



SAINT PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Bi-lingual Afterschool Program

South Street at Maple Avenue | Morristown, New Jersey

August 27, 2015

OUR STORY...

In 2011, we welcomed a group of Spanish-speaking Christians to worship using St. Peter's space. In time, we became friends and the members of this new church joined with us as we cared for our property and decorated our church for the holidays. We grew close, especially with a group of hard-working women who appeared to be responsible for organizing this fledgling church. In 2012, we decided to offer 'English as a Second Language' courses, and as we got to know the students, we learned of some of their dire needs.

- Over 50% of the adults were illiterate in their own language.
- Most earned less than minimum wage for their work and had two if not three jobs in order to live at a subsistence level.
- Afterschool and Arts Programs were unavailable to their children because even subsidized programs were too expensive.
- They were unable to meet with and understand daily teacher's communications, and the children were coming to school unprepared and filled with anxiety.
- Numbers of families were living at one address and children were huddled together during the summer because camp programs were unavailable.
- Children were unable to swim in the town and township pools due to high costs and parents' inflexible work schedules.
- Most members came from Guatemala and Honduras, with 20% speaking the Maam native language.
- Many were reluctant to seek medical attention, and often injuries were being self-treated.



In the spring of 2013 we decided to open a Vacation Bible School which would run for four weeks in our air conditioned church space. We employed high-school students, volunteers and artists to bring enrichment and happy fun to all of the children who enrolled. Thrillingly, 45 children came, and from this beginning we formed a stronger bond with the community. We began to receive the joy, energy, and love offered through this new relationship. Many volunteers said that they could not wait to come to VBS each day, and it was clear that the children felt the same way.

In the summer of 2014 we extended our Bi-Lingual Vacation Bible School to six weeks offering a full Arts Program, and opened it up to 70 children. This past summer, in 2015, we welcomed over 90 children to our Bi-Lingual camp.

With the success of our VBS program, two vital additions were made. During the winter of 2014, we began offering grocery bags filled with fresh vegetables, meat and dairy to 110 families each week. We also started a pilot 5-day-a-week afterschool program that included an agreement with the Morris School District to bus students to St. Peter's for tutoring. We organized over 30 adults, many of whom were retired educators including two retired principals, to be on hand to help with the program. Their assistance was invaluable. Imagine your child bringing home a message from the teacher in a language you could not understand. Our tutors were diligent in reading take-home messages from teachers, and helped to keep our students and parents up-to-date and prepared.

Many gifted children who love to sing joined our Chorister program and began the serious study of Anglican repertoire, attending rehearsals four afternoons a week and singing on Sundays. As the children were touched by the poetry, discipline, and beauty of the music, they were also leading worship, giving them the confidence to be an inspiration to others.



OUR PHILOSOPHY...

We are dedicated to building a loving, rigorous community which prepares children to be strong, empowered, and healthy. We consider art not a privilege but a necessity, and we give children adequate time to become musicians, painters, and writers. We treat children with love and respect, and we believe that we learn as much from them, as they learn from us.

THE NEXT STEP...

We now look forward to opening our full-fledged five-day-a-week afterschool program. This will include qualified tutors in Math, Language Arts, and a full Fine Arts Program as well as a world-class Chorister program. We are thrilled to be a happy, warm and inspiring place for all families and children!

TUITION AND COSTS...

- Families are asked to pay \$76 per child per week for the full afterschool program.
- Most families receive vouchers from their schools, which covers \$60 of the weekly tuition.
- Choristers receive a scholarship, which covers \$51 of the weekly tuition.
- No child is ever turned away because of a lack of funds.

The cost to St. Peter's for this important ministry is only \$3,495 per child for the program year.. While the tuition and grants cover 73% of the operating cost, we look to the generosity of our friends and family to help cover the 27% gap.

WILL YOU HELP US?

St. Peter's work in the bi-lingual community has been almost entirely underwritten by many loving contributions, and the generous time of volunteers and staff-members of this Church. We are grateful for the initial contributions given by The Simon Foundation, the Kirby Foundation, Morris Arts Council, the Alleluia Fund, the Marge Christie Fund, America's Grow a Row Foundation, the Morris School District, the Harding Township Schools, the Community Soup Kitchen, and many others.



Your help can truly change the lives of many Morristown children.

Sincerely,

The Reverend Janet Broderick