

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

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT NO 32622

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST WORD

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

SEPTEMBER 2014

"Lamppost: Shining His Light" by: Pastor Joel

Out in front of my home there is a streetlight. At night, it penetrates the darkness and lights up my house and several of my neighbors' homes. Then down at the corner, there is another streetlight shining, giving light to another couple of homes on my street.

That is what Jesus has called us to be. Streetlights. Lampposts. Together. So we can shine the light of Jesus in our neighborhoods. One of the lines of our vision statement reads, "We imagine First Free together being an outpost, a people sent out for Christ, a signpost, a people that point to Christ, and a lamppost, a people that shine the light of Christ everywhere they go."

Jesus in Luke 8:16 says, "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light."

It is interesting that Jesus, who is the "light of the world", has called us to also be light. That is where we must start. Our identity is in Him.

Ever light a candle in a pitch-black room? Strike a single match and that tiny light fills the room. A little bit of light goes a very long way. Light permeates. People around us are trapped in sin and its devastating secrecy. But our light can uncover all that darkness and set people free. Light exposes.

Can you imagine attempting to land a plane on a runway at night with no runway lights? Or go through a cave without a flashlight?

Light guides. Light permeates. Light exposes. Light guides. In other words, light refuses to be irrelevant and useless. If you claim to be light, be bright enough to light the way for others.

Here are three big words we need to keep at the forefront of our minds as we attempt to be lampposts: speak, live, act. As light we need to speak the gospel, live the gospel, and act out the gospel.

Jesus has called us to be His light in our world.

So join us this fall as we look in more detail at some of the ways we can be like that streetlight in front of my home: shining His light in each of our neighborhoods.

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:

LAMPOST: LETTING CHRIST SHINE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Sept. 7 – Vision Sermon: Lamppost: Letting Christ Shine in Your Neighborhood

Sept. 14 – Lamppost: Love

Sept. 21 – Lamppost: Initiation

Sept. 28 – Lamppost: Grace

Oct. 5 – Lamppost: Service

Oct. 12 – Lamppost: Hospitality

Oct. 19 – Lamppost: Time

Oct. 25 & 26 – Outreach Weekend: Jeff Sorvik Speaking

SERVING & SUPPORTING: TC MARATHON

A WAY TO SERVE FIRST FREE RUNNERS; SUPPORTING CLEAN WATER FOR LIFE

By: Joel Sutton

If tomorrow First Free disappeared from this community of South Minneapolis would we be missed?

Our vision at First Free is to reach out and serve our community. We want to be a lamppost, a signpost, an outpost for Christ. We would hope that our neighbors would miss us if we were not here.

One of the ways we are attempting to serve our community this October is to be involved in one of the biggest events of the year in Minneapolis – the Twin Cities Marathon. Our church building is located only a block away from mile 10 of that 26.2 mile course. What an opportunity to be involved serving.

So this October 5th we will need 60 volunteers to help man "Fluid Station Mile 9" at Nicollet Ave. & Minnehaha Pkwy between 7 am and 10:45. They will hand out different drinks and fluids to the runners as they go by. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Kaitlin Graff at the church office at Kaitlin.graff@firstfreechurch.org.

We will also be setting up a cheering "tent" on the Parkway and Chicago Ave to cheer on our five World Vision runners as well as all those who are running and have hot coffee for neighbors who come down to watch the Marathon. Afterwards we will come back to the church, to celebrate God. We will have only one worship service that Sunday morning at 11 am.

Can you imagine – being a tired runner, and then suddenly, encountering a cheering squad of 300 plus from First Free? What an impact!

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

UPCOMING @ First Free

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

Check out our website!

Visit at www.firstfreechurch.org

Visit our Facebook page!
First Free is now on twitter
@ FEFCMpls

FIRST FREE STAFF

JOEL SUTTON
SENIOR PASTOR
joel.sutton@firstfreechurch.org

JAY POUND
ASSOCIATE PASTOR
jay.pound@firstfreechurch.org

BETH BROWN
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR
beth.brown@firstfreechurch.org

MIKE GRAFF
WORSHIP MINISTRY DIRECTOR
mike.graff@firstfreechurch.org

DEE HUANCA & MAUREEN JUAREZ
FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES
nurses@firstfreechurch.org

KAITLIN GRAFF
ADMINISTRATION
kaitlin.graff@firstfreechurch.org

SHELBY ANDERSON
DESIGN/COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT
shelby.anderson@firstfreechurch.org

SCOTT BECKETT
FACILITIES TECHNICIAN
scott.beckett@firstfreechurch.org

EXPRESSIONS — SEPTEMBER 7TH & 21ST FROM 3:30-5:30 P.M.
For those struggling with chronic illnesses or pain, join us 3:30-5:30 P.M. in room 103.

YOUTH KICKOFF PARTY — SEPTEMBER 10TH @ 6:30 P.M.
Join us Wednesday, September 10th from 6:30-8:30 here at church for our annual Kickoff party as we play games, eat snacks, and reconnect after the summer!

WOMEN'S NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDY — SEPTEMBER 10TH @ 9:30 A.M.
Women's Neighborhood Bible Study starts up for the year on September 10th here at First Free. They'll be doing a 10 week study called "Set Free: Leaving Negative Emotions Behind". Childcare will be provided. Contact Patty Mellema for more information.

KIDS CLUBS RETURNS! — SEPTEMBER 17TH @ 6:30 P.M.
Join us Wednesday, September 17th from 6:30-8:30 here at church for the start up of Kid's Clubs for the school year.

THE DEEP — SEPTEMBER 17TH @ 6:30 P.M.
Start off this Fall being refreshed and encouraged in worship and prayer! Join us for The DEEP on September 17th at 6:30 p.m.

TWIN CITIES MARATHON VOLUNTEERING — OCTOBER 5TH @ 7:00-10:45 A.M.
60 Volunteers are needed for Mile 9 (Nicolllet Ave & Minnehaha Pkwy) during the TC Marathon on October 5th. Hand out refreshments to runners from 7:00-10:45 a.m. If you are interested, please visit: <http://www.firstfreechurch.org/serve#outside>, or contact Kaitlin Graff at: kaitlin.graff@firstfreechurch.org.

CPR/AED TRAINING: OCTOBER 5TH
On Oct. 5th, after second service there will be a certification/recertification of CPR with AED training. All those who work with children, youth, and adults in the church are welcome. A light lunch will be served at 12:15; the class will end at 2:00. Please RSVP to the church office by Oct 1st.



Church Family News

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PUTNEY FAMILY on the birth of their first born son, Nathan Michael Putney, at 9lbs, 5.5 ounces, and 22 inches.

BRIDAL SHOWER FOR INGRID VATSAAS will be held here at First Free on Saturday, September 20th, at 2:00 p.m. Ingrid and her fiance Luke Amstutz are registered at Bed, Bath, & Beyond, and Target.

STUDENTS:
SAVE THE DATE!
OCTOBER 17-19

Fall Fling @ Camp Shamineau
More details to come!



SEE MORE INFO AT:
www.firstfreechurch.org

OPERATION
CHRISTMAS CHILD
Trying to get an early start on good ideas for stuffing shoeboxes? School supplies are great items to send in your OCC shoeboxes! Creekside Clubs will be collecting items to pack soon! Stay tuned!

OUR NEW COUNCIL CHAIR: AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE

by: Jeff Dutton

When Alan Peterson approached me regarding the role of Council Chair I was both humbled and a little apprehensive. The same questions came to mind we all have when asked to help in ministry. Can I do it well? I am the right fit for this? God...are you sure? Once I prayed through those questions and concerns it came down to a question Lisa and I ultimately ask whenever we get involved in church ministry. Is this an opportunity to serve?

I prayed to accept Jesus in grade school, but I also remember key times in high school and college when I renewed my commitment as a follower of Christ. A key verse for me has always been Proverbs 3:5-6. I have found in my life when I trust God and try not to depend on my own self my path is better. The assurance I have experienced through the Spirit is life changing. It's a daily challenge, but Christ made it possible for me to have peace by freeing me from the bondage of sin and giving me the opportunity to approach God. We all have our own story to tell. Certainly there have been challenges in my life like my parents' divorce, death of my father when I was ten years old, multiple moves during my youth – I changed schools four straight years between fourth and eighth grade – as well as other trials through adulthood, but we all have been broken in our lives. I am grateful for how God has blessed me through those times. However, I prefer to focus on the reality of God's plan once we submit and seek his guidance through the Spirit. Jesus enables us to be more like him and show his love. That's the exciting part of the gospel for me.

I grew up in the Fargo-Moorhead area in the beautiful Red River Valley. I have two sisters and one brother. My mother is still with us and is the classic snowbird spending time in Fargo and Casa Grande, AZ. I attended college for two years at Northwestern in Roseville, MN but ended up transferring to and graduating from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. I work at the Best Buy Corporate Office as a Senior Manager in Distribution/Supply Chain.

At First Free I have served on the Ushering team, Terrace on Chicago Kitchen Team, Men's Wednesday Night Bible Study,

Church Council, Personnel Committee, and am currently the Chair of the Youth Pastor Search Committee.

Lisa and I have been married for 22 years. Along with our daughters Tess (16) and Lily (14) we have been attending First Free for seven years after moving to Minneapolis from Ohio. It was kind of a homecoming for me after being gone for 24 years. Our path to First Free was a combination of a Google Search for an EFCA church in Minneapolis and Randy Solem making a recommendation. Many of you know Randy and I were friends going back to Junior High. I have attended EFCA churches for 25 years going back to the years after college when I attended Fridley Evangelical Free Church – now called Grace Evangelical Free Church. During our time in Ohio we were involved in Findlay Evangelical Free Church for 13 years. We served in Nursery, VBC, Food Bank, Small Group Leadership and were on the Building Committee. Lisa and I also facilitated a College and Career Sunday School class. During our last few years at the church, I was a Deacon on Findlay E-Free's Leadership team.

In my free time I enjoy time with family, travel, and Gopher sports.

I'm excited about the role and continuing to be a part of this great church and all of the exciting plans God has ahead for us.



MAKING A GREATER IMPACT: HIGHLIGHTS FROM SERVE MINNEAPOLIS

Did you know . . . 75 people (ranging from 5 years old to 80+) served at our first ever "Serve Minneapolis". Here are the "Thank You Notes" from those we served:

From Hale Elementary School:

"I just wanted to say how much we appreciated your group's help and how well the morning went (at least from our end). We were all wishing we had taken before and after pictures, that really would have done it justice.... everything just came together so nicely and I can't thank you enough. ... I hope we can work together again, very much!"

From Field Middle School:

"I drove by the school this morning and thought again about how great it looks! I have had so many people reach out to say how wonderful it was to have all the helping hands from your group. They were really awesome!"

From Community Emergency Services:

"Thank you so much for bringing the team on Saturday . . . the work was accomplished and done well. ... Thanks to you and your team for being so generous to the community."