

First Evangelical Free Church  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**FIRST FREE CHURCH**  


2014-2015 Annual Report

May 2015

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**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

2015-2016 Budget

Summary of Income, Disbursements, and Cash Balances

- Church Operations Register
- Designated Accounts

Financial Summary for Period Ending March 31, 2015

Financial Summary: April 1, 2014- March 31, 2015

## SENIOR PASTOR

We are on mission!

Our mission statement - to help individuals become Christ-centered and Christ-sent together - became our driving force this past year. Before we start anything new we now begin with the question, "How does that program or event help us make our mission come true?"

This year we intentionally focused on the Christ-sent side of our mission. This meant changing our goal from trying to become the best church in the community, to the best church for our community. The question we started asking was "If First Evangelical Free Church suddenly disappeared from this community would anyone miss us?"

With that in mind, let me share some things we did this year to serve our neighbors and city:

- 1) We partnered with the local neighborhood organization, Hale-Diamond Lake-Page (HDLP), to hold, on a trial basis, a local farmer's market in our parking lot three Wednesday nights during the summer. It was a huge success. Not only did HDLP give us an award (as a valued supporter of the community), but they have asked us if they could expand the farmers' market this summer to 16 weeks. We look forward to enjoying some fresh produce as well as serving our community.
- 2) Last August we held our first "Serve Minneapolis". There were over 75 people who volunteered to serve in our local community on Saturday morning. We served at Hale Elementary school, Field Middle school and Community Emergency Services. The comments from each of these organizations expressed their gratitude and surprise at our willingness to serve them.
- 3) Last October, we took another bold step to become part of our community by serving during the Twin Cities Marathon. We cancelled our 9:15 am Worship Gathering and we set up a cheering section – with donuts and coffee for our neighbors – at the intersection of Chicago Ave. and Minnehaha Parkway (mile 10). Sixty-two people from our congregation also volunteered to "man" the water station at mile 9 – handing out water and other nutritious snacks to the runners as they came by. Speaking of runners, we also had five from our church body run the whole marathon with Team World Vision. It was very encouraging to see the whole church get behind the vision of serving and being part of our community at the Marathon.
- 4) One of the hidden ways we continue to serve our community is by opening our building to outside community groups. We have basketball teams from McRae and Pearl Park using our gym throughout the winter months. This past year we received a call from a local piano teacher who had heard how generous our church is to outside groups. He asked if he could hold a piano recital in our sanctuary. We worked it out. What a great witness – not only to use our building for our ministries, but as a way to minister to the community.

Of course, we still have a long way to go. The vision of being an Outpost, a people sent out for Christ, a Signpost, a people who point to Christ, and a Lamppost, a people that shine the transforming light of Jesus Christ everywhere we go - is still a work of Christ in progress. But I am thrilled at where we are headed and the changes we have made.

One additional comment-- I have to publicly thank all our volunteers with our student ministry. The youth pastor search process has taken much longer than anyone expected. Despite that – our youth ministry volunteer staff have done an excellent job and kept the ministry strong. Ben Nordell and Pastor Jay have teamed up teaching and leading the student ministry and we look forward to adding a new youth pastor to our church staff soon.

Finally, let me say once again, that I am very thankful to God for the great staff he has given us here at First Free. Pastor Jay, Beth Brown, Mike Graff, Maureen Juarez and Dee Huanca – what a super team of committed and godly ministers. Kaitlin Graff and Shelby Anderson - our office staff who make us all look good. And Scott Beckett – who keeps our facility in shape.

I pray that this next year, we might continue to see many individuals becoming Christ-centered and Christ-sent as we carry out our vision together!

Pastor Joel Sutton  
Senior Pastor

## CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

*For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

*Romans 12:4-8*

This is the verse Alan Peterson chose for the header on his last report as Chair of the Council. Thank you to Alan for his many years of service and a personal thank you for his mentoring and friendship. I tried to find a suitable replacement for this year, but Romans 12:4-8 is so perfect when looking at the way God intends us to work together in the church.

As I reflect back on the events of the last twelve months at First Free I see this vision in place. Many different members of the First Free body contributing to the ministry in so many ways. Each person willing to serve as their strengths and talents dictate, but done in the spirit of service as God intends for each of us.

My first year as Chair has been one of growth and rewarding experiences. I am so thankful for your prayers and words of encouragement. It is a privilege to serve in this role. Thank you.

What an exciting year we've had at First Free as we continue to embrace the vision of Christ-Centered and Christ-Sent Together. Seeing the congregation participate in the outward focused events like the Service Day and the Twin Cities Marathon along with our partnership in the Farmer's Market is inspiring. Connecting with others in the community and taking the love of Christ to those in the neighborhood and beyond is our mission in action. As these efforts grow in the months and years ahead it's exciting to think about what God has planned for our church family.

The Council had dubbed this year "The Year of Personnel" as we have dedicated a lot of prayer, thought, discussion and planning into the Staff of First Free. The main effort, of course, has been the ongoing search for a Youth Pastor. We are grateful for the work done and the ongoing commitment of the Search Committee. Through this process we have relied on God for guidance and discernment. Although we do not have the position filled yet we are steadfast in our determination to bring the right person to First Free. Someone who not only will be right for our Youth Group, but will also add to the strong chemistry we have amongst the members of the staff. Thank you again for joining us in lifting this process up to the Lord. He will provide.

The other part of the Youth Pastor Search story is the fine job Jay Pound and our other volunteers have done to lead the student ministry in the interim. Jay's teaching has been well received by our young people and I think Jay would also tell you it has been a great experience for him as well. This is another great example of members of the body using their gifts for the overall good of the ministry. Sometimes God takes what we perceive as a gap in our programs and fills it with a great alternative. Thanks to Jay and all the youth leaders who have served so well in our Student Ministry.

Once again we had the privilege to welcome new members into the First Free family. Some of these folks are long time attenders and some have been at First Free less than a year. How exciting it is to see many of these new members already applying their gifts to the ministry and getting involved in service. In the interviews with Council members we hear great testimonies and celebrate with the new members as we review their path to our church.

As I close I want to recognize the commitment to ministry displayed every day by Joel and the entire staff. Thank you for all you do to serve the Lord and the body of First Free. Each of you contributes so much to the body and the work of the church. We applaud you and thank God for your commitment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Dutton  
Council Chairman



## ASSOCIATE PASTOR

*“He told the another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until it was all leavened.’”  
Mt. 13.33, NRSV*

Last year I began my annual report by reflecting back on the time we had spent as a staff and as a church preparing and launching the new vision. I began by quoting the parable of the mustard seed as a reminder that God often delights to bring great endings from humble beginnings. Now as I reflect back on this past year, I find that while I have the same high hopes for what God will do, they now sit not only on God’s promises, but on the work that God has already begun to do in and through us at First Free.

### **Living Christ-Sent in South Minneapolis**

Yeast – to do its work – needs to be mixed in with the flour. A lamp – to be useful, need to be placed where its light can shine. And when Jesus commissions his church, he tells us to “Go...” to the world, not to sit put and wait for the world to come to us. And so, over the past year, we have worked hard as a church to increase our presence in our community, to “live sent” in South Minneapolis. One of the ways we did this was though, “Serve Minneapolis,” last August. We mobilized three teams of around 25 people to serve at Hale Elementary, Field Middle School, and Community Emergency Services – all three right here in our own backyard. Just over a month later, well over a hundred of us had the opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with our neighbors, cheering and serving the runners of the Twin Cities Marathon. We even got to cheer and support our own representatives running as a part of Team World Vision.

Last year we also had the opportunity to be a test location for a new neighborhood farmers market. And to our great pleasure – it was a spectacular success that will provide us with the opportunity to host the market weekly this coming summer. I love that God has provided such a spectacular opportunity to show hospitality to our neighbors. And it is already having an impact. One of my personal highlights came last fall when I received a call asking if First Free would be willing to host a piano recital. The gentleman told me that he did not attend, but that his students lived in our neighborhood. He then added that we were recommended to him by a parent who thought that if we were willing to host the farmers market, we might be willing to host a recital.

Looking back over the past year, God has not only provided great opportunities, he has already begun to use them to grow his Kingdom in our neighborhood. I have been encouraged by the response of our community and by the response of our church body which has given their time and money to serve where they live. If we needed them, last year has provided yet more reasons why should expect great things of God as he works in and through First Free.

### **Becoming Christ Centered and Christ Sent...Together**

This past year has also been a time of excitement and growth for our Community Groups. While some of these changes have been less visible, they are no less exciting. Just this past year we have launched a new Sunday morning group – Embark – for those singles and couples transitioning out of college and into their careers. We launched several new weekday groups, including one that grew out of an existing women’s group that had seen tremendous growth. Men United launched this spring to provide a place for men to grow and learn as they walk through life together. Spring also saw the launch of “Connections” – a new kind of group that helps those who have been attending find places and ways to connect in both community and service.

Finally, I have continued to serve alongside Ben Nordell as we oversee the Youth ministry, and have continued to enjoy the opportunity I have to teach the youth. I have been stretched both personally and professionally as I have re-learned how to relate to and communicate with teenagers, but it has also been very rewarding. I have been reminded how thoughtful and capable our students are, and I have also been reminded of how much they are asked to navigate during these years of life. As we have worked through our different curriculum I have been encouraged by their responses, by their willingness to learn and engage with God’s Word and his world, and by their faith.

This past year has been busy, and as I sit to write out the report, I can hardly believe that all of this happened in just the last 12 months. I am also realizing all over again how important it is to pause and take the time to look back and actually see all the things God has done. Too often we work and plan with our eyes only on what comes next. God has done great things this past year, he has answered prayers, provided opportunities and made his Kingdom grow. Having paused to look back, my prayer is that we might all now look ahead with greater hope, greater faith and higher expectation for our God – may he use us as yeast of the Kingdom in South Minneapolis.

Jay Pound  
Associate Pastor

## WORSHIP MINISTRY

What a joy to be a part of a congregation that, as a mark of being Christ-centered and Christ-sent people, believes in worshipping passionately! It's my honor to lead and serve our worship ministry volunteers, as well as our entire body of Christ.

Here's a list of the multiple worship-ministry aspects that have seen movement this last year:

- Our Christ-centered worship model has continued to benefit our Sunday worship gatherings. We decided to add one additional piece to the worship model starting in January 2015; we now have a time of Invitation at the beginning of each worship gathering, to acknowledge that the Lord is present and eager to meet with us, and to give us the opportunity to prepare our hearts of expectancy for a genuine encounter with Him. It's a great addition to an already-solid worship model.
- We've had a steady stream of people sharing their faith stories with our church body during worship gatherings this past year. Part of our church-wide focus is to remind ourselves we're in this together, and faith stories help do that very thing. Heidi St. Clair has signed on to be our faith story coordinator, working hand-in-hand with an ever-growing pipeline of people to share their story within our worship gathering context. Our goal for this next year is to have 2 people share their story with us each month.
- In continual pursuit of our church having a united definition of worship, Kari Taylor has been working with the elementary school kids each Sunday morning. They spend time singing songs, discussing attributes of God and worship, and even sing songs we use during our worship gatherings. I'm excited to see the forward momentum this is producing in these kids' hearts and lives. We have also begun implementing the same type of structure with the student ministry, and hope to grow that part of ministry once we hire our new youth pastor.
- We've had another year of seeing a steady stream of people show interest in serving in the worship ministry. I want to continue encouraging those who have a worship-gift to approach me; this is an ongoing pursuit, and I pray God continues to bless us with the hearts & gifts for leading worship. We're looking for pianists & keyboardists, lead vocalists, worship producers, guitarists & bassists, and those who have an interest in musically leading rehearsals/ services (musical directors).
- The Deep has continued to grow in its importance to our Christ-centered mark of "praying like it matters and living like it counts". The Deep is a gathering for those who want to linger in the presence of the Lord through worship and prayer. We've added a few team members to The Deep, and look forward to the structure continuing to be shaped by the Lord as we grow further.
- Our sanctuary sound-system continues to be focused on; though there's much work to be done, this last season of ministry has brought some great sound quality changes that allow for every generation to be able to hear more clearly and to not be sonically offended by particularly loud frequencies or instruments (including the use of in-ear monitors, which eliminates the extra volume and noise from using multiple speakers on stage). We will continue to pursue big-picture solutions as we aim to dial out any and all distractions that might come in between our church body worshipping the Lord in our sanctuary.
- Church decorations in the Advent and Holy Week seasons have gone very well thanks to the coordinating & executing efforts of Lindsay Lee.

There is a lot of momentum in each avenue of the worship ministry, but my biggest thrill of it all is that the momentum is being carried by multiple members of our worship ministry instead of solely by myself; I have the privilege of equipping and mobilizing members of our body of Christ to grow in their God-given gifts and to disciple them in the process. This next year will see a lot of growth in our worship ministry once again; and I am thrilled that God, at work through many people in our ministry, will be the One who deserves that credit.

Thanks to Mark McClun, Heidi St. Clair, and the rest of the worship commission for your encouragement and support. Thanks to everyone in the worship ministry family for faithfully walking through ministry with me. Thanks to our congregation, for a continued opening of your hearts to what God wants to do in and through us.

May we as a church be filled with boldness, peace, and discernment; may God give us eyes to see Him and ears to hear Him as we worship Him. May we embrace the sweetness of intimacy and relationship with our Abba Father. I'm looking forward to continually worshipping Him together with you.

His,  
Mike Graff  
Worship Director

## CREEKSIDE FRIENDS CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### VACATION BIBLE CAMP VBC AT FIRST FREE!

Weird Animals VBC brought a record 300 boys and girls through our doors in June. And a record 170 volunteers made this week go smoothly. Our missions focus was partnering with FEFC and World Vision to provide access to clean water for individuals in Africa. \$1500 was raised for "Clean Water for Kids". This week impacted both children and adults. We know at least 15 decisions were made for Christ! The Lord truly blessed this week and I praise God for this opportunity we have at First Free to touch so many lives for Him!

### SUNDAY MORNINGS

Can you believe we have over 180 boys and girls that could be a part of Creekside Friends on Sunday mornings? Each area is busy and full of children. I'm thankful for 4 amazing nursery coordinators who keep the nursery running smoothly. And, we're blessed with teachers for preschoolers through 6th grade who care passionately for the children and truly discipling our kids.

We want the children to know what it means to worship passionately. Part of our mission for Creekside Friends, as our tagline reads, is "Anchoring Kids to the Rock". We intentionally are teaching the children what it means to worship passionately and to define what it means to be anchored to the rock. This takes place during "BASE CAMP", at the start of our Bible Time where Kari Taylor leads both the K-3rd graders & the 4th-6th graders separately. Our theme this year has been "God is My Rock" and the kids have been talking about who it is we worship and they've been sharing characteristics of God. The children also helped lead worship by singing in the services in December and on Palm Sunday.

Our K-3 Creekside Kids Children's Church has been looking into the Old Testament and spent time making valentines for children who are homeless and making Easter crafts for our church family who are homebound. The 4th-6th Junior Church group went caroling at Redeemer Residence and enjoyed a couple hikes plus a trip to the Science Museum!

### CREEKSIDE CLUBS

On Wednesday nights we have about 100 boys and girls coming regularly. We marvel how each group has grown and for the consistency we have week-to-week. I am thankful that the parents make the effort to bring their children plus am grateful for our faithful volunteers who make clubs so fun! We do have a few boys and girls who come from a neighboring church and a mom of one shared this with me... "I want you know you are filling a huge gap in our Christian community by providing this group for our kids."

Other highlights from clubs: Our Girls Rock 46 group went on their first "Girls Rockin' Retreat" for a weekend and also served at Feed My Starving Children. Stockade boys and dads spent 2 nights at Camp Nathanael. We packed around 100 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child in November and there will be overnights at church and the pinewood derby, too!

### PARENTING SEMINAR...REACHING INTO THE COMMUNITY

First Free hosted a parenting seminar put on by Jim and Lynne Jackson from Connected Families in February. We were amazed that 100 adults came out on a Friday evening and we had free childcare for about 80 children. This gave us the opportunity to invite the community into First Free. Out of 100 adults, at least 40 were from outside the church.

### CAMP SHAMINEAU

Last year, over 50 boys and girls from First Free & Creekside Clubs went to Camp Shamineau. First Free continues to offer coupons toward Camp Shamineau and Camp Nathanael to students through high school age who regularly attend a First Free kids or student ministry program. Families are appreciative and thankful for a church family who support camp and see the value of it! We will also be taking kids to the Retreat46 in April. Doug and I continue to serve on the board of Shamineau and it's truly a blessing to see how the Lord uses camp to reach kids!

THANK YOU to our First Family for your prayers and support of the children's ministry!

JOYFULLY Submitted,  
Beth Brown  
Children's Ministry Director





## STUDENT MINISTRY

I will sum up the past year of students ministry at First Free with this verse; Galatians 6:9 "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Many of us involved in this ministry have been tempted to become weary during this year, but have kept the faith that if we continue to follow God's leading us to minister to teenagers, he will reap a great harvest in their lives.

Our congregation has been searching for a new youth pastor for more than a year, and although that search has had it's ups and downs, the youth ministry has remained active and strong. God's faithfulness over the past year was clearly seen in Terrace on Chicago, our annual fund-raiser. Not only did we host more guests than ever before, we raised over \$14,000 for our summer trips.

We have had some great events this past year, which started off last July with the Challenge Conference in Kansas City, MO. Thirty-seven students attended and were challenged about how God wants to use them to restore this world and share his kingdom and gospel of love and grace in their lives. We got to do this first while in Kansas City by helping to paint and clean up an old house for an elderly gentleman who lived there. Our students also played a big role, as they always do, in ministering to the kids who attend VBC each summer. I love how active our youth always are in helping with this event, and this event also is an incredible view into the potential of our youth ministry for years to come. Fall retreat and winter retreat at Camp Shamaineau are both wonderful times of growth in our student's walks with God and their relationships with others.

I want to say a special thank you to Pastor Jay for all of the help he has been to the youth ministry especially in the area of teaching and curriculum planning. I also want to thank Kaitlin Graff and Shelby Anderson for the invaluable work they do on the administrative and detail side of the ministry, without them, most events this year would not have been possible. I ask that each of you would be vigilant in prayer for the future of our youth ministry. First in the plan God has for a new youth pastor to lead this ministry. Secondly, for the trips we have planned this summer to work with Urban Impact in New Orleans and to Rock Ridge Camp, and growth for the students as a result. Lastly, for all of the volunteer youth leaders who continue to work to minister to students and share God's love with them.

I look back at the past 10 years I have worked with the youth ministry as some of the greatest times of my life, and the past year of leading that ministry as a time of great joy as well as a time of great personal growth. I will be stepping away from this role as youth group wraps up for the school year with very mixed emotions, sadness in leaving a ministry that I love so much, and eager anticipation in what God has planned for myself and my family in Cameroon.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ben Nordell  
Interim Youth Director



## FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES

*Oh, Give thanks to the Lord!*  
II Chronicles 16:8

As we begin our eleventh year, we rejoice in the opportunities to serve at First Free and for your continuing prayers and support.

Visitation continues to be a major focus since there was an average of 33 homebound and hospitalized people each month. Three people took the Visitation Class in the past year and one of them has become a regular visitor. The Faith Community Nurses, Pastors and 8 Trained Visitors made visits to homebound or hospitalized people. In addition, we were privileged to come alongside many people who were not homebound, assisting them in their issues of concern. We are so thankful for Cindy Larson who stepped in to take Dee's place while she was on vacation last summer. A nursing student, Elsa McClun, spent 20 hours working with Dee, learning about the role of the Faith Community Nurse.

Other Areas of Ministry which were overseen or carried out by the FCN's included the following:

- Monthly Blood Pressure Clinics were directed by Holly Doble. One hundred twelve people had their blood pressure taken at least once. Support was provided for those with abnormal pressures.
- The yearly Blood Drive was held. Eighteen units of blood were collected, one over the goal!
- The program of support to expanding families was restructured by Priscilla Riveness with input from several young mothers. Priscilla continues to direct this ministry.
- Expressions, a support group for those experiencing chronic illness, met twice a month with Karie Amstutz and Dee Huanca facilitating.
- The prayer shawl ministry was reestablished and 8 shawls were distributed. Three quilts were also distributed.
- Monthly Health education classes were provided to the Senior Community Group at their request.
- The yearly update of CPR and use of the automatic defibrillator was provided to 32 church members and staff by Beth Fragipane and Maureen Juárez. This year for the first time additional information on allergies and treatment of anaphylaxis was also taught. First Free now has an allergy policy.
- The FCNs represented First Free in meetings with Redeemer Health and Rehab Center.
- The FCNs were members of the Caring Commission of First Free.

The Wellness Advisory Team for the Faith Community Nurses met twice last year to provide wisdom and encouragement. Carolyn Berg, Marilyn Fisher, John Lande, Gail Marchand, Phyllis Nordin, Jerry Young and Marlene Ytterboe were members of the team.

Plans for 2015-2016

- Support and encourage volunteers to develop areas of service.
- Effectively carry out the roles of Faith Community Nurses at First Free Church.
- Respond to health education needs of individuals and groups at First Free.

The following people went to be with Jesus in the past year: Harold Engberg, Merton Kvelland, John Nordin, Janice Nielsen, Elizabeth Osterlund, Lorraine Prins (Retired Evangelical Free Church Missionary), Richard & Marilyn Carlson, and Ron Sollie.

Dee Huanca RN, MS, FCN and Maureen Juárez RN, MS, FCN

## CARING COMMISSION

It is a privilege to report as a Caring Commission member to give an account of the deeds and work of the Caring Commission for this past year. The fall food drive, service at the falls, summer church picnic are just some of the events Caring does.

Caring commission members Jerry Young, Ryan and Terri LeGros, Anne Nordell, Marlene Ytterboe and council representative Jeff Dutton, work to bring God's grace and love to those within our church and those from outside the church family. We have been able to show the love of Jesus this past year to those who have no idea of the power of Christ and his redeeming love

Our prayer is that through a meal brought to them; a pair of shoes purchased for their children; laundry washed, these hurting ones will come to know that they are greatly loved by a merciful God. Our prayer is for salvation to come to these families.

Our Community nurses have the pulse of our church body and inform the Commission of many needs. Dee Huanca and Maureen Juarez supply wisdom and share helpful ways for our commission to reach out to our church with the love and grace of Christ. They are amazing.

More members that serve faithfully and make our church a warm caring place, are people on the Welcome Force, Funeral Reception helpers, Ushers, Kitchen Coordinators and Greeters all working to build a loving fellowship for the glory of God. We are blessed to have these giving servants.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lori Peterson  
Caring Commission Chair

WORSHIP COMMISSION

**To God Be the Glory, Great things He has Done.**

In a church well into its second century this must be true. No matter how long you have called this your church home, you have experienced, seen and/or heard of these great things. The Spirit's moving and giving the gift of faith to new believers. Christ followers coming into this body from other places. Believers called from our midst to share the good news elsewhere. Those called to share the gospel returning to this body and telling all He has done. The provision of those called pastors, teachers, and leaders in the faith to shepherd us. We have seen the miracle of physical healing. Great things He has done.

**To Every Believer, the Promise of God.**

In those times when we have not seen the "great thing", is our hope strong in the promises of God? Do we stand and declare in full assurance his promise to never leave or forsake us? Do we pray knowing His promise to not only hear our cries, but to listen? Are we unworried because of His promise to care for us at least as well as he cares for the lilies of the valley and sparrows? Do we weep with joy in the promise that the broken spirit will be renewed? Do we cartwheel at the promise that those who wait on the Lord will mount up like eagles? Are we confident in the promise that he will provide a way? Do we know the meaning that there is not a single thing which can separate us from the love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord? Great things he is doing.

**Praise the Lord Praise the Lord, Let the earth hear His Voice.**

In the midst of writing this report, disheartening news regarding the health of one of our own.....  
How do we react? May the earth hear His voice arising from our congregation.

**Praise the Lord Praise the Lord, Let the people rejoice.**

May our worship, born each Sunday morning as the body of Christ, be the rejoicing of those redeemed and filled with the knowledge that our hope is a sure hope, built with a sure faith, resting on our sure foundation.

**Oh come to the Father through Jesus our Lord. And give Him the glory. Great things He will do!**

In His Love,  
Mark McClun, Chair  
Worship Commission



## OUTREACH COMMISSION

The Bylaws of First Evangelical Free Church charge the commission with very broad responsibilities.

OUTREACH COMMISSION: This Ministry Commission shall plan, implement, and oversee all evangelism and missionary ministries of the church, and such other assignments as may be proposed and accepted in the joint consultation of the Council and Ministry Commission.

Some of the Scripture justifying this purpose is found in Romans 10:13–15a:

*"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?"*

The commission defined what it hopes to see accomplished, the "ends" for which we strive.

### **"Ends" for Outreach Commission (approved 6/2/08)** (The first three fall under "Bring" the last under "Equip")

- Our attendees and neighbors will hear and understand the gospel
- Events will be scheduled that draw in un-churched neighbors and friends
- The gospel will be preached and disciples made throughout the world
- Our members and attendees will recognize their own part in the great commission and carry it out in their own spheres of influence.

Much of this goes on without input from Outreach: Actually a lot of what the church does is outreach. Clubs, Youth Group, Women's, Neighborhood Bible Study, both Men's Fellowships and many small groups, MOPS (although Outreach helps fund it), VBC, TC Marathon (which has its own team of organizers), many other ministries of the church. Further, there are ministries outside of the church in which our people are involved. Finally, every encounter that each of us has with people that God has placed in our path is outreach for Christ's Kingdom.

We sponsor twice a year Outreach weekends. On October 25-26, 2014, the focus was Transformational Discipleship internationally. February 21 – 22, 2015, focused on local ministries for which we can volunteer – New Salem, China Outreach Ministries and Community Emergency Services.

We help support 38 missionary families and 9 missionary organizations. In the past year, one retired missionary we helped support, Lorraine Prins, died. Vanny Evanson, after the accidental death of her husband Jeff, decided to become a tentmaker, staying in her native Cambodia. Lareau Lindquist is retiring from Barnabas. These three events decrease our obligations by \$6400. However, our long range plan to give cost of living increases to our current missionaries cannot be done at this time due to budget constraints. Nor are we currently able to consider new missionaries or ministries.

The only new supported missionaries coming out of our fellowship are Ben and Janielle Nordell. There are a number of other missionaries who are near retirement age so unless we want to see the financial commitment to missions continue to drop, we will need to fund increases for the supported missionaries and/or support new missionaries.

The idea of lifetime commitment to missions seems to be less common than it was. Also, we seem to be losing a generation of sacrificial givers within our fellowship who supported missions as well as the other ministries of the church faithfully.

We subsidize short term mission trips by our people and sponsor events such as Street Fest and arrange a presence at Picnic in the Park. We provide childcare for Financial Peace University.

We are each missionaries in an increasingly dark and spiritually needy culture, involved in spiritual warfare whether we recognize it or not.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*

Ephesians 6:10 – 18.

Ross Olson  
Outreach Commission Chair

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

### Women's Neighborhood Bible Study

Every Wednesday morning women of all ages come to First Free to study the Bible at Women's Neighborhood Bible Study (WNBS). This year we studied Lifestyles of Faith and the book of I Corinthians. Ten women served on the WNBS leadership team this year, which allowed us to have multiple leaders for each of the five small group tables. It is in these small groups that the women share what they learned from their independent study throughout the week. Fellowship, encouragement and prayer support are also a big part of the small group time each week.

One of the more unique characteristics of WNBS is that it is intergenerational. Brand new mothers are able to benefit from the wisdom and experience of women who have walked with the Lord long enough to be blessed with great grandchildren! WNBS is also interdenominational. Several of the 53 women who attended WNBS this year (including a few on the leadership team) do not call First Free their home church.

A big thank you to Scott who sets up for us each week and Leola for faithfully making coffee and coordinating the kitchen. We are so thankful for our loving childcare workers: Gail, Jan, Marie, Russ, Unni, and Anessa who made it possible for many young mothers to participate in WNBS each week. We are grateful for the many blessings that God has given WNBS this year – including many answered prayers!

Respectfully submitted,  
Patty Mellema

### MOPS

This year's MOPS theme was Be you, Bravely. The theme went well with our moms as well as the leadership team as it is comforting and applicable to all our lives. "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." Isaiah 43:18-19 was the theme verse. In the summer of 2014 as Kimber Carter and I, Mallory Hueckman took on the roles as coordinators, we wanted to really be involved and have our leadership be unified. We kicked off our year with a half day training where we, as a group, came up with these goals: 1) to have our group be Relationship Centered. Helping all moms feel welcomed, connected, friendly and included; 2) to be Christ Centered. By the end of the year we want to know where each woman stands in her faith; and 3) to be Encouragement Centered. Having our moms' practical needs met and be purposeful in what we are doing so we can be helpful. We have been praying throughout our meetings and frequent in asking if we are doing that. After First Free revamped their mission statement it was encouraging for us to be purposeful and forthright in faith conversations in MOPS.

This year we have registered 54 Moms and about 87 children in the MOPPETS program. Our Moppets program is led by Brenda Audette and she has a great group of volunteers who continue to serve on Friday mornings. Many of these include retirees, people who have off of work on Fridays and choose to spend their day off with our kids and a few homeschooled girls. It is comforting to have such a range of ages to help love on our children while us moms are getting time to focus on being mothers, wives, friends and fellow believers.

This year we had a variety of speakers: Organizing your home and life with Bonnie Axelson, Photography with Gretchen Pruett, Missing MN, Misbehavior by Connected Families and a Chiropractor. We look forward to finishing with a Dental topic with Glenn Hultstrand, and Accelerated reading with Amy Moeching. Our mentor moms, Donna Holliday, Priscilla Riveness and Karin Olson each spoke and really talked more about faith and the Lord. Overall we had great feedback on our chosen topics. We enjoyed 2 meetings of community building and getting to know moms at other tables. We also had a spa day, a few creative activities and are putting together backpacks for teen challenge.

As our year is winding down I feel like I have learned more about what it takes to bring even the slightest comments and concerns straight to the Lord. This group isn't about proving ourselves to one another or comparing with this mom or what that mom does better, MOPS is about relationships and one team. We are all cheering each other on as we take on this Brave role of motherhood together.

Next year I have asked Kaitlin Graff and Keri Graden to join me as coordinators. I am encouraged by this past year and really want to take these relationships to the next level. With three coordinators I feel our group will see a greater benefit and we can spend the extra time needed to reach out to more women in our group. So far, Priscilla Riveness and Abbie Holm aren't returning. We will be looking for 1-2 more mentor moms as well as 2-3 women to step into the hospitality roles and creative service leader. Heather Aunan will also be joining us as finance leader. We also discussed and got the green light to add 1 or 2 MOMS NEXT tables (moms with kindergarteners through 12th grades) to our current meeting. The hope would be to develop the need and desire for our graduating MOPS moms and a place to continue such an awesome fellowship time and continued place for spiritual growth. Kimber Carter has offered to be the liaison for these moms and lead a table. I'm very excited to test out this new area for our MOPS moms with older children. Can't wait to see how this turns out!

Thanks for supporting this group as well as all of your encouragement throughout our year.

Mallory Hueckman  
MOPS Co-Coordinator



## FINANCE & PROPERTY BOARD

*Consider it all joy ... when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result ...*

*James 1:2-4*

Consider it all joy ...

First let me say I consider it a privilege to serve in the capacity of Finance and Property Board Chairman! I served on the Trustee Board, and as Chairman of the then House Committee, for several years (in another lifetime, it seems) and, having been raised in this church, with deep roots here, my love and heart has always been here, and it is so wonderful to be back - four years already! Really, I praise God every day in gratitude for First Free and its People!! Thank you!

Let me also say that experience has taught that it takes years to get to know a church, and many things have changed, and I expected to spend a considerable amount of time doing just that - before serving on a board or commission, to say nothing about serving as Chairman. However, sometimes God (and His people!) have different plans, so here I am!!

Now then, for the important stuff! We as a Board have been very busy, and I want to say how grateful I am for the members of this Board, and also emphasize how important each of them are. There is actually a lot to do here, and a lot to manage, and the Board is doing, in my opinion, a superb job! (And I am most definitely not talking about myself). In fact, the past year has gone extremely fast it seems, for me, and it is because of all the board members that much is getting done! I do want to be sure to make a special note of the work and sacrifice of David Kriesel-Koll, our Treasurer, who puts in a huge amount of time and effort keeping the finances in order, and with clarity! And Bob Goodman, who also gives a tremendous amount of time by way of estimating, designing and describing numerous projects, obtaining volunteers and contractors as needed, as well as doing a great deal of work himself!

I also want to thank Scott for his dedication and love for our church, and the many repairs and improvements he does without fanfare, and mostly without any recognition at all - things we all appreciate but often are not aware of their presence!

Briefly, (and to describe in detail would be quite lengthy), important projects completed this past year include: the Worship room off the platform (1950 church office!) received plaster repairs, painting and carpet (special thanks to the Polland family!); the beautiful Platform carpet and improvements (special thanks to Jeff Miller!); powered Handicap door installed at the north Chicago Ave entrance; ceiling replacement, lighting and electrical work off the Gymnasium; rehab work in the lower north Primary Sunday School rooms; plaster repairs of the gym pillars; and Scott obtained and repaired a commercial refrigerator, which is a great addition!

Projects underway, being scheduled or needed: New front Sign; Kitchen remodeling to improve alley-side area around storage and refrigerators; Sanctuary window repairs; Parking lot and fence repairs; and the lower windows on north (1964) portion of building. I am probably also forgetting some things - but I don't want to forget that many of you have volunteered considerable hours helping with projects - Thank you!

Recently the City completed a routine but fairly in depth Fire Code inspection of our building, and we received a (lengthy) list of items in "violation". I put that in quotes because there is some interpretation of code which is considered by the city with existing buildings, and what items will actually be required items of repair or rehab. Bob is working closely with the city, and we will be doing what is required along with what is seen as hazardous, and general safety improvements.

Last summer we hosted the Nokomis Farmer's Market on 3 dates, and this summer we are going to host this Market for most of the summer. This is a great way to serve the Neighborhood, and, along with our support of other events such as the Twin Cities Marathon, to continue being visible as a good neighborhood partner!

Thank you for allowing me to serve, and I look forward to more years in this wonderful place of God - we are very Blessed!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Rollin Nordell  
Finance and Property Board Chair



## CHURCH TREASURER

The church fiscal year ended with an actual operating deficit of \$3,985. It should be noted that \$8,195 in ACH contributions (online giving) were posted to the bank on April 1, but cannot be credited to the fiscal year ending 03/31/15. In reality it is close enough to state that it was a breakeven year in terms of contributions to expenses.

The budgeted goal for fiscal year 2014-2015 was \$873,950 and contributions fell short of that goal by \$56,500. Fortunately the actual expenses were \$52,500 below budget which kept FEFC from ending the year with a large deficit.

Average weekly income was \$15,721, \$1,086 less than the budget amount of \$16,807.

The cash balance on hand for operations on March 31, 2015 was \$84,869.

You may notice that the reporting format is different this year. New accounting software was purchased prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in April 2014. The software purchased was QuickBooks Pro Plus. Going forward for future years, this is a far superior approach to capturing all the financial activity that occurs during the year. It resembles an actual general ledger accounting system, providing reports that allow financial auditors or those familiar with GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) to review the bookkeeping accuracy.

There were no major financial transactions that took place during this fiscal year. The church has no outstanding debts at this time.

The budget being presented for the fiscal year 2015-2016 is a 3.7% increase over last year. It became apparent in the search for a new youth pastor during the past year, that the current compensation structure in place was not competitive for the type of candidates FEFC wanted to attract. Using information from post offer interviews with prospective youth pastor candidates, the personnel committee established a maximum amount that could be offered. Using that figure as a baseline, it required us to review the compensation that is paid to current staff. It became a priority that there was parity between the incomes of other staff members and adjustments were made to current staff compensation packages.

The Council instructed the various Commissions and the Finance & Property Board to keep their respective budgets the same as fiscal year 2014-2015. Where possible, some of the budgets were reduced.

There is little to say regarding the church's finances when the benchmarks set have been met. No one knows what tomorrow will bring – we trust in God's grace to see us through.

If there are any specific questions that you might have about the church's finances, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,  
David Kriesel-Koll  
Treasurer

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

The audit committee has examined the financial statements and supporting records of First Evangelical Free Church for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015. In our opinion, the financial statements fairly present the results of operations for the fiscal year and the financial condition as of March 31, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Holman-Chairman

Ben To

Audrey Zhang

The Audit Committee

2015 - 2016 BUDGET

First Evangelical Free Church, Minneapolis, MN

	Proposed 2015-2016 Budget	Actual 2014 - 2015 Budget
<b>PERSONNEL &amp; ADMINISTRATIVE</b>		
PERSONNEL	\$ 477,000	\$ 419,300
PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT	\$ 8,200	\$ 6,900
OTHER PERSONNEL EXPENSE	\$ 16,750	\$ 16,250
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$ 9,800	\$ 9,800
OFFICE SERVICES	\$ 37,300	\$ 37,150
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL &amp; ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>\$ 549,050</b>	<b>\$ 489,400</b>
<b>COMMISSIONS</b>		
CARING COMMISSION	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000
NURTURE - GENERAL	\$ 10,500	\$ 10,700
NURTURE - CREEKSIDE FRIENDS	\$ 27,000	\$ 30,000
NURTURE - STUDENT MINISTRY	\$ 13,650	\$ 22,150
WORSHIP COMMISSION	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000
<b>TOTAL COMMISSIONS</b>	<b>\$ 67,150</b>	<b>\$ 79,850</b>
<b>FINANCE &amp; PROPERTY</b>		
BUILDING EXPENSE	\$ 79,845	\$ 63,200
UTILITIES	\$ 42,200	\$ 40,500
RESERVE FUND EXPENSE	\$ -	\$ 26,400
HOUSE - 5147 CHICAGO AVE	\$ 3,050	\$ 3,550
Rental Income - 5147 Chicago	\$ (4,800)	\$ (4,800)
HOUSE - 5151 CHICAGO AVE	\$ 4,100	\$ 3,900
Rental Income - 5151 Chicago	\$ (9,000)	\$ (9,000)
HOUSE - 5155 CHICAGO AVE	\$ 7,300	\$ 7,300
Rental Income - 5155 Chicago	\$ (12,600)	\$ (12,600)
SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600
VAN EXPENSE	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,100
SUNDRY	\$ 2,950	\$ 3,050
<b>TOTAL FINANCE &amp; PROPERTY</b>	<b>\$ 120,745</b>	<b>\$ 129,200</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR LOCAL MINISTRIES</b>	<b>\$ 736,945</b>	<b>\$ 698,450</b>
<b>OUTREACH COMMISSION</b>		
EFCA AFFILIATIONS	\$ 13,212	\$ 13,200
EFCA MISSIONARIES	\$ 45,600	\$ 47,600
NON - EFCA MISSIONAIRES	\$ 67,200	\$ 71,600
ORGANIZATIONS	\$ 13,248	\$ 13,400
LOCAL OUTREACH MINISTRIES	\$ 10,800	\$ 10,600
OUTREACH INVOLVEMENT-PROMOTION	\$ 19,100	\$ 19,100
<b>TOTAL OUTREACH COMMISSION</b>	<b>\$ 169,160</b>	<b>\$ 175,500</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 906,105</b>	<b>\$ 873,950</b>

103.68%



**First Evangelical Free Church**  
**Balance Sheet**  
 As of March 31, 2015

Mar 31, 15

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets**

**Checking/Savings**

12000 · Wells Fargo Bank, NA (Checking)	25,457.93
12020 · CIF Demand 14314221	59,410.76
12030 · CIF Demand 973739 (P&E)	18,716.99
12040 · CIF Demand 973742 (Benevolent)	24,296.32
12050 · CIF Demand 973755 (Memorial)	29,531.22
13000 · CIF Demand 995629 (Special)	24,970.29
13010 · CIF Demand 995632 (Reserve)	26,464.15
13020 · CIF Demand 995645 (Donor Rest)	15,467.89
13030 · CIF Demand 995658 (Challenge)	77,410.68
13040 · CIF Demand 995661 (Council Des)	29,222.68
13050 · CIF Demand 995674 (Outreach)	174.89
12060 · CIF Term 143150596 (LT Mission)	40,000.00
12070 · CIF Term 143175364 (Memorial)	26,594.50
12090 · Ameriprise - 8656 9188 5133	100.00

**Total Checking/Savings** 397,818.30

**Total Current Assets** 397,818.30

**TOTAL ASSETS** 397,818.30

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

**Liabilities**

**Current Liabilities**

**Accounts Payable**

20000 · Accounts Payable 11,399.99

**Total Accounts Payable** 11,399.99

**Total Current Liabilities** 11,399.99

**Long Term Liabilities**

31000 · Benevolent Fund - LIB 24,287.45

31200 · Memorial Fund - LIB 55,725.32

31250 · Outreach Memorial - LIB 668.03

31300 · Challenge Building - LIB 77,166.30

31350 · Youth Pass Through - LIB

31352 · PP Student - Jasmyn Danielson 380.00

31362 · Rock Ridge / Shamineau -4,450.00

31361 · Summer Mission Trip -100.00

31353 · TOC Fundraiser - March 11,992.35

**Total 31350 · Youth Pass Through - LIB** 7,822.35

First Evangelical Free Church  
**Balance Sheet**  
As of March 31, 2015

Mar 31, 15

31400 · Donor Restricted - LIB	
31401 · Agape Community Group	3,392.83
31402 · Seekers Community Group	3,838.88
31403 · Advent & Thanksgiving Fund	897.30
31405 · Children - Shameneau Scholars	475.00
31406 · Children's Ministry - General	404.96
31412 · Dom Rep (DR) Team Support	1,079.10
31413 · Faith Community Nurses	105.00
31418 · Peru Dental Trip	200.00
31419 · Staff Christmas Gift	1,361.19
31429 · Youth Scholarship - Student	2,915.00
31431 · Rental Deposit - 5147 Chicago	400.00
31432 · Rental Deposit - 5151 Chicago	600.00
31433 · Rental Deposit - 5155 Chicago A	525.00
31434 · Rental Deposit - 5155 Chicago B	525.00
Total 31400 · Donor Restricted - LIB	<u>16,719.26</u>
31500 · Reserve Fund - LIB	26,400.00
31700 · Council Designated Fund - LIB	
31701 · Health Care Premium Credit	21,939.72
31702 · State of MN - Sales Tax Refund	2,879.85
31703 · Wells Fargo Rewards	3,721.98
31704 · Twin Cities Marathon	600.00
Total 31700 · Council Designated Fund - LIB	<u>29,141.55</u>
31750 · Mission Investment Fund - LIB	40,000.00
31800 · Property & Equipment - LIB	18,765.60
31850 · Special Gifts Fund - LIB	
31855 · Kitchen Remodel - V Fjellman	5,000.00
31865 · Kitchen - Comm Refrigerator	4,900.00
31885 · Kitchen - Storage for Supplies	5,000.00
31875 · Marquee Sign Replacement	10,000.00
Total 31850 · Special Gifts Fund - LIB	<u>24,900.00</u>
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>321,595.86</u>
Total Liabilities	332,995.85
Equity	
35100 · Unrestricted Net Assets	68,416.80
Net Income	-3,594.35
Total Equity	<u>64,822.45</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>397,818.30</u></u>

**FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH**  
**Financial Summary for the Period Ending March 31, 2015**

	YTD 2014 - 2015 <u>Actual</u>	YTD 2014 - 2015 <u>Budget</u>	<u>Variance</u>	2014 - 2015 <u>Total Year Budget</u>
Local Ministries - Income	\$ 694,273	\$ 728,350	\$ (34,077)	\$ 728,350
Outreach - Income	\$ 123,209	\$ 145,600	\$ (22,391)	\$ 145,600
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 817,482</b>	<b>\$ 873,950</b>	<b>\$ (56,468)</b>	<b>\$ 873,950</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>				
Personnel & Administrative	\$ 453,128	\$ 489,400	\$ (36,272)	\$ 489,400
Caring Commission	\$ 795	\$ 3,000	\$ (2,205)	\$ 3,000
Nurture General	\$ 8,648	\$ 10,700	\$ (2,052)	\$ 10,700
Nurture Creekside Friends	\$ 28,048	\$ 30,000	\$ (1,952)	\$ 30,000
Nurture Student Ministries	\$ 6,793	\$ 22,150	\$ (15,357)	\$ 22,150
Worship Commission	\$ 14,702	\$ 14,000	\$ 702	\$ 14,000
Finance and Property	\$ 137,660	\$ 129,200	\$ 8,460	\$ 129,200
Outreach - Non Missionary Support	\$ 25,478	\$ 29,700	\$ (4,222)	\$ 29,700
Outreach - Missionary Support	\$ 146,217	\$ 145,800	\$ 417	\$ 145,800
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$ 821,468</b>	<b>\$ 873,950</b>	<b>\$ (52,482)</b>	<b>\$ 873,950</b>
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (3,985)		\$ (3,985)	
Average Weekly Income (AWI)	\$ 15,721	\$ 16,807	\$ (1,086)	\$ 16,807
Number of Weeks into Fiscal Year			\$ 52	
<b>Deficit: Income to Budget (AWI x # of weeks)</b>			<b>\$ (56,468)</b>	

**Operations**

(Church Fiscal Year 04/01/14 - 03/31/15)

	March 2015	YTD
Income	\$ 84,369	\$ 817,482
Disbursements (includes Outreach)	\$ 77,662	\$ 821,468
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 6,707</b>	<b>\$ (3,985)</b>
<b>Operating Cash on Hand - EOM</b>	<b>\$ 84,869</b>	