

FBF Newsletter

Faith Bible
Fellowship

From Pastor Chris: The Church and the Schoolhouse

It had been a wonderful church home to many over the years, Treytry Church (pronounced “tray-tree” by the locals) in Free Range, North Dakota. Free Range had been founded in the 1880s on the notion that range-fed beef could be shipped by rail to the east and sold more cheaply than grain-fed beef from the Chicago stockyards.

So Treytry Church was where weathered ranchhands and risk-it-all entrepreneurs came to be reminded of the biblical truths that gave meaning and context to their always demanding, often difficult lives. Treytry was a place where lifelong

friendships were forged on the foundation of Christian fellowship, and where one day a week all turned from their own labors to work together for the cause of Christ in their own lives, in their church, and in their town.

But now a generation had passed, or at least was beginning to. As it turned out, folks in the east found grain-fed beef more tender and tasty than the cheaper North Dakota variety. Some ranchers lost up to half their stock if the winter was unusually harsh. So jobs became harder to come by, and Free Range’s young people tended to leave for the east, west, or Chicago

upon coming of age.

Although Treytry Church was not immune to the demographic trends in Free Range, the church also enjoyed an advantage not of its own making. As Providence would have it (at least that’s how they saw it), the church was situated right next to one of Free Range’s remaining schoolhouses.

Dogwood Primary School served Free Range’s most impoverished neighborhoods—the tenements down by the stockyards, the rattled-apart houses alongside the railroad, and that neighborhood of unfortunates known to all

Continued on page 2

Volume 10, Issue 8

September, 2010

Notes of Interest:

- *Thank you, everyone who attended and/or helped out at FBF’s picnic.*
- *The meeting time for youth groups has been moved back to 6 p.m. on Sundays.*
- *We’re still looking for pianists for our worship services. Anyone who may be available one or two Sundays a month should contact Pastor Chris.*
- *We have an immediate need for a team-teacher for a primary-age Sunday School class. Contact Diane Hardin.*



Inside this issue:

NHC Ministry	2
September Calendar	3
Upcoming Events	4
Financial Update	4

Another Divine Appointment at NHC

“Are you here to receive therapy?”, we asked. Most of the residents we meet at NHC Healthcare are, and Mr. D (name withheld) looked like he was too—in bed but alert and not obviously ill.

“No, I’m here to die,” he answered.

That’s how the conversation started, and it got more serious from there! Because Mr. D was not as concerned about dying as he was about facing eternity. “I sure don’t want to miss heaven,” he said. So we talked about his faith in Christ, the ground of his hope as he faced death, the goodness and faithfulness of God. We prayed together before we said our good-byes.

As we left the room we met someone from Mr. D’s church who had been waiting outside the door, and listening. We apologized for unintentionally making him

wait, but he assured us that our presence and conversation was exactly what Mr. D had been needing for several days.

Two weeks later to the day, Mr. D went to be with the Lord.

Some FBF members minister at NHC Healthcare. It isn’t an easy place of ministry. Almost every resident is going through a very difficult time in their life, and would rather be at home. Some cannot communicate well, or at all. Some are sad. A few are bitter. It can be

emotionally draining.

But it is also a place of great spiritual need—for witness, for encouragement, sometimes just for prayer. And it can fill our spiritual need as well—to serve, after our Lord’s example, those who cannot repay, and from whom many would rather avert their eyes.

If you would like to be involved in

some way in FBF’s ministry at NHC, contact Nancy Mills at akanellie1@aol.com.



The Church and the Schoolhouse, *continued from Page 1*

as simply, “the ghetto.” This also drew the notice of the members at Treytry, remembering that Jesus situated himself similarly during his earthly ministry.

So the people of Treytry resolved to pray more intentionally, consistently, and specifically for their neighbors—for Dogwood and other neighboring schools, for the children who cut through the church yard on their way to and from the schoolhouse, for parents who stood in the shade of the steeple as they waited for the afternoon bell, for the teachers and the school administrators.

They also prayed that God would show them how they might be the face, hands, and feet of Jesus to the mission field in which they had been placed. What would it be—a weekday Bible study for moms, a Christmas outreach to particularly impoverished neighborhood families, an after-school program at the church? Something else? All of it and more? They did not know, but knowing from experience that prayer was the foundation of all successful ministry, they prayed. They prayed for opportunity, for resources, for discernment, for will, for faithfulness, for success.

What happened next? Did God answer their prayers? Did their prayers have an effect prior to and apart from any ministry efforts? Did the prayer-bathed ministry efforts come about? Were there Bible studies, outreach events, after-school programs?

Nobody knows, because the end of the story hasn’t been written yet. You see, there is no such town as Free Range, North Dakota. Dogwood School and Treytree Church are made up. Even the photograph has been borrowed to give a sense of reality to the fiction.

By the way, on Sunday, September 19, FBF will observe the very first annual “Bless Our Schools Sunday,” an event being promoted by Moms in Touch, a national ministry that promotes prayer for schools. Prayer for our schools and students has been bubbling up in notable ways lately in our monthly “Just Prayer” meetings, in our elders’ prayer times, and in the hearts of our members and friends. Something is going on.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear.