



**BeTh-El**  
*Farmworker Ministry, Inc.*

*Feeding the Mind, Spirit, and  
Body of Farmworkers and our  
Neighbors in Need.*

## ***Winter in Wimauma***

Like most transplants from the North, I gave away my snow boots and heavy winter jacket shortly after moving to Florida. Winters in Florida are very brief, so having heavy jackets and boots are usually unnecessary. This is a rule of economy: to keep only the things you know you'll need the most.

Yet, winter in Florida can get pretty cold, especially when you are not equipped with the right type of clothing, or live in a home where your only source of heat is a tiny space heater. For most farmworking families, living without is a way of life. These families understand the laws of economy—traveling with the barest of necessities as they follow the crops of the season. They can't afford to carry items they might only use a week or two out of the year. So, instead, many families learn to go without.



It is one of the many challenges our farmworkers face. There is the uncertainty of how the weather might affect the crops, and whether there will be enough to harvest to support your family. There is the prospect of hours picking in the bitter and damp cold, only to return to a damp and cold home. With the change of every season, the farmworker must make a difficult decision: what can I afford to carry, and what must I leave behind? How do I clothe myself for the journey ahead?

I heard a story a long time ago about the Benedictine journey a novitiate or postulant goes through to enter the monastery. Upon entering, the postulant removes his worldly clothing in exchange for the plain tunic of the monk. Then, every day for the next six months, the postulant must make a choice. There, in his closet, are two sets of clothing: the worldly clothes in which he entered the monastery or the plain tunic of a monk. It is a visible choice of what he will wear and whom he will serve.

There is an economy to ministry, and how we will serve in Christ's name. So many at our mission understand the daily challenges our farm working families face, because this was once their life, too. Still, when we serve a meal at a farm, or distribute blankets on a cold winter's day we are reminded again of the struggles our families face, and to the ministry into which we have been called.

So, how shall we clothe ourselves today? The reality is, like many non-profits, we have an abundance of donated clothing, so much so, that we have difficulty distributing into the hands of needy farmworkers. What we really need are fellow Christians clothed as a visible presence of Christ to walk with us in this journey.

At Beth-El we have a number of ministries in need of your support today, and toward the long-term well-being of our farmworking families' future. We need mentors and professionals willing to donate their time and skills to truly help change a life. We



need worker bees who can help pack and distribute products and resources to aid in the immediate care of our families. We need your financial support to keep the programs our mission offers viable. Most importantly, we need your prayers.

This month's newsletter is filled with the many ways you can come alongside and support our farmworking families. I hope you will "try one on". I am certain there is a ministry waiting here for you that is custom tailored to your talents.

Dios le bendiga,



**Rev. Kathleen (Kathy) Dain**  
**Executive Director**





Thanks to the help of Perry's group from First Presbyterian Church of Brandon, and John and Gregory from Christ Church, Largo, the Mission provided a hot meal and other resources to 120 farmworkers last week.

## ***Volunteer Opportunities***



Thanks to our friends from Campaign Against Human Trafficking-SouthShore, Inc. for bringing and packing these backpacks with personal care items for our farmworkers. If you'd like to learn more about our volunteer opportunities, please email us at [info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org).

**Beth-El has a number of opportunities for volunteers who would like to share their professional skills to help improve the quality of life of our farm working families, including:**

- **Mentors - For career coaching and job interview training.**
- **Teachers - Bi-lingual who can help with basic skills (ESOL, GED).**
- **Dentists/Hygenists - to add to our volunteers for our clinic.**
- **Translators - to work with professional dental teams.**
- **Counselors - (bi-lingual) to help with needs assessments.**



---

## ***Moving Forward***

Greetings from the Nuevo Camino worshipping community at the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry!

We continue to study the book of Exodus in Sunday worship. We recently considered Moses's prayer to God for help as the people journey in Exodus 17:1-7. Preachers tend to center on the complaints of the Israelites and their lack of faith. We



considered how God answers prayer and responds to the needs of God's people.

God calls for Moses to gather elders from the community as God instructs Moses to draw water from the rock in the middle of the desert to relieve the people's thirst. Moses prays to God, seeks God's will and obeys God's call. Elders witness this miracle that they might remember and share the news of God's power, presence and providence.

I asked members of our worshipping community to consider these two questions, "How does sharing our individual and corporate experiences of God's providence and faithfulness encourage us, deepen our faith, and build community as we move forward as the people of God here in Wimauma?" "How can we seek guidance from God in prayer and encourage one another follow where God leads us as we seek to be God's faithful disciples?"

Please continue to hold Nuevo Camino in your prayers as we seek to grow as Christ's disciples.

Peace and Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tamara Lara".

**Rev. Tamara Leonard Lara**  
**Mission Pastor**

---



Mission Fairs are a great way to learn about the ministry of Beth-El. Many thanks to the Church of the Palms who donated socks and toiletries for our Cedarkirk campers as part of their mission fair.

## ***Immediate Needs***

**Beth-El Farmworker Ministry has an immediate need for the following items:**

- **Bath Towels**
- **Deodorant**
- **New Socks**
- **Hats (baseball style)**
- **Shampoo for Men, Women, & Children**
- **Men's Pants Sizes 30-36**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Bar Soap**
- **Mouthwash**
- **New Men & Women Underwear All Sizes**
- **Dishwashing Detergent**



I would like to become more involved at Beth-El Mission as a Volunteer:

I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Lunch at the Farm (Sept-May)
- Food Pantry
- Lead VBS
- Organize a Workgroup
- Organize a Food Drive
- Organize a Clothing Drive
- Summer Camp Scholarships
- Back to School Program
- VBS Supplies
- College Scholarships
- Music Lessons for Youth
- Food Pantry
- Mission's Greatest Need

# WANTED



## ***Dental Professionals***

**Willing to Volunteer one Saturday a month to Support  
the Beth-El Farmworker Ministry Free Dental Clinic for the Poor.**

*To learn more, email [kathy@beth-el.org](mailto:kathy@beth-el.org)*

## ***2018 Finances***

2018 was a struggle for Beth-El financially. Individual and Church giving was down 15% compared to 2017. Also, the delay in opening the dental clinic because of permitting challenges made it difficult to pursue grants to help with that effort. Overall, our revenue was under budget by 16% or \$144,000. We were able

to trim some of our expenses by \$52,000 so our final deficit was \$92,000.

We have adjusted our 2019 budget to make every effort to insure this situation does not occur again this year.

Don Olson  
Treasurer

---

## ***Celebrating the Harvest***

### **1st Annual Benefit Dinner**

*to support the Health & Wellness Campus of  
Beth-El Farmworker Ministry*

February 28, 2019 6:00pm

Columbia Restaurant  
2117 East 7th Avenue  
Ybor City, Tampa Florida

*Email [don@beth-el.org](mailto:don@beth-el.org) to reserve your seat today!*





---

## Many Thanks to Our Celebrating the Harvest Sponsors



**Randy Talaski**

**Laurie and Ed Palmer**

**Walt Cawein**

**Don and Bonnie Olson**

**Leonard and Florence Wilson**

**Sue and Tom Rice**

**Peter and Bettye Bartholomay**

**Ross and Cindy Alander**

**Christ Presbyterian Church, Largo FL**

**Dees & Dees CPA's**

**Penny Baker**



*Thank you Sun City Center Chamber of Commerce for naming Beth-El Farmworker Ministry non-profit of the year.*



---

**A Printable Copy of this Newsletter is Available on our**

**Website at: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org) or by emailing us at:**

**[info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org)**

## ***Leave a Lasting Legacy***



Consider making Beth-El Farmworker Ministry part of your will or living trust. Your gift will help the farm working community for generations to come.

***Support Beth-El Mission with your online contribution today.***



**Beth-El**  
*Farmworker Ministry, Inc.*

Fueled by Volunteers and Your Faithful Prayers and Support

**Our mailing address is:**  
18240 Highway 301 South  
PO Box 860  
Wimauma, FL 33598-0860  
Phone: 813-633-1548  
Email: [info@beth-el.org](mailto:info@beth-el.org)  
Web: [www.beth-el.org](http://www.beth-el.org)



Beth-El Farmworker Ministry is open Monday through Thursday from 8a.m. to 5p.m., Friday 8a.m. to 2p.m. Other times by appointment.

### **Beth-El Farmworker Ministry Staff**

Rev. Kathleen (Kathy) Dain, Executive Director ext. 223 email: [kathy@beth-el.org](mailto:kathy@beth-el.org)

Rev. Tamara Leonard Lara, Pastor  
Roberto Villadoniga, Property Administrator  
Javier Izaguirre, Community Outreach Mgr.  
Rosalva Serrano, Exec. Admin. Assistant

ext. 222 email: tamara@beth-el.org  
ext. 224 email: roberto@beth-el.org  
ext. 228 email: javier@beth-el.org  
ext. 231 email: rosalba@beth-el.org

***Extraordinary Support Staff:***

Maria Galarza  
Jesus Gallardo  
Angel Santos

