

SUMMER FELLOWSHIP DINNERS ~ Dee Huanca Caring Commission

More than 70 people participated in our Summer Fellowship Dinners. The eight groups which met in July all reported delightful times; God bless those who hosted these events.

Evon Peterson, Mildred Smith and Phyllis Brown who live at Mainstreet Village Retirement Community have always loved to entertain. When they realized the opportunity to host a group in their party room, they were thrilled. After quickly drawing up their menu, they contacted the nine people who had been selected. It was exciting to see that they were of diverse backgrounds and ages: couples, singles and a family, all ranging in age from 20-99. Any fears about communication proved to be unfounded as the conversation moved smoothly with everyone eager to get to know each other better. The hostesses were thrilled and even more so as the guests chipped in to help with cleaning up.

Was it worth the effort? "Absolutely!" The participants said "We hope that those who haven't attended a dinner will in the future so that we can get to know each other better as a 'Church Family'."

*First Free Church
5150 Chicago Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55417*



Firstword

First Evangelical Free Church A Church Family Publication September 2008

Ready for Royalty

Imagine this morning that the President and the First Lady are coming to your house for dinner. So what do you do? You clean your home from top to bottom. You prepare a meal that would be fit for royalty. And you set the table with your finest china.

In a similar way, at First Free we have been preparing for a spiritual meal that will begin in September. Everyone one of you has been invited to participate in this special campaign called 40 Days of Community. I am sure we are going to enjoy what has been prepared. We are going to have some fun together. But I also want to make sure we are ready for our guest of honor, Jesus, our King.

So let me challenge you to prepare yourself spiritually.

In Exodus 19, the Israelites came to Mt. Sinai. And they prepared themselves for a visit from God. "And the Lord said to Moses, 'Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and be ready by the third day because on that day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.'"

Here in these verses are three very practical steps you and I can take, to get ready in the next few weeks for what God wants to do in our midst.

First, set time aside. These Israelites were people just like us. They had jobs, responsibilities and families. Yet God told them that they were to get ready to meet with Him. If you are going to get the most out of 40 Days of Community, it is going to happen partly because you have set time aside beforehand and during the campaign to get ready for what God wants to teach you. I will be asking each person in our church during 40 Days of Community to become part of an ABF or join a small group. How can you do community unless you are in a community? I will also be asking you to read a daily devotional for all 40 Days. A great way to get started each day is in God's Word. A third thing I will be asking is for you to memorize a different verse each week. Make time. It will be worth it.

Second, spiritually prepare by taking a spiritual inventory. Make an honest assessment. "Where am I in my own relationship with the Lord right now?" "Is there anything that is blocking my relationship with God?" "Have I left my first love?" If I want to be in the right place in my heart to let God do a great work in my life, I need to let God search my heart. I hope your cry is the same as David's in Psalm 51, "Create in me a pure heart, God, and make my spirit right again."

Third, pray diligently. Nothing will draw our hearts to God's heart like prayer. Nothing will remove spiritual roadblocks like prayer. Nothing will ignite our hearts for God like prayer. Nothing will invite God's presence into 40 Days of Community like a congregation which is committed to praying. Nothing will set the table for a visit from God, our King, like prayer.

And here is what I find interesting about that story in Exodus: as a community they responded, "We will do everything the Lord has said." Understand, we are more than just a collection of individual Christians who happen to gather for worship on the same time on the same day. We are a community. We are a church. We are a family. We are the body of Christ. We are all going to do this together. That is why I am hopeful that every single person who considers First Free their church home will say, "I am in." I pray that your response is "I will do my part, because I am part of this body, this family, this community. I belong here. And I want to see what God can and will do in us together."

- Pastor Joel

Fall Worship Schedule

Worship Service/ABF's:	9:30 am - 10:30 am
Fellowship:	10:30 am - 11:00 am
Worship Service/ABF's:	11:00 am - 12:00 am

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

A Disconnect

When kids know that they might get a shot at the Doctor's office, are they the first one in the car saying, Let's go? Or when kids at church know that Uncle Stan always has candy in his pocket, guess who gets all the attention the minute they enter the church. There's a reason, a connection between what we know and what we do. When these two don't match -- it's a disconnect.

We find in our house there is a huge tendency for there to be a big disconnect in our approach to prayer. And we suspect this is true for a majority of Christians. We know Jesus said very plainly, "Without me you can do nothing." Billy Graham has said that the secret to all that really happened in his campaigns was that humble people prayed. We say on our bulletin cover, "Where the difference is... the relationship". We know that all relationships are built on communication and prayer is that communication with God. It would seem to be "just natural" for us to put prayer as a top priority in our lives. In fact prayer is a delight, so meaningful, so important. Why the disconnect? We suspect you struggle with this disconnect between what you know to be true and what happens, as we do. Why?

Underlying all the contributing factors is one Enemy of our Souls. He knows perfectly well that our spiritual well being depends on our relationship with God, that the invasion of his territory is done by God's army and their weapons are (from Ephesians 6) the Word of God and prayer. He uses every trick in his book to keep us from both. Friends, we are at war and this sneaky enemy hoodwinks us into all sorts of busyness, distraction -- good things, some times -- subtle lies and doubts which creep in so unobserved. End result -- we're too busy to pray. or worse don't even think about praying. And getting together with others to pray, even about important stuff? No time! Dear friends, we're at war, soldiers in God's army. II Timothy 2:4 says soldiers don't get distracted by these things of the world. Step up for active duty!

Now throughout the scriptures God calls us to come TOGETHER in prayer, especially when there is a special need. This campaign is a special need. Where ever our people are gathered, and prayer seems appropriate, please pray for this campaign -- at meal times in homes, small groups, and the ABFs, as well as in personal prayer. Come TOGETHER before His throne.

Are you (and your family) in the battle? Join the ranks! Let's Devastate that Disconnect!

Laboratory for Love

"But the greatest of these is love." – I Cor. 13:1

If you have been to a number of weddings, you most likely have heard the famous "love" chapter the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians. It is a most fitting place for that elegant section of prose to be read, and hopefully applied—in the lives of the newly united couple. However, that passage was not written to brides and grooms, though their relationship is a laboratory for practicing that kind of love.

Paul means to say that the body of Christ is the laboratory for love. While ultimately, you wouldn't want to limit your loving to just a few, we want you to experimentally love a few folks for 7 weeks—once a week, at the time of your choice. The 40 Days of Community series we are kicking off September 21st will give you the opportunity to explore together five key purposes God has for His Church.

The best part of the experiment is that you will learn something, even if the results are not what you expected. If your experiment goes well, we hope you'll continue your "research" and love those folks for a whole year (or longer...) in your small group. Together you'll read a daily devotional. Together you'll serve in the community. Together you'll pray and study the Bible. Together you'll look for and find a place to serve the church body as a whole. Together you'll love each other.

We look forward to your joining us on the adventure of loving each other in small groups this fall! Be ready to sign up for a group on Sunday, September 21st, or contact Jennifer Bartle (jenn.bartle@gmail.com) even sooner if you are ready for the lab.

Pastor Eric Twietmeyer

Youth Missions Update

CHICAG-ARTIN-RICA?

Do you get service in Chicag-artin-rica? Well you would if you had the FEFC Students as your service provider. This summer our students went to Chicago, Martin SD and Costa Rica on Mission Service trips impacting the lives of those to whom they ministered, and being impacted in their own lives.

Days after school let out in the middle of June nine students and two leaders headed to a suburb of Chicago and took part in the Converge Evangelism experience where our students learned key truths about their Christian faith and then learned how to share those truths. We hit the streets of Chicago at Chicago's North Beach where students attempted to start spiritual conversations with people. Some were open and some were very closed. The key to Converge is the challenge our kids are given to share with their non-Christian friends and family members when they return home.

In the middle of July, fourteen students and adults piled in the Church van and headed to Martin, South Dakota, where they ministered to one of the poorest areas in the country. Our students painted a house and helped do some home repairs. They also helped with a kids' club where the students did dramas, taught some lessons, gave lots of piggy back rides and loved on some kids that are often forgotten.

In early August, eleven students and five leaders hopped on an airplane early in the morning and flew to San Jose, Costa Rica. Our students worked along side two Evangelical Free churches in Costa Rica. At one of the churches we helped repair their sanctuary and did some evangelism training with the church's youth group. We then headed out, Costa Ricans and Americans together, to share Jesus with people on the streets. At the second church we did some much needed repairs, building a handicap accessible ramp into the church, painting the church and repairing their building and grounds. Students also were able to share a few dramas they had prepared.

So if you are looking for a service provider in Chicag-artin-rica then the FEFC Student Ministry has the plan for you!

Creekside Friends Children's Ministry FALL 2008 SCHEDULE

- 9:30 am-12:00 pm NURSERY and 2's
 - 9:30 am-12:00 pm PRESCHOOL
 - 9:30-10:30 am CREEKSIDE BIBLE TIME
 - Room 102A: Kindergarten Room 102C: Grade 1
 - Room 102D: Grade 1 Room 102B: Grade 2
 - Room 101: Grade 3 Room 101: Grade 4
 - Room 301: Grade 5 Room 302: Grade 6
 - 10:30-10:55 am FRIENDS CORNER
 - *Parents, please pick up your kids by 10:55 for worship
 - Room 102: Grades K-2 Room 101: Grades 3-6
 - 11:30 am-12:00 pm CREEKSIDE CHILDREN'S/JUNIOR CHURCH
 - Room 102: Grades K-1 Room 101: Grades 2-3
 - Room 302: Grades 4-6
- All K-6 kids go to the 11:00 service first, then they are dismissed
 - Any child whose parent isn't in the service can sit with a teacher or friend

FEFC Student Ministry Fall Schedule

Sunday Jr. and Sr. High 9:30-10:30 AM Room #108	Wednesday Night Jr. & Sr. High 6:30 -8:30 Room #108
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Fall Retreat Jr. & Sr. High
 OCT. 16th-19th
 Sign up by Sept. 28th \$95



Starts September 21st!