

Summer 2011



*love God, love people, be changed*

## Summer Camp Manual



## Uh... Where Am I Going?

### **St. Louis**

St. Louis is a city of about 350,000 people in a metropolitan area of nearly 3 million people which faces the same challenges as many other urban areas: overcrowded and poorly-funded schools, lack of economic opportunity, and crime. The church is located on the north side of the city in a predominantly black neighborhood. The church is located in the Mark Twain neighborhood, one of the most broken areas of the city.



### **History**

North City Church of Christ (NCC) officially incorporated in 1996, but for many years, functioned without a building. In 2006, several of the families involved in the ministry purchased the property of an old Catholic church in the Mark Twain neighborhood. Even though many families have come and gone, the church has continued to serve of the roughest neighborhoods in St. Louis.

### **Philosophy of Ministry**

NCC's mission is threefold: love God, love people, and be changed. Because we are located in a neighborhood that faces so many challenges, we place a strong emphasis on relationships and discipleship.

One of our primary ministries has been to the children in the neighborhood. For



most of its existence, the church has put on a summer program and after-school mentoring program during school year.

We believe that the kingdom calls us to reconciliation, and we strive to build relationships with churches across economic and racial lines.

### **Safety**

North St. Louis is often perceived as an unsafe place. While there is truth to this, those of us who live here know caution and good judgment are the basis of a safe environment. We have a gated parking lot that groups park in. We encourage

people not to be outside alone at night. Group sleeping areas have doors that can be locked during the day.

### **Sleeping, Eating, and Bathing**

Groups stay on the second floor of the school building. The rooms are have air-conditioning, but we try to keep to usage low. We encourage you to bring your own bedding – air mattresses, sleeping bags, cots, etc. We have men’s and women’s showers/bathrooms on each side of the basement. You will have access to a fully equipped kitchen (next door) at any time of the day (including midnight munchies), so you only have to eat out when you want to. Bring your own food or purchase when you get here.

### **Okay... What Am I Doing Here?**

We hope that your time in north St. Louis will accomplish 3 things:

- 1) Help run our summer program
- 2) Help us build stronger relationships with neighborhood kids
- 3) Help us work on our buildings

### **Weekly Schedule**

Our summer program runs Tue/Wed/Thu for 6 weeks. Each group is in charge of planning activities for their week, though we have a schedule that we ask groups to follow. Most groups come for a week, and we are flexible on exact arrival/departure times. We just need to coordinate with other groups to prevent overlap.

For the program, expect 40-60 children ages K-6<sup>th</sup> (if you are bringing a smaller group, we can set a cap for that week). The first 30 minutes is recreation time in the parking; during that time, your group will register the kids and play games with them. At 3:30, you should bring the kids inside, provide a small snack, and begin the lesson. This is time for your group to sing with the kids and teach a Bible lesson using a skit, puppet show, or whatever your group comes up with.

#### **Summer Camp Format**

- 3:00 – Recreation/Snack
- 3:30 – Singing/Bible Lesson
- 4:15 – Class 1/2/3/4
- 5:00 – Class 1/2/3/4 (2<sup>nd</sup> option)
- 5:45 – Dinner
- 6:15 – Dismissal/Pickup

### Class Ideas

- sports
- creative writing
- book club
- dance, music, art
- bike repair
- carpentry/house repair
- entrepreneurship
- cooking
- baking
- science
- gardening
- sewing
- carpentry
- computers
- health
- money management
- mechanics

At 4:15, the kids will be dismissed to 45 minute classes, which your group will plan and teach. We would like for these classes to be fun and educational, helping them learn practical life skills. The table to the left has ideas, but let your group be creative. As you plan these classes, think about a craft that the kids might make to take home or celebrate with on the last day.

We suggest preparing 4 classes, which makes a maximum class size of 15 kids. Each child will choose two of your classes the week before. They will attend that class every day of your week at the same time.

At 5:45, everyone will come back together for dinner. Your group will be responsible for preparing and serving dinner (you will have access to the kitchen). Whether or not your group eats with the kids is up to you. At 6:15, kids will be sent home or their parents will pick them up.

### Discipline

The neighborhood children face many challenges each day, and many of them have some type of learning disability. They often act out, and behavioral problems are common. We strive to model good behavior to them and encourage respect.

We use a point system to promote good behavior. Children earn points during each daily activity for being respectful and being on-task. These points, called “North City Buck\$” can be spent on various rewards at the end of the summer. As much as possible, we strive to use positive language that points are “earned,” not lost or taken away. At the end of the summer, they will use their Buck\$ to buy school supplies.

We will always have at least one (but usually several) of our church leaders on site to assist with problems. Someone from NCC will be designated each week as



an on-site contact to address problems that arise and provide discipline. If children are repeatedly acting up in class, they can be escorted to the NCC contact, who will address the problem.

### **The Rest of the Week**

Our church meets from 10:15-1:00 on Sundays. We do not meet at night or on Wednesdays. If you would like to plan an activity at the church or out in St. Louis one night with our teenagers, we would encourage you to.

During the mornings, and on Monday or Friday, most groups complete projects around the church building. These projects include scraping, painting, drywalling, applying various sealers to different surfaces, moving/setting-up rooms, and working in the Mark Twain Community Garden. We have most of the



necessary tools on site, but your group may need to purchase materials. If you are bringing someone from your group with technical skills such as plumbing, electrical, heating/cooling, please let us know if they would donate their skill to our aging buildings. We will coordinate your work projects before you arrive so that you will be prepared.

Groups are more than welcome to schedule a free day (usually Monday or Friday) away from the church to take in all that St. Louis has to offer.

### **Cost?**

You will need to budget your transportation, food costs, and any spending money for fun activities. You will need to purchase food to prepare snacks and dinner for the children during the 3 days of camp. Depending on the work projects you select, you may need to purchase some materials to complete them. Don't forget any costs you have associated with running your lessons or materials for classes. If you have more specific questions regarding your budget, feel free to discuss them with us.

We do not charge a fee for groups to come, because we expect groups to bear the burden of the cost for activities. We leave it up to groups to determine their own gift for helping us with our facility/utility expenses.

## Is this going to be on the test?

Just in case you were wondering whether this was a class syllabus or a summer mission trip, we've included a recommended reading list. These are some books that resonate with our ministry or have challenged us in some way:

*The Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne

*Real Hope in Chicago* by Wayne Gordon

*Beyond Charity* by John Perkins

*Let Justice Roll Down* by John Perkins

## So, this is a class?

One day, we're hope to have interns that we can award academic credit to, but for now school is out. While you're here, we hope you'll invest your money in the St. Louis economy and find a few fun things for your group to do. A few suggestions are:

- Catch a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game.
- The St. Louis Zoo, Art Museum, Science Center, and History Museum all have free admission.
- If you don't like museums, try the City Museum (it's not really a museum, but more of a jungle gym of crawling and climbing).
- Travel to the top of the Gateway Arch.
- Enjoy a day at Forest Park, one of the largest parks in the country.
- Drink freshly brewed root beer at Fitz's.
- And of course, no trip to St. Louis is complete without a trip to Ted Drewe's Frozen Custard (it's like ice cream, but better).

To discuss your trip, please contact Daniel Gray. If you call the church office, it might be a week before we discover your message, so use the contact information below.

[admin@northcitychurch.org](mailto:admin@northcitychurch.org)

314-514-5079 (Daniel's cell)