

# First Word

A CHURCH FAMILY PUBLICATION OF FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

OCTOBER 2017

## Above All

BY JOEL SUTTON

I love the the Acts of the Apostles.

Once again I have been reading this New Testament story and I have been caught up in the expectant and vibrant faith of the early church. Their zest for Christ and for sharing His good news, their sacrifice, and their ministry all draw me up short. The power of the Holy Spirit displayed every day in the lives of those first disciples amaze me. And I come away asking how this power, zest, and vibrant faith can be ours.

Then I go back to the first chapter of Acts. "They all joined together constantly in prayer" (Acts 1:14). I turn to Acts 2:42: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Moving ahead to chapter 3: "One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer..." (Acts 3:1).

It seems that wherever I read in the book of Acts, a prayer meeting is taking place.

It was in prayer that they drew lots over Matthias. They were in prayer when the day of Pentecost arrived and the Spirit fell. While some were in jail, others were praying. After Saul encountered Christ, he spent three days in prayer. In that early church, every Christian was a praying Christian.

Prayer is the driving force behind all the power and the miracles and the expectant faith. Prayer is everywhere in Acts!

"Pray for great things, expect great things, work for great things, but above all pray."  
- R.A. Torrey

The disciples in Acts, did exactly that. Above all, they prayed!

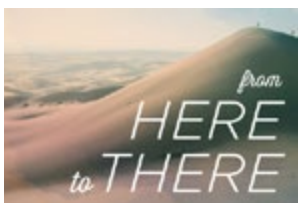
Above all, do you pray? Are you devoted to prayer as your driving force? Are we desperate enough to want to be like the early church with its power, its zest, its faith? Do we want to be full of the Holy Spirit?

At First Free, we are committed to prayer. We want everything that happens here to be saturated with prayer. So we are very excited to introduce our new Prayer Room. It is located in the lobby across from the Welcome Desk. If on any Sunday morning, at any time, you

would desire to pray or be prayed over, we would love for you to stop into the prayer room. We want to be open to what the Holy Spirit is doing!

Tim Lund, our prayer team coordinator, shares this: "We have already seen that the need for prayer is great with a variety of requests which have included things like a house offer being accepted, work-related situations, family loss, restored health and healing, salvation for friends and family members, marriages, youth ministry needs, God's direction in retirement, addictive situations, and just the energy for the day. Sometimes we find our team crying out to Jesus for our friends that come by the Prayer Room. Sometimes we laugh and rejoice. In the prayer room we (the prayer team) listen, share a promise from God's word, and then we pray and stand waiting as God moves in the situation. But we always stand in assurance that He hears when we pray and is moving in our hearts and lives."

Besides the prayer room, every Wednesday night from 6:45 - 8:00 pm a group gathers together to pray for our church body and the prayer requests that are shared and published in our "Weekly



## CURRENT SERIES: FROM HERE TO THERE

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| <b>OCT. 8</b>  | Winning the Battle; Joshua 6 | <b>OCT. 29</b> | Outreach Weekend                  |
| <b>OCT. 15</b> | Setbacks, Sin and Surrender  | <b>NOV. 5</b>  | And You Thought Your Day was Long |

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

**WANT MORE INFO?**

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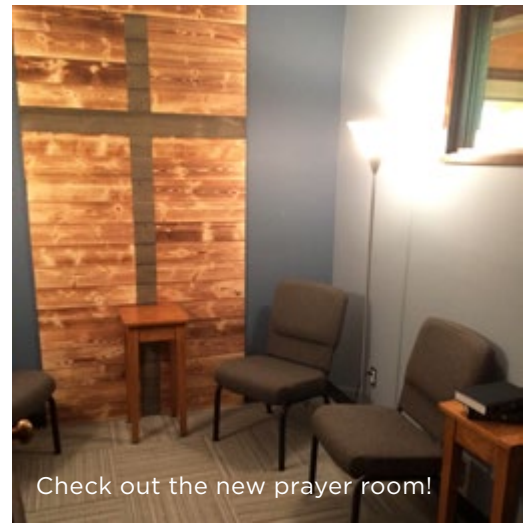


**SEE MORE INFO AT:**  
[www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

Prayer Guide". Once a month we have the Deep, a powerful time of personal prayer and intimate worship, on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00. You are invited to join us at either or both of these times.

Another opportunity to pray for our church is by receiving our weekly, "Knee Mail". This is three or four prayer requests we send out via email each Monday or Tuesday. You can get on that email list by calling the church office. Again, our goal is that everything that happens here at First Free is saturated with prayer.

This year, I ask that would you commit to pray . . . above all else!



Check out the new prayer room!

**Outreach Weekend: October 28 & 29**

Hear about the good work being done all over the world by missionaries supported by First Free! The theme for this Outreach Weekend is "Awesome Prayer". Evangelism and missions is a spiritual battle, and in prayer we storm the gates of hell and advance the Kingdom of God.

**On Saturday there will be a brunch at 10:30 a.m. followed by a missionary panel** so that you can hear about the work and prayer requests of each missionary. On Sunday, John Robb will be the keynote speaker in our worship gatherings and other missionaries will share in community groups. **Joseph Najem will also speak after a potluck lunch on Sunday at noon** about the situation of Christians in the Middle East. This potluck is open to everyone and will be downstairs at church.

**John Robb: Keynote Speaker**

John Robb is the Chairman for International Prayer Connect and International Facilitator for the World Prayer Assembly. International Prayer Connect is a coalition of 3,000+ Christian prayer networks and organizations who share a common vision - to mobilize and equip worldwide prayer for the blessing, healing and transformation of the nations.



**Ernie Manges: sharing in Young Adults and Seniors**

Ernest divides his time between two ministries. In the Philippines, he teaches at a seminary training pastors, missionaries, evangelists, and Bible teachers. For the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) he helps train all new EFCA ReachGlobal missionaries that serve around the world.



**Heidi Tunberg: sharing in Student Community Group and K-6 groups**

Heidi works with ReachGlobal to provide care for their children of missionaries in the college and career age group. In this role she offers encouragement, practical assistance, and information to missionary kids (MKs) as they return to the US for college. She also seeks to develop relationships with MKs in junior high and high school and to be a resource to parents on issues related to raising kids internationally.



**Katie Dudgeon: sharing in FaithBuilders and Embark**

Katie works with ReachGlobal in Berlin as one of the assistant leaders of the Berlin Team, providing oversight to short-term staff, cultural training and other strategic priorities. She is passionate about developing new ways to express the gospel in a secular context.



**Joseph Najem: sharing in Living Life, Agape, and at potluck**

Joseph does ministry in Lebanon. He is currently involved in relief work among the Syrian refugees in Burj Hammoud/Beirut, starting and running centers for discussion and Bible study, and developing a Discipleship Kit on Prayer.



*Meet our new council member:*

## Patty Mellema

### **Tell us a little about yourself.**

My husband, Mark, and I met and fell in love when we were both students at Bethel University. We have one son, Seth (age 22), and we have been married for almost 32 years. We love to travel and hope to do more of it now that we are empty nesters!

### **What is your history with First Free?**

We have been attending First Free since 1988. We had just moved back to Minnesota after living in London, England for a year and wanted to find a church in our neighborhood where God was at work. Over the years I have enjoyed serving in various volunteer positions at First Free including; Children's Sunday School Teacher, Girls' Club Leader, Youth Group Leader, VBC Director, and Caring Commission Chair. In addition to my new role on Council, I am currently serving on the Women's Neighborhood Bible Study Leadership Team, singing on Worship Team, and serving as a Small Group Leader. I love my First Free family - we have so many wonderful ministry opportunities here!

### **What made you decide to become a council member?**

I had never really thought about being on the Council until I was contacted and asked to serve. I think that I have a unique perspective to bring to the table because I have volunteered in several different ministries over the years. I look forward to serving in any way that I can.

### **What excites you about where First Free is going?**

Since joining the Council I have participated in two Saturday planning sessions. I am not at liberty to share the details about new initiatives that are coming in the next year, but I know that God is at work! I have such confidence in our staff and lay leaders - I know that they want to honor and serve God with every decision that they make on behalf of our church family. I am humbled to be invited to be a part of that team.

## *Church Family News* .....

Our deepest condolences to the family of Marcia Banks, who passed away on September 1st. Her funeral was held at First Free on September 7th.

Congratulations to Jeff and Katie Bormes on the birth of their daughter Louisa, who was born on September 2nd.

Congratulations to Mike and Kaitlin Graff on the birth of their daughter Amelia, who was born on September 20th.

Congratulations to Yinzi Chen (Jenny) and Guangwei Weng (Joe) on their recent marriage.

Congratulations to Kristian and Erica Vatsaas on their marriage in August.



# *This Month* **@ FIRST FREE**

## **Twin Cities Marathon, One Worship Gathering: October 1**

Join us as we serve at the mile 9 water station during the Twin Cities Marathon on Sunday, October 1st. Sign up online through the link at [firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon](http://firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon) using the password FLUID917. Shift time and location are outlined on the sign up page. All others are welcome to join us at the cheering section on Chicago Avenue just south of Minnehaha Parkway from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. We will have one worship gathering at 11:00 a.m.

## **Connections: October 8, 15, 22, & 29**

New at First Free? Looking to get connected? Connections meets for four weeks on Sunday evenings for a potluck style dinner at Peter and Erica Lehner's house from 5-7 p.m. There you will get a chance to know other adults from First Free as well as learn about the different opportunities to get connected. Try Connections by signing up online at [firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon](http://firstfreechurch.org/comingsoon) or by calling the church office.

## **Class 101: October 8**

Interested in becoming a member at First Free? Check out our Class 101 to learn more about our church and what it means to be a First Free member. Join us October 8th at 4:00 p.m. Sign up online or contact the church office.

## **"Stepping On" Fall Prevention Class: Starting October 5th**

A 7-week fall prevention program called "Stepping On" will be offered by the Faith Community Nurses and guest experts for anyone age 60 or over who lives at home, does not have dementia, and has had a fall or is fearful of falling. Stepping On has been researched and proven to reduce falls in older people. The cost is \$15. Sessions will be held on Thursdays, 1 pm to 3 pm, each week starting October 5th and ending November 16th. For more information, see the brochure or talk to a Faith Community Nurse.

## **The Deep: October 11**

Join us for a time of worship and prayer at The Deep on Wednesday the 11th at 6:30 p.m. Childcare provided.

## **Soul Search: October 14**

Soul Search Men's Fellowship will begin on October 14 and continue every third Saturday until May 2018. We meet at 9:00 a.m. in room 105 (unless preempted by a special event) for breakfast. We discuss topics that involve searching our souls and examining our behavior. Contact Ross Olson ([ross@rossolson.org](mailto:ross@rossolson.org)) for more information or to get on the email list.

## ***Check out the new look of our student ministry!***

This year, we've rebranded our student ministry to give them an identity of their own. The student ministry at First Free is now Velocity Student Ministries. Our church is situated near the MSP airport and we all live in awareness of planes flying overhead. We incorporated the airplane theme in order to use that imagery to remind students that we want them to be sent out, living on mission for Jesus. The name, Velocity, evokes a sense of movement. We don't want our Student Ministries to be just a club students go to at church. We want them to walk with Jesus in their everyday lives and use what they learn to take the gospel into their homes, schools, and extracurricular activities. Our desire is to propel students toward Jesus.



# **VELOCITY**

## **STUDENT MINISTRIES**

**PROPELLING STUDENTS TOWARD JESUS**

**Learn more about Velocity Student Ministries at [firstfreechurch.org/students](http://firstfreechurch.org/students) or pick up a Velocity brochure from the lobby. Youth group meets Wednesday nights, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in room 107/108.**

A big thanks to Allan Peters for designing this logo for us!