

THE FEFC NEIGHBORHOOD STREET FEST - Lori Graham

The first annual FEFC Neighborhood Street Fest was a smashing success! If you were there on the evening of June 24th (or anywhere near the corner of 52nd and Chicago Ave.) you couldn't miss the two-story high inflatables, music, and crowds of people. Many from our church gathered to enjoy a fun summer night with family and new friends from the neighborhood.

The neighborhoods surrounding First Free were invited to join in the fun through the willing hands and feet of many volunteers who delivered almost 1,000 post-it note flier invitations door-to-door. The fliers proved very effective in bringing many neighboring families out to see what First Free was doing in the church parking lot! And boy, was there was a lot to see and enjoy!



The most noticeable excitement at first glance was the inflatable jumpers and obstacle course for the kids. All three were manned by the FEFC Youth Group and obviously enjoyed by all kids in attendance!

In addition, kids and families enjoyed a variety of free food including hotdogs, chips, ice cream, popcorn, cotton candy, and sno cones.

There was something for everyone at the Street Fest, including: a tent with information about FEFC, a nurses' station, and basketball for the men and boys who weren't busy at the food tables or jumping on the inflatables. For a break from all of the food and action, there was worship music provided by Pastor Eric Tweitmeyer, Randy Solem and the FEFC worship band and singers. A special treat was the performance by guest artist, Michelle Whalen.

God's blessings were obvious and abundant on the Neighborhood Street Fest! He brought many people from the surrounding neighborhoods that were impressed by the friendly people they met and talked with from First Free. Our prayer now is that they will come again through the open doors of our little community church and find the hope and love through Jesus Christ that we all need in this world.

"David: A Man After God's Heart"

- August 2 – A Heart of Grace – 1 Samuel 26
- August 9 – Dan Reeve Speaking
- August 16 – A Heart of Worship – 2 Samuel 6:12-23
- August 23 – An Over-Exposed Heart – 2 Samuel 11:1-5
- August 30 – A Heart of Humility – 2 Samuel 16:5-14

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"SLOW DOWN"

-Pastor Joel

Did you know that McDonald's restaurant now offers a fast-track option, so you can be billed automatically and shave 15 seconds off getting your QuarterPounder Meal? I read the other day that people aren't buying frozen juice as much these days either. We simply don't want to wait for it to thaw!

You don't have to be a person of great insight in order to understand that life is much faster these days than years ago.

We can easily identify with what a USA Today article said about life for many people: "Today, people are souped up, stressed out, and over scheduled. In this brave new world boundaries between work and family are disappearing. Everybody is mobile and every moment is scheduled."

My guess is that you are like me. And you are not immune to these time pressures. That is what I enjoy about the summer so much. Hopefully, it allows you a

chance to slow down, catch your breath, take some vacation, think, and pray.

The Bible tells us that hurry and worry and scurry have dramatic negative effects on our lives. If you're serious about slowing your life down to a more humane pace, you're going to have to make three counter-cultural changes in your lifestyle:

1) Learn contentment. It starts in the heart. Paul says this about contentment in Philippians 4:12 (NIV): "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation." Of course that is not as easy as it sounds because it is not in our nature to be content.

We want life to be different - better. But we can't slow down our lives unless we start being content with what we have. Contentment means you find your true joy in your relationship with Christ.

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FEARLESS KIDS SHINING GOD'S LIGHT

by TEAM CROC DIRECTOR Beth Brown

Crocodile Bait Buckets, fireflies, a shack, God Sightings, straw hats, Bible characters in costume, spanish moss, the "Old Man of the Swamp".... add 200 kids and all this will add up to a POWERFUL week of God at work at First Free's Vacation Bible Camp! The church was turned into a colorful Bayou with the fun theme: CROCODILE DOCK, WHERE FEARLESS KIDS SHINE GOD'S LIGHT! Evidence that God was stirring up kids', friends', and parents' hearts for Jesus filled the week. Please read on!



THIS DOCK ROCKED!

- 130 kids came on Monday...
- 40 more kids came on Tuesday, "Bring a Friend Day"
- By Friday, 200 children came to Crocodile Dock!
- Dozens of kids received Wind Whistler toys and GATORade for bringing a friend!
- It was a treat to have Doug & Cheryl Conrad, missionaries that First Free supports, here all week. They and their 3 kids flew in just in time from Japan!
- Each day the kids had the opportunity to give money to the

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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

"SLOW DOWN"

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2) Pause and pray before deciding. Stop and pray about the decisions you make on a regular basis. That doesn't mean you wait a year before deciding something. I'm talking about 10 to 15 seconds. How does this help you slow down? You're pausing to get perspective. Most of us just want to make decisions faster, but it's perspective that really makes better decisions.

Face it—we have a hard time saying no to opportunities. So pause and pray. And ask yourself two questions every time you're given a new opportunity:

- Is it worth it? Is it worth my energy, effort, reputation, and ultimately, my time? Your time is your life. And you need to decide whether the new opportunity is worth a portion of your life.
- What am I going to give up? You can't just keep adding, adding, and adding. You have to give something up to take hold of an opportunity. What will it be?

3) Trust God's timing. Impatience is often why we hurry. It's simply a lack of trust. When you're impatient you're saying, "God, I don't really trust you. I don't think you have my best interest at heart. You don't know when I need it, and I'm in a hurry." Is fast always better? No. Not always.

God has a plan for your life. You know that. But he also has a timetable for your life. It's painful when you're in a hurry and God's not. But it's part of maturing, part of growing up. Children have to learn the difference between "no" and "not yet." God knows the right time and the right way. He has a plan and a timetable.

As we come into August, the last month of this summer, how and when are you going to slow down, take some time, and listen to God?

AUGUST

- Starting August 2nd,
One service @ 9:30 AM with
Fellowship afterwards

SEPTEMBER

- 13 - Fall Kick-off
- 20 - Small Groups Launch
- 23 - Clubs and Youth Group Begin
- 27 - FEFC Ministry Fair

Rock the River Tour

Sunday, August 16th

The Youth Group is Leaving from
Lake Nokomis @ 1:30 PM

Returning to Church @ 10:00 PM

Bring your friends!

\$10 Entrance Fee

Great music, food, hanging out

@ Harriet Island

and hear Franklin Graham too!



**QUARTERLY
BUSINESS
MEETING
AUGUST 10, 7 PM**

CROWN FINANCIAL WORKSHOP

The **Crown Biblical Financial Study** is changing
the way people handle their money.

Topics include: getting out of debt, giving, saving, and investing. **Classes begin on Sept. 13th and 16th at 6:30 pm, and will last for 10 weeks. Watch for more info in upcoming Sunday bulletins.**



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Conrads... over \$300 was raised for them to buy children's books, DVDs and Bibles for the Meinhama Christian Center in Japan! One preschooler even emptied his entire piggy bank

because his heart was touched by them!

- "Bugs and Boils", "Burning Bush" & "Promise Pizzas" were just a few of the snacks the kids experienced from the Snack Shack!
- 114 volunteers joined the CROCODILE DOCK Team to make this a success! Thank you!
- Did you know that 45 of our own youth helped out during the week? They were awesome!
- The "Old Man of the Swamp", Jack Nordin, joined us in the Bayou with his wonderful Magic Show in the Swamp...complete with fireflies, fishing, and doves!
- Preschoolers had a blast at Rocky's Preschool Playhouse...a bunch of parents of preschoolers and babies helped out and their youngest kids got to participate, too!
- Each day the kids had fun making a new craft, such



as a picture frame complete with real Spanish moss!

- 64% of the kids who came either don't attend church or attend a church other than First Free.



- The Sorenson family, missionaries to the deaf, came and showed pictures of the people in Thailand who received Bibles & soccer balls from the kids at VBC last year. Everyone enjoyed a song in sign language about the Armor of God!
- One of the highlights was the youth band and singers, led by Pastor Eric!

A FEW QUOTES FROM KIDS OR PARENTS:

- ... I "learned that Jesus died on the cross and how to pray and talk to God."
- ... "A lot of people liked me for who I am."
- ... "friendly people and staff."
- ... "Every year FF (First Free) goes above and beyond!"
- ... "Great truths in Bible time!"
- ... "He was really scared at the beginning of the week, but by the end he couldn't wait to go!"

- The gospel was clearly presented on Thursday of VBC. Crew leaders talked to each child and many prayed to receive Christ! Seeds were planted among many... I would like to THANK the VBC TEAM that was so fun to work with and who worked hard in planning, preparing, praying, and leading, months and weeks in advance: Colleen Guzman, Jennifer Bartle, Paulette Goodman, Marilyn Fisher, Tracy Johnson, Melinda Meyers, Sherie McClun, Johanna Holliday, Carolyn Berg, & Sue Redepening.



Our kids truly are learning to be fearless in sharing Jesus! They are inviting their friends and neighbors to VBC, to Wednesday night clubs, and even to Camp Shamineau. The light of Jesus is shining brighter in South

Minneapolis. Kids are reaching other kids. Local schools are being affected. Neighborhoods are being touched. We need to pray. First Free family, please pray for the kids at First Free and their friends who are coming. Families are being changed. Pray for Fearless kids to shine God's light!

Thanks for your support of Vacation Bible Camp and of the Creekside Friends Children's Ministry!

"FEAR NOT!" - Beth

HIS FAITHFULNESS TO ALL GENERATIONS: THIRD GENERATION

My Swedish grandparents were born on small farms just North of Minneapolis. While they were growing up, both families attended Free Churches, one in North Branch and the other around Elk River. They were both youth when they came to Minneapolis in the early 1900's looking for work. They each individually sought out the



local Free Church and ended up meeting at First Free on 12th Ave. and 7th St. Grandpa and Grandma Sundgren loved to sing, so they joined the church choir and were members of many years. My grandfather also played the guitar. He, along with others from the church, would do street corner evangelism; singing and presenting the gospel to the many Swedish immigrants coming to Minnesota to live. As a very young boy, I loved to listen to my grandfather play and sing Swedish Hymns. He even taught me to sing in Swedish; however, I couldn't do it now. I am thankful for the significant role First Free Church of MPLS. has played in my family members' lives for over 100 years.

--Wayne Danielson

