

A Little Booster Shot of God!

By Marie James, Director of SJE Vacation Bible School

St. John the Evangelist Church provides so many wonderful opportunities to live Jesus' love in our lives, but the Vacation Bible School calls to my heart like no other. I, like many, was surprised to discover that St. John's had a Vacation Bible School. About five or six years ago, a group of inspired parents organized and implemented this children's ministry and it has grown in some way each year through the marvelous generosity of all of the volunteers who contribute their time and talents toward the program.

The most remarkable aspect of St. John's Vacation Bible School is that it enables everyone involved to grow in and live their faith. The children, both the participants and the youth volunteers, learn about Jesus in many different ways and demonstrate their faith by learning and acting as Jesus asks of us. They serve others by helping those younger than themselves in the program and by modeling good behaviors and attitudes. They provide for those who are less fortunate by making sandwiches for the homeless and donating items and funds toward a mission project. And, they develop their faith by learning more about Jesus and praising Him through song and prayer. The adult volunteers also grow in and live their faith through leading and teaching the children. There are few things so spiritually reaffirming as seeing the love of Jesus joyfully reflected in our children's faces.

Many parents enthusiastically support the program. It offers so many great opportunities to talk to your children about God and your faith. One mother recounted a precious memory of when her son came home from Vacation Bible School so excited about Jesus and the jaguars. Somewhat confused, she talked with him about the day's lessons and discovered that he was really talking about Jesus healing the lepers and her son had connected spots and leopards with jaguars. They both agreed that Jesus loved the lepers, the leopards and the jaguars, just as He loves all of us.

In the midst of a summer hiatus from most structured religious education, Vacation Bible School is a fun experience that serves as a gentle reminder and reinforcement that God is present in our lives. One mother said of the program that, "It's like a little booster shot of God!" Vacation Bible School gives the children a little extra protection from all that might buffet their growing faith. Wow – wouldn't we all do better with a little extra spiritual "umph" to reinforce our faith? In so many ways, for me at least, St. John's Vacation Bible School provides that booster shot by reinvigorating my faith and allowing me to bear witness to the hope, joy, and truth of God's message. Need a little spiritual booster shot? St. John's Vacation Bible School is always open for another volunteer!