

Results for: Connect Pronunciation: [Kuh-nekt]

Connecting to other believers is an integral part of the Christian walk. Below the Sanborns share their thoughts on what connecting means to them, and how they have recently connected to the body of believers at First Free.

1. ***“To become joined or united.”*** When we first visited First Free a little over one year ago, we felt a connection to the church. First Free was by far the friendliest church that we had been to. Each Sunday, some new person introduced him or herself to us.

We were looking for a church that we could see ourselves growing into. First Free seemed to be the place. Maybe it was the donuts. Maybe it was the overwhelming welcome to our son Jeremy when he was born October 2005. We received a number of meals from people we had never met. We were thrown a baby shower by people we hardly knew. Maybe it was the chance to visit with other new families at Pastor Joel and Becky Sutton’s home. We knew that First Free was a place that we wanted to join.

2. ***“To plug in.”*** Friendliness only takes one so far in a church. We feel a need to plug into the church, to see where God can use us, to find out why he has brought us to First Free. We have felt connected when we have found ways to plug into the ministries at First Free. I feel connected when I’m spending Sunday mornings with my first-grade Sunday School class. What a joy and privilege to share Jesus with these fantastic people!

3. ***“To establish relationships.”*** To feel truly connected at a church we need to be relating to other believers so that we can encourage one another in our walks with God. This requires that we share our lives with one another. These relationships take time to develop, which can be challenging when our lives are full and busy. But we look forward to developing these relationships with our friends here at First Free.

Did You Know?

Corey and Jessica Sanborn are involved in the Chaim ABF. Jessica recently started teaching Sunday school. Corey is employed by US Bank in the technical and financial fields, and Jessica works part-time as an associate attorney for a local law firm. Since Jeremy’s arrival last fall, they have really enjoyed settling into their roles as parents.



Function: verb

1. **To become joined or united**
2. **To plug in**
3. **To place or establish in relationship**

(The American Heritage Dictionary)



Forces of Connection

First Word: I have noticed recently that you have a new title, **“Pastor of Worship & Connecting”**. What does that mean?

Well, the worship part of the title is the same as it has been. I'm still attending to the priority of worshipping God in our corporate gatherings. The term “connecting” has to do with establishing relationships. One of the purposes of First Free is to “connect” people to God's family. My new job is to develop people and systems that allow more people to be more connected to the family of First Free Church. God desires His family to meet one another's needs at many levels (i.e. socially, physically, emotionally) and in such a way they live a common life together. For a very intense description of a highly connected community, see Acts 2:42-47. From a human perspective, building lives together is an impossible task, but it is God's desire for His people to risk and share in connecting with one another and those outside of family.



First Word: What is the **“Welcome Force”**?

The Welcome Force has no real connection with science fiction. Its point is connection. The Welcome Force is a ministry that seeks to intentionally welcome outsiders to the family at First Free into our Sunday morning gathering. The Force includes the Welcome/Information Center attendant(s) who give a gift to our first timers, Guest “Hosts” who spend time getting to know guests who stop by after the service to get a donut, Ushers, Curbside Greeters and Greeters. If you have served as a greeter, you have been a part of the Welcome Force without even knowing it!



First Word: I have noticed that there is something called **“Guest Luncheon”** every once in a while on a Sunday after the second service. What is that for?

After folks have visited First Free a few times, we invite them to join us for lunch to get to know them better and explain a little bit more about where they might connect to our family. Pastor Joel is there as well to answer any questions they might have.

First Word: What are some ideas you have to help people **connect to our church body** in the future?

There are so many ideas for connecting! Our body has incredible people in it, and by hearing people's stories, others are bound to connect to them. I'd like to encourage and build a network of small group leaders to shepherd their groups in healthy ways, many in one another's homes. Many folks will only feel like they are connected if they can contribute somewhere, so I'd also like to see us further deploy people into ministry. I want to encourage each ABF to continue to establish welcoming environments on Sundays and throughout the week. Much of the connecting process will take time and initiative from church body members to get to know others. There are other ideas, too, that verge on the outreach or “bring” purpose and will have to wait for a future article.

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