

New Jersey College Outreach

with Jeff and Karen Grant

Oct/Nov 2012

Greetings and blessings! Please join us as we continue to pray for friends and family on the east coast (especially New Jersey!) in the wake of Sandy. We are so thankful that nobody in our family experienced major loss, though a couple of relatives and teammates will be replacing parts of their homes. It is still hard to believe all that happened and that parts of NJ will never be the same again. Please continue to let us know how we can be praying for you. As always, we are so thankful that you are part of our team and part of our lives!

Love,
Jeff + Karen

Praises!

- * friends & family safe after Sandy
- * making a difference at world headquarters
- * building trust bonds with our new friends
- * medical breakthrough for NJ Director's son's seizures!

Prayer Requests

- * Jeff's friend who is struggling with faith and drugs
- * Continued Hurricane Sandy relief effort
- * Teammate and his family during wife's final stage of Crohn's
- * parenting with grace

Campus Events: Non-Christians Getting Involved

By the end of a recent Bible study at Fairleigh Dickinson University, students were weeping, broken before the Lord and praying for one another in unity.



Freshman Dan surrendered his life to Jesus. Students gathered to pray for him, and he confessed that he was struggling with suicide! Pray for Dan (in the green shirt), as we are trying to connect him to a church and help him start his relationship with Christ.

Non-Christians (including those struggling with homosexuality) have consistently come out to our Bible studies and outreaches. Freshman Cooper even came to Jersey Cru and was even singing to Jesus during worship (please pray for his salvation).

On another note, the Gay/Straight Alliance and the Latino club both *asked us* to do a Pizza & God with their groups! The Gospel Choir (students who grew up Christian and are not walking with Jesus) will also be partnering with us. God has certainly been opening doors for us, as we have been praying for a revival on campus! Please pray with us.

New from HQ: Huge Development in Church Partnership

Knowing that our time at Cru's international headquarters is limited, Karen and I have been busy getting to know as much as we can about what is going on throughout this enormous organization as well as building a wide network of relationships. It seems many people in our program have come with specific missions in mind, and we are no exception.

I've often shared that I have a big heart for seeing church volunteers on the campus, engaging with students. It is best for the student, the church and the ministry; but because it is so complex, there is not a good program in place (yet!) to make that happen. It has been my goal to put together practical steps to help Cru missionaries and churches know how to get started and where they best fit together, even in their unique situations.

This past week has seen some amazing progress with that project. I shared my Church Partner Handbook with Cru's national director of communications (over all 73 ministries) and the campus ministry's communication coordinator.

They loved it! They called it "Cru in a box," a tool lay-people could use to even be able to run ministries on campuses that Cru staff aren't able to reach (due to limited manpower). They have already begun introducing me to major leaders in several different branches of Cru and I present at a "round table" discussion next week. Please pray for God to unify His people in this effort.



Family News

We have all adjusted so well to life here! (Don't worry, we are planning on returning to NJ when our program here ends in June!) We have a defined schedule for the first time since having our kids, and that has made parenting so much easier in so many ways. We have coaches who pour into us individually, in addition to speakers who help us process relevant issues. We've gotten to use various tools to help us discover who we were made to be and how we can best serve God out of love. We are surrounded by families in the same situation (full-time ministry, little kids, not sure how to put it all together) yet from all kinds of different backgrounds. It is so nice to feel understood and to share with other moms in a similar position—I feel like I've been able to teach and to learn, but most of all I love that fellowship is so readily available.

The kids are loving it. Of course the weather is nice down here, so we spend a lot more time outside (this has been greatly helpful with everyone's moods!). After a couple weeks of adjusting, they love childcare on Wednesday morning (when Jeff and I meet with our whole STINT team for seminars, training, etc.). They also both enjoy their Sunday School and are eager to tell us what they learn each week. It's great to have so many kids around the same age for them to be friends with!

Arthur is particularly interested in Toy Story, Zelda (video game that Mommy plays for him) and "rice trucks"—thanks to my genius mother, he will sit for a very long time using a tiny dump truck, tractor, front-loader (etc!) to play with rice in a big box lid. It's really fun to listen to the scenarios and dialogue he comes up with! He also recently learned to count to 100 by himself, so he is pretty excited about practicing that.



Katherine is usually interested in whatever Arthur is doing. She's almost done being 2—which means her behavior has been a lot more pleasant, but now she is coming into the stage where everything is "scary." We remember this from when Arthur went through it, but it is still hard when she wakes up crying from a bad dream or randomly starts shrieking about a cartoon animal from a kids' show. Aside from that she is usually pretty laid-back. She is also very entertaining to observe when she is playing with toys and making them have little conversations. Lately she is excited about singing and counting things!



What God's Been Teaching Us (Karen)

Each week I see more evidence that God wanted us here this year and that He is using this time for His glory. At first, I felt like a failure for wanting to come here. Many of you know that leading up to this I was dealing with post-partum depression, my dad's death, side effects from medication, then worse physical effects from ending the medication—and I felt like I needed to do this program or I just wouldn't survive another year in ministry. But I told Jeff that it needed to be *his* decision, and I would trust and follow, because I knew He would pray and look at everything objectively and make a choice that reflected God's will over mine. So God allowed me to come here in freedom from guilt and self-doubt.

Within this extremely nurturing environment, I've seen changes in myself that I've been wanting to see for a long time. I don't know if I can put it into words, but I feel like some "simple" truths have finally made the arduous journey from my head to my heart. I've been enjoying my current roles so much more, now that I've let go of some false expectations and unrealistic goals for the life stage I am in (thanks to some of our speakers and a great book called *Your Life in Rhythm*). I've stopped beating myself up for a lot of things. I've been experiencing relationships in a more healthy way. God has been showing me grace upon grace, and has shown me different ways I can express that grace to the people in my life—including myself.

But I can also see clearly that this is not all about me. Several different people have told Jeff that his being here is a specific answer to prayer. Some of the ideas he's brought to his office have people talking about "revolutionizing the way we do ministry." We have made a difference in the lives of people here through conversations and simple acts, like bringing a meal to a family that seems to be losing their wife/mother to Crohn's disease. Please pray for them and for us to continue to be able to bless those around us and see how God wants to use us in the future.



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