

A NOTE FROM REVEREND REBECCA

Hello Church!

I am beginning to learn the yearly rhythms of our church. In addition to Pentecost (this year), May brings the transition of Ministry Teams. In our tradition, service terms end at the end of April and new ones begin in May. With the coming of Spring, we breathe new life into our systems and ministries. We say thank you to those who have served and we look forward to receiving new servants.

Transition is never easy. We get used to the way things were. We desire to continue the work we started and will not quite finish. For those of you who are stepping away from a team and a specific role, thank you! Thank you for all you have done to support and propel the ministry of Second First Church. For those of you continuing and coming on board, thank you for your energy and effort. God is doing a good thing in our midst and your time and talents make a difference.

I want to say a special thank you to Bob Langford, who has been our Moderator. Bob kept our church moving forward while I was away on maternity leave. He supported our Ministry Teams with great skill and care. I am grateful for Bob’s willingness to challenge us and his ability to point us toward growth and stability. Thank you Bob, for your service and sacrifice to be our Moderator this year!

On Sunday during our annual meeting, we will transition our teams and welcome Carolyn Greenlaw as our next Moderator. I look forward to what God has in store for us in 2016-2017.

Peace to you,

Rebecca

AN EVENING OF GRATITUDE - SATURDAY, MAY 21



Join us as we honor James Lowell Fry, retiring bell director, with a special dinner here in our dining room on Saturday May 21 at 6 pm. Catered by Sam’s Ristorante on Riverside, this event will be a wonderful opportunity to indulge in good food, good friends, and good fellowship, as we thank Jim for sharing his musical talents and leadership with all of us here at Second First. There may even be a surprise or two! Cost is just \$8 for adults and \$6 for children (12 and under). Contact Debbie at debbie@secondfirst.org in the office to reserve your spot today. Payment is due at time of reservation. The deadline for reservations is Friday, May 13.

Moderator: Robert Langford rrlang44@yahoo.com	Director, Peanut Bells: Sarah Hallberg sarah@secondfirst.org	Childcare & Thrift Store Coordinator: Stephanie Cooper
Senior Pastor: Rev. Rebecca White Newgren rebecca@secondfirst.org	Director, Alegria: Julie Cook Ramirez julie@secondfirst.org	Communication Coordinator: Erin Sturm erin@secondfirst.org
Director of Member Care & Neighborhood Connections: Becky Erbe becky@secondfirst.org	Director, The Carillons: Joyce Zartman joycezartman@att.net	Director of Theological Engagement: Andy Newgren andy.newgren@secondfirst.org
Student Pastor: Julie Eklund julie eklund@secondfirst.org	Bookkeeper/Business Manager: Nancy Yoeckel nancy@secondfirst.org	Youth Director: Courtney Jonsson courtney.jonsson@secondfirst.org
Director of Music: Paul Laprade paul@secondfirst.org	Office Manager: Debbie Wise debbie@secondfirst.org	Family Ministry Coordinator: Dyan Lofgren Dyan.Lofgren@secondfirst.org
Organist: Valerie Blair valerie@secondfirst.org	Building Manager: Kurt Riplinger kurt@secondfirst.org	
Director of Bells: James Lowell Fry james@secondfirst.org	Sunday Building Host: Jeff Byrne jbyrne6132@yahoo.com	

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

The Annual Program Meeting - May 1

The Annual Program Meeting of Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church will be Sunday, May 1, immediately following the worship service. A luncheon will take place in the dining room after the conclusion of the annual meeting. A free-will offering will be taken at this time. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Ministry.

Nerf Wars - May 14

Drop your middle schoolers off for a night of Nerf Wars! On May 14 from 6-9 pm, we will be battling it out in the playing field to see whose team can capture the fort. Students will have a chance to build different obstacles and barriers by attending our youth group gatherings on the first two Wednesdays in May at 5:15 pm. Nerf guns will be provided, but teens are more than welcome to bring their own.

Confirmation Sunday with Brunch - May 15

Our 2016 Confirmation Class will be confirmed on Sunday, May 15. The Christian Education Board will be hosting a breakfast in honor of our confirmands. Breakfast begins at 9:00 am in the dining room. Please call the church or email debbie@secondfirst.org to make a reservation for your family.

Baseball Game Save the Date - July 23

On Saturday, July 23 we will have a bus trip to the Cubs vs. Brewers game in Milwaukee.

Performers Wanted for Summer Music Series

Would you like to perform a solo, duet, trio, quartet, ensemble, performance art moment (interpretative dance) or some other artistic offering for our Summer Music series? Second First Church features individuals in the summer who might have a prelude to offer (especially if you take piano lessons), a song to sing, or a short piece to play. Why not return God's artistic gifts to you as gifts of praise? We would love to have you offer your talents in our services, and can offer accompaniment and support as you wish to have. Contact Paul Laprade at paul@secondfirst.org for more information or to suggest a date when you or yours can make a "joyful noise"!

Graduate Notice

Calling all graduates! We will be honoring you in Prayer and in the worship bulletin on Sunday May 22. If you would like to take part, please send us a brief bio that tells us where you graduated from and your future plans. Please email debbie@secondfirst.org by May 17.

Summer Program for Kids with Northwest Community Center

Second First Church is partnering with Northwest Community Center for a summer program for children. The program begins June 6 and will run through August 12. The hours will be 10:30 am -4:30 pm. Lunch will be provided by the City of Rockford. Stay tuned for more information or email becky@secondfirst.org.

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 Sarah Holliday, Phillip & Mandi Bush and baby Beatrice, Doreen Vickery, Jayne Pheiffer, Marshall Butchart, Jim Miller, Jim Rollins, Don Beckman, John Livermore, Philip & Shirley Davidson, Miriam Richardson, Linda and Julie Cook Ramirez.

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, Sally Cooper, 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.

PENTECOST HISTORY

by Julie Eklund

On Pentecost, Sunday May 15, we are celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Advocate Jesus promised to us. Pentecost was the second of the three great feasts in Hebrew society; it was originally referred to as the "Feast of Harvest" and later as the "Feast of Weeks." The day was the culmination of a seven-week agricultural season that concluded with a one-day festival held on the first day after the seventh Sabbath after Passover.

In its original setting (Num. 28:26), it was a sacrificial presentation of the first fruits of the harvest. In Jesus' time, the holiday took on a more festive tone with a final communal meal to which the poor were invited. The word, Pentecost is from the Greek word 'Pentekostos', which means 'fifty'. It's the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week.

Pentecost Sunday is held the seventh Sunday after Easter and is considered the birthday of the church. Red is the traditional color for the day of Pentecost. It is derived from the fiery flames leaping above the heads of the startled disciples. Pentecost fulfills two promises: God's Spirit Poured Out from Joel 2:28 and The Work of the Spirit from John 16:5-15.

WELCOME DYAN LOFGREN



We welcome Dyan Lofgren who has begun service in the Family Ministry Coordinator position. She and her husband, Scott, have two children. Her daughter, Miranda, will graduate with her master's degree in athletic training in May and her son, Ian, is a software engineer at HP in Boise, Idaho. She is passionate about working with children. When she isn't at Second First, you will be able to find her coaching soccer and running a youth soccer league. Dyan looks forward to meeting everyone.

JAMES LOWELL FRY'S RECEPTION



MAY CALENDAR

Sunday, May 1
Communion Annual Meeting
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Youth Spaghetti Luncheon
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
4:00 PM – Confirmation Class

Monday, May 2
9:00 AM – Lydia Urban Academy Mon-Thurs using gym
5:30 PM – Jeremiah Dev NOC
6:00 PM – Basketball

Tuesday, May 3
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
4:00 PM – Foundation Meeting

Wednesday, May 4
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:15 PM – Transit Youth Group
6:30 PM – Adult Education

Thursday, May 5
9:30 AM - Deaconesses
6:00 PM – Basketball
7:00 PM - Choir

Friday, May 6
1:00 PM – Horizons Bible Study

Saturday, May 7
8:00 AM - Pilgrim Park Clean Up
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, May 8
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
9:20 AM - Wee Worship
10:00 AM – Worship Service

10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:15 AM – Christian Education Ministry
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop

Monday, May 9
9:00 AM – Lydia Urban Academy Mon-Thurs using gym
5:30 PM - Deacons
6:00 PM – Basketball

Tuesday, May 10
8:00 AM – Men’s Fellowship
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
6:00 PM – Discernment and Vision

Wednesday, May 11
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:00 PM - Trustees
5:15 – Transit Youth Group

Thursday, May 12
5:30 PM – Jeremiah Development
6:00 PM – Basketball
7:00 PM - Choir

Friday, May 13

Saturday, May 14
10:00 AM - Bridge Clinic
6:00 PM – Youth Rec Night

Sunday, May 15
Confirmation Sunday
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
9:00 AM - Confirmation Breakfast
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, May 16
9:00 AM – Lydia Urban Academy Mon-Thurs using gym
6:00 PM - Basketball

Tuesday May 17
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop
1:00 PM – Executive Committee
5:30 PM - Missions Ministry

Wednesday, May 18
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
4:30 PM – Membership Ministry
5:15 PM – Transit Youth Group

Thursday, May 19
12:00 PM – Gordon Circle
6:00 PM – ARC Rec night
7:00 PM - Choir

Friday, May 20

Saturday, May 21
10:00 AM - Bridge Clinic
6:00 PM – Dinner for Jim Fry

Sunday, May 22
Graduation Sunday
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

Monday, May 23
9:00 AM – Lydia Urban Academy Mon-Wed using gym
6:00 PM - Basketball

Tuesday May 24
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop

Wednesday, May 25
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:15 PM – Transit Youth Group

Thursday, May 26
5:30 PM – Governing Council
6:00 PM – Basketball

Friday, May 27

Saturday, May 28
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, May 29
Baptism
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

Monday, May 30
Memorial Day Office Closed

Tuesday May 31
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
9:00 AM – Thrift Shop

THANK YOU, JULIE EKLUND!

Julie Eklund will preach on May 22 as we celebrate her time with us. Julie, a child of Spring Creek UCC, has served our church as Student Pastor for this academic year. Julie is about to complete her second year of seminary through Chicago Theological Seminary.



Julie has known for a while that God is calling her to ministry. Her home congregation affirmed this call. But she was uncertain whether others would see her gifts and abilities for ministry. You, Second First Church, have helped Julie discern that God is indeed calling beyond her home church to do God’s work in the world. Thank you for welcoming her and receiving her leadership and care.

Thank you, Julie, for caring so deeply for our congregation, for leading with energy and imagination. Thank you for crafting worship while Rev. Rebecca was on maternity leave. Fortunately, since Julie lives in Rockford, we do not have to say goodbye to her. We can expect to see her in worship on occasion and perhaps even in the pulpit again.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Advocate Health Systems, related to both the United Church of Christ and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is the largest health care system in the Chicago area, with more than 250 sites offering inpatient and outpatient services, home health services, hospice, counseling, physician services, and health care education programs.

Advocate Children's Hospital in Oak Lawn, one of twelve Chicago area hospitals related to the United Church of Christ, announced that since the beginning of April they have delivered seventeen sets of twins. The Children’s hospital has two campuses; Oak Lawn and Park Ridge. Dr. Brett Galley, neonatologist in the neonatal intensive care unit at Children’s Hospital said that he can’t explain it, but “In eight days, some 17 sets of twins have doubled the joy, doubled the fun and doubled the diaper count at the south suburban hospital. Galley said though the high-risk medical center is accustomed to welcoming and treating twins, the current population is "probably 3 to 4 times what we usually see."

LOOKING FOR MOTHER'S DAY OR GRADUATION GIFTS?

Jeremiah Development has a limited number of "Be Your Own Artist" kits remaining from our Loaded Brush Luminaries fundraiser. The kit is \$20 and includes paintbrushes, paint, two small canvases, an easel, an a canvas with Rockford's very own "Symbol" for someone to paint and enjoy! If you are interested, please contact Kathi Ferrero at kathleen@jeremiahdevelopment.org or at 630-452-5234 and she will deliver them to you.



Apples for Education Program

by Holly Beeman



About a year ago this program was born from a conversation about kids who each day arrive at school too late to eat the breakfast provided –leaving them hungry until lunch time.

Fact: We all know trying to focus and learn is difficult when you have a pit in your tummy that constantly reminds you how hungry you are.

Fact: This problem is faced every day at our neighborhood school, Haskell Academy.

Fact: Something needed to be done to help this situation.

Solution: Let’s provide apples for these hungry kids.

Apples provide vitamins and nutrition and help fill that tummy until lunch time.

The Apples for Education program has funded and delivered to Haskell Academy once every 1-2 weeks for the past year. Haskell Academy is very happy and thankful to have this program!

The Apples for Education program grew from the Discernment & Vision Team proved itself successful and has been passed on to the Mission Team for long term success. The program has a generous group of families and individuals who continue to donate time, money or both and the Mission Team fills in the gaps.

If you would like to be a part of Apples for Education program in one or all of these ways please contact Holly Beeman at 815-964-7239. Please know you prayers are always appreciated for this program.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THRIFT SHOP

As you do your spring cleaning, please think of our Thrift Shop. We are in need of pots and pans, towels, washcloths, blankets, sheets, sandals and summer clothes for all. Please make sure items are clean. If you are unable to transport them to church contact Debbie in the office at debbie@secondfirst.org or 815-963-8431.

FUNDRAISING FOR THE MISSIONS TRIP

The amount of support our congregation has shown for Transit, the youth ministry, is tremendous! We are so close to reaching our goal to fund the Missions Trip and other summer outings. This year's Mission Trip will be from June 12-17 in Osage Nation in Oklahoma. Here, they will be able to get a glimpse of life on an American Indian Reservation

With the Missions Trip fast approaching, please mark your calendars with the following fund-raiser dates!

Join Transit for a Spaghetti Luncheon directly following the Annual Report Meeting on May 1. This lunch will be prepared by the high school and middle school students. A free will offering will be taken and all the proceeds will benefit Transit at Second First Church.

On June 5, immediately following worship, a car wash will be held by the students attending this year's Mission Trip in order to raise the remaining amount of money required to go on the trip. A free will offering will be taken at this time.

If you would like to volunteer to help at either one of these events, please contact Courtney Jonsson at courtney.jonsson@secondfirst.org.

PILGRIM PARK SPRING CLEAN-UP

by Dave Noel

On Saturday, May 7 from 8 am - 5:30 pm, a few individuals are needed for a spring clean-up at Pilgrim Park in Princeton, IL. We will assist the maintenance staff at the Princeton Illinois Church Camp. A work session will be scheduled in the fall to assist the Stronghold camp.

The United Church of Christ of Illinois Conference owns and operates Pilgrim Park Camp in Princeton, Illinois and Tower Hill Camp adjacent to Warren Dunes State Park near Michigan City, Indiana. Each camp has a summer and fall schedule of youth and adult events. The Conference recently sold a conservation easement on 40 acres at Tower Hill to the Deer Creek Open Space Association for over \$500,000. The revenue will be used for capital improvements at the park. PCUSA of Illinois owns and operates Stronghold Camp and Retreat Center located near Oregon, Illinois. A summer program of youth camps for all ages are scheduled. The Retreat Center has special events year around.

These facilities are a part of our church campus and the programs at all of the three camps are a vital part of our church mission and growth. The clean-up crew will carpool to Pilgrim Park at 8 am and return by 5:30 pm. Please contact David Noel at 815-398-6518 for more information.

SPECIAL THANK YOU

On Monday, April 18, 14 current and former members of the Sanctuary Choir met at St. Anne's to sing hymns to St. Anne residents Linda Burright, Loren Maynard, and Marshall Butchart, and Siena residents Helen Magnuson and Dixie Hosto. Then Pastor Rebecca conducted a Communion service with grape juice and a loaf of bread warm out of the oven. Thank you to Carol Rice for organizing the choir members and Marsha Martin for directing and accompanying them. A special thank you to Pastor Rebecca for bringing Communion and making this event even more beautiful and meaningful.