



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH  
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# First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

MAY 2019

## Love Your Enemies BY JAY POUND

We recently began a new sermon series titled, "Road Map For Relationships: Loving Like Jesus." As I began doing some background research, my thoughts naturally gravitated to my most significant and prominent relationships: my wife, my children, my in-laws, parents, coworkers, and friends. I would suggest this is natural, after all these people are important to me. I want to love them better, and I should strive to do better in those relationships. That being said, the reality is that I find it easy to love those people - they are lovable, and what is more, they love me.

If we are really going to love like Jesus, doing that - loving the lovable in our lives - is crucial, but it is also the bare minimum. Loving like Jesus requires something more, something qualitatively different, it requires loving our enemies. In my opinion, few exhortations are more self-evidently world changing, more clearly gospel-revealing than Jesus' call for us to love our enemies:

*32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.*

*35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. (Luke 6.32, 35, NIV).*

Now, "enemy" is a rather extreme word, and I have no doubt Jesus has used it on purpose. But I want to warn us not to read that and conjure up a hypothetical enemy. I know you don't have any "real" enemies. Me either. I don't have a nemesis; no one that I am aware of is out to get me or destroy me. And the temptation for all of us is to use that fact to evade Jesus' point. "Phew, we are off the hook, we don't have to love our enemies because we don't have any." It's a nice try, but we all get the point, and none of us are off the hook.

The point is that we are called to

love those we find difficult to love, and called by no one less than our Lord and King Jesus. The coworker that makes your life difficult? Love them like Jesus. The jerk neighbor? The family member with the political positions that make you crazy? The people who denigrate what you hold most dear? Love even them like Jesus. Nothing I can say or you can read will make this easy, but then Jesus didn't say it was easy, he said it was necessary.

I promise that in this, I struggle at least as much as the rest of you. I actually wrote this to remind myself that I am not off the hook; I am just sharing it with you. The truth is I gravitate to what is easy, and it is easier to love those who love me. But Jesus calls us to more. He calls us to love our enemies, and he is at work in us to make it possible.

## This Month @FIRST FREE

### RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

We're hosting a blood drive in our gym on May 13th, 1:30-6:00 p.m. If you are generally healthy, weigh over 118 pounds and are over 17 you can donate! To make an appointment, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and enter the sponsor code Firstfreempls or call 1-800-red-cross.

### GRADUATION NIGHT

Join us as we celebrate our graduating high school seniors! There will be time for you to meet the graduates and congratulate them on their achievement as well as enjoy refreshments. Wednesday, May 15th at 6:30 p.m.

### ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Join us on May 19th during the second service as we take a look back at the last year and share plans and goals for the next.

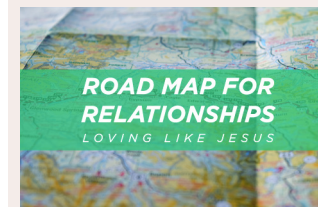
### ONE WORSHIP GATHERING: MAY 26TH

Starting May 26th we will be having one worship gathering at 10 a.m. for the summer.

## This Summer @ FIRST FREE:

From May 26th through September 1st we will have one worship service at 10 a.m. followed by fellowship time.

During the month of June, kids (K-6) will still be dismissed during the sermon for a video series with Beth.



## UPCOMING SERIES | ROAD MAP FOR RELATIONSHIPS: LOVING LIKE JESUS

- |          |              |
|----------|--------------|
| APRIL 28 | Mindful      |
| MAY 5    | Approachable |
| MAY 12   | Grace-Full   |
| MAY 26   | Self-Giving  |

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

**WANT MORE INFO?**

Web: [www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)  
 facebook.com/firstfreechurch  
 Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls  
 Twitter: @FEFCMpls

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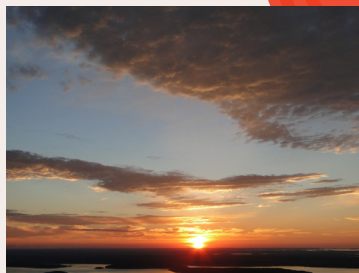
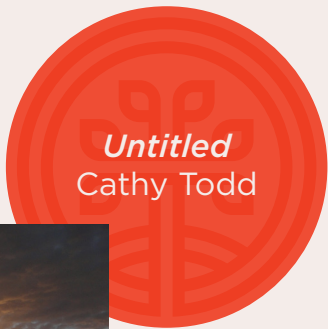
*Lent and Easter Visual Arts*

Throughout Church history, Christians have viewed beauty as a doorway into seeing the beauty and majesty of God. As we look at the beauty of creation, we see that God's language for sharing his handiwork is communicated through colors & symbols that evoke wonder.

This Lent and Advent season we had tremendous participation in our second visual arts gallery. From woodwork to graphic design, from young to old, we have diverse expressions submitted by our diverse congregation.

Thank you to those who participated and helped our church community worship our risen Savior through the beauty you created!

-Paul Anleitner



**PICTURES FROM MEN'S NIGHT OUT**

From April 8th



*Church Family News*

- Congratulations to Jamie & Andy Kvamme on the birth of their daughter Florence (Flora) Ann Kvamme, who was born on April 5th.
- Our condolences to the family of Art Osterlund, who passed away at the age of 95. Visitation for Art will be held at First Free on May 21st at 10:00 a.m. and a memorial service at 11:00 a.m.
- Congrats to our graduating Seniors! Nathan Flomo, Leif Riveness, Josh Peterson, Jackson Cuper-smith, Isaac Peterson, Britton Peterson, Daisy Audette, Emily Holliday, Jessica Holliday, Zuly Knecht, Precious Smith, Dajion Dawson and Elliot Klenk

**VACATION BIBLE CAMP**

**9 AM TO NOON, JUNE 24-28, 2019**

For kids entering grades K-6.



**VBC DONATIONS**

Look for the Donation Station in the foyer for more specific items to donate.

Here are some general items that we are looking for:

- Jumbo cardboard building bricks
- Large cardboard boxes
- Green tulle
- Brown tulle
- Play tunnels
- Tomato cages—new and clean
- Green tissue paper (any shade of green, solid color)
- Gift cards to Walmart, Target, Cub, Joann Fabrics, and VISA gift cards

**VOLUNTEER AT VBC!**

*VBC training is on Sunday June 9th, 11:30-1:30, a light lunch will be provided.*

Kids and volunteers register at [firstfreechurch.org/vbc](http://firstfreechurch.org/vbc)

CHECK [FIRSTFREECHURCH.ORG/VBC](http://FIRSTFREECHURCH.ORG/VBC) FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

Questions? Email [vbc@firstfreechurch.org](mailto:vbc@firstfreechurch.org)