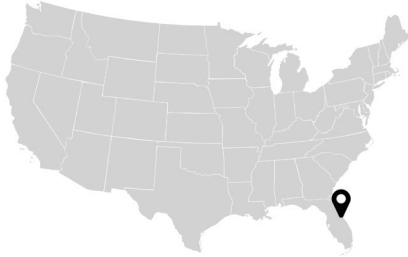




# 87 Apopka, FL



We were once kicked off the doorstep of a church that had the word “outreach” in its name.

By the pastor.

It was a dramatic illustration of how our traveling lifestyle and the traditional North American model of doing church were at odds with each other.

A low point, for sure.

But only one stop on a journey.

Other stops on that journey included:

- Visiting multi-location churches so big the pastor flew by helicopter to one campus and video-streamed his sermon to the others.
- Visiting churches so small when our family of four walked in we doubled the size of the congregation. MsBoyink volunteered to “play the pianer” - but first someone had to get the key from the laundry room to unlock it.
- Trying an online church.
- Awkward attempts at home church.

Along the way, we met other people with the same struggle. They were

Christian families, enjoying exploring the USA on long-term road trips, longing to gather with other believers, but not feeling served by traditional churches.

There’s a rhythm to RV travel in the USA.

An ebb and flow.

During the summer months the big boxes on wheels mostly disperse north. With a greater range of comfortable temperatures to be in, there’s more of the country available to the traveler.

Come winter?

Find I-10 on the map.

And look south of that.

From Los Angeles to Phoenix to San Antonio to New Orleans to Mobile to Jacksonville, I-10 and all points south.

That’s where you’ll find most RVers.

One winter found us at the eastern end of I-10 in Florida.

Along with five other traveling families of faith.

We all managed to reserve campsites



close to each other at Wekiwa State Park in Apopka, Florida.

And our church service began.

It didn't look like you'd expect.

Tents over there. A bus over here. A couple of fifth wheels mixed in.

A campfire ring surrounded by an audience of bag chairs holding an ever-changing cast of occupants.

Men talking around trucks. Women just back from a hike through the woods. Kids running free-range.

Plans being made for a morning kayak run.

Guitars coming out and campfires turning into worship.

Group potlucks coming together last minute and (with a recklessness that might get one kicked out of some churches) without sign-up sheets.

All a bit chaotic, yes.

But also?

Church.

Like we'd never experienced it before.

People talking openly about their

faith. Their struggles with it. Or how traveling strengthened it.

The New Testament uses the phrase "one another" 100 times.

We are to love one another (John 13:34).

Be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10).

Honor one another (Romans 12:10).

Live in harmony with (Romans 12:16).

Build up (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Accept (Romans 15:7).

Greet (Romans 16:16).

Don't grumble against (James 5:9).

Stop passing judgment (Romans 14:13).

The Florida group was in no way perfect.

But for that magical, warm December in Apopka, Florida?

We one-anothered.

*For more about the hiking, kayaking, swimming and biking available at Wekiwa Springs State Park, visit [floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/wekiwa-springs-state-park](http://floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/wekiwa-springs-state-park).*

*See all of the "one another" Bible passages in an infographic at [overviewbible.com/one-another-infographic](http://overviewbible.com/one-another-infographic).*

### Photos:

1. A rustic amphitheater at Wekiwa Springs State Park in Apopka, FL.
2. Kayaking church in the Wekiwa River.
3. The "Mens Ministry" having a board meeting in the campground.
4. Spontaneous group meals always provided enough food for the crowd.
5. The "Women's Ministry" enjoyed several walks on the campground trails.

