

August 2019

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Beth-El
Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

Color My World

Summer at the mission is almost over.

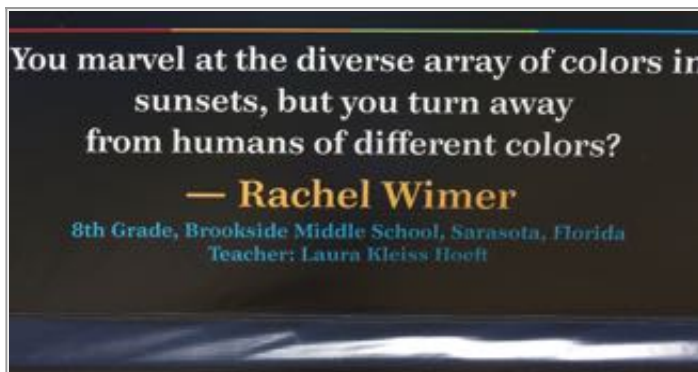
In another week the children will go back to school. Hopefully they'll return with a backpack filled with all the supplies they'll need along with a new pair of shoes to start the schoolyear. This year the kids have

"Roared" to "Mars and Beyond" and learned the simple lessons of the glory of God through Jesus Christ.



One thing that struck me this summer was the influx of color—not just from the wildly decorated sets of VBS but in the children themselves. This was the first time I could recall an interracial mix of children from different nationalities and cultures. Together, these children learned about Christ and living life together. Some appeared apprehensive at first to engage with others 'different' from themselves. One little girl did not want to be called Mexican even though it was her heritage. Kids are keenly aware of what is happening around them, so what are we teaching our children?

I recall a banner I saw several years ago and the profound words of an 8th grader:



Rachel Wimer's words strike to the core of one's heart. How can we love the natural colors of God's creation and still be so indifferent to the varying shades of humanity?

I remember traveling with my mother through East Germany in 1982, passing through Checkpoint Charlie from East to West Berlin. Today the Berlin Wall is only a lingering memory to those alive at that time. Still, remnants of memorials for those



who perished trying to cross are still in evidence. "No man's land" was a desolate and foreboding scene with watchtowers and barbed wire that led to a six-foot-thick wall of concrete. Everywhere I looked evoked a sense of fear. Yet, what I remember the most from that moment was the explosion of color once inside West Berlin. Everywhere I looked there were bright warm colors of blue and

rose filling the flower boxes along the roadway. Blue cornflowers and yellow buttoned, white petaled, German chamomile dotting the landscape. Everywhere I looked I saw color, and with it a sense of calm.

I love color. I love the hues that fill the sky at sunset, or faint colors of a rainbow after a summer storm. I love that every day at Beth-El we are greeted with a cornucopia of colors—the dark skin of Africans, Haitians, or Columbians, the warmer hues of Honduran, Guatemalan and Mexican, or the lighter tones of Puerto Rican and European. We are now part of this country—some whose ancestors have dwelled here for centuries, others for only days or weeks.



As I watched our children play this summer I said a prayer that these young lives may learn to love one another far better than my generation. I prayed that they might embrace their cultural differences and still embody their oneness as the children of God. I prayed that they might not be subjected to fear or bigotry or hate, that they have safe shelter and the security of a loving community. May they grow up bold enough to dream, and strong enough to hope. In a week that has been riddled by bullets and news accounts of yet another mass shooting, I still dare to dream.

Last Thursday, pastor Tamara and I witnessed one of our community members become a U.S. citizen. She was one among many, representing 23 nations that took the pledge of allegiance. Our eyes filled with tears as we watched Rosa, whose life has been filled by tragedies, stand and affirm all that this nation of immigrants can be.



I love that there is not one place in scripture that provides a physical description of Jesus. Certainly, we can assess that he was middle eastern--a Jew by birth, but we don't know if he was tall or short; fat or thin; dark skinned or fair—all we know is that he is our Savior, the Son of God, whose very presence remains with each of us through the on-going work of the Holy Spirit.

I love color. I especially love the colors of the rainbow that remind us of God's covenantal promises, that regardless of our nationality or the color of our skin, invites us into communion through Christ and with one another.

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.

--Ephesians 2:14 NRSV

May it be so. Color our world with love.

Dios le bendiga,



Rev. Kathleen (Kathy) Dain
Executive Director





They're Back!!

We had a very busy few weeks here at Beth-El with three weeks of Vacation Bible School. It was wonderful to see the Beth-El bus pull up to the building every morning to unload the little ones. I enjoyed seeing the kids wave and smile as they walked the hallway while changing stations.



Since I am the photographer for social media I got to witness the children doing a lot of the cool things such as shuttle launching experiments, different arts & crafts, dancing, singing, and most importantly learning the word of God. I also love to see our youth leaders who a few summers ago were here as VBS children themselves. Vacation Bible School takes a lot of planning but it is all worth it!

Bendiciones,

Rosalva

Rosalva Serrano
Executive Assistant





Summer Fun at Beth-El

God is good – all the time!

The kindness and dedication of our many volunteers are some of the visible examples of the goodness of God. Our volunteers come from all different backgrounds, cultures, churches, and are of all ages.

Recently, girls from RCMA's summer youth program called *Girls Outside* came to volunteer. They worked tirelessly at our Food Pantry where we served over 600 people. Thank you to *Girls Outside* and their mentors!



Another reminder of the goodness of God has been the outpouring of donations for back to school supplies. We are very grateful to the faithful churches who support this ministry. It ties in with the value we place on education and the hope it brings.

In closing, we want to celebrate our Step Up for Success students who will begin their studies this fall. Lizseth and Yamilet will be going to the prestigious Aveda Institute of Cosmetology in Clearwater. Yuri will pursue her dream of becoming a Dental Assistant at Manatee Technical College. She has been volunteering at our Dental Clinic which has not only given her experience in the field, but also a deeper desire to study dentistry. Angel will be the first in his family to get a college degree and will major in Computer Technology. Through guidance from his mentor and help from the community, he has set off on a path that is full of goals and hope not only for him and but also for his family. Finally, Larissa will finish her last year of high school with an Associate's degree from HCC. She sacrificed her senior year to be able to accomplish this. She hopes to get a scholarship so she can become a prenatal nurse.

Feliciades a todos nuestros estudiantes!

Mary Ellen

MaryEllen Welton Barragán
Community Outreach Manager



Nuevo Camino blesses its new children's play center.

Greetings!

Greetings! On Sunday, July 14 members of the Nuevo Camino at Beth-El worshipping community welcomed Patrice Hatley, Coach and Coordinator of Tampa Bay Presbytery. We began worship by dedicating a new play space for children in our sanctuary. Church leader Emma Donofry was inspired by the "pray-ground" she saw while attending a meeting of the Presbyterian Women of Tampa Bay Presbytery at Good Samaritan Church. As we dedicated this wonderful space for children and their parents, we celebrated Emma's vision and the work of many church members who made her vision a reality. We also thank Beth-El Board member Mrs. Sue Rice who donated two rocking chairs to complete our space!



I acknowledged that these are difficult days for many in our community, yet many churches and individuals support Nuevo Camino at Beth-El through prayers, service at the pantry and material and financial donations. Although some prefer to spread hate and sow division, we are surrounded by love and care thanks to these

relationships. We are not alone. We are united in God's love, which gives us strength to face the challenges and celebrations of each new day. I am sharing one of the hymns we sang (Glory to God hymnal, #762).

Peace and Blessings, Rev. Tamara Leonard Lara, Mission Pastor, Nuevo Camino at Beth-El.

Hymn: Cuando El Pobre ("When the Poor Ones") Latin American hymn written by José Antonio Olivar and Miguel Manzano in 1971, a meditation on Matt. 25: 31-46. The English translation is by George Lockwood. Spanish original:

Cuando el pobre nada tiene y aun reparte, cuando el hombre pasa sed y agua nos da, cuando el débil a su hermano fortalece, [Estribillo] va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar, va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar.

Cuando sufre un hombre y logra su consuelo, cuando espera y no se cansa de esperar, cuando amamos, aunque el odio nos rodee, [Estribillo] va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar, va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar.

Cuando crece la alegría y nos inunda, cuando dicen nuestros labios la verdad, cuando amamos el sentir de los sencillos, [Estribillo] va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar, va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar.

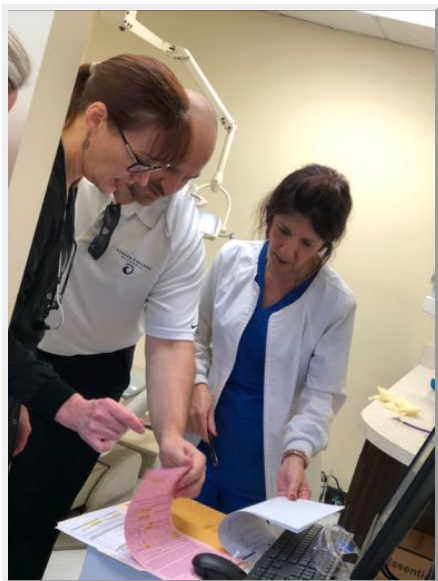
Cuando abunda el bien y llena los hogares, cuando un hombre donde hay guerra pone paz, cuando "hermano" le llamamos al extraño, [Estribillo] va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar, va Dios mismo en nuestro mismo caminar.

Peace and Blessings,



Rev. Tamara Leonard Lara
Mission Pastor, Nuevo Camino

Volunteers of the Month



Here's to all our dental professionals who give up one Saturday a month to volunteer at the Beth-El Dental Clinic.

To learn more about the Beth-El Dental Clinic, please email Kathy at director@beth-el.org.

Treasurer's Report

Our financial picture so far in 2019 is trending better than 2018. Revenues have been enhanced by the proceeds from our 1st annual dinner as well as a number of generous donations. This good news has been partially offset by a 38% drop in church donations. Thank you to all who faithfully support Beth-El in this way.



Don Olson
Beth-El Farmworker Ministry Board Treasurer

Volunteer Opportunities

Beth-El has a number of opportunities for volunteers who



Thanks to Darnestown Presbyterian Church for coming all the way from Maryland to lead VBS at Beth-El! When they weren't teaching VBS to 73 children, the group helped pack resources for the Tuesday pantry.

would like to share their professional skills to help improve the quality of life of our farm working families, including:

- **Mentors** - For career coaching and job interview training.
- **Teachers** - Bi-lingual who can help with basic skills (ESOL, GED).
- **Dentists/Hygenists** - to add to our volunteers for our clinic.
- **Translators** - to work with professional dental teams.
- **Counselors** - (bi-lingual) to help with needs assessments.

Volunteer Opportunity for the Whole Church Family



We would like to celebrate and support expectant moms by having a gift of new items for their babies. Would you consider hosting a “baby shower” and making baby baskets for mothers to be?

Please contact MaryEllen for more information and volunteer opportunities at outreach@beth-el.org

Immediate Needs

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry has an immediate need for the following items:

- **Deodorant**
- **New Socks**
- **Hats (baseball style)**
- **Shampoo for Men, Women, & Children**
- **Men's Pants Sizes 30-36**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Disposable Razors**
- **Feminine Products**
- **New Men's & Women's Underwear - All Sizes**
- **Adult Diapers**
- **Baby Wipes**
- **Insect Repellent**
- **Sunblock**
- **Adult Long Sleeve Button Up Shirts**
- **Bar Soap**
- **Dental Floss**



I would like to become more involved at Beth-El Mission as a Volunteer:

- Step Up for Success Mentor
- Food Pantry
- Lead VBS
- Organize a Workgroup
- Organize a Food Drive

I would like to donate \$_____

- Summer Camp Scholarships
- Back to School Program
- VBS Supplies
- Education Scholarships
- Dental Clinic
- Food Pantry

■ Organize a Clothing Drive

■ Mission's Greatest Need

A Printable Copy of this Newsletter is Available on our Website at: www.beth-el.org or by emailing us at: info@beth-el.org



Gift cards are a wonderful way to help support the Beth-El community. The cards can be used in a variety of ways including for purchases of clothing, food or fuel. To learn more, please contact Kathy at Director@beth-el.org

Leave a Lasting Legacy



Consider making Beth-El Farmworker Ministry part of your will or living trust. Your gift will help the farm working community for generations to come.

Support Beth-El Mission with your online contribution today.



Beth-El

Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

Fueled by Volunteers and Your Faithful Prayers and Support

Our mailing address is:
18240 Highway 301 South
PO Box 860
Wimauma, FL 33598-0860
Phone: 813-633-1548
Email: info@beth-el.org
Web: www.beth-el.org



Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is open Monday through Thursday from 8a.m. to 5p.m., Friday 8a.m. to 2p.m. Other times by appointment.

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry Staff

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Extraordinary Support Staff:

Maria Galarza
Jesus Gallardo
Angel Santos

