

SECOND FIRST CHURCH
Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)
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Non Profit
Organization US
Postage PAID
Permit No. 3734
Rockford, Illinois



A WORD FROM PASTOR REBECCA

Hello Church,

As we look forward to Fall, I am reflecting on our summer! We had youth go off on a mission trip, elementary kids stay for a couple mission projects and the Park District's teen therapeutic rec program took over the gym. We had a visiting handbell choir, hosted KFACT's trunk party (for college dorm supplies) and Just Breathe 815's back-to-school

giveaway. We held the Rockford Urban Ministry annual dinner with Latisha Wallace and invited the community to hear about the new Family Justice Center with Justice Rosemary Collins and team. We celebrated fireworks together and enjoyed a fun church picnic. If that was not enough, a new HVAC system for the sanctuary is being installed this week. We had a fun ministry-filled Summer!

On Sunday mornings when I was in the pulpit, we walked through the Ten Commandments. (The series will conclude Labor Day Weekend.) As the series title suggested, there is grace and peace in the Ten Commandments! Instead of finding a list of rules that no one wants to follow, we found a series of powerful ways to bend our lives toward the God who made us, loves us and calls us by name. As we bend our lives toward God, fruitful spiritual blessings multiply. Turns out living within the framework of peace and grace radiates positively through our lives to those we love and those we barely know.

As we look forward to the Fall, we ask for God's guidance and blessing in our lives individually and as a church. In worship we will embark on the third year of the Narrative Lectionary beginning in Genesis and focusing on the Gospel of Matthew from Christmas through Easter. Our ministry teams have been busy planning for much ministry throughout the year. They will display their team's work on Sunday, September 9 at Sundae Sunday following worship!

The church is fun and busy, but never too busy to hear from you about what is going in your life. Drop an email, send a text or schedule an appointment. I am praying for you and our church.

Peace,
Rebecca

NEW NARRATIVE BIBLE STUDY
TUESDAYS, SEPTEMBER 4 - OCTOBER 9, NOON-1:00 PM, DINING ROOM

Let's join together to study God's word. For a six week trial, Rev. Rebecca will lead a bible study based on the upcoming Sunday's Narrative Lectionary text. Bring your faith, your doubt, your friends and a bag lunch. This will be a dynamic back-and-forth format, so come with questions and answers or sit back and take it all in. May God use this time to teach and bless us. Questions? rebecca.whitenewgren@secondfirst.org or 815-963-8431.

SAVE THE DATES

- Oct 7 – World Communion Sunday
- Oct 14 – Bible Sunday
- Oct 14 – Horizons Bible Study
- Oct 20 – Stronghold Clean Up
- Oct 21 – Stewardship Kick Off
- Oct 21- CROP Walk 1:00 pm
- Oct 28 – Trunk or Treat 4:00 pm



Our beautiful tower! Not pictured, falling stones.

NOTE FROM MODERATOR

Summer has slipped away, but the results of a busy summer is very evident at SecondFirst as we look forward to an exciting church year. We had discussion and town hall meetings on the various issues that we have needed to address. As we looked at one issue, the domino effect continued. We will be a more vibrant church on this downtown block as we strive to reach out to fulfill our mission. Read your Sunday Bulletin, weekly e-mail, and the monthly tower to see how things are changing. We, as a church will be a better church, and as individuals will be better individuals. Please continue to keep your church leaders in your thoughts and prayers as we strive to make Second First the leading church that we were during our individual dynamic history.

RAIN GARDEN WORKSHOP
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 • 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Join Natural Land Institute and partners for a presentation about the benefits of urban rain gardens. Then, if able, stay to help install a new rain garden at our church!

Installation includes planting and mulching. Tools and snacks provided. Please bring a water bottle and work gloves if you plan to assist in installation.

Special thanks to our partners: HomeStart Neighborhood Grants Program (www.nwhomestart.org) and Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District (www.winnebagooswcd.org). RSVP for this FREE event by calling 815.964.6666 or emailing lsjoquist@naturalland.org.





15 YEARS OF SERVICE
NANCY YOECKEL

Congratulations to Nancy Yoeckel, who has ably kept our books for 15 years! Pictured is the gag gift Jeff dug out of the church somewhere for her celebration party. Technology sure has changed a lot in the past 15 years!

2018 PEANUT BRITTLE PARTIES

Gordon Circle has accepted the challenge of hosting four Peanut Brittle Parties this fall. Katy Paterson will be the hostess of these parties. All members and friends of SecondFirst Church who are willing and able to help us make this delicious treat are invited to a “Brown Bag Lunch Fellowship” on Thursday, September 20 at Noon in the church dining room. Everyone bring a sandwich, dessert and beverage will be provided as we enjoy our food and fellowship. In addition, we will be setting the four work dates of our “parties” and any other responsibilities of the group.

TECH TALK IS COMING!
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 • 5:30 PM

What is Tech and Talk? Our Transit Youth Team kids are pros at those things that can at times come to the rest of us with difficulty. How do I use Facebook to look at pictures of my kids and grandkids? Should I use Instagram instead? What about Twitter? Forget all of those, I just want to be able to send and receive photos on that new phone I invested in but haven’t been able to master. How do I take a selfie? Download an app? All these questions and many more can be easily answered by our youth and they are willing to share their expertise. We will be meeting in the church dining room at 5:30 pm on Wednesday September 26. Bring your phones, your devices, your questions, and our youth will do their best to help you with any issues that you are having. After you’ve become a pro on your phone, share a light dinner with the kids and get to know each other better. Don’t need any tech help but would like to get to know our kids better? Please feel free to come and enjoy a meal with them. Youth parents, great time for you to come and share a meal together to catch up on what’s happening in your lives. Tech Talk will end in time for all Martin Ringers to get to their rehearsal. Extended youth supervision (gym time, homework help) will be provided for those kids who have siblings or parents in the Martin Ringers. Please let Deb in the church office or Karen Olson (kareno128@comcast.net) know if you plan to attend. Family CE is looking forward to this exciting new church event!

SPOTLIGHT DEACONS

Hello Church Family,

I was asked to write you a letter to give you an update of what the Deacons have been up to. I am proud to say a lot! We have a full board and are enjoying all of the ideas and suggestions for avenues to reach out to the congregation.

We have recently completed our “Miss You Letter” to send to the members that we haven’t seen in the last five years. This will be followed up by our Tower message and then a postcard around the holidays. If you know anyone that we could reach out to, please let us know.

This year the church has welcomed in 12 new members Yay! We welcome you to our church family. Our goal is to make you feel comfortable and answer any questions you may have. This also gives the congregation an opportunity to give our new members a friendly shout out too!

In October, we will be going out into the community to serve communion to our shut-ins. This gives us an opportunity to share the word, find out if they need any other assistance and let them know we are here and we care. We are also in planning for a caroling outing this December. It would be amazing to gather a large group for this trip. You don’t need a big voice just a big heart. It is also a great way to spread the Christmas spirit.

Busing is going well and an ongoing joy of helping our members in the area come to worship, that being said, our bus is full and we could use some help picking up on the east side of town. If you might be interested in helping out, please contact Darlene or Tim Riddle. If you are uncomfortable with driving, we are always in need of having more volunteers to help out with the ushering.

The last thing I would like to add, Thank you to all of the volunteers that have donated all the floral enhancements in memorial or celebration throughout the year. They are always a beautiful addition to our service.

It’s a pleasure to serve you!
Troy Akerman



SLIP ‘N SLIDE KICKBALL RECAP

Many of our kids joined in the Slip ‘n Slide Kickball fun. Some of our neighborhood friends joined in the fun. There was a lot of slipping and a small

amount of sliding and a TON of pool sitting. Many thanks to Hayden and Connor Hallberg for helping set up the fun.

TURKEY ROAST SATURDAY
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 • 6:00 PM

The annual church turkey roast will be held on Saturday, at the Conklin’s house at 4048 Will Ann Drive. We are saying 6:00 pm for a start time but won’t really start eating until about 6:30 pm. Turkey, dressing, beverages and s’mores will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass and your own table service. Let Debbie in the office know if you are coming so that we will know how much food to prepare and how many to set up for. If you decide to come at the last minute and have not let anyone know, COME ANYWAY!!! We always set up some extra places. Questions? Contact Ed Conklin by email at ejc4048@aol.com.

SUNDAY SCHOOL KICK OFF
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

We will kick off a new year of Sunday School on Sunday, September 9. Children of ALL ages will participate in Sunday School in the 3rd Floor Art Room. This year we are using a combination of curriculum and will offer a format similar to our worship service. If you want to see what is happening in Sunday School, we always welcome visitors! Any questions, Contact Dyan Lofgren at dyan.lofgren@secondfirst.org.



SUNDAE SUNDAY
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 • AFTER CHURCH

What a great way to see the results of the church in action! Ice cream and visiting with our mission partners; what a great idea, meeting our teams and the local community groups that we at SecondFirst support through our time, talent, and treasure. We will gather in the gym after our church service on September 9, where our teams will allow you to see what the plans are for the 2018-19 church year – AND – an opportunity to hear how our outreach impacts our city.



SECOND ANNUAL PIG ROAST
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 • 12:30 PM

Last year was such a blast, we are doing it again! Join us Saturday September 22 for a fun day. The feasting will begin around 12:30 pm. Bring a chair to sit on as we will be outside in the yard. (If it rains we will be in the gym.) For more information call the church office.

DOWNTOWN ORGAN WALK
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

There will be two opportunities in September to hear our organ. First, on the 23rd, Mendelssohn Performing Arts Center will be holding a Downtown Organ Walk starting at 1:30 pm. Four organs will be featured: Court Street at 1:30, SecondFirst at 2:15, Emmanuel Episcopal at 3:00, and ending up at MPAC at 3:45. Join us for a fun and relaxing afternoon enjoying some of our downtown musical assets. Then, on September 30, our own organ will be featured in the Rockford Chapter of the American Guild of Organists’ scholarship recipient recital. Individuals who have received scholarship money from the AGO will offer their “thanks” by playing an afternoon concert at 3:00 pm. I hope you will join us!



CIDER & DONUTS
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Towards the end of September, the temperatures cool off and we start to think about fall, leaves changing colors, crisp cool air. Enjoy the sweet taste of apple donuts and cider with your church friends at the fellowship hour after church on September 30, provided by the Fellowship Ministry team.

DIALOGUE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Conversations on current events (specific topic TBD) All sessions meet in the Heritage Room. Coffee and gathering at 8:30 am; sessions begin at 8:45 am.

PRAIRIE ASSOCIATION FALL MEETING
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3

We are invited to gather at First Congregational UCC, Marseilles, on Saturday, November 3, 2018, for the Association Fall Meeting. Please mark your calendars and plan on bringing a car-full of your church members and adherents - the hospitality will be terrific, and the program inspiring. Yours in Christ’s service,
Rev. Kathy Lawes
Associate Conference Minister Serving Prairie and Western Associations; Illinois Conference United Church of Christ

NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBERS
(as of August 21)

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 19 for showers | 3 meal help |
| 3 diaper closet | 2 laundry help |
| 3 clothing help | |



WELCOME!

AUBREY BARNETT,
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH
MINISTRY

Aubrey Barnett is a born and bred Illinois girl and a graduate of both Knox College in Galesburg and Loyola University Chicago. She holds a BA in education and MA in pastoral counseling, and maintains licensure in the state to practice in both fields. Aubrey has been the

youth pastor at Epiphany UCC for the past four years while working in a hospital with adolescents struggling with mental health crisis. She is very excited to have moved to Rockford with her husband Rickey and twin daughters Bailey and Tinsley (8 months old), to take a position as the middle school teacher at Spectrum School. She cannot wait to learn about the wonderful community of SecondFirst (especially those young people!), and feels blessed beyond measure to have been chosen for the rich opportunity of being your new Director of Youth Ministry.



HAITI EDUCATION PROJECT FOR FALL 2018

LET'S GET READY FOR SCHOOL

It is time to get ready to go back to school for students in Rockford and throughout the world. Our Haiti Interest Group at SecondFirst Church is hoping to provide tuition support for children in Saut-d'Eau, Haiti, the home town of our James and Odette Casimir family.

Public education is not free in Haiti. The family of each Haitian child must pay \$100 tuition plus \$150 for books, supplies, food, uniforms and backpack to attend school for one year. Many children cannot pay these fees and therefore cannot go to school. We hope to help!

Any size donation is appreciated and will be sent directly to Saut-d'Eau to help provide for a child to go to school this year. If you would like to assist with our education project you may send a check to SecondFirst Church with Haiti Education Project noted in the memo line of the check.

If you have any questions or would like to join our Haiti Interest Group, contact Carolyn Greenlaw: email csgreen52@aol.com, or call 815-978-0723.

HORIZONS BIBLE STUDY

SEPTEMBER 14 • 1:00 PM

Join us as we begin a new Bible study. We will be studying God's Promise: I Am with You. This study is written by Amy Poling Sutherlun. We will trace the repetition of God's most frequent promise—on the actual speaking of the promise, God's words, "I will be with you" or "I am with you" wend their way through scripture. This study is divided into 9 sessions—beginning in September and finishing in May—the second Friday of the month in the Heritage Room at Church. All are welcome! Study book provided. Please contact Joyce Pogue if you have questions.



JEREMIAH DEVELOPMENT

TO SEEK THE WELL-BEING OF THE CITY

Jeremiah Development's first newsletter was a success!! We saw an increase in neighbors attending the Coronado/Haskell Neighborhood Association meeting. We had several new people taking advantage of the garden and sharing recipes through the new recipe box. The original garden sign has been rehabbed and is now at the SW corner of the garden along with a container full of plastic grocery bags. There is a new rain garden being installed on September 8th! Thank you to everyone who donated their bag-o-bags! Planning for Love Rockford 2019 has begun! You will be hearing more about it as we get closer to the event.

As we continue to assess the needs of the neighborhood with more and more input from those that live here, Jeremiah's focus may be changing. However, our mission remains the same: To Seek the Well-being of the City.

Sue Kanthak
Executive Director



REED CHAPEL

A SPACE REBORN

Three handy men removed the stage from Reed Chapel. They were amazing and the space is reborn. Our Bells will be OK in the "Chapel". We'll make "Heavenly Music". - Alice Uphouse



CHURCH PICNIC

ANNA PAGE PARK

All Church picnic at Anna Page Park was a great success. Thank you to the Fellowship Ministry Team for organizing and cooking!



MISSION TRIP

SIX FLAGS ADVENTURE

On Monday, August 13th a group of us who went on the mission trip spent the day at Six Flags. Some of us only rode 3 rides and others were able enjoy more rides. We all had a good time and are looking forward to planning a trip again next year. Thanks again to Bill Hoff for joining us on this adventure.

ARC NIGHT

RECAP & UPCOMING DATE

Clients played games, ate hot dogs, made crafts and danced. Thank you to Bruce and Joanne Johnson, Holly Beeman, Linda Roy and Merritt Matheson for helping with the event. Our next ARC night is Thursday October 25. It is our favorite rec night as the clients and volunteers all dress up in Halloween costumes and we have a full house! The ARC is one of our favorite Mission partners. The clients always have such a great time. Our volunteers leave with a smile. If you are interested in volunteering for an ARC Rec Night, Contact Becky Erbe, becky.erbe@secondfirst.org.

THRIFT SHOP UPDATE

NEW HOURS • 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

The Thrift Shop would like to thank the "Gals" and to those of you for providing items for our Thrift Shop. The new hours begin Tuesday, September 11 from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. Contact Jean Reese or Alice Uphouse to volunteer.

A MURAL? MAYBE...

WITH BEATTIE IS...BACK • SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8



We are in initial conversation with Tia Richardson, a muralist and community activist from Milwaukee, to draw our neighbors of all kinds together to create a mural on the side of our gym. Her process is boundary-breaking and her art is striking. The Membership Ministry Team is sponsoring a table at the Beattie Is... Back arts festival on Saturday, September 8

where Tia will engage the community for the first time. Volunteers will ask children to draw what they think should be on the wall. To volunteer contact Sandra Campa, 815-601-3938; email sandracampa55@gmail.com. Questions? Contact Rev. Rebecca, 815-963-8431, rebecca.whitewglen@gmail.com.

NOTES FROM THE JULY GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING

Our July meeting was very productive and informative. The teams are all working on the 2018-19 church year. We watched a short video to introduce a muralist who resides in Milwaukee, WI and has produced a very large scale outside mural with that engaged community. Remember, we here at SecondFirst are looking into doing a project like this on the outside west side wall of the gym. Also, the greenspace has been marked by the utilities for the installation by the Natural Land Institute of the demonstration or teaching Rain Garden. As we are launching the church year, please plan to stop in the gym after the church service on September 9 to visit with our mission teams and our mission partners, so we can learn about how we are "energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace".

A VISIT FROM JUDGE COLLINS

FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

Judge Rosemary Collins explains the nature of family violence and how a family justice center can help. Thanks to Alice Uphouse for organizing this important city event at our church.



