

# THE BUZZ

August 2011



# EPIC SUMMER CAMP



**Ballast Point Campus:**

5101 Bayshore Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33611

**Islands Campus:**

97 Biscayne Ave.  
Tampa, FL 33606

www.stfchurch.com

Please mail all correspondence to the Islands Campus address.

**Directory**

Office.....	813-251-1515
Fax.....	813-251-1591
Accounting.....	x 207
Bible Study.....	x 208
Celebrate Recovery.....	x 219
Children’s Ministry.....	x 308
Food Services.....	x 315
Graphic Arts.....	x 322
Media Publications.....	x 323
Membership.....	x 203
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Operations.....	x 313
Pastoral Ministry.....	x 203
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Singles Ministry.....	x 214
Small Groups.....	x 214
Student Ministry.....	x 219
Women’s Ministry.....	x 219
Worship Ministry.....	x 212

**Senior Staff**

Craig Rees.....	Lead Pastor
Todd Roberts.....	Associate Pastor
Rob Flint.....	Student Pastor
Kelly Green.....	Missions Pastor
Glyn Norman.....	Service Pastor
Tom Sander.....	Interim Worship Pastor
Gary Taylor.....	Singles Pastor
Rick DePirro.....	Contemporary Worship Minister
Steve Holland.....	Student Minister
Liz Burley.....	Spiritual Formation Director
Steve Hill.....	Operations Director
Tyler Johnston.....	Technical Arts Director
Karen Levine.....	Children’s Director
Kelly Nielsen.....	Graphic Arts Director
Frank Sivard.....	Finance & Administration Director
Jim Weeks.....	Researcher & Curriculum Developer
Jennifer Clark.....	Executive Assistant

**Welcome!**

**A**s I sit here typing this, I am in a lot of pain. I’ve been struggling with a weak area in my lower back for several years now, but this past year has been the breaking point. My back went out on me over Christmas break, and I was incapacitated for nearly two weeks. Over the course of this year, most of the time it has been better. But every so often, I start having pain again in my lower back. Unfortunately, I am not very good at heeding this warning. I will keep pushing myself until finally my entire back locks up in spasms, and I am once again completely taken out of the action. When will I ever learn?

When it comes to life in this sinful world, I think we all probably have the same struggle. We receive the warning signs that complete failure is ahead, and yet we keep plugging forward in our own strength, thinking our weakness will pass and everything will turn out just fine. When will we ever learn to press “pause,” pray, and seek God for His strength before going any further? I was comforted by one of the lessons in the “Press Pause” devotion guide that referred me to Psalm 121:1-2, which reminds us that our help comes from the Lord.

This summer, many of you took time out of your busy schedules to participate in VBS, student summer camp, and mission trips. I am excited to share what everyone at STF has been up to this summer. Inside are featured a two-page photo spread on VBS, a photo spread on student camp, and articles from Kimberley Pace (Amazon mission trip) and Amber Johansen (Dominican Republic mission trip.)

As the summer wraps up and we move into the fall schedule, take a look in the Student Ministry and Singles Ministry sections for exciting upcoming events. Inside this issue you will also find information on the return of the Women’s Bible study, Awana, and the launch of the new Growth and Community groups. Be sure to join us as we resume Wednesday night dinner and worship on August 17. We hope you have had a great summer!

In Christ,  
Teresa L. Nielsen, Editor  
Graphic Arts Associate  
TeresaN@stfchurch.com  
251-1515, ext. 323

**Average Sunday attendance for July**

Worship Services: 805  
Bible Study: 214

**THE BUZZ**

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**On the Cover**

Artwork design by Kelly Nielsen

Check out the photo spread on page 22 from the Student Ministry’s summer camp!



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**Missions Ministry: “Amazon Outreach in Brazil” by Kimberley Pace**



**Children’s Ministry: Vacation Bible School photo spread**

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## Sermon Series

### Sundays in August: "Worship: The Big Picture"

Have you ever walked passed something — something that you've passed by a thousand times — and suddenly noticed something about it? Maybe you just weren't seeing it. Like how a person who strives to be good can still miss seeing the God of the Universe. Being moral or religious doesn't mean that we will see God. We may see what others see in God, or hear what some say God said. But until we take a hard look at Jesus for ourselves and see life from God's perspective, the Big Picture, worshipping God, will simply be a hazy form. In this series we are reminded of the need to truly see the God who calls us, and to be challenged to live our lives in view of the Big Picture: to practice supreme love for God, mutual love for each other, and sacrificial love for those in need. During this series, we'll be looking at what it takes to become true worshippers who acknowledge that worship is not about a style, but about a lifestyle.

## Wednesdays:

August 17 — Pause Celebration Worship Night

August 24, 31, and September 7 — "Lessons in Leadership"

## Baptism

If you would like to be baptized, or would like more information about baptism, please email [Baptism@stfchurch.com](mailto:Baptism@stfchurch.com) or fill out the contact form at [www.stfchurch.com/baptism](http://www.stfchurch.com/baptism). You can read more about what baptism means at [www.stfchurch.com/baptism](http://www.stfchurch.com/baptism).

## Shoreline Membership Classes

Sundays, September 11, 18 and 25

9 - 10 AM, Room A201, BP Campus

### One-day marathon class: November 6

12:30 - 3:30 PM, Islands Campus

These classes offer an opportunity to find out more about STF, explore membership opportunities, ask questions, and get connected. A reservation is requested. If you would like to attend the Shoreline classes, or would just like more information, please email [Membership@stfchurch.com](mailto:Membership@stfchurch.com) or fill out the contact form at [www.stfchurch.com/membership](http://www.stfchurch.com/membership).

## Islands Campus Second Sunday Potluck Lunch


Sunday, August 14, 12 - 1:30 PM, Islands Campus

Please join us for fellowship after the worship service! Everyone is welcome! Come meet our pastor and STF family. Sign up to bring a dish by sending an email to [potluck@stfchurch.com](mailto:potluck@stfchurch.com).

Are you  
in the know?  
Do you want more  
information?  
Are you  
receiving  
the church-wide  
emails?

Did you know that we send out church-wide emails every month to tell you about upcoming events and church needs? We also send out special messages from Pastor Craig with important information. If you want to know more about what's going on at church, then you need to go to the church website and sign up for our newsletter. Just go to [www.stfchurch.com](http://www.stfchurch.com) and click on NEWSLETTER on the top of the page. Enter your email address and select the type of information you'd like to receive. Selecting "General Interest" will sign you up to receive the monthly email newsletter.





**Help me!  
I'm lost!**

**Me too!**

### Lost and Found

Each week we collect many items that go into our lost and found. Some of them could belong to you. If you are missing an item, check the lost-and-found bin at the Connection Center. We want these items to say instead, "I once was lost, but now am found!"

## South Tampa Fellowship

### Our God-given Call

Leading toward life-change through God's Word

### Our Mission

To provide opportunities for life-change

### Our Vision

To know the Truth of Jesus Christ, to be known in Family and to make Him known through Service

Individual life-change occurs through encounters with God's Word. We share God's Word as a large-church family with a smaller-church feel, meeting people where they are because God met us where we were. Global life-change takes place one life at a time. We intentionally share across the table, walk along the bay, confer across the country and reach around the world.

### Our Corporate Habits

At the heart of our mission statement are five ministry values:

VALUE #1: CAMPUS APPROACH (1 Corinthians 9:19-27)

We want to connect communities in South Tampa through neighborhood campuses, because we believe you don't need a big building to build a strong community. The makeup of the population in South Tampa leads us to the conclusion that we must reach different people different ways. One style does not suit all, so we will use various means – and various campuses – to reach as many people as possible.

VALUE #2: FAMILY FEEL (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

STF will be a place where your name is known and His name is made known. We want you to feel that you are worshipping in a large church but fellowshipping in a small church. We want to meet your needs in an environment where you don't have to "take a number."

VALUE #3: GLOCAL (Acts 1:8)

We believe we have received a local commission for a global mission. Global + local = glocal. We are glocal because to us success is not determined by seating capacity but by sending capacity – our capacity to reach out. We are glocal because we believe you can have worldwide appeal without neglecting the local feel. Meaningful change happens one life at a time, and so we are also glocal because everyone is our neighbor.

VALUE #4: CONNECTED (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

Life-change most often happens in the company of friends. We believe that the fruit of loving God and loving others is connection. We believe that to be a light a person needs to be plugged in to a community and turned on to God's mission.

VALUE #5: LEADERSHIP (Proverbs 29:18; 2 Timothy 2:2)

Without vision people perish, and without leadership people fail. Every believer is called to serve where placed and bloom where planted. Leadership involves influence. We believe in leadership because we are called to guide people along the pathway of spiritual pursuit. We are challenged not to follow the easy path but rather to lead toward places where there is no path, blazing a trail for others to follow!

In short, the vision of STF is to live out our name: S = Service T = Truth F = Family

## FINANCIAL UPDATE as of 6/30/11

	Actual	Budget	Better(Worse) than Budget
<b>Operating Income:</b>			
Tithes & Offerings	\$2,014,563	\$1,977,000	\$37,563
Other Income/(Loss)	238	800	(562)
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>\$2,014,801</b>	<b>\$1,977,800</b>	<b>\$37,001</b>
<b>Operating Expenses:</b>			
Compensation & Benefits	1,006,180	1,003,454	(2,726)
Missions, Pastoral Care & Benevolence	215,812	204,954	(10,858)
Family Life Ministries	156,261	152,739	(3,522)
Worship Ministries	31,481	32,359	878
General & Administrative Expenses	142,426	147,914	5,488
Technical, Media & Graphic Arts	71,308	73,792	2,484
Operations	181,402	216,951	35,549
Food Service	18,532	19,360	828
Equipment Purchases/Capital Projects	17,611	17,000	(611)
Interest Expense	132,617	127,228	(5,389)
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,973,630</b>	<b>\$1,995,751</b>	<b>\$22,121</b>
<b>Operating Surplus/(Shortage)</b>	<b>\$41,171</b>	<b>(\$17,951)</b>	<b>\$59,122</b>
<b>Construction Loan:</b>			
Original Loan Balance	\$5,768,025	\$5,768,025	
Repayments to Date	2,503,025	2,518,025	
<b>Balance Outstanding - End of Month</b>	<b>\$3,265,000</b>	<b>\$3,250,000</b>	

Please make checks payable to "South Tampa Fellowship."

### Notes to Financial Statement:

Tithes and offerings for the month of June were slightly less than budget, but we are still better than budget for the fiscal year to date. Operating expenses for the year to date are \$22,000 better than budget, leaving us with an operating surplus that is \$59,000 better than budget. For the eight-month period ending June 30, we have made principal payments on our construction debt in the amount of \$585,000.

### Online Giving Available

1. Go to the church home page at [www.stfchurch.com](http://www.stfchurch.com), click on the Giving Login link at the bottom of the page and watch the three short tutorial videos.
2. Request your member number and password.
3. After receiving your member number and password, log in and follow the on-screen instructions to set up your e-giving. You can make one-time gifts, or you can set it up for automatic recurring payments (weekly, monthly, etc.).

When mailing in tithes and offerings, please send them to the Islands Campus at 97 Biscayne Ave., Tampa, FL 33606.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Deaths

Condolences to:

**Teresa and Kelly Nielsen** in the death of Kelly's grandfather, Henry Rushing, on July 22.

If you or your immediate family members are hospitalized, delivering a baby or experience the loss of a family member, please notify the church office at 251-1515, or email us at PrayerRequest@stfchurch.com.

### Weekday Volunteers

We need volunteers to work the BP Campus reception desk during the week. Duties are answering the phone and greeting visitors. No experience needed. While you are working, you have the freedom to read or study. Email Teresa Ryan at TeresaR@stfchurch.com, or call 251-1515, ext. 219.

Shifts available:

Mon. - Fri. 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Mon. - Fri. 12:30 PM - 4:30 PM

### Parking at BP Campus

Please be courteous in reserving our on-site parking spaces for visitors, handicapped, individual parents with small children, and senior adults. There is plenty of parking available just across the street at the elementary school. Please use those spaces and hop on one of our parking shuttles!

### Meals Ministry

Did you know that STF has a meals ministry? We serve those who have recently had a death in the family, a new baby, surgery, or just need extra help for a variety of reasons. We are now using a free online tool to help schedule those meals at [www.TakeThemAMeal.com](http://www.TakeThemAMeal.com). If you volunteer to take a family a meal, you will be provided a link to the website with the sign-up details. If you are in need of meals, or would like to volunteer to provide meals to those in need, please email [MealsMinistry@stfchurch.com](mailto:MealsMinistry@stfchurch.com). We can provide you with the names of our STF family members who are currently in need of assistance, or set up a web page to have meals delivered to you.

## Community and Growth This Fall

As a result of praying and preparing over the summer for more opportunities for community and growth, we are excited about what God has in store for STF this fall. Rather than having independent sign-ups for different ministries or groups, we are integrating the registration for all the opportunities at one time in mid-August. During "Pause," where has God been showing you that He wants to work in your life?

### FALL CONNECTION FAIR Sundays, August 21 and 28 following the services at both campuses

Plan to explore opportunities at our Connection Fair to learn about options and sign up for a group or study including:

- Celebrate Recovery step studies
- Small Groups
- Semester-long Growth Groups
- Sunday Adult Bible studies
- Women's Bible study
- and more!

Sign-ups will be also be available online August 15 - 31 at [www.stfchurch.com](http://www.stfchurch.com). Groups and studies will meet both on campus and around the city, and will start after Labor Day.

Rather than attending multiple groups, we encourage you to pray about where to focus this fall to deepen your relationship with God and others, and to work toward making disciples. Be praying about your next step for growth and connecting!

## Wednesday Dinner 4:30 - 6 PM

### Starting again August 17!

Join us before the worship service and Wednesday night activities for a great meal. Entrees are just \$6 and include two sides. Call 251-1515, ext. 402, on Wednesday each week for that night's full menu.

Menu subject to change.

A vegetarian plate is offered each week for \$4.

### Entrées

August 17: BBQ chicken with garlic mashed potatoes, steamed broccoli, garden salad and corn bread

August 24: Beef stew in a sourdough bread bowl with steamed green beans and Caesar salad

August 31: Lasagna with Italian salad and garlic toast

## Senior Adults

### Open Door Luncheon

Thursday, August 25

12 PM, BP Campus

Guest Speaker: Sean McHale,  
President of Home Helpers



All are invited to our Open Door Luncheon this month where our guest speaker will be Sean McHale, President of Home Helpers. His company helps aging seniors safely manage and enjoy an active lifestyle while maintaining their independence by offering services such as companionship, bathing, dressing, feeding, grocery shopping, light housekeeping, laundry, transportation to doctor's office, pick-up prescriptions, errand services, and much more. Reservations required. Sign up at the Connection Center, in your Sunday Bible study class, or call Teresa Ryan at 251-1515, ext. 219.

### Game Day

Friday, August 5

10 AM - 12 PM, BP Campus Café



Join us at 10 AM for fun and games like Chicken Foot. Bring a game that you would like to play. Afterward, stay and enjoy lunch with us. Bring your own sandwich; salad and dessert will be provided (what a great deal!). If you plan to stay for lunch, please call Teresa Ryan in the church office at 251-1515, ext. 219.

## SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

### Spanish Ministry

Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:30 PM

2804 W. San Isidro Street, Tampa

Led by Karen and Angel Oyola

*Bienvenido*

Join us for a great time of breaking bread, fellowship and Bible study. Invite your Latino friends! For more information, email Angel Oyola at [SpanishMinistry@stfchurch.com](mailto:SpanishMinistry@stfchurch.com). See the article on page 11, "STF To Launch Spanish Ministry," for more information about Karen and Angel Oyola.

### Mision Hispana

Los invitamos! Nos reunimos los Miercoles desde las 6:30 - 8:30 PM en el hogar ubicado en 2804 W. San Isidro St., Tampa. Un gran tiempo de compartir pan, comunion y estudio biblico (Hechos 2:42-47). Invita a tus amigos Latinos. Para mas informacion email Angel Oyola, [SpanishMinistry@stfchurch.com](mailto:SpanishMinistry@stfchurch.com).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## C-HOPE

Cancer First-Response Ministry

*Do you have a loved one or friend walking through the journey of cancer?*

C-HOPE is a ministry that can offer hope, encouragement and prayer. We equip patients, families and caregivers with the tools that can provide confidence and trust in Christ and the power of His Word. C-HOPE comes alongside our partners with fellowship, encouragement, the power of intercessory prayer, and most importantly, hope.

A C-HOPE backpack is an ideal gift for a cancer patient. If you or someone you know would benefit from this ministry, please stop by the Connection Center and pick up a brochure. The brochure provides instructions on how to request prayer and a C-HOPE backpack.

For more information, contact Susan Sivard at [chope@stfchurch.com](mailto:chope@stfchurch.com).

*The C-HOPE backpack includes a cozy fleece, devotional materials, medical book, inspirational book, a Scripture card case that can fit in your pocket, plus a C-HOPE First-Aid Booklet. The contents will offer hope, comfort and encouragement. Bible study classes, small groups, friends or families may order a backpack.*



# WOMEN'S FALL BIBLE STUDY

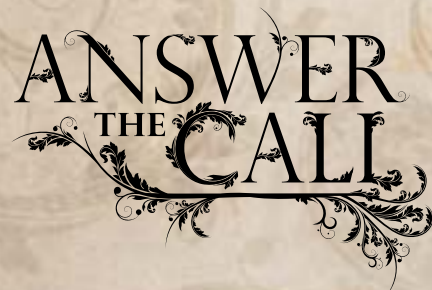
A BETH MOORE DVD STUDY

## HERE AND NOW... THERE AND THEN

A LECTURE SERIES ON REVELATION

Sign up at the Connection Fair on August 21 or 28!

Monday evenings, 7 PM – 9 PM **OR** Tuesday mornings, 9:30 – 11:30 AM  
Beginning September 12 **Cost: \$12** Beginning September 13  
BP Campus for materials BP Campus



**How has God's call changed your life through the giving of your time, talents, and treasure?**

Each month we have featured testimonies of STF members who answered this question above. We hope that you have enjoyed reading about the lives changed at STF and will be inspired to follow God's call in your own life. If you have a story, we would love to feature it here.

Earlier this year during our "Saving Change" sermon series, the pastors challenged our STF family to follow God's command regarding tithing to the church.

**Did you take the 90-day tithing challenge?** If so, would you be willing to write a short testimony about what God did in your life as a result of stepping out in faith? Even if you did not officially sign up with the church to participate, but still did this on your own, we want to hear from you! Tell us what you committed to do, what your concerns were about doing it, and how God proved Himself faithful to you. Sharing your story will bring glory to God and encouragement to others.

If you have a testimony you would like to share for this section, please email the editor of *The Buzz*, Teresa Nielsen, at [TeresaN@stfchurch.com](mailto:TeresaN@stfchurch.com), or call 251-1515, ext. 323.

### A Note from Rick and Chrissy DePirro

To our beloved STF (DIBC) friends, of old and new,

It is with indescribable gratitude that we say farewell to this body of believers.

These are exciting days in our family. Over the past few months, we have been challenged and stretched in seeking God wholeheartedly to follow His will for our lives. As we have sought Him, He has clearly made a straight path for us and called us to obedience. "Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take" (Proverbs 3:6). We confidently step out in faith and look forward to witnessing and being a part of His work.

We do not depart without cost, however. Rick has led worship at STF for over nine years, eight of which he's served full time on staff. He became a licensed minister in this church, recognizing his call to the ministry of Christ. Chrissy gave her life to Christ in this church family five years ago, and has served on staff for almost four years. We've watched many we've loved, served beside and invested in graduate, move, get married, become parents, get baptized and follow the call into ministry. Many of you have been like family to us, standing by us as we've grown in our relationship and in our faith journeys. We are so grateful for these years of love, care, acceptance, patience, forgiveness and guidance. We may be absent from each other, but you will always be in our hearts. We pledge our love, support and friendship to you as we move forward in Christ.

We invite you to join us for 97WEST on Tuesday, August 9, at 7:30 PM at the Islands Campus as we go out singing and praising the Lord for all He has done and continues to do in our lives and in the church. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised" (Psalm 48:1).

Please pray for us as we will also be in prayer for you, so that the body of Christ may be built up "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:13). We would love to keep in touch with you and will post more about where God is leading us as He continues to reveal His plan to us. You can find us on Facebook and at Chrissy's blog ([www.depironotes.com](http://www.depironotes.com)).

All our love,  
Rick & Chrissy



Chrissy and Rick DePirro

**"Faith**  
*is taking the first step,*  
**EVEN WHEN**  
**you don't see the**  
**whole staircase."**

-Martin Luther King Jr.



## Amazon Outreach in Brazil

Article and photos by: Kimberley Pace

Greetings from the Amazon River mission trip team! Seventeen of us ventured out for 11 days traveling up and down the Amazon River in Brazil.

Our journey started with a flight to the city of Manaus. From there, we traveled 30 hours by boat to the Indian reservations in Brazil. We spent about three days visiting in villages of the Mura Indians. We spent the last two days at local churches. We were able to run a number of ministries at all villages.

While in Brazil, we learned a lot about the culture. First, they are family driven. It was a foreign concept to them when we



tried to explain the idea of moving out of our home to go to college or to find a job. The people of the Amazon stay with their family until they are married. Even after they are married (around the ages of 15-17), they stay close by their family.

During our medical ministry, we learned that the natives have many needs. Illness is rampant in this part of Brazil, which is why our medical team served as more of a blessing than they will probably ever realize. The medical team was able to bring knowledge to the natives on how to treat specific illnesses and prevent them from occurring again.

A pharmacy was also set up since so many supporters were gracious enough to donate medicine. Some medicine that is typically unavailable to the natives is serving as relief for the time being. Heather Widell, a physician's assistant from Tampa, was joined by a doctor provided by Amazon Outreach. Their knowledge and abilities served as a huge ministry to the people we met.

The eyeglass ministry was a hidden gem. Little did we realize what an awesome ministry this would be to the people. While many group members had the opportunity to work in this area, Rebecca Schleifer and John Faulkner spent the majority of their time there.

Though the main purpose of this ministry was to go give a quick eye test and provide a pair of reading glasses, the real purpose was to connect and share the power of Christ. Through the sharing of the gospel in the eyeglass section, a number of people came to put their trust in Christ!

Also joining us was Eli Soh, a dentist from Manaus, who worked day in and day out helping the people we met by pulling teeth. Lance Watson and Bea Suez were his constant assistants in this process. Their calm and collective demeanor during this anxious experience offered a sense of calm to the patients.

From our team, Andrew Prilliman, Mike Blasco, Brent Watson, Jay Chastain, and

Francisco Diaz invested in the lives of the men we met through sharing testimonies and playing soccer. Yes, our guys did win a game or two!

Phyllis Woodward, who helped create Amazon Outreach, paired with Bekah Lockwood to run the women's ministry. By sharing their stories and testimonies, they were able to connect with the women we met.

Vacation Bible school ministry was an awesome way for the children to learn stories of Jesus and connect. Leslie Carter, Darby Nolan, Harry Lee, Kandace Woods and Ananda Tolentino shared so much love with the children of the Amazon through stories, songs, acting, coloring and games. These children speak Portuguese, but by laughing and smiling they all connected to one another.



As the team photographer, I helped bring something to the people of the Amazon that so many of us Americans take for granted — pictures. Team member John Faulkner helped me, and together we were able to take a “family photo” of each family and give them a hard copy.

Thank you to everyone who donated supplies toward this trip. Gift bags, photographs for the families, candy, and soccer balls brought a smile that we were blessed to witness. ■

### Pray for our mission team going out this month:

**Gaborone, Botswana (August 8 - 15):**  
Team leader: Pastor Craig Rees

For more information, or to apply to participate on a mission trip, send an email to [Missions@stfchurch.com](mailto:Missions@stfchurch.com).

## STF to Launch Spanish Ministry

Photo and article by: Karen and Angel Oyola

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! For those of you who do not know us, our names are Angel and Karen Oyola. We have been missionaries serving in the high jungle region of Peru for nine years.

During those years, as ordained ministers, we established two churches, one of which was in a Quechua Indian village called Pacchilla (Paq-chi-ya). Today, Pastor Noe Saboya serves the people there by traveling 45 minutes by van, and over three hours on foot when a van is not available.

We also served through Bible training, pastor conferences, women's conferences, and ministering to our neighbors who did not know the true and living God.

Before having to leave Peru due to Angel's medical condition, we were in the middle

of a third church plant in a village called Nuevo Progreso. In 2010, STF was part of an evangelistic medical campaign there. Pastor Enrique has done an amazing job and now leads a congregation of over 50 people.

Our call was and continues to be to “Go preach the gospel, baptize and make disciples.” Our greatest joy was in building relationships with the many pastors of Tarapoto and Moyobamba, Peru. Today, we still maintain relationships with them via telephone and Skype, and hope to be able to continue to travel there from this side of the equator as our Holy Spirit leads. The women's ministry Karen formed in 2005, Mujeres de Impacto (Women of Impact), is still in force, bringing encouragement, fellowship and teachings that edify and bring a richer intimacy with God.

Our heart is to see our Lord move



**Karen and Angel Oyola**

mightily among the Spanish-speaking community. We are excited to be a part of South Tampa Fellowship Church as we launch a Spanish ministry in the South Tampa area. We are excited and look forward to what our Lord has in store for His work among His Spanish-speaking people. May our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ receive all the glory and honor as we press forward in His service.

Find more information about the Spanish ministry on page 7. ■



## Families on Mission in the D.R.: Expect the Unexpected

Article and photos by: Amber Johansen

Upon “putting boots on the ground” in the Dominican Republic, I knew God had big plans for this team. Early in the planning process He revealed that if our team could remain flexible, we would have an exciting adventure. This proved to be true from the very start!

Certainly, He had assembled a unique team. It was mixed with singles, a family of four, other adults, elementary

schoolchildren, and middle and high school students. We all came from different backgrounds, life experiences and gifts, but shared the same desire to serve others through Christ.

Our first adventure was realizing that God had something else planned for us other than what appeared on our schedule. The first thing was being caught in the middle of a national strike!

Yep, we were on our way to church Sunday when our bus narrowly missed a street riot. We were diverted to another small, poor church, where we dropped in unannounced. This unexpected change of schedule proved to be a wonderful morning of fellowship and great teaching.

Our next big adventures included a feeding in a Haitian community tucked way back in a D.R. sugarcane village, and a visit to an orphanage for children of prostitutes. We were not

scheduled for either of these destinations, but once again, the Lord had something special planned. We were grateful for the precious 45 families we were able to feed in the sugarcane village and for the sweet orphans.

Each morning we tumbled out of our bus carrying jump ropes, bubbles, footballs and coloring books. As if we were at a family reunion, we were met by loved ones quick to engage in a game of football, or to sit and color.

On the last day, we gathered in a room with over 65 families to share the gospel and to provide bags of food and toiletries. Over 25 people gave their life to Christ that day.

Boarding the bus on that last day was bittersweet for us. Lingered by the door, we hugged, kissed and cried with our new friends. Even though it had only been a week, we had grown to love our Dominican brothers and sisters. We felt connected to them in a way that only the Holy Spirit can provide. It was hard to say goodbye to them, but we are assured that one day we will all stand together in the glory of God. ■



Photos on page 12:

Top: The STF mission team to the Dominican Republic family mission trip

Bottom left: Izzy Avriett and Lane Johansen delivering food



**“Our first adventure was realizing that God had something else planned for us other than what appeared on our schedule.”**

Top: Scott Avriett sharing the gospel

Left: Ethan McCoy with a village boy

Bottom: Taylor Seals with the village children



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**Intentional**  
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September 30 - October 2  
 Hyatt Regency Sarasota

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<http://www.stfchurch.com/registrations>  
 Early bird prices (until 8/3): \$130, \$195, \$315, \$75.  
 After 8/3, price goes up by \$25.

## Madison Middle School Service Project

Written by: Lindsey Michaelson  
 Photos by: Amy Grossenbacher

Service projects are one of my favorite things to do. Serving alongside others is a great way to help in the community, get to know others, and share Christ through our actions to those around us.



South Tampa Fellowship has had the opportunity to build a relationship with Madison Middle School, which is not too far from the Ballast Point Campus. First Priority, an STF-supported ministry that shares the gospel with students, has also had a big role at the school and has helped in building the relationship between STF and Madison. First Priority asked us to give the teacher's lounge an "uplift." We had about 20 people come and help with the process. We may not be professionals, but we gave it our best shot and had a blast helping.

We do different projects each month and would love for you to join us anytime. Often, friendships grow out of the different service projects as well as small groups. Sign up by sending an email to [ServiceProjects@stfchurch.com](mailto:ServiceProjects@stfchurch.com). ■



## Sunday Morning Bible Study Kindergarten through 5th Grade

### August virtue: Grace

Lost. What comes to mind (or stomach) when you think of that word? "Lost," the TV show? The scarf you hope will show up in lost-and-found? That feeling you get just thinking about navigating traffic in a big city where they drive on the "wrong" side of the road? When was the last time you were good and truly lost? No GPS, no map, on your own in London, in the forest, in the parking lot looking for your car, in calculus class ... No matter where you're lost, or how you got there, it isn't good.

Jesus told a story about being lost. In fact, He told at least three stories about finding yourself in that predicament.

There's the one about the lost coin. A valuable coin goes missing. Its owner turns her house upside down looking for it. She lights the lanterns, looks under the furniture, and sweeps every corner until she finds it.

There's the one about the lost sheep. A man has 100 sheep. One of them goes astray. Because each one is important to him, he leaves the 99 safely in the pasture and takes off after the one. He tracks the sheep and rescues it from certain, inevitable danger.

Then there's the one about the lost son. A man has two sons, one of whom comes to him demanding his portion of their inheritance. After getting his due, he takes off for a foreign land and squanders everything. As he sits in the mess he's created for himself, he finally comes to his senses and decides to return home, sorry for the pain he's caused others. The father would've been justified in kicking him out, in sending him back to that pigsty, in dishing up just the opposite of what he gave his son. No doubt about it — that young man's just dessert was punishment. However, that's not how Jesus ended these stories. Each one concluded with a party: "Hey, y'all come celebrate with me! I've found my lost coin/sheep/son!"

What was the point Jesus was making with these stories? Forgiveness, hope, self-control, joy, love? Sure. Being the Master Teacher, His parables typically had multiple layers and nuances. But maybe in their essence these stories are about grace — the fact that God gives us good things that we don't deserve. Because of sin we don't *deserve* His love, His consideration, or salvation. Because of sin we're lost, separated from our heavenly Father. It doesn't matter whether we're like the coin, separated from Him through no fault of our own (knowing nothing about Jesus); whether we're like the sheep that wandered away, through inattention or ignorance; or whether we're like the son, who actively rebelled. All of us need to be rescued. All of us can be the recipients of His good and perfect grace.

To partner with our STF parents in giving our children a solid, foundational understanding of God's grace, we will be impressing the following truths in August:

**August 7:** *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10, NIV).* **Jesus came to rescue everyone.** God loves all people. He loves us so much He goes on a quest to find us, searching for us until we are found.

**August 14:** *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him (John 3:17, NIV).* **Everyone needs to be rescued, even me.** That's why God sent Jesus: to be our Rescuer, the only one who can save us. God wants each of us to repent, to make a U-turn away from the road to destruction toward life.

**August 21:** *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Romans 3:23-24, NIV).* **God will always love me more than I can imagine.** God loves us unconditionally, which means we don't have to be or act a certain way for Him to love us. We can't *do* anything to make God love us more. We can't do anything to make God love us less.

**August 28:** *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another (John 13:34-35, NIV).* **I should try to love others the way Jesus loves them.** God shows us grace, so He wants us to show others grace. When we do, we'll be giving others a taste of His goodness and love. ■



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

## Preschool Lessons in July

Written by: Heather Agee, Preschool Coordinator

Each Sunday this month our preschoolers will study the life of Jonah. They will hear his exciting story from beginning to end. Jonah's story will help the children learn August's bottom line, "God knows what is best for me."

By using the example of Jonah's choice to disobey God, we want our preschoolers to learn that they will have to make some difficult choices in their lives, too. Sometimes God's way is not the way we like. We want the children to see that had Jonah obeyed God, his road to Ninevah would have been a lot easier.

Our children could find themselves in some pretty uncomfortable places, just

like Jonah did, by running from God's choices for them. We pray that exposing them early to this truth will encourage them to make the right choice even when it's the harder choice. This will help them follow God's ways, which are always the best ways!

What hard choices are you making today to encourage your child to make the right choice? Running to church instead of the beach or Disney World? Volunteering in one of our preschool classrooms to connect with your child's teacher or "church friends"? Our children learn from our example. What are your children learning from yours?

### August's Key Lingo

**Basic Truth:** God loves me.

**Key Question:** Why should you do what God says?

**Bottom Line:** God knows what is best for me.

**Memory Verse:** "God's way is perfect." Psalm 18:30

Contact Heather Agee to learn about fun, kingdom-building opportunities available for you in our preschool area. Email Heather@stfchurch.com.



Written by: Karen McClure, Mid-week Coordinator

The Children's Ministry Department will start its fourth Awana season on August 17! Clubs are open for children from 2 years old through 6th grade.

The Puggles club is for our 2-year-olds. They are presented with basic biblical concepts: We are a unique creation of God, and God loves us very much.



The Cubbies club for preschoolers is built on two premises: Young children can and should receive spiritual training, and home is the primary place for spiritual training. A club night includes games, puppets, crafts, awards, and other activities designed to make learning fun.



The Sparks club is for children in kindergarten through 2nd grade and builds on the material taught in Cubbies. The curriculum takes children deeper into God's Word while giving unsaved boys and girls regular opportunities to hear the gospel and come to faith in Jesus Christ.



The Truth & Training (T&T) name reflects the passion of Awana to teach 3rd- through 5th-grade boys and girls the truth in God's Word and to train them to follow Christ in their daily lives. Third- through fifth-graders have the opportunity to earn the privilege to represent STF at Awana Bible quizzing.



This year we are excited to introduce the middle school program for 6th-graders. This program challenges middle school students to consider their destiny in Christ and to pursue it through life application of God's Word.



By now you must be wondering how you can be part of a ministry that teaches children and young people to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ!! Volunteers are needed at all club levels and in many capacities. Training for new volunteers is scheduled for August 3 from 6 - 8 PM. For more information on what volunteering in Awana means, please contact Karen McClure at karenm@stfchurch.com. Online registration is now open at www.stfchurch.com/awana.

**Volunteer Training**  
**New leaders: August 3, 6 - 8 PM**  
Room D102, BP Campus  
**All leaders: August 10, 6 - 8 PM**  
West Worship Center, BP Campus

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

## Child Dedications

Written by: Karen Levine, Children's Ministry Director

Photos by: Billy Waller

Over the last nine months, God has been leading our Children's Ministry team to rethink our baby dedication policy and event. We desired to make this rite of passage more meaningful and intentional. God has led us to be more inclusive. By changing the name to "child dedication" we allow families adopting older children, as well as new believing families with children, the opportunity to participate in this ceremony. Having been bathed in much prayer, discussion, and exploration, we are ready to introduce a new way of honoring the decision STF parents make as they choose to dedicate their children to the Lord.

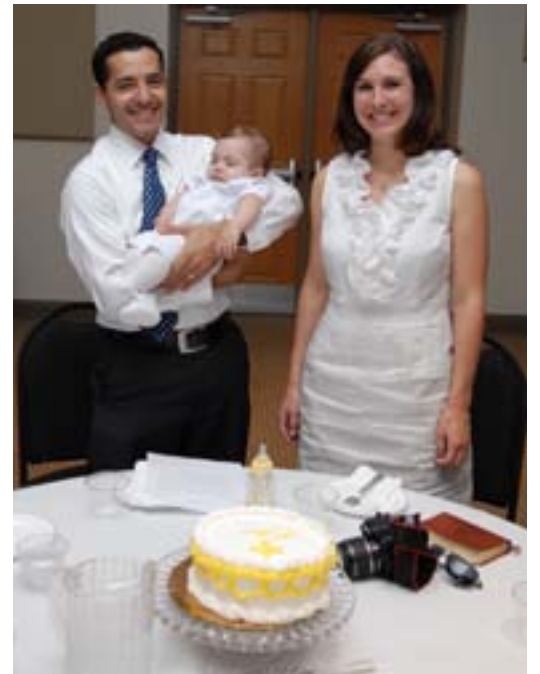
Our refined policy expects both parents to agree to the following minimums:

- 1) That every child is a gift from God;
- 2) That every opportunity must be afforded the children to know and love Jesus for themselves (no barrier must be created to hinder this); and
- 3) That the parents must attend three classes prior to the dedication ceremony.

The classes will provide deeper insight into what Christian parenting can look like, engage parents in conversation about their goals for their children, and about the centrality of faith in the family's life. They will gain an understanding of STF's preschool and children's ministry and how we are here to partner with them as they raise their children.

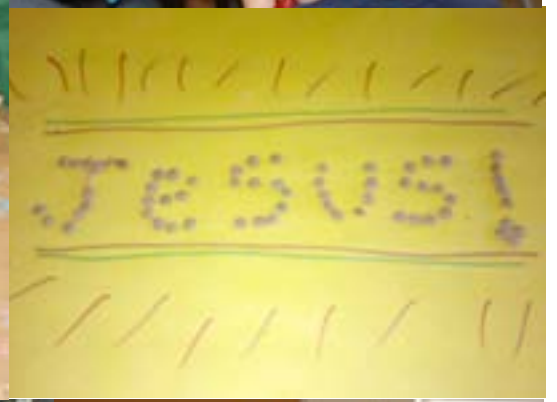
This fall, Heather Agee (STF's Preschool Coordinator) and I will be launching this new dedication process and would like to invite your family to join us on this journey. The three required classes meet on Sunday mornings at BP from 9 - 10 AM, and all homework will be completed in class! The classes will be held September 11, September 18, and September 25, with the actual dedication celebration taking place on Sunday, October 2, from 4-5 PM at the Ballast Point Campus.

If you would like to accompany us as we embark on this new adventure, please pick up a child-dedication brochure, complete the application and turn it in to Pier 3:16 at the BP Campus, or at Grow Up at the Islands Campus. You will then receive an email to confirm your registration for September. I am very excited to begin! ■



At our child dedication in May, each family received a cake with the child's name on it. Friends and families prayed together for the parents and the children.





Photos by: Billy Waller

SUMMER 2011

**EPIC**

**BACK 2 School Bash**

**AUGUST 28**

**6:30 PM**

**Want to get involved?**

Adult leader trainings coming this month! send an email to [students@stfchurch.com](mailto:students@stfchurch.com) for more info.

**EPIC Thursdays IN AUGUST 1-3 PM**

On August 4, 11 and 18, meet at the DI Campus for crazy adventures with the EPIC SM Team!

To receive texts about upcoming events and fun stuff, text your name and service provider to (910) 777-7330.

**Fall calendar coming this month!**

**EPIC Late nights every Sunday UNTIL 11 PM Food, games & FUN**

**EPIC**  
student ministry

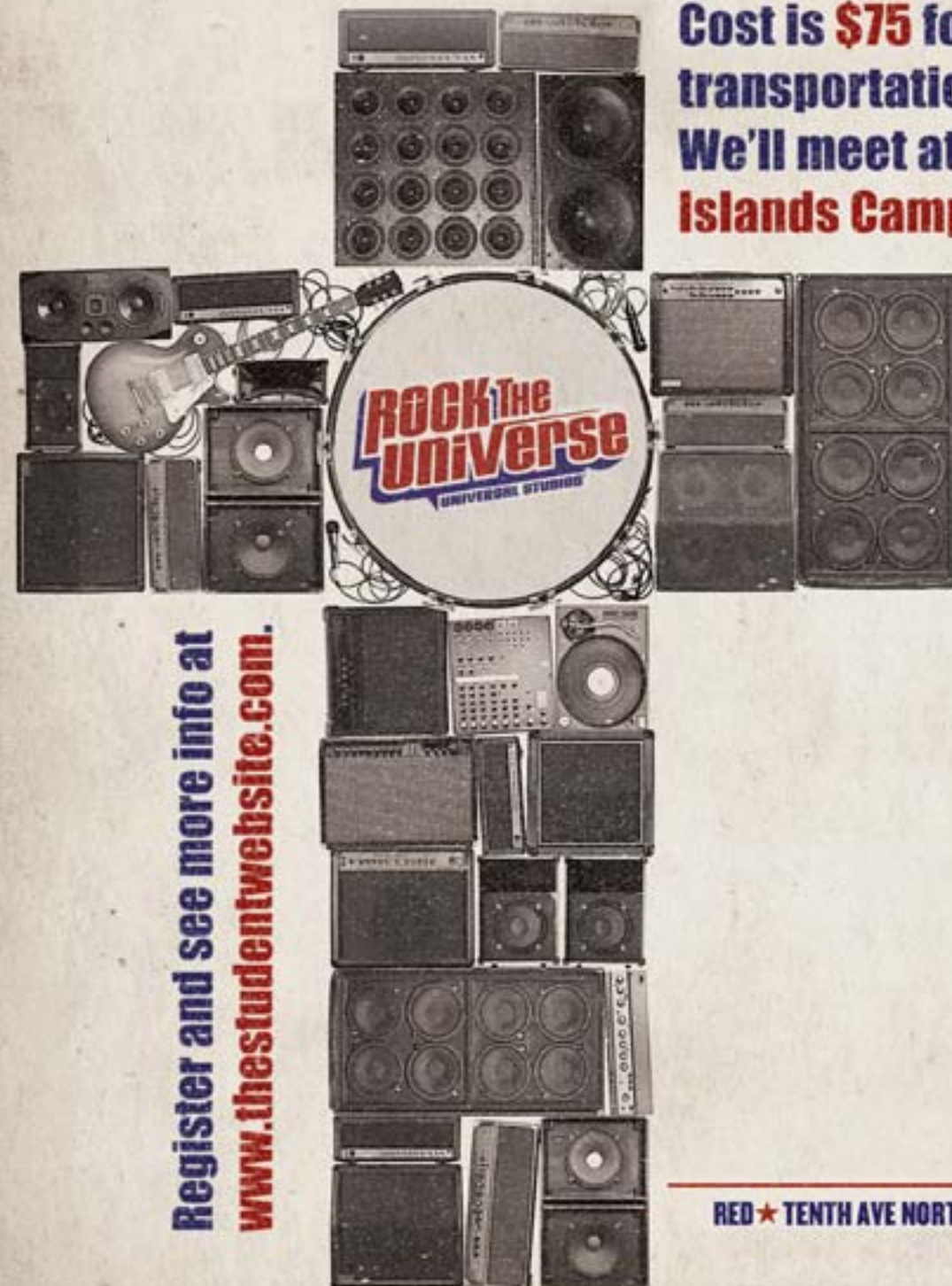
For more info ...  
[www \[dot\] the student website \[dot\] com](http://www.thestudentwebsite.com)

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**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 @ 4:30 PM**

Cost is **\$75** for admission and transportation.  
We'll meet at 4:30 PM at the **Islands Campus.**



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**THIRD DAY**



**RELIENT K**

PLUS  
RED ★ TENTH AVE NORTH ★ BRANDON HEATH ★ LIVE FISH

Register and see more info at  
[www.thestudentwebsite.com](http://www.thestudentwebsite.com).

# STUDENT MINISTRY



Photos by: Rob Flint

# CELEBRATE RECOVERY

## Conquering Anger

Written by: Amber Altamarino

Photo by: Patrick Burley



Amber with her husband Jesse

Hi my name is Amber, a believer in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with anger.

Two years ago I started coming to Celebrate Recovery. I would come frequently to large group, but leave right after. One night I heard a group of people on stage speaking about freedom; I felt I wanted more. I wanted that feeling of freedom — freedom from being so angry.

Now at this time I was still convinced there wasn't anything wrong with me. It was everyone else that kept doing things to make me angry. I didn't need to be in a recovery program because I wasn't addicted to anything. But for some reason I still came. The more I came, the more I learned that everyone needs recovery; everyone's been hurt, and that included me.

When I heard that a new women's step study was starting, I was all in. I had been warned that it wasn't easy, but the end results were well worth the work. Both of these statements are very true. It took me a while to figure out what the main issue of my recovery was. It was hard to pick just one. I would pick up the information pamphlets in the back of the room, and each time I read about a different area of recovery, I could answer "yes" to pretty much every question. I started to think I had every issue out there, so I eventually stopped picking up those pamphlets. After answering the questions in book one during my step study and praying over it, I discovered that my main issue is anger.

Through the step study and answering the questions in each book, I learned about things in my past that I never addressed, hurts that I was still holding onto, and people with whom I was still angry. I was able to address those hurts and forgive those who had hurt me. I learned not to bottle up my feelings. By expressing and acknowledging them, I can better understand them. I realized that by holding onto those resentful feelings, I was only hurting myself. I had to let that go and move on. They probably didn't even know I had those feelings. I've also learned that I can't control everything, especially other people. And when things don't turn out perfectly, it's not the end of the world. I still get angry from time to time, but the difference now is that I'm able to recognize it and address the issue so it doesn't build up inside.

If you are thinking about joining a step study, I would tell you that it is so worth it, but it takes commitment and time. I wish I could tell you that all your problems will be taken care of once you complete it, but that's not the case. You have to put in the work to get results. I can tell you that during my step study, I found out more about myself than I had ever known, and that helped me realize why I do some of the things I do. Don't be discouraged if you don't notice a change right away. You may not notice the changes at first, but others will. The difference in my life now is that I am able to recognize when I'm drifting off course and that I have Someone who, when I surrender and pray to Him, will guide me back. ■

**Women's Step Study is still open!**  
Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8 PM  
BP Campus, Room B209

## Thursday Night Schedule

CR meets 52 weeks a year, every Thursday night at the BP Campus.

5:30 – 6:30 PM, Dinner  
\$6 for ages 5 and up

6:30 – 7:30 PM, Large Group  
Worship and teaching or a testimony

7:30 – 8:30 PM, Open Share Groups and Newcomer's Orientation  
During this time we break up into small discussion groups, which are gender- and issue-specific.

8:30 – 9 PM, Coffeehouse  
Come fellowship and meet new people!

## Newcomer's Orientation

Are you a first-time visitor? Newcomer's 101 meets every Thursday night during small-group time. If you are new to Celebrate Recovery, have questions, or just need to get connected, this is the group for you!

## Contact Information

Celebrate Recovery Coordinator  
Grace Blake, 251-1515, ext. 403,  
CR@stfchurch.com

## Celebration Station (Child Care)

This is a fun and engaging program for kids that will prepare them to overcome the obstacles that could lead to hurts, hang-ups, or habits in their lives — now and in the future. It is based on the eight recovery principles found in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), so children can learn the same biblical truths that adults are digging into in Celebrate Recovery. Contact the Preschool Ministry at 251-1515, ext. 314, for children through 5th grade.

Visit us on the Web!  
www.CRTampa.com

## Schedule:

- August 4 — Testimony - man (chemical dependency)
- August 11 — Lesson 14 (Admit)\*
- August 18 — Testimony - woman (love & relationship)
- August 25 — Lesson 15 (Ready)\*

\*Pastor Todd teaching

## Follow us!

Facebook: CR Tampa



Twitter: @CRTampa

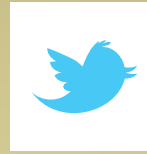
## Mark Your Calendar:

- August 11 — TEAM Meeting
- August 21 — CR in the atrium
- August 25 — Leaders' Meeting

For a list of all the August events, pick up a copy of the August 2011 Events Calendar at the Connection Center.



## Follow STF online!



Twitter:

@stfchurch



Facebook:

STFChurch



epicstudents

Pier 3:16



**Thursdays at 6:30 PM**  
**BP Campus, Room A218**

For more information, contact  
[Lindsey@stfchurch.com](mailto:Lindsey@stfchurch.com), or call  
251-1515, ext. 214.

**Divorce Hurts.**

**Find help at DivorceCare.**

### About DivorceCare

Divorced? Separated? You don't have to go through it alone. At DivorceCare, you will become part of a small support group of people who are also experiencing separation and divorce. By interacting with these people, you'll learn that there are others who understand what you are feeling and who will be able to offer you encouragement. Through the series of seminars and support groups, you'll learn how to deal with the pain of the past and look forward to rebuilding your life. DivorceCare is nondenominational and features biblical teaching for recovering from divorce and separation.



We also offer a program for children of divorced families, ages 5 to 12. These children will find healing and encouragement, and develop coping skills during this difficult time in their lives. DivorceCare for Kids (DC4K) meets at the same time as the adult DivorceCare group.