



Evangelical Etchings

February 2022

The Stuff of Becoming Disciples

By Pastor Randy Anderson



As we remind ourselves week by week: *'We are becoming disciples.'* The aim of the Sunday morning sermon is designed to be of the stuff that will enable a person to be increasingly a disciple of the Lord Jesus. This is why we are in Mark's Gospel Sunday by Sunday. As we noted a few weeks back as we began this series of expositions the late New Testament scholar Rodney J. Decker wrote in the introduction to his commentary on Mark,

"Mark's purpose is related to discipleship. He works it out paragraph by paragraph, by challenging his readers to answer two intertwined questions: Who is Jesus? and What does He expect from those who follow Him?"

Mark's answers to these questions are the stuff of discipleship.

In recent years we have always taken a break from our larger and longer exposition of whatever book of the Bible we were working through to expound a chapter of the Bible from elsewhere during the summer months. In recent years for instance, we broke away in the summer months to make our way through John 14, and then the next summer John 15, and then the next summer John 16, and then the next summer John 17. And then this last summer we made our way through Psalm 37. We will continue this practice – though for the next several summers we will break away from the Gospel of Mark to consider Peter's second letter (for it is only a few years ago that we worked through 1 Peter together on Sunday mornings).

This seems particularly appropriate in that Mark was something of a disciple of Peter's in the years after Jesus' resurrection. But more than that, it is interesting to note that they are both famous for spiritual failure. After all, it is Mark who after turning back on a missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas ends up being the reason that that missionary team dissolves. Luke records the incident for us this way.

³⁷ Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus, (Acts 15:37-39 ESV)

Barnabas wants to give Mark a second chance – Paul believes that to be a waste of time – Paul felt so strongly about it that he allowed his previous partnership with Barnabas – known as the son of encouragement – to dissolve over it. But there is no denying it – Mark turned back on a missionary journey – he quit and went home. Later Paul will express a very different assessment of Mark (Col. 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11) – but spent some time considering Mark a waste of time.

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Youth Ministry Pillar #5: Intergenerational Integration

By Pastor Dan Montgomery



Growing up, I used to help my brother build model rockets. Actually...that's not entirely true. I used to accompany my brother when he

would go launch the model rockets which he built. I did have the patience to contribute much to their construction. However, once the rocket was built, I was sure to join him and my dad for the walk down the street to the large open field at the end of our block. The empty lot was the size of multiple soccer fields, so it was perfect for combustible excitement like this (for the record, it was also a great location for football, baseball, ghost in the graveyard, and many other forms of youthful fun). I remember a few really impressive launches where everything worked as planned. The rocket would blast off into the sky, I would lose track of it for a moment, and then – just as it was designed – the parachute would emerge from the cap and the rocket would slowly float back down into the field, waiting to be recovered by us novice engineers. More common than those impressive launches were the launches that were duds. Through some faulty engineering or a user error, the rocket would not go very high and maybe veer off in a horizontal direction. Occasionally it would not even make it off the launch pad. More than once the rocket launched but the parachute failed, leaving it in a less-than-reusable condition. Failure to launch seemed more common than success.

The uncertainty that my brother, my dad, and I felt preparing to launch a rocket pales in comparison to what many parents feel as their kids leave the home. Sure, everything seems fine as they sit on the launch pad, safely situated on the ground. But what happens as we attempt to send them out on their own, out into the troposphere? As a Youth Ministry, this is a big concern.

The Youth Ministry at First E Free has five core-values. We call these the “Five Pillars” of the FEFC Youth Ministry. They are 1) Gospel Centrality; 2) Theological Depth through Biblical Teaching; 3) Relational Discipleship; 4) Partnership with Parents; and 5) Intergenerational Integration. All of the pillars aim towards the one goal of having students successfully launch into adulthood. We aim to foster Christian adulthood. We come alongside the parents of this church in discipling their Junior High and Senior age children to become mature lifelong disciples. In past newsletters, I have written about the first four pillars. Here I would like to explain the importance of Intergenerational Integration. In many ways, Intergenerational Integration is not preparation for launch as much as it is the first step in the launch process.

“We come alongside the parents of this church in discipling their Junior High and Senior age children to become mature lifelong disciples.”

Intergenerational Integration is a fancy way to say, “normal church life.” In a family, the young and old mingle together. Sure, there's a time and place for a kids table, but eventually a grandpa and his grandson are going to be enjoying each other's presence. The same is true in this family of disciples. We have Intergenerational Integration when high schoolers can use their gifts to build up the entire congregation. We see this almost every Sunday in our various music teams. It happens when chairs are getting set up, coffee is being made, or sound and slides are being run. AWANA, Children's Church, and the Nursery are all built up by the gifts of teenagers in the church.

Intergenerational Integration is also happening when older church members use their gifts to build up the Youth. This happens each week as adults carve out time to help lead Middle School or High School Bible studies and then reconnect with those students again on Sunday morning or throughout the week. It happens when members commit to praying for one specific student all year with the “Pray for Me” Campaign. It happens on those music teams I already mentioned, when older adults aren’t afraid to listen to and wrap in teenagers. It happens when crowds turn up on a Sunday night to see a bunch of teenagers get baptized. Ultimately, it happens as students see that this is *their* church too. That’s different than saying “this church has programs for them.” This is their church too. They benefit from the gifts of others, and others benefit from theirs.

Listening to the Apostle Paul we realize that the whole church—young and old—benefit from Intergenerational Integration. In Ephesians 4:16, Paul says that we are to grow up into our head, into Christ, “from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” Certainly, our growth comes from Christ by the Spirit. But the Holy Spirit uses the various members whom he equips. That’s what Paul is drawing out in this verse. The body, by being a healthy and whole body, “builds *itself* up in love.” This is not self-sufficiency. This is keeping in step with the way the Spirit builds His church.

I am going to keep on calling this “Intergenerational Integration”, but really, it’s just “normal church”. Giving it a fancy names helps remind me that it is important. There are many cultural and structural forces that want to atomize the church. There’s a time and place for age-appropriate teaching. In fact, our age specific ministries are often the first steps *towards* integration. My kids know that their Sunday School teachers care for them. This keeps them more connected to the whole church. But we must beware of the pressure to see the generations as entirely different species.

A successful launch is when teenagers are normal church members, continue to be normal 20-something church members, then become normal 30-something church members, and that continues all the way until they’re decades down the line and can hardly remember what it was like to be so young. Some launches may keep them in the orbit of this specific local congregation. Others may venture further away. The focus is not about where they stay or go, but to which spiritual family they know they belong. This is one of my goals as a Youth Pastor. But it’s a calling for all of us. Each part of Christ’s body, no matter how young & spry or old & creaky that part may be, makes the body so that it builds itself up in love.



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*“Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!”*

Psalm 46:10



Ministry Highlight

We want to highlight the Freezer Meal Ministry and remind you how to take advantage of this opportunity. We have many lovingly prepared homemade meals in the freezer through *Fill the Freezer* events and even some individual contributions! They are ready to be delivered to or picked up by anybody in the church who could benefit from one.

Are you in the midst of a health or life situation that makes it more challenging to cook a meal? Or do you know someone who is? Then you can ask for a meal or two!

You can contact Kimberly Caldwell by email at schollkj@gmail.com or by phone at 605-651-9843. If Kimberly is not available, you may also get in touch with Ellie in the church office by email at office@knowinggods.org or by phone at 605-338-2077. They are happy to work with you to determine a good delivery or pickup time.

We will continue to host Fill the Freezer events when our inventory gets low, but we also welcome individual contributions. If you can't attend one of our cooking nights but would still like to give to the ministry, you can donate a meal from your kitchen! Place your meal with baking/cooking instructions in the freezer in the kitchen and let Kimberly or Ellie know what you have made.



Operation Christmas Child Review

By Lucie Oygard

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who helped with Operation Christmas Child shoebox collection week. Volunteers put in over 550 hours and we collected 19,512 shoeboxes. Also, thank you to everyone who filled a shoebox or made a donation. Our church collected around 200 shoeboxes. Your support for this ministry is greatly appreciated.



Upcoming Events	
February	
13	Second Sunday Potluck
25-27	HS Winter Retreat @ Byron Bible Camp
27	Annual Congregational Mtg @7pm
March	
6	Communion Sunday
13	Second Sunday Potluck
April	
10	Communion Palm Sunday
14	Maundy Thursday
15	Good Friday
17	Easter Sunday



Library Updates

By The Library Committee

The church's library staff would like to thank the congregation for their use of the library.

Thanks for signing books out and getting them returned on time. Please use the rolodexes to find items by author or by subject. The library is self-service except for a short time after Sunday's worship time. Thanks for availing yourself of the services.

Many books are regularly contributed to the library. The ones that cannot be kept because of space or that there is already a copy are put on the Book Giveaway Table to share with others. There will be one this spring or summer.

The Summer Reading Challenge is planned to start on Memorial Day weekend and will end Labor Day weekend.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Philippians 4:6



Women's Ministry News

By Mary Lynne Johnson

The Women's Leadership Team is at work making plans for our year. "Connecting on Purpose...with Purpose" is at the heart of all that we seek to do. Sometimes that will look like Bible Study, and other times it will look like crafting, cooking for the freezer ministry, or hanging out in the parking lot. We hope there will be time for connection, study, and service. Do watch the weekly emails and bulletin for upcoming dates.

Women's Ministries would like to introduce a new ministry to you called *Meet You at the Well*.

*I've carried a burden
For too long on my own
I wasn't created
To bear it alone
I hear your invitation
To let it all go
Yeah I see it now
I'm laying it down...
I run to the Father
I fall into grace
(Cody Carnes—Run to the Father)*

You no doubt know this song. If the words resonate with your heart and you long to run to the Father in prayer, you have a new opportunity as a woman in this congregation. Starting January 30th, join us each week for a prayer time led by Geraldine Keller and members of the Ministry team during the Sunday School hour in the room behind the stage.

We would love to hear from you! Please email Mary Lynne at marylynn@knowinggods.org with questions or comments.

AWANA

By Craig & Chris Herman
AWANA Commanders



"Did you know Satan was an angel before God threw him out of heaven because he wanted to be like God?" That was the question a first-grade clubber asked her leader one night. Well, it really wasn't a question as much as she wanted the leader to know she knew this and understood it. Never underestimate what a child can learn or comprehend about God's Word. That is the exciting part of teaching children the Word of God. They get it, have a desire for it and remember it! There is no "wasted time" in teaching children about God and His son Jesus.

We are now halfway through the club year. Along with memorizing and teaching Scripture, we also try to teach clubbers the importance of putting into practice the principles of God's Word such as 1 John 3:17, "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" On November 10th & 17th clubbers participated in "Sharing is Caring" night, bringing in non-perishable food items and toiletries for the Union Gospel Mission. At the end of those two weeks, we were able to donate 578 lbs. of food and 122 lbs. of toiletries to help those in need in the Sioux Falls area. The Mission was so grateful for this and extended their thanks to all who participated!

In December, the AWANA store was held so clubbers could use their "AWANA bucks" to purchase Christmas gifts for family members. A huge thank you to all of you who donated items for the store or helped wrap gifts.

In March we will be doing the "Building a Lego-cy" project again to raise money so children in other countries can attend AWANA where they live. The past three years we have focused on the country of Mongolia, which now has many thriving AWANA clubs. This year we are looking at the possibility of Africa. The country of Zimbabwe has recently opened all 7500 of their schools to allow AWANA programs to be used in their schools. They are witnessing a huge change in student discipline. Many teachers and students are coming to Christ and recently seven other African nations are adopting AWANA into their school curriculum.

If you are interested in seeing a short video entitled, "Kids Reaching Kids in Africa," here is a web address you can go to watch the video: <https://www.awana.org/africaschoolsproject>

All for His glory!
Craig & Chris Herman
Awana Directors

Continued from P. 1: Pastor Randy's Column

The tradition is that after some time with Barnabas Mark ended up spending significant time with Peter. Peter being by this time less likely to hold an earlier spiritual failure against someone – given his own spectacular collapse of courage on the night Jesus was betrayed – and so it came to be that Mark and Peter served together, and it is thought that Peter provided much material that we find in Mark's Gospel account.

But all this to say, this coming summer, Lord willing, we will break away from Mark to make our way through 2 Peter 1, and then the following summer 2 Peter 2, and then the following summer 2 Peter 3 – Lord willing of course. All of this being the stuff of discipleship.

We are becoming disciples. May the Lord use Mark's Gospel and Peter's second letter to this end.

Pastor Randy

Evangelical Etchings is a quarterly newsletter of First Evangelical Free Church in Sioux Falls, SD. It is mailed to regular attenders and others upon request by contacting the office by email at office@knowinggods.org or by phone at 605-338-2077.

Need to Update Your Information?

Have you or a member of your home moved recently? Do you have a new cell phone or e-mail address? Please call the church at 605 -338-2077 or e-mail: office@knowinggods.org to help us keep in contact with you!

Miss a Sermon? Wish to Hear One Again?

Please visit: <https://www.knowinggods.org/resources/sermon-audio/> to listen to sermons by the FEFC Pastoral Staff! You can search by keyword, date, speaker, scripture, series, or topic.

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