

SecondFirst Church

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)
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Permit No. 3734
Rockford, Illinois

THE TOWER

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UCC/FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace



A WORD FROM PASTOR REBECCA

Hello Church!

You did it again. I can't believe it. You are the most compassionate and open group of people. We had been talking about doing an overnight café (or warming center) for a long time. We all know talk is cheap. When the weather became subarctic in late January, the trustees and Mission Ministry teams voted to open the doors for the four coldest nights.

God brought two amazing people into our lives to staff the café, which made the whole thing possible. As did generous donations from many of you. Did you know we were even able to accommodate for pets (and people with pet allergies!?)

I know it doesn't specifically say in the Bible, "serve those whose heat goes out in subzero weather," but it should. Nice work, church! We'll keep an eye out for that line as we are focusing on the Sermon on the Mount on Sunday mornings.

You never cease to amaze me with the heart and desire you have to love and serve God's people. I am grateful for each one of you.

Peace,
Rev. Rebecca

PLEASE PICK UP YOUR 2018 CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS.

They are located on the table next to the Sanctuary door.
The dated Offering Envelope Boxes for 2019 are also available on the table.

ANNUAL BUDGET AND FOUNDATION MEETING

Please plan to stay after worship on Sunday, February 10, 2019 for the Annual Budget and Foundation Meeting. Budget packets will be available February 3.

SAVE THE DATES

MARCH

March 2 – Jubilee Soup Kitchen
March 6 – Ash Wednesday Worship
March 10 – Carillons
March 23 – Corned Beef Dinner
March 30 – Jeremiah Development Fund Raiser

APRIL

April 14 – Palm Sunday Potluck
April 18 – Maundy Thursday Service
April 19 – Good Friday Service
April 21 – Easter
April 28 – Annual Program Meeting
April 28 – Ring in Spring



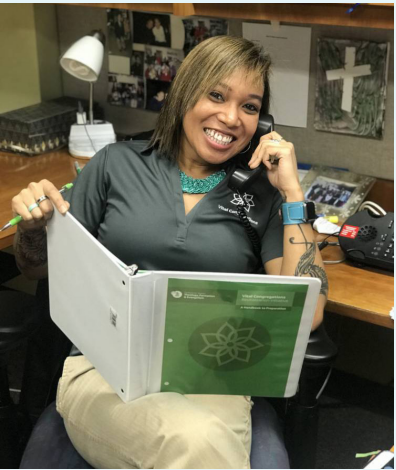
NEWS FROM OUR DENOMINATIONS

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
UCC CONFERENCE IN ARIZONA
WORKS TO MAKE MIGRATION A
MORE HUMANE EXPERIENCE



The Southwest Conference United Church of Christ, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, and several other faith communities in Arizona are working to build a relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to better respond to the urgent situation the agency is creating as it releases asylum seekers into local communities.
Read more online: www.ucc.org

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
FOURTEEN PRESBYTERIES BEGIN
PREPARING FOR CONGREGATIONAL
REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE



Fourteen Presbyteries were selected this week to be part of the first wave of a national launch of the Vital Congregations Revitalization Initiative in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – which is designed to help their churches live more faithfully as disciples of Jesus Christ.

According to the Vital Congregations Revitalization Initiative manual, the initiative is a two-year covenant relationship between presbyteries and the PC(USA) "to prayerfully walk with pastors and existing congregations in intentional efforts of revitalization."
Read the full article online: www.presbyterianmission.org



VIGIL FOR SLAIN 15 YEAR OLD

Wenesday, January 23, 2019

Rev. Rebecca organized with partner Pastor JR Flannigan of Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church a community-wide vigil for Za'Shawn Coats, a 15 year old boy who was shot and killed while walking down the street with his friends. Rebecca said the next Sunday, "Before Za'Shawn's name had been released, we set out to meet with other clergy and community leaders at the exact location where he was killed 48 hours later. And we claimed that corner for peace and love and justice and we sent the violence away. Za'Shawn was killed on MLK day, so we used King's word to claim that a "new age" had already taken hold. We claimed the blessing in the middle of the curse. You can watch the whole video online at Channel 23 or see coverage on the other news outlets.

KOFFEE KLASS

February Schedule

FEBRUARY 3RD & 10TH

Science and Religion: An Overview

There's a popular yet false narrative that science and religion are incompatible. These two fields both explore some of life's biggest questions, albeit from different angles. This two week series, moderated by Roger Greenlaw, Charlie Fry, and Andy Newgren, will investigate these finds and seek to reach a place where our lives can be guided by informed scientific discoveries and Christian faith.

FEBRUARY 17TH

Theology 101

The most basic definition of theology is "god talk," meaning that anytime we talk, write, or even think about God we are engaged in theological practice. This new and recurring series will explore various elements of theology from formative theologians (past and present), doctrines like the Lord's Supper, and historical events from church history. Whether you have a PhD in theology or run for the exit and sound of the word "theology," your presence is welcomed and valued.

FEBRUARY 24TH

Dialogue: Conversations on Current Events (TBD)

ALL SESSIONS MEET IN THE HERITAGE ROOM
8:30 a.m. Coffee & gathering
8:45 a.m. Session begins



WALKING IN THE GYM

Tuesdays and Thursdays, February - April, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

When a church is open to the community around it, the community around it comes to church. For another cold weather season, we will welcome walkers in our gym. So bring your friends, tell your co-workers and get your move on. Would you like to volunteer? Call the office or email Debbie: debbie.wise@secondfirst.org

ROCKFORD WOMEN'S MARCH

A few brave SecondFirst members attended the frigid Rockford Women's March. Many thanks to Tim and Darlene Riddle for driving the bus as a shuttle for people to get back to their cars quickly!



Rev. Rebecca posted this picture on Facebook saying: "This is US Congresswoman Cheri Bustos telling the Rockford Women's March the difference between the men's and women's softball leagues on Capitol Hill. The men play Republicans against Democrats. The women, Republicans and Democrats, form one team, practice and laugh together and then play against the press corps. I like men, particularly the ones who do not ascribe to toxic masculinity that competes and divides. Here's to the Women's March inspiring us all to lead with heart, compassion and boundary breaking courage. Thanks to all who organized!!"



Rev. Rebecca brings up the rear of the march and clicks her heels to make the police officer behind her laugh.
Photo credit: Carly Rice



NARRATIVE LECTIONARY BIBLE STUDY

Tuesdays in February, 12:00 p.m.

Join Rev. Rebecca to preview the coming week's Bible passage which will focus on the stories of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Bring a bag lunch if you choose. No Bible knowledge necessary.



JEREMIAH DEVELOPMENT

Saturday, March 30, 4:30 p.m.

Save the date and join us for the first annual **A Night In Italy** dinner Fundraiser with Jeremiah Development! All proceeds will go to the Jeremiah Development to help with neighborhood programming, events, and more. The event will take place at Mendelssohn Performing Arts Center. Doors open at 4:30 with a cocktail hour and silent auction followed by dinner and trivia. Stay tuned for silent auction prizes! Tickets on sale soon! Tickets will be sold at Emmanuel Episcopal, Court St. United Methodist, and SecondFirst Church. Interested in making a donation? Contact Danica Gray (Fundraising Chair) danicamariegray@gmail.com or Sue Kanthak (Executive Director) sue@jeremiahdevelopment.org.



SAVE THE DATE: LOVE ROCKFORD

Saturday, May 11, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

With a \$10,000 grant from the Northern Illinois Community Foundation, it will be bigger and better than ever...able to serve and LOVE more of our neighbors in need. Check out the website for information and to be an early volunteer: www.loverockfordil.org



SERIOUS SOUP

Mondays, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

We will be welcoming guests each Monday for Serious Soup. We would love people to stop by, either to help, bring soup or just to see what it is like and to meet some of our neighbors. Join us Monday!! Contact: becky.erbe@secondfirst.org



DATES FOR LENT

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Wednesday, March 6, 6:30 p.m.

LENTEN SUPPER WITH WORSHIP

LEARNING EXPERIENCE (see reading material below)

Wednesdays, March 13 - April 10, 6:00 p.m.

MINDFULNESS WITH SANDY WILLIAMS

Thursdays, March 14 - April 11, 12:10 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sunday, April 14, 10:00 a.m.

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP

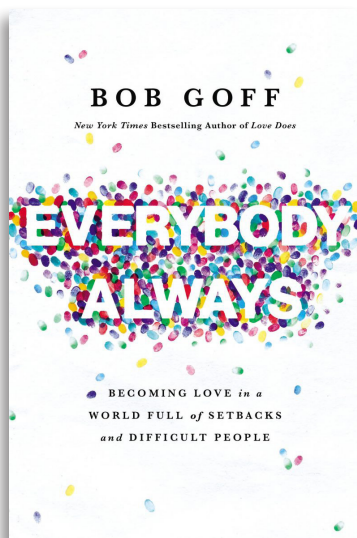
Thursday, April 18, 6:30 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

Friday, April 19, 12:10 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sunday, April 21, 10:00 a.m.



LENTEN SUPPER WORSHIP READING MATERIALS

Wednesdays,
March 13 - April 10, 6:00 p.m.

If you'd like to get ahead, our Wednesday evening Lenten worship experience will use the book *Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People* by Bob Goff. He takes readers on a journey into the secret of living without fear, constraint, or worry.



Thanks to Marge Maynard for leading a session on her favorite theologian, Walter Brueggemann, an acclaimed Hebrew Bible scholar, ordained UCC minister, and national church leader. Want to know more of Brueggemann's work? Check out his website www.walterbrueggemann.com or watch his interview with Trinity Church Wall Street for their 2011 Trinity Institute: Reading Scripture Through Other Eyes (www.trinitywallstreet.org/video/walter-brueggemann). Or check with Marge for suggested readings.



JOIN THE JUBILEE SOUP KITCHEN TEAM

Saturday, March 2, 10:00 a.m.

Marge Maynard is looking for 10 persons between the ages of 10 and 100 to prepare, serve and clean up the Jubilee Center Soup Kitchen effort. We will work between 10 am and 1:30 pm. You can be there for the entire time or just part. You will be making a difference in the lives of our neighbors! Contact: Marge 815-980-5304, mtmhome@me.com if you can fit this into your day

Mark your calendars now for becoming a member of the Jubilee Soup Kitchen Team for the New Year. The dates we will serve are March 2, May 4, July 20, September 7, and November 2. Reminder calls for Team Members will appear as each date approaches. Thank you for your personal and financial support for this outreach program.



Pastor Joseph Dixon, President of the Rockford Minister's Fellowship, speaks at the clergy lunch hosted by SecondFirst during Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr weekend.



Our housekeeper, Maria, is an amazing cake maker! Here the staff celebrated our late December and January birthdays.



The Workforce Connection Job Fair: Our gym was full on January 15 with people trying to connect jobs to workers. They even offered haircuts for the interviewees!



FAMILY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM



TECH AND TALK COFFEE HOUR

Sunday, February 17

New phone or tablet received as a Christmas present? Old devices still not fully mastered? Tech and talk is returning just in time! On Sunday, February 17th during coffee hour in the dining room, the transit youth kids will be available to help you with your tech concerns. Kids are pros at those things that come to the rest of us with some anxiety. How do I use Facebook to look at pictures of my kids and grandkids? Should I use Instagram instead? Just want to be able to send and receive photos on that new phone you got for Christmas 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. No tech concerns but just wants to get to know our kids better. Share a moment at coffee hour with them. Contact Karen Olson; kolson128@gmail.com

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

February 10 and March 17, 11:45 a.m.

We will return to our Sunday afternoon confirmation classes on February 10 and March 17 at 11:45 am. Sandwiches, water, and snacks will be provided.



FELLOWSHIP EVENT ROCKFORD WIND ENSEMBLE

Sunday, February 24, 3:00 p.m.

Join church members and friends for a late Sunday afternoon of great music at the Nordlof Center. The Fellowship Ministry Team will leave the church at 2:30 pm and walk to the Nordlof Center at 118 N. Main Street. Individuals desiring a ride from the church to the Nordlof Center, please call the church office to reserve a seat by Tuesday February 19. Tickets can be purchased at the door: \$10 Adults, Seniors and Students \$5.00. Contact: Dave Noel 815-398-6518

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

February 22-24

We get to join with other students from the area to learn and play: Confirmation Retreat Feb 22-24 at Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center. We will meet at SecondFirst at 5:30 p.m. and return in time for worship and bowling on Sunday. Cost TBA. Also confirmation time change/update: class will be held from 11:15-12:15, moving it to directly after church. Questions? Contact aubrey.barnett@secondfirst.org



SNOW CAMP RECAP

We had an amazing trip to Snow Camp this year; the weather on Saturday was sunny, 40 degrees, with lots of snow. The teens went horseback riding, cross country skiing, zip lining, tubing, and of course spent time thinking of God's message! Through a three-part workshop, the group unpacked the meaning of true joy, moving towards an understanding of joy that comes mixed with tears because something is just too good to believe- that's how God's love is. Looking forward to many amazing more memories as we are already rebooked for the first weekend in January next year!



ALL CHURCH BOWLING SUNDAY

Sunday, February 24, 12:30 p.m.

Join us for a fun filled afternoon of bowling at Park Lanes Bowling Center (please note the change in location). Check-in starts at 12:30 pm and bowling starts at 1:00 pm. Cost is \$5.00 per bowler and includes 2 hours of bowling, shoe rental, pizza and soda. Please RSVP to Debbie by Wednesday, February 20 (after February 21 the price increases to \$11.00 per bowler). Questions? Contact: dyan.lofgren@secondfirst.org

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Friday, February 1
No scheduled activities

Saturday, February 2
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, February 3
8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Peanuts
11:15 AM – Tower Ringers
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center

Monday, February 4
11:30 AM – Serious Soup
12:00 PM – Adult Education Ministry Team
5:00 PM – Love Rockford

Tuesday, February 5
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
9:30 AM – Free Showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
12:00 PM – Bible Study

Wednesday, February 6
9:00 AM – Deaconesses
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:30 PM – Membership Ministry Team
6:30 PM – Martin Ringers

Thursday, February 7
9:30 AM – Carillons
9:30 AM – Free showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center
5:30 PM – JD Board Meeting
6:00 PM – Bellcantos
7:00 PM – Choir

Friday, February 8
1:00 PM – Horizons Bible Study

Saturday, February 9
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, February 10
8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Budget & Foundation Meeting
No Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Peanuts
11:15 AM – Tower Ringers
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
11:15 AM – Confirmation Class
4:00 PM – Alternative Worship
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center

Monday, February 11
11:30 AM – Serious Soup
5:00 PM – Deacons Ministry Team

Tuesday, February 12
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
9:30 AM – Presbytery Bolingbrook
9:30 AM – Free Showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
12:00 PM – Bible Study
5:00 PM – Foundation Meeting
6:00 PM – DVT

Wednesday, February 13
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:00 PM - Trustees
6:30 PM - Martin Ringers

Thursday, February 14
9:30 AM – Carillons
9:30 AM – Free showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center
6:00 PM – Bellcantos
7:00 PM – Choir

Friday, February 15
No scheduled activities

Saturday, February 16
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, February 17: Bell Sunday
8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
9:40 AM – Peanuts
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Tech and Talk Coffee Hour
11:15 AM – Music Ministry Team
11:15 AM – Fellowship Ministry Team
11:15 AM – Tower Ringers
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center

Monday, February 18
11:30 AM – Serious Soup

Tuesday, February 19
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
9:30 AM – Free Showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
12:00 PM – Bible Study
5:00 PM – Missions Ministry

Wednesday, February 20
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
6:00 PM – Executive Committee
6:30 PM - Martin Ringers

Thursday, February 21
9:30 AM – Carillons
9:30 AM – Free showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center
6:00 PM – Bellcantos
7:00 PM – Choir

Friday, February 22
5:30 PM – Confirmation Retreat Stronghold

Saturday, February 23
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, February 24
8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Tower Ringers
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
12:30 PM – All Church Bowling
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center

Monday, February 25
11:30 AM – Serious Soup

Tuesday, February 26
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
9:30 AM – Free Showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
12:00 PM – Bible Study
6:00 PM – Earth Care Committee

Wednesday, February 27
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
6:30 PM – Martin Ringers

Thursday, February 28
9:30 AM – Carillons
9:30 AM – Free showers
11:00 AM – Gym Walking
4:30 PM – Just Breathe 815 Drop In Center
5:30 PM – Governing Council
6:00 PM – Bellcantos
7:00 PM – Choir

NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBERS

- 3 for showers
- 3 people stranded in Rockford sent home

LET’S GET SOCIAL!

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facebook.com/secondfirstchurch

Follow Us on Twitter
twitter.com/second1stchurch

alternative WORSHIP



ALTERNATIVE WORSHIP SERVICE
Begins March 10
4:00 p.m. in the Chapel
(Will continue every second Sunday of the month)

It’s Ready! Our new Alternative Worship Service is practiced and ready to go. Experience a laid back gathering with fun spirit-filled music, storytelling and food. Joshua Patterson, a local realtor and executive director of Wabongo Leadership Council, is putting together a worship band and choir. There will be storytelling and mission making. There will be communion wandering and prayer stations. There will be jeans and coffee drinking. Everything revolves around the Table, now in the center of the room. There is no “up front.” All people participate in making worship. Invite your friends and join us!

Questions? Contact Rebecca.WhiteNewgren@secondfirst.org

MUSIC FOR FEBRUARY

By Paul Laprade, Music Director

Dorothy Paige Turner opens February 3rd with her beautiful rendition of Duke Ellington’s ‘Come Sunday’, and the Sanctuary Choir will complement her singing with Craig Courtney’s stunning setting of the Lord’s Prayer. February 10th brings both traditional and contemporary music from our choir with a new variation of the familiar hymn, “Praise to the Lord”. Bell Sunday comes again on February 17th, when our Tower Ringers, Martin Ringers, and Peanut Bells perform exciting new works chosen by Julie Cook Ramirez. The month ends with the Sanctuary Choir and their renditions of works by Moses Hogan and Howard Helvey. We are blessed in many ways by the people who support, perform, and create this music all for the glory of God.

NOTE FROM THE MODERATOR

By Steve Showers

As we look to the month of February, we also reflect on the past five to seven months. We here at SecondFirst have grown some. New members and many visitors have helped keep the Sunday attendance at or above the averages of the past few years. We have also accomplished some really kind and helpful deeds that have spread joy throughout our community, both within our church family and beyond.

Remember to thank the person that you are sharing the peace with on any Sunday by stating that we are making a difference in the lives of someone that we may never see or hear from.

Also, thanks for the support of the Fair Trade Store in December, we almost cleared the shelves. NOW, we need to see if new and different items will be filling those shelves. Check it out.

GOVERNING COUNCIL REPORT

By Steve Showers

The Governing Council meeting in December was a time to share the news from each of the ministry teams. Quick and short was that part of the meeting. After some updates from staff, we shifted to the advent season and had a short Christmas party – we can say “Christmas” at church.

During January, we will be looking at the goals of the ministry teams, sharing and celebrating the successful progress of continuing to work on the goals that have been set by each team as the program year is about halfway complete. We are also looking at the budget and annual meetings of the church and the foundation in early February; getting the presentations ready for you the members of the church.

Keep the works of the mission teams in your thoughts and prayers as we continue to Energize...you know the rest of the line.

Keep warm, keep attending church services, and keep participating in the activities of the church.

Learn more about our Ministry Teams by visiting our website.
www.secondfirst.org/ministry-teams/

