



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

Want to receive First Word
via email? Contact the office
at info@firstfreechurch.org

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO 32622

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

NOVEMBER 2020

Are You Giving Thanks in 2020? BY JOEL SUTTON

When he was 7 year old, his family was forced out of their home, and he had to work. When he was 9, his mother died. He lost his job as a store clerk when he was 20. He wanted to go to law school, but he didn't have the education. At age 23 he went into debt to be a partner in a small store. Three years later the business partner died, and the resulting debt took years to repay.

When he was 28, after courting a girl for four years, he asked her to marry him, and she turned him down. On his third try he was elected to Congress, at age 37, but then failed to be re-elected. His son died at 4 years of age. When this man was 45, he ran for the Senate and lost. At age 47 he ran for the vice-presidency and lost. But at age 51 he was elected president of the United States. Who was this man?

His name was Abraham Lincoln, a man who learned to face discouragement and move beyond it. Did you know that it was Abraham Lincoln who, in the midst of the Civil War, in 1863, established the annual celebration of Thanksgiving? Lincoln had learned how important it is to stop and thank God in the midst of great difficulties.

2020 has been a tough year. The pandemic struck in March. The killing of George Floyd and then the ensuing riots happened at the end of May. Businesses have closed. Jobs have been lost. Students are "going to school" at home.

Our church had to go online and just recently we started meeting in-person again with limited attendance. Now we come to this Thanksgiving of 2020 and wonder, "How can I give thanks to God when times are so uncertain and difficult?"

"I don't have to be thankful for evil, but I can be thankful despite evil."

I Thessalonians 5:18 reminds us to, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (ESV).

Paul is not saying in this verse to give thanks for everything. For example, you don't have to give thanks for COVID-19 or for injustice in the world. If my wife was sick, I would not be thankful for her sickness. But what he is saying is that in every circumstance, no matter how bad it is, we can give thanks to God because ...

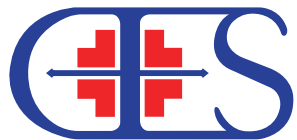
- His purpose is bigger than my problem.
- He will give me the power to overcome.
- I know that I will grow through the experience if I allow God to use it in my life.

I don't have to be thankful for evil, but I can be thankful despite evil. How can you be grateful when you have lost your job or your health or your spouse? By looking at not what you've lost - but what you have. That was what caught my eye about Lincoln's response. He evidently found it important to identify those things he could be thankful for, even when life was tough.

So here is the question for this Thanksgiving: What are you taking for granted? Your health? Your freedom? Your relationships? This Thanksgiving join me in singing that old, familiar hymn, "Count your blessings, name them one by one; Count your blessings, see what God hath done."



Are you a parent of a kid or student? Are you getting our weekly email(s) about Creekside and/or Velocity? If not, be sure to contact the Church office so that we can double check that we have your correct email address and are on our email list! We want each family with kids & students to be in the communication loop with us!
Thanks!



Community Emergency Services
South Minneapolis

We're collecting Food and Personal Hygiene items for CES: Community Emergency Services.

Drop off at First Free on Sundays Nov. 8 and Nov. 15. Bring with you to the service or drop off by the South Door with designated youth outside on Nov. 8 & 15 from 10-11am.

Contact the Church Office with any questions: 612-827-4705.

Griefshare: Surviving the Holidays

Wondering how you will survive the weeks surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas? Are you dreading these holidays, knowing that everything has changed and that happy memories from past years can't be recreated? The GriefShare Surviving the Holidays seminar is especially for people who are grieving a loved one's death.

You'll learn: How to deal with the many emotions you'll face during the holidays, what to do about traditions and other coming changes, helpful tips for surviving social events and how to discover hope for your future.

Join us for a Zoom virtual event on Monday, November 16th from 7-9 p.m.

STAY UP TO DATE WITH THESE LINKS:

 **FIRST FREE** firstfreechurch.org

 **CREEKSIDE** firstfreechurch.org/children

 **VELOCITY** firstfreechurch.org/students



Watch Sunday Sermons:
firstfreechurch.org/sermons
OR [firstfreetv](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) on YouTube

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

WANT MORE INFO?

Web: www.firstfreechurch.org
facebook.com/firstfreechurch
Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls
Twitter: @FEFCMpls

FIRST FREE STAFF

JOEL SUTTON
SENIOR PASTOR
joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org

JAY POUND
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

JASON PENSA
STUDENT PASTOR
jason.pensa@firstfreechurch.org

CARRIE BOYUM
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR
carrie.boyum@firstfreechurch.org

STACEY URBANZ
NURSERY DIRECTOR
stacey.urbanz@firstfreechurch.org

PAUL ANLEITNER
WORSHIP PASTOR
paul.anleitner@firstfreechurch.org

**MAUREEN JUAREZ &
JEANINE BRUEN**
FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES
nurses@firstfreechurch.org

SARAH OLSON
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
sarah.olson@firstfreechurch.org

JOANN BURNS
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
joann.burns@firstfreechurch.org

DAN FERGUS
TECH DIRECTOR/COMMUNICATIONS
dan.fergus@firstfreechurch.org

SCOTT BECKETT
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
scott.beckett@firstfreechurch.org

DAVID KRIESEL-KOLL
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
david.kriesel-koll@firstfreechurch.org



SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

HARVEST OF PRAISE

Where have you seen God at work this year? Though we will not be gathering for our annual Harvest of Praise service, we still want to take time to praise God and give thanks. This year we would like to collect pictures from as many as possible in our congregation, which we will then turn into a video. In your picture, we would like you (and your spouse, family, friends, small group) to hold a sign completing the sentence: "God, we thank you for..." and then send that picture to dan.fergus@firstfreechurch.org by Wednesday, Nov. 18th.



A LOOK AT FALL FLING 2020



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Our condolences to the family of Donna Butterworth who passed away at the age of 96.

Eddy and Sabina Pierre-Louis praise that sentencing of the felony case is complete. The support and prayers of the church played a huge part in the positive outcome. Continue praying for their Child protection case.

Lydia Hauge has completed her cancer treatments and is happy to be able to be back to church. Her parents report the most recent scans show there are currently no cancer cells in her body. Thank you for praying church!



JOIN THE CLEANING TEAM!

help clean the sanctuary between services

Contact the Faith Community Nurses
at nurses@firstfreechurch.org

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.

During this month of Thanksgiving it is good to give praise to God for His many good gifts - especially the fact that He answers prayers.

Many of you have been praying with us since the end of August for Sarah Brosz, David and Pam Kriesel-Koll's daughter, who had a sudden heart attack outside her home in North Dakota. We are thankful to God that Sarah has fully recovered and that Pam was there to perform CPR.

Below is a story, originally featured on KVRR, a Fargo area TV News station.

FARGO, N.D. — Pam Kriesel-Koll and her daughter, Sarah Brosz, were enjoying a summer day in August.

They had just finished a walk around their neighborhood when the unexpected happened.

"I thought she was teasing me and then I looked at her and she was just non-responsive," Kriesel-Koll said.

Despite never having any underlying symptoms, Sarah suffered a sudden heart attack in her driveway.

Pam was scared and in shock, but she quickly took action. While listening to instructions on the phone with dispatchers, she preformed CPR until the paramedics arrived.

"Once they took over, then you kind of step back, and then it was really tough," Kriesel-Koll admits.

Sarah was taken to the hospital where she coded a second time. However, thanks in part to the measures taken by her mother, she is on her way to a full recovery.

"It is just so amazing that someone who really has no training in CPR could really let go of that fear," Brosz said. "I am sure she was just so scared."

Pam's quick actions were recognized by F-M Ambulance with their Citizens Lifesaving Award.

She admits she knew little about performing CPR before

her daughter's incident, but is grateful for the help of the 911 operators.

She believes everyone should learn the important skill.

"If I can do it, I think everyone can do CPR," Kriesel-Koll said.

Learning how could save someone's life. It not only did that for Pam, but it also brought her closer to one of the people she loves most.

"When I found out that it was my mom, I think that moment just became more special cause she is probably my best friend, but also my lifesaver and my hero," Brosz said.



Interested in CPR certification? Jeanine Bruen teaches on online option with a short in person check off. Contact the church office to sign up.