



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH  
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A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

APRIL 2021

## *Freedom* BY JOEL SUTTON

Chuck Colson once visited a prison in Brazil that was an unusual prison, and he wasn't sure why. The moment he walked in, he knew something was different.

The prisoners just weren't acting like prisoners. In fact, his tour guide who had keys to the place was a convicted murderer who couldn't stop smiling. The rest of the prisoners seemed to have this joy and peace about them.

Colson just didn't understand until his guide took him to a part of the prison that was notorious for brutal torture. As they walked down a long concrete corridor the inmate explained to Colson that now there was only one prisoner in this part of the prison. He put his key into a lock and he turned to Colson and said, "Are you sure you want to go in?" Colson said, "That's okay. I've been in torture and isolation cells all over the world."

Slowly the door opened to reveal the only prisoner. It was a crucifix beautifully carved by the inmates. The only prisoner in the torture cell was Jesus on the cross. And Colson understood. The inmate softly explained and said, "He's doing time for the rest of us."

You and I are free because of Easter.

The apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ."

Though we were guilty and imprisoned, we have been pardoned and set free. Free from all condemnation. Free from sin's power. Because Jesus is doing time for the rest of us.

You might ask, "Why did Jesus do it? Why did Jesus die? Why did God send him? Why did Jesus take that beating?"

Why did he take that crucifixion? If he was sinless and did not deserve it, then tell me why he did it!"

The answer is given to us in the last words of Romans 8, "Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God." Why did Jesus endure the cross? Because He loves you!

The result of Easter is that if you are in Christ there is freedom from all condemnation in your life. And He has delivered you from sin's power. Jesus has done all of this because he loves you!

I want to invite you to join us for our Easter services on April 4th (in-person or on line). Don't miss the opportunity to join together with the other believers in celebration of our freedom because of Jesus' love.

### Want to Receive Weekly Updates?

If you are not receiving our weekly email updates from Pastor Joel, please email the church office at [office@firstfreechurch.org](mailto:office@firstfreechurch.org)

**OR**

If your information has changed recently (address/email/phone number) please contact the office so we can update it in our system.

### VACATION BIBLE CAMP



**JUNE 21-25TH, 2021**

more details coming soon

### WATCH SUNDAY SERMONS ON:

[firstfreechurch.org/sermons](http://firstfreechurch.org/sermons)  
or  
firstfreetv on YouTube

### Would you like to receive the newsletter via email?

Contact the office at [info@firstfreechurch.org](mailto:info@firstfreechurch.org)

### GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

7:00 p.m.



### EASTER SERVICES

9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Register @ [Firstfreechurch.org](http://Firstfreechurch.org)



**OUR MISSION:  
TO HELP  
INDIVIDUALS  
BECOME  
CHRIST-CENTERED  
& CHRIST-SENT  
TOGETHER**

### WANT MORE INFO?

Web: [www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)  
facebook.com/firstfreechurch  
Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls  
Twitter: @FEFCMpls

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**SEE MORE INFO AT:**  
[www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

## FROM PASTOR JOEL,

In John 6, Jesus took his disciples over to the "far shore of the Sea of Galilee" in an attempt to give them some down time. They had just finished with a busy season of ministry. Healing people. Needs being met. People coming and going. Everyone was demanding a piece of them and their time and their energy. And they are exhausted. In fact, the Gospel of Mark tells us that they have been so busy that they haven't even had a chance to eat. So Jesus takes them to up in the hills, a quiet, undisturbed area east of the Sea of Galilee so that they might get some rest.

I can relate.

**I share this little story because you, as my church family, have graciously granted me a Sabbatical this summer (from May - August) for a sustained time for rest and renewal.**

During my four month sabbatical the pulpit will be filled by Pastor Jay Pound, Pastor Paul Anleitner, Pastor Jason Pensa and various other preachers, including David Pound, and Dan Reeve. The Council's goal (and mine) would be that this Sabbatical would renew me as your Pastor and enable us to continue to be effective in our ministry here at First Free.

Besides some rest, family time and spiritual renewal, I hope to use this Sabbatical to continue seeking God's vision for First Free. I will be reading, interacting with other pastors, and praying about what God has for us as His church in the future. I invite you to pray for me and with me for God's leading.

## CHILD DEDICATIONS

Child dedications are a special time for parents and close family and/or friends to dedicate themselves to raising their children in a way that is pleasing and honoring to God. It is also a time for the Church body to encourage, support, and commit to helping raise and teach the children to live a life for God.

### Are you interested in having a child or children dedicated?

We're offering four options leading up to Mother's Day.

*Sundays, April 25 & May 2 at 12 noon - semi-private*

*Sunday, May 9 during the 9 or 10:30 a.m. service in-person*

**If you are interested in participating in child dedications or learning more about dedications, contact Carrie Boyum at [carrie.boyum@firstfreechurch.org](mailto:carrie.boyum@firstfreechurch.org).**

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

- Congratulations to Kelsey and Corey Burns on the birth of their son Russell George Burns!

# YOUTH FUNDRAISER 2021



**This summer, Velocity Student Ministries is offering three different trips for students entering middle school all the way up to graduating from high school.**

The first is an opportunity for students to serve right here in the Twin Cities on a missions trip. This trip to the Twin Cities will expose students to diverse approaches to ministry and introduce students to churches and local leaders who are transforming their communities with the gospel in fresh ways. It will allow students to learn about their role in the Kingdom and be the hands and feet of Jesus in our own backyard.



Additionally, we are offering two trips for our High School and Middle School students to Rock Ridge in Ely, MN. They will get to enjoy the great outdoors and to take adventure trips into the Boundary Waters. These trips will combine fun and exciting outdoor activities and a camp-like cabin experience for students to grow in community and in their faith. Both groups will get to experience rock climbing, canoeing, hiking, and river tubing. Our Senior High Students will also experience a two-night canoe trip out in the Boundary Waters.

We know that you love supporting our students as they go on these trips and normally you're able to show this support at our fundraising event, Terrace on Chicago. This yearly event raises money for students to be able to go on these summer trips. I'm sure you understand that simply is not possible this year.



So instead of contributing at Terrace on Chicago, if you'd like to support our students at First Free Church, we're asking you to give online (see the link at the bottom of this page; note the donation category will say "Terrace On Chicago").

Whatever amount of money you contribute will be greatly appreciated! If you do feel led to donate towards students here at First Free, please know that in the early part of the summer, we plan to send you a prayer card for a specific student so that you can pray for him or her over the summer.

We are so grateful for your continued partnership with Velocity Student Ministries here at First Free Church! Thank you for praying for, supporting, and loving each other during such a challenging year!

**Thank you for supporting students,**

*Jason Pensa*

*Student Pastor*

**DONATE AT:**  
[www.firstfreechurch.org/youth2021](http://www.firstfreechurch.org/youth2021)