

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



FIND YOUR PLACE TO SERVE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 & 22

Join us after the service to explore ministry opportunities within First Free!



A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 2024

What a Friend We Have in Jesus by JAY POUND

As of a few weeks ago, I am officially the parent of a teenager. Franky, I find it hard to believe since it doesn't feel like that long ago that I was a teenager myself. The experience has made me reflect on my own time as a teenager, and the many times I said (or thought) to my parents, "you just don't get it" (I haven't heard that yet from my children, but occasionally I can see it in their eyes). And the truly funny part is that at the time I believed it. I was so certain that they had never felt what I was feeling, had never experienced what I was experiencing. If I even considered the idea that they had once been teenagers themselves, I thought those days were so far in the past as to be beyond recall or relevance.

Now I look back on those bold declarations and I can only laugh. Looking down that divide from the other side, it looks so small and insignificant. How could I have ever thought otherwise? Now I look back and realize how much harder I made things on myself by not taking advantage of their understanding, their experience, and their willingness to walk with me through some of the hard stretches of adolescence - if I would only have let them. I still made it out of adolescence, but I missed out on a lot of hope and help simply because

I refused to ask, because I didn't believe my parents understood.

As we wrap up our summer series about Jesus, "He Gets Us," I hope that you have found in these messages a glimpse of the remarkable and radical truth that the God of all creation, holy, infinite, eternal, perfect and all powerful, actually does "get us." He really does understand and love us. Unlike the parent and teen divide, this divide really is massive, but the glorious claim of the gospel is that God bridged it - bodily - in Jesus. Like the author of Hebrews, we believe with awe and deep gratitude, that, "he [Jesus] had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted (Hebrews 2:17–18).

Sometimes in the complexity and deep struggles of life we are tempted to make the same mistake with God that teens often make with their parents. We languish in grief or stress, in anxiety or disappointment, and we think that God can't possibly understand - and he wouldn't care if he did. But the great central and climactic act of the divine plan declares gently yet persistently otherwise. The eternal word has become flesh and made his home in our midst. He has lived among us, he gets us, and he loves us. The divide is great, but God in Christ has bridged it. Whatever you are feeling or experiencing, be it great joy or the loneliest struggle, Jesus is with you and understands you, and he stands ready to walk alongside you. You need only ask.

Have we trials and temptations?

Is there trouble anywhere?

We should never be discouraged,

Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful

Who will all our sorrows share?

Jesus knows our every weakness,

Take it to the Lord in prayer.

(What a Friend we have in Jesus, v.2)



COMMUNITY HOUR @ 9:00 A.M. WORSHIP @ 10:30 A.M.

Creekside Bible Time, Children's Church, Velocity Sundays, & Community Groups will all resume

Would you like to receive the newsletter via email?

Contact the office at info@firstfreechurch.org

Our Mission:

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

FIRST FREE STAFF

JOEL SUTTON
SENIOR PASTOR
joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org

JAY POUND
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

PAUL ANLEITNER
WORSHIP PASTOR
paul.anleitner@firstfreechurch.org

EMMA DELISI WORSHIP ASSOCIATE emma.delisi@firstfreechurch.org

JAKE WEIKEL
STUDENT PASTOR
jake.weikel@firstfreechurch.org

DOUG NELSON
MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR
doug.nelson@firstfreechurch.org

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

STACEY URBANZ
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY ASSOCIATE
stacey.urbanz@firstfreechurch.org

JEANINE BRUEN & ALLIE DANIELSON FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES nurses@firstfreechurch.org

SCOTT BECKETT
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
scott.beckett@firstfreechurch.org

JOANN BURNS
OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
joann.burns@firstfreechurch.org

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

ELIANA NORDELL GRAPHIC DESIGNER ellie.nordell@firstfreechurch.org



VISIT US ONLINE

www.firstfreechurch.org

SOCIAL MEDIA

youtube.com/firstfreetv facebook.com/firstfreechurch instagram.com/firstfreechurchmpls

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

By Eliana Nordell

Graphic Designer

Fresh out of college, I married my best friend and moved back to Minneapolis. Over the following two years, we both began multiple new jobs, moved twice, and had our first baby. Many of our college friends moved far away, or settled into churches across the city from us. We continued attending First Free and serving in various ministry areas, but did not spend much time with others in our stage of life.

Over the summer, our friends Emma and Colin Delisi began planing events for the young adults at First Free. It was then that I realized how in such a busy season, I had missed communing with other believers my age. I have loved reconnecting with and meeting other young adults.

This fall, the young adults will begin meeting during the community hour. If you're looking to meet others your age and study scripture together, I encourage you to join!

Navigating adulthood and growing in faith can be challenging in your twenties. I am so thankful that we have a welcoming, supportive, and loving community of peers at First Free.







MOMC 9

Are you a mother who is pregnant or has a child from birth through school age? Are you looking for other moms in your stage of life to share with, fellowship with, and develop real friendships? Do you need somewhere to listen to informative speakers, participate in creative activities, and have some "me time"? Then MomCo is the place for you! Our MomCo group is a special place where you can meet other mothers passing through this unique stage of life and join together along this journey of motherhood.

MomCo is a place to make new friends, discover a wealth of helpful hints and smarter strategies when dealing with the challenges of motherhood. Our program offers a morning of food, fun, creative activities, guest speakers on relevant topics such as parenting, relationships, marriage, and more!

Our MomCo group meets for two sessions yearly—fall and spring (September through May). We meet at First Free twice a month, on Friday mornings from 9:30—11:30 a.m. We break for the summer and resume again in September with fun, friendships and opportunities for spiritual growth. Childcare is subject to availablity.



MINISTRY EXPERIENCE IN THAILAND







By Lucille Carter

This Summer I had the opportunity to go to Chiang Mai, Thailand to Intern at Faithful Heart Foundation. Last summer, in 2023, when Matt and Audrey Pound came to visit our church I was moved by Faithful Heart's mission and reached out to see if there was a way I could get involved. I primarily was able to shadow and work with the social workers who worked at Faithful Heart.

Faithful Heart has several projects that I was able to learn about during my time there, family strengthening, children's homes, foster care, family reunification, and college scholarships. 4,500 children are growing up in government orphanages, most children end up in institutional care there not because they're orphans, but due to poverty, health issues, or the hope for better care. Faithful Heart is looking to help families stay together by supporting and strengthening them. Children in their foster homes receive family-based care instead of institutionalized care. Faithful Heart looks at each case individually and aims to specifically tailor each intervention to each case.

I lived at Faithful Heart with the Thai college students who graduated out of the foster homes, we would cook meals, spend time, and do life together. It was so sweet to experience daily life with them, I had the opportunity to learn about the language, cooking the food, and culture. I was also able to help with events we put on for the foster homes, like a day out to the movies, a cyber security class, or a health day.

I also spent a lot of time at the local church while I was there, Joy, the assistant director at Faithful Heart took me with to her church, Kingdom of God Church. I spent a lot of time with their young adults ministry, and even went on the church retreat to Chiang Dao. I was able to get really plugged into the community, which was so special. Local ministries and outreach in Chiang Mai are super connected and the community is very close. Even in a city of 127,240 it feels like everyone knows one another, it is like seeing "it takes a village" come to life. Thai people deeply desire to serve, encourage, and support one another. This experience has taught me so much about serving others, and loving others in a much deeper way; to really be self sacrificing for your neighbor. I am so thankful I was able to learn so much and absolutely blessed by this experience.

TESTIMONY OF A FAITH COMMUNITY NURSE

By Jeanine Bruen

Faith Community Nurse

A little over seven years ago I was considering becoming a Faith Community Nurse. I asked my mentor what a typical schedule was like for a Faith Community Nurse. My mentor laughed, "We start out each Monday praying and asking God where we are needed and the schedule fills up." I've now been a FCN for 7 years and I've found her words to be true. The schedule is not always predictable but it's always interesting. Allie Danielson and I share 18 hours/week as paid ministry staff. We are blessed to have the ladies that started this ministry 20+ years ago, Maureen Juarez and Dee Huanca still helping as volunteers in the ministry today.

I love making connections and relationships that grow deeper with time and prayer. I've felt that this ministry has been a great combination of my previous experience in medical surgery nursing, missionary nursing in Kazakhstan and clinic nursing. In hospitals and clinics, I wasn't always able to share my faith and pray with patients and families. In this role, I am able to use those experiences in the medical field and my missionary experiences to do holistic care.



I've been able to go to appointments with patients and be a medical interpreter- helping them understand some of the medical jargon and be able to pray with and for them through the process of appointments and lab work. I have walked alongside a family with alcoholism and have gone with members to Alanon. Families have called and asked for prayer and guidance in choosing a longterm care facility for a loved one, while others have wanted recommendations for the next step in their own health care.

No two days are exactly alike but we love being able to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We call, we text, we email, we visit, we send out cards, we listen and we pray, inviting others to help us be the body of Christ.

As Monday comes again we ask. "Ok Lord, what do you have for me to do this week?"

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

• Our condolences to the family of Wayne Danielson who passed away at the age of 82.