

New Jersey College Outreach

with Jeff and Karen Grant

Aug-Sept 2012



Hello friends! However this back-to-school time affects your schedule, we pray that the Lord blesses this new season for you, and that you find new opportunities to bring Him glory where He has planted you. We've been uprooted recently ourselves, and are still working out what our life will look like, but we so appreciate your thoughts and prayers as we make this adjustment. We can't wait to share more stories about God changing lives in these coming months! May He be glorified as we keep you updated with what He is doing in New Jersey as well as here at our temporary assignment at Lake Hart STINT. We are always thankful for your partnership!

Love, Jeff + Karen

Praises!

- * safe travel to Florida
- * starting to feel comfortable here
- * found a church to be "home" for the year
- * new friends
- * we love our coaches
- * great community

Prayer Requests

- * Karen's left ear (more details in "family update" section)
- * NJ team to adjust to new dynamics
- * adjusting to our new life/schedule
- * parenting with grace

Campus Events— Changed Life on Summer Project

When Eshe (in pink below) first came to our Summer Project mission trip at Hampton Beach, she was a little arrogant. She knew all the right answers, but when it came to letting it all sink into her heart and change her, this was a challenge.



One night we had an event called the 'international dinner,' an exercise to teach students about the need to take the gospel to the whole world. This program changed Eshe dramatically. She was so broken for the lost around the world, she was crying hysterically, and it opened her eyes. Eshe completely changed by the end of the summer. She has become a humble, godly young woman who wants to live for Jesus and is broken for the lost around the world. Next summer, she plans to go on an overseas summer project and influence others around the world for the sake of the gospel!



Summer mission trips often see new believers place their trust in Christ, but in some ways it is even more impactful on the students themselves who went to minister, setting a course of Kingdom living for the rest of their lives. Please pray that students like Eshe carry what they've learned and continue to spread the gospel on campus and beyond!

New from HQ— First Day as Missionary Journalist

We finally began our training program at Cru's world headquarters in Orlando. While we're here, I (Jeff) will also serve as a "Missionary Journalist," collecting and telling stories of God's provision from Cru ministries all around the world! You will find some of his handiwork in Worldwide Challenge magazine and on Cru.org.

I was greeted in my new cubicle with style by a rowdy band of writers who didn't take long to introduce me to their unique culture and community. We immediately felt a kindred spirit with their artistic, silly, scatterbrained and bombastic nature. It is encouraging to find new friends quickly here, because that will be the biggest salve against the pain of missing our loved ones back home.

Please pray that I rides the learning curve quickly in this fast-paced environment and thrive as God's story-teller!

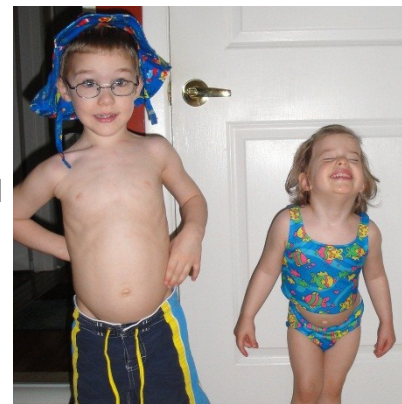



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Family News

We made it to Florida, safe and sound! Jeff drove down with our mini-van loaded with whatever belongings would fit, and my mother helped me fly down with the kids. Mom stayed for a week and it really felt like a vacation as we unpacked and set up our new “home.” So far, we love our teams—the people doing this year-long training program with us (who will henceforth be referred to as “STINT team”), as well as Jeff’s writers team at Cru headquarters. We’ve also found a nearby church with great worship, teaching and fellowship. We are at an apartment complex with most of our STINT team, and we love the community.

There are a ton of little kids here, so a lot of us moms have been trying to socialize (ourselves and the kids!) as much as possible. So far we’ve attended a BBQ, about 5 birthday parties, and a morning of tea and muffins. In addition, I have a friend who comes over about once a week to just chat while the kids play (well her baby is only 4 months old, but she coos and rolls and enjoys watching Arthur and Katherine!).



Our team has 42 adults, 39 kids, and represents 10 different countries. We’d appreciate prayers for these new friends. Most don’t know what God has in store for them after this year. Some came here with wounds—from ministry disappointments to losing babies to physical and mental exhaustion. One is too physically limited (from Crohn’s disease) to even attend our meetings. We know God has a special plan for each one here, and we are thankful that He called us to be part of this team.



I’d love it if you would please pray for continued healing of my left ear. I had a tube put in because it wouldn’t drain for 30 days after our flight down here (prescribed antibiotics, steroids, etc. didn’t help, very long story, very painful). God answered prayers to give me a better attitude during the frustrating time, and I’m very thankful that I can hear in both ears again!

What God’s Been Teaching Us (Jeff)

In our team development times, we are learning to get vulnerable with trusted friends. To do that, they said, we need to recognize where our masks come from. Past wounds we want to avoid and joys we want to recreate teach us ways to present ourselves—to play the game—in order to meet our deceitful desires: to always get our way and to avoid pain at all costs (Ephesians 4:22-24). So, our real self is buried beneath layers of pretense. This fuels addictions and keeps us disconnected and unable to truly give and receive love.

For me, the pain of feeling left out and the approval I got for certain activities have really directed me toward some of my passions, hobbies, college major etc.

A lie still plays in my head if I’m not careful, saying, “people only pretend to like you. You are really annoying them.” I feel like most of my life I was a few years apart from everybody else. Being younger always puts that “you’re a burden on them” role on you, and some teenage betrayal stuff still haunts me if I’m not careful. I think my heart made a vow to “never be a bother.”

On the other hand, my creativity was really fanned by my parents, who would read books (like *Lord of the Rings*) to us while my brother and I played video games or built castles out of Legos. Later on, my brother would run all kinds of fantasy and comic book games for my friends and I. That turned into hours of sword-fighting with my little posse in the backyard and also an interest in acting. One of my junior-high teachers really set me toward acting and writing, just affirming those talents.

It’s easy to say the 2nd set of experiences is much better than the 1st, but the fact is that both can become identities that have way too much influence in my life. The truth is that my value is not defined by what anyone thinks of me, nor by how talented I am or how deeply I bury myself in a book. My value is being a child of God, who died “for the joy [of knowing me] set before Him” (Hebrews 12:2).



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