

# CAROLINA CONNECTION



Now this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3

## Fall 2009 at Chapel Hill

The weather is just beginning to offer signs that the fall has arrived in Chapel Hill. And that means that another school year is in full swing! Erin and I can too easily forget the significance of this time of year in the midst of the busyness that accompanies it. These first few weeks of the semester are so crucial in students' lives, especially freshmen who are beginning to decide what they will spend their college years pursuing. Here is a brief overview of some of our beginning of the year events:

**Leadership Training:** A week before school started 95 student leaders joined our staff team in Wilmington, NC, for training and planning for the fall. Bible Study and Servant Team leaders had 3 days of connecting, hearing vision for the year, praying and being trained for their roles back on campus.

**Freshman Picnic:** Nearly 800 students came out to our Freshman Picnic the day before classes started! In an effort to introduce ourselves to as many new freshmen as possible, we served 1280 slices of pizza and 300 sub sandwiches to the masses. Freshmen heard more about who we are as a ministry and were able to meet the Bible study leaders in their area and begin to get plugged in.

**Hoe Down:** Our annual Hoe Down event offered a fun, friendly environment on the first weekend for people to connect, eat great food, and learn how to swing dance. With an official square-dance caller and 250 pounds of BBQ pork, students got to enjoy a great evening together.

**Weekly Meeting:** The first three weeks of our weekly meeting we have averaged over 600 people in attendance. One of our staff is doing a series of talks called "The Greatest Story Ever Told" which will give an overview of the Bible.



Square Dance Divas

**Fall Retreat Sept 18-20:** A weekend opportunity to get away from campus and connect with others and God. This is always a significant opportunity for students to disengage from the busyness of the week and really reflect on God. This year our speaker is a pastor from Alabama who will be talking about seeing God rightly and how that applies to seeing ourselves rightly, as well.

**Small Group Bible Studies:** Our men's and women's Bible studies have started up in dorms throughout campus. Freshman groups will be studying Ephesians and upperclassmen 2 Timothy. Both believers and non-believers have been coming to these to meet others in their dorm and learn more about who the God of the Bible really is.

### PRAYERS and PRAISES:

- Pray for our student leaders throughout campus leading Bible studies. Pray that they would be experiencing the gospel and lead well.
- Pray for preparation for a debate to happen on Oct 7. between D'nish D'souza (a Christian apologist) and Bart Ehrman (an agnostic professor at UNC) on the topic of evil and suffering in the world.
- Pray for our marriage relationship. That we would balance life well and not neglect each other in this busy season.
- Pray for unbelievers attending our Bible studies and fall retreat, that they would see their need for Christ and the life that he offers.
- Pray for Ru, a shy student who walked up to Josh and handed him a note after a Bible study asking, "What does God want?" Pray for continuing conversations and opportunities with him.





Thank you for your partnership in the gospel. We are so grateful for your commitment with us to see Jesus become more beautiful on the college campus through the lives of college students. Thank you for praying for us and being a part of what God is doing in the lives of college students here at Chapel Hill.

Josh  
&  
Erin





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SEPTEMBER 2009



## PRAYERS and PRAISES:

- Praise God for more conversations with Ru. He heard the gospel for the first time with Josh. There are still more questions with much more to process.
- Praise God for the 800+ students involved in a small groups across campus.
- Praise God for 160 who attended the Fall Retreat
- Pray for the glory of Christ to be made known from the debate. Pray that conversations would exist after the debate and that believers' motives and interactions would be rooted in love.
- Pray for the Junior Bible Studies that Erin and I are each leading, 14 guys and 18 girls. These are some of our best leaders that come to be invested in. Pray for their growth and for a deeper, truer vision of God.
- Pray for Biblical literacy for our students as we unpack the entire Story of the Bible in a series "The Greatest Story Ever Told" We look at the themes Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.

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## Sweden Trip

October 3-10 our staff team will be taking a vision trip to a new partnership country. Organizationally, Campus Crusade assigns campuses specific countries as an assignment to invest staff and students on short-term and long-term mission trips. Our partnerships are East Asia and now Sweden. The staff team from UNC along with some of our staff friends from Duke University will be going to learn about the country, meet the staff, and invest in the ministry. Our hope is that we will be able to recruit more effectively after being there and others will want to follow after seeing and hearing of our experience.

Spiritually, Sweden is dead. The receptivity to the gospel is apathetic due to the perception that there is very little need for anything. Being a socialist nation where there are very little physical needs, there is little to no awareness to the spiritual needs that exist. It is very agnostic naturalistic society.

## Ehrman Debate

On October 7 a debate will be taking place on campus here at UNC. Dinesh D'Souza will be debating one of UNC's own professors, Dr. Bart Ehrman, in a debate discussing the problem of suffering and evil. Dinesh D'Souza is a best-selling American author and speaker who has become a front line defender of Christianity. D'Souza is an accomplished debater and former policy analyst in the Reagan administration. His most recent publication, *What's So Great about Christianity*, is a defense of the Christian faith.

Bart Ehrman, a best-selling author, holds a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary and is perhaps most famous for his

contribution to the study of the "historical Jesus." In many of his best-selling books, Ehrman challenges traditional Christian beliefs about the divinity of Christ, the resurrection, and other aspects of Christian faith. He recently wrote the book *God's Problem*, addressing the Bible's views on the problem of suffering.

We will be unveiling a website Oct. 7 with videos and articles to help communicate alternative views from scholars that oppose Ehrman's. The website is still being built, but you can check it out. **theehrmanproject.com**

**God and the Problem of Suffering**

October 7, 2009  
7:30pm - 9:00pm  
Memorial Hall

Bart D. Ehrman

Dinesh D'Souza