

## Introducing Matthew Tinken

Dear First Free!

It's with great enthusiasm and excitement that we introduce Matthew Tinken as candidate for Senior Pastor of First Evangelical Free Church of Chicago. With the help of Jason Lancaster and [Lancaster Search Firm](#), we began our search process in June 2021. Throughout the last few months, we have watched countless sermons, reviewed several resumes, interviewed numerous candidates, which led to various discussions and prayerful conversations. All of this resulted in a unified decision among the elders and search team that Matt and his family would be a wonderful fit for First Free in the next season of the church's life.

Matt is coming to us after serving as the Interim Pastor of [One Ancient Hope](#) in Iowa City, Iowa although he is a native of Chicago. He and his wife Sarah have been married for 12 years and have a two-year-old son named Shepherd.

Initially, we were struck by Matt and Sarah's hearts for urban contexts. This passion for urban ministry was made apparent in his writings, sermons, and the location of the ministry opportunities he's pursued throughout his career. In addition to serving in Chicago, Matt has also had the opportunity to minister in New York City, Brooklyn, and Pasadena and to live in Los Angeles.

Moreover, after continuing our interview process, we began to get a better sense of Matt's strengths as a pastor and leader. We've found that his ministry is marked by a genuine humility. This was echoed in a number of the reference calls we had and was made apparent in all of our interactions with him. Matt is quick to listen and slow to speak.

He is also able to communicate God's Word clearly through sermons and is passionate about utilizing all forms of communication in ministry toward that end. We discovered this throughout our review of his sermons and in the various ways he has utilized social media as a means to share those sermons. Matt believes strongly in God's Word preached but also recognizes the need to leverage digital communication for gospel ministry.

Overall, Matt demonstrated that he is a deep thinker, has an authentic depth to his spirituality, and is passionate about collaborative, creative ministry in the city. Because of these and so many other reasons, we believe Matt and Sarah Tinken along with their son Shepherd would be a wonderful fit to lead our church.

As the culmination of this process, we have invited Matt and his family to candidate with us on the weekend of Feb 11–14. Please be on the lookout for more information regarding the official schedule. Also, please continue to...

*Pray: Pray for God's wisdom and discernment.*

*Prepare: Listen to one of Matt's sermons listed below; Review his resume;*

*Participate: Come ready to ask thoughtful, productive questions*

SERMONS:

[Easter Sermon](#): His sermon starts 50 minutes into the service.

[Law, Love, and Waking Up \[Romans 13:8-14\]](#)

[Burning Hearts \[Luke 24:13-35\]](#) Scripture reading for sermon begins 47 minutes into the service.