



Be[h]-El
Farmworker Ministry, Inc.

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

*Do you know where you're going to?
Do you like the things that life is showing you?
Where are you going to,
Do you know?*

Seasons

The advent of the Plant City Strawberry Festival normally marks the end of the main growing season here in Florida. Soon strawberries will make way for the brief blueberry season. There will still be peppers, tomatoes and melons to pick, but before long many of our families will begin their journey to other fields.

For those here on a work visa, it will mean a journey back to their homes in Chiapas, Mexico and the bittersweet reunion with families and loved ones. For others, it is the beginning of the long trek north to the fields of the Carolinas, Ohio, and Michigan. Hopefully, it has been a good season where the harvest has been bountiful and their wages fair.



We experience the change of seasons at Beth-El in a number of ways. For our young, it is the hopeful anticipation of a week at CedarKirk or the fellowship of Vacation Bible School. Two of our older youth will be graduating from High School this year. They will face new challenges as they balance their hopes and dreams with the reality of their need to help support home and family. For many young people, their choices are few, and the only pathway available might be to follow their parents back into the fields and another generation in poverty.

Several years ago, Beth-El launched an initiative called “Step Up for Success”. The goal of the program is to provide the tools and resources to those interested in improving their economic well-being through a one on one mentorship program. Many of the participants in this program have advanced thanks to college scholarships provided by Beth-El and other partnering organizations. Yet, we have found that for many students, the greatest need is just a matter of getting back to the basics of reading comprehension, creating a budget, or preparing for a job interview.

Recently, students from the dental assisting program at Hillsborough Community College volunteered at the Beth-El Dental Clinic. This experience offered the students a “hands-on” opportunity to work beside dental professionals in their chosen field. The experience was made possible thanks in part to several of our professional volunteers who reached out to the school’s program educator, providing the bridge between Beth-El and HCC.

The mission would like to expand additional opportunities for vocational training, but the key ingredient is building the one on one relationship between student and mentor. You, as our partners in mission, are a key ingredient to the success of this program. We need more mentors to work with our students. We also need organizations and schools willing to support our students with opportunities for “hands-on” experience. Finally, we need your continued financial support to make these opportunities available.



For the last several days the words to an old Diana Ross song have been floating around in my head. It was the theme to the motion picture, “Mahogany” in which a young Diana Ross works her way out of poverty underscored by the theme, “do you know where you’re going to?” Those

words seem so relevant especially during this season as many of our young prepare for the next chapter of their life. Do they know the bountiful possibilities life can hold if just given the opportunity? There is so much all of us at Beth-El hope and dream for our children, but it is not a journey we can accomplish without your help.

Today marks the beginning of Lent, a season where many 'give something up' as we remember Jesus' journey to the cross. So, what if we gave up one hour a week to mentor a student? What if we gave up some of our life experiences in pursuit of helping someone trying to take step up? It is in this season of Lent that we remember our Savior who gave everything, even life itself, in his journey to Calvary and for our salvation.

Where are you going , do you know?

Dios le bendiga,



Rev. Kathleen (Kathy) Dain
Executive Director



Step Up for Success!

Left: Volunteer mentor, Elaine, works with one of our Step Up for Success candidates.

Right: Step Up for Success Graduate, Lizseth Gallardo, who recently completed all her required course tests for her High School Diploma.

Leaders Now

Greetings from Nuevo Camino at Beth-El! Youth fellowship is a priority here. We are in regular contact with 20 youth.

A recent Bible study and information session about camp at Cedarkirk focused on baptism and how we are all members of the body of Christ, the Church. (1 Cor. 12). Discussion and study highlighted how each member is of value and there is a place in the community of faith for each to serve. I talked with youth about how we often hear “youth are the future”-- but I reminded them there are many ways to serve now. Each youth is a leader now—serving to support the Sunday worship service through the music ministry or worship leadership, actively participating in Sunday school, volunteering at the food pantry or the dental clinic during weekends or school breaks, serving as shepherds during the weeks of Summer VBS programming and more. Many of our youth serve in adult roles in the world helping parents to fill out important paperwork, serving as translators in both formal and informal contexts and caring for younger siblings while parents work.



At Nuevo Camino we need our youth now! A small group of adult leaders work with me to remove barriers to participation in youth fellowship by: sharing the value of our programming with parents, encouraging youth to participate, providing transportation to church and other activities as many families don't have transportation or parents are working. We gather for Bible study, fellowship, fun and service.

This year we have no budget due to financial challenges. We plan to hold fundraisers, including garage sales to support our youth and church programming. Our main goal is to raise funds to attend a Christian music concert (Mercy Me) in May and to hold a special May dinner to celebrate the end of the school year and 2 youth graduating from high school! Please hold this valuable ministry and our youth in your prayers. If you have items to bring in for our garage sale or other donations, please contact me . We hope to hold the first sale in April!

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor. 12: 12-13, 27).

In Christ,

Tamara Lara

Rev. Tamara Leonard Lara
Mission Pastor, Nuevo Camino



Siesta Key Chapel (Sarasota, FL) volunteers say they feel “accomplished” after working at the food pantry at Beth-El Mission on Mondays and Tuesdays! The volunteer effort is led by Bob Million, who gets excited telling the story of Beth-El to others. Bob credits the success in volunteer recruitment to the support of the minister of Siesta Key Chapel and the Outreach Committee. Volunteers continue to return to Beth-El Mission because of the environment, a welcoming staff, and the good feeling of having served a community in need.

Thank you, Siesta Key Chapel, for 15 years of continued service to Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Wimauma, FL

Volunteer Opportunities

Beth-El has a number of opportunities for volunteers who would like to share their professional



Thanks to our friends from Christ Church Longboat Key, who prepared a lunch to farmworkers working at a local farm. If you'd like to learn more about our volunteer opportunities, please email us at outreach@beth-el.org.

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.





The Beth-El Dental Clinic is now able to provide dental hygiene services in addition to our basic dental services. If you would like to learn more about how you can support this ministry, please call Kathy at 813-633-1548 ext. 223 or email her at kathy@beth-el.org.



Beth-El continues its journey to provide services for mind, spirit, and body to farmworkers and our neighbors in 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



BETH-EL ON THE ROAD



Reaching out into the community!

Community Day School helped pack backpacks for this summer's Cedarkirk campers. If your church would like to learn more about Beth-El please reach Kathy at Kathy@beth-el.org.

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
- Disposable Razors
- Feminine Products
- New Men's & Women's Underwear - All Sizes
- Dishwashing Detergent



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

I would like to donate \$_____

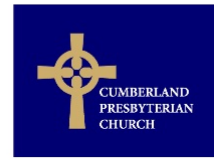
- Step Up for Success Mentor
- Food Pantry
- Lead VBS
- Organize a Workgroup
- Organize a Food Drive
- Organize a Clothing Drive

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



Muchas Gracias to all who supported the mission's first fund raising dinner!

Many Thanks to Our Celebrating the Harvest Sponsors



John and Sheila Smith

Randy Talaski

Walt Cawein

Leonard and Florence Wilson

Don and Bonnie Olson

Peter and Bettye Bartholomay

Sue and Tom Rice

Penny Baker Knight

Laurie and Ed Palmer

Ross and Cindy Alander

Denson Construction, Inc.

Robert and Linda Kuck

Christ Presbyterian Church, Largo FL



Dees & Dees CPA's



Best wishes to Javier. We will miss you!



Spending a week at summer camp can be a life changing experience for the child of a farmworker. Every year the mission sends 40 to 50 children and teens to Cedarkirk, but we need your support. The average cost per child is \$400.



Won't you help sponsor a child to
Cedarkirk this summer?

Sponsor a Child to Cedarkirk

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Accept my Donation to send a child to camp. \$ _____

Please use my donation where most needed. \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Beth-El Farmworker Ministry - PO Box 860 Wimauma FL
33598.

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:
18240 Highway 301 South
PO Box 860
Wimauma, FL 33598-0860
Phone: 813-633-1548
Email: info@beth-el.org
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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