

# CAROLINA CONNECTION



## Training Leaders and Meeting Freshmen

Like every August and September, it has been very busy around here (thus not sending out this letter until October!). The week before school started we had a **Leadership Retreat** to equip students for the roles they were stepping into as Bible study leaders and servant team. We gathered in Wrightsville Beach for three days to pray together, hear vision about where we are headed as a movement and to train students in how to lead others in the Bible. Josh got to lead an evangelism training time, as well, and helped students know how to more clearly communicate the Gospel. The first night we had a time of prayer and worship and it was such a joy to look around at the 120 leaders God has raised up this year!

## Prayer Requests

Pray for the significant Lordship decisions 90 Freshmen made at Fall Retreat!

Praise God for the freshmen who have heard the Gospel through Bible studies, weekly meetings and surveys.

Praise God for the 120 leaders we get to serve alongside. Pray for fruit in their lives that comes from faith.

Pray that our staff team and student leaders would lead from what we are experiencing in our own walks with God. That ministry would truly be out of an overflow of how precious the Gospel is to us.

Pray that we (staff and student leaders) would have an outward focus as we lead in dorms. That we wouldn't just see our role as pouring into believers, but would continue to reach out to non-believers in dorms.

Pray for creative ideas for small groups to initiate in the lives of others around their living areas.

We praise God for YOU! Thank you for being part of all this with us through prayer and giving!

Once we got back from the retreat, we hit the ground running with our freshman events. We set up **survey tables** throughout campus the day before classes started and had about 1,000 students fill out a spiritual survey. These survey cards enable us to follow up with people who want to find out how to get involved in a Bible study. These cards also give us an opportunity to talk to people who want to dialogue about their beliefs or have questions. Our staff and student leaders have had many opportunities to share the Gospel with freshmen through these cards. I got to meet a sophomore who is loosely involved with our ministry through a card. As we talked, she began to share with me that she was confused about some things she believed. It has been so cool to meet up with her since then and help clarify the Gospel.

We also had our annual **Freshman Picnic** the first week of classes. It ended up raining so we relocated to a parking deck! Not an ideal location for a "picnic" but we were so excited that around 800 students still came! We served them free food and they had a chance to hear more about who we are as a ministry and get connected to the Bible study leaders in their part of campus.



Another event in August- the Hoedown!

The first few weeks of school we also kick off **freshman Bible studies**. We start them off as co-ed groups the first two weeks to give students a chance to meet lots of people in their dorms. Josh had the opportunity to speak at three of these freshman studies and got to share the basics of what we believe with freshmen, many of whom are seeking and just checking things out.

And finally, we kicked off our Thursday night **large group meetings**. Our campus director, Miles, has been teaching a series on Romans about the peace of God. I'm always blown away at how 500+ students come week after week and are growing in understanding the God of the Bible. We've been so blessed at all God has done so far this year!

## “Real Life”: Fall Retreat

One of my favorite weekends of the year is Fall Retreat. We pack up, head to Camp Dixie in Fayetteville, NC, and have a weekend away from campus to connect with lots of the new students around. This year's retreat was September 24-26 and was such a great weekend. We were so excited that 240 students ended up coming! Josh was in charge of the retreat and did a great job of helping create an environment for people to be refreshed and connect in community.

The college pastor from a local church was our speaker this year. He led us through some parts of John and talked about how Jesus offers real life, while we so often settle for “so-called life.” Through hearing the talks and processing them in discussion groups, students were challenged to think about what they look to for life that really won't deliver or satisfy.

The weekend also included a lot of down time for developing community. Josh and I lead seniors, many of whom lead younger Bible studies. So this was a neat opportunity for us to get to meet some of the younger students that our seniors are working with. During our free time, we also checked out The Blob. This is a big inflatable float that you jump on and catapult people into a lake. For some reason, Josh and I decided to do it and I shot up so far in the air! (If you want to see the entertaining video of it, check out our blog!)

My favorite part of the weekend happened Saturday night. I was heading to the bonfire to set up stuff for S'Mores (yum!). A freshman girl came up to me and said, “Are you one of the staff?” I said that I was and introduced myself. “Do you ever meet with people and talk to them about God?” she asked. “Yes, that's exactly what I do!” I told her. “Well, do you ever come to campus?” she asked. “Yep, everyday,” I replied. She said, “Being here this weekend has shown me that I'm not really where I want to be in my relationship with God. Can we meet sometime and talk about it?” It was such a sweet moment and reminder of why I love getting to do what I do.



Erin with her girls at Fall Retreat



Erin taking on the blob!



Emmy being baptized in Sweden.

## Sweden Update

When we left Sweden this summer, there were two girls, Emmy and Elin, who were really interested in investigating the claims of Christ. We were able to connect them to the staff team there so they could keep dialoguing about their beliefs and questions. We were so excited to get an email a few weeks ago informing us that Emmy has become a Christian and been baptized! How amazing that a few short months ago, Emmy had never heard the Gospel clearly and now she has begun a relationship with Jesus! One of the staff there will continue to meet with her and help her learn how to grow in her faith. In a place where ministry can be very slow and hard, how encouraging to see the Lord powerfully at work. Join us in praying for our new sister Emmy. Her parents are very against this decision and following God will not be easy for her in that country. Pray for the Lord's protection and provision in Emmy's life.