

## NOVEMBER 2008



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### Many Thanks from the Ratliffs By: Steve Ratliff, Senior Pastor

Thanks so very much for the celebration of the Ratliffs' 20 years here at Faith. Everything was perfect: the book of cards and notes (wonderful job, Marci), the okra song (that Grieger composed and set to the tune of Jimmy Buffett's "Son of a Son of a Sailor"), the video of memories (thanks, Chris, for your "labor of love"), the cash gift from all of you (wow), the heartfelt prayer (thanks Lowell), and the reception (servanthood provided by Milly and Joe and our elders) which included a cake with a like-

ness of me on top (thanks Katrina!) and Call Hall ice cream. Brian, of course, did a lot of organizing. Most of all, thanks to all of you for your encouragement and support over the years. You've been the type of church that has made a long pastorate possible. Your faith, hope, and love often keep me going.

In case you weren't able to be at the celebration, the video that Chris Barker put together can be viewed on our web site (click on Event Photos).

### Faith's 2009 Budget By: Steve Ratliff, Senior Pastor

Over the past year and a half our leadership has been engaged in a process of clarifying our vision. Given our mission of helping people come to faith in Christ and experience God in all of life, we have been seeking God concerning our congregation-wide priorities for the next several years. We sense that God is doing some wonderful things here at Faith. We see signs of new life in many ministries and in many lives. Our proposed 2009 budget reflects what God is doing in our midst.

First, we believe that this is a time to press forward in faith instead of retreating. We sense that God is breathing new life into virtually every ministry here at Faith. We are experiencing greater unity than we've had in many years. We believe that God has given us clear direction for the next three to five years (active compassion, deepening of prayer, plan for spiritual transformation, culture welcome and acceptance, and a lifestyle of worship). Strategic initiatives in some of these areas (such as hiring a worship pastor) will require additional income. If God has led, God will supply.

The inclusion of salary and benefits for a worship pastor comprises the largest increase. The process of clarifying our vision has confirmed to our leadership that hiring a worship pastor should be a priority. After discussing this possibility for the past two years, we feel like this is the time to move forward on hiring a worship pastor. This initiative is the primary reason why the 2009 budget is significantly larger than our 2008 budget.

Second, our elders are aware that we need to lead the church more strongly in the area of financial stewardship. We are planning to do some simple things to encourage giving to the general budget. Our sense is that if all who consider Faith to be their church home begin giving proportionally and regularly, our income will be significantly higher.

Perhaps you are wondering whether it is wise to propose such an aggressive budget given the current economic downturn and given that we are a bit behind budget in 2008. Allow me to share a couple of perspectives.

Many of you are already giving regularly and generously to Faith. Prayerfully deciding before God what you will give to Faith is something that you already do each year. Perhaps others of you have never really considered what you will

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#### Congregational Meeting

**Monday  
November 17  
7:00 p.m.**

**ALL are encouraged to  
attend!**

**We will be voting on the  
2009 Budget.**

## Youth Are Part of the Church Now

by: Russell Soppe, Youth Pastor

Adolescence, historically speaking is still a new kid on the block. With the onset of industrialization and mandatory education in last 100 years or so a new social category was created. Previous to these developments most if not all societies held some rite of passage, though some were more formal than others. Somewhere during pre-teen and the teenage years puberty sets in starting off a massive shift and change in body, mind, emotion, and soul.



When and how a person achieves “adulthood” in our culture is rather unclear. We used to have markers like attaining a driver’s license, graduating high school, and turning 18. However those markers have mostly changed into milestones along the way.

These days the status of adulthood is often further delayed until one has graduated from higher education, successfully started in a career and moved out of the house, and often not until one is married or raising children. The term adolescence has been divided by many who work with adolescents into: early (pre-teen), middle (teen) and late (early twenties) adolescence. As most of you know the years of adolescence are often trying and difficult years of learning to spread your wings, balancing independence with interdependence, establishing identity and managing increasing responsibility. Unfortunately what has occurred over the course of

time is that while simultaneously worshipping the “young” and marginalizing the “old” adolescents are treated as sub-citizens. The result is that society expects little from adolescents in the areas of maturity, contribution, and responsibility. Society has kept adolescents at a distance with mistrust and with the hypocritical expectation to be independent and responsible without granting wings or power. Unfortunately this attitude has not always escaped the church.

Many of you could finish these next few quotes as I say them, “If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation” or “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free...for all are one in Christ Jesus”. As you can see, there is no age barrier for those in Christ Jesus. The rite of passage into the family of God is faith in Christ, at which point that person becomes a part of the body of Christ. Youth are part of the Church now. Timothy, it seemed, faced the challenge of being looked down on to due to his younger age. Timothy’s great mentor, friend and companion Paul encouraged him and challenged him with these words: “*Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.* <sup>(NIV)</sup>” Let me implore you to turn in trust and grace toward those who live as an adolescent and offer them your friendship and partnership in life and ministry.

## Missions Update-Reynosa 2009 Spring Trip

By: Mike Graham

Reynosa, Mexico is a city of about 2 million people, just across the border from McAllen, TX. This is an industrial city with many factories. There is a growing working class, but many live in very poor conditions. The congregation here at Faith and our partner church in Reynosa have been working together in Reynosa for the past three years. We have done many things in Reynosa, with a focus on outreach, relationship building, and some leadership training. The youth of the church have been our primary workhorses the last three years with lots of help from individuals and families. Many relationships have formed during these trips, but there is opportunity for continued growth in this area. We are planning another trip during Spring Break with the understanding that this is a whole church event, being that we desire both a deepening of current relationships and the formation of new ones. I am always amazed at the work that God does in my heart during one of these trips. It has been

a privilege to work alongside both our church family and theirs these past three years, watching both groups grow and mature spiritually both as individuals and as churches.

I ask that you would prayerfully consider your role in this year’s trip. Your participation as “goer” or “sender” will be greatly valued should you choose to actively participate this year. All sorts of gifting, skills, and ability will be needed. Although there will be a cap on the number of “goers”, as regular attendees and members we all have a stake in this relationship. It is our hearts desire that many actively participate in this upcoming trip. The tentative schedule is to depart the 13th of March returning on the 20th or 21st.

Please feel free to contact Mike Graham at 776-1601 or email [mmgraham@kansas.net](mailto:mmgraham@kansas.net) with questions.

## Blessing Children, Through Adults & Prayer

by: Chris Barker, Children's Pastor

I have become increasingly convinced that the Great Commission will be largely fulfilled by pouring into the lives of children and youth. Children learn quickly and have great faith but they need skillful instruction and guidance. We are looking for ways to support all those who give that guidance in the children's ministries here at Faith.

Volunteering in children's ministry, anywhere, can have the tendency to isolate those volunteers from the rest of the body. At the start of a volunteer's term they will often take a big gasp for spiritual air. They dive in, work hard and serve faithfully their entire term. When their term is up they surface again, sometimes completely out of that spiritual air. Imagine how amazing it would be if serving our children was always a life giving experience and never life taking.

Our plan for moving our children's ministries to a place of spiritual encouragement for volunteers is in the process of being developed. Right now, we have several peo-

ple with ideas about different ways to begin that movement. Jan Carnes has some ideas about prayer. Paul Scheele has signed on to help shepherd the core leader's in Children's Ministries. Amy Barker is fulfilling some administrative roles to help lighten the load on teachers. These people, along with others, have been great encouragements, but we need more people and more ideas.

I have often thought that it would take the WHOLE church to effectively disciple the children of Faith E-Free. I used to think that meant everyone serving with the children. I now believe serving with children is a big part of that, but discipling our children also involves serving those who work with our children. I would like to have a person for every weekly volunteer who is committed to praying for and encouraging that volunteer. If you would like to "adopt" a teacher to pray for and encourage or have ideas on how we could do this well let me know. This is going to be great!



## News & Notes

### Financial Update

	<u>October</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Giving (non-designated)	\$45,798.29	\$469,105.90
Other (missionary support, etc.)	6,418.00	67,548.97
Total Receipts	\$52,216.29	\$536,654.87

The 2008 Operating Budget monthly need for non-designated giving is \$54,316.25.

### Faith Café

Faith Café is a Monday-morning conversation among the pastoral staff at Faith that is posted each week on our web site. Faith Café is meant to increase communication within Faith and to supplement the sermon with additional application and discussion. Chris, Brian, Russ, and Steve have a good time discussing events within the church and giving additional thoughts about the sermon from the previous day.

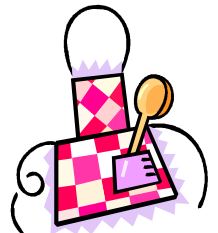


Check out Faith Café at ([www.faithmanhattan.org/resource/podcast.php](http://www.faithmanhattan.org/resource/podcast.php)). There, you can listen to the weekly audio broadcast as well as find past sermons. You can also join in the conversation by asking questions or sharing in-

sight in the comments section. Faith Café is usually available for download by 1:00 p.m. on Monday afternoons.

### Cooking With Faith

Our cookbook, *Cooking With Faith*, will be arriving soon! You can pre-order yours today for \$10 per cookbook. Payment is due at the time of order. Proceeds go towards financial scholarships here at Faith. Contact Karlene Floersch (539-4100) or Mary Graham (776-1601) to order.



### Women's Coffee Break

The Women's Ministry Team would like to invite ladies of all ages to join them on a coffee break at Bluestem Bistro, November 29th at 7:30 p.m. We will have an evening of relaxation and fellowship. Please come and feel free to bring a friend. Plan to join us December 19th, as well, for another fun evening. Call Karlene Floersch (539-4100) with any questions.





Evangelical Free Church

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## Faith's 2009 Budget *Continued from Page 1*

give to Faith; giving is not something that you have prayerfully considered and is therefore more sporadic. We are going to encourage you to seek God and decide what you will give to Faith in 2009. This could be a faith-building exercise as you clarify your priorities and commitments for next year.

We are going to mail to each home a card on which you can record either a percentage of your income you will give or a dollar amount you plan to give. This commitment will be between you and God; we will not be asking you to return a commitment card.

The other thing we are going to do is provide ongoing teaching on financial stewardship throughout the year. This teaching will show up on Sunday mornings as well as in periodic mail outs. As some of you have pointed out, we have been somewhat negligent in this area in the past. As with every other area of doctrine and practice, we want our emphasis on financial stewardship to be biblical and full of "grace and truth."

One possibility for funding the addition of a worship leader is the Midwest District's "Add-a-Leader" program. This program supplies funds to churches who believe that the addition of a staff person is strategic to what God has called them to be and to do. If approved, the Add-a-Leader program supplies up to 2 years of funding for the new staff position in the form of a no-interest loan. The loan is repaid to the general fund of the Midwest District (to be used for its ministries) and terms of repayment are negotiable. Our elders have considered this program and believe it to be a viable option for the initial funding of a worship pastor.

The congregation will be voting on this proposed budget at the November 17<sup>th</sup> congregational meeting. Copies of the budget are available at the curved counter at the church office.

We trust that God will lead and that God will supply in 2009. Thank you for your commitment to God and to what He is doing here at Faith!

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