

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church
 318 N. Church Street, Rockford IL
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 Rockford, Illinois



THE TOWER

Your monthly update on the church and

AUGUST 2016

A NOTE FROM REVEREND REBECCA

Second First Church!

With Deacon approval and Governing Council blessing, we are taking a new look at the Bible in worship soon. Beginning this Fall we will be basing our worship services on the Narrative Lectionary. Developed a few years ago by Luther Seminary, the Narrative Lectionary seeks to share the stories of scripture in a way we can follow throughout the year. Beginning with Genesis in September and moving through the stories of Israel's early history through the Fall. From Christmas to Easter we will use readings from one of the four Gospels. Then from Easter to Pentecost we will move through Acts and Paul's letters. The summer is set aside for sermon series on themes or books of the Bible.



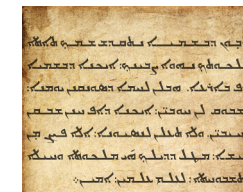
You might ask, "What's wrong with the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) that we have been using?" Well, it was developed for a different time and place. To use the RCL properly, a church must read all four scripture readings every week (something most churches--including ours--haven't done for years). The RCL also assumes that every person is in worship every Sunday for three straight years – a goal for us all perhaps, but not a reality. Also, I have always thought it was hard to get a grasp of the flavor of each Gospel when there are four Gospels divided over three years. The Narrative Lectionary is a four-year cycle for this reason.

I am excited to walk through the Bible with you all in a matter that's compelling and easy to understand. While we will use this as a guide, we will be free to diverge from it when God calls in other directions. May God bless us as we seek God's holy word.

Peace,
 Rebecca

Not able to attend worship service? Check out our sermons on Facebook and YouTube.

SUNDAY WORSHIP AND KOFFEE KLASS: THE LORD'S PRAYER



The Lord's Prayer, consisting of seven short petitions, has been both understood as the summary of the entire gospel and a liturgical element that unites all Christians around the globe. We say these words each week in worship and yet the prayer itself is worthy of study. Join us as we examine, reflect and open ourselves to what this prayer has meant throughout history and why it continues to be a cornerstone of our Christian practices today.

**Five Part Sermon Series by Pastor Rebecca
 July 31 - Aug 21, & Sep 4 - 10:00 a.m. Worship**

**Three Part Adult Ed series with Andy Newgren
 August 7, 14, & 21 - 9 am in the Heritage Room.**

Staff

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

Blessing of the Backpacks - August 14

As we prepare for the start of a new school year, we invite all of those heading back to school to join us for the Blessing of the backpacks. Bring your backpack(s) to worship.

Annual Church Picnic - August 21 after Worship

Celebrate summer with food, fun and fellowship! Join us Sunday, August 21 following worship at Anna Page Park for our annual church picnic. The Fellowship Committee will provide brats, buns, condiments, table service and beverages. What can you do? Sign up in the church narthex to help either the day before in the kitchen, or the day of the event. All help is appreciated. Please bring a dish to pass. Contact Dave Noel dav_noel@comcast.net.

Jeremiah Churches Annual Joint Worship Service - August 28

Please join us for our annual worship service that includes the congregations of Court Street Methodist, Emmanuel Episcopal, Shalom and Second First churches. The worship will be held at Second First. Emmanuel Episcopal will be leading the worship. Pastor Tito Cevallos will be preaching.

Second First Church Hosts Crop Rally - August 28

The CROP Hunger Walk season is at hand! It begins with rallies that bring together recruiters from more than 40 congregations and other organizations. Rallies remind them of the ministries CROP supports through Church World Service. We will host the first one on Saturday, August 20 at 8:30 am with a breakfast gathering to distribute CROP materials. Last year our congregation raised a record \$13,061, placing 16th out of the top 40 USA congregations. This year's Crop Walk is Sunday, October 16. Contact Dave Jones davidj6226@aol.com

Prime Time Wednesdays Start Soon

Prime Time Wednesdays begin again on September 14. We will be offering classes for adults like bible study, movies and Literacy Council training. Our children can be involved in Bible Story classes, Handbell choir and youth group. Dinner begins at 5:45pm. Stay tuned for a more complete schedule.

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.

Bring Us Your Children's Books

The Little Library is in need of children's books of all levels. Do you have some that are gathering dust on a shelf or taking up space in your basement? We can use them! Let Anne Stratemeyer know to expect them and she will let you know where to leave them. Don't have books but would like to support the project? A donation of \$20 will enable us to purchase used books and this will keep the library humming for two weeks. Indicate 'little library' on your check or envelope to make sure it gets to the right place. Thanks for helping to encourage a love of reading! Contact Marge Maynard mtm.home@me.com

Nursery Update

One of the tasks that was recently tackled was cleaning up the nursery to be in compliance with insurance guidelines. Miss Stephanie, the CE board, and the kids all worked together in accomplishing clearing out plastics that were deemed unsafe. The kids were awesome and were active participants in this process. We are in the process of working on "naming the nursery" and adding the kids' artwork. Our goal is for the kids to take ownership of the area and make it feel like a second home. Look for more updates as we continue our work in progress. If you have any questions, contact dyan.lofgren@secondfirst.org

Wednesday Prime Time Dinner Help

We would love to have you be a part of the Wednesday night team! You can volunteer to prepare at 4:30 pm, sponsor a dessert, or help with clean-up. Here is what volunteering entails: Set up: Get trays, plates, napkins and flatware ready. Help with water and milk or cutting up carrots and celery. Serving: 3-4 people to serve the food, 2 people to help with dessert. Clean up: washing, putting away dishes, wiping down tables. Donations of desserts appreciated. Cupcakes, cookies, brownies, or whatever interests you. If you are interested in finding out more call Debbie 815-963-8431.

2016 UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

8/14, 10 am - Blessing of the Backpacks
8/14, 3 pm - RUM Benefit (Held in the dining room)
8/20, 7 am - CROP Rally
8/21, 12 pm - Church Picnic (Anna Page Park Shelter)
8/28, 10 am - Jeremiah Churches Joint Worship

SEPTEMBER

9/5 - Office closed for Labor Day
9/6, 9 am - Thrift Shop opens
9/8, 7 pm - Choir practice returns
9/9, 1 pm - Horizon Bible Study returns
9/10, 10 am - Soup Kitchen
9/10, 6 pm - Turkey Roast at The Conklin's
9/11, 11 am - Sundae Sunday Volunteer Fair
9/13 - Presbytery Joliet
9/15, 12 pm - Gordon Circle returns
9/22 - Choir Guild
9/24 - Prairie Association in Sycamore
9/25 - Cider and donuts

OCTOBER

10/16 - CROP Walk
10/22 - Women's Fellowship Brunch (Rockford Country Club)
10/30 - Trunk or Treat

NOVEMBER

11/5, 10 am - Soup Kitchen
11/6 - Remembering Loved Ones
11/8 - Presbytery Stronghold
11/20 - Stewardship Sunday & Pilgrim Potluck
11/23 - No Prime Time
11/24 - Office closed for Thanksgiving
11/25 - Office closed

DECEMBER

12/3 - Cookie Walk
12/10 - Soup Kitchen
12/15 - Gordon Circle Peterson Meadows
12/18 - Potluck & Caroling
12/24, 4:30 pm - Christmas Eve service
12/25, 10 am - Christmas Day Worship service
12/26 - Office closed

AUGUST PREACHING SCHEDULE

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



AUGUST CALENDAR

Monday, August 1
 9:15 AM – Free Showers
 5:30 PM – Jeremiah Dev
 NOC

Tuesday August 2
 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
 Breakfast
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Wednesday, August, 3
 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp
 12:00 PM – Jeremiah Dev
 NIC

Thursday, August 4
 9:30 AM - Deaconesses
 Ministry
 9:15 AM – Free Showers
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Friday August 5
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp

Saturday , August 6
 10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, August 7
 Communion
 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, August 8
 9:15 AM – Free Showers
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp
 5:30 PM - Deacons Ministry

Tuesday August 9
 8:00 AM – Men’s Fellowship
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp
 6:00 PM – Discernment &
 Vision

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

Thursday, August 11
 9:15 AM – Free Showers
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp
 5:30 PM – Jeremiah Dev
 Board

Friday, August 12
 10:30 AM – Summer Camp
 Ends

Saturday , August 13
 10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic
 11:00 AM – Janet Schleiter
 Memorial Service

Sunday, August 14
 Blessing of the Backpacks
 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 - Fellowship
 Ministry
 11:15 AM – Music Ministry
 11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
 3:00 PM – RUM Benefit
 Concert

Monday, August 15
 9:15 AM – Free Showers

Tuesday August 16
 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
 Breakfast
 1:00 PM – Executive Comm.
 5:30 PM – Mission Ministry

Wednesday, August 17
 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
 4:30 PM – Membership
 Ministry
 5:00 PM – Foundation

Thursday, August 18
 9:15 AM - Free Showers
 10:00 AM – Women’s
 Fellowship
 5:30 PM - Governing Council
 6:00 PM – ARC Rec night

Friday August 19

Saturday, August 20
 7:00 AM – Crop Rally
 10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, August 21
 Church Picnic
 9:00 AM – Koffee Klass
 10:00 AM – Worship Service
 10:20 AM – Sunday School
 11:15 AM – Fair For All Shop
 12:00 PM – Picnic Anna Page
 Park

Monday, August 22
 9:15 AM – Free Showers

Tuesday August 23
 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
 Breakfast

Wednesday, August 24
 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting

Thursday, August 25
 9:15 AM – Free Showers
 7:00 PM - Choir

Friday, August 26

Saturday, August 27
 10:00 AM - Bridge Clinic

Sunday, August 28
 Joint Service
 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, August 29
 9:15 AM – Free Showers

Tuesday August 30,
 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer
 Breakfast

Wednesday, August 31
 10:00 AM – Staff Meeting

SAVE THE DATE

Thrift Shop Opens - September 6

First of all we would like to thank the Congregation for all of your donations and help with the Thrift Shop. We are looking for the following items; ladies and men’s clothing and shoes, coats of all kinds, bedding, blankets, bed spreads, towels, washcloths, pots and pans, dishes, lamps, and small furniture. If you’d like to donate, you can drop these items off during the week. Contact Jean Reese jeanwreese@yahoo.com

Gordon Circle Meeting - September 15

Gordon Circle will meet September 15 at the church at noon. Jackie Chamberlain will chair the meeting. Katy Paterson and Vera Edmonds will be the hostesses. More information will be forthcoming in August and September. Contact Joyce Pogue jlpgogue@comcast.net

Turkey Roast – September 20

The annual church turkey roast will be Saturday, September 20, 6 pm at The Conklin's house at 4048 Will Ann Drive. Turkey, dressing, beverages and s'mores will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass and your own table service. RSVP to Debbie debbie@secondfirst.org

ANOTHER GREAT YEAR AT TOWER HILL

by Valerie Blair

Tower Hill was another great weekend this year. We had old-timers, young timers, and Steve and Sandy Williams, the newbies. Doug Phillips, his daughter, Sarah, Valerie Blair and Ben, and Nichole King and Abigail arrived Thursday. We enjoyed a more intimate dinner and conversation, then the rest of people trickled down to the beach to join us swimming on Friday. Then Pastor Becky, Andy and family joined on Saturday. We had terrific weather, except for not being able to swim on Saturday, due to rough surf. A wicked kickball game was enjoyed by many, and resulted in an injury (Paul Laprade broke a toe...really took one for the team). We had a couple of great campfires, courtesy of Dave Patterson and his not-quite-boy-scout approved methods. Kristine Pando and Nichole took kids on a hike on Saturday, while Paul, Kristina and Valerie went to the local library's 'fill a grocery bag with books for 5 bucks' sale, ('cause none of us has enough books, apparently). Sunday after breakfast we gathered for fellowship under the outdoor cross to read the scripture for that day, share communion and sing. Then everyone scattered to their own corners of the world. Another wonderful church family weekend done. Plans are afoot to make a change or two for next year, and we hope more people join us. It's really one of the best weekends of the year for many people.



Part of the Second First group made it to the top of a sand dune to watch the sun set.



Transit Youth Group cools off after a fun game of Slip and Slide Kickball

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE ANGOLA PARTNERSHIP TEAM NEWS

The Angola Partnership Team is pleased to share that a delegation team will be visiting from the Illinois Conference in Angola from July 28 - August 10.

The team will be led by Rev. Mike Solberg of Union Church of Hinsdale, one of our original team members in the first delegation in 2005. Joining Mike on this journey will be his wife, Janine, and four members of Trinity UCC in Chicago! The focus of this delegation visit will be in the areas of education and health care. The work of the Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola, our partner church, revolves around Mission Stations that were originally set up around the country by Congregational missionaries prior to 30 years of colonial and civil war. Rebuilding these centers of social and religious life has been a priority of our partner church in the past 15 years. The members of our delegation team will be assessing ways that we can assist in helping to re-establish the priorities of educational advancement and improvement and access to health care around the country. We look forward to learning of the ways we can make an impact as a Conference in meeting these particular needs in the coming months.

The delegation team will share their experience at a Partnership Team gathering on August 21 at 3 pm at the Union Church of Hinsdale. All are welcome to attend and learn more about our partnership possibilities! Contact Marge Maynard mtm.home@me.com

JOIN THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

Here Ye, Here Ye! Choir is coming! Join our Sanctuary choir to start the year in a new way! We rehearse Thursdays at 7:00 pm and meet again on Sunday morning at 9:00 am. Our first rehearsal will be on August 25, when we will rehearse for the joint service to be enjoyed on the following Sunday. The next rehearsal will be held on Thursday, September 8, when we will begin rehearsals for our fall services. I have been listening to and playing through hundreds of choral works, trying to select a few special pieces that will enhance our services. Please join us to become a part of the singing team at our church! Contact Paul Laprade paul@secondfirst.org

HORIZON BIBLE STUDY - WHO IS JESUS?

We welcome you to the Horizon Bible Study of 2016-2017, *Who is Jesus?, What a Difference a Lens Makes!*, The author Judy Yates Sikerm, invites us to join her on “a journey to expand our understanding of who Jesus was and is—a journey of our hearts and our minds, a journey that we will take together. As we study together all will be invited to be good conversation partners along the way, sharing with one another how we see and experience the various lenses and how these different perspectives impact your understanding of who Jesus is.

Our meeting schedule will be the second Friday of the month September-May, at 1:00 pm. We will begin on September 9 at 1:00 pm. Joyce Pogue will lead the discussions with the help of others! Study books will be available in August. Please see Joyce Pogue or Debbie Wise. We thank Kathi Ferrero for her great leadership the past few years as she has accepted a position of teaching sophomores World History at Rockford Christian High School. We wish you well, Kathi, and God bless! Contact Joyce Pogue jlp@comcast.net

VOLUNTEER WITH THE LITERACY COUNCIL

What's on your bucket list? How about teaching someone to read? Second First Church is offering the Literacy Council's new 5-week class on Wednesday afternoons, starting September 14. Five 2.5 hour sessions to teach you how to be an effective tutor for adults who can't read. We know there are too many functionally illiterate adults in Rockford, many American-born who had to leave school. Imagine not being able to read the Bible, road signs, doctors' prescriptions, food labels, or driver's license questions. Even worse, imagine two illiterate parents not able to read to their children, putting them at least two years behind kids with reading parents, dooming them to the vicious cycle of more unemployment and poverty.

This is your moment! Five weeks, 12 hrs, then a possible commitment of two hours per week with one student for a year. After training, you can then decide to continue or not. This would be like giving up one Netflix show per week. There are currently over 60 adults motivated to learn to read who are registered and waiting for a tutor. Sign up now. Call the Literacy Council (815-963-7323) to join the Second First class.

SUNDAE SUNDAY VOLUNTEER FAIR

Sundae Sunday Volunteer Fair will be held after worship on September 11. This is a great kickoff for our Fall start-up and will offer yummy ice-cream and a chance to look over the volunteer opportunities. Each Ministry Team will have a table set up that highlights their mission and related projects. Come find just what you are looking for: something new to try, a new group, or a new project. Here is an opportunity to bring a friend to Sundae Sunday who may not be a church member but is thinking about getting involved in the life of the church. You may choose to be a part of creating worship or working in a mission area that inspires us all to do deeds for the greater good. We look forward to a new year of involvement as we: Seek to know, love and worship God while welcoming all people, serving our neighbors and sharing God's grace.

See you at the Sundae Sunday as we continue our journey of Energizing Downtown Rockford and beyond with God's Grace. Contact Carolyn Greenlaw csgreen52@aol.com

SCHOOL SUPPLY DONATION

The Mission Ministry Team has decided to once again collect items for School Kits for Church World Service and school supplies for Haskell Academy. This is the best time for purchasing school supplies since they are on sale at this time of year.

You can donate in one of two ways:

Purchase items from the lists and bring them to the container in the back of the sanctuary.

Monetary donations. Please specify on your check in the memo line “school supplies” or just “kit donation”. Thanks again for your help in advance. Any questions email Winnie Lierman winnielierman@yahoo.com.

Church World Service School Kit Supply List

- 1 - Blunt Metal Scissors (rounded tip)
- 3 -70-count spiral notebooks (no filler or loose-leaf paper)
- 1 - 12” Ruler (wooden only) with metric measurements on one side
- 1 - Hand-held pencil sharpener
- 1 - Large eraser (such as Pink Pearl)
- 6 - New #2 pencils with erasers
- 1 - Box of 24 crayons (24 only)

Haskell School Supplies list

- 3-ring binder (1” with pockets)
- Backpack
- Crayons (box of 24)
- Elmer's glue (not washable)
- Large eraser (like Pink Pearl)
- Glue sticks

- Hand Sanitizer
- Index cards (3 X 5)
- Kleenex facial tissue
- Highlighters
- Loose leaf notebook paper (wide ruled)
- Markers (wide tip)
- Markers (washable, wide tip)
- Pencil sharpener
- Pencils (#2 with eraser)
- Pencils (colored)
- Pens (black or blue ink)
- Pocket folders (with or without paper fasteners)
- Ruler (12” with centimeters and inches)
- Scissors (blunt)
- Scissors (7 ¼” sharp point)
- Spiral notebooks (70-count, wide or college ruled)
- Water color paints

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 Phil Turner, Mike Marvell, the Stratemeyer Family, Leah Baskin, Don Beckman, Philip & Shirley Davidson, and Miriam Richardson.

We offer prayers and sympathy for the family and friends of Bill Dickinson who passed away Tuesday, July 26.

We offer prayers and sympathy for the family and friends of Janet Schleiter who passed away Thursday, July 14. The service will be held in the Sanctuary, August 13 at 11:00 am.

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: Keith Mulford, Thomas Hill, Jim & Nora Jean Rollins, Norma & Wayne Nicholson, Nancy Bert, Linda Burrig, Jan Elliott, Elsie Kayser, Marge Kildow, Ruthann Lenard, Beverly Lindsey, Russell Morgan, John Showers, Marilyn Thayer, Ruth Todd, Ward Wallace, and Willene Ziebell.