

**Faith's Priorities & Habits** by Steve Ratliff

**Special points of interest:**

- E-Team to Thailand!
- The Elders go for a sleepover!
- One of our Pastor's used to visit the Library every week with his Grandma... find out who!
- Life Groups, Louisiana, Little People & so much more here at Faith!

Every local church has a tendency to drift from its calling and mission. Just like individual believers, a local church can drift from its God-given calling to live as the body of Christ and its God-given mission of leading people to Christ and helping them experience God in every area of life. Our elders are given the responsibility of guarding against such drift and of leading the congregation in pursuing the things that we believe God wants us to pursue.

Toward that end, our elders will be taking an overnight retreat on January 22 and 23<sup>rd</sup> at Living Water Ranch. We will be devoting some of our time to reviewing and discussing the results of the Reveal Survey that many of you took last year. This survey provides lots of information that can help us evaluate Faith's priorities and spiritual habits.

We will also be reviewing our Vision for Faith that we established in April of 2008. That Vision was the result of several months of seeking God concerning the priorities that we should pursue over the next three to five years. The areas that we identified as priorities are

a deepening of prayer, a plan for spiritual transformation, a lifestyle of worship, a culture of welcome and acceptance, and active compassion for those without Christ. At our retreat we will take time to evaluate how we are doing in pursuing each of these areas. We will also seek God concerning mid-course adjustments we might make. In the messages on Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup> I plan to review some of what we discuss and recast our Vision for Faith for the coming year.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday – We will be observing Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 24<sup>th</sup>. In each of our worship services we will be hearing about Life Choice Ministries, a ministry here in Manhattan that reaches out to women in crisis pregnancies. Several people at Faith are involved in Life Choice Ministries. As well, Faith supports Life Choice financially.

Overcrowding in the 11:00 Service – Last month I wrote an article concerning our overcrowding at the 11:00 service. When K-State is in session, that service is often uncomfortably full. And so we are asking that 40 to 50 people who

currently attend the 11:00 service commit to one of our earlier services for the Spring semester (January through May). This appeal is motivated by our sense of stewardship toward those who enter our doors on Sunday mornings. Since God has entrusted our guests to us – even if only for one Sunday – we think it vital that we have seats available so that they can enter into worship.

If you normally attend the 11:00 service and are willing to commit to an earlier service for the spring semester, please let me know at [steve@faithmanhattan.org](mailto:steve@faithmanhattan.org). Thanks to those of you who have already agreed to make this change.



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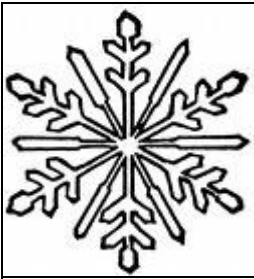
**Network** by Brian Anderson

Want to understand more about how God has shaped you for ministry? Want to discover your spiritual gifting and unlock ministry passions? *Network* is a dynamic process that helps Christians understand who God has uniquely made them to be

and guides them to a meaningful place of service in the local church. Through this course you will gain a greater appreciation for God's design for the local church and your role in it. *Network* will start Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> and will meet at Faith on

Sunday mornings at 11:00 am. Brian Anderson will facilitate this course which will meet Jan. 24, 31; Feb. 14, 21, 28; Mar. 7. You can sign up on your Connections Card on Sunday mornings or by emailing Brian ([brian@faithmanhattan.org](mailto:brian@faithmanhattan.org)).

## Life at the Heart of Faith by Brian Anderson



At Faith, we believe that connecting in authentic community with one another is vital for our spiritual lives. Life Groups are the primary way we seek to facilitate this connection. Our hope and prayer is that 100% of our youth and adults would be involved in a Life Group. Spring Life Groups start the week of January 24th and will run for twelve weeks.

Life Groups meet on various nights of the week in homes throughout the Manhattan area (most weekly, some less often). Some meet on Sunday mornings at church. Others meet weekday mornings. Some people pick a Life Group based on a desire to be with people in their same life situation (i.e. young career, married with kids, etc.) while

others are drawn to specific topics. Others choose a group based on a time that works well for them.

Joining a Life Group requires a commitment to attend each meeting during the semester (of course there are times when a person has to miss) as well as to do any appropriate preparation ahead of time. At the end of each semester folks have the choice of recommitting for another semester, trying a new group, or taking a break from a group for awhile. We have found that the more seriously a person takes his or her commitment to the group the more he or she will get out of it.

The sign up period will run for two more weeks. The best way to sign

up at this point is to go to the Life Group page on our website ([www.faithmanhattan.org/lifegroup](http://www.faithmanhattan.org/lifegroup)). There you will find a PDF version of the Life Group catalog which lists all the group options. You will also find a link there that allows you to register for your preferred group. If the group you select still has openings, the group leader will contact you about the first meeting. If, however, the group is full, the Life Group ministry will contact you about other group opportunities.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call Brian Anderson at the church office (776-2086). We want to do whatever we can to help you find a good group fit for you.

*"A 'worship ministry' cannot be much of a ministry at all unless what it promotes is an honest, sincere, and sacrificial expression of surrender to the God who loves us."*

## More People, Fewer Responsibilities by Chris Barker

A good friend of mine recently asked, "What's the most challenging thing you face as a children's pastor?" Without hesitating I can easily say that the most difficult part of my job is managing our volunteers. How can I recruit enough volunteers? How can I keep from burning volunteers out? How can I place volunteers in positions that fit their personalities and gifting but still cover all the bases that must be covered in the children's wing? All of these are difficult questions I grapple with daily.

This year my focus is going to include building a better team structure within the Children's Ministry department. I would love to see a Children's Ministry that no longer depends on a few people to do the majority of the work. More people, fewer responsibilities, hopefully leading to better relationships with children and fellow volunteers.

In addition to personal invitations to serve, I'll be posting descriptions of available positions in the CMReport ([www.faithmanhattan.org/cmreport](http://www.faithmanhattan.org/cmreport))

so that we can all be seeking God and asking Him to adequately staff the Children's Ministry department.

If at any point you feel led to serve but it seems too overwhelming please get in touch with me and we can customize a position that would work well for you and your schedule. Thanks for your support. I am looking forward to an awesome year!

## Worship Notes by Micah Peacock

I can't believe it's already 2010. As we kick off a new year, I pray that we'd have a great sense of how much we mean to God, and how much we need God. We've been created for a relationship with Him - a living, breathing, interactive and sustaining relationship. Our lives become a more complete act of worship when we invite Him into every moment, and allow ourselves to step into the work He's doing all around us. Let's commit to doing that (the best we know how) in this new year!

Now that the Advent season has passed, it might be easy for us to let slip out of our minds the impact of the birth of Jesus. I know that it so often gets tucked away in my mind - I'm conscious of the fact that He came, He lived and died, and rose again, forever changing the eternities of those who believe - but I don't slow down enough to allow my heart to fully absorb what this means for me as a follower of Christ. Maybe many of you experience this, too. So, let's be the body and continually remind each other that Christ has come,

that we're a part of something much bigger than ourselves, and that He's coming again.

A 'worship ministry' cannot be much of a ministry at all unless what it promotes is an honest, sincere, and sacrificial expression of surrender to the God who loves us. I'd love to be in conversation with you all about ways I can better help that happen. If you have feedback that you feel would help deepen my understanding of how we as a body express our need and longing for God, please know that I welcome your comments.

## Update from the Norens by Mary Noren

A year and a half ago, Karl & I were sent out as short-term missionaries from FEFC to Cameroon, in Africa. It has been a great first term. We've been working at Rain Forest International School (RFIS), a high school for missionary kids and Cameroonians. At the school, Karl's been teaching science and geography, along with extra-curricular things like leading a guys' small group. Although he wasn't sure if he would like teaching, he has really enjoyed working with the students and planning lessons (not so much the grading!). I've spent my time

taking care of Ruth (born Sept. 28, '08), directing two choirs at the school, and teaching about 10 music lessons – mostly piano. We've loved mentoring the kids at school, especially because our work there enables missionaries in Cameroon to continue Bible translation, evangelism, medical ministries, youth discipleship, and many other ministries.

We have so appreciated your support and prayers. Thank you SO much for the winter clothes for Ruth to borrow and the generous gift cards.

Right now, we are back to visit with supporters and friends, staying with family in Topeka until February 22<sup>nd</sup>. We plan to continue working with the school as missionaries each year, from July to December. If you're interested, talk to us about how you can be involved in supporting us, or email us at [karl-mary.noren@covchurch.org](mailto:karl-mary.noren@covchurch.org) if you would like to be on our news/prayer update email list. You can also reach us at my parents' address/phone: 103 SW Courtland, Topeka, KS 66606, 785-354-4409.

## Connecting Students to Community by Owen Carnes

Many of you may find this next statement funny because you have known the two of us since the diaper stage, and the college stage was not that long ago, but... "Back when we were in college", the Christian community was small, but overflowing with opportunities to grow in Christ through various campus ministries and relationships with other believing college students. Since leading the college life group here at Faith we have continued to seek the Lord about how a college ministry should function within the local church. God has recently laid on our hearts the foolishness of our own

idea of a completely isolated college group, and replaced it with His idea of the community of believers in a local church. "In Him the whole building (including room 14) is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him, you too are being built together to become a dwelling of the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:21-22) Although church is one of the few opportunities that many college students get to interact with Christians outside of their age group, the very size of our church can inhibit natural opportunities for these relationships to get rolling. Becky and I are very

excited about the role God has given us in facilitating some of these opportunities this year, and we're looking for your help to better serve the college students and help to incorporate them into the Church family. Starting this semester, you are all invited to join us in this effort by indicating on the "Connections Card" your desire to practice hospitality and intentional relationships with college students over a meal in your home. Please be praying with us about how God might use you in the life of another believer or two just by reaching out to them in love over a delicious meal!

### The Library: Come Check Us Out!

We have new highlighted books on display. Read this month's recommendations to find out: Who used to visit the library every week with his Grandma? Who is a rebel? Where is the line between Christianity and a cult? The answers to these questions and more can be found in our church library.

## E-Team Sent to Thailand!

Our church has a fantastic history of sending E teams to our missionary friends around the world. The E Team (Encouragement Team) seeks to bring encouragement to our workers through their presence but also through the exercising of their spiritual gifts in the lives and contexts of our workers. We've sent E Teams to help after the birth of some of our MKs, to speak

at conferences, to do home studies for adoptions, to engage in prayer ministry, to visit, and to bless.

Currently we have sent Ken & Diann to Thailand to meet up with Steve & Ellen P. Steve is in charge of a conference that brings workers from all over SE Asia together. Ken & Diann will be encouraging Steve & Ellen, counseling other missionaries,

leading a workshop and speaking in one of the main sessions of the conference.

Ken & Diann will be back on January 21st. While they are gone please pray for health, for wisdom to help meet the soul needs of the individuals they interact with, for physical strength and for Philip who manages the farm while they are away.



## Financial Update

	<u>December</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
General Giving (non-designated)	\$76,446.08	\$710,813.00
Other (missionary support, etc.)	4,053.87	49,409.00
Total Receipts	\$80,499.95	\$760,222.00

Thank you for your generous giving to Faith!



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## Return Service Requested

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life...helping others do the  
same.

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### Spring Break Hurricane Relief in New Orleans by Russell Soppe

A group from Faith is planning on joining the ongoing work that EFCA TouchGlobal has doing Katrina relief work in southern Louisiana.

**Sign Up** – No later than January 31<sup>st</sup> with a non-refundable \$20 deposit outside of Youth Pastor Russell Soppe's Office. **We have room for 33 Youth and 8 Adults. Others may sign up to fill un-taken Youth spots and will be notified after January 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**Cost** - \$220 after deposit plus travel and some food expenses.

Your \$220 covers the cost of onsite housing, onsite breakfasts, onsite dinners,

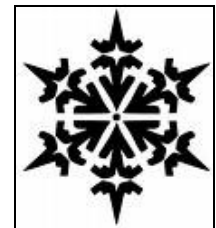
some supplies for projects and ministry costs for the Hurricane Relief Project. As a team we will raise the cost of travel and uncovered meals.

**Location** – New Orleans Area

**Time** – Spring Break 2010 – Arriving in New Orleans area by afternoon on March 14<sup>th</sup>, leaving New Orleans area the morning of March 20<sup>th</sup>.

We will have a meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm in the Youth Wing for anyone interested in learning more and for all those who are planning on serving on the team. Further meetings will be scheduled at that time.

We will be organizing a couple of fundraisers but also be sending out support letters as a team. Please do not let cost keep you from expressing interest in serving in this way. Our God is a gracious giver and when he leads his people, he provides for them. Feel free to contact me with any questions regarding costs or details. I look forward to serving along side of many of you in New Orleans!



“Katrina relief work in New Orleans continues to be an ongoing ministry of EFCA TouchGlobal Crisis Response. In the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, Crisis Response partnered with [Trinity Church](#), [Castle Rock Community Church](#) and [Urban Impact Ministries](#) to restore church bodies and mobilize people from around the country to transform the communities of southern Louisiana.”

[www.efca.org](http://www.efca.org)