

July 9, 2009

Dear Kidz Praise Families and Directors:

I hope you are enjoying the beginning of your summer and that you are able to find quality time to spend as families. I want to thank you for your participation in Kidz Praise this past year. I am grateful for the commitment you made to be a part of this ministry and for all the hard work you invested. As we look ahead to this coming fall, I wanted to make you aware that we have made the difficult decision of suspending the Kidz Praise Ministry for the 2009-10 ministry year.

We have spent a good bit of time over the last two years praying about the Kidz Praise Sunday night program. Some of you who are newer to Providence or the Kidz Praise program may not know that we have seen a significant decline in attendance over the past five years and a more gradual decline in participation over the past 10 years. In addition, we have had great challenges the last four years in filling director and volunteer positions. As you probably know, the director positions are skilled positions, and God has blessed us with some wonderful leaders. I am particularly thankful to Crystal Moran for her leadership over these past two years. However, we continue to experience the void of not having enough directors. This was most evident this last year when we were unable to put together a four-year-old choir for the first time.

I have to tell you honestly that I have mixed emotions about this decision. On one hand, I have a deep desire to see the church investing in the arts and in worshipers. Over the past 10 years, we have held summer camps that have supplemented our Kidz Praise program and for the most part, they have been a success. On the other hand, I do not like to see things in the church done without excellence. We want to take this upcoming ministry year to evaluate where we stand and to look at some of the factors that have led to the decline in participation, recruiting challenges and sub-par programming.

I believe that God is going to give us direction in this matter over the next year. Would you commit to pray for our staff and for the Kidz Praise program over this next year? In addition, if you have any suggestions or thoughts that might be helpful in this evaluation period, we would welcome you to e-mail my assistant, Nan at nan@pray.org.

As far as Sunday night programming, Providence will continue to offer SonStation for children ages birth through three years.

Thank you again for all you have invested in the Kidz Praise Ministry, and we ask you to partner with us in this season of evaluation and prayer.

With appreciation,

Eric Hamsho
Associate Pastor
Worship/Music Ministries