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## Whose Fries are These? BY Joel Sutton

Imagine with a father, let's call him Fred wanted to do something special with his five year old son Jimmy. So he asked "Son, is there anything you'd like to do right now?" Jimmy said, "I want some McDonald French Fries."

So they got into the dad's blue and white chevy truck went to the nearest McDonald's and Fred ordered and paid for some fries for his son. And not just the smallest size, but he "super-sized" his order.

Even before they sat down, Jimmy's little teeth were ready to sink into this huge blessing of hot golden fries. Fred was happy to see his little boy so happy over something so simple. As they sat and talked, Fred decided to join in the fun. He reached over to grab a couple of Jimmy's fries for himself.

But to his surprise, his son quickly put his arms around his fries as though he was building a fort and pulled them toward himself and said to his father, "No, these are mine." His dad was in a momentary state of shock. He could not believe what had just happened.

Fred pulled back his hand and began to think about his son's attitude toward those fries. "I was the source of those fries for my son," Fred thought. "After all, I paid for them. And not only did I pay for them but I bought him the "super-sized" fries. Yet here is my son talking about his French fries. Doesn't Jimmy know that if I wanted I could take them from or I could go back to the counter

and buy more fries than Jimmy could ever eat."

As the dad thought more about it, he also realized that one or two fries really would not have made much of a difference for him that day. What he really wanted was for his son Jimmy, to invite him into the wonderful little world that he had made possible for his son. He wanted his son to be willing to share the very blessing that he had provided.

In similar way, God has blessed each of us. He has blessed you and God has blessed me. He's given us all some French fries. Some of us have a small bag of fries, some a medium size, others a large and some your fries have been super-sized. But God has given us all some fries.

And like that dad, God desires to sit down at the table with us for some fellowship. But far too often, when God reaches over to use some of the blessings he has given to us, our response is, "No God, these are mine. Go and get your own."

In King David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29, we are given three important truths about God's blessings. First, we are reminded that everything belongs to God. "For everything in heaven and earth is yours." (1 Chron. 29:11). All those fries we enjoy in reality belong to God.

Second, everything comes from God. "Wealth and honor come from you" (1 Chron. 29:12). All my wealth, all my gold and silver, all my cars and houses, all my

investments and all my savings accounts - it all comes from God. All my honor, all my awards, all those certificates that I am tempted to hang on my office walls, all I have, it all, ultimately comes from God.

Third, everything is distributed to us by God. Continuing on, vs. 12, David prays, "You (God) are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all." The little word "exalt" there means "to make great". In other words, God, all I have and all that I am it all has been given to me by you.

God, if I have accomplished anything in life, it is because you have allowed me to do it. If I have bubbled up to the surface in my profession or in my company, you have provided me the opportunity. If I have been recognized because of a talent or skill I have, all those skills and talents have come from you, God.

This month of February we are going to be talking about what the Bible says about generosity and money in a series titled, "Living with the Benjamins". I pray that as we tackle this very practical and significant topic, we might learn again these three lessons: Everything belongs to God. Everything comes from God. Everything is distributed by God. And so our response to God when he reaches over to use some of those blessings he has given to us is simply, "God help yourself. I want to honor you with everything I have."



Challenge is the EFCA national conference for high school students challenging students to live on mission with God every day, everywhere. At Challenge 2020, students will be pointed to the power of the gospel as the only thing that can fill the void. We will send them in the power of the Spirit to the mission of inviting their friends into true Rest.



This adventure trip for middle school students will engage and challenge them through hands-on experiences and varied outdoor adventures. Experiences like canoeing, repelling, rock climbing, and hiking, make up many of the day-time activities. Evenings are highlighted by an evening chapel



time and sitting around a campfire reflecting and sharing about how God has worked in the story of our lives.



In the Czech Republic, a country where less than 1% of the population is Christian, our team of high school and college students will be able to partner alongside a local Czech Church and help run an outreach English Camp where our team will have the unique opportunities to build relationships as we help with leading music, games, sports, workshops and teach English in a peer-to-peer setting.



### UPCOMING SERIES | LIVING WITH THE BENJAMINS

FEB. 9  
FEB. 16  
FEB. 23

A Deadly Case of Affluenza—Luke 12:13-21  
Treasure Chest—Matthew 6:19-24  
Stepping Out of the Debt Hole—Misc.

MAR. 1  
MAR. 8

A Wise Investment—Luke 16:1-13  
Grace of Giving 2 Cor 8:1-15

OUR MISSION:  
TO HELP  
INDIVIDUALS  
BECOME  
CHRIST-CENTERED  
& CHRIST-SENT  
TOGETHER

WANT MORE INFO?

Web: [www.firstfreechurch.org](http://www.firstfreechurch.org)  
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Instagram: @firstfreechurchmpls  
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SEE MORE INFO AT:  
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# MEN'S RETREAT

AT CAMP SHAMINEAU MARCH 6-8TH  
VISIT [SHAMINEAU.ORG/OVERHAUL](http://SHAMINEAU.ORG/OVERHAUL) FOR MORE INFO

NEIGHBORING  
12:31

AUGUST 20-22ND



THIS SUMMER AT FIRST FREE



VACATION  
BIBLE CAMP  
JUNE 15-19TH

## This Month @FIRST FREE

### QUARTERLY CELEBRATION—FEBRUARY 10TH

Join us as we celebrate God's faithfulness and discuss church business on February 10th at 7 p.m.

### EXPRESSIONS SUPPORT GROUP

Expressions generally meets twice monthly on Sunday afternoons from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Membership in the group is dedicated to people dealing with chronic illnesses ranging from ongoing physical disease to mental illness, such as chronic depression or anxiety. Creativity is a big part of this support group. The art we make is a wordless expression of feelings or thoughts, not necessarily about making something beautiful. No experience with art is necessary.

### GRIEFSHARE SUPPORT GROUP—STARTING FEB. 7TH

The Griefshare Group offers help and support after the death of a loved one. For more information and to sign up, go to [firstfreechurch.org/events](http://firstfreechurch.org/events).

## Church Family News

### CHILD DEDICATIONS

Congratulations to the families whose children were dedicated last month! Seth & Liz Gouldin and their son Lennox Roger Gouldin, Nate & Katie Pattee and their son Calum Richard Pattee, Tony & Heidi Byrne and their son Jack Byrne, Seth & Mallory Hueckman and their son Hiura Hueckman, Courtney & Stephanie Lewis and their daughter Victoria Lewis.

# TERRACE ON CHICAGO IS FEBRUARY 29TH



## Terrace on Chicago Czech Menu

### Before Dinner Refreshments

Chlebičky Open-faced Egg Salad Tea Sandwiches  
Bramboráky Mini Potato Pancakes (GF)  
Bezinky Elderflower Lemonade

### Soup

Bramboračka Wild Mushroom & Root Vegetable Soup  
in a Whole Wheat Bread Bowl

### Entrees

all tables receive a relish tray

#### The Bohemian

Svíčková braised beef roast served with a root vegetable cream gravy and garnished with cranberry compote and vanilla cream  
Sides: apple bacon balsamic braised red cabbage & parsley sage rye bread dumplings

#### The National

Vepřová Pečeně roasted pork loin served with onion pan gravy  
Sides: apple bacon balsamic braised red cabbage & parsley sage rye bread dumplings

#### The Forager

Restované Houby sauteed crimini mushrooms served alongside bread dumplings and topped with vegetarian brown gravy  
Sides: apple bacon balsamic braised red cabbage

### Desserts

#### Borůvka Knedlíky

Warm Fruit Dumplings filled with fresh blueberries & farmers cheese garnished with lemon greek yogurt and blueberries

#### Vrstvený Řezy

Chocolate Ganache Cheesecake Brownies dolloped with sweetened citrus whipped cream and garnished with chocolate curls



Terrace on Chicago is an annual fundraiser for Velocity Student Ministries' Youth Summer Trips. The menu theme this year for Terrace on Chicago is inspired by our trip to the Czech Republic! Menus & guest reservations will be available and open from February 2nd to February 16th. We've provided a menu to the left so that you can start thinking about what you'd like to eat that night! We're excited for you to come meet and get to know students from the Velocity Student Ministries. So please make a point to come to Terrace on Chicago, bring some friends, eat delicious Czech food and support our students! (For more information about the summer trips, see the back page)



RSVP will open  
on February 2nd