

Clergy Conversation Takeaway- Summer Activities  
6/3/2020

**Vacation Bible School**

Before holding in-person VBS, consider:

- Is your county in the green zone?
- Can VBS maintain social distancing and mask requirements?
- Large groups may not be the best
- Who are your volunteers? Is the majority of your team part of those most vulnerable? Will they be comfortable helping to lead a VBS this summer?
- Do you have outdoor space?

Suggestions for holding in-person VBS::

- Keep kids in small, consistent groups to do activities
- Use the same space for the same group of kids
- Adapt games and activities and keep them as non-contact as possible
- Follow rigorous health and safety guidelines
- Consider neighborhood VBS (small group of children with 2 or more adults, meeting in backyards/parks of neighborhoods)

Other Options:

- Drive-in VBS (keep short)
- Spread VBS over a period of weeks (for example, once a week for five weeks)
- VBS-in-a-box
- Virtual VBS

**VBS in a box**

- Provide a book with five days worth of activities  
<https://ferncliff.org/camp-in-a-box/?fbclid=IwAR2un1qsrPmwSHi7XxPSU3X9vU4bg3aVbLaa4erUOqrDTcppgonbqo1jOqs>
- Probably not too hard to make your own

**Virtual Vacation Bible School**

- Could include a couple activities - snack, coloring page, craft, etc and a link to a short youtube video of the lesson
- Parents prefer something they don't have to lead - keep it simple
- Make sure to maintain safe-sanctuary guidelines (no adult should be on Zoom call alone)

## **Continued Programs for Youth**

- Weekly Sunday school over Zoom
- If you're a church that doesn't typically have youth group in the summer, maybe consider this summer as a time to have one
- Consider small groups for large churches, once a month on Zoom
- Think about outside space... campfires, scavenger hunts, service projects
- Make sure to maintain hygiene protocols
- Don't let kids fall through the cracks if they aren't comfortable coming

**July 20-24- Uth 4 Missions was cancelled, but we are calling for churches to find a local mission opportunity**

## **Mission Opportunities**

Contact all mission agencies and or ministries within your areas to find out summer volunteer opportunities. Constantly check guidelines as they are constantly changing.

As many counties move into the green phase a lot of agencies and ministries are in the phase of preparing for the new normal by creating safe spaces for all.

### Churches

- As churches get ready to open up, people can volunteer to help clean and sanitize churches.
- Connect with a missionary- host a virtual conversation, write letters or send cards
- Find out church ministries that are on-going and see where volunteers can plug in.

### Community

- Talk to elderly people within congregations and communities find out what assistance they need. This could be mowing, raking leaves or buying groceries.
- Donate blood.
- Collect food items for your church and local pantries
- Clean up the community- picking up trash
- Blessings bags for the homeless
- Mask making ministry- If places are in need of them
- Create and advocacy group to talk about local, national and global issues and find ways in which christians can play a part.
- Career development programs especially for Junior and Seniors

Mission Barn

<https://eastbrookmissionbarn.org>

- Many dates available this summer including Saturdays for volunteering at the mission barn. Be sure to contact Katie Peterson to schedule. [Missionbarn@gmail.com](mailto:Missionbarn@gmail.com)
- Katie is also available to be a part of VBS's in person and on zoom
- Coming soon- An educational opportunity document to assist with building health and cleaning kits.
- Children age group- 5th grade and above and each person should bring their own masks.
- Kits- Health Kits and Cleaning buckets- Collect and drop off and pick up locations this summer.

#### Connellsville Area Community Ministries

<http://www.connmin.org>

- All volunteers are required to have clearances.
- They have the capacity to have many volunteers while maintaining safe distances.
- Groups will be split up to work in different areas. That is the pantry, store and sorting
- Contact Rob Reamer: [rob@connmin.org](mailto:rob@connmin.org) 110 W. Crawford Avenue, Connellsville, PA 15425

#### All God's Children Ministries [http://www.getconnectederie.org/agency/detail/?agency\\_id=68119](http://www.getconnectederie.org/agency/detail/?agency_id=68119)

- Looking for small groups to assist with ramp ministry ( putting sealant on ramps etc). This can be a family volunteer opportunity
- Collection of shoes.
- Looking for churches to be drop off locations for shoes and they will organize pickups. Would like to create a network and it would be ideal to have one church per district for now.
- Contact Debbie Hills: [deacon.dhills@gmail.com](mailto:deacon.dhills@gmail.com)

#### Erie United Methodist Alliance

<https://euma-erie.org>

- No volunteers for now. Keep checking
- Accepting donations, so churches can begin to collect.- Cleaning supplies, hand sanitizers, tissues, towels, wash cloths, twin bed sheets, pillows and masks

#### Ruth M Smith Center

<https://www.ruthsmithcenter.org>

- No volunteers for now. Keep checking
- Have a wish list of donated items. Calling to schedule drop offs is greatly appreciated.
- Wish list : <https://www.ruthsmithcenter.org/support>

#### United Methodist Human Services of Johnstown

<https://umhumanservices.org>

- No volunteers for now. Will only be using their regular volunteers.

- They have been doing the food pantry outside and will be moving it indoors soon.
- Working on guidelines and creating a space space. Contact within the next couple of weeks.

Above all many agencies will be happy to take monetary donations.

In many instances when we go on mission journeys we spend money and help support those ministries. One of the ways we can support our global partnerships is by participating in virtual mission journeys. For example Bahamas Methodist Habitat.

**\*\*Camps will be an option to take groups for day projects or retreats\*\***