

## Fun On Purpose: Reaching Kids With The Good News This Summer

By Michelle Van Loon



Though many of us are shifting gears from a more relaxed pace of summertime fun to a busy schedule of fall activities, for many area churches, it's important to remember that summer *the* prime time for meaningful outreach to the children in our communities.

Dozens of Christ Together churches sponsored Vacation Bible Schools or backyard Bible clubs.

Others created camp-type experiences. Michael Caldwell, Family Life Pastor at Libertyville's **Trinity Community Church**, said, "Because of a partnership with



another local church, we were able to charge a very small amount to those participating in our our sports-themed VBS camp this year. The response was that over 60% of the kids attending our Sports/VBS camp were not from either church It was an amazing opportunity to reach out to people in the community and get to tell many people about God."

**LaVina Comunidad Christiana** in Mundelein offered a summer camp experience to children in their community as well. The church's ministry to children is growing, and on the last Saturday of August, they held a fun fair fundraiser on the grounds of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in order to raise money for their Sunday School ministry.

Jan Sabourin of the **Evangelical Free Church of Wauconda** recounted God's faithfulness in the church's Camp Agape ministry: "Now in it's twenty-fifth year, Camp Agapé began with a youth pastor's desire to disciple and train the congregation's high school students and quickly grew to provide a much needed service to those in our community who need summer child care."

She continued, "This summer 171 students attended camp for all or part of the eleven-week program. The camp is designed for children entering kindergarten

through 8th grade. Our average attendance per week was 108 campers. Many campers become junior counselors when they outgrow the camp program because they simply don't want to leave! Counselors are high school students and senior counselors and leadership staff are usually college students. We have found that our church is best known in our community because of Camp Agapé. We have also found that many who are part of our church family first learned of the church through their children attending Camp Agapé."

Though summer is winding down, pray that the seeds planted in the lives of children through the ministries of all of the churches across our area will take root and bear fruit for eternity.

***Are you a children's ministry leader in your congregation? Are you interested in networking with others involved in shaping the spiritual lives of children and their parents? We're in the early stages of facilitating children's ministry connections here in Lake County. Send Michelle Van Loon ([mvanloon@catalystweb.org](mailto:mvanloon@catalystweb.org)) an e-mail letting her know you'd like to hear more about what develops!***