

When I was small and played with dolls, I would always have a family of a dozen, and that was my goal for the future-to be a mother of twelve. During high school, my church offered a teacher training course. My girlfriend and I signed up and were eventually assigned a class in the preschool dept. From there I moved up to the Beginners Children's Church where I team taught with a master, my mother.

After high school, I added what was to become my all-time love...Girls' club. At Girls' Club we went on picnics, went swimming, went mini-golfing, visited different nursing homes, sang silly songs like "Toe Knee Chest Nut" and serious songs like "The Bear Song". We made crafts, played games, cooked, memorized verses, had slumber parties, and even went out to the Children's Theater (free for those in 6th grade who were willing to train and volunteer as an usher). There were also different Bible lessons and songs that taught us of God and His love.

I have been blessed to work with the most wonderful people in the family of God. All of whom have been much more gifted than I. I have learned so much from them, and have been humbled by how God can use and merge our various gifts into service for Him.

"ON NIGHTS WHEN I WOULD GO HOME FEELING LIKE A FAILURE, THE LORD WOULD REMIND ME THAT IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT IS THE REAL TEACHER, NOT ME."

There was a time when I got to help with Bible school at a church in a small town. The only kids who showed up in my age group were boys. I was scared to death, but for some reason I told them it was a good thing I liked boys. On the last day, one of the mothers came up to me and said her boy insisted on attending every day because his teacher loved boys so much. It is fun when you hear something back from the parents. Once in a great while, you will get a hug and a thank you from a former student years later.



When I turned 60, I decided that the girls needed someone with more energy and enthusiasm, so I retired. I trust that I will be as faithful praying for those who are still working as were those before me. I was very lonesome for kids, so much so that when the call recently went out for help in the pre-school department, I came back to help out. I noticed that the younger the children the more affectionate they are.

I have never had any children of my own, but I have always had about twelve children that were around each year, and I have yet to change a diaper.



WHATEVER YOU DO, WORK AT IT WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AS WORKING FOR THE LORD, NOT FOR MAN.

COLOSSIANS 3:23



Just Imagine The Children's Corner...

Beth Brown *Children's Ministry Director*



Just imagine what has been taking place the past few months at First Free...

The Preschool class of 2-5 year-olds was bursting at the seams, so we divided it into two classes. Kids in K - 6th grade love the video and craft corners in the Primary Room during the fellowship time. We have nearly 70 children under our care on a Sunday morning. Parents can check out a pager from the nursery. Just Imagine the impact we at First Free have on children...

The Importance of Children's Ministry

We have a high calling to love and care for children – to teach them about Jesus and His love for them. According to George Barna, most people who trust Jesus as their Savior do so before the age of 15, so we need to give priority to our children, and also help parents with their responsibility of raising spiritually grounded kids.

The Importance of an Effective Church Nursery

Elmer Towns said, "The nursery is the handshake of the local church." For many families, the nursery is the first impression that they receive. It is also a place for sharing God's love with little ones and their families.

The Importance of Having a Strong Team of Volunteers

It's important to have a dynamic presence of volunteers in the church who want to work with children, and for the church to have a program/ministry where people want to get involved. We need to provide training, resources, and support for them - including prayer! Just imagine what God has in store for the future of children's ministry at First Free Church!

TREE CLIMBERS

I have enjoyed working with the 1st and 2nd graders this past year in Tree Climbers on Wednesday nights. My favorite part about helping kids is seeing them on Sunday morning. They always come up and say, "hi," and it's nice to know that they aren't too busy running around to recognize that I like spending time with them.

I really feel that it is helpful for boys at this age to have a place where they can act like boys and be praised for the progress they make. I really like making Wednesday night a time where we can tell the boys, "go and do" instead of, "no and don't." It is so much fun to see them learn how to play sports together, paint a model car, and be excited about being at church.

I would like to thank the other adults that I work with. These adults have made my transition from going to church to helping at church easy and rewarding.



Adam Nordell