



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
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MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55417

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New Creation BY PASTOR JOEL

Brand New You!

Imagine...everything in your life becoming new! All the mistakes that you made in the past are gone. All the goals you didn't reach; you get to start over again. All your relationships are again new, with no hurt and no baggage.

One of the great truths of scripture is that because of Easter, we can be new! "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Author, pastor, and onetime atheist Lee Strobel told this story about becoming new:

How can I tell you the difference God has made in my life? My daughter Allison was 5 years old when I became a follower of Jesus, and all she had known in those five years was a dad who was profane and angry. I remember I came home one night and kicked a hole in the living room wall just out of anger with life. I am ashamed to think of the times Allison hid in her room to get away from me.

Five months after I gave my life to Jesus Christ, that little girl went to my wife and said, "Mommy, I want God to do for me what he's done for Daddy". At age 5! What was she saying? She'd never studied the archeological evidence [regarding the truth of the Bible]. All she knew was her dad used to be this way: hard to live with. But more and more her dad is becoming this way. And if that is what God does to people, then sign her up.

At age 5 she gave her life to Jesus.

God changed my family. He changed my world. He changed my eternity.

Do we really understand this truth? When God steps into our lives everything is new. He brings forgiveness, cleansing and peace. A new perspective and new direction with new attitudes and a new destiny! We are new creations in Christ!

That doesn't mean you won't make mistakes. That doesn't mean you will "live happily ever after" or live trouble-free. That doesn't mean you won't disappoint people and they won't disappoint you. That doesn't mean you won't sin.

What it does mean is that through the power of God demonstrated to us in the resurrection of Christ, you can be remade. Love now can become your controlling motive in place of hate. Serving the one who died for you can take the place of selfishness. God can make you new. And that happens when you put your trust and faith in Christ.

As we prepare for Easter, do you know someone who needs to hear this good news? Do you know someone who needs to become new? Invite them to one of our Easter worship gatherings.

On the Cross—Christ died. On Easter—Christ rose from the dead. On Easter God did something for us, because we could not. He made it possible for us to become brand new!

UPCOMING CAMP OPPORTUNITIES:

CAMP COUPONS FOR SUMMER CAMP!

We love camp and want every student in grades 1-12 to experience camp so much 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 or Jason Pensa with questions or for more info!

CAMP SHAMINEAU

We love Camp Shamineau! In 2015, over 60 boys and girls from First Free attended Camp Shamineau in the summer! Nearly all of them took advantage of the camp coupons!

Camp Shamineau, located in Motley, 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 8-10 Cost: \$75
Sign up: Forms are at the Creekside Canteen

Contact Beth Brown with questions!

CAMP NATHANAEL

Camp Nathanael is a Christian, all boys summer camp just 90 minutes from the Twin Cities.

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!

OUR CURRENT SERMON SERIES: NO WONDER THEY CRUCIFIED HIM

Mar. 13	<i>When Jesus Asks Too Much</i>	Apr. 3	<i>When Jesus Won't Just Do Brunch</i>
Mar. 20	<i>When Jesus Seems Out of His Mind</i>	Apr. 10	<i>When Jesus Won't Accept Neutrality</i>
Mar. 27	<i>Who Are You Looking For?</i>	Apr. 17	<i>When Jesus Frowns on Fun</i>

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Visit www.firstfreechurch.org

Visit our Facebook page!
Find us on Twitter
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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

Golden Thread: LIVING ON MISSION

Our mission is to help individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together.

Our mission statement is like a compass—it points us in the right direction. It points us to the lost. It waves an unmistakable evangelistic banner. It is our redemptive heartbeat.

It is the golden thread we want everyone in the church to know and remember. When you are changing a baby's diaper in the nursery, in the kitchen preparing donuts for Sunday morning, standing in the grocery line at Kowalski's, typing in your cubicle, or watching your son's soccer game, you are at that moment helping individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together. Mission is everywhere.

Below are several stories of people living out our mission in their daily lives.

Worship Passionately:

Having grown up on a farm I became very familiar with GOD through all my senses; a breeze picking up to bring relief on a humid day; a hoar frost, showing winters delight; alfalfa, marking country as home.

All HIS expressions of love through creation has come easily with me to Minneapolis, allowing me to feel HIM, see HIM, and take HIM in every day. I can be in our basement working and hearing the cardinal sing or in our yard with dirt in my hands and I have learned the practice of worship.

All HIS creation brings me to unending praise and thanksgiving. *Jane Hershstein*



Jane Hershstein

Living Like It Counts:

I had just put my grocery cart away outside of the Trader Joe's in Edina when I saw and heard a little family group—a young mom dragging a toddler along who is crying and screaming, a baby in the cart, and the third child walking beside them quietly.

I waited a minute and went over to the mom as she put the crying child in the car seat and closed the car door.

I asked if I could help in any way and mom just shook her head no. I asked, "May I give you a hug?". She gave me the okay.

A moment later, after a quick hug and a word of encouragement, "I've been where you are today. I have three children and 10 grandchildren, and believe me, it will get better". 1 Timothy 4:12 *Phyllis Nordin*

Serving Cheerfully:

This past fall, *Luke and Katie Bonawitz* took the bold step of agreeing together to teach the second-hour preschool class. Although working with preschool children was more familiar territory for Katie, it was a new world for Luke and teaching together was a new step for them in their marriage.

But it didn't take long for them to experience the pleasure of serving. Listen to this comment Katie made last November: "I think Luke and I are finding our stride with the Critters...We experienced such JOY today! We took out the instruments and first played sounds to mimic the rain (for the rainbow story) and then later, Luke marched for Jesus with all of them while they played those little instruments. I wanted to cry with joy! Thank you...for providing this experience for us."

Luke and Katie are living on mission as they love these young boys and girls.



Luke & Katie Bonawitz



Phyllis Nordin

This Month @ FIRST FREE



GOOD FRIDAY GATHERING
FRIDAY, MARCH 25 @ 7:00 PM

**EASTER SUNDAY GATHERINGS
& BAPTISM CELEBRATIONS**
SUNDAY, MARCH 27 @ 9:15 & 11:00 AM
*NO SUNDAY COMMUNITY GROUPS,
YOUTH GROUP, OR K-6 CLASSES*

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS!

Spring ahead! Be sure to set your clocks ahead on Sunday, March 13 for Daylight Savings!

The DEEP: March 16 @ 6:30 p.m.

Worship. Pray. Refresh. Together. Join us for a time of worship and prayer together at The DEEP on Wednesday, March 16 at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

Good Friday Gathering: March 25 @ 7:00 p.m.

Join us as we remember the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ at our Good Friday Gathering, Friday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

Baptism Easter Gatherings, Sunday, March 27

Come celebrate what God is doing at First Free by joining us for baptisms on Easter Sunday, March 27. Interested in being baptized? Contact the church office at office@firstfreechurch.org.

Easter Worship Gatherings: March 27 @ 9:15 & 11:00 a.m.

Come and celebrate with us the resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ! We invite you to join us for our Easter Worship Gatherings Sunday, March 27 at 9:15 and 11:00 a.m. with a special time of fellowship between our worship gatherings. No Sunday Community Groups, Youth Group, or K-6 Classes will be held. Nursery and Preschool Classes will be held as usual.

DR Missions Trip Donations Needed!

Help support the Kids Alive Dominican Republic missions team through donating requested items. A list is available at the welcome desk. Drop off donations in the lobby or outside Room 201. Thank you for coming alongside the Kids Alive ministry and the team!

This Coming April: CES Spring Food Drive — Sundays, April 10 & 17

First Free is collecting donations for Community Emergency Services from April 10th through April 17th. Thanks to your generosity, we collected over 1,000 pounds of food last November and hope to overflow our foyer again with food for those who are in need. Donations such as: non-perishable food, infant products including diapers and formula, personal hygiene items, and paper products are always needed. Please pick up a bag and a list of needed items in the foyer. Thank you for helping First Free build a more loving and caring community!

Salem Church Short Term Missions Trip Opportunity

New Salem Church, in South Minneapolis, our Spanish language sister congregation, is planning a short term mission trip to Venezuela the first two weeks of June. They will be putting a ceiling in a church building. Experienced workers welcomed. Spanish language helpful. Contact Salem Church at 612-724-5552 for more details or to sign up.