

FIRST EVANGELICAL
FREE CHURCH

2008-2009
MOPS
STEERING
TEAM

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REMINDERS:

Please turn your cell phone ringer off or on vibrate. If you have to answer a call please exit

Babies 3 months and younger are welcome during the meeting. Older children should be in

The food drop off doors will be open again. Look for the door marked "D".

Services at First Free:
Saturday: "Alternative"
Borderlands @ 5pm
Sundays: Traditional
@8:30am and Contemporary
@10:15am

Dear God,
Thank you for the unique personality and vision that belongs to my child.



Enjoy The Ride!

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 7

TUESDAY, DEC. 9, 2008

Joy To The World!

Christmas has always been my favorite Holiday. I love the joyful and contagious spirit at this time of year. I have really enjoyed having the snow and cold weather too; yes, I know I'm crazy, I love the snow and cold (only at this time of year though). It brings back childhood memories for me. I lived here until I was 11; it was all about the snow when I was young; building forts, snowball fights, tobogganing, and Twin Sisters sledding days. Then we would unzip our full body snow suits and in we would go for our hot cup of cocoa. When I think of Christmas I often think of my grandmas house; the aroma of Christmas was encapsulated inside my grandma's house! My little norwegian grandma made everything from scratch and that didn't exclude the Christmas cookies we would make, and cut and frost; we didn't go out and buy the Pillsbury dough in a tube, are you kidding? I anticipated the blissful emotions I would experience and still do this time of year. There is nothing like a child waking up on Christmas morning (bright and early) rushing to see their much waited for gift. There is a certain warmth in the air isn't there? People seem more joyful than usual don't they? Well some people..



When I think back to the way I felt during the Christmas Season as a child, I am reminded of how magically the lights shimmered and how carefree the world feels. God is giving us a little taste of heaven I think this time of year. Even though it is easy to get frazzled and stressed out right now as well. I pray that we all can realize that it isn't about the gifts that we give or get so much; it is about the gift that was given to us on that first Christmas. I hope that my kids will comprehend the full meaning behind Christmas even at their young ages. The "Joy" we feel as children and with family is the eternal joy that we will experience living a life for God and with God. I love the song "Joy To The World" because it really does explain why we are so jubilant in December. He wants every heart to prepare him room, that is why He sent His son

to be born in a manger in Bethlehem so long ago. Jesus was born for you and me; we may have sorrow and hardships here on earth, but that is why Jesus was born, so that we can know that we have a hope of a better place because of His death on the cross and then He was resurrected on the third day, and He is alive today. Christmas has a greater meaning to me now that I am older and somewhat wiser. Singing the carols and feeling the joy is somehow sweeter now and filled with that much more hope; especially since I have felt the peace that only God can give through a relationship with his son Jesus. You, Lord, give true peace to those who depend on you, because they trust you. Isaiah 26:3 I pray that you all have a blessed and joyous Christmas and New Year, and that you can extend that "Joy" everyday of the year through a relationship with Jesus if you haven't done so already. I would love to talk with you more about this gift and pray with you if you would like. Jesus is called, Emmanuel, which means "God with us". May we celebrate the real meaning of Christmas, and marvel at God's amazing love.

Moppets Information

If you have a child 0-18 months we ask you to bring a box or refill of wipes for their classroom. If your child is 18months—5 years please bring a bulk snack item (ie. a big box of goldfish or bag of animal crackers). Please NO individual packages for snacks. All nametags will continue to be kept outside your child's room until the new system is put in place. We all know we are in the midst of flu season. To keep all of our children healthy, I cannot stress how important how

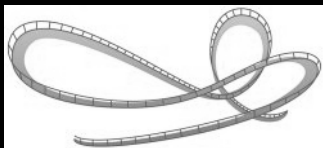
important this is, we ask you to please wash your child's hands with soap and water before entering their room. All children and staff are asked to refrain from attending when ill. Children should not be admitted into class with any of the following symptoms and/or illness; fever or vomiting in the last 24 hours, impetigo, runny nose (unclear), rashes, skin infection-boils, ringworm, measles, mumps, conjunctivitis, diarrhea, coughing/croup, head lice ,including

the presence of eggs or nits. Remember to label all diapers, bags and sippy cups or bottles. If you ever have any questions or concerns., please see one of your steering team members or Teresa Hubbard. FYI - we have a pager system. If you'd like to use it is located in the baby room. Just leave your keys. If you are needed the childcare workers will page you!



Visit our Website @
www.firstfreewomen.org

**“...how wide
and long and
high and
deep is the
love of
Christ...”
Eph. 3:18**



Our Speaker: Michelle Gustafson

Today we are very honored to have Michelle Gustafson with us as our Speaker. Michelle is a stay at home homeschooling mom. Michelle and her husband Matt have been married for 15 years, and they have two children, Maddie, 8½ and Grant who is 7 years old. They are expecting a third child through adoption in early 2009. Michelle grew up in a christian home and became a christian herself due to that, as well as going to church camps. Michelle is a Sunday School Teacher for the high school kids at her church, Broadway Covenant, as well as the Children's Ministry Director of Crosswalk, a weekly outreach for K-5.

Michelle has also taught BSF at her church and has been a Sub-Teaching Leader at women's retreats. Daniel, Ephesians, and James are some of her favorite books in the Bible, not surprisingly since she admits that she loves to read and participate in Bible Studies. Michelle can also relate to some of us I'm sure in that she loves to bake. Please make her feel welcome as she speaks for our Christmas Brunch. It is great to have you Michelle!



ADVENT CALENDAR IDEAS:



I first learned about Advent Calendars through MOPS and my kids have loved to pull out the papers daily, starting Dec. 1st. It is always fun to see them light up and enjoy the activities we choose for the days before Christmas. Here are some ideas of activities to do with your kids using an Advent Calendar:

- Read a Christmas Story with the lights off using a flashlight.
- Game night
- Christmas shopping with mom/dad and dinner
- Breakfast picnic w/ cartoons
- Cake or ice cream for breakfast.
- Read the Christmas story in the Bible.
- Go Ice Skating
- Go look at the lights in PJ'S
- Christmas Movie night
- Swimming night
- Bake Jesus a Birthday cake on christmas.
- Sledding day
- Hide candy canes around the house and hang on tree.



Better Moms Make A Better World.

I believe that who we are as moms really does shape our world in such a huge way. What we instill in our children will continue to be instilled in our children's children. We have a opportunity to leave a legacy with our children. I think about my mom and the values and morals she instilled within me and now I can in turn give that to my children as well. It is so rewarding and fulfilling to see our children begin to possess those values and characteristics that are pleasing to us and most of all God. When we

truly realize who we are as women and mothers we can make a better world. I love that MOPS International exists to encourage, equip, and develop every mother of preschoolers to realize her potential as a woman, mother, and leader in the name of Jesus Christ. I remember when I first came to MOPS and I was very hesitant to come because I only knew one person. I enjoyed the speakers and the friendly people that were here. I have met a lot of people over the years here at

MOPS. I think that God has used MOPS in my life to help me to realize my potential, and also to increase my confidence as a woman and mother and a leader. MOPS helps us to realize that we were not alone in this Adventure Of Mothering. We are all on the same ride so to speak and we need to hold on and not let go of our faith that keeps us moving. Andrew Murray said, "The secret of home rule: first being ourselves what we want our children to be."