

FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

Minneapolis

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FIRST WORD

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

MARCH 2015

UPCOMING CAMP OPPORTUNITIES:

CAMP COUPONS FOR SUMMER CAMP!

We love camp so much and want every student in grades 1-12 to experience camp that we give away coupons for camp! If your child or grandchild regularly attends a First Free kids/youth program, we will provide a discount coupon on the camp fee for either Camp Shamineau, Rock Ridge or Camp Nathanael!

Get a \$100 coupon for a full week of camp or \$75 toward a partial week. Bigger coupons are available upon request! Coupon forms are at the Creekside Canteen or can be found on the church website.

Contact Beth Brown for more information or for questions!

CAMP SHAMINEAU

We love Camp Shamineau! In 2014, 55 boys and girls attended Camp Shamineau in the summer! At least 40 of those took advantage of the camp coupons!

Camp Shamineau is a place "for your children where they will engage in high energy outdoor activities and edifying group experiences that are led by quality summer staff who love Jesus and want to show them how to have an eternal relationship with Him."

Please check out all that camp has to offer at www.shamineau.org.

RETREAT 46

Retreat 46 is a weekend retreat at Camp Shamineau designed just for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders! It's a perfect opportunity for boys and girls to get a taste of camp (and parents can sign up, too)! We bring our own adult chaperones & camp takes care of all the fun details!

When: April 17-19 Cost: \$75
Sign up: Forms are at the Creekside Canteen

Contact Beth Brown with questions!

CAMP NATHANAEL

A camp just for BOYS!

Nathanael is a rustic camp offering rugged outdoor experiences. Their mission is to "raise up boys and young men to be Christ-following leaders."

Check them out at campnathanael.com!

REMINDER: DAYLIGHT SAVINGS!
MARCH 8TH

A LOVE TEST BY PASTOR JOEL

How about a love test today?

The Associated Press tells the story of such a test. . . for dogs. An instructor from a dog training workshop in Salt Lake City noted that a dog's disposition can be tested by the owner. If the owner will fall down and pretend to be hurt, a dog with a bad temper will tend to bite him. But a good dog will show concern and may lick the fallen owner's face. Susan Matice attended the class and then decided to test her two dogs. While eating pizza in her living room, she stood up, clutched her heart, screamed and fell to the floor. Her two dogs looked at her, looked at each other, then raced to the coffee table for her pizza!

The dogs failed the test. How about us?

Over and over again, Scripture tells us that love is of primary importance for the Christian. "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Jesus said, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12). After Paul finishes talking about spiritual gifts and how they make the church thrive, he then adds, "And now I will show you the most excellent way." (1 Cor. 12:31).

As we all know, love is not easy. Yet, one of our core values at First Free is Authentic Community. . . connecting our lives together based on a common love for our savior and our mission. Love, which is expressed and experienced in the body of Christ, is essential for a church to be healthy. If we want to see lives changed (and we do), then communicating God's love is essential.

This next month, on Sunday mornings, we will be digging deep into the great "Love" chapter of Scripture, 1 Corinthians 13. And although most of us have heard these verses applied to marriages, in reality Paul was writing it to a church. We are to love one another.

So how are we doing on the "love test"? Is love more than just a feeling, but something we actually do? Are we more concerned with others than we are ourselves? Are we willing to intentionally do something in the name of Jesus for someone else, even if it might cost us something? Do people know we care for them, even when they have not been around for a while? Are people accepted and appreciated?

As Paul says, love is the most excellent way. So let us keep caring. Let us keep loving.

P.S. By the way, Easter is only a month away and it is a great Sunday to invite a family member, friend, or a neighbor to church. Why not begin now praying for who you might invite to join you for our Easter Celebration!

CURRENT SERMON SERIES: A CHURCH RENEWED

Mar. 1	Unity in the Diversity	1 Corinthians 12:12-31
Mar. 8:	All You Need Is...	1 Corinthians 13:1-3
Mar. 15:	Love Is...	1 Corinthians 13:4
Mar. 22:	Love Does Not...	1 Corinthians 13:4-6
Mar. 29:	The Endurance of Love	1 Corinthians 13:7-13

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

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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

LIVING IN COMMUNITY:
BUILDING & SHARING LIFE TOGETHER

By Sandra Ogren

I joined a women's Bible study about two years ago after attending First Free for a couple of years. I didn't know most of the women in the group, but thought it was time for me to stop waiting for community to come to me and to jump in with both feet instead! Two years ago, I never would have seen myself as helping to facilitate



the group, but God had other ideas. Here is what I have learned from being part of a community of women who meet weekly and share life together.

Living life alongside others brings a brilliance, a passion, and a new perspective to our own lives. We discover others who have the same struggles, or maybe we have passed through a struggle and can share wisdom with another. As each woman joins our group or steps out for a session, we are changed because we have shared

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time, prayer, and a piece of our lives together. Conversations go beyond a "How are you?" because we have shared our spiritual lives with one another. It now becomes, "How can I pray for you this week?" "What are your struggles and how can I help?" Reading scripture, praying together, sharing time with one another forced me to dig beneath the surface of my busy life and seek to know the others in the group as spiritual sisters in Christ. As we talk over cups of coffee, swap babysitting, work out alongside each other, or learn a new skill together, it is natural that laughter has become a foundational aspect of our community. Joy, praise, answered prayer, newfound wisdom, love for one another, it's all part of real life. We have challenged each other to be counter cultural and become the women Christ created us to be.



"What happens when you engage in community? You become more passionate about living for Christ, living out His commands on a daily basis."

What happens when you engage in community? You become more passionate about living for Christ, living out His commands on a daily basis. You find accountability and acceptance and people who will challenge you and push you out of the nest to seek God in your world. It is how God intended us to live not just on Sundays but every day. When we take the time to invest in each other's lives, study God's word, and pray for each other, I believe we will see radical transformation in ourselves and in our communities.



CONNECTIONS — MARCH 8, 15, 22, & 29 FROM 5:00-7:00 P.M.

The Connections Community group meets 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 coming March 8th, 15th, 22nd, & 29th by signing up via welcome card or calling the church office.**

EXPRESSIONS — MARCH 8TH & 22ND 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.

MEN UNITED — FRIDAYS @ 6:15 A.M.

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. Men, join us Friday mornings at 6:15 a.m.

THE DEEP — MARCH 18TH @ 6:30 P.M.

Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP, March 18th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

MEN'S SOULSHARE — MARCH 21ST @ 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.

**Terrace on Chicago
Annual Youth Fundraiser
March 14th, 2015**

Seatings available for 5 & 7 p.m.
Childcare will be provided for the 5 p.m. seating
Look for the reservation table or contact the church office to reserve a seating

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Our deepest sympathies go out to the Nordin family for the loss of their beloved Jack Nordin on Friday, February 13th. The funeral service will be held on Saturday, March 7th at 11:00 a.m. with the visitation at 10:00 a.m. Luncheon to follow after the service.

Announcing First Free's VBC 2015 Theme!



JUNE 22-26

9AM-NOON

for kids entering K-6

100 + "Cool" volunteers needed!

Watch for Vacation Bible Camp Kickoff coming in April!

EVEREST
Conquering Challenges with God's Mighty Power