



Debra's Personal Journey

Call to Christ: I came to know Christ during my senior year at the University of Central Florida (UCF) when a staff woman from Campus Crusade for Christ shared the Gospel with me on January 12, 1993. I was immediately filled with so much gratitude for what Jesus did for me that I gave Him my life and wanted Him to use me and mold me into the person God created me to be. Since that day, my journey has changed my life forever! It didn't take long to realize that my life was not my own, but now belonged to God to use in whatever way He desired.

Call to Missions:

Just a few months later I was on a mission trip in Romania when I knew God gave me the desire to help young people know what I wish I knew growing up. I found out about Campus Crusade's High School ministry called Student Venture and soon got involved. I started at headquarters as a receptionist and then I joined staff with Campus Crusade in 1995. I worked at Cypress Creek High School near Kissimmee and Lake Brantely High School in Longwood until 2002. During this time I led mission teams to Italy three times, trained other new staff, led students to Christ, disciplined them, and spoke at conferences around the country. The experience deepened my burden to help young girls dealing with sexual purity issues and I decided to follow my heart and transitioned to work at the Sanford Crisis Pregnancy Center from 2003-2009.



Pictured here are just a few girls I led to the Lord when they were freshman in High School. During their senior year they led a Bible study for sophomore girls and met with me for their own Bible study at 6 a.m. every Wednesday morning. As they invited their friends, the study grew to 12 girls and then the group wanted to meet again on Thursdays to share prayer requests and pray together too. All four of them travelled with me to Florence, Italy on a Student Venture mission trip to share the Good News of the Gospel with Italian students. It was incredible to watch this movement happen by just being available to them and watching God work in their lives.

At the Sanford Crisis Pregnancy Center I counseled young women who were facing unplanned pregnancies and part of my role was to teach sexual integrity to our clients, as well as to youth groups in the Central FL area. I felt I was in the center of God's will for my life and it was very fulfilling.



Steve enters the picture:

When Steve Burns moved to Lake Mary from Ohio, he was voluntarily leading the youth ministry at LifePoint Christian Church. He asked the pastor for a referral of a woman that could talk to the girls about sexual purity and the pastor suggested he call the Sanford Crisis Pregnancy Center. God brought Steve Burns to the center where we first met in 2004. As we gradually began dating, we also served at LifePoint together. The students got to witness our relationship grow week after week as we led the ministry and lived our lives before them. The best memories were made at the CIY Believe Conference and special events where we enjoyed quality time with the students. Meeting someone who enjoyed ministering to the youth as much as I did was a gift from God! Serving God together was an answer to both of our prayers.

LifePoint Aumni: Debra Burns

Soon after we married in 2005, we bought a house in Deltona and attended Deltona Lakes Baptist Church. We felt led to serve in the middle school ministry because there was a need. It was fun to teach 70-80 teenagers from the local neighborhood who did not attend church with their parents. Sometimes it felt like we were just there for crowd control or to entertain the kids with games and food. I remember one girl who thought she couldn't be a Christian because she was "American."



After just two years, Steve was offered a new position in Jacksonville, if we were willing to move. After much prayer, we felt called to go. I was prayerfully seeking God for my new assignment too. I contacted the Student Venture city director, who has been leading the ministry for twenty years and found out that he needed an experienced staff woman to train a new staff girl coming to the city. I knew this was the answer to my prayers and exactly where I was needed! He has not had female staff for the past 10 years and now he was gaining two! Pictured on right with Christine Kennedy, new staff from Jupiter, FL.



The Ministry in Jacksonville:

Student Venture believes in winning students to Christ, building them up in their faith, and sending them to reach others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. How do we do this? I will be going on campus to give motivational talks to the cheerleaders, athletic teams, and student clubs. We invite them to come back to a Student Venture outreach where the Gospel will be presented. In the past, I typically saw at least 10% of the students who have not been to church, pray to receive Christ at that very first meeting! It is wonderful to witness God open the hearts and eyes of His children to receive His unconditional Love and Grace! From there, I will follow up with each student and invite them to get involved in a Bible Study to further their understanding in their new relationship with God. We also encourage them to get involved in a local church. Pictured here with Greta and Kimmie. Greta plays soccer at Creekside HS and we will be doing an outreach for her team and I will be leading a weekly Bible study for her and her friends. Kimmie is on the dance team and we will be planning an evangelistic event for her friends too.



The Need:

I have the privilege to gather a team of partners to pray and invest in this ministry. God has raised 30% of my monthly need. I was able to purchase the supplies I will need for Bible studies. I still need more partners. What support do I need to impact students for Christ and to help keep just one young girl from making a mistake that could negatively impact her life? I am praying for 100 partners to give \$20 a month or 50 partners investing \$40 a month. But any amount is appreciated, as I know this economy has been hard on everyone.

If you choose to join my team, all donations made to Campus Crusade for Christ are tax-deductible. If God is calling you to partner with me, thank you, if He has other plans for your giving, I understand and would appreciate your prayers. It may sound strange to support a missionary in Jacksonville, FL, but I know God has called me to serve here and there are lost and hurting teenagers who need to hear the Good News of the Gospel in every city of America.

LifePoint Aumni: Debra Burns

Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

Debra's Contact Information:

Email: debra.burns@studentventure.com

Website: <http://www.svjax.blogspot.com/> <http://www.svjacksonville.com/>

Website: www.ccci.org/give/0437644

Home: 11345 Finchley Lane Jacksonville, FL 32223

Cell: 321-363-6369