



THE WORD FOR TODAY – January 27, 2010: **“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:1-3)**

We are about to enter into another exciting chapter in the life of our church. As a result of a 25-0 vote at our annual meeting the proposed building project for Erie Evangelical Free Church was approved. Our hope is to break ground in the spring and have the building ready by the time our AWANA and youth ministries begin in the fall.

I have to admit, I am both excited and fearful as we start this project. It could be a great time of excitement as we look forward to an addition that should greatly enhance our ministries. We will have a much more suitable space for AWANA, a brighter, more convenient nursery, expanded office space, as well as more classroom and storage space. I'm also excited that some of the project will be done by our congregation working side by side.

Our building chairman, Scott Hammer, already has great ideas for how we are going to break down the responsibilities and decision making process necessary to take care of all the details of the project. Everyone will have an opportunity to participate in some way should they choose to.

My fear stems from knowing the potential for conflict that arises from a building project. We need to understand that everything will not be exactly as each of us would envision it. Our committees will do their best to listen to everyone's ideas and thoughts but in the end decisions will have to be made between one, two, or more options on any given aspect of the project.

Before the vote Sunday, I challenged those present at the meeting to commit themselves to unity no matter what the outcome. That is what I expected from us then and I expect it as we work through the details and make the necessary decisions to finish the project.

I would urge us all to keep the big picture in sight. When some detail is not as you would prefer it to be ask yourself, “Does the color of the carpet, the placement of a door or window, or even the color of the walls matter when compared to the ministry opportunities the building will afford us? I would hope your answer will be “no”.

Having shared my fears, I must also confess that I was amazed and encouraged that our vote was unanimous. That bodes well for our ability to work together and stand in unity throughout these next months. I expect we will and I expect that my fears will prove unfounded. Frankly, I don't know if I've ever heard of a church building project of this size being approved by unanimous vote!

I also shared at the meeting my adamant belief that building this building will not assure growth. Only you and I can do that and only as we faithfully continue to serve and worship our Lord and share him with the world!

Pastor Ron

“UNLOCKING THE BIBLE STORY”... As we continue in Volume IV of “Unlocking the Bible Story” we will be unlocking the theme “Justification”. Read chapter three in your text and return to Romans Chapter 3 in your Bibles as we explore the question, “How can I know I am right with God”.

WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY, KELSI JO! ... We are rejoicing with Kristi, Rusty, Riley, and Nathan Packer as they welcome a daughter, Kelsi Jo, into their family and into the Erie E. Free family. Kelsi was born Saturday, January 23 at 2:15 a.m.. She weighed in at 8 pounds and measure 20 ½ inches. Kristi and Kesli are both doing well and came home from the hospital on Monday!

MISSIONS NOTE...

We have all read the stories and seen the reports concerning the devastating earthquakes in Haiti. Did you know that almost immediately our Missions dollars were at work in Haiti? Kid's Alive, one of the ministries we support with our missions giving, was the first agency in the Dominican Republic to receive orphans from Haiti. The first group of 50 arrived at KAI locations within days of the earthquake.

Kid's alive could use your help. If you want to give toward Haiti relief but sometimes worry that you money may not be getting where it needs to go, consider Kids Alive. They are doing front-line work and will put a greater percentage of your money directly to the need than any other organization of its type. Visit Kids Alive at www.kidsalive.org.

MORE ON MISSIONS

Thanks to your generosity, Leslie Wilkens was able to raise the support she needed to join Northwoods Community Church for a missions trip to the Dominican Republic from February 27th through March 7th. The devastation in Haiti has changed the focus of their trip so be praying for Leslie and all the team as they prepare to go.

PRAYER CONCERNS...

- Prayer for Sam Melton, back in Madison
- Prayer for Kelsi Jo, Kristi, and the Packer family!
- Prayer for our expectant mom, Julie Norman.
- Continued prayer for Dorothy and Kerry Slayden.
- Pray for Walt and Bev Watts as they spend the winter ministering at the African Inland Mission retirement facility in Clairmont, Florida.
- Pray for Lori Norman's mom, Shirley.
- Pray for our servicemen and servicewoman all around the world.
- Prayer for the many “unspoken” needs in our church family.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT... “Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you get neither.” (C.S. Lewis)

THE POWER OF GRATITUDE... Mark Twain once said, “I can live two months off of one good compliment.” There is great power in complimenting and thanking others for what they do. Here at Erie E. Free it takes countless deeds of service by a great many people to get everything done that needs be done. Please be sure you say “thank you” to those who serve our church. Every act of service by every servant counts!

