



# First Free News

First Evangelical Free Church, 5150 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55417, (612) 827-4705

[Visit our Web Site](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

[www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)

## God is the First Priority

Written by Pastor Joel Sutton

*God is the first priority of the church. . . Not success. Not growth. Not ministry.*

Jesus, when asked what is to be our top priority, said, "The most important one is this: . . . Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." (Mark 12:29-30).

Worship, then, is all about the priority of God. Worship is our personal, human expression of the truth that God is supreme. Consider the names that we use when we address God in worship—King, Lord, Master, Father, Creator, and Savior—each of them reveals God as supreme.

When we gather to worship, we are responding to who God is . . . to His character and to His being. When we gather to worship we are also pursuing God. Moses, when confronted by God responded with a desire for more of Him. Paul, the apostle, near the end of his life, prayed that he might know Christ even more fully. After we have tasted God, it is normal and expected that we should desire more and more of him. That is worship – the pursuit of a deeper, more intimate knowledge of Him.

As a church is this our passion? Is this what we are seeking? We desire to be a church where the priority of God is our all-consuming pursuit.

With that in mind, we have established a vision

statement for worship: "Our worship will seek to EXALT God through Spirit and truth, CELEBRATE God for who He is and what He has done, and RESPOND to God through service for Him."

Will you join with me in this month of April in the pursuit of God? Easter season is a great time to focus on the "worth-ship" of God, that is, treasuring Him more highly than any other person, thing, or cause. God alone is worthy; therefore, we are to "worth-ship" Him alone.

*"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" (Rev. 5:12 NIV)*

*Might that be our call and desire forever!*

## FIRST EVANGELICAL FREE PURPOSE STATEMENT

We exist to: **BRING** people into a relationship with Jesus, **CONNECT** them to God's family, **MATURE** them in their faith, **EQUIP** them for ministry So that God's name will be **EXALTED**.

### Pastoral Staff

- Joel Sutton  
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### Worship Staff

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- Barb Olson  
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- Deborah Smith  
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### Custodial Staff

- Scott Beckett  
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## Preparing for Easter

### **Sermon Series: Pastor Joel Sutton**

April 6	Ephesians 6:10-20	<i>Be Strong! Be Courageous!</i>
April 13	John 13:1-17, Palm Sunday	<i>A Great Combination</i>
April 18	7:00 PM, Good Friday Service	<i>The Way of the Cross</i>
April 20	John 20:1-18, Easter Sunday	<i>A Great Day!</i>
April 27	John 4:19-26	<i>The Spirit of Worship</i>

## T a l e s f r o m t h e t u b

Written by Pastor Eric Twietmeyer

**Contentment can be a hard thing to find.** Earlier this month I had a growing sense of dissatisfaction with life. Nothing was the way I thought it was supposed to be. Life wasn't exactly handing me lemons, but it wasn't as peachy as I wanted it, either. Perhaps it was prune-y (you'll see what I mean in a moment). I was like an unhappy kid at his own birthday party—so many presents, just not the ones I wanted. I couldn't enjoy the gifts before me or appreciate them at all because of my own stubborn desires. It was not a fun place to be.

Then came the hot tub. A couple times a week this past winter I've made my way to the YWCA down on Lake Street to swim laps and sit in a hot tub. There I'd relax in a tank of heated, treated, bubbling water (not festering with bacteria, I hope) and wait until my hands got prune-y. (OK, it was a bad pun, but I had to use it!) This particular day I was thinking about everything that wasn't in order. It was then that I realized, that of all places, why couldn't I be content in a hot tub?! I asked God to adjust my soul—to give me five minutes of thankfulness to Him for life. Perhaps it was easy in that tub. There was something about focusing on just those five minutes that seemed to help me. He did give me five minutes. It was refreshing to be thankful for life for a mere five minutes. On the drive home I asked for five minutes more, and I received it. I was amazed at how God used that hot tub!

I can't say I won't lose my contentment again. I'm prone to it. Maybe I'm more aware now than before that my desires and my activities can become my idols. The writer of Proverbs reminds us that "*The fear of the LORD leads to life: then one rests content, untouched by trouble.*" (Proverbs 19:23) Only in this healthy respect for what God is about will I "get a life" and find contentment. Paul charges Timothy to remember ". . . Godliness with contentment is great gain." (1 Timothy 6:6) I've only begun to consider a godly contentment as great gain. I know of the many spiritual blessings I have because of my relationship with Christ—now I add contentment.

Regardless of what your circumstances may be: married, single, wealthy, poor, ordered, chaotic, hurried, bored, healthy or sick, Christ calls us to find contentment in our relationship with Him. By learning to discipline our desires and drawing on the strength of Jesus, we realize our spiritual riches.

Do you have expectations of life that impair your ability to enjoy the contentment that God offers? I pray that you'll find the secret of contentment that comes only from gratefulness in your relationship with God.

**"I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."**

*Philippians 4:11*

*Our Worship at First Free seeks to EXALT God in Spirit and truth, CELEBRATE God for who He is and what He has done, and RESPOND to God in service.*

### Values in Worship

*All believers must worship. It is one of life's purposes.*

### Worship

- Is each person ascribing to God His worth in Spirit and truth.
- Content will be Biblically based and rooted in the Spirit.
- Is seeking to create an environment so the worshippers can experience God!
- Will seek to be participatory, engaging people so that each person may be involved.
- Needs to be understandable and informative. We desire to teach and grow in worship.
- Will be done with joy and celebration.
- Results in response to God with changed hearts-lives
- Relational unity precedes worship.
- Calls for our best, with excellence and priority!
- Creativity comes from God's heart.

**All Ladies Welcome!**

Women's Guild Luncheon  
Noon  
Tuesday, April 1st

**With Guest Speaker  
Jan Harthan**



## Bridal Showers

### Heather Hultstrand

- ◆ Sunday, April 6, 4:00 PM at First Free Church. Heather is registered at J.C. Penny's, Marshall Fields & Target.

### Jennifer Viljaste &

#### Neal Buddensiek

- ◆ **All are invited** on Saturday, April 26, at Noon. Lunch will be provided in the old Fireside Room at First Free.
- ◆ Neal is the grandson of Don Brueske and the son of Aaron & Sharon Buddensiek. Jennifer is registered at Target, Marshall Fields, and J. C. Penny's.

## Missionary Focus

### DAVE & JAN HARTHAN

Jan has been a part of our church all her life. She is the daughter of Tony & Helen Chryst, who are both home with the Lord now. Dave is from Colony Baptist Church in Edina.

They are currently directing in Mozambique, Africa. A significant development has been their success in incorporating nationals into leadership responsibility for the work.

### TO KEEP YOU UP-TO-DATE

from the  
Outreach Commission

- ◆ Outreach giving for the last 11 months totals \$87,913.
- ◆ Our Outreach budget (for the fiscal year that ends in May) is \$119,350.
- ◆ Please prayerfully consider how God would like you to help with this vital area of ministry.



Tread Book Review Group Upon the Lion

A thrilling story of a pioneer missionary, Tommie Titcomb, and his work with the Yagba people of Nigeria. Fruits of his work are evident today. I heartily recommend it.

### Journey Against the Current

This is a spiritual autobiography of Julia Duan and is a graphic and fascinating account of Julia's faith being tested through the Japanese occupation and under communist China. - Harold Anderson

This past year the Lord has led me to the writings of Corrie ten Boom - In My Father's House, The Hiding Place, A Tramp for the Lord, Don't Wrestle, Just Nestle and the devotional, Each New Day.

Her books have been inspiring to me for several reasons.

She trusted God to know what was best for her life, and she was very honest and transparent with God regarding her trials and struggles.

She found joy in small things – the sunshine, an afternoon walk, her watch repair work, and especially in her family.

When everything else was stripped away from her and she was in solitary confinement during World War II, she discovered how precious and important God's Word became to her survival.

She also learned the absolute necessity of forgiving others as Christ Jesus forgave her.

*If you are need of encouragement and hope, I highly recommend her writings!* - Cindy Sawyer

## The Way of the Cross

- ◆ Good Friday Service, April 18, at 7:00 PM.
- ◆ We will take a look at the meaning of the cross in the life of a Christian and will be challenged to respond freshly to the incredible love of Christ.
- ◆ Music will feature congregational singing and special numbers led by the First Free Choir.

# ***Guy's Night Out***

## ***NCAA Men's Basketball Final***



***What: Food, fun and fellowship***

***When: Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>***

***Who: Men age 16 to 106***

***Where: First Free gym***

***Time: 7:00 pm for pre-game & pizza***

***Bring: A friend and some pop or a bag of chips/snack to share***

***Questions? Contact John Merry, Dennis Powers or Doug Nelson***

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