

The O'Donalds Partner Letter Summer 2026

One of the busiest times at The Gates Church is wrapping up as summer draws to a close. We've been very blessed with a great summer in Baltimore. Church attendance has been between 50 mid-70s, which is higher than we've ever really had at The Gates Church. For years, even 50 people on a Sunday morning has felt unattainable. We can praise only the Lord for what he is doing in the hearts of the people of Armistead Gardens.

Just as we did last summer, we hosted our month-long Adventure Camp for elementary and middle schoolers. We partner with a Baltimore City program called Youth Works that employs thousands of high school and college-age students. These young adults are paid to work for a non-profit (like our church) and learn about responsibility and the need to work, a concept often lost on young people in our context.



Adventure Camp was a great success, with an average of 12 kids most days. We also had the great opportunity to disciple our camp staff. We really could not have done any of it without a few loyal adult brothers and sisters who help keep our staff engaged and on task while bringing great Christ-like love and care for our campers.

Adventure camp was a four-week program that began the week after this year's VBS program. VBS went very well. We got to meet new kids and catch up with some we hadn't seen in months or even years. Bible stories that are so familiar to us never cease to fascinate and move children who have never heard them. Friday night was filled with raised hands and open hearts when

the kids were asked "Would anyone like to know more about what it means to be a child of God?" The leaders collectively stretched out their hands over 20 of the kids they spent the week with.

We tried some new things this summer. During VBS hours we also hosted a Bible study for adults. It was a huge success having almost as many attendants as our VBS. We had a team of guys visit us and cook us pound upon pounds of barbecue and sides one night of VBS. That alone brought out several new kids, adults, and teenagers.

We had only one other traditional mission team of college-age young adults. Most of them had not been to Baltimore before, and they did lots of door knocking and street evangelism. They even helped us put on a great Sunday evening cook out.

We O'Donalds are currently on a bit of a sabbatical in South Carolina. We are wrapping up spending a month here praying and planning, while also visiting and helping family members. We're so glad to have gotten to see some of y'all, and we deeply appreciate your prayers and would humbly ask you to continue to bring us and The Gates Church in Baltimore, Maryland before the throne of the Lord.

