

MAY
2003

First Word

FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH, 5150 CHICAGO AVENUE

Visit our Web Site

www.firstfreechurch.org

I can remember physical maturity. I remember at three years of age my daughter wanting to do the monkey bars. I told her she had to wait until she was big enough. "How old will I be when I am big enough", she asked. "Six", I responded, rapidly thinking up an age when I thought she would be able to have the strength to hold on to the monkey bars. She beat me. She did the monkey bars at 5 1/2.

One of our goals as believers is to develop spiritually. Paul reminds the maturing believers in Philippi not to get complacent in their spiritual growth. "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me....All of us who are mature should take such a view of things." (Philippians 3:12,15)

But spiritual maturity is typically more difficult to recognize than physical maturity. Ephesians tells us that we are to "become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." In other words, spiritual maturity will look like Christ. That is clear, but what does that mean? What kind of people does God want us to produce at First Free?

NURTURE

What does a fully developed disciple of Christ look like?

I asked our staff and our council members this question. Here are some of their answers:

*The person...loves God...has God's passion for others and the world...
is devoted to prayer...is obedient to God...brings others to Christ...
is willing to sacrifice...and the list goes on.*

What would you say? What would a fully developed disciple of Christ look like?

In our desire to move each person towards spiritual maturity at First Free we have been teaching a class called, *Growing Deeper*. In the class, we emphasize that growing more mature in Christ will, at its core, require us to develop and practice four basic habits. A disciple follows God's Word (John 8:31-32), so we need to develop the habit of time in God's word. A disciple prays and bears fruit (John 15:7-8), so we emphasize the habit of prayer. A disciple is not possessed by his or her possessions (Luke 14:33), so he or she needs to learn the habit of tithing. And a disciple loves other believers (John 13:34-35), so we talk about the habit of fellowship.

Are you developing these four habits? Are you seeing spiritual growth in your own life?

Pastor Joel Sutton

SERMON SERIES: PASTOR JOEL SUTTON

MAY 4 LUKE 9:1-36 *ARE YOU LISTENING? (PASTOR ERIC)*
MAY 11 DEUT 6:4-25 *HOW TO BECOME A GARRISON KEILLOR*
MAY 18 LUKE 15 *WHAT IS THE RECIPE FOR ANGEL DELIGHT?*
MAY 25 PSALM 1 *A NEW SERIES OF SUMMER PSALMS :
(PSALM 1 A FORMULA FOR HAPPINESS)*

FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE PURPOSE STATE- MENT

WE EXIST TO:
BRING PEOPLE INTO A
RELATIONSHIP WITH
JESUS,
CONNECT THEM TO
GOD'S FAMILY,
MATURE THEM IN
THEIR FAITH ,
EQUIP THEM FOR
MINISTRY

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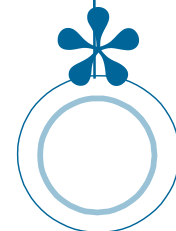
Author Sherie McClun

Contained in the written history of Israel's Kingdoms are often found phrases like this: "Now _____ became the _____ king of Israel when he was _____ and he reigned _____ years. His mother's name was _____. He did _____ in the eyes of the Lord as he was encouraged to do by his father or mother." Granted many of these accounts are tragic and disturbing, but the point is that in each and every life there are lessons learned from individuals that we have contact with. When we are young, we tend to soak up the examples set for us. When we grow older, we become the vehicle exhausting those lessons. That is the focus of the NURTURE COMMISSION.

Sunday school classes, youth groups, VBS, Clubs on Wednesdays, Children's Church, the Library, the Nursery are just some of the activities that fall under Nurture Commission responsibilities. Have you been involved in any of those ministries? If you have not or are not currently, would you please consider doing so? There are many things you could get involved in without giving up your life. You could help check out books in the library and talk to the kids. You could share part of your life in Children's church and or Sunday school classes. For four hours one morning in early August you could hang out at VBS and help wherever needed. You could daydream and come up with your own ideas of how you could be involved.

The words of a contemporary song: *"...and I can hear Mrs. Keane gently say, 'the God of the past is still God today', so....tell me again of the gospel story, tell me again of the faithful who walked, through the lion's den or the fiery furnace....I don't want to forget, so please tell me again."*

You will never know when or how you became "Mrs. Keane" but we are praying that you will try.



Congratulations

MATT GOODMAN GRADUATED ON APRIL 26TH FROM THE BRIERCREST BIBLE COLLEGE IN CAROPORT, SASAKTUAN CANADA. HE IS RECEIVING A B.A. DEGREE IN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE.

MATT WILL BE EMPLOYED AT ADVENTUROUS CHRISTIAN, A BWCA CAMP JUST OUTSIDE OF THE GRAND MARIAS.



Nurture-Pass It On

Stacy Olson

During an interview with Ross Olson, I discovered the impact of God when we take the time to nurture other believers.

- S:** What new things have you learned in your spiritual walk by guiding the Jr. church?
- R:** I get a fresh outlook each time I teach. I notice that you can't use clichés. They want to know what things mean.
- S:** They think concretely.
- R:** Yeah. I also receive a lot of encouragement.

The kids become aware of the things around them. In fact, three girls from Jr. Church class meet to pray for other peers.

- S:** That's incredible!
- R:** Yeah, it makes everything worth while. The kids may not look like they are listening but they really are!
- S:** In your perspective, what does it mean to nurture?
- R:** I think of raising babies and nutrition. Care and growth are needed in order for anything or anyone to develop. You definitely need to care about people. It's also important to be humble. I think this is really important. I learn things from the kids because often times they ask me questions that I have never thought of before.

Recommended Books

MISSION VENEZUELA

PROVIDES A FASCINATING ACCOUNT OF HOW A PRIMITIVE TRIBE WAS REACHED WITH THE GOSPEL. THE AUTHOR IS MARGRET JANK.

OVERCOMING THE ADVERSARY

"OVERCOMING THE ADVERSARY" IS A SOLID BOOK ON DEALING WITH THE ENEMY ON A CONSTRUCTIVE BASIS. IT EMPHASIZES PRAYER AS A GREAT TOOL IN ACHIEVING VICTORY IN OUR SPIRITUAL WALK.

HAROLD ANDERSON

Missionary Focus

Continue to pray for Mary Damon, a missionary in Macau, who devotes her time to infants and children with physical disabilities. As a physical therapist, Mary's work involves touch, stretching and strength training. She physically bears the weight of these children, as Jesus works through her to bear their emotional pain.

Long to make an **impact** on the world?
Want to rediscover a **passion** for ministry?

S e p t 6 t h *more to come!*

PAINT O RAMA



Wanted: Anybody
What: paint scenes and props for VBS.
(Paint by number)
When: Sat May 3rd 9:30 am – 4:30 pm.
Duration: An hour or the whole day.
Lunch will be served at 12:30 pm.
Supplies: Paint brushes (optional)
Questions? Call Patty Mellema or Sherie McClun.

It's
COOL
In
The

F u r n a c e



Where: First Free Evangelical Free Church (5150 Chicago Ave S. MPLS)

When: June 1, 2003 6:00 pm

Who: First Free kids choir