

# The Word on the (F) Street

## A Little Reflection

Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

A few weeks ago, as I was doing some journaling to God, I reflected on the years of "F" Street Neighborhood Church. Going into our 6<sup>th</sup> year of ministry, in 2020, we know not what it will bring, and I never would have imagined many of the things that are happening here today.

I have included a highlight or two of the history (albeit a short one) of "F" Street Church.

**2013** - We found out that the St. Paul United Church of Christ was preparing to close its doors, after over 100 years of ministry in their neighborhood. Of course, their closing was not our goal, but it seemed like an opportunity for a dream. Years previous, there were prayers for a church in this neighborhood. We saw God's hand in the timing, both in the networks that had been built (that would ultimately support the start-up of this church) and the people that God had brought together to make that happen.

We also found a donor, who was willing to financially take the cost of purchasing the building. On November 3, we were informed that we would be given the opportunity to begin a church, after Easter of 2014.

**2014** - We started with a group of people from the Northern Lighthouse, and others who joined in to see what God had in store for us.

On April 21, we purchased the building, and had our first worship service here the following Sunday. We set June 1 as our first service, hoping that we would have some things in place by that time to make us look like we were ready to connect to the people of our neighborhood.



"F" Street Neighborhood Church was off and running, and soon other churches were joining us: Jacobs Well, and the Hispanic Church, both with whom we share our building.

**2015** - This part may seem like a story of Beth, and our family. But to me, it has significance in our ministry here at "F" Street Church, because, in late November, God began guiding us to move into this neighborhood (not something we originally planned). By the end of February, after lots of prayer, and council, we purchased our home, along with the neighboring duplex, and move our family just a few blocks from the church. It has been one of the great, unforeseen, beauties of God - to move us here, and to call this great neighborhood our home. We moved in (after lots of support from many - helping to remodel the homes) on the Saturday before Easter.

Other things took place, like the giving of space for FoodNet, that distributes food to many in our neighborhood each week.

**2016** - Due to a strong desire to fulfill the call that God has given to the church - to be a place that equips people for ministry, Immerse was started in the summer of 2016. A starting point, if you will, that brings in student from all over the U.S., to Lincoln, to be Immersed in ministry and disciplined. This ministry has served thousands of hours in our neighborhood and with community organizations.



### Calendar for January 2020

- 1st: **New Year's Day**
- 2nd: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 4th: **Happy Birthday Sarah Dicter, Sara Watson**
- 5th: Sunday Service
- 7th: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 8th: **Happy Birthday Amber Schmeekle**
- 9th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 11th: **Happy Birthday Kenneth Curtis**
- 12th: Sunday Service' **Happy Birthday Kyle Raney**
- 14th: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 15th: 6pm Youth Group
- 16th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 19th: Sunday Service
- 20th: **Happy Birthday Nexa Holstien, Troy Parolek**
- 21st: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 23rd: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 26th: Sunday Service
- 28th: 6am Prayer; 7:30pm Freedom Through Christ
- 29th: **Happy Birthday Brett Wood**
- 30th: 6:30pm FoodNet
- 31st: **Happy Birthday Asher Schmeekle**

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.

**2017** – It could seem that there was little that was going on in 2017, but God was starting something that, again, we had no idea where it could lead. We were given the free (always a favored word here at “F” Street Church) use of a building, on 8<sup>th</sup> and D, by Redeemer Lutheran Church. It was an incredible gift,



to say the least, and soon became the home of our Youth Ministries, and some small group activities. It was also the year that we started something else I am thrilled that we offer as a church: The Lincoln School of Ministry. That fall, in connection with Jacobs Well, we were able to launch LSOM as a core part of our process to equip people for ministry.

**2018** – With the gift of the Redeemer Building came more dreams, and the clear need to be able to walk with people in their times of need. Soon we were praying and seeing God’s leading us to start another ministry that, although is a separate 501c3, has great ties to our church: ATLAS.



God connected us with the founder, and soon a board of directors. Then, along came Brody, who we had no idea would serve the neighborhood in such a great way, as the Director of ATLAS. In August ATLAS was launched.

**2019** – Although, already starting in May of 2018, with a call from a local landlord wanting to know if we were still interested in starting a Thrift Store, it was finally a reality in June of 2019. There are many, too many to list, who gave of time and resources to get the Transformations Thrift Store open, and today it serves the neighborhood, connects people to Jesus, and will begin to be a funding source for ATLAS.

We also have seen our new Residency program making an impact on the lives of young leaders, and helping us to serve the neighborhood that God has called us to.

**2020** – Of course, we have some ideas of what could happen in 2020, and we stand waiting in prayer, We are even beginning to work towards new ventures, things from a parade in our neighborhood, to the purchase of the twelve-plex next door.

I can really just say that I stand in amazement at what God has already done, and look forward to what God can continue to do as we seek to serve him. Of course, this states little about each of the many people that God has provided in the journey, and his overall faithfulness to provide for us as a church.

Thanks for being a part of the journey, I look forward to what God can do when we together worship him, trust him, and remain faithful to him.



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

I want to encourage you to consider being a part of the Lincoln School of Ministry, as a means to grow in your relationship with Jesus. We believe that to be a disciple means that we live out

the 5 C’s (Christ, Community, Character, Calling and Competencies). Calling, and Competencies can often be neglected in the spiritual growth of individuals. We take salvation, we like community, we know our character needs to change. However, do we willingly go where God has called us, loving those that he has called us to and are we growing in our skills to be better prepared for ministry at any level?

The Lincoln School of Ministry is designed to be a great starting point for any follower of Jesus who is committed to a local body of believers, and who is already engaged in ministry.

Our next trimester starts January 2, and meets every Thursday night for 10 weeks. This trimester covers public speaking, care giving, and evangelism. If interested you can speak with me or pick up an application on the back table. Cost is \$100 per trimester. Application are due December 29.

## Advent Painting: Jesus is Better Than

**Jean Stryker**

This year, at “F” Street Neighborhood Church, our theme for Advent has been “Jesus is Better Than.” Each week, our sermons have been showing how Jesus is better than the prophets, the angels, Moses, the priests. Each week, we’ve emphasized traditional Advent themes of hope, joy, peace, and love with the lighting of a candle in the advent wreath and the testimony of one of our “F” Street Church family.

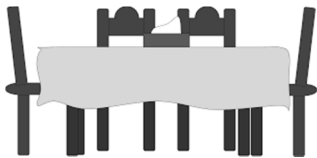
In an attempt to put all of these themes into an image that brings them into the present day, and applies them to what many of us experience in life, artist Jean Stryker worked on a painting throughout the Advent season. The painting was developed layer by layer, taking clearer form with each passing week and causing everyone (even the artist) to wonder what it would look like in the end. But, beyond catching our interest, what was the meaning of this artwork?

In our search for the hope, joy, peace, and love promised during Advent, the world offers us all sorts of options. A lottery ticket might offer a sort of hope. Alcohol and drugs might be seen as a way to find happiness and peace. Social media is a way to find connection and acceptance. Use of these substitutions for true hope, joy, peace and love eventually reveals them to be an illusion. Far more is spent on lottery tickets than is ever given in prizes, and paychecks evaporate in the pursuit of wealth that never comes. Alcohol and drugs destroy countless lives. Social media offers a weak substitute for true relationships; after hours spent online, we are lonelier than when we first sat down at the computer.

In the Advent painting, Jesus in a hoodie (with scars on his hands) is carrying out the trash, which contains items representing fake answers to our real needs. Putting Jesus in a hoodie is a reminder that he is a real person who could be a part of our lives. He’s willing to take out the trash in our lives, to free us from our reliance on the world’s fake solutions to our deep needs. He gives us something far more satisfying: himself. The hope, joy, peace and love that Jesus offers are better than what the world offers. Jesus is “better than”. He is the only true hope, authentic joy, perfect peace, and unending love.

## Why the Table? Savannah Clapper

We want to be a family that gathers around the table together, that eats together, that celebrates, and hurts together - to invest into one another in a way that radically changes how we think and act. That is what we are about here at "F" Street Neighborhood Church. It is why we are in the neighborhood, and why we gather the last week of every month to eat. We want to sit around a table, share stories, hear about one another's weeks, and grow together.



My hope is that this isn't just a place where you come to eat and get warm, but through the conversations and the love of Jesus, you continue to stay warm and be filled with the Spirit. We aren't just scooping out food, though this is a great perk, we are scooping out love.

Consider joining us the last Sunday of every month for a meal. Consider helping out (you can ask Savannah how), or really think about what you can contribute to the table. Are you bringing food to contribute? Great! Are you bringing burdens? Please share. Are you bringing ears to listen? Please do. We hope that through all of our hurts and joys, we simply come to the table, grow in connections, learn to love our neighbors better. Let's be more than the food, let's be community.

## Get to Know Scott Scott Wiese

Hello everyone! You may have seen me around "F" Street Neighborhood Church, here and there. My name is Scott Wiese, and have been attending here for about five years now. I have been given the wonderful opportunity to become a team leader for the audio and visual team. My job is to make everything in the background work as smoothly as possible. If we are doing our job right, you shouldn't even realize we're there!

One of my personal joys about this opportunity, is how quickly it changed my view of going to church to praise God. It's not just a responsibility to attend church; that perspective makes it seem like a burden. I have been given the opportunity to connect with other people that care, and the appreciation that everyone shows, allows me to truly feel like I belong. Before now, I had always struggled with making connections and commitments, but with the opportunities that God has given me, I want to focus on improving myself and everything around me. In healthy relationships, both sides improve for the better. With God, I have faith that he is providing those relationships to build upon.

## Health Ministry Corner

Barb Douglas, Health Minister

Happy and blessed New Year to you all. The weather has been kind, for the most part. The end of 2019 has been really quite nice. I am looking forward to seeing what 2020 is going to bring. I wanted to update all of you on some changes that will be taking place in the new year.

1. I have officially retired my license for nursing. So I will no longer officially be called your parish nurse. However, I will

continue to serve "F" Street Neighborhood Church the same as I have always done. I am hoping to spread out a little in ministry, to get to know more of you. I will continue to serve as the Benevolence Officer, and answer the phones every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., unless I get called out for a visit or other necessary call. I will be adding a couple of new members to the Benevolence Ministry as of February 2020. At that time I will introduce you all to those beautiful people.

2. I will continue to facilitate classes at N.L. for the R.I.P. program, and may be adding some new people to that endeavor as well. Come February, I hope to introduce them to all of you.

3. I also hope to add myself to some new programs as well, so hopefully I will see more of you more often. The position of Health Minister will open up new opportunities for many others who would like to begin helping those in need here at "F" Street Neighborhood Church. If you have a desire to help in this way, please call me at 402-435-3673. If I am not available, please leave me your name, phone number, and the best time to call you back, and we will make a connection. I sincerely hope there are a few good people looking to serve in this capacity.

I believe that this new year, 2020, will open many new opportunities for as many as will look to serve.

"Jesus said to him, if you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Mark 9:23

"He is generous, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his strength shall be exalted with honor." Psalm 112:9

"And now abides faith, hope and charity; but the greatest of these is charity." 1 Corinthians 13:13

I am looking forward to serving "F. Street Neighborhood Church as your Health Minister in 2020 and onward. God's blessings to each and everyone of you. I truly hope and pray that we can get to know each other even better.

Your Health Minister,

Barbara J. Douglas HMFSNC

## 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.

