

## **Abby Carlen – February 12, 2012**

I have been actively involved in the Children's Ministry at Gulf Coast for the past 17 years. To say that it's an area of ministry that's near and dear to my heart would be a colossal understatement. But it hasn't always been that way. I'll admit that, at the age of 10, my primary motivation for serving in Children's Ministry was to avoid having to sit through the sermon on Sunday mornings and had nothing to do with my heart to serve. Over the years, God has drastically changed the way I view this very important area of ministry.

I stand before you a product of faithful Sunday school teachers who joyfully shared the Gospel with me every week. They reinforced what my parents were teaching me at home and helped bring me to an understanding of what sin is and why I personally needed a Savior. They explained truths of scripture to me in ways that I understood and remembered. And it was very evident these were people who not only believed what they were teaching; they lived it out in their own lives. These teachers and helpers viewed Children's Ministry as a mission field, which is exactly how it should be viewed.

When God started changing my view of Children's ministry, I began to see it as my mission field. It was the area where God was calling me to lay down my life and help make disciples. Just because most of these children are being brought up in Christian homes does not mean that they all are saved. And, as workers in Children's ministry, we have a responsibility to clearly present the Gospel and the truth about Jesus.

Once I saw things this way, serving ceased to be a burden and became a delight. I have served in many areas over the years but serving in New Creation Kids has brought me the most joy. I

really love these kids! Seeing children come to an understanding of the Gospel, and allowing it to affect their lives, is one of the most amazing things I have ever had the privilege to witness. Having been involved with NCK for so long, I've been able to see many of the young people here at Gulf Coast grow up and make their own decisions for Christ. It's a testament to their parents but also to the people who tirelessly serve Sunday after Sunday in Children's Ministry.

One of the best ways to get to know people and build relationships in this body is to serve. If you're looking for a way to get involved I would strongly encourage you to consider serving in New Creation Kids. If you're looking for a way to make an impact on our community I can't think of a better place to start than right here, serving these children.