

# God Doesn't Make Junk Vacation Bible School 2016

Message for Sunday, August 19, 2016  
by Bruce Fraser

We had Vacation Bible School at St. Paul's this past week. In today's worship service, we will follow what the children did this past week. We had great fun learning about God, and I pray you will, too.

The theme for the whole week was "God doesn't make junk." Each day we looked at one part of God's creation.

We also did something a bit different: the usual approach is to put people in groups according to their age, so all the older kids are together, and so on. We made "family groups" with kids of all ages. So each family had an older brother and sister, and some younger brother and sister. They helped one another, just like in a regular family. Each age had a role: the older ones were our readers and writers; the youngest were runners to deliver things; the middle ones had a variety of jobs.

**DAY ONE:** God made the world and it was Grrrrreat!

**BIBLE READING:** from Genesis 1

**KEY VERSE:** Genesis 1:31

**God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.**

**WHAT WE DID:** Each day we start with prayer and a Bible reading. We talk about what it tells us about God, about our world, and about ourselves. Today's reading was about God making the world. At the end of just about every day, God looked around and said, "That's good!" And on the last day, God said, "That's *very* good!" That introduced the theme for the week: God doesn't make junk. God makes *good* things!

We think the world is pretty nice, too, and we want to keep it that way. So our groups set out in different directions to do a trash bash, picking up all the garbage we could find. In fact, every day we did some sort of service project. After all, God made us his partners in creation, and we have work to do.

Each day we also did some crafts, played games, and sang lots of songs. Music time was a favourite for many of the kids. Some parents told us, "They sang those songs all evening!" One of the songs

which goes with today's theme is "There's a Hole in the Bottom of the Sea." Let's sing it now!

**DAY TWO:** God made people. They are marvelous. Their job is to guard the world and help it grow.

**BIBLE READING:** from Genesis 2

**KEY VERSE:** Genesis 2:15

**The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.**

**WHAT WE DID:** God made this world, and it sure isn't junk! We are certainly thankful that God has given us such a wonderful world to enjoy. But with the gift also comes responsibility: we need to look after the world. Yesterday we helped to clean up the world. For our service project this day, we helped to make the world a more beautiful place. We took seeds for milkweed, sunflowers, and various other plants, and spread them beside the trail. It will be fun to see what comes up next year! (Well, we actually did this first thing Wednesday morning, since it was raining on Tuesday.)

A song that goes with today's theme is "Take Off Your Shoes." Let's sing it now!

**DAY THREE:** God made you. You are amazing. You have a special job to do.

**BIBLE READING:** from 1 Corinthians 1 & 12

**KEY VERSE:** 1 Corinthians 12: 27

**All of you are Jesus' body, and each one is a part of it.**

**WHAT WE DID:** God made us, and God doesn't make junk! Each one of us is important; each one of us has gifts and talents that make the whole group better. We went around the circle, and each person got to say what they're good at.

Since we're talking about the body, one of the games we did was like "Twister." People got in pairs of threes. Someone pulled from a hat two pieces of paper with random body parts written on them. The people had to connect those body parts together (like my "ear" to your "toe"). Then, while holding that position, someone pulled out two more papers with body parts. It soon got very interesting!

We made cookies this day, and talked about how the different ingredients are all important. Each one is needed, even the ones with just a small amount. With that in mind, how would our family groups be different if we didn't have the talents of each

person? The cookies were our service project for this day, so we pondered whom we could give them to. We came up with a half-dozen people or families to whom we wanted to show some love, and VBS members who lived near them delivered the cookies on their way home.

Let's sing another song: "Jesus Loves Me" (to the tune "Twist and Shout")

**DAY FOUR:** God made people who are different from you. All different people make God's world fun and interesting.

**BIBLE READING:** from Acts 10:1 – 11:18

**KEY VERSE:** Acts 10:1-11

**Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean.**

**WHAT WE DID:** We sampled different kinds of fruit, including some weird looking ones (like pineapple) and some which they'd never seen before (like papaya). They were all different, even strange, but were all delicious.

With that in mind, we talked about how people are different, even strange. But that doesn't mean they're wrong or bad. Once we get to know them, we can become good friends. God made them, too, and God doesn't make junk! We talked about how it feels to be the kid at school who gets left, out or even teased and bullied, because he or she is different. We said we could be the friend to that person.

Jane was wearing her favourite pink sweater, and asked the kids if they liked it. They nodded their heads, but Bruce spoke up: "I don't like it. It looks like you were walking down the street some Monday morning when people have their garbage at the curb, and you pulled it out of someone's garbage. It's the ugliest thing I've ever seen. You should give it to me to burn it." Jane was shocked and replied, "I think you just insulted me." Bruce answered, "I'm not talking about you; I'm talking about that stupid sweater." Jane responded, "Do you know who made this sweater? My mother knitted this sweater for me. And she's sitting right behind you! When you insult this sweater, you're insulting the person who created it." Bruce kept his mouth shut after that.

The point was: if I insult someone, saying they're ugly or stupid, I'm not just hurting them. I'm also insulting the one who created them: God. If I'm going to treat God with respect, then I need to respect all the people whom God made. (I hope you understand the conversation above was planned ahead of time!☺)

Our service project was making placemats for Meals on Wheels. Each family group had a variety of coloured crayons, and they used pencil sharpeners to make wax shavings. We arranged the shavings on a paper, and then one of the leaders melted them with an iron.

A great song which goes this this day's theme is "I Can Be Your Friend." Let's sing it now!

**DAY FIVE:** God made the church. Together, with Jesus, we can do great things.

**BIBLE READING:** John 15:1-6

**KEY VERSE:** John 15:6

**Jesus said, "I am the vine. You are the branches. You can do nothing without me."**

**WHAT WE DID:** We looked at an African Violet plant. It was vigorous and healthy... except for one leaf which just flopped over. Examining it more closely, we discovered that this leaf had been cut at the stem; it wasn't connected to the plant. That's why it was so weak.

Jesus tells us that we need to stay connected to him. Of course, being connected to him also means being connected with everyone else who is part of the "plant," that is, the church.

We talked about how it can be difficult to do some things. Living with Jesus and having his power in us will help. Helping one another in the church will also make life better. With that in mind, we wrote on papers, one for each person, something that we can't do, but would like to do. Also, something we'd like to do for God or for the world. Then we put all those papers in a tin can and dropped in a match. We watched while they all burned up. The point: when Jesus is with us, and when we help one another, we can do all kinds of great things! This was an "I Can't Funeral."

Our service project this day was making a banner “Jesus is the vine and we are the branches” to give to the church. Here it is!

A song that goes with this day’s theme is “We Are the Church.” Let’s sing it now!

So that was Vacation Bible School! Of course, there was lots more; I couldn’t include everything. I guess you’ll have to come out yourself next year to see for yourself what it’s like!

Remember: God doesn’t make junk.

- God made our world, and it is *very* good.
- God made people, and they are marvelous. We are partners with God.
- Yes, God made people... but God made *you* in particular. You are special and amazing. We all have a part to do in God’s work.
- And God made other people as well, even those who are different. But God never makes junk. A strange person is just a friend you haven’t had a chance to get to know yet.
- God made the church. Together with Jesus at the core, and all helping one another, we can do great things.

Finally, at the end of every day, we closed with the song “Shalom, My Friends.” *Shalom* is a Hebrew word which means a combination of peace, harmony, wholeness. When we pray for shalom for others, we are blessing them. Let’s sing that song now.