

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

VBS Sets Sail for Jesus! 1

From Spectators to Supporters 2

Middletown Goes Camping, Family-style! 2



There was always a really fun way for the kids to be actively involved!



AUGUST EVENTS

- 5 | Monthly fellowship potluck
- 11 & 18 | "Bring A Buddy" Young Adult Fellowship
- 19 | Back-To-School Sabbath

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

- 2 | Monthly fellowship potluck

VBS Sets Sail for Jesus!

About 50-55 Vacation Bible School students ages 3-12 set sail on a "High Seas Expedition" June 19-24 under the leadership of Children's Ministries Leader Rhonda Monroe. The theme was that God's Word is for everyone, true, comforting, surprising, and life-changing.

Each night, VBS opened with "Sing and Play Splash" led by Leslie Frantz, Traci Oms, and Mindy Crecelius. The singing was Rhonda's favorite part of VBS; she loved watching the kids do the motions as they sang praises to Jesus with all their hearts! "Captain Mindy" and "Sailor Jack" (played by Joey Karr) performed hilarious skits during the opening program which were a crowd favorite.

After the nightly music and skit, the 6-12-year-olds broke into small groups called "crews" to rotate through the three stations: "Bible Voyage" (where they participated in exciting activities and skits that made them feel like they were a part of the story), "Ship Rec Games" (where they played games connected with the story), and "Clipper Ship Crafts" (where they created crafts inspired by the story).

VBSers also enjoyed yummy "Goodies from the Galley" prepared each night by Marilyn Matherly and her kitchen crew. While they ate their snack, they

watched "Chadder's High Seas Adventure".

The preschoolers (ages 3-5) had their own exciting lineup of activities with Bible stories, crafts, games, and snacks in "Skipper's Preschool Play Deck".

At the end of each evening, all age groups met back in the sanctuary for the "Floating Finale", an awesome event designed to connect the pieces of the day's program in a powerful, unforgettable object lesson.

An event as fabulous as VBS definitely takes a group effort. Over 40 volunteers plus kids helped with event logistics before, during, and after VBS. In keeping with this year's nautical theme, adult and teen crew members wore aqua T-shirts to match the blue "water", and the crew and kids wore adorable white sailor hats. Leslie was in charge of decorating the church in a way that grabbed the kids' attention and got them excited about VBS without distracting from its purpose. She organized a crew of hard-working moms who put up all the decorations and props the week before. The fellowship hall was decked out with seaweed and fish, the sanctuary walls sported blue "water" with red and white life preservers, and the hallways were decorated with kid-designed "portholes". A special



feature this year was the huge wooden boat with large, white sails on the sanctuary stage constructed by Lemual Sikes and Kelly Frantz. When kids and parents came into church on Sabbath before VBS began, they got excited about participating during the upcoming week.

At Traci's "Bible Voyage" station, the kids experienced a Bible story by imagining what it might have been like to be there. The crews always had a lot of fun together being scared, excited, sad, etc. about whatever story they were learning. There was always a really fun way for the kids to be actively involved, like throwing "cargo" overboard as Paul's "ship" was in danger of sinking, or "swimming" to shore when the ship broke up and then trying to avoid the dangerous "snakes" on the "island". It was a truly memorable way to learn Bible stories!

(Sailor) hats off to Rhonda and her wonderful staff for making VBS 2017 an awesome success! Visit the church's Facebook page to see more VBS pictures!





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"A safe environment... where people relationships become kingdom relationships"

From Spectators to Supporters by Pastor Marius Serban

Carol Kinsey Goman, author of *This Isn't the Company I Joined*, shared this story in one of her speeches:

"In the mid-1950s, the city of Toronto decided to hold its first-ever Easter parade. The city leaders announced that the parade would take place at 10 a.m. on Easter Sunday. The day of the event, the citizens of Toronto turned out in full force to watch the parade. They waited all morning, but no parade ever appeared. Disappointed, the citizens went home—angry at what they assumed was

some sort of municipal hoax. What the citizens of Toronto failed to realize was that an Easter parade wasn't something you watched; it was something you did. The citizens were supposed to dress in their finest clothes, join arms with their fellow citizens, and 'parade' down the center of the street."

As I read this story, I reflected on how we do church. Some people believe church is a spectator sport. Is it? What did God do? He did not just watch our misery. He gave of

Himself. Jesus left the Heavens to live like you and me and became our Model, our Master, and our Mediator. He said, "I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done" (John 13:15 NKJV),

If you are willing to obey His command and move from spectator to supporter of the Middletown SDA church, fill out a Member/Friend questionnaire in the church office and let us know how you would like to be involved!

Middletown Goes Camping, Family-style! by Traci Oms

This summer, five Middletown families (Karr, Frantz, Crecelius, Lang, and Oms) went to our Kentucky-Tennessee conference camp, Indian Creek, for Family Camp. All were blessed by the ministry of the ICC staff and had amazing experiences together as family and friends.

At family camp, parents and children can enjoy all of the programming and activities of junior/

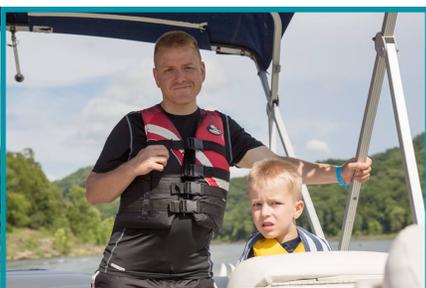
teen camp, but with more independence and added perks (like an adults-only dinner and "moms night out" at the craft room). Morning and evening worship are always memorable with awesome song services and hilarious but thought-provoking skits. The meals are tasty and the list of activities is long! Crafts, ceramics, archery, gymnastics, super science (building rockets

with dads, throwing boomerangs, holding fire!), horses, skiing/tubing, swimming, mountain biking, RC cars/drones/boats, baking, nature center (holding snakes, etc.), canoeing/kayaking/paddleboarding, and more.

Family camp at ICC is a fantastic retreat from the daily responsibilities of life to focus on having fun and growing spiritually together as a family.



Mikey Oms riding his trusty steed



Father-son boating: Joey & Jake Karr



David Crecelius water surfing on Center Hill Lake



L-R: Mindy Crecelius, Leslie Frantz, Stephanie Karr, Traci Oms