

FIRST FREE CHURCH

Minneapolis

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FIRST WORD

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH



"Our Values" by: Pastor Joel

Do you remember the story of Apollo 13 (There was a movie made based on the story starring Tom Hanks)?

They had a mission: "Get to the moon." Alongside that mission they had some very strong values: "Get everyone back safely." The drama of the real life story came in the fact that an oxygen tank exploded. And so even though they were within very close proximity to the moon, the value of getting everyone back safely was the priority. Despite limited power, a loss of cabin heat, a shortage of water and the critical need to jury-rig the carbon dioxide removal system, they were able to return safely to earth. Their values guided their mission.

This is what values do. Just like a river without any banks is just one large puddle, a church without identified values stagnates and goes nowhere. Values give us the river banks.

So, what are our values at First Free?

- **Intimacy with Jesus** — Pursuing a passionate relationship with Christ above all.

- **Scripture centered** — Treasuring God's Word as our standard for life and faith.

- **Authentic Community** — Connecting our lives together based on a common love for our Savior.

- **Missional Mindset** — Compelled by God's love to reach our community and world for Christ.

- **Kingdom Diversity** — Seek a genuine reconciliation of all people in love and oneness in Christ.

These values effect everything we do at First Free. They hold us together because we know what we stand for. They filter our decision making. They are our "die-fors"—those things we are ready and willing to die on the hill for. They are our make up of our DNA. They describe the First Free experience.

Aubrey Maplhurs from Dallas Theological Seminary has said, "You won't do ministry that really matters, until you define what matters." For us at First Free, these five core values define what really matters.

In the coming editions of First Word, you will find a more in-depth discussion of each of these five core values. I encourage you to read about them, celebrate them and let them inspire you to action.

Value #1: Intimacy with Jesus

Christianity is about relationship. This has become cliché, but for good reason. Not fully understanding that he spoke to God, a lawyer made himself famous by asking Jesus which was the greatest commandment. Jesus, in Matthew 22 offers what still seems to us a startlingly simple, though not easy answer:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind! This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Mt. 22:37-40, NRSV)

What is perhaps still more surprising is that this should not have been new information to the Jews. Jesus is in both cases quoting from the Old Testament (Dt. 6:5, Lv. 19:18). It turns out the ultimate calling of all human beings is as it has always been, a call into loving relationship with God, to love God with all we are.

Therefore, at First Free we believe that intimacy with Jesus should guide and inform all that we do as a church. We want to live out that value together, in worship, community and service. And we want to equip people to live out that value in their own lives, wherever God has placed them. So it should be no surprise that our new mission, in accordance with this value, is essentially to help individuals develop an intimacy with Jesus that produces obedience to Jesus - to become Christ-Centered and Christ-Sent together.

CAMP SHAMINEAU

We Love Camp Shamineau! (By: Beth Brown)

Singing songs of praise to God around a campfire, swimming with a buddy, canoeing around the lake, spending time with close friends—these are just a few of my favorite things about camp. I grew up going to Camp Lebanon and with no doubt, camp was one of the biggest influences on strengthening my faith.

There is nothing like camp. I would love to see every child at First Free experience Bible camp! Last year, over 50 boys and girls from First Free & Creekside Clubs went to Camp Shamineau. My two children have benefited greatly from fun and meaningful experiences at Camp Shamineau such as worshipping with a huge group of kids, hearing the Word from other adults, building relationships with new and old friends, and gaining some independence by being away from home!

I asked some kids who've been to Camp Shamineau what they're favorite thing about camp is and here's what they said:

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|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| - The blob! (a huge inflatable) | - Counselors—they're so nice and fun! | - The zipline |
| - The animals (snakes, bunnies, etc. in the nature center) | - Chapel time | - Swimming |
| - Night games | - Sleeping in the skateboard park (!) | - The horses |

First Free offers coupons toward Camp Shamineau and Camp Nathanael to students through high school age who regularly attend a First Free kids or student ministry program. Just look for them at the Creekside Canteen or contact me.

Lives are changed at camp. Campers make decisions to follow Jesus or renew their commitments to following Him. They come home on fire for the Lord.

Please, take a few minutes to watch this amazing video about camp. Go to www.shamineau.org or google "camp shamineau summer 2014" and you'll find the YouTube video for 2014. Watch that and you'll be packing your child for camp...or you'll at least have the urge to go jump in a lake!

Beth Brown, Children's Ministry Director (& Camp Shamineau Board Member!)

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MORE INFO

www.firstfreechurch.org



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

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Errace on Chicago

Annual Youth Fundraiser

March 15th, 2014

Seatings available for 5 & 7 p.m. Childcare available for 5 p.m. seating only

Look for the reservation table or contact the church office to reserve a spot

EXPRESSIONS — MARCH 10TH & 17TH @ 7:00 P.M. For those struggling with chronic or devastating disease, join us at 7:00 P.M. in room 103.

WOMEN'S GUILD — TUESDAY, MARCH 11 @ 1:00 P.M. Women's Guild meets monthly. Contact Phyllis Nordin at 612-724-6251 if you have any questions.

MEN'S SOULSHARE — SATURDAY, MARCH 15TH @ 9:00 A.M. Men of all ages are welcome to join us every 3rd Saturday for breakfast and fellowship from now until May 2014. Contact Ross Olson with any questions: 612-824-7691.



THE DEEP

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19TH @ 6:30 P.M. Come join us for a time of rest, enjoyment, and encounter God through worship and prayer. Childcare will be provided.

Church Family News

Child Dedications:

Eleni O'Neil Weston Aunan Houghton Hueckman Simon Resler

Levi Stabnow William Ogren Henry Ogren

Baptisms:

Gabe Hansen Lily Hansen Oscar Knecht

New Members: Tory & Susie Passons Eddy Louis Judith Nebel

Daylight Savings Time!

Be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday, March 8th for Daylight Savings!

UPCOMING SERIES: 24 HOURS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

March 9: The Last Supper March 23: Condemned by "The Righteous" April 6: The Torture and Humiliation of the King April 20: V is for Victorious

March 16: Agony is Not Defeat March 30: Jesus, Barnabas and Pontius Pilate April 13: A Personal Encounter with Christ April 27: V is for Victorious II

CHALLENGE

2014 — What to Expect at Challenge: A Student Perspective

Challenge is a five day, national event put on by the EFCA for High School students from all around the country. Challenge is designed - not surprisingly - to challenge these students to engage their world, friends, families, schools and neighborhoods with the gospel. But it is also more than a challenge, it is an opportunity to be equipped and encouraged, not least by one another. Challenge reminds students that far from being alone, they partner with other students around the country and the world, and that they are all partners together with God as they make the gospel of Jesus known. In other words, Challenge fits beautifully with our mission here at First Free, challenging and equipping students to live Christ-Sent, "to live on mission with God, everyday, everywhere."

Here are some students' reflections from Challenge in 2012.

Why did you choose to go to Challenge?

Henry Clinton: I chose to go to Challenge because I had, and still have, a desire to grow closer to God, and closer in fellowship to other believers in Christ as well as care for my peers that do not know God.

Hope Sutton: I chose to go to Challenge because I had heard so many people rave about their experiences on the trip and I wanted to see what all the hype was about.

Lydia Clinton: I chose to go to Challenge in 2012 because it was going to be the farthest mission trip I had taken, and I couldn't wait to travel with my friends and be able to evangelize in such a cool, new way in an amazing place. I was really excited to help out and meet new people.

Cher Nelson: I chose to go to Challenge because I had gone before in 2010 and it was amazing. This time we went to New Orleans and I was excited to serve down there and help people.

What kind of experience did you have at Challenge?

Henry Clinton: Challenge 2012 was astounding. It was an amazing experience to be surrounded by thousands of fellow believers, who all cared about making a difference in the host city of New Orleans. It was a blast.

Hope Sutton: My Challenge 2012 experience was incredible. From start to finish we, as a youth group, were able to see God's hand moving in our lives.

Lydia Clinton: Well, it was hot. Very hot. But being in Kansas City (as opposed to New Orleans) it probably will be less hot (even though we will all still be on fire for God). It was a very hands-on experience and it was truly moving.

Cher Nelson: It was an eye opening experience. I had never been that far from home before. There was still so much devastation from Hurricane Katrina and it was shocking. We got to help out in the local neighborhoods, which was my favorite part. We painted houses and hung out with kids all over the city.

What kind of spiritual encounters did you have while at Challenge?

Henry Clinton: On one of the days of Challenge, my group had the opportunity to set up a station and ask for prayer requests of people who happened to pass by. It was encouraging to have other Christians come by and pray for what we were doing, as well as pray for others who needed something to lean on.

Hope Sutton: Challenge was a trip that I will never forget because of the incredible way that I saw God work. The worship was outstanding, standing in the middle of thousands of teenagers praising God was absolutely awe-inspiring. Even through the many mishaps we saw how God provided for us in our times of need.

Lydia Clinton: While at Challenge I could feel the Lord giving me the courage to go on a prayer walk in a very scary neighborhood. In addition, the worship was so incredible that it was almost impossible to leave the conference without having a deeper love for God.

Cher Nelson: We were faced with many challenges on the trip but I think God really wanted to teach us patience. When Challenge was over I didn't leave with a "spiritual high" like I had the last time, which was confusing. But I think God wanted to show me that you have to live for Him everyday even when you don't have that same enthusiasm.

