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# SALT Shaker



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Vacation Bible School 2011



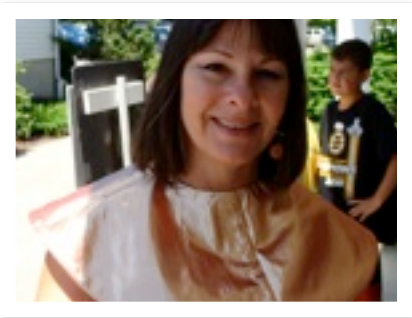
### *EGYPT: Joseph's Journey from a Prison to a Palace!*



**VAMANOS!** (*Let's Go!*) *EGYPT: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace* was a **pleasure**. (Usually I start this article by writing that VBS was a "great success," and I give stats on how many children registered and the like. Then I give a summary of VBS and **end** with a heartfelt thank you to the volunteers and a reflection

on what God taught me through the whole process.) This year I felt the need to make a change and **start** by expressing my overwhelming gratitude to all volunteers who made this year's VBS actually a **pleasure** to direct. To say it simply, "This year's VBS was a lot of fun for me." Even with the normal hiccups

(the daily process of checking in and out over 240 children) and a few that weren't normal (like losing the teacher's guidebook a week before VBS started), VBS was a **pleasure** for me to direct thanks to all those who volunteered.



This year we had over **120 volunteers** including people from other churches! Every year VBS is the product of a wonderful team

effort with people working to prepare and then implement the program faithfully day after day, often times behind the scenes (like **Nigel Stokes** who back in April helped me go over the curriculum and infuse the gospel message into each lesson). Also

many thanks go to volunteers like **Glenn & Jackie Smith, Dawn Bryden, Dick Smid, Susan Drennan, Brian Gordon, Gretchen**



**Noiseux, Susie Nudelman** and the rest of the sets & props team who designed and created an enchanting Egyptian world in our church building. (Did you get



to see how great the foyer and sanctuary looked? I hope so!) Proudly we were able to lend out some of the Egyptian props to the YMCA in

Ipswich for a program they had this summer, and their kids were very impressed. We also had the privilege of



lending out VBS props to two other churches as the summer continued. (This is a great way for our church to reach out to the community and for churches to work together to evangelize the North Shore.)



Again **Doug Bidwell** (despite having two broken ribs) kept the count for the daily snacks and the offering. The nursery team (led by nursery committee:

**Heather Rich, Emily Fauble and Rebekah Bohl**) was another group behind the scenes who watched the infants and young children of the volunteers, freeing them up to help. Again this year I was particular impressed by the number of times a volunteer just saw a need and responded without involving me or waiting for someone else to take care of it. (Can I say just one more time that the VBS volunteers made VBS a **pleasure** for me this year?)



As always I want to thank my wife and daughter (**Lisa & Emily**). At key moments before and during VBS they stepped up and helped me, so I could not

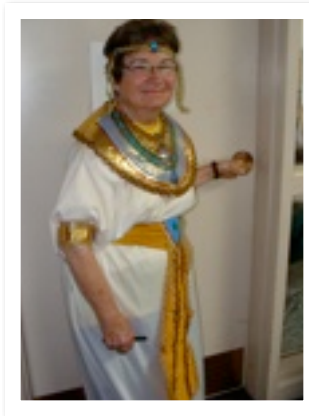
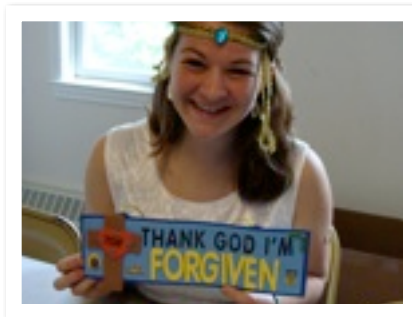


only keep a shred of my sanity but (you guessed it) so I could actually enjoy myself (**Pleasure!**). Emily actually spent the week

helping in the nursery and at recreation. (What a great daughter she is!)

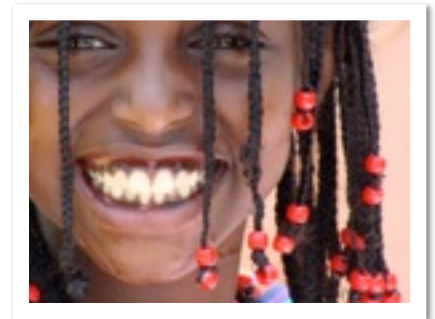
I also want to say another special thank you to **Jen Whiteacre** for all her hard work and the extra hours she put in to handle the registration process. Before VBS, Jen went to classes at the Apple Store to learn how to enable us to take registrations online. Then more pressure was added to her work load by the fact that she left for a mission trip to Ukraine on Thursday during VBS. This meant many late nights (one that lasted past midnight) to prepare everything needed for VBS to run administratively while she was away. Let me just say that time after time I have seen Jen stepping in to help others and spending extra time at work because she has had to wait for others to finish their work. (Even this article was very late because I was distracted from finishing it by the process of trying to buy a house and a new baby in my family, and she patiently waited.) I know I have thanked her for three years now, but I will continue to thank her over and over because she deserves it. **She deserves all our thanks.** (Please remember that when you call the church or see her. Her desk should be covered in thank you notes.) **THANK YOU, JEN!**

All that being said I also need to **thank the Lord** for all the blessings He poured out



during VBS. The main theme this year was that **all good gifts come from God**, and He definitely proved it during VBS. As I have already said, this year VBS was a **pleasure** to direct. I really enjoyed VBS. Volunteers have said they really enjoyed it, and children have said

they really, really enjoyed it. Everything worked out and the potential stress of having over 260 children ages four through middle school registered, and 10 children in the nursery was almost nonexistent for me. (How is that possible? The Lord and volunteers, that's how!) The largest daily attendance was 266, and we didn't lose any of them (Thank you tour guides). Almost 60 churches were represented, and we were delighted to welcome

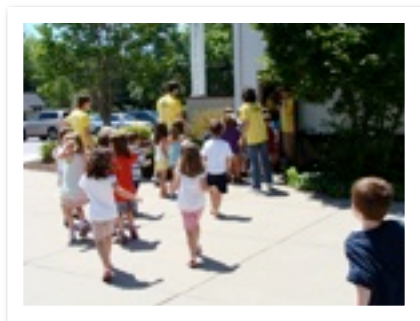


children who currently have no church home. Thank you to the many from our church family who brought friends and neighbors to the program and



participated in the VBS version of our church's vision "**More Kids, More Like Christ.**" We also had a community first in that I was allowed to hang VBS posters at the Doyon School in Ipswich. It is

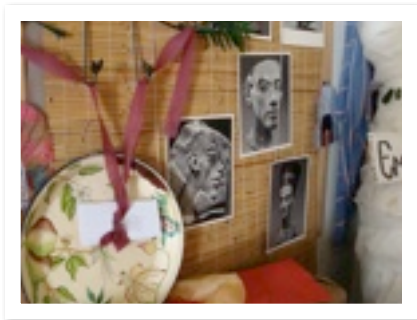
my hope that I will be allowed to do this again and continue to make our program more available to the children in the town.



Another **pleasure** this year was the perfect weather (Thank you Lord!). Each day began in the courtyard where children gathered by age or grade.

Then promptly at 9 am, (Actually this year we did much better getting the kids to the opening on time.

The first day we were only 15 minutes late compared to 30 minutes last year.) the children happily marched up the stairs to enter an Egyptian market

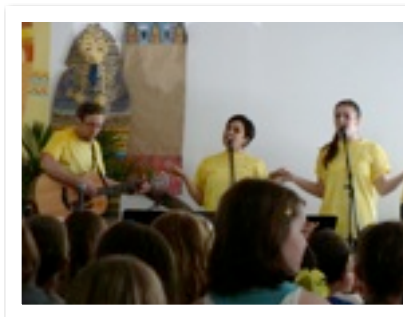


place in the foyer and Egypt itself as the inside of our church had been transformed into a desert archeological dig site extraordinaire (try to say that

10 times fast) for the opening. It was complete with desert sand, a temple, pyramids, the Sphinx, a stone jail, a mummy, a sarcophagus



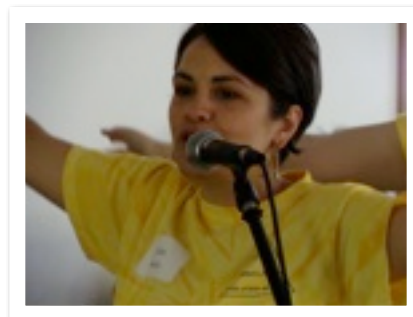
(Yes, I needed spell check for this word.), a market place full of wares and plenty of palm trees.



Every morning the opening began with songs by our band again under the skillful and energetic direction of **Julie Zook** (She was willing to lead in spite of

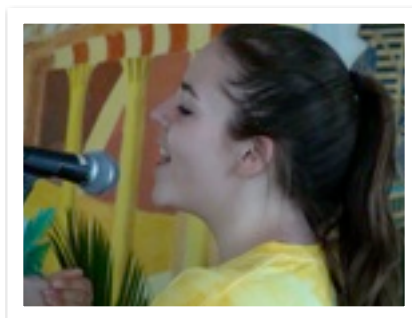
a wedding commitment later in the week. **Pleasure!**) and then **Noni Mason** (She stepped in at the last minute with no rehearsals. **Pleasure!**) with the help of **Shelby Evans**.

This year **Stuart Noiseux** also was very helpful in directing the band as well as **Derek Baker** who always has

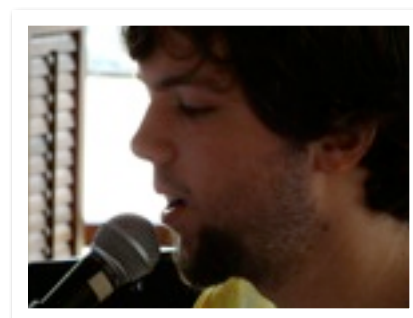


my back. Then Indiana Jeff (whip and all) and his faithful sidekick Paco, (You Rock **Mr. Gordon!**

Working with you was ..., how do I say it? A **Pleasure!**), would enter and inevitably be chased by a large red ball. (The very first



day I fell into the pews trying to avoid the ball and ended up with a black eye. Don't tell me I don't go all out for the kids.)



Then they would have to survive other traps provided by **Daniel Van Dyke** who liked to try and upstage them each day. (Naughty, naughty Mr. Van Dyke.) After facing mortal danger, they would find the treasure chest which helped them explain the theme of the day to the children.

Also each morning an offering was collected to benefit the **E v a n s** family. As many of you know, **Wes Evans** was

in a terrible skiing accident just before Thanksgiving last year, and he has been in the hospital and rehabilitation facilities ever since. The money raised helped the Evans family purchase a handicap van so they are able to transport Wes while he recovers and after he comes home. (You may see the blue van sometimes in our church parking lot. Wes has already been able to go for a ride in it. See pictures at the Care Pages website.) Amazingly and despite the current economic uncertainty, the children, their parents and members of our congregation surpassed our goal of \$1,600 and gave over \$7,000. **(Pleasure!)** If you still would like to contribute, please feel free to place a check in the offering plate on any Sunday this summer and just write "Van for Wes" in the memo line. **Jon, Jo and Shelby Evans** were able to attend the closing on Friday to accept a very large check from the children. (This year's check was even larger in size than last year's. It was over five feet long!) Thanks so much to all who participated!

During the week the children learned that God gives each of them good gifts every day. They learned that **ALL good gifts ultimately come from God and**



**that He should be thanked by them all the time.** The five specific gifts they learned about as found in the story of Joseph in Genesis were the gifts of **hope, special abilities,**

**wisdom, forgiveness and a family.** They also heard each day of **the ultimate gift** God gave each one of us in His son **Jesus** and his death on the cross for our sins.

Each day the children experienced events from the book of Genesis and Joseph's time in Egypt through interactive skits

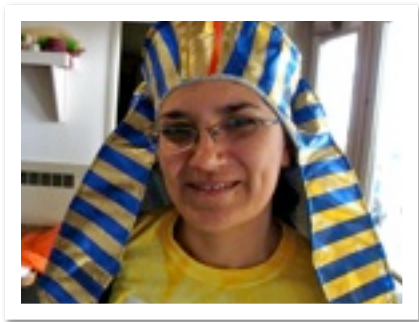


in five different classrooms. The classrooms were turned into the sites of biblical adventures where Joseph interacted with his brothers, the Pharaoh and others, such as when Joseph interpreted dreams for the baker, the butler and eventually pharaoh; when pharaoh elevated Joseph to the number two position of power in all Egypt; when Joseph wisely administered the grain in Egypt during seven years of plenty and seven years of famine; when Joseph

for gave his brothers; and when Joseph's family came to live in Egypt. I was amazed again this year at the creative and hard work the teachers



put into transforming their rooms into exciting biblical locations. (Their costumes were pretty good too. There were many pharaohs running around that week.) Please look again at the long list of volunteers who gave their time and effort to minister to all the children in the name of Jesus. Thank you to all of them! (Have I mentioned how great the volunteers were, and that VBS could not happen without them? Have I mentioned VBS was a **pleasure?**)

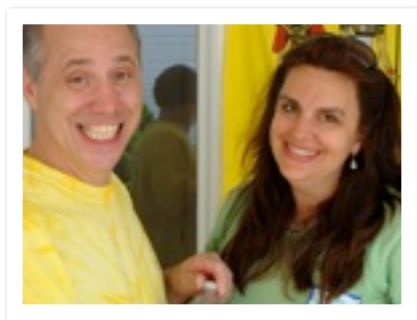


Along with their Egyptian lessons the children made different theme-based crafts each day, had snacks and went outside to play games. The

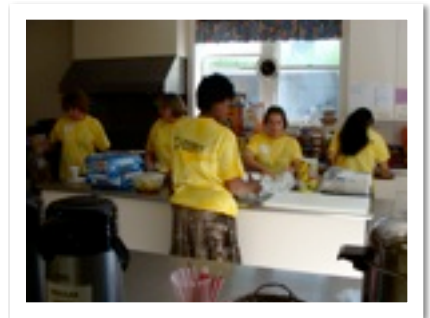
craft teachers led large classes in small rooms. (Thanks **Maya Kline** for again helping to choose and coordinating the crafts and leading the craft time for all the three, four and five year olds.) With classes of almost 40 children, it was impressive to see the creative ways the recreation team played fun



games. (Great job **Brian Gordon and Greg Hills.**) Thanks also to all the teenagers who were willing to get soaked day after day, so the children would



have fun. (Thankfully there was no repeat this year of the tragic event which occurred last year when a five-gallon jug of water was poured over the head of a very, very nice, handsome, intelligent, and spiritual man.) Again we were lucky enough to have two of the ever-popular Castle Bounces. (Thank you **Andrew and Logan!**) The children also enjoyed snack time each day. The kitchen team, again under the capable leadership of **Jan Marcaurrelle**, prepared snacks for more than 200 children and the staff every day. (Thank you to **Marge Walker** for starting us off and recruiting help.)



During the daily closing time there were more songs, and **Pastor David** would congratulate the children on that day's contribution to the Van for Wes and announce which team (red or green) won the offering challenge for the day. Then **Pastor Greg** presented the gospel message. Also Pastor Greg led the children in their daily Bible verse recitation aided by a huge beach ball that was larger than the Pre-K children. (Actually it was



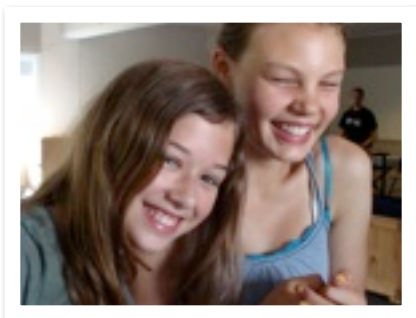
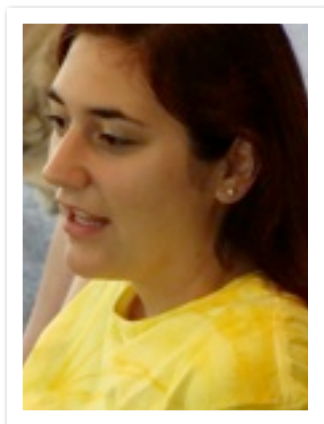
larger than almost all the children.). The ball was bounced into the air by the children for each word in the verses. (We only hit the ceiling fans a couple of times all week. Please don't tell the Trustees! Actually there was a trustee in the room all week helping as a tour guide, and she didn't scold us once.) On Friday Indiana Jeff and Paco couldn't

make it, so Han Solo, Chewbacca and R2D2 filled in to review all the themes learned during the week. (I am always amazed at the many gifted people God has bought to our church. Aren't you?)



Middle School VBS, under the direction of Youth Director, **Jon Evans** and his right-hand helper, **Kerry Lowell**, had a

separate program involving mornings at the church and a Thursday trip to Water Country. The highlights of this program were playing crazy games, singing, doing silly skits, having lots of snacks, and having the **pleasure** of hearing from God's word while discussing real life issues that these young people face daily in their lives.

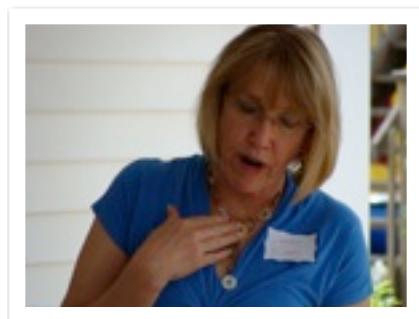


The Thursday evening program welcomed most of the parents and children back to the church, so parents could

hear and see what their children were doing, meet VBS staff, and enjoy Richardson's ice cream. The parents were told about Wes Evans' accident and more money was collected. There was a slide show (Thank you **Lainey Hambelton, Nina Walters** and

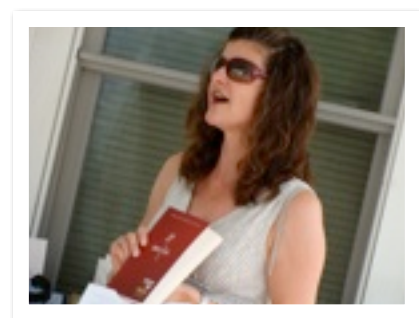
**Sarah Phillips** for the pictures and **Derek Baker** for creating the slide show) and the morning skit cast did an encore presentation of that morning's skit. Also those who do not already have a church home were invited to join our church family. Again the two inflatable Castle Bounces were very popular places to be. (The mosquitoes weren't too bad this year.) We did not count how many came, but almost 8 three-gallon tubs of ice cream were eaten. (Thanks to **Meirwyn & Nina Walters** for organizing the serving stations and especially to **Meirwyn** for picking up the ice cream. **Pleasure!**)

An outreach to VBS parents, led by **Christine Gordon** and **Debbie O'Leary**, began each day with a welcoming coffee hour at the Cairo Cafe, thoughtful gifts, crafts and a chance for



the parents to hear a short talk concerning the "Heart of a Child." This year we were also able to give out children's Bibles and books on parenting thanks

to **Esther Baird's** planning. Over 30 parents stopped by throughout the week. Please pray for the families who do not know Jesus. We are

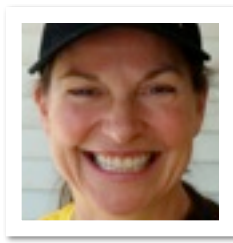
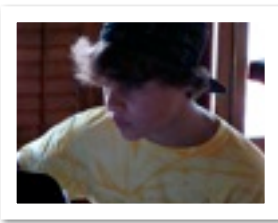
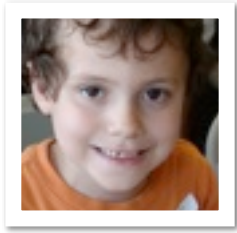
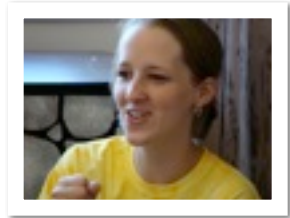
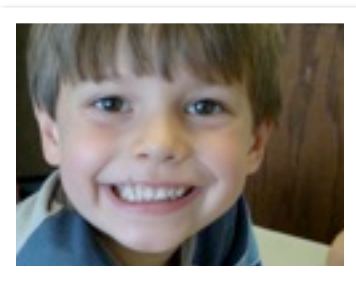


contacting the families of children who did not list a church home, and we are inviting them to First Presbyterian. Please pray for this outreach and be on the lookout for new faces and help welcome them to our church.

Again throughout the planning and implementation of VBS this year, I was reminded how God does the work, and I am just along for the ride. The whole time VBS was taking place, I was thinking about how I make a feeble effort then God blesses it and something wonderful happens. I know that alone I could never have enjoyed all that is required to make a VBS of this size happen. It is a **pleasure** to take large steps of faith and take on real challenges for God and see His provisions all along the way. We are truly blessed to have a God who cares about our every need. My prayer is that the Word was proclaimed during VBS and that the children and their families will have learned and will continue to **truly glorify God and enjoy him forever!** When this happens it is a **pleasure**.



Thanks so much,  
Jeff Spencer  
(Children's Ministry  
Director)



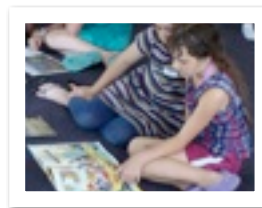
**THANK YOU TO THE OVER 120  
Volunteers  
WHO MADE THE 2011 VBS A PLEASURE!**

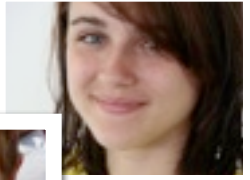
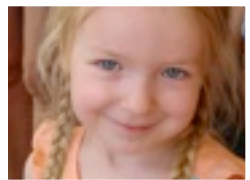
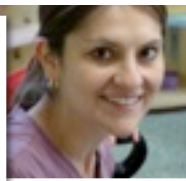
**Director:** Jeff Spencer; **Admin. Assist:** Doug Bidwell; **Registration:** Jen Whiteacre, Jo Evans, Maureen Oh, Linda Armerding, Kathy Azadian, Liana Jaeger, Laura Smith; **Opening Skits:** Jeff Spencer, Brian Gordon, Daniel Van Dyke; **Gospel Presentation:** Greg Hills, Jeff Spencer; **Staff Devotions:** Pastor David; **Music Team:** Julie Zook (vocals), Shelby Evans (vocals), Noni Mason (vocal), Stuart Noiseux, (piano/opening), Elizabeth Mulley (piano), Derek Baker (lead guitar), Andrew Kang (bass), Alex Berthoud (electric guitar), Tyler Mulley (drums); **Kitchen:** Jan Marcaurette, Wendy Nelson, Happiness Afulike, Diane Maguire, Betsay Van Cleef, Marge Walker (coordinator); **Recreation:** Brian Gordon, Greg Hills, Derek Baker, Shelby Evans, Curtis Grenier, Naomi Shearer, Taemar Shearer, Alexis Mobley, Steph DeAngelis, Naomi Krason, "Red" Casandra Moses, Madeleine Berthoud, Marisa Iannitto; **Photographers:** Lainey Hambelton, Nina Walters, Preston Clarkson, Sarah Luetjen Phillips; **Nursery:** Heather Rich, Emily Fauble, Rebekah Bohl, Karen Colaneri, Wendy Pike, Elizabeth Mulley, Laura Russo, Carmen Queen, Inje Cho, Marti Rydbeck, Emily Spencer; **Set/Props:** Jacki & Glenn Smith, Ed & Susie Nudelman, Dawn Bryden, Brian Gordon, Gretchen Noiseux, Greg Smith, Susan Drennan, Dick Smid, Maureen Oh, Jenna Higgins; **Mission Project:** David O'Leary; **Parent's Fellowship:** Christine Gordon, Debbie O'Leary, Kendra Burke, Esther Baird, Laurie Grover, Maya Kline, Joyce Cochran; **Middle School:** Jon Evans, Kerry Lowell, Meghan Thomassen, Amanda Ayers, Gay-Lynn Alldridge, J.T. Himmelstein, Will Barrett, Stuart Noiseux, Erich Clark; **Pre-school & K Crafts:** Maya Kline; **Pre-School & Kindergarten (Ages 3-5):** Teachers: Katherine Cook, Heather Hills & Iana Oswtrowski; Helpers: Lisa Poblentz,

Rianneke Shearer, Patti Nihan, Renee Minogue,, Darien Huaman, Laura Jennings, Lily & Emily Heintz; **Teachers & (Crafts):** Day 1: Joseph interprets dreams: Donna Frye, Sarah Jones, Sue Mulley (Sarcophagus); Day 2: Joseph put in charge: Norma Camp, Lois Wilbraham, Vicki Bower (Collar & Headband); Day 3: Joseph leads thru famine: Robin Schweitzer, Nina Walters, Emily Fauble (Mobile); Day 4: Joseph forgives brothers: Robin Davis, Jess Bond, Megan Azadian (TGIF banner); Day 5: Joseph's family moves to Egypt: Becky Mulry, Cheri Burrer, Marilyn Brown, Katherine Cook, Sue Drennan (Photo Frame); **Guides: (1<sup>st</sup>)** Heidi Martin, Lori Breen, Pat Christensen-Krysiak, Maureen Oh, Melanie Laganas, Ryan Breuer; **(2<sup>nd</sup>)** Christina Ambrose, Melanie Tyack, Jo Evans, Astrid Mayne, Peg Hothem; **(3<sup>rd</sup>)** Diane Naeger, Yolanda Grenier, Cody Franz, Andrea Klos; **(4<sup>th</sup>)** Gretchen Noiseux, Mary Ann Woodrow, Nora Lombard; **(5<sup>th</sup>)** Julian Vance, Cameron Woodrow, Rhiannon Tyack, Dana Dufour; **Ice Cream Social:** Meirwyn & Nina Walters, **Extra Helpers:** Jenna Sawyer, Alex Berthoud; ALL who prayed;

**& THANK YOU FATHER!**

**AND ANYONE WE FORGOT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**





# Vacation Bible School 2011!

