

2022 Children and Youth Ministry Annual Report

The children and youth of Grace in the Desert bring us joy in many ways. The last two years were tough, not only for the parents but also for our children.

Because of the restrictions this past year, I send out weekly lessons and activities to our parents to encourage the whole family to discuss the lessons and work on the activities together. I also send out the link to our YouTube live streaming service each week through the remind app and Grace in the Desert's Facebook page for those who are not able to attend the in-person service.

We had a successful turnout for the following activities:

1. VBS (July 29th to July 31st) – Our Vacation Bible School theme this year was “ROAR” Life is Wild, God is Good. It was three full days of fun, games, superb music, and a wild setting that comes together to celebrate God's goodness. Everyone who was there enjoyed every second of the program. I am so blessed to have our 13 wonderful teachers and volunteers (Paul and Margie Turner, Larry Holmes, Paul Biddle, Rhine Preas, Travis Lohmann, Tim Parker, Sheila Nikiforova, Darlene Albert, Pam Moore, Shannon Besoyan, Susan Cooper, and Rev. Angela Anderson). Our five youth leaders (my oldest daughter, Erica Gonzales, Desiree and Abi Demos, Grace Albert, and Demitri Griego who tirelessly came every day to witness the children's glowing eyes as they began each day with Ollie the Orangutan played by our very own Larry Holmes.
2. Trunk 'n Treat (October 31st) – We had ten beautifully decorated trunks by our parents, teachers, and parishioners who were generous to provide yummy treats and toys for our children. Also, I am very thankful towards Phil Watnem, who is always willing to help in any way he can.
3. Christmas Pageant (December 5th) – As always, our Christmas pageant was successful. We had a total of 28 children who participated. We had the highest attendance since we started the in-person service. It was such a heartwarming presentation that everyone felt overwhelming joy during and after service. I am most proud of our Sunday school children, who were well-behaved during the practice. I am grateful to Ms. Margie, Larry, Travis, Ms. Bunmi, and Dave who helped me with the practice, music, and sound system. We also had a potluck after the service at the park next to our church. Our parents brought food that was more than enough to feed everyone.

During each Sunday school activity, you can feel the happiness in the air. The children are comfortable with each other. Our parents, teachers, and volunteers are kind, patient, and are always supportive. I can't ask for any better children, parents, and teachers.

I would like to acknowledge the following office volunteers who willingly come to the office to help me and give me company each week: Bill Terry, Paul Biddle, Gerrie Holmes, Mamie Hechter, and Deb Manning. They are joyful and kind.

I am also thankful to Mr. Eric Love who put so much time and effort to help with the office technology and system. Also, to our Vestry who have given us full support in doing all the above activities. With blessings and gratitude, Tee