



FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
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Outreach Weekend: October 29-30

This year's theme is "World Missions in the 21st Century". Join us Saturday, October 29, 10:30 - 12:00 for a free brunch and panel discussion with all the missionaries. Childcare is provided and the kids can eat, too! The keynote speaker in the Sunday Services is David Rofkahr, Executive Director of Recruitment for EFCA ReachGlobal. Missionaries will also be visiting Community groups on Sunday.

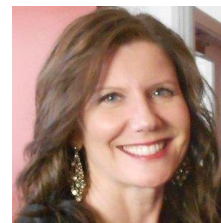
The Dahlins are involved with ProMETA, which provides online graduate education for Christian leaders. They also minister to the Hispanic immigrant population in Minnesota.

GlobalFingerprints is the child sponsorship ministry of ReachGlobal. They partner with churches around the world to send children to school and help care for their physical, spiritual and emotional needs.

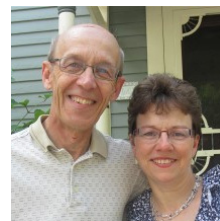
Kids Alive ministers to the many orphans and vulnerable children that have multiplied because of world problems. They also make use of short term missions to benefit both the Kids Alive ministry and those who serve on missions trips.



Rachel Bliss
GlobalFingerprints
Speaking to Real Talk
and Agape



Patricia Poldo
Kids Alive
Speaking to Living Life
and Embark



Tim & Carolyn Dahlin
ProMETA, Hispanic Ministry
Speaking to Faith Builders,
Seniors, and Youth



David Rofkahr
EFCA ReachGlobal
Keynote Speaker

2016 Twin Cities Marathon

On Sunday, October 9th, come join us as we cheer on the runners or volunteer at the mile 9 water station. For those who want to serve at the water station, sign up online at

firstfreechurch.org/marathon and plan to meet us at 7:00 a.m. on Nicollet and Minnehaha Parkway. All others are invited to join us at our cheering section on Chicago Avenue and the Parkway at 8:30. (coffee and donuts provided!). Then, join us at our single worship gathering at 11:00 a.m.

Kingdom Ambassadors BY PASTOR JOEL

Jesus talks a lot about the kingdom. He announced the kingdom in his first public words. The first prayer request that He taught His disciples was, "Thy kingdom come". The top priority of the believer is to seek "first the kingdom of God." The word "kingdom" is mentioned 152 times in the New Testament, 116 of those times in the Gospels.

So what is God's kingdom? A kingdom is where the king reigns. With that in mind, the kingdom of God is any place over which God has operative dominion. If Jesus is reigning in your life, then as Jesus reminds us in Luke 17:21, "the kingdom of God is within you." God's kingdom is also "present and not yet," meaning that the reign of God is currently active but will one day culminate in His "reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

Too often, we have replaced the "kingdom" with the "church." What is the difference? Let me allow the words of Howard Snyder to explain:

"Kingdom people seek first the Kingdom of God and its justice; church people often put church work above concerns of justice, mercy and truth. Church people think about how to get people to church; Kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world. Church people worry that the world might change the church; Kingdom people work to see the church change the world."

TAKE A RISK FOR THE KINGDOM:

In this next school year of 2016-2017, our goal is that 50% of our church would commit to spending one meal (breakfast, lunch, supper) a month with someone who is far from God for the intentional purpose of building a relationship with them.

At First Free, we are Kingdom ambassadors. We have a Kingdom perspective. Our mission statement is "to help individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together". We want to represent the kingdom of God - everyday, wherever we are. We want to be involved in making South Minneapolis more reflective of God's coming kingdom.

What would it look like to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on my block - or in my school, or at my office - as it is in heaven"?

This year we are inviting everyone in our church body to take a risk. Step out of your comfort zone. Pray over your neighborhood, or over your school or over your workplace. Ask God to open a door for you to share your story of what Christ has done in your life with someone who is far from God. Testify to God's grace and love. Be Kingdom ambassadors.



OUR UPCOMING SERMON SERIES: CHASING AFTER MEANING: A STUDY OF ECCLESIASTES

OCTOBER 16	Cracking Our Cul-De-Sac Life	NOVEMBER 6	The Answer to our World's Trouble
OCTOBER 23	The Center of Reality	NOVEMBER 13	A Grand Illusion
OCTOBER 30	Outreach Weekend	NOVEMBER 20	The Gift of Life

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
@FEFCMpls

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SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

Meet our new council member:

PETER MCWILLIAMS

Peter is one of three new council members. We asked him a few questions to get to know him a little better.

Tell us a little about yourself.

My name is Peter McWilliams. My wife Jessica and I have a wonderfully full life with our four children. At the age of 36, I work as the Vice President & Chief Technology Officer of a small Internet marketing and web development agency. We help small businesses solve problems using web technology. If you look for me outside of my home or the office, you may find me sharing life with a good friend, carving down the side of a mountain on my snowboard, with my nose buried in the latest spy thriller, or wandering in the backwoods camping in my favorite hammock.

What is your connection to/ history with the church? What made you decide to become a council member?

I have called First Evangelical Free Church my home church for 30 years. Growing up close by in Richfield, I attended with my parents and grandparents (Norb & Margaret Jensen) until my family volunteered for the Brookview church plant in 1987. Six years later, after Brookview closed down, I elected to return to First Free. This place is truly dear to me. FEFC is where I grew up and was baptized. Pastor Joel married my wife and I when he first arrived, and we dedicated my children on First Free's stage.

Service being an important part of a healthy community, my wife and I have always tried to give some of our time to FEFC. Before having children, we helped within the youth group. As our family changed, so did our capacity to serve. My wife went on to help create our very first MOPS group. Other areas I served include assisting the worship team by running video on Sunday mornings and completing two terms on our finance and property board. Most recently you can find me having a blast on Wednesday nights working with Stockade as I watch my son blossom into a pre-teen.



Steve Mondy reached out to me and floated the idea that he'd like me to serve on the council. To be honest, the thought scared me. As I prayed about it and consulted with trusted friends, God reminded me how often He used unsuspecting and unqualified people to change the world. I'm confident He can also use me. I think it's important that we are consistently involved in activities that push our comfort zone. It reminds and requires us to trust in God and not in ourselves, so I called Steve back and accepted.

What excites you about where First Free is going? What things related to the church's mission would you like to see happen/improve?

As I look at the early church described throughout the New Testament, I see a picture of people coming alongside each other, living life together, sharing meals, and loving their neighbors. First Free is a place where I see all of those characteristics and more. Our mission is to become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together. I am so excited to see and experience how we are striving to engage our community and meet outside our church walls. How else will people hear, see, and feel Christ if we're not out telling them, showing them, and loving them? As we pursue our mission together, the future excites me. I look forward to the day when each of us has a mentor and a disciple, for when more events and groups are meeting outside the church than inside, and for when our neighbors all know Jesus' love first hand because of the family at 5150 Chicago Avenue South.

Open Doors in China

We've been talking about taking a risk and looking for open doors. Harry (Defeng) Tian and Angel (Jingying) Zhang have been praying for the opportunity to share their faith with their family back in China for years. Here is their story.

With prayers from our dear Brothers and Sisters, our family of five (including Harry, Grace, Faith, Enoch (Grace's fiancé) and I) returned to our hometown in China for the first time since 2005. We visited many friends and family members, over 200 people all together, during the short three-week stay. Praise the Lord, our trip was full of God's blessings and we had several opportunities to share our faith with our family!

Prior to coming to the U.S., Harry and I both worked in a psychiatric hospital in China. The hospital had over 300 employees and it's a place that is really in need of God's work. When we left in 2005, there were about three or four people there who were believers in Christ. About eight years ago, God touched my heart in my prayers. So I asked a sister who worked in that hospital to mail me some gospel DVDs from a local Chinese church to share with our brothers and sisters here about Christianity in China. However, due to various reasons, those DVDs could not be brought back to the US. But God's work is miraculous! That sister ended up sharing the DVDs with other colleagues in the hospital and there were over ten people who decided to follow Jesus right away. Now there are about fifty believers in that small hospital community and it is still growing. They formed a home church and study the Bible together regularly. God's name is lifted high over there!

Another thing we are grateful for is that God has done wonderful reconciliation work in my family. Twenty years ago, my nephew was not behaving well and was facing disciplinary actions from the local government. But now he has repented, formed his own family and was a great host to us when we were back. My brother and his wife dishonored my mother years ago with lots of fights in the family, so my three sisters stopped talking to them a long time ago. Despite all the reconciliation efforts from the local village leaders and elders, our family never came back together. Because of God's power and mercy, this time our entire family got together and we had a great time sharing with each other. It is truly God's amazing work! I also found out unexpectedly during our family get-together that my brother's neighbor, who I knew when I was young, turned their house into a home church with about fifty believers who study God's word on a regular basis. This is almost unheard of in a small village, but God has accomplished His work.

Among several family members who are very ill, one of them is Harry's cousin. He has been deteriorating quickly the past two years and we have been praying for the chance to see him again. We are so grateful that we got to visit him and his family this time, and he passed away two days after we returned back to the U.S. Another family member we visited was also near the end of her life, and she passed away the third day after we returned. God has listened to our prayers, and at the time same He has reminded us of the urgency of sharing the gospel with our family.



Pictured: Angel, Faith, and Harry

God created social media, and this time we learned that social media like WeChat is a great tool to stay connected with family and we have been utilizing it as a channel to share the gospel. Our trip has truly been a blessed one. For what God has prepared for us, no eye has seen and no ear has heard. Thank you Lord for using my family!

This Month @ FIRST FREE

Marathon Sunday: October 9

We have reserved spots for 40 volunteers to help serve at the fluid station, at mile 9, during the Twin Cities Marathon on Sunday, October 9th. Sign up online on our website or at the Welcome Desk. All others are welcome to join us at the cheering section. Then join us for our single worship gathering at 11:00 am after the marathon.

Expressions: October 9 and 30

Expressions is a support group for those dealing with chronic illness or pain. Join us from 3:30-5:30 p.m. in room 103.

Connections: starting October 16

Looking to get connected? The Connections Community Group meets for four weeks on Sunday evenings for a potluck style dinner at Peter and Erica Lehner's house from 5-7 pm. There you will get a chance to know other adults from First Free as well as learn about the different opportunities to get connected. Try Connections this coming October 16th, 23rd, 30th and November 6th by signing up online at firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon or by calling the church office.

Class 101: October 16

Interested in becoming a member at First Free? Check out our Class 101, October 16th at 4:00 p.m. to learn more about our church and what it means to be a First Free member. Visit firstfreechurch.org for more info.

Fall Fling Youth Retreat: October 21-23

Fall Fling is a youth retreat designed to give youth groups opportunities to grow and hang out together. Hosted by Camp Shamineau, there will be dodgeball, pumpkin carving, hayrides, great worship times and challenging messages from speakers. Contact Jason at jason.pensa@firstfreechurch.org for more info.

The Deep: October 26

Come, be refreshed and encouraged. Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The DEEP on Wednesday, October 26th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare will be provided.

Outreach Weekend: October 29-30

Come and hear testimonies of others being Christ-centered and Christ-sent here and globally. Outreach Weekend is October 29-30 with the theme "World Missions in the 21st Century". Plan to come Saturday October 29, 10:30 - 12:00 for a free brunch and panel discussion with all the missionaries. Childcare is provided and the kids can eat, too!

The Keynote Speaker in the Sunday Services is David Rofkahr, Executive Director of Recruitment for EFCA ReachGlobal. Missionaries will visit the Community Groups as well, including Rachel Bliss, Patricia Poldo, and Tim & Carolyn Dahlin.

Church Family News

Congratulations to Matt and Kim Lawrence on the birth of their son, Jackson Rollin Lawrence, who was born August 26th.