



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

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VACATION BIBLE CAMP

JUNE 25-29, 2018

9 AM TO NOON

For kids entering grades K-6.

At Shipwrecked VBC, kids discover how Jesus rescues us through life's storms.

VBC KICK-OFF: APRIL 29

Join us in the gym during fellowship time to kick off VBC! Meet the leadership team and start registering kids and volunteers!

WATCH FOR UPCOMING WORK DAYS!

CHECK FIRSTFREECHURCH.ORG/VBC FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

Questions? Email vbc@firstfreechurch.org



First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

APRIL 2018

Faith Rooted in Fact BY JAY POUND

We are nearly 2000 years removed from Jesus' resurrection. Given that significant gap in time and culture, it can be easy to lose touch with what it was like for early believers. We live in a world and culture where Jesus' bodily resurrection is celebrated annually, where even those who don't believe it are at least used to the idea. Jesus' resurrection has even, in western culture, turned into a secular holiday, albeit one increasingly detached from the event that created it.

The reality is that the first believers, the disciples and first generation church, lived in a world both closer to the event (and the evidence), and more skeptical of the claim. Despite the temptation for those of us alive today to think ancient humanity more naive (or worse), living a long time ago doesn't automatically make someone stupid. The reality is, ancient people knew just as well as modern people that the dead do not return to life. After all, one hardly needs sophisticated technology or a well developed scientific method to confirm this. The permanence of death was a fact that

life itself taught everyone. For them, to believe in Jesus' resurrection was to believe in something that had never been done by anyone - ever.

And though we can easily take it for granted, the early Christian writings reflect this worldview. The fact that the stories of Jesus resurrection were so often retold and so carefully preserved serve to prove the point. Here was an event no one, not even Jesus' closest followers either anticipated or expected - for the very simple reason that they knew it to be impossible. They knew, as did everyone else, that if the dead could be raised, then something fundamental about reality had been changed. And this is exactly what they claimed. Something that had never happened, and never could happen, just did. And now nothing will ever be the same again. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul writes explicitly about the world and reality altering implications of the resurrection.

But while the first believers had a tougher task, they also were closer to the evidence. There actually

was an empty tomb - and if you lived in Jerusalem, it wasn't hard to find. Additionally, for a generation afterward, there were hundreds of actual eyewitnesses to the risen Jesus. In fact, at the beginning of 1 Corinthians 15, aware of the magnitude of his claims, Paul reminds his audience of exactly this (15.3-8). Now for us 2000 years later, that is an interesting note, but for Paul it is something very different. Paul himself notes that most of these witnesses are still alive (15.6). In other words, if you finds Paul's claim incredible - you don't need to take his word for it. There are others, alive now, that can confirm it.

The early Christians believed, not because they were naive or easily persuaded of the impossible, but because there was good reason. There was both an empty tomb and living eyewitness - and both could be found if one was willing to look. And as Paul would I am sure remind us, we ourselves, 2000 years later, are heirs of that same tradition (15.3). We too believe not out of willful blindness to reason and the evidence, but because of it. Like Paul, ours is a faith rooted in historical fact.



UPCOMING SERIES: FAMILY MATTERS

- | | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| APRIL 8 | The Cleavers Don't Live Here Anymore | APRIL 29 | When a Wife Loves Her Husband |
| APRIL 15 | What Marriage is and isn't | MAY 6 | Advantage of Singleness |
| APRIL 22 | When A Husband Loves His Wife | MAY 13 | Power of Praying Parents |

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Visit www.firstfreechurch.org
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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org



PARENTING MATTERS:

NEW DATE!

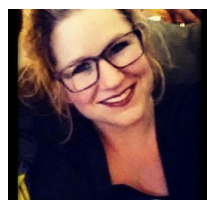
MAY 5TH, 8:30-NOON

\$10 per person. Childcare provided.

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS:

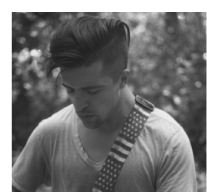
- Beth Brown - It's Just a Phase
- Darcy Wood - Discipling Your Children
- Shane Stacey - Generation Z
- Jason Pensa - Making Faith Stick
- Jeromy Darling - Technology in the Home
- Ben Nordell - Healthy Sexuality

We are excited to announce the rescheduled date for our Parenting Matters seminar! We've scheduled more speakers with a wealth of experience and knowledge and added childcare to make it easier for more parents to attend. Here's more about some of our speakers:



About Darcy Wood: As the Director of Kids Ministry at Eagle Brook Church, Darcy leads the team that creates, develops and plans ministry for kids at all 7 Eagle Brook campuses. Darcy's passion is reaching kids for Christ and helping them to understand who God is and how much he loves them.

About Shane Stacey: Shane is the National Director for EFCA ReachStudents. He has been serving youth and youth workers for more than 20 years and has led dozens of mission experiences both within the United States and abroad.



About Jeromy Darling: Jeromy Darling is a father of 3, singer/songwriter, actor, speaker, and advocate against sexual exploitation in all its forms. He has spent the last two and a half years speaking to tens of thousands of high school students, young people and parents across the country on the dangers of pornography and the value of taking control of all the technology in your home.

Register online at
firstfreechurch.org/parentingmatters

Terrace on Chicago Recap

We raised about \$19,000 to help send our students on trips this summer. About 60 students participated along with dozens of adult volunteers. Thank you to our team who worked so hard to make this event happen, from those who helped with food prep, set up and decorations, childcare, table assignments, clean up, and all the other roles that make this event run smoothly. And thank you to everyone who came for your generosity towards our students! Please continue to pray as our teens and leaders prepare for their trips this summer.



Blood Drive: May 7, 1-7 pm

Want to help save a life?

We're partnering with the Red Cross to host a blood drive in our gym on May 7th, 1-7 p.m. Blood donations help millions of patients in need. Being a donor ensures blood is on the shelf when needed - most people don't think they'll ever need a blood transfusion, but many do. If you are generally healthy, weigh over 118 pounds and are over 17 you can donate!

To make an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org and enter the sponsor code Firstfreempls or call 1-800-RED CROSS.



American Red Cross

This Month @ FIRST FREE

Men's March Madness: April 2

Watch the NCAA basketball final at First Free and enjoy food, games, predictions, prizes, and more. Come at 7:00 p.m., tip-off at 8:00. All ages welcome. Bring a snack to share and a lawn chair if possible.

Connections: April 8, 15, 22, & 29

Are you new to First Free and looking to learn more? Want to meet other new folks and enjoy some food? Check out Connections! Connections is a 4-week small group that meets at Erica and Pete Lehner's home on Sunday evenings in April, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Sign up at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon.

Dominican Republic Trip: April 7-15

First Free Church and Christus Victor Lutheran Church in Apple Valley are planning a joint mission trip to the Dominican Republic to work with Kids Alive, from April 7-April 15. Cheryl Vatsaas, Mark Poston, and Felix and Maureen Juarez will be joined by 5 people from Christus Victor. Please keep them in your prayers!

Together, A Gathering for Women: April 14

A place to connect, live out and grow in our faith together. Join us for a light brunch on Saturday, April 14th, 9:30-11:00 a.m. All First Free ladies age high school and above are welcome. RSVP at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon.

Pinewood Derby: April 27

Start your engines! The Pinewood Derby is on Friday, April 27th. Come at 6:15 p.m. to vote on car designs and have some snacks. Races start at 7:00!

Church Family News

Our condolences to the family of Walter Ortman, who passed away at the age of 106. A memorial service for Walter will be held at First Free on April 28th at 10:00 a.m.

Our condolences to the family of Doris Johnson, who passed away in February at the age of 87. Doris' husband, Bruce Chapman, was the pastor at First Free and she worked as the secretary here for some time. There will be a memorial service for Doris on May 21st at 1:00 p.m.