

# Abundant Life Church

Helping People Discover  
and Develop New Life  
In Jesus Christ

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ALC Online

Blog

October 21, 2009



## ALC Annual Pack-n-Pray Night for Operation Christmas Child Sunday, November 1st @ 6pm

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry that provides shoe boxes full of Christmas gifts to children all around the world who are in need. If you would like more information please click on the Operation Christmas Child logo or visit [www.samaritanspurse.org](http://www.samaritanspurse.org).

### Things to bring to Pack-n-Pray Night

- Empty shoe boxes (standard size) or plastic containers
- A variety of gifts for boys and girls to pack into your boxes
- A donation of \$7 per box made payable to Samaritan's Purse

If you cannot make it to Pack-n-Pray Night and would still like to participate, please bring your filled boxes to the church. You may wrap your box if you'd like, but please wrap the lid separately. Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your gift.

We will accept shoe box donations until Friday, November 20th, @ 5pm

## ALC Volunteer Openings

**Greeter Ministry:** Many options and openings available. If interested, please contact Becky Stutzman @ 993-0933.

**Computer Operators:** Help run Power Point and Media Shout for Sunday services. To join the team, contact Jared Reall @ 321-3393.

**Kidz Kingdom:** Many opportunities available for adults and high school students. To get involved, contact Kristin Fourie @ 321-6078.

**Hats of Hope:** This ministry sews and knits hats for cancer patients who have lost their hair due to chemotherapy treatment. To get involved, contact Leah Holm @ 746-5043.

## Ushers

### October 25th

Phil Stutzman, Juan Galvan, Ed Detweiler, Josh Hochstetler, Caleb Hochstetler, Steve Steury, Greg Flagg, Kevin Delaney, Josh Heinlein, Jeff Lidster

## Christmas Outreach 2009

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Saturday, Dec 5th  
Begins @ 6pm

Christmas Program  
followed by  
Winter Wonderland

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM : For Preschool-12th Grade.  
Practices are **Mondays @ 6:30pm** for K-12th grade.  
We invite all kids to come out to be a part of the choir.  
Watch for an announcement for the start of preschool practice.

WINTER WONDERLAND...will feature real snow, rides, food, and games! We will need everybody's help to pull off this exciting event! We need help with construction, sewing, food prep, and lots of helpers in other areas. Stop by the Information Center Sunday and see where you can sign up to help!

## Do you have it?

We are missing (or trying to locate) curriculum for a group bible study on the Study of James. If you or your small group have it, please contact Jessica at the church office. Thanks so much!

## Check It Out!

### GARAGE SALE

This Saturday @ ALC

8-12:30

Hosted by the Financial Peace  
University Class

## Missions Corner

### Miami Mission Trip!

We are planning to leave Thur. Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> at 4pm and return Sunday the 8<sup>th</sup> in the morning. The cost for the trip will be \$95 a person, plus gas. We will be working with a homeless ministry on Friday and Saturday, then attending a church service Saturday evening. Call Rick @ 302-3925 with questions.

# KIDZ KINGDOM

Parents, in our current series "**Center Stage**" we are learning how to worship God! This week, our focus will be on giving. We'd like to begin a service project supporting the ministry of the African Children's Choir, who performed for us this year! We will be talking to the kids this week about how they can give, and a letter will be sent home to parents. It's an awesome opportunity to show our kids how blessed we truly are! Thank you for your support!



# UNITE

UNITING THIS GENERATION  
TO AWAKEN OUR PASSION

For 18-20 something's  
Tuesday nights at 7pm  
In the Thrive Center.

For more info, email us at  
[unitesrq@gmail.com](mailto:unitesrq@gmail.com)



Youth Pastor Andy Ard  
924-5835      [andy@alcsrq.com](mailto:andy@alcsrq.com)

Grades 6-12 meet Wednesdays from 6:30-9:15pm in the Thrive Center

Parents - Check out the Parent Newsletter on the Youth Ministry page of ALC's website @ [www.abundantlife-sarasota.com](http://www.abundantlife-sarasota.com)

## Disciple Now

October 23-24 : Cost is \$30

Money due Wednesday, October 21st

For students that have signed up:

Meet @ your host homes

@ 5:30pm Friday.

Click on the THRIVE logo to go to  
our website for more info!

## NO THRIVE

November 4th

Hillsong United Movie



# Abundant Life

6461 Proctor Road  
 Sarasota, FL 34241  
 Phone: (941) 924-5885  
 Fax: (941) 924-5884

[www.abundantlife-sarasota.com](http://www.abundantlife-sarasota.com)

[info@alcsrq.com](mailto:info@alcsrq.com)

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## October 2009 Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Christmas Program Practice, 6:30pm Bringing Up Boys, 7pm "When God's People Pray", 7pm Financial Peace University, 7pm Prayer Night, 8:15pm	6 UNITE, 7pm	7 Thrive, 7pm	8 Praise Band, 7pm	9	10 Men's Breakfast, 7am Night of Praise, 7pm
11	12	13 Small Group Leaders Mtg., 7pm	14	15 Kidz Kingdom Curriculum Night, 4pm	16	17
18 ALC Blood Drive, 8:30am Baptism Service Fall Family Picnic, 4pm	19	20 Finance Team Mtg., 7pm	21	22	23 Thrive Disciple Now	24 Thrive Disciple Now
25	26 Hats of Hope, 7pm	27	28	29	30	31

## **P**RESSING FORWARD

One of the goals that the Apostle Paul had for his life was to give it his all and to finish well.

**Philippians 3:14** (NLT) *“I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.”* He constantly had heaven and the mission God had for him in his sights. Even in prison, he stayed the course and kept moving forward. Nothing was going to keep him from reaching his goal.

My goal is to have that same kind of passion and drive for my life. I want to keep heaven and God’s purpose for my life in my sights every day of my life. I don’t ever want to get to the point where I lose the vision and direction God has for me. I want to stay on track and keep moving forward toward that goal.

## **G**ET IN THE RACE

The moment a person says “YES” to Jesus Christ and invites him into their life to take over, they now begin a new life – a new journey. They now join the race toward the prize. This race however, is not a race to see who finishes first. It is more of a journey that requires us to stay on the right path and to keep moving. In this race you don’t want to stop or take a side street. There are no shortcuts to the finish line. You must stay on course and moving toward the finish line.

So what is the prize at the end of the race? What is our main goal as we move ahead in this journey? The most obvious goal we all have as followers of Jesus Christ is – Heaven. That is our ultimate destiny when we leave this earth. An eternity in Heaven is definitely a good reason to stay on the course of this journey. The other prize we should be focused on is the goal of becoming spiritually mature. The Bible says that spiritual maturity means that we become more and more like Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christ-likeness should be one of our main goals as we live our lives on this journey.

The word we use for the process of becoming Christ-like is **DISCIPLESHIP**. Discipleship is when a follower of Jesus Christ moves toward spiritual maturity; when a person grows in their relationship with God. God’s desire for each of us is to keep learning and growing to be more like Jesus Christ. God gives us many different tools to help us to grow. But the important thing is that we **GROW** – we keep moving toward the prize.

We are all at different places on this journey. Some people have just started the journey, while others have been on it for a long time. But the amount of time a person has been on this journey doesn’t necessarily translate into movement. Many people have started the journey but have been spinning their wheels or stuck in the pit stop. They haven’t really taken their place in the race and their responsibility to grow. No matter where you might find yourself on this journey, it’s important that you continue to do whatever it takes to grow in your relationship with God.

One of the temptations we can have is to compare ourselves to other people on this journey. We could look ahead of us and get discouraged about where we are and be tempted to give up. Or we can look behind us and become irritated or judgmental about those that may not be as far along as we are. Either one is wrong. It’s not so much where we are on the journey, it’s that we need to keep moving forward. Whether it’s a series of small steps or a big step here and there we need to keep moving.

The main resource God gives us to do this is by studying and learning the truth of God’s Word and applying it to our lives. As we allow God’s Word into our minds and our hearts it begins to change us from the inside out. The change in our hearts and our minds will then result in a change in our behavior and the way we live our lives. That process is called discipleship.

There are many different ways God works His truth into our lives. One of those is people. As we are connected together in community we help each other to grow and mature. We are here to encourage each other and challenge each other to keep the course and run the race. God designed us to need each other and to help each other along this journey. As we get God’s truth into our lives and commit ourselves to living it out, we do so in the context of relationships with each other.

We call this “Doing Life Together”. We help each other in the journey and encourage each other as we move toward spiritual maturity and ultimately toward heaven. That’s what the Body of Christ does.

GROWING TOGETHER, **VERN**