

*Daily Vacation
Bible School*



Geiger Memorial Brethren Church

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DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

1. WHAT IS DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Daily Vacation Bible School is an effort on the part of Geiger Memorial Brethren Church to reach the children and adults of our community on 8 successive evenings with the message of the gospel. Closing exercises are held on the final night of the School or on the Sunday evening after the final session.

2. CONCEPT

The name of the program was adopted from a previous program that was held during summer months when the children were out of school. That program was held five or ten mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.. The purpose was to bring the children in from the streets and keep them occupied with games, crafts, Bible studies and related activities

3. HISTORY

The Geiger Memorial Brethren Church Daily Vacation Bible School began in 1983 when Mrs. Beverly Liken approached Pastor DiBenedetto stating her desire to start a Daily Vacation Bible School in our church. The program that was started was scheduled for five evening during one week and had 30 children in attendance. An evening program was chosen rather than a day program because more staff were available in contrast to the number available during the day. In addition it would conflict with our Day Camp Program.

Since it's inception the program has been increased to eight evenings with closing exercises being held on the final night of the school or on the Sunday evening after the final session. The program begins on Wednesday of one week and ends Friday of the following week. Weekends are not included in the program.

The program has increased from the initial 30 participants to a high point of 258 individuals. Children and adults of all ages (some as young as 2 years old) are enrolled in the program. In addition, the original staff of eight has grown to a staff of 35 to 45 individuals who help us carry out the various parts of the program.

The program continues to increase its ability and effectiveness from year to year in reaching the children and adults of our community with the Gospel and is set in a creative, charming and exciting environment.

It has progressed from very minimal decorations in the Sunday School Room to elaborate decorations throughout the building. In the past the Sunday School Room has been decorated to simulate a western town, a beach front, a circus tent and a pirate ship. Costumes are worn by various members of the staff to add to the enjoyment.

4. PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy or approach to this program is that all activities should be performed in a spiritual atmosphere because our primary goal is to reach people (children & adults) with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the gospel will be primary and the remaining aspects of the program will be secondary. In no way will the position of the Gospel be compromised in order to attract people or to avoid controversy.

We are not simply interested in reaching children or providing a stimulating program that gets them off the street, but rather that we might reach and introduce them to the Gospel and in turn enable us to reach their parents with the Good News that Jesus has died for them to take away their sin and make them a part of His Family.

Our hope with the adults is to show them how to live their daily lives in conformity with the Word of God which takes on real meaning after they are redeemed.

5. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Daily Vacation Bible School is to reach our community for Jesus by introducing the Gospel to children and adults of all ages. For we believe that receiving Jesus as Saviour and applying the principles, precepts, and commands of the Word of God is the primary cure for all the problems of individuals and the world.

Further our purpose is also to give the children of God the opportunity to share their faith with others through faithful and willing service to Christ. To use their talents to present the Gospel, and carry out a program that is exciting, challenging and interesting.

6. PROGRAM

Our program is multifaceted. This includes exciting opening exercises, singing, skits, Bible study, games, refreshments, crafts and a very special closing exercise.

The program is designed to keep the children well occupied so as to avoid boredom and disinterest. The

classes for the adults involves identifying the problems of life and making recommendations for coping with and solving these problems through a study of what God has to say on the issue.

7. METHOD

Our method is to perform all activities in a Biblical manner - using Biblical principles. For this reason, in all that we do the children and adults will be aware that the spiritual will take precedence over all other matters.

We do our best to make the evening meetings exciting as well as Biblically informative and showing the children and the adults that we all can relate with each other "real good" even though we come from different backgrounds, cultures and races; because Jesus is the one on whom we focus, not backgrounds or cultures.

Our method is to run a structured program that is geared to the various grade levels of the children participating in the classes. Adults are treated as learned individuals able to handle thought and reason. We endeavor to make practical applications and to cope with the problems the children and adults face in their daily lives inside and outside our community.

8. REFRESHMENTS

The refreshments are selected so as to relate as closely as possible to the program or emphasis we are presenting. Usually the refreshments are of high quality, such as, water ice, hot pretzels, hot dogs, ice-cream sundaes, Tasty cakes or similar foods. Refreshments are handled by the kitchen crew whose responsibility it is to make sure that the refreshments are at the class sites on time and in an orderly fashion. The refreshments are an inducement to encourage the children to attend the program.

9. STAFF

The staff is made up of Born Again individuals (teenagers and adults) from the Geiger Church congregation and other congregations throughout the Philadelphia area.

The staff numbers between 30 and 45 people who have the responsibility of supervising the children, teaching, providing the exciting opening exercises, participating in the maintenance of the building, preparation and distribution of refreshments, conducting the singing, assisting with crafts and games, and in any other area of the program where their services are required.

The staff meets prior to the beginning of the D.V.B.S. program to confirm that everyone is aware of their specific responsibility, class location, distribution of materials, and other instruction necessary for the effective running of the program. There is prayer time scheduled before and after each meeting. In addition a daily prayer time is held before and after each D.V.B.S. session.

10. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The school is funded by the offerings which are taken each evening, but, primarily by the personal gifts of individuals inside and outside the congregation. Without the support of many individuals and churches, the \$1,000.00 plus cost of operating the school would be impossible to handle.

11. DISCIPLINE

Because of our strong Biblical position, we believe that the program should be well structured and the children well disciplined. The children are taught self-discipline and to respond in a positive manner to the individuals in authority over them. If a child does not respond to authority, creates a problem or confusion, the staff will use every effort to assist that child in becoming an integral part of the group and to deal with his or her problem.

Biblical standards will be used in an effort to discipline the child. However, if the child continues to be a problem then he/she will be sent home with understanding that he/she will be able to return if they agree to behave. If the child continues to pose a problem when he/she returns, then the child will not be allowed to attend the remaining sessions of the program.

12. SPONSORSHIP

The school is sponsored by Geiger Memorial Brethren Church and is under the direction of a member of the Geiger congregation who is under the supervision of the Pastor and Elders of the church.

13. ELIGIBILITY FOR ATTENDANCE

Eligibility to attend Daily Vacation Bible School is open to anyone who is 4 years of age and older. Each individual is required to complete a registration card providing their name, address, telephone number and birth date. Children under the age of four years can attend if they are accompanied by their parents or guardians who are also attending the program.

Adults are encouraged to participate and attend the classes.

14. TIME AND LOCATION

The Daily Vacation Bible School is held during the month of June in Geiger Memorial Brethren Church. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 p.m.

15. ATTENDANCE AND GROWTH

The school has increased in size from 30 to 285, however, the nightly attendance can average between 130 and 145 individuals: attendance varies from night to night.

16. RESULTS

As a result of this program, many Christians have been afforded the opportunity to serve in a very meaningful manner. Hundreds of children and adults have been served and introduced to Jesus as Saviour, and a good number have received Him as their Saviour. Several years, men from several rescue missions were brought in to participate in our program.

Through the years the program has become so well known and respected in the community that parents are quite interested in and anxious to have their children attend. There has been less success in getting the children to attend Sunday School regularly. More effort needs to be applied in the area of visitation and follow-up.

17. PLANNING

A Committee is established in October of each year to plan, coordinate, prepare, and carry out the program each June. Anyone who has an interest is invited to participate. These individuals can come from the congregation or outside the congregation. It is understood that anyone can help in the carrying out of the program, but that membership on the committee should be limited to adults and mature teens who have vision, desire, ability to reason, are Born Again, can meaningfully participate in discussion, and can get excited about our D.V.B.S. and reaching the community for Jesus.

18. COMMITTEE

The committee is comprised of individuals of various ages who meet monthly or bi-monthly, depending on need, in a general session under the chairmanship of the D.V.B.S. General Director. This general session is for the exchange of ideas and the making of decisions concerning the program of the D.V.B.S. Individual and smaller committees are given responsibility for various areas of preparations and actions.

19. GOALS

- a. To make the school more efficient in its operations.
- b. For the school to become more effective in follow-up and visitation.
- c. To develop the quality and increase the size of staff for this program.
- d. To be able to reach more people in the community with the Gospel of Christ through the program so that they can make an informed decision about their relationship with Jesus as Saviour.
- e. To obtain adequate financial funding for the program each year and to build a reserve for unexpected expenses.
- f. To provide solid help for all participants so that they can solve personal problems through the application of Biblical principles.

20. HOW YOU CAN HELP

- a. Pray for the staff during preparation and operation of the program.
- b. Give financial support to underwrite program expenses.
- c. Participate as a leader, teacher, helper, or head a particular committee.
- d. Attend!!!
- e. Encourage attendance of your friends, neighbors, and relatives.
- f. Assist with the preparation of the program; decorations, getting supplies together, and/or advertising the event.

21. DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you require additional information, please contact:

Beverly Liken at (215) 228-5817

or

Rev. Anthony DiBenedetto, Jr. at

Home (215) 223-8746 Church (215) 229-2967