

VOL. 10 ISSUE 5 · MAY 2024

THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR

F Street Youth

SAGE PETERSON, YOUTH DIRECTOR

Well, summer is quickly approaching and sadly that means it's almost year-end for F Street Youth. Our final Tuesday night of the year will be on May 7th and then we will start meeting regularly again in the fall.

As sad as we are to see our year-end, we are also excited because we can't wait for our mission trip to Hawaiian Gardens, California! We are extremely excited to be partnering with The Way Out Missions to create a VBS for their entire city. Right now, some of our high school students are working to fundraise to help fund the trip. If you're interested in supporting a kid to go on this trip, please contact Sage at sage@fstreetchurch.org.

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The “Plumb Line” of Truth

BILL THORNTON, TEACHING PASTOR

In my office I have a piece of wood that proudly proclaims the following message:

EXERCISE BLOCK

1. Place block on the floor
2. Walk around it twice
3. Sit down and relax

Congratulations! You have just walked around the block twice.

This is a funny example of how something can appear to be saying one thing, but really is saying something quite different.

Presently we live in a world where many things are not what they seem to be. Of course, this shouldn't surprise us as believers because this realm is ruled by an evil one who lies, deceives, and seeks to destroy. As Christians who are living as “foreigners” and “strangers” in such a place, we would do well to keep this in mind and take this to heart as we communicate with one another, as well as with those who have yet to follow Jesus as their Lord.

For one thing, we should always seek to discern whether the “thing” that is being represented to us is, in fact, what it presents itself to be. This is where living in the presence and proximity of other believers can be particularly helpful. Personally, I have found that I am much less likely to fall into the devil's schemes when I am actively engaged with other believers who help me stay accountable to the truth.

Some of you may find this difficult to believe, but many years ago, as a college student, I worked on a construction crew one summer. One of the things I learned was how to use a “plumb line” to make sure that everything was lined up straight. After all, crooked walls are not a good idea in building construction. As we were working, our college president, who was also a pastor, came alongside me and suggested that those who would be preachers should use the Bible as their “plumb line,” too. In other words, the Scriptures are God's revealed truth for us as believers. Through them, we know what is true or false from His divine perspective as our God. I will never forget this illustration that has reminded me through the years to test everything that is taught by God's objective standard, which is His Word.

When these two things are joined together (studying God's Word within a Christian community), I have found that we are much more likely to discover God's true will for our lives, and much less likely to be misled or deceived by that which is false. Today, I want to encourage us all to seek out this kind of fellowship where the people of God are devoted to the study of the Word of God.

In Christ, Pastor Bill Thornton

F Street Neighborhood Church is the place that we emerged from. You provided the vision, the work, and the means for us to become who we are today. We are so grateful.

As we enter Give to Lincoln Day Month, please consider making a financial contribution to Transformations and the other amazing ministries that have been born out of F Street. Every financial donation you make between May 1 and May 30 receives a proportional share of a match fund increasing the impact of your donation.

This allows Transformations to donate an outfit, household needs, a present for a kiddo, or a pair of shoes to someone in need.

To give, use the QR Code or go to www.givetolincoln.com/nonprofits/transformations-thrift-store.

Thank you for your support,
CeCe Robinson
Director Transformations Thrift Store



Upcoming Events with Atlas: Lincoln

ATLAS: LINCOLN

Want to learn about mentoring? How do you mentor? Why should you mentor?

Answer these questions and gain important insights on mentoring at our Initial Mentor Training held on Tuesday, May 28 from 6pm-8pm at our office.

Lunch available: Stop by our office on Monday, May 20, to grab a burger or hotdog between 12pm-1.

F STREET

EST 2014

IT'S ALL GOOD IN THE HOOD

**New 10 Year Anniversary
F Street:**

**T-Shirts
Hoodies
Crewnecks**

Mark your calendars!

On Sale May 19th!

The Seven Deadly Sins: Part 8 - Against the Thoughts of Vainglory

ANDY BUTLER, TECH & BENEVOLENCE LEADER

29. Against the thought of vainglory that, before doing the commandments of God, wants to teach them:

Whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:19)

Pope Gregory saw “Vainglory” as a form of pride, so he folded it into pride and removed it from his “7 deadly sins” list. I kind of think the distinction Evagrius made between Vainglory and Pride is interesting. Especially in his above entry, where he reminds us through scripture, that if we are not living out God’s commandments, then we are essentially teaching them in vain. Or this next entry with which Evagrius reminds his fellow monks of this:

30. Against the thoughts of vainglory that completely attached itself to acts of piety and made the intellect perverse:

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven (Matt 6:1)

In this entry Evagrius, again through scripture, clarifies the reason we do good works for others as followers of Jesus. It isn’t for public recognition or our own praise. Instead, it is simply because doing what’s good or right is good and right, and pleasing to our Father in heaven. The ideal picture is one of loving intimacy with God, which in turn compels us to carry out His will in our lives and the lives of others. Vainglory is merely our glory, but humble, sacrificial service through love is done for the glory of God. Based on his handbook, Evagrius seemed to view pride as the inability to see one’s sin in the first place, but vainglory as pride masked in religion. Many of you have several real-life examples of this running through your minds right now. I think of the church leader who cares more about his public platform than the people who make up his church. Or the televangelist who uses God as a smokescreen for what is no more than his or her own quick cash-grab or short con. The point is, God does not want to be used by us for selfish gain or for our own vain glory. He wants to use us for His Glory.

I will admit, doing something for the Glory of God, as a concept, can be a bit abstract without explanation or exposition. It’s also difficult to address with much specificity, because it comes across as highly conceptual. I do think sometimes God’s intention is for us to meditate on His teachings, in this case, what it might mean to do what we do for His Glory. So it could be that it is unclear, but with purpose. While Jesus was on earth, he did teach through complexity. He also taught through timeless stories or parables which were meant to be applied throughout human history, in many different contexts. I think the way Evagrius treats “vainglory” in his handbook provides at least some clarity on what it means to do what we do for the Glory of God and not our own. Scripture tells us God looks at our hearts. Our heart is where our motivations and deepest desires lie. Therefore, I think we can take the Lord’s name in vain without ever actually saying it. In fact, my two earlier examples of the con-artist televangelist, or starry-eyed pastor are both taking the Lord’s name in vain. They are teaching one thing but living another. While it’s true that all of us have fallen short in this area, and all of us are hypocrites to some extent. It’s one thing to recognize that and be convicted it’s wrong. It’s another to continue living that way, unrepentantly, for your own vainglory. Let us pray and do good for others for their benefit and for the Glory of God, expecting nothing in return. Let us not take or live the Lord’s name in vain.

Church Planting Update

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

On March 24th, we held a F Street Family meeting to discuss and approve getting a possible loan from the Christian Reformed Church to purchase the current City Light building on 28th and O. We are still in the process of this, and the building is officially on the market.

The biggest challenge we have right now is finances. F Street has never had a loan and not sure we want one. We also do not have the 1.5 million to purchase the building (We do have a \$300,000 pledged commitment from an individual supporter for 24/25). So, we need a miracle, if this is to happen.

James tells us, "You don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure." (4:2-3)

I want to ask you the church to pray, asking God for the miracle. I know that some have questions about the starting of another church, and so do I, as this is a step of faith. However, we have always wanted to raise up leaders, to start new churches, not get bigger. We have always wanted to start churches in neighborhoods that are often overlooked by the church. So, we do see planting churches as a part of our purpose and health. I am asking you to ask God to do his work in our hearts and to lead in this time by providing the funds. I am asking that we all open our hearts to what God wants to do and even if that is stretching us personally and financially. I also ask that you pray for wisdom as we do not want to force anything, simply walk in faith.

Let's see together if this is God's will for us, for the Hartly neighborhood and for the kingdom.

Note: you can give to the church planting effort by giving to the church planting fund via placing the money in an envelope and placing in the offering.

Community Groups

Topic: Genesis

Leader: Vince Grove
Location: Jean Stryker's office
Day/Time: Sundays, 9 am

Topic: Ephesians

Group: Young Adults (20s) led by Bill & Marcia Thornton
Location: Grace Room
Day/Time: Thursdays, 7:11 pm

Topic: Testimonies

Leader: Ardeshir Mazhari
Location: 1750 Prospect Street
Day/Time: Thursdays, 7 pm

Topic: Esther

Group: Women's Study led by Beth Heerspink and others
Location: Fellowship Hall
Day/Time: Fridays, 10 am

Topic: Spiritual Disciplines

Leaders: Drew & Sarah Peters
Location: Fireside Room
Day/Time: May 10th & 31st at 5:30 pm

Living Life Like Jesus

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

Omniscient = all knowing

Omnipresent = present everywhere at the same time

Even with the creation of AI there is no one, no 'thing,' that is all knowing apart from God. This is one of the characteristics that the Bible tells us of God. Another characteristic of God is that He is omnipresent: He is everywhere at the same time, and we can never escape His presence no matter where we go.

As followers of Jesus, we are to be like Him. One verse that has really captured my attention recently is 1 John 2:6: "Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did."

This is an interesting and challenging statement. Do I live as Jesus did? It is also interesting to note that Jesus was fully God, yet dare I say that He was also "limited" by His humanity? He did seem to be pretty witty and able to stop the Pharisees in their attempts to trap Him in arguments, often turning it on them. He knew how to engage and interact with all sorts of people and relate to them where they were at (high EQ). Yet He clearly was unable to be present everywhere at the same time in His human body.

Yet what is more challenging and convicting to me is that Jesus was present. Present with the people who were in His presence. He could be walking through the crowds and connect with the person in need, offering hope, healing and salvation.

In a world where many believe that knowledge is power, or at least it makes us feel powerful, we need to understand that what might be more powerful is loving presence. Being there, being engaged and being inquisitive. As the old adage properly states: "People do not care how much you know unless they know how much you care."

Presence as a church is not being everywhere all the time but being where we are consistently or routinely. In other words, building relationship and trust in our neighborhood (or workplaces, or families) comes from consistency, not a one-time big event but from a routine that people can depend on. Presence is about showing up and being present.

Presence as an individual starts with showing up but it also includes engaging. It means looking at one another and talking to one another, not just at our phones. Being present is also being inquisitive. Beth has been known to say, "Jesus asked questions. Be like Jesus." It is true that Jesus displayed not knowledge but wisdom by asking thoughtful questions. Questions can help people experience genuine care for as you ask genuine questions.

So, I encourage all of us to think about how we can live our lives like Jesus did. It is not about how smart we are but how present we are with those around us.

Skillpower, Willpower, or Fillpower?

BETH HEERSPINK, COACH

It seems to me that there are a lot of struggles in our lives. A lot of it boils down to this: pain in relationships. The quality of our relationships can have a huge impact on the quality of our lives. And when I say “quality” I don’t just mean happiness. I mean our ability to give and receive love, and ultimately bring glory to God through our lives, living with purpose and intention.

Sometimes we just try to power through with determination (willpower) but lack the necessary skills (skillpower). Maybe our parents didn’t teach us how to resolve a conflict in a healthy way, so we literally don’t know how to do it. Sometimes we know exactly what we are supposed to do (skillpower) but simply are not motivated to want to do it (willpower). For example, I might have the skill set to know how to apologize, but I just don’t have the motivation (willpower). And then maybe we are forgetting that we have the Holy Spirit inside of us, ready to give us strength beyond our natural abilities (Fillpower). We need to tap into that power, inviting Him to change our hearts, strengthen our wills, give us His wisdom, and ultimately lead us into healthy relationships.

Do you need more Skillpower? Willpower? Fillpower? All three?

As many of you know, “Transformed Life Coaching” is the name of the coaching ministry that is currently being developed (our new office space is in the upstairs of the Atlas Building). Our hope is to walk with people in all three of these areas, restoring relationships with God, others, and self. Our goal is to offer a couple of groups in the next few months that will focus specifically in the areas of Skillpower (and hopefully include some willpower and fillpower, also!) I hope you will consider registering for and taking one of these classes, offered in the TLC space at 1039 S. 13th Street. To register, email Beth at beth@fstreetchurch.org and she will send you the registration link. Also, scholarship applications are available upon request.

Transforming Wisdom

Teacher: RJ Coburn

Time: 6:30-8:00pm on Thursdays

Cost: \$10

Spaces available: 10

June 6: A wise person trusts in God.

June 13: A wise person walks in healthy relationships.

June 20: A wise person seeks good counsel.

June 27: A wise person uses words wisely.

July 11: A wise person exercises self-control.

July 18: A wise person manages their resources

July 25: A wise person lives in peace

From “Harm to Harmony”

Teacher: Sam Keyzer

Dates: Friday, August 16 & Saturday, August 17 (8:30am-4:30pm)

Cost: \$25 (includes snacks, lunches, and follow-up dinner)

Spaces available: 10

Through this Timothy Leadership Institute class, you will explore ways to overcome harmful behaviors within family relationships. You will learn about God’s concern for those who are neglected or abused, and how to protect those who are vulnerable to abuse. You will explore ways to grow healthy family relationships, while interacting with Scripture and other members in the group. You will gain a better understanding of how to honor family members, you will understand the effects of sin on family attitudes and identify positive attitudes and speech for overcoming harmful behaviors in the family. You will have the opportunity to set a Kingdom-oriented Action Plan with follow-up in 3 months.

Immerse Projects

SAGE PETERSON, YOUTH DIRECTOR

T-1 month until we have Immerse groups joining us here at F Street! One of the things that makes Immerse so special is how everyone here at F Street celebrates and welcomes all the groups that come through. We can't wait to see how the groups will impact our neighborhood.

We are excited to welcome Michael Vacek as an Immerse intern for this summer! Michael is currently a sophomore at UNL and is originally from Ankeny, Iowa. If you see Michael in the coming weeks on Sunday mornings make sure to welcome him to F Street!

Immerse is still looking for a couple of projects for the summer! If you know of any projects that the groups could work on, please contact Sage at sage@fstreetchurch.org.



Looking back at Lent and Easter Art

JEAN STRYKER, RESIDENT ARTIST

During Lent, we hung a length of sheer black fabric in front of the altar and added a new layer every week. This made the altar increasingly dark and obscured. It was uncomfortable and unpleasant! Which was the point.

Art isn't always pretty and easy; sometimes it's designed to rub us the wrong way or provoke our thinking. The black drapes over our altar were meant to cause us to consider how our sin separates us from our holy God. It was meant to make us want to see it gone. Everyone was relieved when the dark veil was "torn" and this colorful image of the risen Christ was revealed on Easter morning!



Our Easter art was a collaborative project for the whole F Street family. I cut and gessoed a round piece of mural fabric, then marked random sized "rays" coming from the center with yellow acrylic. At one of our neighborhood block parties, there was a station set up for people to paint whatever they wanted within the rays. It was great to see so many people join in! Your work made the Jesus image that's placed over the colorful "halo" look radiant and victorious.

Thank you to everyone who engaged in the process with our Easter art! It was a super gratifying project that I believe brought some weight and solemnity to Lent and added extra joy to the celebration at our Easter morning service.

Immerse is Coming with F Street Opportunities

JEFF HEERSPINK, LEAD PASTOR

Neighborhood Summer Pancake Feast

Last year we had the privilege of starting something new as a way to serve and connect with our neighbors: Saturday Pancakes. A church in Iowa had given us a gift and we purchased a flat grill and made pancakes; we also “coincidentally” received 10 boxes of bacon that were rejected from a giant retailer due to one box getting punctured and we had bacon for weeks. Primarily for the months of June and July we offered pancakes for the neighborhood on Saturday mornings under the worship shelter between 8 and 9 am. It was a great way to serve breakfast to the Immerse kids and provide a place for them to connect with people from the neighborhood. It was also a way for us (F Street people) to care, connect and communicate love to our neighbors.

This year we are hoping to do the same, and we have a church again offering us some funds if we are able to get a group of us from F Street together to set up, make batter, grill, serve and clean up.

If you are interested in connecting with people, interested in learning more about this opportunity, interested in creative planning, interested in serving, would you consider attending a short 20-30 minute gathering on May 5 (Cinco de mayo) after church in the fireside room?

We will only do this if we have enough support, and we hope you will consider it.

Summer Children’s Ministry

Years ago, Neighborhood Bible Club was started at F Street. This was an intentional weekly time to love and teach kids in our church and neighborhood about Jesus. This was primarily run by Immerse and took a break. However, we have some interest in starting it up again. The Immerse students can be key players in this on the weeks when they are here but we need people from our church to be present to connect with the kids as a consistency through the summer and especially on the weeks when there is not an Immerse group in town.

We are interested in the following:

- Are you interested in being the point person for this? Coordinating it would include planning and working with a team of volunteers as well as the Immerse groups.
- Are you interested in being a volunteer, committing to each week and teaching and engaging the kids?
- Are you interested in supporting it by providing snacks, creating promotional material and or financial support (we have a potential donor already interested in helping to make this a reality)?

If you are interested in any of these and learning more, will you please email Hollie at hollie@fstreetchurch.org. Thank you!

Missionary Corner

Prayer Requests

If you have any prayer requests, please fill out the back of the communication card or come up to the front after church service.

Up to Date

To keep information up to date, please fill out a communication card or email Hollie at hollie@fstreetchurch.org

Email Updates

To be added to regular email updates about the church, email fstreetchurch@gmail.com

The Howells

Dear friends,

Lithuanian children play "knygnešius ir žandarus". This game is essentially hide-and-seek, but translates as "book-smuggler and gendarmes (para-military police)".

From late 1800s-early 1900s the Russian Cossacks banned the use of Latin-based languages (which included Lithuanian language). Books, newspapers, and speech in Lithuanian language was therefore forbidden.

Jurgis Bielinis was one of the main organizers of illegal book-smuggling in efforts to preserve Lithuanian texts and language at the time of the Lithuanian press ban. Much of the smuggling of texts took place in the thick Lithuanian forests.

When Aaron's class played the hide-and-seek variant, all the children wanted to be the seekers, so his teacher hid as Bielinis, the "King of the Book Smugglers", and all the kids had to find him.

A book that AJ and I read earlier this year is "Words on Fire" -- a juvenile historical fiction book about the Lithuanian press ban. We recommend it to you!

We thank God for the many forms of freedom that we experience daily, remembering that this language ban really was not so long ago!

Blessings to you all,
The Howells



May

2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28 Block Party 10:30am - Sunday Service	29 Psalm 23	30 Psalm 24 6:30am - Prayer 6pm - Youth Group	1 Psalm 25 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	2 Psalm 26 5:30pm - FoodNet	3 Psalm 27	4
5 10:30am - Sunday Service	6 Psalm 28	7 Psalm 29 6:30am - Prayer 6pm - Youth Group	8 Psalm 30 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	9 Psalm 31 5:30pm - FoodNet	10 Psalm 32	11
12 Mother's Day 10:30am - Sunday Service	13 Psalm 33	14 Psalm 34 6:30am - Prayer	15 Psalm 35 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	16 Psalm 36 5:30pm - FoodNet	17 Psalm 37	18
19 10:30am - Sunday Service	20 Psalm 38	21 Psalm 39 6:30am - Prayer	22 Psalm 40 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	23 Psalm 41 5:30pm - FoodNet	24 Psalm 42	25
26 Block Party 10:30am - Sunday Service	27 Psalm 43	28 Psalm 44 6:30am - Prayer	29 Psalm 45 6:30pm - Celebrate Recovery	30 Psalm 46 5:30pm - FoodNet	31 Psalm 47	1

Birthdays

1st - Tony Orendel
5th - Brent Gerhard
8th - Beverly Hill
11th - Andrew Tate
15th - Josiah Heerspink

18th - Sarah Wallace
20th - Darci Harvey
 Jessica Hernandez
30th - Matthew Stevison

Anniversaries

21st - Tyler & Darci Harvey
22nd - Terry & Carrie Martinez