



God's crew members...

- *Jesus saves from sin.*
- *God guides with His Word.*
- *Work together to serve God, people.*
- *Send messages to others by word and deed.*
- *Show their faith by trusting Jesus for everything.*

In the name of Jesus, the only true Master and Commander of our souls, dear fellow crew members:

Growing up on the Oregon coast gave me plenty of stories to illustrate this year's Vacation Bible School theme for the children: **Set Sail with the Son!**

- *Jesus saves from sin.*

Object: Life preserver

M.C. story: My boyhood friend, fellow parishioner, drowned.

Bible story: Mark 4:35-41 (text) – retell how tired Jesus was, but still trusting enough to sleep. Disciples are in trouble because they have “no faith” in Jesus to care for them. At least they prayed, and He wasted no time in helping them with His powerful Word.

Application: Our friends need to know about Jesus who is the true life saver from sin, death and hell.

Memory verse: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (1 Timothy 1:15)

- *God guides with His Word.*

Object: Rudder

M.C. story: Fishing with dad and brothers on Wickiup Reservoir in a canoe with neither keel nor rudder. Wind and waves blowing sideways until safely ashore, then hole in the boat needing a patch.

Bible story: Joseph had a *rudder* in God's Word to guide him away from sin with Potiphar's wife. But in spite of his best efforts, more trouble followed until God more than patched up his life. (Genesis 39)

Memory verse: “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

- *Work together to serve God, people.*

Object: Sails

M.C. story: Crew climbs high to set the sails, but it does no good without the wind. In Southern Hemisphere sailing boats often got stuck in the *doldrums*. Crews complaining about all the work finally had nothing to do as they sat there. But when wind finally came up, they got underway, glad to be working and sailing again toward home.

Bible story: Offering to build tabernacle in the desert straddled the sin of the golden calf. Law and Gospel was the wind of the Holy Spirit that filled the sails of the people to get to work with skills and offerings beyond what was needed. (Exodus 35-40)

Application: We sometimes get into the *doldrums* too especially when we're either not hearing God's Word or receiving the Sacrament. The wind of the Holy Spirit blows through them and fills our sails. We sometimes need Christians with the gift of encouragement to come along and help us see our sin, then see our Savior. Law and Gospel Means of Grace are God's “wind” to get us underway again.

Memory verse – VBS: “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.” (Romans 12:6)

Another: “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Epistle – Ephesians 4:7)

- *Send messages to others by word and deed.*

Object: Signals, ship's horn

M.C. story: Deschutes River rapids below the Wickiup Reservoir not as easy to float as we thought. Shouting from people on shore got us out, but friend and younger brother nearly lost with raft.

Bible story: After Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, Peter preached God's Word by word and deed. Healed Aeneas in Jesus' Name and raised Tabitha from the dead. The warning for us is not to trust our own power as God's "Mighty Crew." (See VBS song.)

Memory verse: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

- *Show their faith by trusting Jesus for everything.*

Object: Anchor

M.C. story: Fishing again with dad and brothers on a day too foggy. Anchor stuck and would not pull out. Wrong place at the wrong time with water rushing out to sea past buoy. Remembered my friend who drowned and wondered if I would. Need anchor of Christ in the right place.

Bible story: Mark 4:35-41 (text) – The disciples did not have faith or true fear of God until they learned who Jesus is for them. We too need knowledge with the faith to believe the facts as the dear Holy Spirit gives them in His Holy Word. Then we can say with David now in heaven enjoying the truth of this Word of God...

Memory verse: "I trust in God's unfailing love (dōx) forever and ever." (Psalm 52:8)

Conclusion: VBS is not just for kids. May we all take every opportunity not only to learn the facts, but also to grow in grace and wisdom as the dear Holy Spirit builds us up in our most holy faith. [Quote end of Epistle – Ephesians 4:11-16.]