

# Letters of ENCOURAGEMENT

God Loves You  No Matter What

May 19, 2022

A Note from Lindsay Robinson

**Dear Friends,**

Do you remember how you felt before the first day at a new school? That mixture of excitement and nerves, fear and anticipation? What would your teacher(s) be like? How far away were your classes from each other? What would the lunch situation be, and where would you sit?

That set of feelings is where I find myself now. But it's not because of school, it's because of **Vacation Bible School (VBS)!**

After two years of having VBS via Zoom with a smaller group of kids, and doing porch drops so they would have their materials for each day, it seems surreal that in just seven weeks (and three days, but who's counting?) we will all be back together!

Guides greeting their crews each morning with the excited energy filling the Sanctuary! Watching everyone building friendships and learning together throughout the week!

**That entire week, the spaces, all the decorations, the experiences that our kids and our volunteers have — it's all so sacred.**





**And, while I enjoyed our time together these past two years in virtual VBS, I can't help but also recognize a feeling of loss that has surfaced for me.**

A loss of connection with a large group of kids who during the past two years have aged out of attending VBS as participants.

A loss of momentum, since each of the prior three years our attendance had grown by about 25 kids each year, and we have no way of knowing how many kids will attend this year.

A loss of fellowship with the team of 75+ volunteers that showed up each summer to spend their time in service to these children and their families. Some volunteers have moved, others have had a shift in the season of their lives over the last two years and won't be able to come back. I think it's this loss that has been surfacing most for me in the past few weeks.

**But I keep reminding myself that we are in a season of growing and rebuilding.**



This year through **The Great Story** we have been following the story of the Israelites as they transitioned into their own season of growing and rebirth. Listening to their story and learning about how they came together as a community, freely volunteering their time, resources, and skills to follow God and build the tabernacle, I couldn't help but see similarities.

**We have also been in a season of rebuilding as a church family** — coming together to follow God's nudging on how to reopen our spaces safely, how to continue to serve our community, and how to fellowship together once again.

**We have only been able to do it with the help of so many of you who have volunteered your time, resources, and skills**, whether it was technical skills and improving our livestreaming capabilities, ways to continue to provide community meals on Wednesdays, staying up to date on how best to clean and sanitize our spaces, and coming together to again have choir and other musical guests in worship, the list goes on.

**You all have done that. And we wouldn't have been able to gather in person again without you.**

And now, we have an opportunity to come together again as a community to reopen in person for VBS. **All youth (entering grades 7-12) and adults are encouraged to serve in this transforming week of ministry!**

Maybe you weren't able to serve a few years ago but now find yourself with **a little more flexibility** in your work or family schedule.

Maybe you had **kids who participated in VBS who could now serve on a team** themselves. Maybe you would like to serve alongside them.

If you are **new to HUMC and have been looking for a way to connect with others while serving**, VBS week is a perfect opportunity!

If you **love to craft and create**, you might find joy in helping make our set pieces and other decorations.

If you like **being outside and active**, our games station may be calling your name!

If you have **a heart for feeding others**, our snack team would be a great place to serve.

Our Imagination Station is perfect for those who **love a mixture of science and crafts!**

If you aren't able to free up time that week to serve in person, there are other **opportunities to help get us ready ahead of time!** You could help manage our registrations, prepare materials for the different stations, or shop for supplies.

**There are so many opportunities for all of us to come together to serve our kids as a community!** You can find out all the details and sign up here to volunteer and to register your child(ren) for VBS and/or VBS Plus (afternoon outreach session):  
<https://hilliardumc.org/vacation-bible-school-vbs/>.

So, my friends, as we all continue to process the losses we have experienced over the last two years, remember that we are also in a season of growth and rebirth. There are new opportunities awaiting, and I can promise at least one fun and meaningful week this summer, where kids and adults come together to experience God in a way that can only happen at VBS.

And maybe, just maybe, you can join me in that new-school-year feeling, butterflies in my stomach, excitement for what lies ahead of us!

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