



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

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Living the Gospel BY JAY POUND

The desire for heroes seems to be deeply and perhaps universally human. As far back as we can find literature, we find literary heroes. The ancient Greeks certainly loved them and produced them memorably and in staggering quantity: Perseus, Heracles, Achilles, Jason, Odysseus, Socrates and many more besides. It says something about the power and importance of heroes that thousands of years later most of you could tell me more about these “heroes” than about many of our America presidents from the past 100 years. We like heroes, and so even when we cannot find them, we tend to make them.

This is certainly true in scripture. Give us a narrative, any narrative, and we look for heroes - and so inevitably we look in scripture too. This isn't bad in and of itself, but it does sometimes cause us to see them where we shouldn't. For example, Samson's strength tempts us to see him as a hero like Heracles, but as with Heracles there is much in Samson that we would do better not to emulate. Similarly, though Jonah was a prophet, God's instrument to warn Nineveh, we are left with grave doubts as to what kind of example he is. In the New Testament we find

similar difficulty. The disciples seem like good candidates at first glance, but their portrayal (even according to their own accounts) seems far from heroic. Even Paul, who becomes a model apostle, starts his life fervently opposed to Christ.

While this might disappoint us on some level, I think we ought to be encouraged. The universal testimony of scripture is that God is relentlessly committed to working through normal, fully human beings: people, in other words, like us. Like us, most of them have their heroic moments and low moments. And the wonderful and exciting news is that God's purposes are accomplished through them anyway. The Bible does not give us an anthology of heroes, rather a single story of a heroic God accomplishing his work through ordinary people. And that is a story in which we all can participate.

Consider again the work of the apostle Paul. Paul without question is a model apostle and was used powerfully by God. And yet here too we should be careful not to allow him to overshadow all the others through whom God was working. Consider that while we often consider Paul an early “church planter,” many

churches existed before Paul even arrives. Paul writes the letter to the Roman church before he even travels to Rome. There is already a church there, and Paul did not plant it. The same goes for many other cities. Even where Paul founds a local church, he is usually not the first one to proclaim the gospel. So if Paul is not planting all of these churches, who is?

The answer, as it happens, is normal people. Paul traveled fast, but the gospel traveled faster still, carried by regular people, by merchants, by servants, by people visiting family and often by people fleeing persecution. Paul's role was significant, both when he was present and as an overseer/encourager after he left. But Paul was quick to acknowledge that ultimately, it was God, working through all kinds of people, who made the church grow (1 Cor. 3.5-7). Paul did great things in service to the kingdom, but so too did the countless people who quietly lived godly and respectable lives, sharing the gospel with their friends and neighbors (1 Thes. 4.11).

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This Month @FIRST FREE

AUGUST 8-10TH NEIGHBORING 12:31

This August we will be going out into our neighborhood to serve and support our neighbors. Everyone can participate! There will be opportunities for different interests, and skill levels, whether you're an experienced missionary or a beginner with a heart to serve.

AUGUST 18TH BAPTISM AND PICNIC AT NOKOMIS

After the worship gathering on Sunday, August 18th, join us at Lake Nokomis to celebrate those being baptized with a picnic to follow. For the picnic, the church will provide sandwiches, drinks and chips. Please bring your own chairs or picnic blankets and something to share according to last name: A-M bring a salad or side dish, N-Z bring a dessert.

AUGUST 25TH STUDENT MINISTRY CELEBRATION

Join us as we celebrate our students and the experiences they had this summer at Lead the Cause, the Jr. High Adventure trip and in the Czech Republic. Hear students share about what they learned and how God worked in their lives, during the worship gathering at 10:00 a.m., and then stick around to talk to them more during fellowship time.

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We still have our Christian heroes today, men and women who have a huge impact in service of the kingdom. But as always, God will continue to do most of his work through regular people, people who faithfully love their neighbors and give the gospel a good reputation by their hard work and good lives. Our church goals over the past few years, from the High 5, to dining monthly with friends who don't know Jesus, to Neighboring 12:31 are all designed to help us be and become that kind of people. God is still working, and our prayer is that he will work through us to reach our friends and neighbors.

Could you serve in the nursery once a month? Caregivers are needed, starting this fall!

Contact Erika Garcia to sign up!
erika.garcia@firstfreechurch.org

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Web: www.firstfreechurch.org
facebook.com/firstfreechurch
Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls
Twitter: @FEFCMpls

FIRST FREE STAFF

JOEL SUTTON
SENIOR PASTOR
joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org

JAY POUND
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

JASON PENZA
STUDENT PASTOR
jason.penza@firstfreechurch.org

BETH BROWN
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR
beth.brown@firstfreechurch.org

PAUL ANLEITNER
WORSHIP PASTOR
paul.anleitner@firstfreechurch.org

MAUREEN JUAREZ &
JEANINE BRUEN
FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES
nurses@firstfreechurch.org

WINFORD MORRISEY
OFFICE MANAGER
winford.morrissey@firstfreechurch.org

SARAH COOK
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
sarah.cook@firstfreechurch.org

DAN FERGUS
TECH DIRECTOR/COMMUNICATIONS
dan.fergus@firstfreechurch.org

SCOTT BECKETT
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
scott.beckett@firstfreechurch.org

DAVID KRIESEL-KOLL
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
david.kriesel-koll@firstfreechurch.org

ERIKA GARCIA
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY ASSISTANT
erika.garcia@firstfreechurch.org



SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

Vacation Bible Camp 2019 Recap

This year we...

- Had over 230 boys and girls, and over 140 volunteers.
- Raised \$2,000 to establish a scholarship fund for kids at the Mbingo Baptist Hospital in Cameroon that will provide life saving malaria medicine for 200 kids.
- Served 30 gallons of iced coffee to the volunteers.
- Fed over 200 volunteers who helped with training, set-up and take-down.

Thanks to everyone for making this year a ROARING success with your help and support. We hope you can Come Aboard with us next year in June 2020!



MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY IS COMING TO FIRST FREE!

6TH-8TH GRADERS

more details coming in September



Faith Community Nurses Upcoming Events

AUGUST 11TH LEGAL ISSUES RELATED TO OLDER ADULTS

On Sunday, August 11, 2019, at 11:30 AM in Room 104 Joshua Damberg, Attorney at Law with Maser, Amundson and Boggio, P. A., will share information about legal issues and the recommended documents needed by older adults.

He welcomes interaction during his presentation so bring your questions. Older adults, family members and caregivers are welcome.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the foyer of church on August 4th and 11th.

AUGUST 25TH HONORING CHOICES SEMINAR

On Sunday, August 25, the Faith Community Nurses will share information about Honoring Choices. We will meet in Room 104 at 11:30 AM.

This is a program that provides information about completing a form called Health Care Directives. Our hour together will help you have a conversation with your family about your values, beliefs and goals for future health care. More than 90% of people think it is important to talk with their family about end of life care, however, less than 30% have discussed this with their families. Ideally completing this form begins at the onset of adulthood---age 18---and revisiting it throughout the life span. The forms will be provided as well as assistance filling them out. Individuals and families welcome.

A sign-up sheet will be available in the foyer on August 8th and 11th.

Church Family News

- Congratulations to Gabrielle and David Hauge on the birth of their son Thaddeus Hauge born on Saturday, July 6th!
- Our condolences to the family of Gen Erickson, who passed away at the age of 90. A memorial service will be held at First Free on August 16th at 11:00 a.m.
- Please join us here at the church for a couples shower for Sarah Cook, fiancée of Christopher Olson. Saturday August 17th at 2:00 p.m. Chris and Sarah are registered at Target and Amazon. Questions? Contact Jeanine Bruen at jeanine.bruen@firstfreechurch.org

MARKETFEST!

Here are some pictures from our annual Marketfest on June 26th!

