Third graders lead Bible club at school

By **TABITHA GOODLING** Sentinel correspondent

It might not be unusual for a Christian school to have a Bible club. And there is a Bible club at Juniata Mennonite School in McAlisterville.

The club's teachers/leaders are three third-grade boys.

No one told them to form the club.

No one makes sure it meets when it is supposed to.

They formed it on their own desire and have consistently kept it running every Friday morning during first recess for the past three months.

JMS third grade teacher Paula Diven says last fall, three of her students, Luke Bastian, Luke Sheaffer and Trey Tusing, approached her with a sign they had made.

"It said, 'Bible Club Every Friday at Recess,'" Diven says. "They asked me, 'Can we hang this up?""

The teacher recalls looking over the sign and then looking at the boys.

"I said, 'All right guys ... now what exactly are you planning to do?" She says it was then the boys shared their desire to teach "the little kids" Bible stories and help them learn more about God.



Sentinel photo by TABITHA GOODLING

Luke Bastian, left, Luke Sheaffer, center, and Trey Tusing lead their Bible club during recess at Juniata Mennonite School.

Diven told them she would get approval from Administrator Tom Getz. The administrator was fine with the idea as long as recess monitors watched over the meetings.

Luke Bastian says he had wanted to start a Bible club for a

long time and had shared the idea with his friends, Luke and Trey. Luke Sheaffer approached Luke Bastian one day at recess.

"He asked me, 'Do you still want to start a club?" Luke Bastian recalls.

The three boys sat down on

the front porch of the school and drew the sign they later presented to their teacher.

One Friday morning in November, the boys conducted their first meeting. A row of eager kindergarten and first grade students sat on the bench in front of

them as the boys asked them true or false questions regarding Bible passages.

"It lasts the whole recess," Luke Bastian declares.

"And they stay ... they don't leave," Trey says of the smaller students who attend.

The boys pick a particular topic and area of scripture and stick to that theme. One of the more recent themes was prayer and the young teachers referenced Daniel and the Lion's Den as they taught.

"It's neat that we get to tell the (smaller) kids about God," says Trey, whose younger sister, Olivia, a first-grader, has never missed a meeting.

Their teacher says she is not surprised the boys wanted to do this when she reflects on their personalities

"Luke B. is very outgoing and take-charge academically. Trey is outgoing socially and Luke S. has a sweet spirit. He's a rock. He's not going to waiver from his faith and move away from what's right."

Diven has spoken with teachers on recess duty who said boys are doing just as they have planned. They are sharing the Gospel with the smaller children.

"I haven't worried about it," she admits. "(The boys) all have really good hearts."



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