

# FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

Minneapolis

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# First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

MAY 2015

## The Prayers of Pray-ers BY PASTOR JOEL

The Bible is all about God, and that is why the practice of prayer is so pervasive throughout its pages.

In Genesis we see every one of the patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—praying with familiarity and directness. Abraham’s doggedly insistent prayer for God’s mercy on the pagan cities of Sodom and Gomorrah is remarkable (Gen 18:23ff). In Exodus, prayer was the way Moses secured the liberation of Israel from Egypt.

“Far be it from me,” said the prophet Samuel to his people, “that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you” (1 Sam 12:23). To fail to pray, then, is not to merely break some religious rule—it is a failure to treat God as God. It is a sin against his glory.

Move to the Psalms. Much of it was written by King David and is God’s inspired prayer book. It is filled with appeals to “you who hear prayer” (Ps 65:2). David’s son Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem and then dedicated it with a magnificent prayer.

Solomon’s main petition for the temple “was that from it God would hear his people’s prayers.” Indeed, Solomon’s highest prayer was for the gift of prayer itself. Beyond that, he hoped those from other nations would “hear of your great name . . . and pray toward this temple” (1 Kings 8:42). Again we see prayer is simply a recognition of the greatness of God.

The Old Testament book of Job is largely the record of Job’s suffering and pain—worked through with prayer. In the end, God is angry with Job’s callous friends and tells them he will refrain from their punishment only if Job prays for them (Job 42:8).

Prayer permeated the ministry of all the Old Testament prophets. The Jews’ preservation and return from exile in

Babylon was essentially carried out through prayer. In Jeremiah, their exile began with a call to pray for the pagan city and their neighbors (Jer. 29:7). Daniel, nearly executed by the Babylonian authorities over his insistence on prayer three times a day, prays a prayer of repentance for his people, asks for their return, and is heard. Later, Nehemiah rebuilds the wall around Jerusalem with a series of great prayers interspersed with wise leadership.

Then we turn the page into the New Testament. And we find Jesus praying. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, healed people with prayers, denounced the corruption of the temple worship (which, he said, should be a “house of prayer”), and insisted that some demons could be cast out only through prayer. He prayed often and regularly with fervent cries and tears (Heb 5:7), and sometimes all night. The Holy Spirit came upon him and anointed him as he was praying (Luke 3:21-22), and he was transfigured with the divine glory as he prayed (Luke 9:29). When he faced his greatest crisis, he did so with prayer. We hear him praying for his disciples and the church on the night before he died (John 17:1-26) and then petitioning God in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. Finally, he died praying.

Immediately after their Lord’s death, the disciples prepare for the future by being “constantly in prayer” together (Acts 1:14).

*Pastor Joel's article on The Prayers of Pray-ers continues on page 2.*

### CURRENT SERMON SERIES: The Prayers of Pray-ers

May 10 - Prayer of a Mother — Praying with Hannah: 1 Samuel 1:4-11; 2:1-10  
May 17 - Prayer of God’s Friend — Praying with Abraham: Gen. 18:16-33  
May 24 - Prayer of a Wrestler — Praying with Jacob: Gen. 32:22-31  
May 31 - Prayer for God’s Glory — Praying with Moses: Exodus 33:12-33; 34:5-8



## VBC: Ways you can help!

### GENERAL ITEMS

Look for the “Pine Tree” in the gym or foyer to choose some mittens with specific items that can be donated.

- # climbing gear
- # hiking boots
- # small boxes (shoebox size or a bit larger)
- # rope of various sizes
- # rope cut to 18” for 250 kids
- # gift cards to Michael’s, Home Depot, Target, or Cub
- # tents-contact Beth first
- # paper sacks (paper grocery bags)
- # pallets
- # white twinkle lights
- # duct tape (light blue/dark blue)
- # backpacks
- # wood crates
- # logs
- # snowshoes

### VBC PREP

Watch for scheduled work days  
Dates & Times: TBD (Contact Beth Brown for more information)

Prep that needs to be done:

- # Put together crew buckets
- # Paint props
- # and more fun things!
- # Organize materials
- # Make rocks
- # Please let Beth know if you can help during the day or can work on things at home!



### PRAY!

- # For the kids
- # For the leadership team
- # For the volunteers
- # For beautiful weather-no rain!

QUESTIONS? CONTACT BETH BROWN, EXPEDITION GUIDE. SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER OR REGISTER KIDS ONLINE AT [FIRSTFREECHURCH.ORG](http://FIRSTFREECHURCH.ORG)!

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

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IS TO HELP  
INDIVIDUALS  
BECOME  
CHRIST-CENTERED  
& CHRIST-SENT  
TOGETHER**

**WANT MORE INFO?**

Visit [www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

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**SEE MORE INFO AT:**  
[www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

## *The Prayers of Pray-ers Continued. . .*

All church gatherings are "devoted . . . to prayer" (Acts 2:42; 11:5; 12:5, 12). In the book of Acts, prayer is one of the main signs that the Spirit has come into the heart through faith in Christ. In every chapter but two, people are praying—together. The church moves, grows, adapts, and is made powerful through prayer.

All Christians are expected to have a regular, faithful, fervent, devoted prayer life. The Spirit gives us the confidence and desire to pray to God and enables us to pray even when we don't know what to say. Christians are taught that prayer should pervade their whole day and whole life—they should "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). (The above summary was adapted from Timothy Keller's book, "Prayer")

Prayer is so great that wherever you look in the Bible, it is there. Prayer is what we were made for. Prayer is God's people having a relationship with Him. On Sunday mornings, starting in May, we are going to learn from some of the great pray-ers of Scripture. We are going to go listen in to their prayers.

Why? Because it is my hope (prayer) that we might not only learn from these prayers who God is and how to pray, but even more significantly, their prayers will motivate us to be pray-ers!

## *Congratulations Class of 2015!*

**Congratulations to our high school seniors graduating this year:**

Annika Chantland  
Haleigh Caruso  
Holly St. Clair  
James Holliday  
Kylie Graham  
Matthew Nelson  
Ryan Schow  
Tyler Larson

Chris Conrad  
Henry Clinton  
Hope Sutton  
James Sorensen  
Marisa White  
Megan Boone  
Seth Cupersmith

*You are invited to join us in celebrating our senior high graduates on Wednesday, May 13th at 6:30 p.m.*

## **UPDATE FROM THE YOUTH PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Update from Youth Pastor Search Committee. . . .

This journey to add a new Youth Pastor to our staff and church family has been long—with its share of ups and downs. But we believe we are getting close.

At the time of printing this update, we will have two strong candidates we are meeting with in person. Following those interviews, we hope to invite one of them to candidate—sometime late May or early summer.

Continue to pray for the committee and for our candidates as we move forward. And watch for further news—hopefully coming soon!

## *Upcoming @* **FIRST FREE**

**EXPRESSIONS — MAY 10TH & 24TH 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.

**GRAD NIGHT — WEDNESDAY, MAY 13TH @ 6:30 P.M.**

Celebrate our graduating seniors on Wednesday, May 13th at 6:30 p.m.

**MEN UNITED — FRIDAY, MAY 1ST & 8TH @ 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.

**MEN'S SOULSHARE — MAY 16TH @ 9:00 A.M.**

Men of all ages are welcome to join us for breakfast and fellowship on various Saturday mornings. Contact Ross Olson with any questions at 612-824-7691.

**THE DEEP — MAY 20TH @ 6:30 P.M.**

Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP, May 20th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

## **CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

Congratulations to Renea & Zack Reichenbach-Carr on the birth of their baby girl, Hazel Marie, on Thursday, April 9th at 9:13 a.m., weighing 7lbs 4oz and 21.5 in.!

Congratulations to Marian Nyquist who is celebrating her 101st birthday on May 18th!

## **ANNUAL CELEBRATION!**

**Sunday, May 3rd @ 11:00 a.m.**

**Childcare will be provided for nursery; preschool classes meet. K-6 will be dismissed for Children's & Jr. Church.**

We are having a party!

On May 3rd, we are holding our first ever Annual Celebration on Sunday morning. It will truly be a celebration of what God has been doing in helping us move forward with our vision and to fulfill our mission - helping individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together.

We will take a look back and hear stories from the past year. We will worship in song and prayer. And then the church leadership will share what it looks like for the next year.

We hope you will plan on joining us—and being part of the celebration!

## **ONE WORSHIP GATHERING MAY 24**

**Memorial Weekend, be sure to join us on Sunday, May 24th @ 9:15 a.m. for our one Worship Gathering!**

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