

Job Title – Associate Pastor of Family Ministries

THE FREE CHURCH

A. Meet the Free Church

The Free Church of Thief River Falls is a single-site and single-service church with a membership of almost 150 adults, with an average attendance over 275. Our church was founded in 1901 as the Scandinavian Evangelical Church, representing our Norwegian heritage. In 1920, we joined the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA).

Thief River Falls (TRF) is the anchor city for the NW corner of Minnesota. Many of the smaller towns come to us for shopping, food and services. We are roughly 70 miles from the Canadian border and 60 miles from Grand Forks, ND. Our town population is around 9,000 and represents a unique mixture of agriculture and business. Two international companies anchor our town: Arctic Cat (owned by Textron) and Digi-Key. Our city also features Sanford Medical Center. Our community is one where graduating high school students often head out to college and return in order to raise their families here. Our public and private schools are active with numerous after school activities, while Northland Community & Technical College is a great option after high school. And if you love hockey, the Ralph Englestad Arena is one of the finest indoor arenas around!

When you join us for worship on any given Sunday, you'll join in singing songs of the faith, corporate and pastoral prayer, the reading of Scripture, the expository preaching of God's Word, the giving of offerings, and the monthly celebration of the Lord's Table. You may even partake in the singing of a blessing over a newly dedicated child or celebrating a baptism. You'll be invited to connect and linger over coffee and fellowship. It's not uncommon on a given Sunday to fellowship with three or four generations of one family. During the school year, our church is packed with Awana kids and youth groups every Wednesday evening, and there is children's and adult Sunday School prior to worship service on Sunday. During the work week, we share our church space with RISE Adult Day Service for disabled adults, Northland Christian Counseling, Sanford, and various school and community functions. This year (2024) will mark our third annual Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve Community meals which fed 1,200 people combined last year (2023). Our roots are deep and growing!

B. Our Mission and Vision

- Our mission is to cultivate followers of Christ among all peoples.
- Our strategy is to connect with people, labor for their conversion, disciple them in Christ, and send them into the mission field.
- We labor toward Christlikeness, spiritual maturity, and love for one another.
- We value dependence on God, love for one another and our community, the study of God's Word, and the power of the Holy Spirit to bring about multiplication.
- Our ten-year vision is to reach every person in Thief River Falls and the surrounding Pennington County with the gospel of Jesus Christ!

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C. Polity and Accountability

We are a congregational, Elder-led church and a member of the EFCA. Our congregation elects seven men as lay Elders, and a variety of male and female members to serve on six commissions. The commissions are more than committees, each helps oversee an area of ministry under the oversight of the Elder board.

The six commissions are as follows (in alphabetical order): *discipleship, facilities, finance, nurture, outreach, and worship*. If you are from a Baptist background, think of these commissions as deacon boards, each overseen by an Elder and run by an elected chairman. The Associate Pastor, in conversation with the Lead Pastor, will divide commission attendance and contribution.

The Associate Pastor, as a member of the staff, is accountable to the Lead Pastor. He is also accountable to the Elders and the congregation who has called him.

D. Overview of the Staff

- Lead Pastor (full-time)
 - Responsible for casting vision for the church, equipping the Elders and Staff, preaching and enabling other capable men to preach and teach, doing the work of an evangelist, engaging with the community at large, and more.
- Associate Pastor (full-time)
 - (see next page)
- Music and Media Director (full-time)
 - Responsible for training, equipping, and managing the worship leaders and teams, A/V servants, and our media (printed and electronic), in coordination with the Admin Assist.
- Care Coordinator (part-time)
 - Helps the Staff and Elders with coordinating care for shut-ins, meals and visitations, and assisting community members in need of our Care Fund, while also working in coordination with other community organizations (Salvation Army, FoodShelf, etc.)
- Administrative Assistant (part-time)
 - Set hours: 8-3pm, M-F. Manages walk-ins, phone, staff and church calendars, bulletin, Planning Center People (database), and much more!

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OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION

E. General Elder Qualifications and Responsibilities

The man who applies for this job must first and foremost qualify as an Elder according to 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and 1 Peter 5. He is an Elder set apart for full-time vocational ministry as a pastor. Therefore, he must be willing and able to do the general pastoral work of an Elder. He must be able to teach, “equip the saints for works of ministry” (Eph. 4:12), be above reproach, and be a model of maturity and a shepherd to his flock.

The Associate Pastor will have a passion and calling to make disciples. This starts with reaching and teaching adults and parents, and then their children, from the ages of high school all the way down to the cradle.

F. How does the Associate Pastor of Family Ministries fit within the church’s mission?

The Associate Pastor will focus his gifts and passions on the families of our church, laboring with the Lead Pastor, the Elders, and the Commissions to disciple parents to disciple their children. The result, we pray, will be that both the parents and children will connect with our church body, be converted through the gospel of Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit, and be disciplined to make disciples as they are sent into the larger TRF community as gospel laborers.

G. Associate Pastor of Family Ministries Job Summary

The Associate Pastor is responsible to develop a cohesive theological vision for family ministry and a compelling, Christlike leadership in the discipleship of families that call the Free Church home. He will work closely with the Nurture and Discipleship commissions, alongside the numerous servants in our youth and children’s ministry, to develop and equip leaders to execute a comprehensive ministry that assists parents in discipling their children, from preschool to high school.

This pastor must be able to teach, model, train, and equip current and future servants for the work of ministry. He will not be solely responsible for the teaching in any one of these areas, as we have an amazing group of servants currently serving in the Senior High, Junior High, and Children’s ministries. They need a leader who loves to cast vision, give direction to scope and sequence, and develop a team of servants and their gifts to disciple children.

H. Associate Pastor of Family Ministries oversight responsibilities

1. Parents
 - a. Discipling parents to disciple their children.
 - b. Equipping parents to partner with the youth and children’s education servants and other adult members of the church.
2. Youth Oversight
 - a. Sunday School: Sr. High and Jr. High
 - b. Wednesday night: Sr. High and Jr. High youth groups

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3. Children's Education Oversight
 - a. Sunday School Classes
 - i. 2-3 yr. olds
 - ii. 4 yr. old – kindergarten
 - iii. Grades 1-3
 - iv. Grades 4-6
 - b. Wednesday: Awana

I. Shared pastoral responsibilities with the Lead Pastor and Elders

1. Baptisms
2. Counseling
3. Dedications
4. Funerals
5. Preaching (6-8 times per year)
6. Teaching (adults, youth, or children as needed)
7. Visitations
8. Weddings

J. Education & Experience

1. An MDiv or seminary degree is preferred, but not required.
2. 5 years of ministry experience or more in family, youth, and/or children's ministry.