



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
5150 CHICAGO AVE S.
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55417

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First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST FREE CHURCH

APRIL 2017

Vacation Bible Camp 2017

JUNE 26-30
9:00 A.M. TO NOON

For kids entering grades K-6

VBC KICK-OFF: MAY 7

Volunteers and kids register online
Meet the Imagineering team!
Join us in the gym during fellowship time

WATCH FOR WORK DAYS TO COME!

Help us build our factory!

We're looking for supplies to decorate and transform the church into Maker Fun Factory! Think gears, air duct tubing, hubcaps, PVC pipes, duct tape, or anything that might be found in an inventor's workshop. Donations can be dropped off in the foyer (watch for VBC buckets) or outside Beth Brown's office.



A world where curious kids become hands-on inventors who discover they're lovingly crafted by God!

Questions? Email
vbc@firstfreechurch.org

Ears Open, Hearts Ready

Dr. Jerry Root, Professor of Evangelism at Wheaton College, shared the following story about a time when his flight was delayed and he had a conversation with a woman in the Vienna airport:

"She was wearing a lanyard with a name tag and carrying a clipboard and obviously taking a survey for the airport. When she came to me I asked what her name was. "Allegra," she replied.

"Allegra, are you from Vienna?" She answered, "No, I grew up in southern Austria." With that answer came the permission to ask, "What brought you to Vienna?" She said she was a student. This opened the door to more questions. Where did she go to school? What was she studying?

After 20 minutes or so I knew a good deal about Allegra. I knew her mother abandoned the family to go to Canada

with her lover. I learned her father's bitterness was toxic. I learned her brother also attended the University of Vienna, but that they were estranged.

When I expressed my sadness for what seemed to be a good deal of estrangement from the people closest to her, she said it was far worse than she confided. She told me she had a boyfriend who went to study art in Florence for six months. He asked her to wait for him, and she did so. Her boyfriend returned the very day before I met Allegra only to inform her he met somebody better in Florence.

After 20 minutes, she had not asked me one question. I said to her that I knew she had a survey to fill out but that I had been sent to tell her something. She wondered if I was a plant, put there by the airport, to see if she was doing her job. I assured her it was nothing like that, but I had something to say to her once she finished her survey questions.

She rushed through the airport's survey, then put down her pen, looked me in the eye, and eagerly asked, "What were you supposed to tell me?"

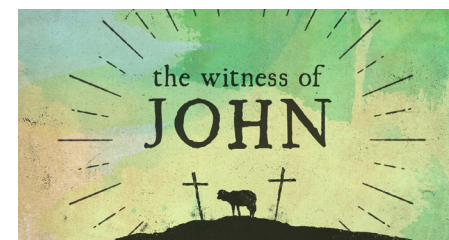
Knowing that Allegra felt abandoned and betrayed, I said to her, "Allegra, the

God of the universe knows you and loves you; He would never abandon you or forsake you." I said it to her again: "Allegra, he loves you!" Sometimes, it takes three times before the words sink in, so I said it again: "Allegra, he loves you!"

After the third time she burst into loud sobs. Everyone in the gate area was looking in our direction. Through her tears, Allegra blurted out, "But I've done so many bad things in my life!" I responded, "Allegra, God knows all about it and that's why he sent Jesus to die on the Cross for all of your sins and to bring you forgiveness and hope." I was explaining the gospel to ears willing to hear and a heart willing to receive."

That is the good news of Easter. Jesus Christ, God's only Son, conquered death and offers His forgiveness and love to each of us.

This Easter season, do you know someone who needs to hear this good news? Why not step out and invite someone to one of our Easter services? Take a risk. The risen Christ is alive and He is working in the hearts of those all around you.



EASTER SERIES: THE WITNESS OF JOHN

- APRIL 2 "I Thirst" - John 19:28-37
- APRIL 9 "You Must Be Born Again" - John 19:38-42 & 3:1-8
- APRIL 16 Easter - Encounter the King! - John 20
- APRIL 23 "I Am Sending You" - John 20:19-22, Luke 24:36-49

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Visit www.firstfreechurch.org
 Visit our Facebook page
 Find us on Twitter
 @ FEFCMpls

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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

Together: A Gathering for Women

Together is a place for women to connect, live out and grow in faith held a few times throughout the year. We asked Erika Garcia a few questions about these events.

How long has Together been happening? How did it get started?

The Together brunches began in January 2016 after many informal conversations among women at First Free. We realized that many of us were not having the opportunity to build relationships with First Free women of other generations. Since we have a multi-generational church, we wanted to create the opportunity learn and grow together across these generations.

What happens at the brunches?

At the Together brunches women are seated randomly at tables of mixed ages. A light brunch is served and someone may share a life experience or lesson learned and we then take time to connect as a table.

What is your favorite part of Together?

My favorite part of the Together brunch is having the opportunity to learn more about women that I've seen for years in passing but have never have the chance to really "know." I have connected with a couple of different ladies at each brunch and I really appreciate knowing more about their lives and how we can support one another in our faith journeys.

The next Together brunch is April 22nd. All First Free ladies age high school and above are invited to come and join us for a light brunch on Saturday, April 22nd, 9:30-11:00 a.m. RSVP at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon or call the church office.

A wide variety of individuals help make these gatherings happen. If you are interested in getting involved and helping out, contact the church office at info@firstfreechurch.org.

Church Family News

Congratulations to Glenda and Jonathan Sannes on the birth of their daughter Audrey Elizabeth Sannes, who was born on March 3rd.

Congratulations to Josh and Annie Schrock on the birth of their son Bode Darrel Schrock, who was born on March 12th.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE:

April 14th @ 7:00 pm. Nursery childcare available.

EASTER GATHERINGS AND BAPTISM CELEBRATION:

April 16th @ 9:15 & 11:00 am. No community groups, youth group, or K-6 classes.

Annual Celebration and Q & A Forum

Our Annual Celebration will be taking place on **Sunday, May 7th at 11 am.** We will take a look back and hear stories from the past year, worship in song and prayer, and the church leadership will share plans and goals for the next year. We will hold a single worship gathering at 9:15 am with our fellowship time to follow and then come together in the sanctuary at 11:00 a.m. for our Celebration. Childcare and children's classes will meet as usual during both our worship and celebration.

Prior to our Celebration, we will have a Budget Forum Coffee on **Saturday morning, April 29th from 9-10:30 a.m.** This meeting is being offered specifically for the purpose of answering any questions about our budget or any other matter regarding the church's vision. Annual reports (with our new proposed budget) will be available on April 23rd on the church website (on the Newsletters page, firstfreechurch.org/newsletters) and at the Welcome Desk.

As always, if you have any questions, you can call 612-827-4705 or email Pastor Joel (joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org) or Jeff Dutton, our church council chairman (jefflisa92@gmail.com).

New and Improved!

Last month we put in new carpet in all the children's rooms and a few other rooms on the first floor. The old carpet had been around for almost thirty years! Like the new wood flooring, we were able to get the carpet squares at a discount through a church connection.



Thank you to everyone who helped clear out rooms and pull up the old carpet: Doug Brown, Aaron Brown, Joel Burns, Lynn Longfield, Tony Longfield, Shyla Longfield, Aizec Olson, Patrick Olson, Jeff Miller, Gavin Miller, Grant Miller, Allan Peters, Matthew Peters, and Floyd Goodwyn III. And thanks to Scott Beckett for all his hard work coordinating the installation and putting the rooms back together.

This Month @ FIRST FREE

Fall Prevention Workshop: April 13

A fall prevention program called "Stepping On" will be offered by the Faith Community Nurses and guest experts for anyone age 60 or over who lives at home, does not have dementia, and has had a fall or is fearful of falling. Join us on Thursdays, April 13-May 25 from 10:00 a.m. to noon in room 105. Registration forms are available in the foyer and online. The cost is \$10.

Good Friday: April 14, 7:00 p.m.

Join us as we remember the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ at our Good Friday Gathering, Friday, April 14th at 7:00 p.m. Nursery childcare provided.

Easter Gatherings and Baptism Celebration: April 16

Celebrate with us the resurrection of our Savior on April 16th at 9:15 and 11:00 a.m. with a special fellowship time between services. No community groups, youth group, or K-6 classes will be held.

In addition to celebrating Easter, we will also be having baptisms. Interested in being baptized? Contact the church office or talk to a pastor.

The DEEP: April 19

Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP on Wednesday, April 19th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

Together, a Gathering for Women: April 22

A place to connect, live out and grow in our faith together. Join us for a light brunch on Saturday, April 22nd, 9:30-11:00 a.m. All First Free ladies age high school and up are welcome. RSVP at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon or call the church office.

Dominican Republic Trip Donations: April 30 deadline

Our Dominican Republic team has lots of supplies packed and ready to go but can still use financial donations, replacement basketball nets, dust-free chalk for personal chalkboards used in classrooms, and sunflower seeds in the shell (the kids love them!). Drop off any donations in buckets in the foyer by April 30th (financial donations can be put in an offering envelope designated "DR Mission Trip" or brought to the church office).

South of the River Potluck: May 6

Anyone who lives south of the Minnesota River is invited to come to a potluck at Jon and Carrie Boyum's house on Saturday, May 6th at 6:00 p.m. Kids and families welcome! RSVP to Carrie at joncarrieboyum@hotmail.com or 612-237-3619.

VBC Kick-off: May 7

Join us on May 7th during fellowship time in the gym to meet the Imagineering team and start registering kids and volunteers!