

Ministry in Action:

- Parents of Teenagers ABF at CES

Interview with Pam Ericson

Q: What is CES/Community Emergency Services?

A: CES is a resource for the people of the community in times of emergency situations. The organization is based out of an old abandoned church building operated by Pastor Don. At any given time the projects available can include packaging rice, oats, sugar, and flour that come in bulk and need to be put in smaller bags for the food shelf. Other necessary activities include sorting through food items and organizing, packing and getting things ready for the food shelf pantry.



Darcy Suzy and Anna Schubloom and Dan Larson at CES.

Q: How many members of the Parents of Teenagers ABF made it to CES?

A: Our ABF had a turn out of about 14 people.

Q: What did you do in your time at CES?

A: We all bagged approximately 1,045 lbs of oats, and we were involved in organizing the food that was donated into boxes. The food was then set by categories on the pews, and then it was placed on a conveyer belt to be stored upstairs until its turn in the food pantry or to be delivered to people.

Q: How did you hear about CES?

A: I heard about CES through the youth group project FOCUS.

Q: What did you like most about your experience at CES?

A: The thing I liked the most was finding out that there are organizations locally to aid area residents' needs. I plan on helping out in the future on my own.



Bryce Miller, Pam Ericson and her daughter Nona, helping at CES.

First Free Church
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Firstword

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Thankful in Every Circumstance

I read this story awhile back about the wild brush fire that swept through Southern California, from North of Los Angeles to the Mexican border last October 2007. Five hundred thousand acres were burned up, a half-million people displaced from their communities, and 2,000 homes destroyed in the blazes.

But in Rancho Bernardo, in a Presbyterian church where 60 families had lost their homes, worshipers met to give thanks. One reporter noted, "They gave thanks for the big things: for lives saved, families, friendships. They also gave thanks for small things: a hug, a shoulder to cry on."

Barbara Warden was one of those fire victims. All she was able to salvage were three boxes of photographs and her grandfather's cuckoo clock. But she, too, was thankful. No one was hurt, neither in her family nor in her community. On the Saturday before the Sunday service, as Barbara searched through her home's ashes, she discovered a sundial her husband had given her. The following message was engraved on the sundial: "Grow old along with me. The best is yet to be."

Barbara mused, "That says it all, doesn't it? We have a lot to be thankful for."

Some of you have had a tough year. You've lost your job. Maybe you have gone through a difficult time in your marriage. Now we come to Thanksgiving and you wonder, "How can I give thanks to God when times are tough?"

I Thessalonians 5:18 reminds us to, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (NIV).

Paul is not saying in this verse to give thanks for everything. For example, you don't have to give thanks for evil in the world. If my wife was sick, I would not be thankful for her sickness. But what he is saying is that in every circumstance, no matter how bad it is, we can give thanks to God because . . .

- His purpose is bigger than my problem.
- He will give me the power to overcome.
- I know that I will grow through the experience if I allow God to use it in my life.

I don't have to be thankful for evil, but I can be thankful despite evil. How can you be grateful when you have lost your job, or your health, or your spouse? Not by looking at what you've lost - but what you have. That was what caught my eye about Barbara Warden's response. She found those things she could be thankful for.

So here is the question for this Thanksgiving: What are you taking for granted? Your health? Your freedom? Your relationships? This Thanksgiving sing that old, familiar hymn, "Count your blessings, name them one by one; count your many blessings, see what God hath done."

- Pastor Joel

Fall Worship Schedule

- November 2 - Celebration Sunday
- November 9 - Characters of Faith: Stephen - Acts 7
Pastor Eric preaching
- November 16 - Outreach Sunday -
Dan Reeve preaching
- November 23 - Living in a World of Complainers
Exodus 15 -17
- November 30 - Advent Conspiracy 1 -
The True Wonder of Christmas - Luke 2:8-20

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

is a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ.

In addition to their Sunday activities, a special time of fellowship with our missionaries will be held on Saturday evening, Nov. 15, at 7:00 pm. This will be hosted at the home of Steve and Marie Mondy, 8629 Poplar Bridge Curve (call 952-835-0845 for directions).

Parents' Special Event, Wednesday, November 12, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

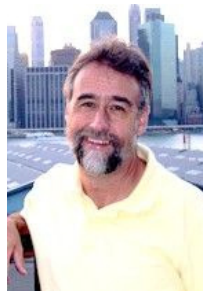
Are you a parent of a child or teen? Do you wonder how to deal with the electronic media (TV, computers, video games, cell phones, text messaging, iPods, etc)? Wednesday, November 12, you will have the opportunity to hear from a national youth leader. Don Paterson, President of Christian Service Brigade will speak on adults' confusion over teen use of e-lingo. Although Christian Service Brigade ministers to boys from elementary school through high school, the topic is applicable to parents of boys and girls of all ages from preschool through college.



International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church
We will be privileged to have a greeting **November 9 from Lori Robb**, who with her husband has served many years with World Vision and now with International Prayer Council and Global Children in Prayer. The congregation as a whole will be encouraged to pray, with others across the world, for the persecuted church on this day.

OUTREACH/MISSIONS

An exciting Outreach Week is planned with events on November 9, 12, 15 and 16.



Sunday November 16, Rev. Dan Reeve will be speaking in both services. Dan was pastor of Salem Free Church and went on to work with Urban & Intercultural Ministries of the EFCA. He is currently President of the Center for Student Missions. Dan is driven by the conviction that the greatest needs of all urban and ethnic Americans are to experience the people of God building relationships, empowering others, and becoming incarnate in the lives of those often forgotten in a holistic way. Dan spends many hours in the urban "trenches" sharing his faith on the streets and mentoring inner-city youth. He is a colorful and challenging speaker and will be bringing a message entitled "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Samaria" to First Free.



Two of our missionaries, **Gary Maloney and the Harrigers, will be sharing with ABFs on Sunday, Nov. 16, as well.** Gary Maloney is the Regional Director for Christian Service Brigade. He writes, "Our mission is to win and develop children and youth to be leaders for Christ in their families, churches, and communities. We strive to do so through strengthening churches

by equipping men who are committed to God's Word, to win and train boys as disciples of Jesus Christ."

Tom and Joy Harriger serve with Student Venture facilitating student mission trips and following-up with those who come to Christ as a result of those missions. Though the Harrigers normally operate state-side through their ministry, this past summer they led a Mission Project Team to Japan. Student Ventures



Advent Conspiracy

- Pastor Eric

What if we spend our Christmas budgets helping others instead of buying gifts that are so easily forgotten?

In our Christmas series, Advent Conspiracy, We want you to spend less and give more! we decided to have a special offering and give it to Kid's Alive. Kid's Alive is an organization committed to rescuing at-risk kids and orphans from the barrios of the Dominican Republic. In the past, members of First Free have visited the DR to help build many of the facilities of the The Ark, a collection of homes which cares for 80 orphans at a time. The goal of The Ark is to take in children who have been orphaned, abandoned, or abused and train them to become productive members of their society and active disciples of Jesus Christ. The program is centered on the relationship between the individual child and his or her housemother/houseparents. The children range between 2 and 17 years old.

It is a beautiful work of God's grace in action.

In order for more children to be cared for, they need to expand their facilities.

What if we raise \$15,000 that will be matched by another organization to help buy a bus to get The Ark kids to school?

What if we raised more to help them add rooms to the school? Purchase another vehicle for their ministry? Start a care center in Costanza to help the poor in that town?

Start to plan now about how this Christmas will make a difference in the lives of some orphan kids.



Chinese American Afternoon

Several hundred future leaders of China doing graduate work at the U of M, are looking for American friends and are curious about Christianity. On Sunday, November 16, you have an opportunity to host a Chinese student or family in your home for a meal and take him or her to a short outreach at the U. For more information, contact Bob and Joanne Kraftson with China Outreach Ministries at rjkraftson@embraqmail.com or at 651- 437-6806 (home) or 651-303-7683 (cell).

HARVEST OF PRAISE

**November 26th
7:00 PM**

**Come Celebrate
All of God's Good Gifts**



Fresh Encounter

****NEW DAY**
Wednesday, November 19
6:45-8:00
...An all church
Prayer Worship Experience**

VETERANS' PROJECT

Anoka Technical College, as part of its "Veterans' Project," is offering a day where Veterans of any period can have their stories recorded by real-time reporters. They will be providing two sessions, 9-Noon and 1-4 pm, on Saturday, November 8th. Contact Joyce Freisen, 952-835-1854, with any questions.