



# The Word on the (F) Street

## Offering the Greatest Resource We Have

Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

Recently, someone that I know showed up at church looking for help. It was someone that I had been with during an extremely difficult and traumatic experience in their life. They came asking for help and I was excited by the fact that they were at “F” Street Neighborhood Church looking to find help for the struggles in their life.

After some conversation, I stated that we could walk over to Center Pointe to see what they might be able to do to assist with the needs. The offer was rejected, and re- \$20 or a room at a hotel, difficult to deny the re- vince this person, along F Street community, that a greater help than \$20, were offering to walk support of a community, that all we were able to the immediate, and a

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placed with a request for to stay for the night. It was quest, but I tried to con- with a few others from the what we were offering was or a night at a hotel. We with them, to give them the the body of Christ. It ended do is offer some food for ride to a different location.

I sat there thinking, “Do you not see that what we are offering you is far greater than anything you are asking for? We are offering you the support of a community - the very body of Jesus.” We were not offering Center Pointe as the answer, but we were offering to walk with them to Center Pointe, and to anywhere that led. If Center Pointe had no answer, we were willing to work with them to figure out the next steps. They just were unwilling to walk with us.

I realized, in that moment, just how important and powerful the body of Christ is for this individual, and also for each of us as followers of Jesus, including myself. We need the body of Christ to grow in maturity (Ephesians 4:11-16). We need each other in order to be the body of Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12-31). Together, in harmony, I believe we can do far greater things than we realize (Genesis 11:5-6).

See, at “F” Street Neighborhood Church, we believe that to be a disciple of Jesus there are “5 C’s” that must mark our lives. They are **Christ, Community, Character, Calling and Competencies**. Community is a priority if we are going to be a follower of Jesus. It is not something that we can opt out of. Many want to believe, “I can believe in Jesus and be a disciple.” Sure you can believe in Jesus and not be a part of the body, but you can never be healthy or mature in your faith apart from it. You will never be all that God intended you to be without, and we will never see all that God wants to do in us or our neighborhood, our city, our country or the world apart from it.

1 Peter 4 gives us an idea of what this community should do:

*“The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.*

*God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then*



### Calendar for December 2019

- 1st: Sunday Service
- 3rd: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 4th: 6pm Youth Group
- 5th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 6th: **Happy Birthday Joshua Dicter**
- 8th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Jordyn Schmeekle**
- 10th: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 12th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 15th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Aspen Triplett**
- 16th: **Happy Birthday Toby Pierce, Silas Richard**
- 17th: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 18th: 6pm Youth Group; **Happy Birthday Kat Wiese**
- 19th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 22nd: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Caleb Heerspink, Linda Morgan**
- 23rd; **Happy Birthday Chance Triplett**
- 24th: **Christmas Eve**
- 25th: **Christmas Day**

Please keep us up to date on birthdays & anniversaries! If you aren't sure that we have your information, talk to Jane Mailand or simply fill out a Welcome Card and hand it to her. In addition, if your address, phone, or email has changed, let Jane know.

*Speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen."*

There are four things that I think we can see and need to ask ourselves these questions.

1. Prayer – Am I committed to praying for the individuals in our church, for our church, and for the ministries of the church?
2. Love – Am I committed to “loving” people at “F” Street Church in ways that reflect the description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7? If not, consider the reflections that Paul makes, in the first 3 verses of that passage.
3. Hospitality – Am I committed to opening my home to others in the church community, either for a shared meal or offering a place to stay?
4. Using my gifts – Am I using the gifts that God has given to me for the sake of the mission of the church? Imagine if everyone was how great the impact on our neighborhood could be. There are lots of ways to serve and there is no unimportant task each week. From Benevolence, to Greeting, and from Nursery to Transportation, there are lots of ways to help together fulfill the mission God has for us in the community.

I want to close with this thought: If you are a follower of Jesus, you are called to be a part of the body of Jesus for your growth and the growth of others. Never forget that you are the church and your involvement is imperative.



## Lincoln School of Ministry **Jeff Heerspink, Pastor**

The Lincoln School of Ministry was started as a joint effort between Jacobs Well and “F” Street Neighborhood Church, with one thought in mind: To equip the people of the neighborhood to be the ministers to the neighborhood and beyond. We are in our third year, and have been able to do just that. Whether you want to serve in long term full time ministry, or just learn more so that you are better prepared for the volunteer service you currently do - or want to do - the Lincoln School of Ministry is for you.

I encourage you to consider taking a trimester. It could help you to grow in your gifts, leave you more in awe of our great God, or give you some new experiences in ministry.

The Lincoln School of Ministry will start its next trimester on January 2. This trimester focuses on ministry, or the practical skills for ministry: 3 weeks on teaching, 3 weeks on counseling and 4 weeks on evangelism.

You will sit under, and engage with great practitioners and educators like Bill Thornton, who is a professor at Nebraska Christian College, and Dan Dallman, who has been a pastor and missionary as well as is a spiritual counselor.

The cost is \$100, and there are scholarships available upon request. Pick up an application from the back table of the church and see what God might do in and through you.

All classes are taught at the Redeemer Building on Thursday nights, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

## Financial Update **Tad Stryker, Elder**

*Celebrate what God has done, pray about year-end needs, give what you can.*



Can you believe it? We're down to the last month of 2019.

With only a few days left in the year, it's a good time to reflect on God's goodness. I urge you to stop and think about it for a few minutes. I like to make a list of things that happened this year which I am thankful for.

For “F” Street Neighborhood Church, that list would include things like:

- Made it to our fifth anniversary as a church!
- Helped launch a new neighborhood thrift store
- Launched an “outdoor service” in our parking lot so neighborhood residents reluctant to come into our building can interact with our hosts seated outside and hear God's word taught.
- Expanded our ministry to children and youth
- Increased our block parties to a monthly schedule
- Expanded our ministry by hiring residents

It's also time to plan your giving for the rest of the year. Please pray about it. Thinking about how God has blessed you, what do you believe he is prompting you to do? Many of you are giving regularly, and we thank you. If you want to make an extra gift to “F” Street Church by year's end, now's the time to do it.

We need your giving to maintain our current pace of ministry. We're paying for more food to feed more people in our neighborhood for more weeks of the year. In addition, we're driving more miles to bring people from around Lincoln to our Sunday morning services, while paying our utilities, buying cleaning supplies and keeping the roof repaired.

How to pay for this? Our goal as a board of elders was to increase local giving to \$6,000 per month (\$72,000) in 2019. Due to a communication lapse, however, a lower amount, \$66,000 was entered into our annual budget. We need a big year-end push to meet that goal. In fact, we need \$26,852 to come in between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31. Would you like to be part of that effort?

God only uses people who are willing. Are you willing?

If you are willing, please pray about what God would have you give. And after you are settled in your mind and heart, give your gift, whatever the size. God can use whoever He wants to do His work. It's a privilege for you and me to be part of it.

## Welcome Aboard!

**Kayla Wilson, Team Leader-Hospitality & Discipleship**



Along with the new season, we are excited to introduce two new Team Leaders, Jacki Knapp and Scott Wiese! Jacki will be recruiting, encouraging, and equipping the Nursery Team, while Scott's efforts will be invested in the Audio and Video Team.

Not only do we simply enjoy these two individuals, but they have exhibited qualities that we, as a church, value and desire to build upon:

- They have acknowledge Christ as their Lord and Savior
- They are committed to the community of "F" Street Church
- Their character is in submission to the authority of scripture
- They are in pursuit of growing in their character
- They are fulfilling God's call to love others and reach the lost



We, at "F" Street Church, are reveling in what God is doing here, and how he is building this body. We believe God is at work, not only in this church and neighborhood, but in our day to day lives. We are thankful to partake in the free gift of salvation through Christ, and the sanctification that our relationship with Christ brings. For we know that God is working all things for our good and his glory, so we have this hope to press on. During this season, we are particularly thankful and remember this gift, the gift of life and hope that God so graciously offered through His Son, Jesus.

Today, if you're interested in serving in the way of loving on kids, or working with audio and video, connect with one of these new Team Leaders. More importantly, if you're interested in this free gift of salvation offered to us in and through Jesus, reach out. We would love to walk that out with you.

Take some time to connect with Jacki and Scott and give them a warm welcome!

## Neighborhood Parties Savannah Clapper

As the fall and winter have settled in, we have invited our Block Parties indoors--we call them Neighborhood Parties. Our goal is to invite our neighbors, serve them well, and to know their stories. In doing so, we are living up our name as "F" Street Neighborhood Church.

This last month, we had a Thanksgiving meal, where we got together as friends and neighbors, and sat around with some good food. Next month we will gather again, around tables and food, to get to know one another, to serve one another well, and to

share our stories. December's Neighborhood Party will be a potluck, so bring a dish to share!

If you would like to help with the planning, food preparation, or setting up on that day, reach out to myself, as we work better together.



## Parish Nurses' Corner Barb Douglas, Parish Nurse

Hello Dear Family at "F" St. Neighborhood Church,

'Tis the season to remember all the blessings God has bestowed on us with throughout the year. I know there are times when it is difficult to think of blessings when our world is turned upside down. However, I would like to share a few ways to be thankful no matter what our situation.

1. Thankfulness is not necessarily based on how great life is or has been lately.
2. Thankfulness is really a state of mind. A way to look at things and situations that bring Jesus into the picture...like being thankful even in the hard times.
3. It may be rather difficult to "think" thankfully about the cold weather, or an illness, or losses of any kind (be it relationships, jobs or health).
4. As human beings we tend to think of being thankful only when we're "happy".

I would like to pass on some thankfulness that most people would not think to be thankful about, at least not usually.

1. Thank you, Father, for the pain that keeps me home sometimes...it gives me more time to talk to you.
2. Thank you, Father, for being with me through the loss of my family member. Your presence helps me when times are especially bad.
3. Thank you, Father, for letting me know you are near, and I can call on you no matter how our relationship has suffered. My bullheadedness keeps us apart.
4. Thank you, Father, for loving me when I can no longer love myself (no matter what the reason).
5. Thank you, Father, for remembering me through all the times I have forgotten you.
6. Thank you, Father, for never turning your back on me, because I'm so terribly weak, and continue to make the same mistakes over and over.

I'm sure each of you can think of how God has always been there

even when we didn't "feel" like he was. That's an important thing to remember...thankfulness is not a feeling, it's a state of mind. And, blessings are always present in our lives. They may not be seen or felt, but they are ever present to the child of God. Being one of God's children doesn't make us perfect, not even close! It just makes us loved and cherished by the One who is!

So, this Christmas season, let's all try to keep the wonderful blessing of Christ at the top of our Christmas list. Give that blessing to everyone around us, especially those who don't seem to be in that thankful state of mind. The gift of unconditional love, this Christmas, is the most precious and least expensive gift ever given. May each of you receive that gift 100-fold. We love each and everyone of you unconditionally. May the light of Christ and the blessing of his life, death, and resurrection remain with you always.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your Parish Nurse, Barbara Douglas

## Religion vs Relationship Jeff Graham, Team Leader

I have often pondered the idea of religion vs simply getting to know God. I have found my mind wandering during church service. I found my heart and mind not focusing on God the Father, Jesus and his glorious gift to us, or the Holy Spirit who resides in each of us and is constantly nudging us here or there... if we just listen.

I found myself asking questions that I did not have answers to. I could not live up to the image I had in my head of what a Christian might look like, or how a Christian might act. I felt fearful in the knowledge that God could see the real me - the "me" who was at times a jerk, hard, dismissive, unmoved, angry. I knew I wanted God to see the good stuff - when I helped, cared, had empathy, had time to serve, and all that stuff that goes along with a "good Christian image."

It bothered me so much that I sought help. In short, I found out that God wants to know the real me. The good, the bad, the ugly. With that knowledge, I felt relieved. He still loves me, even though I am not perfect, even though I get distracted, even though I fail, even though I can be challenging, argumentative, mean, and angry. He takes the good, the bad, the ugly, and accepts me fully, right where I am. Through time, I get to know him. I read the Bible. I learn something new. And slowly, painfully, and deliberately, I make small, and sometimes unnoticeable changes. Every time I do, I walk the line towards who He wants me to be. I become a little more like him. Thank you Jesus, for saving me.

I found this article, that so well outlined some of these ideas. I have asked to have it reprinted here. I did substitute the verses found in the original article with NLT verses, simply because I find the NLT Bible easier to read and understand. Enjoy!

### **Religion Versus Relationship: What's the Difference?**

**By Andrea Charles | May 17, 2018**

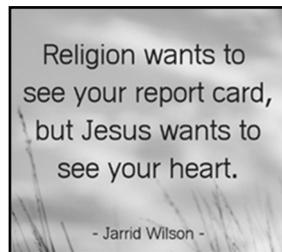
(<https://sharingmyfavorites.com/religion-versus-relationship-whats-the-difference/>)

## Religion

religion (rə'lijən) noun. A set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. (Credit: Dictionary.com)

Within the Christian religion, there are many denominations: Baptists, Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, and more. Each denomination has its own beliefs and its own list of do's and don'ts.

For some people, being a Christian means the following:



- Doing what's right and avoiding what's wrong to gain entrance to Heaven
- Participating in rituals to try to achieve spirituality
- Trying to fulfill the duties and requirements of the religion

- Maintaining an outside appearance that looks Christian-like
- Acting like a Christian should

There were people in the Bible who professed Christianity. They tried to do all the things a Christian was supposed to do and look like a Christian was supposed to look. They even paid their tithes and went to church regularly. But their hearts weren't right. They were so caught up in the strict observance of religious ceremonies, laws, and traditions that they missed out on having a relationship with Christ.

Matthew 15:8 says "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

Luke 11:39-43 outlines Jesus' admonishment of the Pharisees: "Then the Lord said to him, "You Pharisees are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are filthy—full of greed and wickedness! Forty fools! Didn't God make the inside as well as the outside? So clean the inside by giving gifts to the poor, and you will be clean all over. "What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens, but you ignore justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things. "What sorrow awaits you Pharisees! For you love to sit in the seats of honor in the synagogues and receive respectful greetings as you walk in the marketplaces."

The Pharisees *looked* clean on the outside, but their hearts were wicked. They focused on observing religious ceremonies, laws, and traditions instead of getting to know Jesus. The Pharisees paid their tithes, but didn't possess the love of God. They attended church regularly, but they were going to be seen. As a matter of fact, they wanted to sit in the best seats so they could be seen by others. Sadly, the Pharisees were caught up in religion.

Still today, there are people who profess Christianity but their priorities just aren't right. They only want to be a Christian when it is convenient for them. They gladly go to church on Sundays,

but they do whatever *they* want to do during the week. Or maybe they ignore God until tragedy strikes and they really *need* something from him. These people are involved in *religion* instead of having a relationship with the God of the universe!

Being a Christian is so much more than dressing up and attending church on Sunday. It has been said that going to church doesn't make one a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes one a car. It is so easy to get carried away with the do's and don'ts of a religion and neglect to have a **RELATIONSHIP** with Jesus Christ!

### Relationship

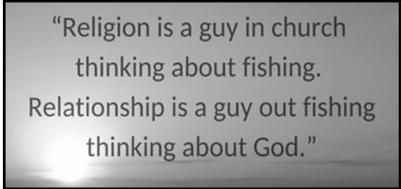
relationship (ri'lāSHən,SHip) noun. The way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, or the state of being connected. (Credit: Encyclopedia.com)

When two people are in a relationship, they spend time together, talk to one another, listen to one another, and trust each other.

How can we identify someone that has a relationship with God?

- Their heart has been changed
- They have a genuine love for God
- They spend time talking to God
- They listen for God's voice and his directions
- They invite God into every area of their life (home, business, family, decisions, etc.)

God wants an intimate relationship with us. He wants us to experience the fullness of His love and peace. When we seek God and pour out our love on Him, we will build a relationship with Him.



Deuteronomy 4:29: "But from there you will search again for the Lord your God. And if you search for him with all your heart and soul, you will find him."

James 4:8: "Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world."

Mark 12:33 reminds us that loving God is more important than trying to do good works and make sacrifices: "And I know it is important to love him with all my heart and all my understanding and all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself. This is more important than to offer all of the burnt offerings and sacrifices required in the law."

It's not the good works we do that are paramount; it's the *relationship* we have with the almighty God that really counts!

### How to Have a Relationship With God

So, how do we build a relationship with God? Start by asking God to forgive your sins and become the lord of your life.

Romans 10:9: "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

You cannot skip this step! There are people who attend church regularly. It appears that they are *doing* everything correctly. They have high moral standards and live ethically. Simply put, they are *good people*. But, they have never accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. They've never entered into a relationship with God.

Accepting salvation is something that each person must do for themselves! You can't call yourself a Christian just because your parents or grandparents were Christians. Likewise, going to church regularly doesn't make you a Christian. You must decide that you want to accept and follow Christ. That decision is yours to make!

If you have made that decision, there are several things you can do to draw close to God and have a relationship with him:

- Spend time each day communing with God in prayer
- Take the time to listen for His voice to speak to you
- Study the Word
- Worship Him with all your heart
- Honor Him in everything that you do
- Give yourself wholly to God and stand clean before Him with no secrets
- Realize that you aren't perfect, but God loves you anyway

It's so amazing to realize that the God who created this whole world truly loves us and wants to have a relationship with us!

### What about you?

Take a few minutes to examine your life. Is your life focused on religion or relationship? Maybe you started out alright, but somewhere along the way you lost your focus. Maybe you began to prioritize the do's and don'ts, the ceremonies, the laws, and the traditions of Christianity.

Let today be the day that you shift your focus to Christ and begin to build a relationship with Him. Get to know Him and be enveloped by His love and the peace that passes all understanding!

## Community Groups

**Thursday Group:** 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Keith Morrissey's home. Contact Keith Morrissey, 402-525-4897.

**Sunday Group:** 12:00-1:00 p.m. at "F" Street Church. Contact Keith Morrissey, 402-525-4897.

**Sunday Group:** 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Art & Kayla Wilson's home. Contact them, 402-318-4968.

## Frozen Cranberry Salad

There are no portion or calories available for this recipe...it's just one of my own personal favorites from my daughter Amy's kitchen. ENJOY! It is delicious.

### Ingredients:

- 1-12 oz. pkg. fresh or frozen cranberries, thawed
- 1 1/2 c. granulated sugar
- 1-20 oz. can crushed pineapple
- 1-16 oz. pkg. mini marshmallows
- 2 c. whipping cream
- 2 Tbsp. powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 c. chopped walnut (optional)

### Instructions:

- 1) In a blender, process cranberries until coarsely ground.
- 2) Place cranberries in a bowl and add 1 1/2 c. of granulated sugar, mix well, cover and chill for 1 hour.
- 3) Drain the pineapple, reserving 1/4 c. of the juice.
- 4) In a large mixing bowl, combine marshmallows pineapple and juice. Mix well, cover and chill for 1 hour.
- 5) After chilling, take both the cranberry mixture and the pineapple mixture and mix together. Cover and chill an additional hour.
- 6) In another mixing bowl, beat cream until soft peaks form, then beat in powdered sugar and vanilla.
- 7) Fold cream mixture into pineapple/cranberry mixture, add walnuts if desired.
- 8) Freeze until ready to serve.



## Wisdom Literature Monthly Bible Reading Plan

| November | S of S                   | December | Proverbs                 | December | Proverbs                 | December | Proverbs                 | December | Proverbs                 |
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| 26       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3        | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10       | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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