to memory, she played with her heart, for the ultimate glory of God.

Another big thanks to Linda Sanders who has served these two decades as our banker. She has watched over the giving, counted and assigned counters. She has been fair and enthusiastic, even to the point of encouraging our kids to give sacrificially. Thank you to the other banker helpers who spent a lot of time counting money, Al and Esther Havey, Branch Isbell, Crissy Sanders and Sarah Normand, Angela Johnson, Harriet Mowery, Cody Isbell, Todd Gregory, Sarah Howell, Bethany White, Rachel Lemons.

A special thank you to Patricia Sanchez who has worked day, night, and through the night to provide food for the kids (and even the workers). With all the little ones in her household she has to attend to already, her efforts have been especially appreciated. Thanks also to Dawn Allen, Wilma Arevalo, Brenda Normand, and Sarah Normand for blessing us with their preparation of refreshments. By the way, most of these ladies also served twice a day when helping with the evening session with the teens.

Thanks also to Angela Atwell, our real live missionary to Cambodia, who told with wonderful animation a Bible story everyday! Thanks to Donna White for the interesting Missionary story she told

everyday.

Thanks to Judy Hawkins, Darleen Maler, Elizabeth Briner, Carolyn Lemons, and Lonna Higgs for their aid in registration. That welcoming smile was the first impression on our VBS students!

Ryan Normand, Sean Pope, Jason Pomeroy, C.J. Pomeroy, Todd Gregory and Walter Arevalo, Jr. did a great job as activity assistants. Their presence helped insure a wide margin of safety, while providing the spirit of fun!

A big thanks for our counselors, Beka Hawkins, Vinette Harris, Cheryl Strauss, Carrie Ray, Marilyn Dice, Deborah Little, Sheryl Montgomery, Debbie Howell, and Leslie Johnson! These are the ones that helped make sure the children understand what it means to be saved on one hand and surrendered to Christ after one is saved.

If would not be possible to have a successful Bible School without our nursery workers. So our hats are off to Heather Transeau, our nursery coordinator, Rachel Hawkins, Ruth Stayte, Jackie McClain, Jamie Kujawa, Rachel Ray and Lissa Cochran. They watched our smallest ones with tender care!

The work of the auditorium assistants and line up/dismissal workers is invaluable! They help keep "law and order" in the Bible School. So please know a heart-felt thanks goes to Megan Thornton, Sarah Harper, Melody Findley, Sarah Fredericks, Charity White, Jacqueline Higginbotham, Billy Findley, and Dianne Hogstrom.

This year we incorporated an evening Bible School for our teens that was an extra blessing and very well attended! Many thanks to Jeff and Jan Shadoin, Richard Sanchez, Tommy Normand, Mark and Lori Mathews for helping us make the teen Bible School such a blessing.

We are thankful for the watch care of our men that helped in whatever way they could such as Walter Arevalo, Sr., Gary Stayte, and Charlie Pomeroy.

Please know that any left out in our expression of appreciation was not intentional. Isn't it a grand thing that we have so many helpers wanting to be a blessing at Christchurch Vacation Bible School, that we have a hard time keeping track of how many were involved? So for all we have left out, from the bottom of our hearts we thank you for making Truth Alive an excellent adventure.

Above all, we give our praise to the Lord Jesus Christ who, on a daily basis this week was saving souls for time and eternity. This is the main reason for Bible School, so that all might hear, believe and receive Jesus Christ by faith!

- Pastor Pope -

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