

## “TO MARS AND BEYOND” 2019 ECUMENICAL VBS HIGHLIGHTS



SITTING: Tracey Jepsen (Helper), Emma Wandrey, Leslie Avina (Helper), Peyton Wuebker, Claire Wandrey (Helper), and Madelyn Jacobson

FIRST ROW: Jacee McDonough and Reed Rydberg

SECOND ROW: Anna Jacobson, Colton Leshner, Nolan Grieme, Averlee Collins, Elyza Manson, and Liliano Avina

THIRD ROW: Gracelyn Thompson, Levi Ronfeldt, Eve Hustedt, Kale Manson and Lane Johnson

FOURTH ROW: David Sydnor (Helper), Kallie Pyle, Savannah Leshner, Emerson Collins, Cole Ronfeldt and Rev. Michael Sydnor

Lizzlet Avina, Brynlee Grieme, Jordan Grothe (Helper), Emily Jepsen (Helper), Courtney Pyle (Helper), Lennox Rydberg, Braxton Struchen, Kaiden Struchen, and Tierney Thompson were missing at the time the picture was taken.

Helper & Photographer – Kirk Langner

Our VBS students enjoyed their trip "To Mars and Beyond." They met EP3-20 a robot assistant who helped teach them about the verse that he is named for: Ephesians 3:20 which proclaims "Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us." They also discovered the importance of faith, boldness, kindness, thankfulness, and hope.

Our Biblical stories were Daniel in the lion's den, Esther standing up for her people, the good Samaritan, the Samaritan leper who gave thanks, and Jesus comforting his disciples on the road to Emmaus. Our songs included, "Even When the Lions Roar," "On Our Way to Mars and Beyond," "God of Wonders," "Safe Inside Your Love," and "God Can Do." This is not a complete list of the music, but it gives you an idea. "Even When the Lions Roar" became a favorite of this VBS and you would be advised to close your ears or stay at a safe distance when they sang this song as they could be quite loud.

The children also had snack time, recreation, mission, and reflection time. Since the weather was so bad, we frequently ate at the church. The children and the helpers seemed to thoroughly enjoy the experience although all the helpers experienced some fatigue as they coped with such an energetic group of kids.

We are thankful for the participation of so many Lutherans, Methodists, and Catholics, making this a truly ecumenical Vacation Bible School.

The children were challenged to collect non-perishable items for our local Food Pantry and managed to collect over 150 cans. Their reward was the opportunity to pie Claire Wandrey, Leslie Avina, Courtney Pyle, Kirk Langner, and Pastor Sydnor in the face.

The children learned so much and demonstrated their knowledge in the closing program that featured the music they learned. We also recapped the story of the rescue of the Starship Galaxion as our VBS collected the necessary elements of faith, boldness, kindness, thankfulness, and hope. The children sang well and enthusiastically and were met with some exuberant applause. The Friday night program was followed by a meal.

I want to thank everyone for donating supplies and food, working in the kitchen, giving cash donations, and especially, praying for the VBS participants and its success!

We praise the Lord for opening hearts to share His love in new ways! VBS was sponsored by the Schaller Presbyterian, Methodist and Catholic Churches.

--By Michael Sydnor

