

Celebrating Hazel Johnson

~ by Vangi Parr
Written 5/24/2006



- Hazel Johnson is at the top right in this picture taken in 1936. She was the girls High School Sunday School Teacher.



HAZEL:

There's a little lady at my church, she's elderly and sweet

I tell her so now and then, her smile just can't be beat !

This smile reflects the joy inside, from a life who loves the Lord

And one day soon she'll meet her King and receive her reward.

I hope to be content like her, when I grow tired and old

I'm sure that all I need to do is let Him carry my load.

I'll ask her one of these days real soon, how did you do it so long,

Trusting Jesus, and serving him and continually staying strong ?

I'm sure she'll smile that wonderful grin, with a twinkle in her eye,

She'll tell me how she's looking forward to meeting Him in the sky.

After my visit with this dear saint, I'll continue down life's road,

Asking Him to please help me to reach those streets of gold.

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Firstword

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REmodel

Ever walk through one of those "Remodeler's Parade of Homes"? When somebody on our block has done a major home renovation, Becky and I love to take a walk through. We enjoy seeing what they have done to their older home; to see what we like and to catch a vision for what we might like to do someday in our house.

Peter is encouraging us as God's church to be a remodeled spiritual house that people can see and want to be like. "You . . . are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood . . . Live such good lives among the pagans that . . . they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." (1 Peter 2:5,12, NIV). Together, as the church, we are to live in such a way that others want their lives to become remodeled by God.

The life of the early church in Acts 2 was lived out on three fronts: in the temple courts, house-to-house and then in the community around them. The Bible says that as nonbelievers saw the early Christians loving each other and living a lifestyle of biblical fellowship, everybody around them was in awe, and each day the Lord added to their group others who were being saved.

In other words, fellowship created opportunities for evangelism; community opened doors for outreach. Nonbelievers were so impressed by the fellowship of these believers and the love they had for one another that they wanted to be in on it. I'm convinced that the same is true today. Biblical fellowship is just as powerful a witnessing tool today as it was two thousand years ago.

The truth is, everybody wants to be loved, and deep inside, everybody wants to have a sense of belonging. This sense of community is universal. We all long for authentic community.

This month, I want to ask you to prepare yourself for our fall all-church spiritual campaign called "40 Days of Community: Better Together". On Sunday, August 17th we will be having a Pre-Campaign Kick-off at the 11:00 am hour. We want to invite everyone to join us for this exciting event. I want to also ask you to pray this month for what God wants to do in our community through our church.

The focus of "40 Days of Community" will be love. Loving the people in our larger church community - that's temple courts. Loving the people in our Adult Bible Fellowship and small group - that's house to house. And loving the people in our neighborhoods, in South Minneapolis - that's the community around our church. Because without love, nothing else matters - it's just wasted effort. And without love, the church has nothing to offer a lost and dying world. My prayer is that God will make us at First Free into one of His Remodeler's Showcase Homes.

~ Pastor Joel

- August 3 - Teen Challenge Choir and Communion
- August 10 - Are We to Fear God? - Psalm 103
Lake Baptism/ Picnic
- August 17 - Anxiety Medicine - Phil. 4:5-7
40 Days of Community Pre-Campaign Kickoff
- August 24 - Minnehaha Falls Worship
Fear Not - John 14:1-6
- August 31 - Fear No More - Zephaniah 3:14-20

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

so that God's name
 is EXALTED



VBC RECAP...

This year's VBC was especially memorable for our family. We were all very moved by the Sorenson family, Tyler and Nick were very inspired by their dedication to their ministry, and it's even ignited a desire to learn sign language! Being a photographer for the week, I had an up close and personal view of the week's events, and was so encouraged by the way God's love and truth were revealed over and over again. Because I was a volunteer, our 3 year old Rachel was able to be a part of VBC and experience first hand not only the fun "Power Lab" experiments, but hear the message of God's faithfulness all week long! And



again, this year, we had kids from our neighborhood SO excited to come back to First Free for their third year of VBC. Thanks to everyone for their dedication to this very special week! ~ Kris Larson



There were a total of 220 children that passed through our doors during POWER LAB! Praise God for a POWERful week where He was at work in the lives of kids and parents!

Other FUN Facts from the week!:

- There were 189 K-6th graders, 60% of which were not from our church!
- 120 volunteers served - Thank You!
- Collected nearly \$700 for Sorenson family's Ministry to the Deaf in Thailand
- 100 people came to see the "GodMan" movie Thursday night
- At least 3 kids prayed to receive Christ - probably more!!
- Soccer balls signed by the kids; going to kids in Thailand, Japan, and Costa Rica!!
- Doug and Cheryl Conrad, our Missionaries to Japan, were here to give an update about the PrayerBears they gave to kids in Japan. Our kids made them at VBC last year!
- One girl said that this was the first time she had ever prayed! And she is telling her mom about Jesus!

Dental Mission to Peru

Getting people to come to church can be like "pulling teeth"! In this case it's true. On August 14th a team of 9 from First Free and 4 others will travel to the jungle town of Puerto Maldonado, Peru on a dental mission trip. The outreach to these rural Peruvians will provide dental care through extractions, cleanings, and oral hygiene instruction. However the primary purpose of this outreach is Kingdom building. By partnering with local churches, hundreds of individuals will be ministered to in a unique way by a loving, caring church right in their own neighborhood.



Glenn and Apryl Hultstrand have made several of these trips to Peru in recent years. This summer they are encouraged to be leading a team which includes Matt Beckett, Felix and Maureen Juarez, Jay and Heidi Pound, Debbie Smith, and John Symington. Also joining them will be Tim Olson, who grew up here at First Free (Stan's son/Ross's brother); John Anderson, a friend of Hultstrands; Becca and Erik Benson, friends of Jay and Heidi (Becca and Heidi are senior dental students at the U of M).

While only a few of the team members have dental/medical experience, all have demonstrated a true servant's heart by being willing to go. Clinics take place in a different town or village each day. Before entering, all patients will receive a Gospel presentation and prayer by a local pastor/leader. For many it will be the first time they have heard a clear presentation of the Gospel. It will also be the first time for many to see the Gospel in action as they are the recipients of love and care from a local church. The goal is that the Kingdom will grow and local churches will be strengthened.

You can join with this ministry by donating toothbrushes to the collection box by the information booth in the foyer of church. And of course, you can pray. Pray as the team prepares. Pray for trouble-free passage through Peruvian Customs with suitcases full of dental instruments and medications. Pray for the missionaries, Don and Christie Latta, as they make the preparations for the team to join them in Peru. Pray for the patients coming to the clinics, for their health and salvation. Pray for the local churches. Pray daily for the team's safety and health as they travel and minister in the jungle of Peru.

UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS

First Free is having its first **BLOOD DRIVE** in 10 years. Please save the date and plan to participate on:
Wednesday, August 13th from 3:30-6:30
 Sign up by calling Christy Fleming at 651.332.7167 or at the Welcome Desk on Sunday mornings. Your donation of one pint can help save up to 3 people's lives! SO, join in the life-saving fun and be a hero!

Minnehaha Park Public worship:
 Sunday, August 24th, 10:30 am

Join us at the Park for a time of worship and praise!



Pre-Campaign Kickoff is Sunday, August 17th at 11:00 AM

Lake Baptism and Church Picnic
 at the West Beach of Lake Nokomis
 Sunday, August 10th, after the
 9:30 service. Everyone is invited!