

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

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO 32622

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



A CHURCH RENEWAL BY PASTOR JOEL

As I have been reading the book of Acts again, I have been caught up in the expectant and vibrant faith of the early church. Their zest for Christ and for sharing His good news, their sacrifice and their ministry -- all draw me up short. The power of the Holy Spirit seemingly displayed every day in the lives of those first disciples amaze me. And I come away asking if this power, zest, and vibrant faith cannot be ours.

Then I go back to the first chapter of Acts. "They all joined together constantly in prayer." Acts 1:14. I turn to Acts 2:42, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Moving ahead to chapter 3, "One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer . . ." Acts 3:1.

It seems that wherever I read in the book of Acts, prayer is taking place. It was in prayer that they drew lots over Matthias. They were in prayer when the day of Pentecost arrived and the Spirit fell. While some were in jail, others were praying. After Saul encountered Christ, he spent three days in prayer. In that early church they prayed.

Over the past year, we have started to live out a renewed vision here at First Free. We want to be a church that is known for its compassion, a servant society that pours out its time and wealth for the common good of the city. Together, we desire to be an outpost, a people sent out for Christ; a signpost, a people that point to Christ; and a lamppost, a people that shine the light of Christ everywhere they go. We envision First Free teaming up with other like-minded churches and together becoming a force for the gospel in the Twin Cities.

So how do we do that? That vision seems impossible. Where will the power come from to accomplish it? It will only come through prayer. Renewal of our church and of our city requires corporate, prevailing, intensive, kingdom-centered prayer. It is prayer that is focused on the church and the kingdom and the city.

R.A. Torrey said, "Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all pray." Prayer is the driving force behind all the power and the miracles and the expectant faith in the early church. And if we truly want to have a city shaping movement of the gospel, we are going to have to pray.

Are you devoted to prayer as your driving force? Are we as a church desperate enough to want to be like the early church with its power, its zest, and its faith? Do we want to be full of the Holy Spirit? Then we have to pray.

This next year of 2015, as we continue to flesh out our vision, I would like to challenge you to commit to prayer; corporate, prevailing, intensive, kingdom-centered prayer!

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:

A CHURCH RENEWED

- Jan. 4 Hallmark of the Church – 1 Corinthians 1:1-17
- Jan. 11 Inside Information – 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16
- Jan. 18 Who is the Best? – 1 Corinthians 3:1-23
- Jan. 25 It's Not 'Just Sex' – 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
- Feb. 1 Intimate Marriage – 1 Corinthians 7:1-8
- Feb. 8 Should I Get a Divorce? – 1 Corinthians 7:10-16
- Feb. 15 Gifted! – 1 Corinthians 12:1-11
- Feb. 22 Outreach Weekend
- Mar. 1 Unity in the Diversity – 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

MEN UNITED BY JAY POUND

As I talk to guys around church, one theme that constantly surfaces in all our lives is the desire to be better husbands and fathers. We know God has blessed us with amazing wives and trusted us with wonderful children—and we want to honor that blessing and trust. We have good intentions, but there are (at least) two big problems:

1. We are not always exactly sure what to do.
2. Even when we know what to do, it is not always easy to do it.

If this sounds like it comes from personal experience, it does. If this sounds familiar, then consider yourself personally invited to Men United, a new men's ministry that we will be launching at First Free this February. Men United exists to train men to be who God designed them to be in their homes, workplaces and neighborhoods through Biblical teaching, accountability, and a closer connection to Christ and each other.

Put another way, we want to help men live Christ-centered and Christ-sent together. We believe that happens through worship, community, and service. At Men United we want to provide that community. On our own we will not always know what to do or how to do it, but together we can share wisdom learned through experience. Together we can encourage each other and hold each other up in prayer. Together we can be better.

Look for more information and sign-ups on the church website: www.firstfreechurch.org

First Free's Mission – To help individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together.

**FIRST FREE:
OUR MISSION
IS 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

FIRST FREE STAFF

JOEL SUTTON
SENIOR PASTOR
joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org

JAY POUND
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

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

MIKE GRAFF
WORSHIP MINISTRY DIRECTOR
mike.graff@firstfreechurch.org

DEE HUANCA & MAUREEN JUAREZ
FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES
nurses@firstfreechurch.org

KAITLIN GRAFF
ADMINISTRATION
kaitlin.graff@firstfreechurch.org

SHELBY ANDERSON
DESIGN/COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT
shelby.anderson@firstfreechurch.org

SCOTT BECKETT
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
scott.beckett@firstfreechurch.org



SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

BRAVE MOM: BUILDING COMMUNITY

by Maria Peters



I have been a MOPS mom for 2 1/2 years. I found MOPS when I was in a very lonely, fragile place emotionally, spiritually and paternally. Luke was 6 months old, he was feeling healthier after figuring out his health problems and was finally sleeping for more than 40 minutes at a time.

After spending so much time and energy healing Luke's gut (via my diet and chiropractic treatments) and teaching him to sleep, I was a sleep deprived, emotional shell of a woman. I knew that I wanted to start taking care of myself spiritually because I knew that it would help me to feel better in all other areas of my life. So I began to search.

During this same time we were searching for a new church. Living in the neighborhood, I drove by First Free multiple times per week. Finally, I got the motivation to check out the church website. While on the website I also noticed that they hosted a MOPS group. I had no idea what MOPS was, but clicked through to the group's website and was instantly captivated.

I emailed the MOPS group coordinators to ask about joining, even though there were only a few months left of the semester. As it turns out they had room for my boys in their MOPPETS program and I could start the very next week. What I didn't realize at the time was that our MOPPETS program typically had a waiting list and it was an act of God that there was actually room for my two young boys in their program.

Joining MOPS was a lifesaver for me. It provided an outlet for my extroverted self to recharge through adult conversation and by learning about topics that were of interest to me.

Without the community of my MOPS group I don't think I would have been able to snap myself out of that despaired state. By meeting and connecting with the women at my MOPS group our family felt called to attend church service at First Free. It has been truly wonderful.

Church Family News

Baby Shower for Olivia Clayborn
Saturday, January 10th @ 2:00 pm
@ The Mellema's - 4411 Grand Ave S
Olivia is registered at Target and Babies R Us

Wedding Shower and Farewell for Debbie (Smith) Thornberg
Sunday, January 18th @ 2:00 pm
@ First Free Church
Debbie & Brad are registered at Target, Home Depot, and Amazon.

Our deepest sympathies go out to the Sollie family as they mourn the loss of Ron Sollie, who passed away on Thursday, December 11th.

UPCOMING @ FIRST FREE

CREEKSIDE CLUBS & YOUTH GROUP RESUME – JANUARY 7TH @ 6:30 P.M.
Join us for the first night back for Creekside Clubs and Youth Group on January 7th at 6:30 p.m.

MEN'S SOULSHARE – JANUARY 10TH @ 9:00 A.M.
Men of all ages are welcome to join us for breakfast and fellowship on various Saturday mornings from now until May 2015. Contact Ross Olson with any questions at 612-824-7691.

YOUTH WINTER WIPEOUT RETREAT – JANUARY 16TH-18TH
Youth group students (7-12 grade) are invited to Camp Shamineau to retreat and enjoy winter activities and be refreshed! Forms can be turned in to either Jay Pound or the church office. Questions? Contact Jay Pound at jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org.

THE DEEP – JANUARY 21ST @ 6:30 P.M.
Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP, January 21st at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

EXPRESSIONS – JANUARY 25TH FROM 3:30-5:30 P.M.
A time of journaling for those dealing with chronic illness or pain, join us from 3:30-5:30 p.m. in room 103.

CONNECTIONS – JANUARY 18TH & 25TH/FEBRUARY 8TH & 15TH FROM 5:00-7:00 P.M.
Community is like a great pair of pants; it can be hard to find, and the same style won't work for everybody. We get it, and we want to help you—whether you are new to First Free, or if you have been coming here for a while. Connections is new way to help you find the community that is right for you. **The Connections Community group will meet for four weeks on Sunday evenings for a potluck style dinner at Pete and Erica Lehner's house from 5-7pm.** There you will get the chance to know others from First Free, as well as learn about the different opportunities to get connected. If you are looking to get connected, **try Connections this January or February. Sign-up via welcome card, by a call to the office, or through our church website. Please indicate your preference for January 18 and 25, or February 8 and 15.**

ADULT ELECTIVES ARE HERE!

We are excited to offer you two 3-week electives during both hours (9:15 and 11:00) on Sunday, January 11th, 18th, and 25th.

Elective 1: Pray Like it Matters This elective will be team-taught by Pastors Joel and Jay. It will provide some specific and practical teaching about prayer as well an opportunity to ask and discuss questions about prayer together. Join us as we study what God's word says about prayer, and how we can all better put those lessons into practice.

Elective 2: What is the Old Testament & Why Should Christians Know It? This elective will taught by Dr. David Howard, an Old Testament Professor at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul. Dr. Howard has authored several books, and taught Old Testament and Hebrew at Bethel and Trinity. Join him as he highlights the continuity between the Old and New Testament and explains the application of the Old Testament to Christian living.

Each elective will offer the same material at both 9:15 and 11:00. We encourage and invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to explore a topic of your choice more deeply.

No need to sign up; just show up! Questions? Contact Jay Pound at jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

RAISE KIDS WITH RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, & REAL FAITH A PARENTING WORKSHOP WITH JIM & LYNNE JACKSON FROM CONNECTED FAMILIES

When parents are intentional about modeling and encouraging God's wisdom, their kids are far more likely to become respectful and responsible. In this powerful workshop parents will be inspired and equipped with four powerful principles that bring the love of Christ alive in the nitty gritty of everyday life! You can become a proactive, insightful parent, despite today's frantic pace and confusing culture. Join us here on **February 6th from 6:30–8:30 p.m.** for this great opportunity! **Cost is \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. Childcare available for 4th graders and under.** Parents and grandparents of teenagers and younger as well as teachers of children and youth are encouraged to come!

Questions? Contact Beth Brown at beth.brown@firstfreechurch.org