

Abundant Life Church

Helping People Discover
and Develop New Life
In Jesus Christ

September 22, 2009

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Fall Family Picnic

Sunday, October 18th, @ 4pm
Twin Lakes Park on Clark Rd.

Hot food, drinks, and tableware will be provided

Last names A-M bring a side dish to share

Last names N-Z bring a dessert to share

**Don't forget
your lawn chairs!**

ALC Online

Blog



Outreach Opportunity

MDS Partnership Program - Florida unit and local churches are building a home for Ms. Helen Jefferson of McNeill, MS. **Walls and partitions for the home are being built THIS SATURDAY, 9/26, beginning @ 8am in the parking lot of Bahia Vista Mennonite Church (4041 Bahia Vista St).** Dedication will be held Sunday, 10/4 @ 3:30pm. Persons interested in helping should contact Ervin Miller @ 374-9620.

Missions Corner

Do you want to make an impact for Jesus Christ but you aren't sure how to? Consider going to Miami on a Mission Trip with DOOR. We are planning a trip and the tentative dates are Thursday, October 29th – Sunday, November 1st. We would love to see families go, but space will be limited. Contact Rick @ 302-3925 if you are interested. Some ministries have a minimum age requirement, so watch for details coming soon!

Christmas 2009

We are planning “A Winter Wonderland”, a community outreach event immediately following this year's Christmas Program on December 5th. There will be 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!

Prayer Meeting

Prayer Meeting @ 8:15pm in the Worship Center ~ We invite all of you to come out! If you are available to pray for others or need prayer for yourself or someone you know, these nights are for you.

We expect God to move in mighty ways!

Baptism Service

Sunday, October 18th

See Pastor Rick if you'd like to be baptized.

Night of Praise

Mark your calendars for
Night of Praise
Saturday, October 10th

Ushers

September 27th

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

KIDZ KINGDOM - don't miss out!

Hey everyone! Preparations for the Christmas Program have begun! And this year we are planning a community outreach directly following the Christmas Program!! It's called **A Winter Wonderland!** There will be snow, rides, food and games! But we need everybody's help to pull it off! We need people to help with construction, sewing, food prep and lots of helpers in lots of areas! Please call the church office to sign up.

The first practice for the Christmas program is **Monday, October 5th at 6:30 in the Sanctuary.** We will be using kids Kindergarten – 12th grade, with something special for preschoolers! See you then!



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

THRIVE
YOUTH MINISTRIES

Youth Pastor Andy Ard
924-5835 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

Disciple Now

High School & Middle School

October 23-24

Cost is \$30

Sign up @ Thrive this Wednesday

Abundant Life

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September 2009 Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 UNITE, 7pm	2 Thrive, 7pm	3 Praise Band, 6:30pm	4	5 Men's Breakfast, 7am
6	7 Office Closed Happy Labor Day! Prayer Mtg., 6pm	8	9	10	11	12 Thrive Girls High Tea
13	14 "When God's People Pray", 7pm Financial Peace University, 7pm Prayer Night, 8:15pm	15 Finance Team, 7pm	16	17	18	19 Thrive Ichetucknee Trip
20 Class 101, 3-7:30pm	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Hats of Hope, 7pm	29	30			

MAKING THE MOST OF CHURCH

This past Sunday we started a new series called, "Doing Life Together." I like this phrase. It is a good description of what our Small Groups are all about – small groups of people that are doing life together. It also describes the life and interaction of the Church. The Church is the greatest movement to ever hit the planet. The Church will last forever. The Church is the most influential and powerful force on the earth. The Church is God's Family. God loves the Church, it was his idea from the beginning of creation. It was His Plan A for the world. So what is the Church?

A simple definition of the Church is: the group of people that Believe in, and have committed their lives to, Jesus Christ as their Savior & Lord, and are living their lives as His Followers. This applies both to the Universal Church – everyone Believer in the world – and to the local Church – a local group of Believers who meet, worship, and fellowship together. As I said, this is a simple definition, it can get much more involved. The Church is made up of people, people committed to Jesus Christ. It is based on relationships – with God and with each other. The Church is a movement of truth and power designed to influence the world with the life-changing Good News of Jesus Christ. God has given the Church the privilege and the assignment of being the mouthpiece of this message.

One of the problems we face as the modern Church is that we've lost the passion and expression of this kind of Church. For many people in today's world "Church" has been reduced to a meeting, a worship service, and a building or location. Now, we do use these as an important part of the strategy of what the Church does, but in the end they are only tools to accomplish the true purpose of the Church. For many people their Church experience is limited to 1 ½ hours on a Sunday morning. Once they drive out of the parking lot, that's the end of church for them until next week. Then we wonder why the world has become disillusioned with "Church", and why the agenda of the world seems to be advancing above the influence of the Church.

Over the past several years I have been studying this whole theme of what the Church really is and should be. Recently God has been challenging me in an even deeper way on how we could be more effective in this community as Abundant Life Church. I will be sharing bits and pieces of this as we move along the next few months and even years. It will most likely just "leak out" in what we talk about and do with the goal of changing the whole culture of how we do Church. Not sure what it all means yet, but we'll go on this journey together.

BODY LIFE

One of the most powerful descriptions of the Church in the Bible is, "The Body of Jesus Christ." In the past, most of us have interpreted this to be a metaphorical picture of how we work together, using our talents and Spiritual Gifts, to minister in the church. That is totally true – we are all a separate and necessary part of this Body of Christ. But as I study the Bible I see that it is also a more literal description of who we are and what we should be doing in the world. We, as the Church, are the Body of Jesus Christ here on the earth. Ephesians 1:23 says that the Church – us together – are filled with Christ. Now obviously the physical body of Jesus is somewhere else. He ascended to the heavens after his resurrection, but He is still here on the earth as the Church. The Church represents the ongoing Presence and Purpose of Jesus Christ here on the earth.

As the Church, we are to carry out the same mission Jesus had from his Father when he was on the earth – to seek and save lost people. That is our primary task as a church. We are also here to represent Jesus well, because we are His presence here on the earth. People see Jesus in and through us. As we interact with each other and with those in the community do people observe the real Jesus Christ? Does the way we live our lives give people a true and inviting image of who Jesus Christ is? These are questions we will begin to explore in the future. In the meantime, I have a challenge for you. As you read the New Testament try to think of the instructions we are given as a church, through the eyes of Relationships, Lifestyle, and Small Groups, rather than Programs, Meetings, and the Large Group only setting. Next week we'll talk more about our Sunday Services and the important role they play in the Church.

ELDER DECISION

I'd like to thank those of you who responded to the process of us choosing a new Elder for the Team. Over the Summer we have been processing and praying through the possibility of Phil Stutzman joining the Elder Team. Phil & Becky have been very gracious and humble in this process and as Elders we feel that God is calling them to be a part of the Elder Team at this point in time. We look forward to having Phil on the team and ask that you continue to pray for all of us as we seek God for His plan and purpose for ALC. We will have a more formal installation for them in the near future.

Being the Church Together, **VERN**