

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church
318 N. Church Street, Rockford IL
815-963-8431
www.secondfirst.org
www.facebook.com/secondfirstchurch

Non Profit
Organization US
Postage PAID
Permit No. 3734
Rockford, Illinois



THE TOWER

Your monthly update on the church and its members

JULY 2016

A NOTE FROM REVEREND REBECCA

Church,

We have a vision statement! Depending who you talk to on the Discernment and Visioning Team, this either took one meeting or six years. :) Either way we are excited about it. Our vision statement:

Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace.

There it is. We think this can really guide us to do and be God's mission for the coming years. I said recently from the pulpit: Some people might say, "Energize downtown Rockford?? Are you crazy?" Well, yes we are. Crazy enough to believe that God has put us here for a reason, that neither church left downtown when they had ample opportunity to do so. Crazy enough to know that God can do immeasurably more than even we can imagine. Crazy enough to trust we will see God's grace at work as we align ourselves in this very place with justice, compassion and mercy.

But our mission doesn't stop downtown. "And beyond" takes us to where we live, work, serve and play. We follow God's calling to Winnebago and Pecatonica, to Roscoe and Rockton, to Oklahoma and Angola.

This is all about God's grace and with God's grace. One of the first things that I was drawn to when I started to learn about this congregation was God's grace. You seek to be gracious with one another and you understand God to be a God of grace. What an important message for us to take to our community that God does not want us to be confined to a box of rules and limitations, but rather that God sets us free to love, to experience abundant life and ensure others can, too.

Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace.

I am excited to be on this journey with you.

Peace,

Rebecca

P.S. We have a mission statement, too. More on this soon. Second First Church seeks to love, know and worship God by welcoming all people, serving our neighbors and sharing God's Grace.



Staff

Moderator: Carolyn Greenlaw csgreen52@aol.com	Director of Bells: James Lowell Fry james@secondfirst.org	Building Manager: Kurt Riplinger kurt@secondfirst.org
Senior Pastor: Rev. Rebecca White Newgren rebecca@secondfirst.org	Director, Peanut Bells: Sarah Hallberg sarah@secondfirst.org	Sunday Building Host: Jeff Byrne jbyrne6132@yahoo.com
Director of Member Care & Neighborhood Connections: Becky Erbe becky@secondfirst.org	Director, Alegria: Julie Cook Ramirez julie@secondfirst.org	Childcare & Thrift Store Coordinator: Stephanie Cooper
Director of Music: Paul Laprade paul@secondfirst.org	Director, The Carillons: Joyce Zartman joycezartman@att.net	Communication Coordinator: Erin Sturm erin@secondfirst.org
Organist: Valerie Blair valerie@secondfirst.org	Bookkeeper/Business Manager: Nancy Yoeckel nancy@secondfirst.org	Director of Theological Engagement: Andy Newgren andy.newgren@secondfirst.org
	Office Manager: Debbie Wise debbie@secondfirst.org	Youth Director: Courtney Jonsson courtney.jonsson@secondfirst.org

Ministry Teams

Christian Education christianed@secondfirst.org	Fellowship fellowship@secondfirst.org	Missions missions@secondfirst.org
Deaconesses deaconesses@secondfirst.org	Governing Council governingcouncil@secondfirst.org	Music music@secondfirst.org
Deacons deacons@secondfirst.org	Membership membership@secondfirst.org	Trustees trustees@secondfirst.org

UPCOMING EVENTS AND VOLUNTEER & DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

Garden Prairie Trail Bike Ride - July 9

Join Rich and Karen Olson, Roger and Carolyn Greenlaw on Saturday July 9 at 9:30 am as we bike the Garden Prairie Trail. We will meet at the trail parking lot at the corner of Front Street and Main Street in Caledonia. We will bike the path from Caledonia to its eastern end just beyond Capron, total distance is 22 miles round trip. This portion of the trail is paved, flat and frequently shaded. We will stop for a quick break and then return on the trail. Please bring your own snack and drinks. You can decide the distance you wish to ride. We are looking at additional rides depending upon interest. Please RSVP to Karen Olson, karen0128@comcast.net, 815-397-0667.

Party in the Park Volunteers - July 10

On Sunday, July 10 from 1-4 pm we will be joining with the Coronado-Haskell Neighborhood Association to celebrate our neighborhood with Party in the Park. We are looking for 8 volunteers to start moving tables and chairs from Second First to Haskell Park around 11:30 that day. We will also need 8 volunteers to move them all back beginning around 4:00 that afternoon. We need 6 people from 12-2 and another 6 people from 2-4 to help make and serve popcorn. It was VERY popular last year. We will also need some others to distribute water, watermelon, and hot dogs. We could also use two people to help keep things organized at the Kroozin' Kooler ice cream truck. If you are interested in any (or all) of these positions, please let Kathi Ferrero know at kathleen@jeremiahdevelopment.org or at 630-452-5234.

Cubs vs, Brewers Save the Date - July 23

This year's game in Milwaukee is Saturday, July 23. Plan on meeting in the church parking lot at 3:00 pm. Game time is 6:00 pm. Once again, we will have a special bus drop off and pick up that is handicapped accessible. Tickets are \$46.00 each. We have purchased 45 tickets this year. Please make your reservations to the church office, including your payment. Half the tickets has been sold. Any cancellations after July 1 will be reimbursed only if we are able to find someone else to go in your place.

Soup Kitchen Saturday - July 23

Bring your willing hands, a ready smile, an apron, and a baseball cap. Contact Mary Conklin to volunteer. 815-968-9789

Slip and Slide Kickball - July 24

Join us on for Slip and Slide Kickball on July 24 at 3 pm. This a variation of a classic game. Kiddie pools will serve as first, second, and third base while each baseline is a slip and slide. This event is free to all middle school and high school students. Be sure to dress in clothes you can get wet. If we have enough participants to make a few teams, we will play a tournament, so please invite your friends! Any questions can be forwarded to Courtney Jonsson at courtney.jonsson@secondfirst.org

Summer Club Volunteer News

We are requesting volunteers that know how to sew and would be willing to bring their machines down and work with the kids. Sewing times will be Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm. The campers will also be growing a garden! Jeremiah Development has donated a planting box in the community garden for the kids. Volunteers are needed to help with gardening Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 am - 11:30 am. We will have other opportunities soon. Questions? Call Becky E or Carlisha at 815-963-8431.

Lay Leaders for 2016-2017

Interested in participating in the Worship Service? We are looking for Lay Leaders for the 2016-2017 program years. If you are willing to read the Call to Worship, or write a prayer, or even sing and dance, please contact Linda Roy at Lroy116@comcast.net.

Scholarships Grants and Loans Available

If you are a post high school graduate, planning on furthering your education by attending college, vocational school or graduate school this coming academic year (2016-17) and are a Second First member, you are eligible to inquire about the First Presbyterian Scholarship Fund or the Weingartner Student Loan Fund. Please call Debbie at the church office for an application 815-963-8431. For additional information contact: Presbyterian members, call Joyce Pogue 815-874-7646 by July 12, 2016. United Church of Christ members, call Jeff Jacobs 815-398-4366.

FOURTH ANNUAL PARTY IN THE PARK

Please plan to join with your Jeremiah Development neighbors on Sunday, July 10 for the Fourth Annual Party in the Park. The event will be held from 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm in Haskell Park, just north of Emmanuel Episcopal Church. There will be musical entertainment, activities provided by the Rockford Park District and the Discovery Center, food, and time to make new acquaintances. We hope you can come out and celebrate your special neighborhood! Contact Kathi Ferrero kferrero55@hotmail.com

BELL TASK FORCE AND BELL PROGRAM UPDATES

The Bell Task Force was brought together in the wake of Jim Fry's retirement to discern the future of the bell program and bell program leadership at Second First. We want to assure everyone that the Bell Program is alive and well and will restart in the fall. The task force and staff are both committed to supporting the current Bell Program and giving it whatever it needs to continue to succeed and grow. If anyone has anything they want the task force to know – anything you want to make sure stays the same or an idea you have about the future or any concerns you may have, please reach out to any of us or Pastor Rebecca. Contact Jennifer Archer, jennifer814@hotmail.com, 815-623-1620 – Chair. Other members – Bill Baskin, Julie Cook Ramirez, Sarah Hallberg, Paul Laprade, Carol Picchioni, Steve Showers and Joyce Zartman.

SOUP KITCHEN COORDINATOR NEEDED

After too many years to count, Mary (and Ed) Conklin will be stepping down as one of the coordinators for the Second First Soup Kitchen at Jubilee Center. Mary will complete the 2016 calendar year so this is a perfect time to shadow her (or Marge) and see if this is something to which you might be able to contribute your time and talent. We need to have a commitment by November as that is when we select dates for 2017. While Mary had care for three dates, if that is more than you can take on, let Marge or Mary know and we will work something out. If you have any questions, let one of know---we are happy to share our experiences with you. Contact Marge Maynard mtm.home@me.com

SUMMER MUSIC SERIES

Summer services at Second First Church brings out music not always heard during the September-May calendar season. This summer promises to be no different: musical work from jazz, folk and gospel to Handel, classical guitar, and Paul McCartney will adorn our services as well as traditional hymnody and instrumental works. It is a pleasure to see such variety of praise in music! Schedule below:

July

July 3 - The Youman family, piano, and Paul Laprade
July 10 - Bob Bates, organ
July 17 - Harlan Jefferson, gospel saxophone
July 24 - The Second First Marian Sextet, women's voices
July 31 - The Second First Brass

August

August 7- Julie Cook Ramirez, classical guitar
August 14 - 'Beatles Sunday'
August 21 - The Church Street String Band, folk music
August 28 - Four Church Joint Worship Choir

September

September 4th - Valerie Blair, organ, piano, and dulcimer

JULY CALENDAR

Friday, July 1
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday, July 2
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, July 3
Communion
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop

Monday, July 4
Office Closed

Tuesday July 5
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
Breakfast
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Wednesday, July 6
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Thursday, July 7
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
No Deaconesses

Friday July 8
Tower Hill
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday , July 9
Tower Hill
9:30 AM – Bike Ride Caledonia
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, July 10
Tower Hill
No Wee Worship
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
No Sunday School
No Christian Education
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Christian
Education Ministry
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
1:00 – PM – Party In The Park

Monday, July 11
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
No Deacons Meeting

Tuesday, July 12
8:00 AM – Men’s Fellowship
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
6:00 PM – Discernment &
Vision

Wednesday, July 13
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:00 PM - Trustees

Thursday, July 14
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Jeremiah Dev Board

Friday, July 15
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday, July 16
10:00 AM - Bridge Clinic

Sunday, July 17
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Fellowship
Ministry
11:15 AM – Music Ministry
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop

Monday, July 18
9:15 AM – Free Showers 10:30
AM – Summer Camp

Tuesday, July 19
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
Breakfast
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
1:00 PM – Executive
Committee
5:30 PM – Mission Ministry

Wednesday, July 20
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
No Membership Ministry

Thursday, July 21
9:15 AM - Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
6:00 PM – ARC Rec night

Friday, July 22
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday, July 23
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic 10:00
AM – Soup Kitchen
3:00 PM – Cubs game in
Milwaukee

Sunday, July 24
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop

3:00 PM – Slip and Slide Kickball

10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Governing Council

Monday, July 25
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Tuesday, July 26
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
Breakfast
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Wednesday, July 27
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Thursday, July 28
9:15 AM – Free Showers

SAVE THE DATE

Blessing of the Backpacks - August 14
The Blessing of the backpacks will take place on Sunday, August 14. Kids can bring their backpacks to the worship service on August 14 to be blessed for the start of a new school year.

Church Picnic - August 21
Mark your calendar for the church picnic on August 21. The picnic will be held at Anna Page Park Shelter House, 3000 N Springfield Ave, Rockford, at 12 pm. Fun and food for all!

Four Church Worship - August 28
Plan to attend the Four Church Worship on August 28, as we worship with our neighbors Court Street Methodist, Emmanuel Episcopal, and Shalom. Second First will be the host site with Emmanuel Episcopal leading the worship.

SUMMER PREACHING SCHEDULE

July 3 - Rev. Fred Krauss

July 10 - Becky Erbe Ephesians Part 2

July 17 - Rebecca White Newgren Ephesians Part 3

July 24 - Guest Preacher Ephesians Part 4

July 31 - Rebecca White NewgrenLord's Prayer Part 1

August 7 - Rebecca White Newgren Lord's Prayer Part 2

August 14 - Rebecca White Newgren Lord's Prayer Part 3

August 21 - Rebecca White Newgren Lord's Prayer Part 4

August 28 - Four Church Joint Worship at Second First

TILL NEXT TIME WE MEET...

by Jim Fry



Wow!! We had such a great time in April and May with bells! Bell Sunday with guests, Ring In Spring with guests and my retirement dinner also had so many guests. Thank you ringers, Julie, Joyce, Sarah, Paul, Valerie and the Choir for making these events so special musically and just plain fun! If I may say, resistance was futile to that fun! Seriously though, each of you have generously shared your talents to show Love and make such wonderful memories. Thank you!

It is nearing the time Diana and I will be making our move to Arizona. We are hoping for a late August or early September move. We will see how that goes. Rest assured, the gift of love and family y'all have given us these many years will go with us across

the country on our new adventure. Second First will be in our prayers, too. We know God is working here and He has great things planned. Diana and I wish God’s blessings on each and every one of you. Till next time we meet...

Jim, Your retired Humbell Handbell Director

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

by Joyce Pogue

First Presbyterian Church of Rockford will be 162 years old on July 8, 2016. The church has always been in the downtown area. The first recorded Presbyterian gathering in Rockford was in 1835 when Rev. Aratus Kent, brother of Germanicus Kent, one of the early founders of Rockford, came to Rockford from Galena and preached in his brother’s cabin to 17 individuals. Second Congregational will have its 167th anniversary on Nov. 7.

This group constituted, at the time, all the white inhabitants (except Stephen Mack) in the county. During 1853 and 1854, two different Presbyterian pastors would come to the community and preach to the faithful Presbyterians. Under the leadership of the Rev. Hugh Brown on July 8, 1854, a Saturday, the First Presbyterian Church of Rockford, Illinois, was officially organized by the Committee of the Presbytery of Chicago. On that day 38 individuals were enrolled and became the nucleus of First Presbyterian of Rockford. One of those individuals was John Bull; a descendant of that family is a current member, George Bull. At the present time there are 22 people of Second First Church who have been members 54 years or more at First. They are:

1941: Robert P. Smith
1943: Richard H. Baker III
F. Russell Morgan
1944: Joan Riedesel
1945: Edward J. Conklin
1951: David F. Smith
1952: H. Jackson Anstedt
Tanya Anstedt
1953: Donna Larson
E. David Sbragia
1954: Willene Ziebell

1955: Carole Cotter
1956: Linda B. Burright

Doris F. Rowald
1957: Coe W. Johnson
Ward Wallace
1958: Donald L. Freedlund
Mary Lea Freedlund
1959: Sandra Morgan Anderson
1961: Sarah (Sally) Baker
Jill Proudfoot Torgerson
1962: Thomas B. Ferguson



PRAYER VIGIL FOR ORLANDO

On June 16, Second First held a prayer vigil for Orlando. Reverend Rebecca wrote:

"There is something sacred about a gay nite club for those who feel on the outside of the hetero-normative (the place where most people are straight) world. It is a type of church. It's an experience of welcome and belonging, a place to be free. For it to be a Latin gay night club makes it even more special for those who sought that safe space. It is important for us all to know what was shattered by gun violence early Sunday morning in Orlando, Florida. At an interfaith vigil on June 16 in our sanctuary we lit 57 candles. The 49 victims obviously belong on that list. But so does the shooter whose death by hate began years ago. We will also add to that number the 7 people who have been killed by gun violence in Rockford this year, reminding us that the grief is not so far away. Let us continue to pray for Orlando and act on behalf of victims of gun violence everywhere."

PRAYER VIGIL IN THE NEWS

The prayer vigil for Orlando received a lot of news coverage. You can view these stories by Googling the titles or going to Second First's Facebook page.

- Local LGBT optimistic, "Orlando could be our defining moment" - WIFR News
- Rockford Community Honors Orlando Shooting Victims, As Well As Shooter - WTVO News
- Prayers for peace continue in Rockford as Orlando massacre victims honored - Rockford Register Star



SECOND FIRST CHURCH HOUSING WORK CAMPS

We are housing work camps that will be working through Rockford Urban Ministries around the Stateline.

- July 3-9: N.E.W.S. Newtown Ecumenical Workcamp Servants, Newtown, CT - 70 campers
- July 17-23: St. Paul United Methodist Church, Cedar Rapids, IA - 50 campers
- August 8-12: Sturgis United Methodist Church, Sturgis, MI - 30 campers

Questions? Email Debbie at debbie@secondfirst.org

OSAGE NATION MISSION TRIP, JUNE 2016

by Courtney Jonsson

All five of our students, with our two brave volunteers, returned safely from their Mission Trip to Osage Nation in Pawhuska, OK on June 17th. In worship the following Sunday, we heard all about about the experiences they had while on their trip. From doing yard work for the people of Osage, to facilitating activities for Kid's Club, to serving in the soup kitchen, these students had many eye opening experiences. Brendon Coleman, son of Kimberli Craft, shared the story of a little boy who was so upset that their trip was coming to an end. Jack, the little boy, hid under the table with tears of sadness because he bonded so well with our group of students. Thank you to everyone who took time to donate, pray, and encourage our students to embark on this journey. It was beautiful to see the support of this congregation.



PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep these members and friends of the congregation in your prayers. Additions to the prayer list are always welcome. Prayer requests will be listed for one month. If you would like to remain on longer, please notify the office.

Continue prayers for Arlene Snap, the Stratemeyer Family, Leah Baskin, Jim & Nora Jean Rollins, Don Beckman, Philip & Shirley Davidson, and Miriam Richardson.

And we pray for all those at home and in long-term care facilities, who are not able to be in worship regularly, but who remain part of our family of faith: Nancy Bert, Linda Burright, Jan Elliott, Elsie Kayser, Marge Kildow, Ruthann Lenard, Beverly Lindsey, Riley Martin, Russell Morgan, Janice Patterson, John Showers, Marilyn Thayer, Ruth Todd, Ward Wallace, and Willene Ziebell.