

## Followup Program Update:

The summer is drawing to a close and the follow-up ministry is about to begin at Great Oaks. This year we were able to get about five Great Oaks kids connected to First Covenant Church's VBS program. These kids learned, along with many other kids, about Jesus Christ through the "Crocodile Dock" theme. As the follow up ministry continues to unfold, Paul Tanner and I are working together as we prayerfully consider how to most effectively minister to these young



people. We will be hosting after school clubs at the Stine Youth Center in Peoria in the fall that will continue through until the spring. We will also be holding retreats at the camp throughout the year to continue teaching about Christ and building relationships. Paul, Callie, Jim, Tyler and I would love to have some of you join us in the follow-up ministry. How can you help? Here are a few ways:



1. Read the prayer updates from our ministry and bring these things to the Lord.
2. Volunteer one evening a week at a club. (We could use the help, even if it takes you out of your comfort zone!)
3. Become a mentor or "Big Brother" to one of our Great Oaks kids.
4. Donate 20 tickets to a community event, sporting event, or concert for a youth outing.
5. Donate a portable basketball hoop or portable soccer goals for the Peoria office.
6. Build 2 games of "bags" or "washers" for us to use at club.
7. Drop off unused board games to be utilized at club.
8. Volunteer to 2 paint murals in the youth center basement.
9. Go with Paul or myself out to lunch to discuss how your gifts could be utilized within the urban youth ministry
10. Ask your church to host and plan a Thanksgiving Feast or Christmas Party for 25 Great Oaks kids.

These are just a few ideas that would greatly benefit our particular ministry. Please feel free to be creative and to ask God to show you how you can tangibly be involved in this ministry or possibly another. As a youth pastor I am too often guilty of saying "pray and read your Bible" without giving practical advice on how to live out the Christian faith. As you think about how you can live out your faith, think outside the box. Please consider these practical ideas as a springboard into a vibrant passion for serving the Lord. Get creative where and how you serve Jesus. Not because you have to, but because we serve a creative, passionate, wild, untamed God who needs no rest as He pursues His lost sheep. "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men..." (Col. 3:23)

## Continued Housing Project Update:

However, God provided!! We began by seeing if we could find someone to build the home for the amount of money we had. After a week of phone calls and countless contractors whom simply laughed at the thought of building a home with the money we had, I felt discouraged. However, while shopping at Menard's a local contractor learned of our need and decided he could work with the money we had. Praise God!!

Meanwhile, we still had to hire new staff, and the house would not be done until the fall.

God then provided us a couple who were willing to temporarily live in the guest apartment until the new home was complete. Once the new home is complete, my family will move into it, and they will move into our trailer. All that to say, God provided the exact financial resources needed to build the house, and He provided them just before we lost two staff homes!! God's provision has been great, and I think we can all see His hand at work here. It makes me excited for whatever plans He has next for Great Oaks!

