

Youth Newsletter

March 2004

Children Visit Nansemond Pointe, Sing and Deliver Valentines

On Sunday, February 8, the Scooters club, the Voyagers club, and the Children's Choir made a Valentine's visit to the residents at Nansemond Pointe nursing home.

Nearly 25 children, leaders, and parents went along to sing for the residents, visit with them, and give them dozens of valentines that the children carefully and lovingly crafted the week before.

The group left immediately following the Morning Worship service, and stopped for lunch at McDonald's en route to the nursing home.

Led by Terese and Nathan Neblett, the children

sang about six songs for the residents. The children sang for about 15 minutes, while a large crowd of residents gathered to hear them.

After the performance, the children stopped to talk with and give valentines to the dozens of residents who had come by to hear them sing.

Before they left, the children went down the halls of the nursing home to visit those residents who were confined to their rooms, and to give them valentines as well.

"They really appreciated our visit," commented Angie Salerno, a Scooters parent. "They told us that it wasn't too often that groups of young children came to visit. The staff and residents thanked us for coming, and welcomed us to come back anytime."



Top Left: The Children's Choir sings for the residents at Nansemond Pointe nursing home.

Top Center: Nathan leads the Children's Choir in a song.

Top Right: The children give hand-made valentines to the residents.

Bottom Left: Benji gives a resident her valentine.

"By this all men will know you are my disciples, if you love one another." —John 13:35 (NIV)

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES

SCOOTERS

March 7 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 14 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 21 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 28 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm

VOYAGERS

March 7 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 14 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 21 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 28 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm

PATHFINDERS

March 7 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 14 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 21 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 28 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm

ALPHAS

March 6-7 SnowBlast 2K4 "Snow Day"
**NO REGULAR MEETING
 for Alphas/Omegas**
 March 14 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 21 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 28 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm

OMEGAS

March 6-7 SnowBlast 2K4 "Snow Day"
**NO REGULAR MEETING
 for Alphas/Omegas**
 March 14 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 21 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm
 March 28 Regular Meeting, 5:45pm-7:30pm

For more detailed information about your group's schedule, please contact your group's leaders.

Teens Help Serve at Soup Kitchen

On Saturday, February 14, members of the Omega Youth Group helped the Jackson Circle serve at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen.

Between the Jackson Circle and the youth, over 15 volunteers were on hand to serve over 100 meals to the needy and homeless.

The Jackson Circle prepared a delicious dinner of

beef-a-roni, rolls, pineapple chunks, cookies, and iced tea.

"It was a good experience for the youth," commented Becke West, a Jackson Circle member and Omega Youth Group leader. "The kids even got to meet William, a 'regular' who will only eat bread."

Special thanks to the Jackson Circle for allowing the Omegas to be a part of your mission project.



Left to Right: Brittany, Brooke, Amanda, David, Steven, and Becke are ready to serve!



**"...let your light shine before men,
 that they may see your good deeds
 and praise your Father in heaven."
 —Matthew 5:16 (NIV)**



SnowBlast 2K4 "Snow Day"
Alpha/Omega Ski Trip
Saturday, March 6 –
Sunday, March 7

**see trip package for
 complete details**

Pathfinders Earn Trail Hikes Activity Award

On Sunday, February 1, the Pathfinders club traveled to the property behind Johnson's Gardens on Holland Road for an outdoor hike.

The children were working to complete their Trail Hikes Pioneer Clubs activity award.

The day was clear, bright, and sunny—perfect for an outdoor adventure. During their hike, the Pathfinders stopped to identify animal tracks and learn more about nature. The children even picked up trash they found along the way.

Special thanks to Ray Johnson for allowing the Pathfinders to use the property for the hike.



Left to Right: Pathfinder leader Mrs. Salerno and club members Skye, Phillip, Taylor Y., Olivia, Taylor K., Kayla, and Chris pause for a picture. Pathfinder leader Mrs. Holland is behind the camera.

Special thanks to:

♦ those who brought food items for Bethlehem's Food Pantry to the Regular Meeting on Sunday, February 1—"Souper Bowl Sunday".

More than 60 food items were brought in by Bethlehem's youth to help the needy in our community.

♦ those who supported the Alpha Youth Group and Omega Youth Group during their participation in the World Vision 30-Hour Famine.

An extra special thanks to the C.O.F.F.E.E. Class for providing our "break-fast" dinner. Complete famine details will be available in next month's Youth Newsletter.

Youth Coordinator's Corner by David Salerno

On February 21, I had the privilege of attending, along with six other youth leaders and Sunday School teachers from Bethlehem, an outstanding children's ministry seminar at Grace Bible Church in Virginia Beach.

The seminar was organized by Children's Ministry Magazine, one of the leading periodicals in the field of children's ministry, and was led by Gary Lindsay, a fifteen year veteran of children's ministry, and Eric Wesley, a Children's Pastor from Garland, Texas.

This year's topic was Connecting Kids to Christ. A number of issues were discussed, such as how to better connect with Jesus, how to make Christ our focus, and making every ministry moment count.

One resounding theme throughout the seminar was "The 1 Thing". The question was asked, what is the one most important thing in life, the one thing that the world desperately needs, and yet is the one thing that so many churches fail to deliver?

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Surprisingly, the answer is a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

It was discussed how, often in children's ministry, we let things get in the way of what really counts. We get too distracted by details, too worried and upset about the many things that have to be done, and get our sights off building relationships.

Like Martha, we just don't get it sometimes. We cook, we clean, we prepare, but then we have little time or energy left to sit at the feet of Jesus, spending time with Him. Mary got it. Mary understood "The 1 Thing". Mary understood what was truly important in life.

I am a firm believer in relational youth ministry.

As youth leaders, we are fortunate if we have the chance to truly interact with our young people for 1 hour a week. That's about 0.6% of their week. Most of us spend more time than that each week simply waiting—sitting at stoplights, waiting at the drive-thru, or stuck in line at the grocery store.

Furthermore, as teachers, we're really fortunate if weeks—let alone years—from now, children will remember the exact words of wisdom that we have spent so many hours preparing and trying to get "just right".

What children will remember, however, are the friends and adult leaders that spent time with them and cared for them. They will remember the friendships they built and the experiences they shared along the way. They will remember how their faith and understanding grew, and how they entered into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

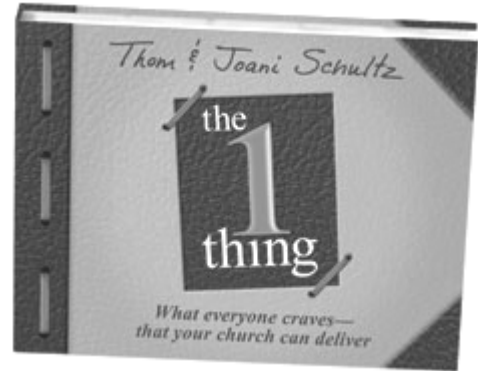
That is "The 1 Thing". That is what is truly important in life.

Next month, I will share with you what I feel are the three essential "building blocks" of an effective, well-rounded youth ministry program.

Until next month, God bless,

David

To learn more about "The 1 Thing", what is most important in children's ministry and in life, check out the new book by Thom & Joani Schultz from Group Publishing.



You can get it at your local Christian bookstore, on the internet at grouppublishing.com (free samples are available for viewing online), or by phone at 1-800-447-1070.

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YOUTH GROUP WEB SITE AT:**

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"If the total time in a child's week were represented as a distance—say, a mile—then the one hour that we as youth leaders typically have to truly interact with them would be represented as just under 32 feet, or about 16 steps..."