



Loving the Church by Steve Ratliff

Sometimes the title of a book gives you a pretty good idea of its main point. That's certainly the case for Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck's *Why We Love the Church: in praise of institutions and organized religion*. This work is a rather bold (and funny) response to an entire genre of books that express disillusionment with the local church.

DeYoung and Kluck address four broad reasons why many are disillusioned with the church: *missiological* (the charge is that the church has tried and failed in its mission), *personal* (many have been wounded and disappointed by the church), *historical* (the claim that the church as we know it has been corrupted beyond recognition), and *theological* (some argue that biblically "church is just plural for Christian").

The authors try to explain each of these objections, what we need to learn from them, and "why we shouldn't swallow [them] hook, line, and sinker." They argue that "being part of a church – and

learning to love it – is good for your soul, biblically responsible, and pleasing to God." I couldn't agree more when they write that "the church we love is as flawed and messed up as we are, but she's Christ's bride nonetheless."

I think it's good and healthy to admit that Faith Evangelical Free Church, like every other church, is flawed and messed up because *we* are flawed and messed up. This isn't an excuse for things that can and should be changed in our lives or in our fellowship. But it is an explanation. It is an explanation why being part of a local church is sometimes frustrating and difficult. Relationships in the church sometimes become complicated and painful. Decisions are made and directions are set with which we disagree. There have probably been times when you've wondered if it's "worth it" to remain committed to the local church.

At the same time it's also good and healthy to *love* the local church. Not merely tolerate or pretend

to love, but actually *love*. We should love the church for many reasons. One reason is because the local church – flawed as it is – is still the God-ordained context for discipleship. Without the committed, sometimes frustrating, relationships that exist in the local church, much of what Jesus (and Paul, Peter, James, etc.) taught won't be experienced. In the local church we best learn how to accept one another, forgive one another, admonish one another, speak the truth to one another in love, etc.

I am communicating these thoughts about the church for a couple of reasons. First, I'd like to challenge you to love Faith Evangelical Free Church as an expression of the bride of Christ. DeYoung and Kluck would ask, "Is your friend really your friend if you can't stand his wife?" Second, I want you to know that I know that Faith Evangelical Free Church has many flaws and weaknesses (as do you and I). But a person doesn't have to be flawless before being loved. And neither does a church.

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Worship Notes by Micah Peacock, Worship Pastor

Some recommended listening from Micah:

Dave & Jess Ray: (self-titled album)

Phil Wickham: new album – *Heaven & Earth*

Sojourn: album – *Before the Throne*

Toto: everything they've ever done

Well, the semester is drawing to a close for those of you who are students, and I suppose for you professors, as well. Hopefully the summer will bring with it some freedom to pursue some of the interests and activities that bring you life and energy. Not that school doesn't do that, but... let's be honest. Everybody needs a break from the routine.

There are several people in our family here at Faith that will be heading out on mission-related trips all over the world. Let's remember them in our prayers – that the gos-

pel of love and hope will be spoken in word and deed, and that the kingdom will advance further into hearts and communities. Let's also remember that Manhattan is also a mission field of its own; we are here for a reason, and we are equipped with a purpose. The freedom of summer should encourage us to reach out to the residents of Manhattan that don't leave at the end of each school term. The love of Christ is relentless, and such should be our effort to share it.

I've been collecting hymn texts that I think could ex-

press our heart well and aid us in the corporate adoration of God. If there are hymns that you would like to suggest, please feel free to e-mail micah@faithmanhattan.org

We are currently in the process of establishing the capability for in-house, multi-track digital recording. If you are interested in this endeavor – whether you're a songwriter, aspiring audio-engineer, or you have experience in this area of expertise – please contact me.



Did you know that Faith E Free has a softball team? Come out to Anneburg Park and cheer them on:

May 17, 6 pm field 4

May 17, 8 pm field 4

May 24, 7 pm field 4

May 24, 9 pm field 5

June 7, 6 pm field 2

June 7, 8 pm field 3

June 14, 7 pm field 1

June 14, 9 pm field 6

June 21, 6 pm field 4

June 21, 8 pm field 2

Greeting One Another By Russell Soppe

Hey all soon to be new 7th graders, on June 6th at the start of Sunday School we will send some current middle school youth to come invite you to the Middle School Class. There you'll get to enjoy a small party where you'll get to know the other middle school youth a bit. Also on the night of June 6th you and your family are invited to

what we call our Kawai Party. Kawai comes from an Australian dialect and means welcome, or come in.

Our Kawai party is a direct reflection of our desire to live out God's command to "greet one another with a holy kiss" Granted we don't do it with a kiss but with a party! At Faith we express this idea in our desire to grow

in the area of welcome and acceptance.

Our Kawai Party kicks off the summer and celebrates the welcoming in of new friends! Check out the youth website at www.faithefreeyouth.com One more thing, if you are entering the 7th grade and haven't heard from me please contact me and let me know.

Stewardship Principle

God provides for our needs through diligent work.

Diligence is a virtue that Scripture applies to many areas of life, including our work. Although some are unable to work and provide for their own needs (e.g., those who are disabled, elderly, etc.), the normal pattern given in Scripture is to work diligently to provide for oneself and one's family. Proverbs 10:4-5 states:

Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

Proverbs includes many such warnings against laziness and many encouragements toward diligence. Good stewardship involves a willingness to work dili-



Financial Update

	<u>April</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
General Giving (non-designated)	\$59,230.86	\$217,194.39
Other (missionary support, etc.)	5,748.19	27,002.81
Total Receipts	\$64,979.05	\$244,197.20

His love, His eternal purposes by Justin Kastner on behalf of the Alpha Team

Just three weeks ago, during the *24 Hours of Prayer* event held in advance of the *Alpha Course* in Aggieville, we prayed that Jesus would give us His heart for the city. We held this event because we believe that understanding and experiencing Jesus' heart must remain central in all that we do on *Alpha*.

Jesus loves Manhattan, and we were so heartened to see Him draw so many to preview—and, significantly, register for!—the *Alpha course* at May 3rd's introductory dinner party at the KatHouse. The evening was, in a word, stun-

ning. Well over 100 attended, we observed a socio-economic mix of people, and the venue was chock-full of smiles, laughter, and the love of Jesus. Many from Faith were encouraged to see their friends (whom they've invited to past courses) attend and register.

We are anticipating one of the most exciting (and logistically complex!) *Alpha Courses* to date. This is why Jesus' heart must remain central. On Monday, May 10, the course begins—quite rightly, with the session "Who is Jesus?" This is the most important question for both our

guests as well as our team; we're all lost until we find Jesus. Darren, Tracy, Susie, and I pray that every member of the *Alpha* team find their identity not in constant sweat in Jesus' service, but in the ongoing redemptive effects of Christ's sacrifice on the cross for them.

His work is ongoing, and we remind ourselves of God's faithfulness to use everything for His eternal purposes. As we trust in Jesus' ongoing love and care, may our personal faith become contagious.



Good Bye Robynn; Welcome Debbie By Robynn Bliss

As many of you know our real Administrative Assistant, Debbie Kluitenberg, went with her husband, Gerard, on sabbatical nearly a year ago. At that time I stepped in to take her place. It has been an amazing year of learning for me! I had no idea I could learn so much, so fast! Having said that, I've certainly made more than my share of mistakes this year. I'm grateful for the graciousness and the sense of humour that God gives His people! Thank you for being so forgiving.

I've learnt a lot about Faith E Free

this year. We have an amazingly generous community. Many times your faithful giving to one another and to God has overwhelmed me! What a sweet thing. We've been blessed with Pastors that are passionate about their calling. They truly love you. God has given them a vision for who we might become if we completely yield to Jesus and they've entered into serving Him to that effect.

Behind the scenes are so many people that come and go quietly volunteering, giving of themselves, stepping up to fill in the gaps. It's

a great church and I've loved getting to peek in that back door. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to sit at this desk and play secretary!

The church has grown a lot this year and we've made a lot of changes. Pray for Debbie as she transitions back into her role here. If you haven't met her yet be sure to introduce yourself to her... She's amazingly sweet and very gifted at what she does. We'll all be very glad to have her back!

MEMORIAL
DAY
PICNIC!!
MAY 31ST
AT
KEAT'S PARK
(FROM 11:30-
2:00)
YOU ARE
NOT GOING
TO WANT TO
MISS THIS
ONE!

Heroes Spotted! Family VBS Update by Chris Barker

I've been very blessed by the amount of interest we have this year for Family Vacation Bible School. I wanted to give you a few updates on how you can continue to help us prepare for this event.

- We will hold two identical volunteer training sessions on Tuesday, May 25th at 7:00-8:30pm and then on Sunday, May 30th from 3:00-4:30pm. Volunteers need only attend one.

- Family VBS setup will happen on Sunday June 6th at 1:00pm.
- We still need more Heroes! Please consider helping out. You can sign up at the table or send an email to chris@faithmanhattan.org
- Week one of our Beg and Borrow process went great! Check www.faimanhattan.org/vbs

- for more ways to help out.
- Student preregistrations will begin Sunday May 16th. You will also be able to register online at www.faimanhattan.org/vbs starting May 16th.

The theme of this year's FVBS is Heroes Headquarters. You are all heroes as we work together to pull this off!



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Manhattan KS

Experiencing God in all of
life...helping others do the
same.

Discipleship Summit by Chris Barker

It is often easy to get focused on what needs to happen right NOW and lose sight of what we should be doing to plan for the future. At the beginning of the year the children's ministries here at Faith organized two teams to start a discovery process looking for ways that we might better disciple our children.

While a relationship with God is at the core of discipleship, there are two other primary spiritual influences in our lives, the church and the family. The Discipleship Summit is where we will share our vision for what we want our children to become and share what we are already doing. We will also start the conversation about what it looks like for the church and the family to partner together in discipling our children.

On Sunday June 27th the children's ministry department will be hosting the Discipleship Summit alongside several other ministries. The summit will be held from 3:00pm until 5:00pm. Following the summit, at 5:00, we will have dinner together. Childcare will be provided. Our desire is for everyone to come (not just parents and those involved in children's ministry). RSVP at www.faithmanhattan.org/summit, I hope to see you there.

The Library— Check Us Out!

Are you going on a long car ride this summer? Does your family need entertaining along the way? If so, check out our brand new audio CD selections. We have both short story collections and whole book selections available for check out! Happy Vacation!