

May 2006

Dear Parents of 4th, 5th and 6th Graders,

On June 3, the kids finishing 4th, 5th and 6th grades are invited to our semi-annual First Free Church Children's Hike – sometimes known as “the episodic insanity.” This year we will be hiking along the Mississippi River at Crosby Lake Park (on the St. Paul side, across from Pike Island and the Sibley House.) Kids who have attended First Free Church Vacation Bible School, Junior Church, Stockade or Girls Rock!, or Salem Free Church Kids Club are all invited. We have a sizable cadre of adults and youth who volunteer to ride herd but can always use extra parent volunteers.



We meet at the church parking lot on 52nd and Chicago Avenue at 9:00 am on Saturday, June 3. We will feed and water the kids through the day and return them (in whatever condition they happen to be by the end of the day) to their homes – or other designated drop off place. This usually means between 5:00 and 6:30 pm, depending on how long we can all stand each other.

In the past, our events have always taken place regardless of the weather – through rain, sleet, snow and hail. We always have a backup plan to go indoors to a museum if needed. If your child wants

to invite a friend, please notify us. In general the kids need to be just finishing 4th, 5th or 6th grades and shorter than Mary Anderson (5' and possibly shrinking — sorry, Mary) although there are occasionally some exceptions.

Since we hike near the confluence of land and water, one of the most abundant natural resources is mud, for which kids of that age seem to have a magnetic affinity. Kids should dress for the weather (but long pants are best because of thorns and nettles) and wear shoes that tolerate getting dirty. Sunscreen and insect repellent may be a good idea, and we always bring extra.



To cover food, drinks and pictures (which we will post at church and distribute to each participant) we ask for a contribution of \$10.00. If your child needs a ride to church, let us know. As mentioned, we bring ALL of the kids home at the end so you need not pick them up.

We do insist that you accept your child back at the end of the day – after peeling away the grime to confirm identity if necessary.



Also, note that one of the favorite activities is collecting souvenirs, which often end up coming home. Please make it clear to your intrepid explorer what sorts of animals, minerals and vegetables will be allowed over the threshold. The most common possibilities include frogs, toads, snakes, insects, worms and other creeping (and creepy) things, shells, bones, sticks, rocks and discarded railroad spikes.

We look forward to another “memorable” event – which

means that the occasional nettle attacks, the inevitable muddy shoes, the rare smelly dead raccoons and possible insect bites, all become part of the adventure.

We will call starting May 30 all who are on the mailing list. If you are viewing this letter over the internet, picked it up at church or found it on your windshield in a parking lot, please call Ross. Spanish speakers may call Maureen Juarez at 612 866-6913.



Your Fearless* Leaders,

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*Depending on your prayers for energy, patience and safety.

Junior Church at First Evangelical Free Church, 5150 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis MN 55417