

Volunteer Opportunities

Food Distribution - Tuesday 8:45am to 2pm

Outreach to Farms – Wed/Thur 11am to 2pm*

Prepackaging Deliveries - M/W/TH/F 9am to Noon

Dental Clinic – Monthly M/Sa 7:30a to 2pm

Step Up for Success Mentors – Tuesday 9am to 2pm

Summer Youth Programs – Various times

Volunteers packaging or working in the mission's food distribution may need to stand for long periods of time. Some light and heavy lifting may be required. Some knowledge of Spanish is helpful, but not required. Volunteers interested in becoming a mentor in the Step Up for Success program or Dental Clinic must be bi-lingual. Additional Training may also be required.

*The outreach to farmworkers in the fields is seasonal (September through April).

I would like to become more involved at Beth-El Mission through

Summer Camp Scholarships
Food Pantry
Lead VBS
Organize a Workgroup
Organize a Food Drive
Organize a Clothing Drive

Back to School Program
VBS Supplies
College Scholarships
Dental Clinic
Food Pantry
Mission's Greatest Need

I would like to donate \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Immediate Needs

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

- Dry goods
- T-shirts
- Caps (baseball cap style)
- Sunblock
- Deodorant
- Detergent
- Toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, mouthwash
- Towels



Beth-El

Farmworker Ministry, Inc.



Gardens of Grace

The Strawberry Festival in Plant City traditionally marks the end of the growing season here in Florida. Soon the berries found in our supermarkets will be branded from California growers, while the remaining fruit in Florida's fields goes fallow—more costly to pick than to lay waste.



It has been a precarious season for our farm working community, initiated by the storms of Irma and hard frosts of January. Many workers arrive in the early hours of dawn only to be dismissed from their labors before noon. In a month's time many workers will have already begun their trek north, while those who call Wimauma home will savor a few more weeks of work finishing the last of the melons and tomatoes or pulling the plastic from the fields in hope of better days next fall.

With summer comes the return of many workers to our food pantry—too busy during the growing season to stop by on a Tuesday or chancing a distribution after Sunday worship. Our Tuesday pantry currently serves 600 to 700 families a week, with another 5000 individuals receiving aid with our direct distributions to the farms.

It is a hard life. It is especially hard for the children of farmworkers, which is why every year Beth-El fills the weeks of June and July with plenty of activities for children and youth. Once again the mission plans to send 40 to 50 children from our immediate community to Cedarkirk Christian Camp for a week of fun and exploration. It is a time many older teens and young adults reflect as being some of the best times of their lives.

July brings partnering churches from our presbyteries to lead a week of Vacation Bible School; and throughout our community, back to school supplies and backpacks are collected so that hundreds of children may return to school equipped with the tools they need for another school year.

Like the farmers preparing their fields for another season, these are the seeds the mission sows, that all might grow and find nurture in God's grace. Thank you always for your continued support of this ministry.

Dios le bendiga,

Rev. Kathleen Dain
Executive Director

A Day in the Life of a Farmworker

Most farmworkers are up well before dawn to prepare for the day. Sometimes, depending on how well the growing season is going, their work may be finished before noon, other times they will work well past sunset. Regardless, their income is based on the quantity they can pick.

On average a farmworker will pick 30 to 40 flats a day earning about \$60 before taxes for their wages. Most workers rarely stop for breaks or a drink of water, instead only stopping for a quick lunch before returning to the fields.

By early May many farmworking families will begin their trek north to pick in the fields of Michigan and Ohio hoping that work will be available when they arrive. Other families remain in Wimauma picking up odd jobs where they can during the summer months.

Farmworking is especially hard on the children of farmworkers. That is why Beth-El has numerous opportunities to support families and their children with educational opportunities and summer programs that engage a child's mind, spirit and body.



to be able to spend a day in the Wimauma community serving others. The farmworkers were very grateful for all that was given to them and for our appreciation for what they do.

In the future, we hope to host a lunch each month at a farm or packing house in appreciation of the farmworkers. The next meal is scheduled to be served on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at noon. We hope to have more volunteers during this lunch.



We are looking for an afternoon group on Tuesday to gather at Beth-El and help prepare the food for the following day. Those interested in serving at the farm need to arrive at Beth-El on Wednesday by 10am and plan to stay until 1:30pm. Volunteers can participate in either one, or both days. We foresee a very large group to be served due to the time of the season. If you have any questions or are interested in donating to purchase the food, cooking, or serving and bringing a side dish, please contact Nuri at 813.633.1548 ext. 224 or at nuri@beth-el.org.

God bless you,

Nuri H. Navarro
Community Relations Liaison



Summer is Coming!

Your Can:

- Send a Child to Cedarkirk Camp
- Volunteer to lead VBS
- Hold a Back to School Drive
- Bring a Mission Team

Serving Christ Through Others

The lives of children and families continue to be brightened by your contributions. Multiple students in the Wimauma community have submitted scholarship applications to continue their post-secondary education; one of them received a notice of his acceptance and he was ecstatic to receive support to obtain his bachelor's degree. Our farmworkers are grateful for the weekly deliveries at various farms.



On Thursday, February 15, more than 20 volunteers and staff gathered at Pacific Tomato Growers packing house to serve a meal for 130 farmworkers. The theme of the lunch was celebrating friendship amongst each other. There were vegetables, salad, rice, chicken and delicious home baked pies and cookies. After the lunch, the farmworkers had an opportunity to receive essential everyday items such as clothes, water and paper products for themselves and their families. Being able to break bread together was a blessing. Volunteers were very grateful to interact with one another and



You are cordially invited to
the commissioning of the Rev.
Tamara Leonard-Lara as the pastor
of Nuevo Camino at Beth-El.

April 22th, 2018
3 P.M.