



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

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## The Holy Spirit and Missions

Outreach Weekend is February 11-12, with the theme "The Holy Spirit and Missions". Herb Bloomquist of Camp Shamaineau will be the keynote speaker on Sunday. He has some great stories of answered prayer that show how the work of the Holy Spirit and prayer are crucial for effective missions.

### Saturday, February 11th

Join us for a brunch and missionary panel from 10:30-12:00 on Saturday. Enjoy free food and great conversations with the missionaries. Childcare is provided.

### Sunday, February 12th

Herb Bloomquist will be our keynote speaker in the worship gatherings and missionaries will be speaking to community groups at 9:15 and 11:00.

#### Dave Boeltl from DB Ministries ("Doing Battle")

Dave ministers to Native Americans in Canada and Minneapolis using music and hockey. He will be with FaithBuilders at 9:15 and Embark at 11:00. Guy and Barb Hugo, who also serve with that ministry, will be in RealTalk at 9:15 and with the children at 11:00.

#### Stephanie and Stephen Quanbeck from City Life Center

City Life Center helps people in need and works to influence our world for life, all from a location near inner city Minneapolis. They will be in Living Life at 9:15 and with the Seniors at 11:00.

#### Tim Daniels, program director of Damascus Way

Damascus Way's motto is "On the Road to Freedom". They house, disciple and train men coming out of prison, preparing them to become positive members of society. Tim will be with the Youth Group at 9:15 and Agape at 11:00.



### God Works the Night Shift BY JAY POUND

*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Rv. 7.9-10, ESV)*

One of the pieces of wisdom from seminary that I recall most often is that, "God works the night shift." God is of course always working, but the comment was directed specifically at our all too human tendency to assume that God is only at work when and where we are. Or, we worry that God is not doing enough fast enough, and instead of simply serving Him and His kingdom, we decide to help Him run it. When we head down that road, we usually need to be reminded that God is always at work, and most of that work we will never see.

I was very recently and powerfully reminded of that fact when my family boarded six different planes en route to Chiang Mai, Thailand. We spent over 24 hours in the air, covered thousands of miles and ended up almost exactly halfway around the world, in a time zone 13 hours ahead. And yet when we woke up the next day for our first full day

in Chiang Mai, we went to the church where my Dad is now the pastor and gathered with hundreds of believers from at least a dozen countries and worshiped Jesus Christ together. It was a powerful experience, but one of the most powerful moments came when I went to bed that night and realized that all of you were just that moment driving to First Free to do the same. As big and diverse as our world is, the sun never sets on worship of Jesus.

One of the highlights of our trip came when we took a day to drive out to an elephant camp in a more rural area of northern Thailand. The elephants were incredible, the scenery was beautiful, and riding the elephants through that scenery was surreal. But to top it all off, my wife realized that the man who "drove" the elephant carrying her and my daughter Liesl was humming hymns for most of the journey. Here too, God was at work. Here too Jesus was being worshiped. We may from time to time have cause to doubt God's plan, or to question the progress of the gospel in our world. But the cure for those doubts is often simply to open our eyes and expand our perspective. While we sleep in Minneapolis, God is building His kingdom in Chiang Mai. God works the night shift, and He does good work.

The second lesson I learned was that I often miss what God is doing even when

I am staring right at it. Part of what made this trip so special for me is that I had the chance to see (and even preach at) the church where my parents now minister, and to visit Faithful Heart, where my brother Matt and his wife Audrey are missionaries. What was immediately obvious to me in both cases was that God had been at work for decades preparing all of them, and laying the groundwork for their ministries. We knew God was working in their lives, knew God was working in their previous ministries, but none of us saw or even suspected some of the biggest things God was doing. One day when I was talking with my brother, asking him about how life and ministry were going in Thailand, he just looked at me and smiled and said, "Jay, I honestly feel like I fit better here, like God made me to live here." I laughed because it is true, God designed him, made him and prepared him for the ministry he has in Chiang Mai. In retrospect it couldn't be more clear to either of us, and yet at the time we missed it.

Our trip was wonderful, filled with lots of fun and and fun times together. But more than that it was full of hope. I am genuinely excited by what God has been and is doing at First Free, and you should be too, but it is only the smallest part of what God is doing all around the world. Praise God, he is working in places and in ways we cannot imagine - and He is working all of the time. The sun never sets on His work or His kingdom, and it never will.



### OUR CURRENT SERMON SERIES: POWER

- |                |                                 |                |                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>FEB. 5</b>  | Holy Spirit: The One who Guides | <b>FEB. 26</b> | Holy Spirit: The One who Seals      |
| <b>FEB. 12</b> | Outreach Sunday                 | <b>MAR. 5</b>  | Holy Spirit: The One who Transforms |
| <b>FEB. 19</b> | Holy Spirit: The One who Equips |                |                                     |

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

**WANT MORE INFO?**

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

# LEARN MORE ABOUT *The Caring Commission*

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.*

*1 John 4:7*

In scripture, we are admonished to "love one another." The Caring Commission is charged with overseeing some of the ways we care for one another as the Body of Christ. Ministries and areas of responsibilities that fall under the Caring Commission include:

**The Faith Community Nurses:** Dee Huanca and Maureen Juarez provide input to the Caring Commission about needs of people in the congregation. Dee and Mauren are registered nurses with decades of experience. Their role in the church is to support and facilitate the health of body, soul and mind through a relationship with Jesus. They walk alongside individuals and families, seeking to empower them as they experience stressors in their lives. They provide health information and resources to individuals and groups. They (and a large group of volunteers) do visits to those who are ill or homebound. They coordinate volunteer ministries and prepare people to serve in them.

**Benevolent Fund:** The Benevolent Fund is a sum of money set aside to help people in need. The funds are used for members, regular attendees, extended families of church members and people in the church community. The Caring Commission reviews all requests for funds which are kept confidential. The Benevolent Fund is funded by generous weekly offerings as indicated on the offering envelopes or online. Any of the Caring Commission members can be sought out to discuss a need and being a recipient of the Benevolent Fund.

At Christmas time, it is a tradition that the Caring Commission blesses a handful of people with gift cards to

Cub Foods. This past December, we were able to gift \$2,900 worth of gift cards to people within our church community. We are grateful for the generosity of the faithful givers who chose to donate money to the Benevolent Fund and in turn, bless many individuals and families from First Free at Christmas time. What a beautiful testament of Christ!

**Events:** Many events that happen at First Free throughout the year are overseen by the Caring Commission such as Sunday morning fellowship time, funeral receptions, dinners for membership Class 101, the baptism potluck at Lake Nokomis, the Thanksgiving food drive, the Thanksgiving Eve pie social, and staff appreciation. Every Sunday morning, Paulette Goodman and Mary Londborg coordinate our fellowship time in the gym, where donuts and coffee are served. They are also the overseers of the kitchen. Phyllis Nordin is the faithful coordinator of funeral receptions. She works with a wonderful crew of people who are committed to providing receptions following funerals at First Free.

If you, your small group or community group has an interest in serving at one or more of these events, please contact anyone on the Caring Commission. We would love to get you plugged in to serve!

The Caring Commission members: Carrie Boyum (chair), Anne Nordell (vice-chair), Kathie Solem (council rep), Dee Huanca (faith community nurse), Maureen Juarez (faith community nurse), Jerry Young, Apryl Hultstrand, Lori Graham and Brian Graham.

## Meet New Members: Charles & Jeanine Bruen

**How did you come to First Free?**

Jeanine and I landed in the Northstar state in the middle of south Minneapolis from the Lone Star state (Texas). We had not even learned the difference between a street and an avenue, or if we were Parkway or Broadway pizza fans, when our neighbors Pete and Deb Olson invited us to their church. We had been part of a large "megachurch" in Dallas that we were blessed to be a part of, but we were looking for closer community at a smaller scale. We were invited to be part of the First Free Family, and now, 8 years in, it is home.

**How were you able to get connected?**

Deb Olson invited Jeanine to a ladies bible study on Monday evenings. She was a part of that for about 8 years. Jeanine also sang on the worship team for a few years. Once our son Benjamin came, connecting to other moms through the nursery, women's bible study



and MOPS helped Jeanine get more connected while my work schedule was so crazy.

**Why did you decide to make First Free your home church and become a member?**

We felt like First free was our home long before we became members. We wanted to join for a long time but finding a time when we both could go to the membership class was a little tricky. Finally becoming members just gave an outward sign to what we already felt and believed.

*Looking to get more connected? Connections Community Group, starting March 5th on Sunday evenings, is one way to get to know other people from First Free and learn about other opportunities to get involved in our church community.*

*Terrace on Chicago*  
 YOUTH FUNDRAISER

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SAVE THE DATE:  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 18TH**  
*Menu and reservations available soon!*

## This Month @ FIRST FREE

**Outreach Weekend: February 11-12**

Outreach Weekend is February 11-12 with the theme "The Holy Spirit and Missions." Join us Saturday February 11th, 10:30 - 12:00 for a free brunch and panel discussion with all the missionaries. On Sunday, Herb Bloomquist from Camp Shamineau will be our keynote speaker and missionaries will be speaking in community groups.

**Youth Group and Parents Fundraising Meeting: February 8**

Join us at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8th to learn about ways to raise money for our mission trips coming up this summer.

**The DEEP: February 15**

Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP on Wednesday, February 15th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

**Quarterly Celebration (Business Meeting): February 27**

Join us as we celebrate God's faithfulness to us at First Free on Monday, February 27th at 7:00 p.m. The Council proposed a bylaws change at the November Quarterly Celebration (i.e. Quarterly Business Meeting). It will be voted on at this meeting. If you wish to view the proposed bylaws changes, go to [firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon](http://firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon) or call the church office for a paper copy.

**Connections: Starting March 5**

Looking to get connected? The Connections Community Group meets for five weeks on Sunday evenings for a potluck style dinner at Peter and Erica Lehner's house from 5-7 p.m. There you will get a chance to know other adults from First Free as well as learn about the different opportunities to get connected. Try Connections March 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th by signing up online at [firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon](http://firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon) or by calling the church office.

## Church Family News

Our deepest condolences to the family of Stan Marchand, who recently passed away late January. His service was held at First Free on January 27th.