



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

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Shaped by God's Story BY JAY POUND

Matthew begins his gospel with a genealogy: “This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Mt. 1.1). At first glance this seems a strange way to begin the gospel; in reality it is a remarkably efficient way for Matthew to let us know right from the start that we have waded into a much larger story. Here is a story that reaches all the way back, a story big enough to include Abraham’s story and David’s story—and many more besides. This is in fact God’s story, brought to its climax by God’s anointed—his Messiah, here to see that the Father’s will was done on earth as it is in heaven.

We rightly focus this time of year on how this new chapter in God’s story was good news for all people, and yet not everyone was excited by this announcement. In fact, as we enter into the story, we find that some are disappointed, some confused, and some are angry.

King Herod, for one, was not excited to hear any of this. Herod had written his own story—a story in which he played the lead role. He, Herod, was the King, there was no need for another. Herod could not receive the good news because he preferred the story he had authored to the one being written by God.

Tragically the Pharisees, some of those who were the most zealous for the Lord, could not receive the good news either. They too had written their own stories; they had labored carefully and excitedly over this next chapter. And of course they had cast God (and his Messiah) in the lead role, but they had very specific ideas as to how that part was to be played and how the story should develop. They became so invested in their own ideas and their own plot that when the Messiah came they dismissed him with anger and confusion for spoiling the story they had written.

The fact is that we (humanity) are always tempted to become the authors—and the heroes—of our own stories. Sometimes we do it knowingly, and with bad intentions (Herod), other times we may think we are helping God along (the Pharisees). What God asks, by contrast, is for people willing to live within His story, people who will allow their lives to be shaped by what He is doing. But living like that is not easy. Living in God’s story requires enough humility to believe that God’s plan is better, and enough faith to trust him to what he has planned.

Starting in the new year, we will begin a sermon series titled, “Shaped by God’s Story.” Together, we will explore how we can stop stealing the pen and start trusting God enough to live in his story. We will hear stories from some in our congregation who have been changed by God’s story. Join us we explore God’s story together and learn to better participate with what he is doing.

New to First Free? TRY CONNECTIONS

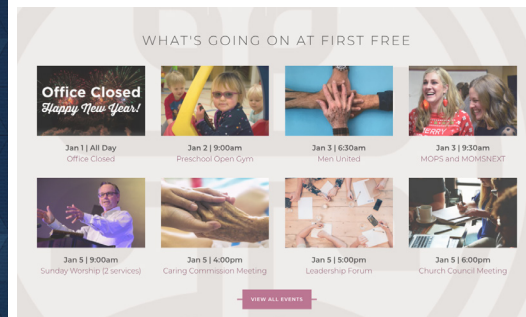


SUNDAYS, 5–7 PM
JAN 12, 19, 26, & FEB 9

at Pete & Erica
Lehner’s home

Sign up at firstfreechurch.org/events or the Welcome Desk

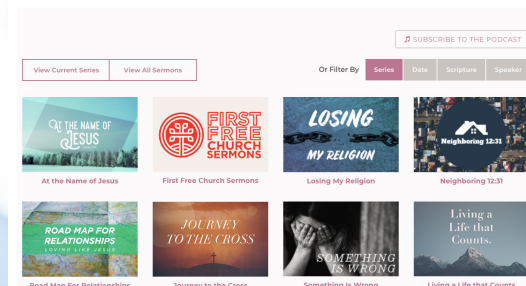
CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE! firstfreechurch.org



Updated Events Page

WE'RE UPDATING THE PHOTO DIRECTORY

PHOTO DATES: DEC 22,
JAN 5, 12, 19 & 26



Listen to Past Sermons



UPCOMING SERIES | GOD'S STORY

- JAN. 5 Creation—Genesis 1 & 2
- JAN. 12 Fall—Genesis 3
- JAN. 19 Redemption—Romans 5:8
- JAN. 26 Restoration—Revelation 21
- FEB. 2 Call—Ephesian 2:9-10

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Web: www.firstfreechurch.org
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Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls
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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

Advent Art 2019



Thank you to everyone who
submitted artwork!

- 1-O Holy Night by Marlene Maloney
- 2-Nativity by Karen Manos
- 3-Joy by Maria Peters
- 4-Away in a Manger, A Child's View by Karen Manos
- 5-Advent Candles by Karen Manos

This Month @FIRST FREE

JOIN A SMALL GROUP

God has designed us to grow in community, and Small Groups provide the environment for that growth. Small Groups provide deep relationships, accountability and encouragement; they are places where we can do life together. If you are not yet part of a Small Group, we want to invite you to take that step this winter. Sign up online or use one of the cards at the welcome desk.

CONNECTIONS—JANUARY 12, 19, 26 & FEBRUARY 9

Are you new to First Free and looking to get connected? Want to meet other new folks and enjoy some food? Connections meets for four weeks on Sunday evenings from 5-7 p.m. for a potluck dinner at Peter and Erica Lehner's house. There you will get a chance to know other adults from First Free as well as learn about the different opportunities to get connected. Sign up at firstfreechurch.org/events or the Welcome Desk.

PHOTO DIRECTORY

We're making a new Photo Directory! We ask that all members and regular attenders have their pictures taken at one of the upcoming photo sessions—photos will be taken January 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th.

BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING

There is a Blood Pressure Screening on Sunday, January 19th at 10:00 a.m.

VELOCITY STUDENT MINISTRY

Velocity resumes on Wednesday January 15th.

CREEKSIDE CLUBS

Creekside Clubs resumes on Wednesday January 15th.

WINTER WEATHER

Check our website (under the "About" and "News and Information" tab) or call the church office for cancellations and weather related announcements in the event of severe winter weather.

Interested in learning more about First Free?
Want to become a member? Check out

DISCOVERING FIRST FREE

JAN 19 & 26 @ 10:30 a.m.

Sign up at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon or contact the church office

Save the Date

Terrace on Chicago

Feb. 29th, 2020