

CNH Mission Agency Congregational Mini-Grant
Vacation Bible School Reflection
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It is hard to believe that it has already been three weeks since we finished our Maker Fun Factory Vacation Bible School at St. Paul's in Tracy. This is the first VBS I have organized myself since taking on this position, and I have learned so much. I am so thankful for the Mini-Grant that we received. It was used to help purchase snacks for the 150 kids who were on campus all week- which they were able to help prepare! This was a small task that many kids thoroughly enjoyed; several couldn't wait to ask their friends and siblings if they enjoyed the snack they made.

Most of what I have been reflecting on is how to improve our follow-up in the future, and what I can still do this summer. Vacation Bible School creates such momentum and energy in the children and families! I want to be very purposeful to capitalize on that more next year, but this year, I have made sure to connect each family that I can to our "St. Paul's Kids" Facebook page, and we will send a card soon to invite them to Sunday School. In the future, I would like to plan a specific event or two to connect families to our church (and have the information available to them during VBS).

One very obvious choice is to have the children come sing at church the Sunday after VBS is finished. Music was such a huge part of what they loved about their week with us, and their enthusiasm is infectious! I want them to wear their special VBS shirts, and come to sing and then stay for Sunday School.

I would also like to plan a few family nights at our church. Maybe something as simple as a movie night, or possibly something more interactive like game night. I want to get the whole family on campus, together, and talking with one another and other families. Raising kids to be Christ-lovers is a huge task, and all of us (myself included!) need each other. I want these families watching out for and praying over my own children, and I want to watch out for and pray over theirs. I want to create authentic connection with the whole family, which takes time and many opportunities to get to know one another.

Lastly, I want to do more training and connection to retain the amazing volunteers that we had during VBS. On an average week in Children's Ministry, there are about 5 volunteers for Sunday School. During our VBS week, we had 65! They were amazing and energetic and committed. I can see several who fell for Children's Ministry the way I have, and I want to connect with them more personally. All of these volunteers have now become a face of this ministry, and the more familiar faces a family sees, the better!

Thank you again for the financial help with this important outreach ministry, and for the opportunity to spend time reflecting on how to improve it in the future!