

The FORESEE

January 2010
CONSERVATIVE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

Volume 42, No. 1

Around The Conference True and Undeiled Religion

by Gerard K. Kilyk, Mid-Atlantic Area Representative

Jesus did not discriminate over who should receive physical, social and economic help. As a matter of fact, Jesus spent much time with the poor, needy and unloved. Those Jesus cared for included orphans, widows (James 1:27) and those demonized by society. He was an all-inclusive caregiver as one human being touching others.

The church I pastor here in Chesapeake, Virginia, has begun a new ministry in a separate building available on our premises. The ministry is called "God's Gifts." At one time, this annex was used for Boy Scouts. After that children's program ended here, this ample structure became one of the messiest storage buildings a church could have. Then came a vision.

After five years of prayer, our church family has seen a clear light of direction. The Rosemont Christian Church has discovered after praying for our specific call, a ministry to the helpless, hopeless, disabled, and those on very little income. Those who fill our neighborhood have a particular place in Jesus' heart. We have found in a high crime battle zone that those recently released from jail can be newly outfitted for a fresh start. Our part of Chesapeake (South Norfolk) has the highest crime rate and homeless population. There are thirty-two hundred homes headed by single mothers.

God's Gifts is an evangelistic center where adults and children are outfitted with clothes from a free clothes outlet. Over 400 needy friends have received anything from shoes, socks, clothes, dishes, men's and women's products — and most important, an opportunity to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. One of the rooms was refurbished to serve as an office and spiritual counseling room. We have literature in both English and Spanish. Visitors are welcomed into a variety of church activities, and several different churches with various forms of worship are available for those who come.

It is very sad to also serve in an area where forty percent of the population of children live at or below the poverty line. As churches of Jesus Christ, we are desperately needed to reach these often without hope with a very practical gospel. Words without deeds mean very little in Kingdom work. James said that to find these needs and to say "be warmed and filled," yet do nothing to meet the need is defiled religion. May we never be guilty of such.

Pray that we, and all of us in our wonderful CCCC family, will fulfill James' admonition to practice pure and undeiled religion. Lord, we ask you to bless every ministry to be sensitive to the least of these.

Conservative Congregational Christian Conference 62nd Annual Family Conference

July 26–29, 2010

***At the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center
Springfield, Massachusetts***

**Morning Bible Hour Speaker
Dr. H. Drake Williams III
Vice President and Academic Dean
Tyndale Theological Seminary
Amsterdam, The Netherlands**



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Christ Loves His Church

by Rev. Dr. Stephen Gammon, Conference Minister



As we begin this New Year I invite you to share my joy about what is happening in the CCCC! By His grace, the Lord is moving in the CCCC, drawing us closer, and giving us new opportunities to birth new churches and see established churches revived again with fresh fire and focus. It brings joy to my heart to see CCCC churches that are visibly loving God, loving others, and making disciples! It brings joy to my heart to see congregations desiring to draw nearer to Jesus. I know it brings great joy to Him!

The Bible portrays through various pictures just how precious the Church is to God. One image I've been reflecting on lately is of the Church as the Bride of Jesus Christ! This picture reveals hope, promise, love, beauty, potential, commitment, and a future to be lived together... forever!

Ephesians 5:25 depicts the Church in this way, instructing husbands to love our wives now in the same way that Christ loves HIS bride: *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

Revelation 19:7 offers a snapshot of a future day in the culmination of our union with Christ at the wedding supper of the Lamb, for the Church is the bride Jesus loves and longs for: *Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.*

What a beautiful picture to gaze upon as we consider our Lord's plans for His Church, and for the CCCC as part of His Church! The most memorable wedding I ever attended was when Helen and I were married on August 21, 1976! I looked into her eyes that day and pledged my vows of love and commitment for the rest of my days, and she did the same to me! I've been remembering that event recently, because on December 21, 2009 Helen and I celebrated an anniversary milestone of a third of a century together as husband and wife (33 years, 4 months). Although I looked in vain to find an anniversary card commemorating this milestone, Helen and I celebrated how blessed we have been together, how happy we are in our relationship and in His service, and how we are looking ahead to continued ministry in His service, and then to an eternity with Him in heaven.

CCCC friends, as we begin this New Year I hope you will join me in celebrating the privilege we have of adoring Jesus Christ and being His Bride! Let's renew our vows to Him, expressing to Him again our shared and heartfelt commitment to love God, love others, and make disciples. In this New Year we will be doing this together by planting new churches and strengthening our churches, beginning of course with our own devotion to the Lord. He loves us; He loves His Church as His very own Bride! This is reason to celebrate!



THE FORESEE

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Deadline for the February 2010 issue is December 20, 2010.

Attention CCCC

Prospective

Ministerial Students

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, is now offering two scholarships for CCCC students matriculated there for ministerial programs, in the amount \$4,000 each. Prospective students should contact the Education Committee for more details on this generous offer. You may call the home office for contact names and numbers.

Keep the Faith

by Rev. Terry H. Shanahan, Northeast Regional Minister

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. — 1 Timothy 6:12

The Northeast has some really old churches. And that should not be a surprise. Isn't this where people sought their religious freedom so many years ago? In those early days, you could not form a town without a minister, and he was the pastor to the whole community! Things have changed since this hard soil was a refuge for those seeking freedom to worship God.

But one thing hasn't changed. People here still desire to worship God and serve Him. I had the pleasure of joining with the faithful people of First Congregational Church of Berkshire, New York recently as they celebrated 120 years in their church building. Last year I was also with them when they celebrated 175 years as a church family. And next spring I hope to be with them when they say goodbye to their pastor, Jim Willard, who has led them faithfully for over forty years. What a lot to celebrate. This is a testimony to faithfulness.

When I visit this church, I am so aware of the unity with which they come together and seek to serve God and each other. This church has passed the test of time. They have acknowledged the call of God in their lives and they seek to follow Him. They took a stand in Berkshire for the Lord.

Our Conference is not as old as the First Congregational Church of Berkshire. But we are as old as any Congregational denomination. We came together because our founders heard

the call of God on their lives, and that caused them to take a stand for the Lord. I doubt that when the CCCC was organized, that the founders could envision what is happening in America today. I doubt they could anticipate that our mainline denominations would get so confused. But they did. And God knew that this time would come. And He provided for these days.

Just as He called the First Congregational Church of Berkshire into existence 175 years ago, looking ahead to these days that it would be a faithful witness for Him, he also called the CCCC into existence 61 years ago, knowing that the need for a faithful witness would be here in these times. We have been called for such a time as this, to keep the faith, to fight the good fight, to persevere. God called us and is equipping us. He has given us a vision and a purpose. Together we must fulfill that vision and that purpose.

God is leading us as He has from the beginning So keep the faith. *Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.* — Galatians 6:9



CCCC Missionary Prayer Directory — Where Is It? And How Can I Get a Copy?

by Malcolm Collins, Chair, CCCC Missions Committee

A beautifully designed new CCCC Missions Prayer Directory, with information about each CCCC missionary unit serving in both the US and overseas, including color pictures, addresses and email contact information, was introduced at the CCCC Annual Meeting in Waterloo, Iowa, in July.

This Directory was prepared under the direction of the Missions Committee, with the goal of mobilizing individuals in every CCCC church to become more active in praying for CCCC missionaries. However, followup study indicates that five months later these Directories have not made it into homes of many of our members of CCCC churches!

In these days of economic challenge, it is not possible for the CCCC central office to distribute "hard copies" of the Prayer Directory.

The CCCC Missions Committee would be pleased to have a copy of this Missions Prayer Directory in the home of every member of every CCCC church. However, the distribution of those copies cannot come from the CCCC main office. The CCCC office will do its best to get a copy to each CCCC local church. Additional copies for churches can be ordered from the CCCC.

It is not designed to be kept on a church office bookshelf; it is designed to accompany Bibles to regular times of prayer!

So in answer to the question of "How does a local CCCC church get access to the new CCCC Missions Prayer Directory?," here are some answers:

- 1) The CCCC office has the Missions Prayer Directory as a PDF file. All any church needs to do is to email or call the CCCC office and request an emailed copy of the PDF file.
- 2) For security reasons, the Missions Directory is not available directly from the CCCC website.
- 3) For those churches without Internet access or who can't use PDF files, please explain your situation to the CCCC office, and they will help you find another way to get a copy.
- 4) Once the local church gets a PDF file of the Prayer Directory, find a way to get it distributed to your membership — either by sending the PDF file to those who request it, or by making hard copies available.

Please do your part to get this Prayer Directory where it belongs!

The Value of Assessment

by Jeff O'Guin, member of the CCCC Church Multiplication Committee



With the growing movement of church planting within the CCCC, a means of determining God's "wiring" for such an endeavor becomes critically important. This is the purpose of the "assessment."

Assessment is an in-depth evaluation of a planter (and spouse) that looks at one's spiritual gifts, leadership style, personality shape, values, vision, and Christian journey. The process "paints in the details" of one's personal profile to create a better picture of God's plans for his or her life.

Most planters feel a strong call to the challenge of a church plant. Older planters, who typically know their strengths and weaknesses, find that assessment confirms or discourages the sense of call. For younger planters it's more about the discovery of whether God has shaped them for the call they sense.

Matt Kruse, a Boston planter told me, "...by painting a clear picture of what it looked like to be a church planter, assessment created space for me to say 'yes, yes, that's it, that's it, let me do that, please.' ...It also affirmed that God in His grace really had shaped my personality and wiring for this crazy calling."

But "call" isn't enough to insure success. Church plants fail because of a number of things: wrong planter, wrong place, or wrong plan. Failure usually comes from a mismatch of the planter's gifts and strengths with the place, people and plan of the plant. Combine assessment with coaching, training, and ongoing support from the CCCC, and success rates go up over 90%.

Assessment allows God to reveal to the planter and spouse what's in *their* hearts. The Gospel that we so passionately desire to share with others must penetrate *our* hearts as well. Assessment begins to unearth the areas of our lives that need the Gospel's transformation and brings health to the hearts of the planters. Healthy planters tend to produce, naturally, healthy churches.

Assessment also enfolds the planter into the process and support of the CCCC family. An Ohio church planter just beginning said, "...the assessment process showed us that we would not be alone. We learned that our values are shared by the church multiplication committee and the CCCC leadership. It is comforting to know that my family's heart for the mission matches the CCCC's heart as well..."

If you are sensing God's call to church planting, the first step is to seek out assessment. Contact Ron Hamilton in the CCCC office for more information.

Shipwreck Cove

by Dr. John Kimball, CCCC Director of Conference Care and Church Redevelopment

As a family, we love to spend time together watching movies. It doesn't matter whether they're in the theater (my favorite venue) or on the TV — it's just something we've always done together.

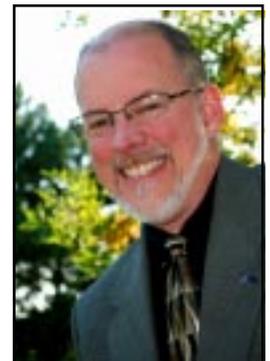
One of my teenage kids' favorite movie series is Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean*. In the last installment of that trilogy, there is a scene where the pirate "Council of the Brethren" meet secretly to decide what they are going to do about the new deadly alliance between Davey Jones and the East India Trading Company. The location? Shipwreck Cove — an impenetrable bay surrounded by a perimeter of mountains on an unmapped island. When asked about the possibility of attack, one leader mocks that the enemy can't get in and that they have enough food and water to hold up there for years.

Shipwreck Cove is a fortress — one must know the secret way in, and the surrounding structure is strong enough to stave off all outsiders. There are supplies galore to meet the needs of the select few who are part of the "in crowd," and the culture within the mountain walls has not changed for generations. Sound vaguely familiar?

One thing that appears to be a common denominator among

all churches in plateau or decline — slowly losing their ability to actually impact their respective communities for Christ's rule and reign — is the "fortress mentality." Think about it — those inside are suspicious of (or at least uncomfortable with) outsiders. There is an internal "culture" that has been treasured for generations. And in many cases, there are even large stores of resources (e.g., investments) which the leaders guard to help the church survive in future difficult times.

A fortress mentality in any church betrays a malignancy that the people may not even recognize: a lack of relationship. All true ministry flows through relationship. But what church members often experience is not this kind of Christ-like relationship, but something less. In many cases, it's polite tolerance of each other. In other cases, most of the folks only "relate" to one another on the superficial level of acquaintance. In still other cases, outright conflict is the way of life. Even when there is a rapport with each other, it is often issue-centered (e.g., against some style of music)



creating “comrades at arms” as we struggle for the same cause rather than practicing Jesus’ command to truly love one another.

Thankfully, in virtually every church, there are a few who understand and pursue deep, authentic relationships. They may do this intentionally or intuitively, but they do indeed build a small number of abiding relationships through which they invest themselves for the sake of the kingdom. Depending on the condition of the rest of the body, these folks are either seen as saints living at a spiritual level that few can attain, or

they are jealously disliked because their very presence threatens the culture of comfort the rest have worked so hard to maintain.

Over my next few articles, I am going to unpack this idea of relationship more. In the meantime, prayerfully consider the relational health of your congregation. Do you look like the New Testament community of Acts 2? Or do you look more like Jack Sparrow’s motley horde in Shipwreck Cove? Even local bodies that fall somewhere in between will be incredibly blessed by making their own relational priority like that of Jesus.

God Makes First Contact Through Furniture!

by Wes and Marjie Blood

We knew it would be big, because God began providing resources well in advance of the project. Each year we have a project called the Household Items Giveaway, as a way of welcoming new, incoming international students by helping them furnish their apartments with microwaves, furniture, kitchenware, mattresses, desks, tables chairs, bookshelves and other items.



Our first indication that God was going to greatly expand the project was that He provided a truck. God enabled us to purchase a 36-year-old delivery truck that actually has only about 60K miles on it. It has been just exactly what we needed.

The second indicator was that we were given access to a much larger storage space. Cherry Street Mission Ministries (a huge local rescue mission) partnered with us to provide both volunteer coordination (assigning drivers to students) and the use of half of the third floor of the old Banner Mattress Warehouse for storage.

The third indicator was that people began spontaneously calling us about donating items as early as April. One warehouse of surplus furniture offered us 100 desks (of which we gave away more than 50), as well as dozens and dozens of tables, chairs and bookshelves. All throughout the project God flowed in the materials as they were needed (Luke 6:38).

At one point we were at the surplus warehouse and asked them for more chairs, which we desperately needed, but their supply was low and they were only able to give us more desks. While my son Andrew and I were in the process of loading the desks, another truck pulled up to a second loading dock and began to unload 30 beautiful chairs! The lady took one look at the chairs and said, “Oh, these are the older style office chairs with only four legs and casters. We are not allowed to put these back into service because the new rules dictate that we can only use chairs with five legs or more! You can have them!” God arranged a delivery of chairs at the very moment we were already at the warehouse!

It is hard to describe the results of this project. A year ago

we were able to help 33 apartments receive furniture. This year, God supplied 10 drivers, plus all of the above, and we have been able to help 81 apartments! With roughly an average of three students per apartment, that means God greeted more than 240 students arriving in Toledo from all over the world. We helped students from India, Iran, China, Jordan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

For many of the students this is their first contact with Christians, helping them get situated in their apartments simply because Jesus taught us to love and serve everyone from every nation as our neighbor (Luke 10:25–37). This project opens the door for all kinds of contact with the Christian community during the students’ time at The University of Toledo.

One married couple from Iran invited me to stay and share tea with them after delivering furniture. They began to ask many questions about Jesus and the Bible, even though we had never met before. The wife has since become involved in a Christian English as a Second Language (ESL) school that we helped to found, called the American School for Women and Children (www.ASEWC.org), and she and her husband have both attended English Corner, an on-campus class we teach. She requested a Conversation Partner, and we assigned her a delightful Christian young woman to meet with her weekly. Doors continue to open!



Wellspring is the ministry of the Blood family, working to reach international students and immigrants with the love and hope of Jesus. We believe that the most strategic work that the kingdom of God can do is among the next generation of leaders from the 10/40 window, who are in our own backyard.

We are missionaries with the CCCC. For more information on how you might get involved, or how we might help you reach internationals in your community, please feel free to contact us at any time.

Wes and Marjie Blood: wdbbdw@aol.com

200 Years of Service by the American Board of Commissioners

by Phil Corr

Phil Corr did his Ph.D. dissertation at Fuller Seminary on the history of the American Board of Commissioners. His dissertation, *The Field Is the World*, is now available as a book online at www.missionbooks.org. That is the William Carey Library publishing site. Phil hopes to have copies of that volume available for purchase at the July Family Conference. He currently lives and serves in Iowa. You can learn more about missions by checking www.haystack06.org (sponsored by Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship).

In 2006 many celebrations and prayer gatherings took place to commemorate the Haystack Prayer Meeting that is viewed as a catalyst for the modern American mission movement. In 2010 we are marking the development of the establishment of the mission organization that flowed from the prayer meeting — the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

On June 28, 1810, an application for advice was made to the General Association of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts. [Note: the 2010 CCCC Family Conference and Annual Meeting will take place in Springfield, Massachusetts!] Meeting in Bradford, the presenters sought

counsel as how best to fulfill Christ's specific directive, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

On June 29, 1810, the General Association voted to establish a Board of Commissioners to implement the request made by the students who were now in seminary. Within two years the Board was a legal entity and sending its first missionaries.

Alwyn York, our Conference Historian, has asked me to provide several articles during this anniversary year. I am delighted to do so! I will provide overviews, look at particular areas of service, and highlight individuals — both Board missionaries and indigenous evangelists related in some way with the Board.

Good News Goes to India

(Tom & Rhonda Curry are CCCC members sharing the Gospel in the great nation of India.)

When thinking of India, hot temperatures usually come to mind. Not so throughout all of India. Rhonda and I recently visited a small Evangelical Church of India seminary tucked away in the Himalayan Mountains in the city of Solan, a city of some 35,000 people. Knowing we might encounter some cooler weather, we brought along some long-sleeved shirts and jackets. We were shocked at the cold weather, with daily temperatures struggling to reach the upper 40s. Compared to Minnesota or Massachusetts that might not appear cold, but in buildings where there is no central heat and only a couple of small, portable heaters, it was verrrrrry cold. Next month's temp (December) will get well below freezing.



The Currys

We were there on assignment with the Evangelical Church of India, which has the goal of going from 3,000 churches to 10,000 churches by 2020. My role is to assess the needs of the seminary (academic, spiritual, structural, etc.), encourage the faculty, and to

introduce them to a new curriculum — the OMEGA Course (www.alliancescp.org/resources/omegacourse.html). BTCF curriculum (www.btcp.com) is used also. I am doing this for ten very small, regional seminaries located throughout the country of India. This was one of the smallest schools, with only ten students. Part of my time is also given to leadership development among senior leaders of the Evangelical Church of India. Rhonda enjoys the supportive role accompanying me and sometimes speaks to women's groups. She presently is preparing missionary monologues to give to students as we travel.

A husband and wife pastor team run the school. Each Sunday they do five services — two in Hindi, one in Tamil, one in Nepalese and one in English. They have opened their home to twenty-five Nepalese children (girl pictured), which the seminary students assist with in care of the children. These children are very poor children of parents who have come from Nepal to India for very low paying jobs. Since both parents work, the children grow up on the streets with no education. By staying at the seminary, the children go to public school during the day and stay overnight. Some of the parents help by contributing food and clothing.



A Nepalese Girl

The children too young to go to school stay in bed under blankets all day during winter days as it is too cold to be out. This would be a great project for a church or Sunday school class — purchasing blankets, socks, and a few more portable heaters.

We left Solan humbled as to how God uses faithful people. The pastoral couple provide the only evangelical services in the entire city. Probably 99% of the population is Hindu, Buddhist or Jain.

As we boarded the train for New Delhi, I thought of the famous quote of the 19th century missionary to China, C.T. Studd:

Some want to livewithin the sound
of church or chapel bell;
I want to run
a rescue shop
within a yard of hell.

Tech Tips

Phone Your Missionaries

by Teddie Techie

When foreign missionaries leave for the field, they lose the everyday contact with friends, loved ones and home churches. Some have good Christian fellowship where they serve, while others are more isolated. But nearly all miss the contact from home. They miss familiar voices, they miss conversations in their own language, they miss familiar references.

A few years ago we called friends of ours who were serving in China. We knew it might be expensive, and didn't talk long. But when I checked my phone bill, we had been billed \$13 per minute. This kind of expense discourages telephone contact.

However, thanks to modern technology and competition, we can do much better than that. Cost is no longer prohibitive. While regular calls from a home or business phone may still cost dollars per minute, there

are a number of other alternatives. Prepaid calling cards reduce the charge for calling most countries to less than a dollar a minute, some to less than a dime. There are also Internet-based (VoIP) services, including Skype and Vonage. These operate differently; but calls through their services may be free to only a few cents.

Also, with Internet-based calls, webcams enable the caller to see the other person. So your church can see the missionaries' pictures projected on the screen and hear their voices as the pastor or other leader talks to them. What an encouragement for the missionary — and, for the church!

Changes and Opportunities

Pastoral Changes:

Maple Rapids, MI	Congregational Christian Church *Derrick Kresge (Youth Pastor)
Billerica, MA	Community Congregational Church * Deborah J. Ennis
Blackstone, MA	Christ Community Church of Blackstone * Maurice Cormier

Pastoral Openings:

Carlsbad, CA	Carlsbad Community Church *
Brighton, CO	Zion Congregational Church * (Associate Pastor)
Buffalo Center, IA	First Congregational Church *
Garner, IA	Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church *
Treynor, IA	Zion Congregational Church *
Paul, ID	Ebenezer Congregational Church *
Rockland, ID	Rockland Congregational Church (Part-time) *
Mishawaka, IN	New Life Christian Fellowship (Ind.)
Boxford, MA	First Church Congregational * (Minister of Youth & Music)
Chelmsford, MA	Immanuel Church *
Medway, MA	Community Church of West Medway *
Traverse City, MI	First Congregational Church (Ind.)
Edina, MN	Colonial Church *
Mantorville, MN	First Congregational Church *
Kulm, ND	First Congregational Church *
Amherst, NH	Souhegan Christian Church (Ind.)
Lake Grove, NY	First Congregational Church of New Village (Youth & Music Pastor)
Lowell, OH	St. John's Evangelical Church (UCC)
Scotland, SD	United Church of Christ (UCC)
Suffolk, VA	Cypress Chapel Christian Church *
Wilton, WI	Faith Congregational Church *

* = Conference member
+ = In process

Health Tips

No Time

Consider some in-home exercises on the days you are not able to get out for a walk or to the gym.

To help increase your balance, stand behind a sturdy chair or table for balance. Lift one foot off the floor, bending your knee toward your chest. Hold the position for up to 10 seconds. Repeat 10–15 times. Repeat with the other leg. Repeat 10–15 times.

To help strengthen your calves and ankles stand behind a sturdy chair, feet shoulder-width apart, holding for balance. Breathe in slowly. As you breathe out, slowly stand on tiptoes, as high as possible, hold position for 1 second. Breathe in as you slowly lower heels to the floor. Repeat 10–15 times. Rest, then repeat 10–15 more times.

To strengthen your hand grip, hold a tennis ball or foam ball in one hand. Slowly squeeze the ball as hard as you can and hold for 3–5 seconds. Relax the squeeze slowly. Repeat 10–15 times. Do the same with the other hand. Repeat 10–15 times more with each hand.

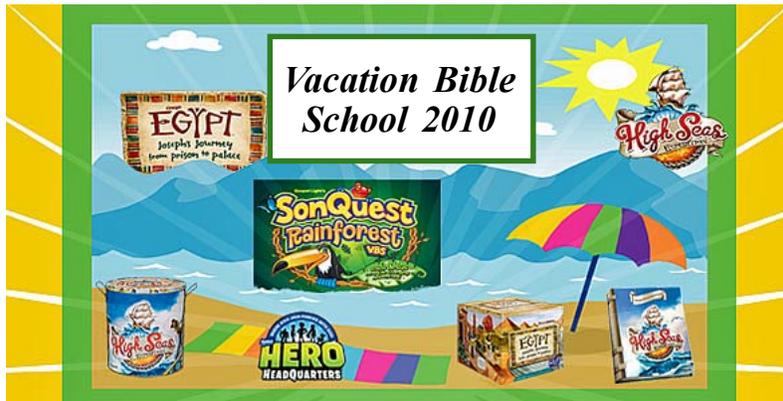
Not only will you be keeping your muscles in shape but you will be burning up calories.

Check out the web site (www.nia.nih.gov) for many more in home ideas to sneak in some exercises.

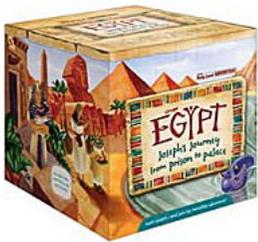
Betty Mitchell, RN, Parish Nurse
Emmanuel Bethel Church
Royal Oak, MI

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2010

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22.6



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Hero Headquarters 2010 VBS Power Pak
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 New
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SonQuest Rainforest VBS Starter Kit 2010
 Item #: 0830752536
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 Your Price: \$79.99



Hero Headquarters 2010 VBS Starter Kit
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