

# Summer Report 2021

It is with great delight that I write this update about our summer program in 2021. In spite of all the uncertainties about the global pandemic and the restrictions that were imposed on us, we were able to have a very successful summer camp program. We faced an initial hurdle of finding a site to host the camp because the Focus on Youth program which allowed us to apply for free permits from the school board was cancelled this year.

Thankfully, we were able to secure a permit to host the camp at St Charles Garnier Catholic School which is located right at the heart of the community and in close proximity to the swimming pool at Driftwood Community Centre. This came with a very high price tag but we thank God for *HOPE 4 YOU Community Services* and *Community Counts Foundation* for helping us with the payment. We were very grateful to receive the funding from the *Canada Summer Jobs program* to hire all the seven students that we requested. This was facilitated through the good offices of our Federal MP for Humber River Black Creek *Hon. Judy Sgro*. Also through a generous donation from a long-time patron of Seeds of Hope Camp, we had enough funds for the daily expenditure of the camp.



The day camp which ran from July 5<sup>th</sup> to August 13<sup>th</sup>, was divided into three sessions each lasting 2 weeks, so that more children would have the opportunity to attend. Approximately 20 children ages 7-14 registered for each cohort. This enabled 54 children to participate in the program for the summer.

For most campers, coming to camp was literally a breath of fresh air since many of our activities were outdoors. This helped them to regain their physical strength after a long period of online learning due to the Covid 19 lockdown. The theme for the summer was "*Riding the storm*". Special stories of Bible characters and contemporary heroes of the Christian faith were used to bring the message to the campers. This helped them to understand that we can trust God completely with our lives, even when we face trials and adversity. All the counselors did an amazing job by taking turns to deliver the message daily.



Our daily small group sessions were special times to go deeper with the kids. It was just as important for us to hear from the campers their thoughts, how they were feeling and provided an opportunity to discuss any questions that were lingering.

The campers had the opportunity to do arts and crafts, dance and drama, play team games, sports, and martial arts to help build their confidence, self-control and learn sportsmanship.

Every week, we took a trip to the neighborhood pool, to cool down from the summer heat. Thanks to generous donors and the **Stepping Stones Ministry** who provided us with bicycles, they were able to explore some of the nearby bike paths. Those campers who didn't know how to ride, were taught! Other special activities the kids enjoyed included Literacy Day where they were encouraged to become avid readers. They were also introduced to new skills such as robotics, facilitated by **First Robotics Canada**. To top it all off, the Day Camp ended with an exciting day of fun, and food at the **Heart 2 Soul Fest**. The day concluded with bike giveaways and each child awarded with a gift and a certificate, highlighting their strengths.



On August 21<sup>st</sup> we left behind the hustle and bustle of the city and traveled north to the serene and beautiful **Camp Koinonia** in Parry Sound. For 5 idyllic days the 39 campers and leaders were surrounded by God's beautiful creation and immersed in His loving presence! For many campers, though this was their first time going overnight camping, they

quickly adapted. They relished going hiking, canoeing, jumping into and swimming in the lake, along with devouring the wonderful meals. The days ended around the campfire under starlit skies eating S'mores.

We could not help but notice and celebrate the transformation in the kids. There were those who began to socialize right away, and a few who were very introverted and afraid to let anyone in. Over the course of the summer however, we saw many of these campers blossom. They became more confident and discovered new talents and abilities they never knew they had. The campers were encouraged as they participated in cabin devotions, the daily challenge, and Bible study sessions which pointed them to Christ's love. The result was that nearly all made first time commitments or recommitments to follow Christ and we even witnessed one camper being baptized!

We are immensely grateful to all who contributed to making this summer 2021 the best camp experience for many! Thank you for your continued prayers and support of Seeds of Hope Camp! Because of you, hope has been restored and many young lives and families were transformed by the love of God demonstrated through you! May God continue to show you His favor as you continue to stand with us!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Osei".

Benjamin Osei  
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