



Beth-El
Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

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

Community

The new year began at Beth-El with the sounds of music and children's laughter thanks to the work of 9 dedicated volunteers who arrived on New Year's Day to teach Kindermusik classes to our local children. This was a bright and wonderful way to kick off the year, especially when things around us have been so unsettling.



As I write this, our nation is still in the midst of a government shutdown. Last year seemed a haze of uncertainty, so much so, that I once joked that I thought our nation should be on Prozac, because everywhere I looked people generally seemed depressed. The economy was doing great (for the most part) but the air of uncertainty seemed to cast a long shadow.

Despite all the good taking place at Beth-El with the opening of the dental clinic and expansion of services to farmworkers, the mission still ended the year far short of its budget. Still, as much as I would like to bemoan this point, or join the chorus of discontent so frequently found on the evening news, I can't, because there is still far too much good happening around us. Maybe it is just that single moment when a volunteer cradles a small child. Or the humbling moment when a farmworker offers you a bucket of freshly picked peppers for which they will be paid the lowly amount of 35 cents.



Uncertainty is nothing new to a farmworker. They begin the day with the hope that there will be sufficient crops to harvest. They know that one storm or hard frost can, and will, significantly impact their income. They pray that they will be able to find safe shelter for their family, and dream that their children will not have to follow in their footsteps. We could learn a lot from our farmworking neighbors.

So, this year rather than resolutions that will soon be broken, I would like to offer you my simple personal theology of the teeter totter. Most of us will remember playing on this simple plank as a child. You are either up, or down—a great deal of fun for a child, but not so much for an adult when division, uncertainty and worry seem to divide us from our neighbor. But if we move toward the fulcrum, that is the center of the teeter totter we find equilibrium (peace).

My prayer for all of us this year is that we let Christ be the fulcrum in our lives, that we hold each day as tenderly as that of a newborn child, and that we give thanks for all our blessings God provides. Good things are happening at Beth-El. Thanks be to God.



Dios le bendiga,

Kathy



Update!

The scholarship committee recently approved 10 students to receive Beth-El College scholarships for the winter semester. This is in addition to the four returning students who will each receive an additional \$1,000 to continue their education. Congratulations Scholars, may God be with you as you continue your studies.

Kindermusik at Beth-El



Our experience at Beth-El the week of New Years, 2019 was fulfilling and rewarding. We are so grateful for our time spent with each child and adult in our makeshift Kindermusik classroom at Beth-El.

We had three days. Enough time to dance, sing, cuddle, and love. To encourage caregivers who patiently and devotedly nurture

young children; to share tools, activities and materials that can help them make life a little less stressful for these children. We formed beautiful connections with these children in a short period of time, and felt our hearts and bodies move in sync with each other as we spent time together each day making music and memories.

We had one short afternoon to distribute blankets, paper and hygiene products and enough meat to last a couple of meals. We were so

grateful for the opportunity to see the farm workers at work and for the beautiful gift from them of a basket of fresh green peppers.

We are sad that it's not nearly enough, but grateful we could do something for the families and children connected to Beth-El. The nine of us that spent our first week of 2019 at Beth-El will never quite look at our produce the same way. Each time we look at a green pepper, we will remember our outreach there and our calling to reach out to others with compassion and love. Peace, love and continued musical joy to all



of the families that we met at Beth-El from all of our Kindermusik families across the US. We hope to see you again in the future.

Christa Beck

Top Program Educator and Owner, Kindermusik with Christa LLC

With the generosity of our Pathways to Learning studio families along with another Iowa based Kindermusik studio we have purchased 2 school sets of music and early childhood instruments. That's more than 400 instruments and upwards of 50 themed CD's. [Kindermusik International](#) donated Home Materials in Spanish for each family and [Conscious Discipline®](#) donated 4 copies of the Spanish version of "Easy to Love Difficult to Discipline," the Parenting book by Dr. Bailey that we recommend and 10 classroom sets of the Sophie Series in Spanish - that's more than 70 books! We are leaving behind more than \$3000 of music, instruments, and books! Music matters, children matter, families matter!



The mission wishes to extend its sincere thanks to the leaders of Kindermusik who, through Kindermusik International were able to donate over \$3,000 worth of resources to the children participating in the Kindermusik program. The mission also wishes to thank our community partners, RCMA and Hispanic Services Council for

their participation in this special event.

Many thanks to all the churches and individuals who adopted our families this Christmas!



Volunteer Opportunities

Beth-El has a number of opportunities for volunteers who would like to share their professional skills to help improve the quality of



Many thanks to the volunteers from Peace Presbyterian, Lakewood Ranch, who volunteer every week. If you'd like to learn more about our volunteer opportunities, please email us at info@beth-el.org.

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

- Lunch at the Farm (Sept-May)
- Food Pantry
- Lead VBS
- Organize a Workgroup
- Organize a Food Drive
- Organize a Clothing Drive

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.

I would like to donate \$_____

- Summer Camp Scholarships
- Back to School Program
- VBS Supplies
- College Scholarships
- Music Lessons for Youth
- Food Pantry
- Mission's Greatest Need

Immediate Needs

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

- **Bath Towels**
- **Deodorant**
- **New Socks**
- **Hats (baseball style)**
- **Men & Women Light Jackets**
- **Men's Pants Sizes 30-36**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Bar Soap**

- **New Men & Women Underwear All Sizes**



Celebrating the Harvest

1st Annual Benefit Dinner

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

February 28, 2018 6:00pm

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

Email don@beth-el.org to reserve your seat today!



Many Thanks to Our Celebrating the Harvest Sponsors



Don and Bonnie



George and Susan

Randy Talaski

Ross and Cindy



**A Printable Copy of this Newsletter is Available on our
Website at: www.beth-el.org or by emailing us at:
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:
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Web: 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

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