



FIRST WORD

First Evangelical Free Church Monthly Publication

June-July 2004

SERVICE AT ITS
BEST

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Henri J. Nouwen wrote, "The mystery of ministry is that the Lord is to be found where we minister. That is what Jesus tells us when he says: 'Insofar as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me.'" (Matt. 25:40)- from *Gracias!*

Did you catch that? Our ministry becomes a way for us to meet the Lord. The more we give, help, guide, counsel, visit, encourage, and serve, the more we receive of the Lord.

Ministry is using whatever God has given me to serve Him and the needs of others, and each of us is capable of some ministry. So the question to ask if you want to receive more of the Lord is, "What has God given me?" He expects it to be used in serving Him and the needs of others.

This month *First Word* is focusing on the ministry and the stories of some people who are involved serving behind the scenes here at First Free.

Most opportunities for service, in fact, are away from the spotlight. Although nobody can promise you a glorious position, I can promise you more of God.

So here is my challenge: If you call First Free your home church, then commit to spending at least one hour a week in some type of service.

"God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them." Hebrews 6:10.

God sees your work and He will reward you.

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SERMON SERIES *Pastor Joel Sutton*

Widening the Front Doors – The Church of Acts

- June 6 – Acts 1: Over and Out
- June 13 – Acts 2:1-41: Peter's Greatest Sermon
- June 20 – Pastor Eric Preaching: Acts 2:42-47: A Fast
- June 27 – Acts 3: The Peter Principal
- July 4 – Guest Preacher: TBA
- July 11 – Guest Preacher: Rev. John Easterwood
- July 18 – Acts 4:1-31 – The Saving Name
- July 25 – Acts 4:32-5:16 – The Fatality of Error

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,

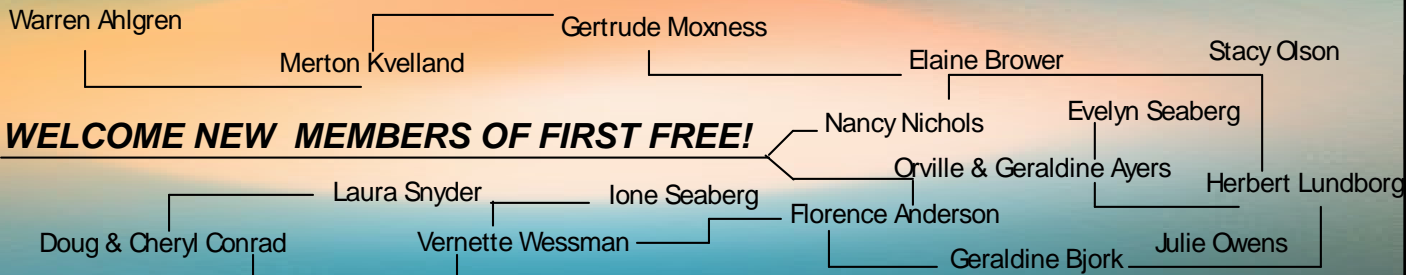
EQUIP THEM FOR MINISTRY SO THAT GOD'S NAME WILL BE EXALTED.

Annual Meeting Election Results

Caring Commission Vice-Chair	John Lande
Outreach Commission Chair	Glenn Hultstrand
Nurture Commission Chair	Cheryl Vataas
Worship Commission Vice Chair	Jerry McDonald
Finance & Property Chair	Bob Goodman
Finance & Property Members	Matt Beckett Jerry Fisher Steve Rose
Nominating Committee	Mary Anderson Dean Larson

I JUST CALLED TO SAY...

It is often a very lonely stage of life when you are raising a child without adequate support. The questions that get asked during motherhood or pregnancy are uncountable. That is why Phyllis Nordin has chosen to reach out in this area. Her knowledge, having worked in nursing for so many years, has also been very beneficial for moms at First Free Church. It is a service that goes unseen, but has tremendous impact on mothers and women who need medical guidance.



DOING WHAT I CAN AS LONG AS I CAN

Betty Renstrom and Stacy Olson

Prepared: That word enters my mind each time I think about my visit with Betty Renstrom. I can still see the glass bowl brimming with strawberries and the leaves neatly sliced off. I can still smell the hot cocoa concocted from scratch before my arrival. I can still taste the wonderful bread too! Preparation. For Betty, it is something that also filters into her service to God at First Free every Sunday morning before you step foot in the sanctuary. During our discussion, Betty shared an amusing story of how she was able to help behind the scenes.

“I am an early bird. Wherever I go and whatever I do, I am always early. So imagine, on Sunday, I arrive early as usual—around 8:30 am. I saw pastor Joel washing windows. You do not know what it did to me!” At this point, Betty throws her hands up. “‘Pastor Joel, why don’t you let me do that! You have much more important things to do than washing windows!’ Joel handed over the glass cleaner and cloth very quickly! I added, ‘I’d be glad to do this on a regular basis.’” The impact of what Betty said sunk in. “One thing I asked of God was, ‘If you really want me to work for you, you’re going to have to make me feel better!’”



Look how God answered that. Even this past Sunday, I saw Betty in the cold, wiping down the glass doors. Prepared with her own cleaning supplies and her time, Betty is impacted most by how Jesus served when he washed Peter’s feet. “You have to really humble yourself,” she states with caution. “I remember the impact of washing my husband’s feet before he died.” From that statement, Betty and I discussed the result of comfort in serving. Sitting at the table with Betty, on a cloudy day, peering out her spotless windows, I thought to myself, I see God in action in Betty who is prepared to do what she is able to with love.

Pray for Betty, as she wants to continue to serve, but due to her health and the doctor’s recommendation, she may not be able to continue washing windows on a consistent basis. Your prayers are deeply appreciated. If you want to help, please let Betty know!

Who Packed Your Chute?

Charles Plumb was sitting in a restaurant when a man came up to him and said, "You're Plumb. You flew jet fighters in Vietnam. You were on the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!" "How in the world did you know all that?" asked Plumb. The man who had been on the same ship replied, "I packed your parachute." Then he added, "I guess it worked."

That night Plumb thought of this man who stood at a table in the belly of the ship carefully folding parachutes for men whose lives might depend on them. Plumb was saddened and humbled as he thought, How many times might I have passed this man but didn't even say good morning because I was a jet pilot and he was a low-ranking sailor?

Check out the story about David and the Amalekites and how David saw no distinction between the men in his armies. He said, "They shall share alike." (1 Samuel 30:24)

In God's service there are no high and low people, no high and low tasks. We all depend on one another. Let's never forget those who packed our parachute.



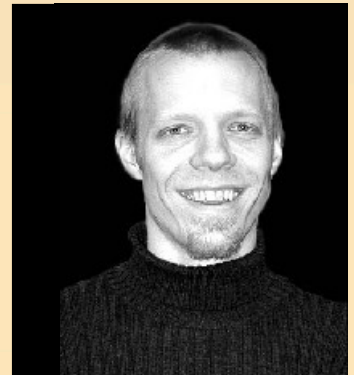
Our Daily Bread, RBC Ministries, April-May 2004, Grand Rapids MI, reprinted by permission.

Herbert Vander Lugt

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Scott Beckett

"Two of the most important things I discovered when I was attending Capernwray Bible School in Australia is what it really means to search for your gift/gifts and to use them. That's what led me to seek this position. I am able to use my gifts, and in turn, it gives me purpose to what I am doing. I know I did not end up here by chance."



I am being taught in my position how crucial God's timing really is. One afternoon, I was changing a valve in a restroom. After I had finished testing it, I walked away-and before I got too far, I heard water trickling from behind the valve. Suddenly it sprayed very heavily out of the wall. The pipe was so badly corroded that it could have burst any time. All of this could have happened 30 minutes later after I was gone, resulting in a huge flood. About a month after that, I was leaving since it was the end of the week. I went to the boiler room to find the water heater leaking badly. I went to turn the water off to the water heater. In the struggle of trying to turn it off, I found out it was not a valve but a corroded cap to a water pipe. Water gushed out. Imagine me on top of a boiler getting hosed down. It was pretty funny. It doesn't stop there. When I came in on Sunday, right after this incident, it had been snowing very heavily. I came to open things up at the church and to clear the snow off the sidewalks. When I went into the boiler room I discovered five inches of water with a burst pipe spraying water all over the electrical panels. In that moment, I shut down the power to the whole building, and was able to take care of the problems before anyone arrived. I see God's perfect timing in these circumstances. This position as custodian gives me a chance to listen to God's leading and allow Him to put me in those situations.

"I am not a pastor, or a teacher, I am a custodian behind the scenes of most things that happen at First Free. My position is to minister by serving."

One challenge I face in my ministry is organization. At times I am tired, grouchy and not in the mood to help anyone. It is then that I try to remind myself what I am here for. To serve!

Please pray for strength and discernment in what I do. Pray that I have a consistent serving heart, and that the ministry I am in would keep benefiting God's plan for First Free and others in their ministries.

❖ FEFC NEWS & UPCOMING SUMMER EVENTS ❖



- Games
- Crafts
- Songs
- Snacks
- Bible Stories

Vacation Bible School

Where: First Free Church

Who: Kids age 5 – entering 6th grade

When: Monday, July 26 - Friday, July 30

(from 9:30 am – until 12:00 pm)



Sojourner's June Social

When: Friday, June 11th 6 pm

Where: Joel & Becky Sutton's
4817 10th Avenue South

What: Barbecue and fellowship
(adults only)

Please sign up to bring a dish to share.
A sign-up list is posted in our classroom.

Congratulations Graduating Seniors!

Christina Olson Jordan Milikan Phil Olson
Jennifer Hibst Emily Sawyer

Congratulations College graduates and beyond!

Christy Fleming Wheaton College
Bekah Holman Bethel College
Linnea Londborg Bryan College
Ben Nordell Bemidji State
Steve Sawyer Dunwoody Technical College
Eric Stabnow Mankato State University
Thompson Ivory Humphrey Institute
Enrique Fernandez Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

First Free Church Semi-Annual Children's Hike



Ross Olson
Hike Leader

(612) 824-7691

All 4th —6th graders, kids from Jr. church, Adventure Club, Stockade, VBS and ESL classes at Salem Free are invited. Meet at the First Free parking lot, on 52nd and Chicago Ave at 9 am Sat., June 5. The journey begins near the Sibley House in Mendota. Around 5-6 pm, we will drive the kids to their homes.

First Evangelical Free Church

Minneapolis, MN 55417

Bring Connect Mature



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