



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
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First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

NOVEMBER 2015

TC Marathon Reflections

Thanks for joining us!

Thank you to all of you who joined us at the Twin Cities Marathon Cheer Station and at the Mile 9 Water Station. Once again, we had beautiful weather and lots of fun as we served and cheered at the Marathon.

We started off our new vision campaign a couple of years ago by asking, "Would our neighborhood notice or care if First Free disappeared?" No, cheering and serving water are not all that difficult (even if the water station gets started early), but they are a fabulous opportunity to be present with our community, to serve with them and cheer with them. It is an opportunity to be a lamppost. So thanks to the 40 volunteers who showed up bright and early at Mile 9 to help prepare all of the water and Powerade for the runners along with volunteers from the Richfield Cross Country Team. Thanks to the crowd who cheered alongside our neighbors—and provided free coffee and donuts—just down the street from our church. Thanks for showing up and being a light.

We hope you all had fun, and if you didn't have a chance to join us this year, we hope you will plan to join us next year!



Congratulations to our runners who finished the marathon—Kari Taylor, Dean Peterson, DJ O'Neil, and Kevin Drake (not pictured).

Generous Living BY PASTOR JOEL

When I was younger, one time I forgot to turn off the faucet. Now that would not have been such a big problem if I had not also put the stopper down. The end result was the sink filled up and overflowed.

Romans 5:5 says, "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us". Before you dismiss this as just Paul giving us some theological jargon, understand that Paul had been raised and trained in a very law-conscious school of thought. He knew what it was like to feel as though he could never measure up. He knew the shameful and harmful effects of a religion that said that no matter how hard you tried, you would never be good enough.

And then Paul came into touch with God's grace through Jesus Christ. And he suddenly became aware of God's generous love, a love that cannot be turned off, that fills up and overflows the heart of each believer.

In the very next verse Paul writes, "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly". In other words, this was no conditional generosity.

It was a generosity that overflows from heaven, even though we have done nothing to deserve it. In fact, we have often shaken our fist in the face of that love the same way a teenager will sometimes irrationally rebel against their family.

God is generous. And His generosity is a pattern for us to adopt. At the heart of our giving we are to have a certain mindset: we are to give to the one in need, the one who is weak, the one who is oppressed not because they beg us to do so—not because they promise to flood us with praise—not because we expect immediate results. But we give because we love.

We are to give because God gave. We are to give as God gave. And we are to give as generously as God gave.

This month of November I want to invite you to experience generous living. When we give thanks during this holiday season, we are thanking a God who is generous beyond belief. When we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, we are celebrating the greatest gift ever given. Might the end result be a community of generosity that overflows.



CURRENT SERMON SERIES: GENEROUS LIVING

- November 1 Why Did Jesus Talk So Much About Money? - Luke 16:1-13
- November 8 When Is Enough, Enough? - Luke 12:13-34
- November 15 Tool Or Drug?
- November 22 A Generous Faith - Luke 21:1-4

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

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STOCKADE TRIP @ CAMP NATHANAEL

On October 9-11, 14 boys and 15 men made the annual Stockade overnight camping trip to Camp Nathanael near Hinckley. We had a great time enjoying the beautiful fall weather and building relationships. Some of the highlights were: campfire circle, night hiking, Chef Craig's cooking, Ranger Doug's Dakota fire hole jambalaya, squirrel hunting, octaball tournament, frisbee golf, looking for the space station, cleaning up two miles of Highway 48, zip line, climbing tower, slingshot range, combing the wood for stray arrows at the archery range, rope bridge, carpet ball, stargazing, launching rockets, eating by headlamp light, making s'mores, telling stories, laughing, making new friends, connecting with old friends, and reveling in God's glorious creation.



Coming in January... A Children's Musical!

Calling Boys and Girls in grades K-6! This coming January, we'll have try-outs for our children's musical on January 6th for boys and girls grades K-6. Rehearsals will take place on Wednesdays before Creekside Clubs. More details to come in December from director, Kari Taylor.

This Month @ FIRST FREE

Adult Electives — Two 4-Week Electives Available During Both Gatherings Sundays November 8, 15, 22, & 29 @ 9:15 & 11:00 am

We are excited to offer you two 4-week electives during both hours (9:15 and 11:00) on Sundays November 8, 15, 22, & 29.

1. Gospel Fluency: Have you ever been in a conversation where you wanted to share the gospel, but you didn't know where to start? Have you ever wanted to bring the gospel to bear on a difficult situation, but were not sure how to apply it? Many of us have been there, often; we know what God has done for us and how it has changed our lives, but we struggle to communicate it to others in a way that naturally intersects with their lives. We know the gospel, but we lack fluency. Join us on Sundays, November 8, 15, 22, and 29, as we grow together in our Gospel Fluency.

2. Dave Ramsey's Life, Money, Legacy: In our November Sermon Series, "Generous Living", Pastor Joel will be teaching about the joy that comes through generosity. But we recognize (and know from first hand experience) that personal finance is complex—and becoming ever more so. We also know that wanting to do something, and figuring out how to do it are two very different propositions. With that in mind, we are offering an elective based on Dave Ramsey's "Life, Money, Legacy", to complement the current sermon series by providing some more specific help on how to be good stewards of our finances so that we can all know the joy of generous living.

Quarterly Celebration — Monday, November 9 @ 7 pm

Join us as we celebrate God's faithfulness to us at First Free on Monday, November 9th at 7:00 p.m.

CES Food Drive — Accepting Food Donations Through November 15

First Free is collecting donations for Community Emergency Services through November 15. Please pick up a bag and a list of needed items in the foyer. This year, CES has expressed a strong need for flour, sugar, oil, and other baking goods. Help us overflow our foyer with food for those in our community!

Operation Christmas Drive — Collecting Donations Through November 15

We will be collecting donations for Operation Christmas Child now through November 15th. Please help make this experience possible by donating items, money, or gift cards so there is enough items for children to pack!

Creekside Clubs boys and girls will be packing shoeboxes on Wednesday, November 18th, giving children the powerful experience of giving. Join them in praying for the children across the world who will receive these gifts! Helpers are also needed for set up before the event and at packing stations on November 18th. For more info, contact Beth Brown.

Harvest of Praise & Pie Social — Wednesday, November 25 @ 7 pm

You are invited to our annual Thanksgiving gathering celebrating God's faithfulness! There will be a pie social following our praise gathering. Households of two or more people, please bring a favorite pie to share. Individuals bring a topping such as whipped cream. Nursery childcare will be provided.

Happy Thanksgiving from First Free!
The church office will be closed on Thursday, November 26 & Friday, November 27 in observance of the holiday.

Church Family News

Our deepest condolences go out to Dan and Donna Larson on the passing of Dan's mother on Saturday, October 10.

Our deepest condolences go out to the family of Dick Miller on the passing of their beloved Cheryl Miller. Cheryl passed away on Sunday, October 11.

Alicia Symington will be having a bridal shower here at First Free on Sunday, November 22nd at 2:00 p.m. Alicia and her fiance Tanner are registered at Target, Bed, Bath & Beyond, and Herbergers.

Congratulations to Jerome and Amy Borden on the adoption of their baby girl Eva Borden! Eva was born on August 17th.