

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

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Organization US
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Permit No. 3734
Rockford, Illinois



THE TOWER

Your monthly update on the church and its members

JUNE 2016

A NOTE FROM REVEREND REBECCA

Hey you,

Come meet with me! Yes, you, the one who would never make an appointment with the pastor. Yes, you, who has everything and nothing going wrong and right in your life. Yes, you, the one with the story to tell. Please come tell me about you.

I have been your pastor for over a year now. I've been to meetings, met our neighbors, preached often, celebrated births and deaths, but I haven't met with you (you know who you are). I would like to know your story, what makes you tick, why you come to church and anything else you want to share with me.

Come to my office for thirty minutes (sign up with Debbie in the office for the dates below). OR I would love to come to you. OR let's meet at one of your favorite Rockford locations. Give me a call, send an email, fax, tweet, smoke signal...? It's an open invitation, and I hope you will respond.

I pray for you all everyday.

Call Debbie to schedule a 30 minute time slot:

Monday, June 27, 10-noon

Tuesday, June 28, 5-7pm

I hope we have to add more.

Peace to you,

Rebecca



Pastor Rebecca with Student Pastor Julie Eklund on her last Sunday

NEW MEMBERS' CLASSES

Interested in finding out more about the life of Second First Church? Want to know about our collective history, theology and vision for the future? Join Pastor Rebecca and members of the Membership Ministry Team for our New Members' Class series. Gather with your fellow newcomers as we share our stories of life and faith. You will have the option to become a member of the church after the classes. No pre-commitment necessary. Bring all of your faith and all of your doubt and come for lunch. For questions or to sign-up, please contact Pastor Rebecca, 815-963-8431 or rebecca@secondfirst.org. We will meet Sunday, June 12, 11:30 am with lunch, Wednesday, June 15, 5:00 pm with dinner, and Sunday, June 26, 9:00 am and received into worship.

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

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

Youth Sunday - June 19

On June 11, we will be sending our high school students along with two brave volunteers, Wes Hegge and Andy Newgren (please pray for them) to Osage Nation in Oklahoma. Here they will serve on a Mission Trip on an American Indian Reservation. On their journey to Oklahoma, they will stop for the night to stay at First Presbyterian Church in Joplin, MO. They will attend worship with this church on Sunday morning and continue on their journey. The group is scheduled to return to Rockford on June 17. In order to celebrate their return, worship on Sunday, June 19, will be led by the students who attended the trip. Come ready to hear meaningful testimonials as well as some goofy stories from their experience. Please join us in prayer as we continue to prepare for this life altering experience for our youth. Contact courtney.jonsson@secondfirst.org

Dinner and Fireworks - June 27

Celebrate the Fourth of July a little early by joining us Saturday, June 27 at 6:30 pm at Dick and Donna Larson's house 4971 Dunbarton Parkway, Rockford, IL for a potluck dinner. After dinner we will enjoy the amazing Tullock's Woods Fireworks Show. This is a fun, family-friendly event! Please bring a dish to pass, table service, and a lawn chair for viewing the fireworks. Questions? Call the Larson's at 815-654-8183.

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 by Friday, July 1. Any cancellations after July 1 will be reimbursed only if we are able to find someone else to go in your place.

Soup Kitchen Save the Date - July 23

Second First Church members and friends are invited to participate in the Soup Kitchen Ministry at the Jubilee Center in 2016. You can volunteer once or many times, for all of the day (generally 10:00 am to 1:30 pm) or just part. Bring your willing hands, a ready smile, an apron, and a baseball cap. Contact Mary Conklin to volunteer.

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"!

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' Cooler 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.

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 on how to volunteer, email becky@secondfirst.org.

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 at kferrero55@hotmail.com

CO-CREATING IDEAS INSPIRED BY "THE ABUNDANT COMMUNITY"

by Sarah Reinold

What great discussions we had in our groups while studying "The Abundant Community." In our first joint meeting, Andy Newgren challenged us to begin thinking about ideas we could co-create. One member has taken our new way of thinking about community and is already exploring how it relates to our church and its work in stewardship! Do you have an idea that has been percolating in your head since our discussions? Are you ready to start co-creating? If you have an idea for a project, the Discernment and Vision Team (DVT) would love to hear about it. You can email you ideas to Sally Hoff sallykhoff@gmail.com or put them in the DVT mailbox in the office. Happy co-creating!

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATES

Summer Sunday School will kick off on Sunday, June 5. Our Pre-K through 5th grade will meet together during the summer months. There will be no Summer Sunday School on July 3 and July 10.

A big thanks to those who volunteered teaching Sunday School and/or working in the nursery. Your help is greatly appreciated! For more information contact Dyan.Lofgren@secondfirst.org

MINISTRY TEAM CHAIR AND OFFICER RETREAT

The new chairs of the Ministry Teams and the newly appointed officers of the church are meeting for a retreat on Friday, June 10, 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm and Saturday, June 11, 9:00 am - 11:45 am.

Dinner begins 5:30 pm Friday.

The Retreat will include:

- Celebrating the New Team led by Pastor Rebecca
- Theological Leadership with Historical Examples led by Andy Newgren
- Vision and Mission of our Church led by Pastor Rebecca
- Bylaws Crash Course led by Carolyn Greenlaw
- Parliamentary Procedure led by Bob Canfield
- Crafty Closing led by Sarah Reinold

All Ministry Team Chairs and officers please RSVP to debbie@secondfirst.org or 815-963-8431

LET'S GO TO THE HOLY LAND

At the invitation of John DeWaters and Lenore Lund, you are invited on a trip to Israel. Planning is underway to design an exciting ten day trip to Israel with an optional three day extension to Jordan. Let's share this great opportunity to walk His walk and learn more about the great religions of our world. This trip will take place in February 2017. The approximate cost is \$3400 for the all-inclusive (really!) ten day tour. Add \$900 for the three day Jordan extension. Come with us! Information sessions are being held May 29 and June 5 following worship in the Heritage Room. Contact Lenore Lund with any questions at ldlund23@gmail.com.

JUNE CALENDAR

Wednesday, June 1
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
4:00-PM - Pastor Hears Your Story

Thursday, June 2

Friday, June 3

Saturday, June 4
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic
5:00 PM – Families with Preschoolers
Pastor Becky’s home

Sunday, June 5
Communion
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:30 AM – Youth Car Wash

Monday, June 6
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Jeremiah NOC

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

Wednesday, June 8
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:00 PM – Trustees

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

Friday June 10
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Governing Council Retreat

Saturday , June 11
9:00 AM – Governing Council Retreat
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic
10:00 AM – Mission Trip

Osage Nation

Sunday, June 12
Baptism and Commissioning of our Leaders
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
9:20 AM - Wee Worship
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Fellowship Hour
11:15 AM – Christian Education Ministry
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
11:30 AM – New Member Class

Monday, June 13
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Deacons

Tuesday June 14
8:00 AM – Men’s Fellowship
9:30 AM – Presbytery
Pontiac
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
1:00 PM – Executive Committee
6:00 PM – Discernment & Vision

Wednesday, June 15
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
4:30 PM – Membership Ministry
5:00 PM – New Member Class

Thursday, June 16
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Friday, June 17
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday, June 18
10:00 AM - Bridge Clinic

Sunday, June 19
Youth Sunday
Father’s Day
9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:00 AM – Donuts with Dad
11:15 AM – Fellowship Ministry
11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop

Monday, June 20
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Tuesday June 21
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

5:30 PM – Mission Ministry
Wednesday, June 22
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
12:00 PM – Deaconesses
Lunch for Staff

Thursday, June 23
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:30 PM – Governing Council

Friday, June 24
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday, June 25
10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic
6:30 PM – Fireworks at Larsons

Sunday, June 26
9:00 AM – New Member Class
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, June 27
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
10:00 AM – Pastor Hears Your Story

Tuesday June 28
7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
10:30 AM – Summer Camp
5:00 PM – Pastor Hears Your Story

Wednesday, June 29
10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Thursday, June 30
9:15 AM – Free Showers
10:30 AM – Summer Camp

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

On Sunday, May 15, eight students were confirmed into the life and ministry of the church. They attended monthly classes with Rev. Rebecca and Courtney and then worked on a statement of faith with their sponsors. Below is a snippet of what they each professed:

Mason Ferrero, sponsor Sally Hoff
Mason says that he loves the church because he feels happy and loved here and he gets to learn about Jesus. He has many special friends here and the passing of the peace is a highlight of worship.

Hayden Hallberg, sponsor Anthony Picchioni
Hayden says he believes in God the creator of all, in Jesus Christ his only son and in the Holy Spirit. “Church is a place where you can go to feel safe,” he says.

Nathaniel Laprade, sponsor John DeWaters
Nathaniel is drawn to Jesus’ message, which he summarizes saying you should forgive people and treat them like you want to be treated.

Christopher Makulec, sponsor Billye Vernam
Christopher says, “I trust that God will always care for me and when I make mistakes, he will forgive me. ... I believe that God will always love me.”

Ellie Pando, sponsor Jennifer Archer
Ellie says, “I believe the Church is something that you can turn to at any time in your life and not to be afraid to ask the Church for help.”

Allison Paterson, sponsor Audrey Williams
Allison believes in the Holy Spirit, particularly knowing that people are changed by the Spirit. She says, “I believe that there is good in everybody and I see it everyday in people around me.”

Sebastian Picchioni, sponsor Janet Jacobs
Sebastian says, “God is great. Church means everything to me. I come to church and learn about the Bible and things about God.”

Nate Youman, sponsor Becky Erbe
Nate says, “I realize God does not abandon me. God acts through the people around me to help me out.”



CONGRATULATIONS 2016 GRADUATES

Jesse Cowman will graduate from Bradley University on May 14, 2016 with a BS in Mechanical Engineering and **Shanna Cowman** will graduate on May 28, 2016 from Milwaukee School of Engineering with her MS in Structural Engineering, she also has her BS from MSOE in Architectural Engineering. Greg and Sharon Cowman are the parents of Jesse and Shanna.

Breida Hill graduated from Illinois State University on May 7, 2016 with a bachelor's degree in Therapeutic Recreation and Therapeutic Art. Proudly Hill number five of five to earn a bachelor's degree. This summer she will be out west in Boise, Idaho interning with the park and recreation department of the city. She will primarily be involved in inclusive and adaptive programming, anything from wheelchair sports to adaptive whitewater rafting. Scott and Karen Hill are the parents of Breida.

Chloe Nicole Nooden, is graduating from Learning Foundation and Performing Arts High School, in Gilbert, AZ. She will be attending the University of Arizona, in Tucson, AZ, this fall and will be studying Political Science and Linguistics. She will also be starting Air Force ROTC in the fall. Winnie Lierman and Richard Lierman are the grandparents of Chloe.

Austin Hegge will graduate from Hononegah Community High School and is a recipient of the Illinois State Scholar certificate commending his academic achievements. He plans to major in Psychology at the University of Minnesota, and he will likely dabble in some theater since he was bitten by the bug in high school. Austin is very thankful for the mission trip opportunities because it gave him an awareness to help others, and it is a reason for his area of interest. Wes and Holly Hegge are the parents of Austin.

Jacob Paterson will be graduating from Boylan High School. He is a Titan Outstanding Principles award recipient, 4 year varsity swimmer, All-conference swimmer, and State qualifying swimmer. He will be attending Colorado State University majoring in Sociology with an emphasis in criminal justice. David and Meredith Paterson are the parents of Jacob and grandson of Katy Paterson.

JULIE EKLUND'S LAST DAY AT SECOND FIRST



See more photos on our Facebook page



SUMMER PROGRAM WITH NORTHWEST COMMUNITY CENTER

by Becky Erbe

Grace and Peace to all of our Church Family,

This is such an exciting time for our church as we open our doors to more and more people and activities. Our gym is in use almost daily with Lydia Urban Academy coming in for their gym class. We have basketball practice and open gym on Mondays and Thursdays. The older youth team recently won two large tournaments in Chicago. An adult basketball ball group scrimmages every Tuesday night. Wednesday evenings our Youth Group uses the gym. We will be hosting several work camps this summer as teens come from all over the country to work with Jeremiah Development in our Coronado/Haskell neighborhood.



And this is just the beginning...

After months of discussion, we are joining forces with Northwest Community Center for a 10 week summer program at our church for children up to 13 years of age. The program will run Monday through Friday from 10:30 am - 4:30 pm. Northwest Community Center is a proven program with a long history. While we were able to run a successful summer program of our own last year, it is wonderful to partner with a strong existing entity. It is the hope of Second First and Northwest Community Center to be able to extend our relationship into a year-round program.

There will be plenty of opportunities for our members to volunteer for many of the activities for the children during the week. As we move closer to the start date of June 6, we will publish a list of volunteer activities in the newsletter.

Our congregations made a commitment to the downtown, when both could have gone to the east side. We continue our commitment in opening our doors and in everything we do, and everything we do is in response to what God has done.

PILGRIM PARK CLEAN-UP

by Dave Noel

On May 7, Shawn Weissenfluh, Jim Delmore and David Noel assisted two staff members at Pilgrim Park clearing a woodland area of honeysuckle and brush. The workday completed a task that would have been undertaken in late summer or fall. The cleanup provides a view of the creek and steel bridge from the conference center and Dr. Cleveland Chapel. The staff was very appreciative of our interest to assist in the park maintenance program and enhance the visitor experience at Pilgrim Park. A work session will be held in the Fall to assist the Stronghold Camp and a Spring 2017 Pilgrim Park clean-up will scheduled.

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 Jeanne Page, Jim Brown, Arlene Snap, Eleanor Babel, the Stratemeyer Family, Leah Baskin, Todd Wilson, Sarah Holliday, Phillip & Mandi Bush, and baby Beatrice, 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, 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.