



*Silver City's New Logo designed by
our own April Ruple*

Silver City Church

News

—Following Jesus Downtown

February 2005

Following Jesus Downtown

Eight years ago when several of us at Silver City were praying about where God was leading our work, we sat down together and wrote out some things that seemed important. One of those things was the phrase, "Sharing the Love of Jesus with God's Children," and if you've received anything from us by mail, you've seen those words somewhere on the page. "Sharing the Love of Jesus with God's Children" is what we do and always will do as long as we are blessed to be in North Little Rock, but it is not all that we do.

Let me repeat some words I wrote in an earlier letter about the Silver City Church:

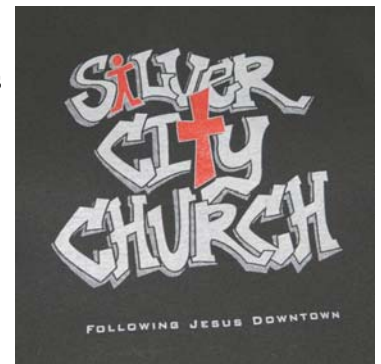
This group of believers has a primary goal of simply being a body of Christ in an area that many churches have fled. While we do children's ministry, we are not simply a children's ministry. While we mentor many at-risk urban youth, we are not simply an urban mentoring ministry. Rather, we are a church belonging to Christ that is striving to do battle against the things that plague the community in which we serve. It is our desire to see more families join our service to the Lord both from within and without the downtown North Little Rock area. Instead of bringing a defeated community to the church, we are purposefully bringing the church to a defeated community.

What has come to be over the last eight plus years is an urban congregation of mixed races and socio-economic backgrounds. There are several middle-class families and many urban youth and some urban parents that make up the congregation.

All this to say that the phrase I feel that best describes us now is, "Following Jesus Downtown." If you aren't adequately confused already, let me add more. When I say we are following Jesus downtown, of course I mean following Jesus is what any body of Christ would do anywhere. It's just that we happen to be following Jesus in the downtown area of North Little Rock, Arkansas, and this is one thing that I mean. However, in regards to the

Silver City Church, there's more, because of what I believe the word "downtown" means in our setting. "Downtown" is a place where there are rough neighborhoods, hundreds of children, extreme poverty, both physical and especially spiritual, and a place where the values of Christianity have been discarded to a large degree. It's a place where boys and girls have to search long and hard to see any man who strives to follow God, much less his/her own father. It's a place where hip-hop culture, music videos, over-paid sports heroes, and pop icons get far more attention than they should (sounds frightfully like the rest of our country). "Downtown" is where I believe Jesus wants us to be. This is not the only place he wants us to be, but I'm convinced it is HIGH on his priorities. So when I say "Following Jesus Downtown," I believe "downtown" is the place where Jesus wants to work and where we need to follow Him to join in that work. It's why we serve God here and why my family lives here.

I hope this discussion about words drives home the fact that I believe that God's people need to be immersed in those areas where the salt and light most need to be spread and shown. We invite people to serve in this ministry. Many before you have ventured out of their comfort zones, charting a course for others to follow, helping the church develop that sweet aroma of Christ of which Paul speaks. God's people are making a difference in this city, but there is so much more that needs to be done. Please consider becoming a partner in this ministry by mentoring a young person, teaching a Bible class, hosting a potluck, becoming a member of our body, and especially by keeping this work and others that serve our city in your prayers.



*Silver City's New Logo as it appears
on our latest T-Shirt*

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30 teens and adults from Silver City ended 2004 at Youth in Action in Jonesboro. The 3 day event, hosted by the Southwest Church focused on evangelism, a theme that our young people have taken to heart. More and more young people from the community are coming through our doors because a friend or relative invited them to see what church was like, and more and more are deciding that being around God's people is something they like. Pray for those of us given the task of teaching them about the Lord Jesus. OR better yet, pray about visiting our work to see if the Lord has a place for you to share the Good News about Jesus with a resident of "Downtown."

Bill and Susan Plunkett (right), pose with Marreo and Anthony Jones at our mentoring Christmas party. As 2005 begins, 42 young people (from a 1st grader to a 3rd year college student) are meeting weekly with a Christian adult to encourage them in their walk with Christ. We still have some young people who regularly attend church who don't have a mentor to meet with them.



Shell Thomas, a 6th grader, dribbles around her defender in an Upward Basketball Game. More than 20 Silver City Kids are blessed to play or lead cheers in the Christ-centered program sponsored by several North Little Rock area churches.



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