



ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING AND REPORT

June 14, 2020

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)
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Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UCC / FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)
Rockford, Illinois

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ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING AGENDA

JUNE 14, 2020

(delayed and held via mail and Zoom due to COVID-19)

- I. Call to Order – Moderator Jim Delmore
- II. Opening Prayer
- III. Announcement of Quorum
- IV. Approval of Minutes from April 28, 2019 Annual Meeting
- V. Presentation of Annual Reports
- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business
 - A. Recognition of Board and Committee Members Completing Service – Moderator
 - B. Report of Nominating Committee – Vice Moderator Ann Stites
 - C. Nominations from the Floor – Moderator
 - D. Election of Officers and Ministry Team Members – Moderator
- VIII. Welcome of New Moderator, Ann Stites
- IX. Congregational Comments/ Questions
- X. Adjournment

ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 28, 2019

- I. Moderator Steve Showers called the meeting to order at 10:57 A.M.
- II. Pastor Becky Erbe opened us in the prayer.
- III. Quorum was met.
- IV. Minutes of 2018 Annual Meeting were approved as printed.
- V. Steve presented the reports of the Ministry Teams, printed in the program year handout.
- VI. Old Business
 - None presented
- VII. New Business
 - A. Steve expressed thanks to all who have served the church this past year.
 - B. Report of Nominating Committee
 1. Jim Delmore presented the Nominating slate, with the following additions: Katy Paterson as 2nd Vice Moderator, Lenore Lund to Adult Christian Education, Jeff Manning to Fellowship and Jim Pippel to Missions.
 - C. Steve asked for any nominations from the floor.
 - D. The Slate of nominees were accepted.
 - E. Steve asked for any other new business and Joyce Pogue wanted to thank the Office Staff for getting the packet all together for today's meeting – especially right after Easter.
- VIII. Welcome of New Moderator
 - A. Steve welcomed Jim as New Moderator and recognized his dedication to the church in many different capacities.
 - B. Jim thanked Steve for his service and presented him with a Certificate.
- IX. Time for additional questions and comments.
- X. Lenore Lund moved to adjourn; Susan Dodillet seconded. Adjourned 11:13 AM.
 - A. Reverend Rebecca thanked Steve for his service and led us in a closing Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer Archer

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR SUBMITTED BY REV. REBECCA WHITE NEWGREN

Hello Church!

What a year! I can safely say this is the strangest year of my life.... maybe yours, too. Since our last annual program meeting, I took an extended vacation for a month last summer in the national parks out West with my family (amazing!). Before my metaphorical feet had landed back on the ground, I suffered a physical head injury in September that I am still recovering from. As I was supposed to tip toe back into a little work in March, COVID-19 shut down the world. What a strange year!

And yet through it all, God is faithful (and you have been, too!). I cannot thank Pastor Becky enough for jumping in to cover for me in ways I will never know. It takes someone with both great compassion and talent to do that, and she did it with seeming ease and grace. The executive committee stepped into pastoral roles to guide the church through my absence and through everything we had planned.

Without me and all that I promised to bring to it, you opened the Rockford Overnight Café saving lives during the cold winter months and sharing love to our city's most vulnerable people. You helped create a HUGE mural for the outside of the gym with artist Tia Richardson bringing peace and joy to the neighborhood, some to be released when it's hung. You hosted pilgrim potluck and funeral lunches. You rang bells, sang songs, studied scripture, cared for one another and served hot meals to neighbors on Mondays. You were church! (I'm sorry I missed out on so much as I was home in bed with my eyes covered and my ears plugged.)

Many thanks to Jim Delmore for being the moderator in this crazy year! Jim has a true servant's heart and loves doing the detail work that many never see, like changing light fixtures! This year he also tackled the main work of the church with kindness and love. Jim has an eye for what is most important (things like justice, love and peace) and is able to focus there. Thank you, Jim!

It is true that people and organizations show their true colors in the midst of tragedy and challenge. Your colors are bright, church! And through this COVID-19 challenge, we will shine on. Our worship has gone to Facebook Live and conference call. Our fellowship has taken to video conferencing and phone calls. We all are more adaptable and resilient than we thought, and so is the church. For a while yet, our lives will look strange, but through it all God is faithful and we can be, too.

I am honored to be your pastor, church. Thanks for all your love and care and support for me and one another.

Peace,
Rev. Rebecca White Newgren



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MODERATOR SUBMITTED BY JIM DELMORE

Stay in Place • Total Lock Down • Better Days Ahead

At this time, it feels like everything and everyone is off limits. Very few businesses are open and we are asked to only go out for essentials. If you do go out, keep your distance and wear a mask.

But this past month has not defined this year. As moderator I have witnessed great things happening within our church:

People gathering to worship and share love.

The Thrift Shop helping the community with affordable items.

The Fair Trade Store helping farmers and families get a fair price for their products.

Serious Soup feeding up to 100 folks at a time, to make certain people had a nourishing meal.

Showers being offered for those in need.

The Rockford Overnight Café providing a warm place for gathering and sleeping on cold winter nights.

The Mural painting with Tia Richardson, that brought together people from the community (including church members) to bring life to a drawing that symbolizes our unity.

For a brief time, we had a monthly Sunday afternoon Alternative Worship service that brought us joy.

These are the things that should be remembered

I have been honored to serve as your moderator and very thankful to the people who helped me when I needed it most. This year has been unique and it has provided me with the opportunity to make new friends and strengthen ongoing relationships. But most of all it was an inspiring experience to be a part of the ongoing work of SecondFirst Church. I've been amazed by the countless hours and deep commitment of our congregation and staff.

Thank you for giving me the privilege to serve as moderator. I'm confident as we move forward that our future is bright and filled with God's grace.





ANNUAL REPORT FROM STAFF

ASSISTANT PASTOR OF MEMBER CARE & NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS SUBMITTED BY BECKY ERBE

As I write this, I am in my office at church. I am the only one here and the silence is deafening. I can't wait until the halls and offices will be busy again, and our Sanctuary full. In the meantime, you are all in my prayers, and I think of each and every one of you often.



This truly has been an unusual year between Rev. Rebecca's brain injury and a pandemic. But though it all our church is still thriving and we have accomplished so many things.

Serious Soup averaged 80 guests on Mondays. Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, three, sometimes four choices of soup, an entrée, sides, salad and dessert. As the pandemic began, we served brown bags for a few weeks, until virus numbers in our city began to rise. We have temporarily suspended Serious Soup until after Rockford hits its peak in cases. Then hopefully we can go back to serving warm brown bag meals. Thank you to everyone who has made soup, desserts, breads and meals. Thank you to all the volunteers who came on Mondays to help serve our guests. The meals are so much appreciated not only for nourishment, but for the fellowship as well.



We opened the Rockford Overnight Café on January 6 serving a total of 154 people. We averaged about 50 guests a night. Our peak number was 78 guests when the temperature was the coldest. It was a good experience and we will have even a better experience next year. The best part of the Café were the relationships made with the guests. Enclosed in this report is a detailing of the Overnight Café.

Throughout the past year we have performed some weddings and said goodbye to others. We have greeted new families and have welcomed back home returning families.

Professionally I have taken on a few extra roles. I serve on the Committee on Ministry for the Prairie Association of the UCC. I lead three worships a month in two Senior Living facilities. The most rewarding though is serving SecondFirst church as your Associate Pastor.

Overnight Café

- Number of total guests served: 154
- Number of guests taking showers (and towels, receiving new socks, underwear and hygiene kits): 359
- Number of guests receiving clothing items: 98
- Number of guests receiving outdoor wear (coats, hats, gloves, hand warmers): 54
- 56 nights and mornings of meals served.



ANNUAL REPORT FROM STAFF DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

SUBMITTED BY PAUL LAPRADE WITH VALERIE BLAIR, SARAH HALLBERG,
JULIE COOK RAMIREZ, AND JOYCE ZARTMAN



Through the church's support, our music program has continued its legacy of strength and flexibility. Although the challenges of COVID-19 have altered the complexion of our musical offerings since March 2020, our liturgy remains musically supported through performances on piano, organ, guitar, solo vocal, and bell music offered by our wonderful staff.



Choir, Vocal Music

The Sanctuary Choir has been actively presenting music in support of liturgy from August through Pentecost throughout most of its history. As in previous years, the Sanctuary Choir has sung on all major liturgical Holy Days and most Sundays when bell groups are not performing. The choir sang with harp, clarinet, and strings for the Christmas service, a service for which music is arranged by the choir director of chamber orchestra or variations thereof. COVID-19 halted the contributions of our singers due to safety concerns; subsequent support vocally has been provided by individual singers and duos in isolation. Vocal soloists, such as Dorothy Paige-Turner, Elizabeth O'Leary, Nora Maynard, and our wonderful church secretary, Debbie Wise, have also provided their gifts to worship in this past year.



Handbells Under the astute leadership of Director of Handbell Ministries Julie Cook Ramirez, Carillons Director Joyce Zartman, and Peanuts Director Sarah Hallberg, the SecondFirst Handbell Program had a successful, albeit truncated year. In addition to contributing music to numerous worship services, we presented "A Very Carly Christmas" on December 14th. Turnout was great, and donations totaled just over \$1,700. Thank you to all the ringers, directors, and audience members who helped us raise such a significant amount, which was put to good use by Carly Rice and her team, helping Rockford's underserved population. The Ring in Spring was poised to benefit CASA, and all the ensembles were hard at work on their selections when the coronavirus outbreak put a hold on all church activities. The program year ended early and the concert was postponed. When it is safe for us to reconvene, we will reconnect with CASA with the intent of having a future concert benefit their organization.



Organ and Piano

Organ repairs that had been delayed due to the health of the technicians were finally completed by Fabry, Inc., in January and February of 2020. The following items were addressed:

1. Re-leathering water damage reed chests
2. Installed stronger pouch strings on two reed pipes
3. Repair of the 16 ft. Bourdon pipe

These repairs allow the organist to use some stops which have needed to be avoided. The most important repair was of the 16 ft. Bourdon, a flute pipe that is probably used more than any other pipe in a great deal of solo literature. It is an essential voice in not only solo music, but also in important parts of congregational song, like the Doxology, Gloria Patri, and hymns.

Hymns, accompaniments, and wonderful solo works for piano and organ continue to be expertly and beautifully provided by the inimitable Valerie Blair. Bob Bates, organist emeritus, has contributed to our worship several times over the past year.

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**ANNUAL REPORT FROM STAFF
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC (CONT'D)**
SUBMITTED BY PAUL LAPRADE WITH VALERIE BLAIR, SARAH HALLBERG,
JULIE COOK RAMIREZ, AND JOYCE ZARTMAN

Additional Ensembles and Guests

As in the previous year, we were blessed by ensembles and performers from our own church--such as "The Brass", the "Church Street String Band", Julie Cook Ramirez (guitar). Invited guests, in addition to our own church members, added a great deal to worship: these included the UpNorth quartet, Dorothy Page Turner, Bryce Hudson, Hayley Goetzsche, and Jefferson Harlan.



ANNUAL REPORT FROM STAFF YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT: FAMILY AND YOUTH DIRECTOR SUBMITTED BY AUBREY BARNETT

As my second full year at SecondFirst began, I took on the role of both the Family and Youth Director positions, merging the roles as best I could to meet the current needs of our community. I have loved getting to know the families and young faces of our church better, especially as my own young daughters began their first season in Peanut Bell Ringers. Throughout this year, the church has been able to keep up old traditions, support some new fun projects, and continue to support through the unforeseen crisis of Covid 19.



Trunk or Treat

We had one of the highest attended and most successful Trunk or Treats around. The weather was especially nice that day as many cars lined up, which was not the case on actual Halloween, when it snowed. Our church continues to be a welcoming sign of joy and hope to all through this annual event.

Thanksgiving Reenactment

Alice Uphouse led the reenactment of the five kernels of corn, a story to remind us that we come from people who knew how to find hope and resiliency during hard times. The costumes were dusted off, and the tradition remembered, and who knew how important that lesson would be through the coming times!



Scavenger Hunt, Chopped Competition, and Bowling Oh My!

There were a few new fun family and intergenerational Game Nights this year. Families of all ages gathered for a Chopped Show-style cooking competition. The meals were better than expected and fun was had by all. We also held a photo scavenger hunt across the church and teams took goofy and lovely pictures of themselves in a variety of spaces in our amazing building. Additionally, we continued the tradition of a bowling outing as several families met at Don Carter Lanes for a fun-filled afternoon.

Snow Camp

Snow Camp was a frosty good time, as almost 20 young people ventured north for a weekend of spiritual exploration. The theme was “Gen Z Spirituality”, and over the course of the workshops, the youth explored what God meant to them and eventually crafted their own worship service.



Music Videos and Podcasts

In Sunday school, we used some of our time together to create worshipful 21st century content. We found ways to share created content with parents, and at the Pilgrim Potluck.

Covid Support and Resources

During the time of the Shelter in Place order, resources were put in place to support families spiritually during the time of crisis. Weekly emails went out for two months, each with a curated list of activities that reflected both the scripture lesson for the week, as well as the things happening in the world. Additionally, a children-and-teen early worship time on Zoom was created before worship, so families could gather and have some special time to learn about God together. We also began a Facebook Covid 19 group support page for community members to connect with each other through the challenging moments.



Report Summary

Although much of this year may feel overshadowed by the darker days of its end, when I looked through the pictures saved to my phone gallery for this report, it was the many smiling faces that made me realize just what an incredible year we have had. God has continued to bless us with children who learn to grow in faith and carry forward Jesus’ work in the world. For that, I know we all say Hallelujah and Amen.

**ANNUAL REPORT FROM STAFF
DIRECTOR OF THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT
SUBMITTED BY ANDY NEWGREN**



I am filled with gratitude as I look back on the past year and see the wide array of programs offered. I have a deep sense of gratitude for the team that carefully and thoughtfully thinks through ideas and topics, and while they occasionally indulge me, keep the congregation on the forefront of their minds. Saint Anselm's motto was faith seeking understanding, which also happens to be the name of my first theology textbook, but never does he wish to replace faith with understanding. Despite the claims of some, there is not a preference for understanding or knowledge over faith. Rather it confronts Anselm's conviction that a faith that "merely believes what it ought to believe" is "dead." Faith was to be an active endeavor grounded in God's active love.



What no annual report can fully capture are forged relationships, holy moments of vulnerability, honest disagreements, and life giving bouts of laughter. Education is truly rooted in connection, and the fabric of this faith community shines through in these gatherings. In the midst of a pandemic that keeps us home, Sunday's Coffee Class has continued to meet providing connection, reflection, and affection. That trio may not be as memorable as Paul's faith, hope, and love, but I wouldn't trade it as the foundation to dig deeper into Paul's writings.



A final word of thanks to those who actually do the work, notably Steve Williams for serving as secretary and keeping the team on track. But more so, the committed and faithful folks listed below who craft wonderful and meaningful sessions. Any congregation that can look at climate change, biblical interpretation, sexuality, and doubt in a single year is doing something right. Understanding is not final for Anselm but understanding brings joy. May all our thoughtful reflection end in that joy.





ADULT EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM SUBMITTED BY ANDY NEWGREN, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Bob Bates, John DeWaters, Charlie Fry, Roger Greenlaw, Cara Keller, Lenore Lund, Tyler Pratt, John Spindler, Steve Williams (Secretary), Becky Erbe (Staff), Andy Newgren (Staff, Chair)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Adult Education Ministry Team cultivates spiritual growth and Christian community using multiple types of programming: on Sunday mornings, the Coffee Class topics help us grow in faith and navigate issues of the day; on Wednesday evenings, the programs focus is on ways to put our faith into action in our community and beyond.

SELECT SERIES & TOPICS

- Hope: A Look at Jurgen Moltmann
- A Look at the Life and Work of Rachel Held Evans
- Making Sense of the Bible by Adam Hamilton
- Climate Change and Renewable Energy with special guest Ray Empeur (partnership with the Earth Care committee)
- Haiti Interest Group
- Neighborhood Ministry
- Power & Love
- The Spirit at Pentecost
- Religion Today: Trends, Challenges, and Hope
- Community
- Sexuality, Homosexuality, Transgender identities
- Doubt Essential to Faith
- Stewardship
- Salvation
- Space Archaeology
- Light & Darkness (Advent series)
- Seven Laws of Spirituality
- Implicit Bias
- Restitution
- Lectio Divina (or Divine Reading)
- History of Lent
- Mindfulness and Emotional Health
- Psalms for a Plague with special guest Dr. Elaine James
- The Church: Kingdom Instrument or Business Venture with special guest Rev. David Hallgren
- Meister Eckhart
- God: Does Theology Matter

CHURCH MEMBER PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Bob Bates, Casimir Family, John DeWaters, Becky Erbe, Charlie Fry, Carolyn Greenlaw, Roger Greenlaw, Karen Hill, Lenore Lund, Janet Moore, John Spindler, and Sandy Williams.



FAMILY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

SUBMITTED BY JENNIFER ARCHER, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Karen Olson, Sarah Hallberg, Janet Jacobs, Kim Craft, Karen Hill, Nicholas Archer (Youth), Jennifer Archer (Chair)

What a wonderful year we've had with the children and youth of the church! We moved into our beautiful new space and continue to work on making it welcoming, beautiful, safe, and functional. Way back in May, Nicholas Archer joined the Ministry Team as Youth Representative. In June, we celebrated the confirmation of 8 new members of the church. That joy was tempered with sadness as we had to say goodbye to Dyan Lofgren who served this church joyfully and faithfully. We are blessed and grateful to have gained Aubrey Barnett who has taken over seamlessly and is bringing lots of new ideas to our diverse group of youth.



Our Youth undertook 3 mission experiences in June and July. Five of our kids had a great week with Aubrey and her husband Rickey to Nashville helping make and hand out shower kits and helping with a childcare program. For the 12-15-year-olds, Karen Olson once again coordinated a day with Sharefest at YMCA Children's Learning Center. The girls had a great time painting. Karen also organized our elementary school kids to help out with Serious Soup. They made desserts and helped with silverware and tickets.



With the start of the school year, we made some changes and set some goals. We're working on a Family CE Handbook to give to parents to help them know what we do and what to expect. We're also working on emergency plans that we hope we'll never have to use. Due to the low participation of children in bells, we made the difficult decision to suspend Angeles and Tower ringers for now. We still have peanut bells and any interested, experienced youth ringers are incorporated into Bellcanto. We'll have to take this year by year. With that we had a CRAZY idea to do a pop-up Bell Choir. 3 weeks. 3 rehearsals and performed in church. And it worked! They did great! Big thanks to Julie Cook Ramirez and all the courageous new ringers who took a chance.



We want to thank Court Street Methodist for helping us with another very successful Trunk or Treat. The weather was gorgeous, and we had plenty of candy and food to treat and feed a lot of people. I think everyone had a great time.

During Advent, we held our 2nd Annual Pop-Up Pageant. Our deepest thanks to everyone who participated and to Paul and Aubrey and Alice for making the music happen, coordinating the participants and washing costumes. It's truly one of my favorite days of the year. I hope it is a memorable day for all of you as well. We also helped with a scavenger hunt/Christmas party and the kids had a great time.

January means Snow Camp and the kids had a great time again this year. In addition to winter sports, the youth went on a spiritual journey, as they planned a worship service.

Winter also means Family bowling! A smaller turnout this year than some, but everyone who came seemed to have a great time. I know I did!

We also continue to stock the activity boxes in the back of the church (Thanks Sarah!). Our biggest responsibility is to support Aubrey as she develops curriculum and allows the youth to develop their relationships with God and the church in their own ways. The creativity she, and they, have exhibited this year has been truly amazing. From their group discussions every night to the music videos, Aubrey continues to go above and beyond giving her heart and time to all of our kids.





DEACONS MINISTRY TEAM SUBMITTED BY TROY AKERMAN, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Troy Akerman, Jim Burrright, Richard Baker, Tim Riddle, Linda Oshita, Mary Spindler, Sally Baker, Andrea Akerman, Alice Pampe, Darlene Riddle, Katie Mitchell, Diane Pippel, with Pastor Becky Erbe (staff)

What have we been doing?



We had a great year. We started the year as a full team for the first time in a few years. We sent “miss you” letters to the members of the church we haven’t seen in the last 5 years. We’ve started to go out and give communion to our shut-ins. It has been a true joy to get to know them and to see their gratitude that we came out to visit with them.

Christmas caroling, what fun. We sent out two separate groups to the local assisted living facilities, as well as some individual homes. The Christmas enhancements as well as the floral and weekly enhancements were beautiful. Thank you, Mary. Communion was flawless under Jim Burrright.

Church Bus: We considered purchasing a new one but it was decided to put it on hold until we had a solid campaign to raise the funds. In the interim, we had all issues fixed on the current bus except for the A/C, and plan on fixing it mid - June.

The Ushers and Audio Video: all is well.

Our shepherd group gave a warm welcome to our new members.

I would also like thank all the volunteers that work behind the scenes that are not on the Deacons Ministry Team: the drivers, ushers, communion servers and the audio video volunteers.



DEACONESS MINISTRY TEAM
SUBMITTED BY ARLENE NOEL, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Cayli Mitchell, Sue Saunders, Beth Gargani, Darlene Riddle, Judy Wyatt, Mary Young, Ann Boline, Jean Herro, Vera Edmonds, Katy Paterson (Treasurer/Funeral), and Arlene Noel (Chair)

You probably already know the Deaconess serve up the treats at coffee hour, almost every Sunday. They prepare the luncheons for the funerals (7 luncheons this year). And a few other dinners here and there. The Deaconess work on Serious Soup, with the help of other dedicated volunteers, who are not Deaconess, Serious Soup has been serving soup on Mondays since 2018. So, seriously, there are about 14 of us and usually there are at least eight of us each Monday to set up, prepare, serve soup and clean up. But that's not all, there are more of you, who have prepared soup, desserts, and other delicious offerings to serve at the meal. In one year there have been 1380 quarts of soup (345 gal.) to ladle into the bowls. And there are many words of Thank you, Mmmmm, that was good, God Bless.

As of March 23, 2020 there was a need to get a meal ready for Monday, even though we could not let people in the church. There were approx. 55 meals handed out (brown bag) the first Monday after the "stay-at home" order. And 30 meals the next Monday. We are planning this week to week. We need to be aware of the risk week to week.



DISCERNMENT AND VISION TEAM SUBMITTED BY LENORE LUND, CHAIR



MEMBERS

Jim Delmore, Ann Stites, Katy Paterson, Jennifer Archer, Steve Showers, Terry Mohaupt, Ed Conklin, Karen Olson, Bob Canfield, Pastor Becky Erbe, Rev. Rebecca White Newgren, Lenore Lund (Chair)

Bring Us Your Dreams!



Part of DVT's mission is to act as the church's planning committee, focusing on "down the road" possibilities and dreams – the ideas you all bring to us as well as ideas that germinate from within our team.

When an idea comes to us, we review and analyze it to be sure it aligns with the mission of the church. We can then explore it within our team, forward it to another team for their input and possible adoption, or take it to the Governing Council.

Previously our church teams have spent the past few years developing four strategies which were adopted church-wide, and the goals each team set to accomplish this.



This year DVT felt it was time to take an overview approach to the many and varied activities and involvements of our congregation to see if we needed a little "course correction" to stay on the most effective path toward achieving these strategies and goals.

We are now near finalizing a simple but thorough set of discussion questions for each team chair to bring to his/her group for their personal input on what each team member feels is working well, what needs some tweaking, and what, if anything, should be dropped or added to that teams' focus, as well as the church's wide outreach to each other and to Rockford and beyond.

Another area we have pursued is creating a "One 'n Done" list of needs within the church for help with one-time events. Many of us would like to participate occasionally in church activities, but work and family commitments prevent us from making long term commitments to teams that oversee the many activities our congregation sponsors.

When a church member has a free time slot, "One 'n Done" provides a source to plug in short-term to participate in church life. Please watch for this new offering and check it frequently for short term opportunities to help!



Additionally, DVT recognizes that we the church body need to do more outreach to each other! Our mighty leaders, Rev. Rebecca, Pastor Becky and our moderators, have much on their plates. We need to learn how to minister to them, too, as well as reaching out to each other for support during times of loss and to celebrate our successes and achievements! The more we are in community with each other the stronger our church will be. As the author Anne LaMott says, "we are all just walking each other home." When we can turn your ideas and dreams into fruition, we're all helping each other.

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY TEAM
SUBMITTED BY LINDA MOHAUPT, CHAIR



MEMBERS

Greg Makulec, Wendy Hall, Linda Miller, Vera Edmonds, David Noel, Janet Merchant, Mary Conklin, Kristina Pando, and Linda Mohaupt (Chair)



Relationships are developed and bonds are formed around the table, sharing food, time and fellowship. This is the focus of the Fellowship Ministry team.

The team sponsors the Palm Sunday and Pilgrim (Thanksgiving) potlucks and the summer picnic, and we also help with the Corned Beef and Cabbage potluck. We serve cider and donuts in October, and Wassail and Cookies in December. These are church traditions that we look forward to throughout the seasons.

Two informal events dating back many years are an annual cookout and potluck at Dick and Donna Larson's home, followed by fireworks at the Tullocks Woods subdivision in June, and in September, Ed and Mary Conklin host a turkey roast. Both of these were well attended and enjoyed by everyone.



We schedule 2 service/work days per year. This year, 7 people went to Pilgrim Park in the spring to do spring cleanup, and 5 went to Stronghold in the fall to help with fall cleanup. Both facilities appreciate our time to help get their work done. We also helped with the church pig roast in September.

We tried a couple new events. We went to a February Wind Ensemble concert at the Nordlof Center. We met at Sinnissippi Park in July to hear a summer concert. It's fun to share these experiences with our church friends.



MISSION MINISTRY TEAM

SUBMITTED BY JOHN DEWATERS, CHAIR



MEMBERS

Doris Rowald, Joanne Johnson, Kay Blair, Zan Picchioni, Marge Maynard, Audrey Williams, Jim Pippel, Anne Stratemeyer, Holly Beeman, Dick Larson, Kristine Pando, John DeWaters (Chair)

Mission Statement

SecondFirst Church seeks to know, love, and worship God by welcoming all people, serving our neighbors, and sharing God's grace.

The Mission Ministry Team supports its members through shared participation in its activities, and connects the Church to the wider community both within and beyond its walls.

We fulfill the Church's Mission Statement through four broad areas of activity:

- » Developing and maintaining direct relationships with Rockford Mission Partners.
- » Providing direct aid to individual neighbors.
- » Working with the Congregation to carry out programs beyond our direct relationships.
- » Aiding our Denominations in accomplishing their broader programs.

We've provided direct involvement in and/or monetary support for these Mission Partners:

- » The ARC – we open our gym and supply snacks and craft activities to support their regular Rec Nights.
- » Jeremiah Development – we supply office space and a monthly contribution, along with volunteers at Love Rockford and earth and laborers for the community garden.
- » Rockford Urban Ministries – we join the community in supporting this multi-denominational outreach and social justice effort.
- » KFACT – we provide office and program space in our newly remodeled Emerson Hall, financial support and involvement in their College Care Package program.
- » Carpenter's Place – where team members actively serve.
- » Fairgrounds Boys and Girls Club – where we partner in a multi-denominational mentoring program.

We've provided direct support to our neighbors through:

- » Neighbor care, including showers, diapers, clothing, travel assistance.
- » Funding for Serious Soup

We've worked together to further broaden congregational programs:

- » Managed the Rockford Overnight Café. We were joined in funding and staffing this by many of our community and governmental neighbors.
- » Jubilee Center soup kitchen, where members and friends serve six Saturday meals annually.
- » Haskell School –we've helped provided apples for children who did not get breakfast and boots for every child there.
- » Rock River Food Pantry – we've called for donations of food and cash.
- » Fair Trade Store – the team supports the store and outreach about Fair Trade.
- » Bridge Clinic – the team supports this Saturday free clinic.
- » For My People – we've shared in funding the Haiti Seed and Tool drive and the Tuition Assistance program.
- » Fall pig roast – we've sponsored this annual event, staffed by a church-wide group.



MISSION MINISTRY TEAM (CONT'D)
SUBMITTED BY JOHN DEWATERS, CHAIR



We've aided our Denominations with contributions and coordination efforts for:

- » UCC: Our Church's Wider Mission.
- » Presbytery Shared Mission.
- » Presbytery Per Capita.
- » UCC Christmas Fund / PCUSA Joy Offering.
- » UCC Neighbors in Need / PCUSA Peacemaking.
- » UCC and PCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing.
- » UCC Strengthen the Church / PCUSA Pentecost.

We remain open to new Partner relationships that can strengthen our ability to fulfill our mission statement, and to supporting new programs of SecondFirst Church, remembering always that "just as you did it to one of the least of these ...you did it to me."






MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM

SUBMITTED BY BILL BASKIN, CHAIR


MEMBERS

Phil Blair, Charlie Fry, Sharon Cowman, Liz Dickinson, Donna Schaad, Marilyn Hartzog, Jan Novak, Jim Burrright, and Bill Baskin (Chair)



The Music Ministry Team has had an interesting year, despite the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Our church was one of the first to rapidly pivot to virtual, especially in light of the number of cases and deaths from a California choir rehearsal. Though cancellation was appropriate, members of the choir, hand bell ringers, brass group, string band, and others truly missed the fellowship and spiritual growth of rehearsals, and participating in and enhancing our worship experience. This was especially true of missing our traditional Easter gala service, which had been specially planned by our Music Director Paul Laprade.

The huge pile of boxes of FPC choir music, laboriously collated and transferred before the merger in 2012 by Marilyn Hartzog and Mary Makulec, has cluttered the choir room for the last 7 1/2 years. Thanks to the trustees following up the transitions of Emerson Room K- FACT remodeling, funds were allocated to clear, re-paint, and re-shelve a back room behind the choir room, ably carried out by Jeff and Ramon. The music is now being re-filed, and should enhance future worship services. The hand bell directors got a new refurbished office across from the new Bell Room.



Our final event was hosting the Greenville Choir. Those in attendance heard an incredible concert. Many thanks to all the family hosts for providing bed and board for these inspiring students.

Committee members included Phil Blair, Jan Novak, Jim Burrright, Liz Dickinson, Donna Schaad, Sharon Cowman, Marilyn Hartzog, and Charlie Fry.



TRUSTEES MINISTRY TEAM SUBMITTED BY ROGER GREENLAW, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Ann Stites (Vice Moderator), Felipe Campa (Vice Chair), Jay Baker (Treasurer, Budget Committee), Steve Showers (Assistant Treasurer), Peter Joachim (Secretary), Alice Uphouse (Historic Preservation), Jim Delmore (Moderator, Building Committee), Richard Lierman, Greg Makulec, Ron Schaad (Grounds/Landscape Committee), Alicia Reese, Mathew Martin, Jeff Byrne (Building Manager), Becky Erbe (Staff), and Roger Greenlaw, (Chair)



This year the Trustee Ministry Team's main focus beyond taking care of our building and the safety of our programming, has been making room for KFACT. Pastor Rebecca presented space for them as an opportunity for our church. We accepted and launched a project to clear Emerson Hall and begin renovations of this part of the building. Replacing the windows has been the most amazing change. We all had a chance to see these renovations during KFACT's open house. THANKS to Bob Langford (Trustees) and Jennifer Archer and Karen Olson (Building Use Task Force) and all their team members for getting us off to a great start last year! Thanks to all of you for your help and understanding throughout this process.

Of equal importance has been the work organized by Bill Hoff and the Foundation last summer, to repair our Church Bell Tower and major areas of the roof. This spring we will see the mounting of our Mural on the exterior west wall of the Gym. Trustees had church financial processes audited and we passed with praise and few recommendations. A long-range building and décor taskforce have formed to plan for maintenance and updating our facilities. We did a Stain Glass Window audit for maintenance and renovation. We will be monitoring the City's plan to change N. Main and Church streets to two-way traffic.

Trustees are responsible for the safe and appropriate use of our building, for example: Serious Soup, Rockford Overnight Café, Bridge Clinic, KFACT, Love Rockford, Thrift Shop, Just Goods. Trustees, Governing Council and Staff have watched for Covid-19 recommendations and promptly made changes throughout our operations to keep us safe. Alice Uphouse has summarized (below) our projects for the year. These renovations were financed by a grant of \$140,000 from the Second Congregational Church Foundation. We have \$16,000 remaining in that fund after the work completed to date.

Emerson Hall and some of **Gordon Chapel** now have new windows. Offices for KFACT staff now have a fresh coat of paint and new flooring. Bathrooms have new toilets and paint. The Kitchen has refinished cabinets, newer stove and refrigerator, and new faucet in the sink. The balcony has a new railing on the upper east wall to protect the new windows. Office area lighting is new, and internet service has been added.

The new **Kids Zone** is on Third Floor, just off the sanctuary balcony and the elevator. This area received new flooring, fresh paint and stalls in the bathrooms. Counters now have granite tops that add a great look and functionality. At the Kids Zone open house you would have seen their new furniture and area rugs. We are still working on details to make this an extra-safe zone.

(cont'd to page 22)

TRUSTEES MINISTRY TEAM (CONT'D)

SUBMITTED BY ROGER GREENLAW, CHAIR



The Gathering Place (formerly Nursery-Pre-School Rooms) is now divided into 3 Spaces: Adult Education area with seating for up to 20+ people, (you may schedule to use these spaces through Debbie in the office), a small conference table for seating up to 8 people, and the bride's reception area with separate brides dressing room. These areas needed paint, flooring, a buffet and coffee bar, plumbing upgrades, new counter tops, new sofa and re-purposed upholstered chairs, table and mirror. Stop in the former nursery and pre-school area for a look.



Our **Bell Choirs** now occupy the fourth floor Reed Chapel 'Bell Room'. This area has painting and new floor to be completed this spring, after the end of Bells' season. New bookcases and file cabinets, new lighting and table covers are all part of the renovation for our bells!

Clearing out Emerson Hall: Moving out the many 'storage' areas in the great room and offices in Emerson Hall was the largest task. Moving the White Chapel English Handbells was a task requiring many hands. All of the historical documents, enhancements used for the liturgical seasons, the hand puppets and all those custom costumes found new homes. We all came together as a church family to accomplish these tasks. I am 'Truly Grateful' for all the support and encouragement from everyone. My Grandma DeLauter always quoted this to me as a young child, "Many Hands Make Light Housework". Thank You All.

Alice Fry Uphouse, Trustee/Church Historian





MEMORIALS SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE SUBMITTED BY BRUCE JOHNSON, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Jean Reese, Donna Larson, Kay Blair, and Beth Gargani, Bruce Johnson, Chair

The Memorial Sub-Committee administers monies that are donated by people in memory of their departed loved ones. The monies vary in size from as little as ten dollars to as much as several thousand dollars. The Memorial Committee is charged with determining the use of these funds.

Income to the Memorials Committee is irregular and varied. Therefore, it is not practical for memorials to be considered a reliable source of income for ongoing church activities. Church committees are asked to submit “wish lists” to guide our disbursements.

Giving to the Memorials Committee is a thoughtful way of remembering departed individuals, and is a caring way of giving to the Ministry and Mission of the Church.



STEWARDSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE SUBMITTED BY DAVID JONES, CHAIR

MEMBERS

Jennifer Archer, Jim Delmore, Karen Hill, David Noel, Ann Stites, David Jones, Chair

“The biblical community of faith is neither an arena for religious devotion nor a seminar on religious questions. It is rather a community called to be the “first fruits” of the resurrection.” Walter Brueggemann

In Jesus’ day, there were four competing ways of being faithful in times of crisis: Torah (The Law) alone, righteousness alone, God alone, and country alone.

The Sadducees posed to Jesus a question raising these competing visions of the future. They hypothesize that seven brothers marry the same woman according to The Law and ask who will be considered her husband in the after-life. They are asking about resurrection (Luke 20:27-38). Does it really happen?

As sheltering in place continues this Spring, we find ourselves wondering how it will end. How many deaths will occur? What will happen to the livelihoods of billions around the world? Jesus is assuring us, this too shall pass. Distraught? Let it die. Angry? Let it die. Anxious when we watch the news? Let it die. Protecting our privilege or position? Let it die. Resurrection really happens.

Trust that God is the God of the living. As children of God we are children of resurrection, for our God is God of the living, not of the dead.

In the human landscape webbed with such issues as pandemic and global warming, God calls congregations to be there for one another and the entire kingdom of God. Our commitment of time and talent as well as treasure, make ‘being there’ for others near and far, most effective. Our commitment to the 2020 budget stands at \$331,621. Our Stewardship Subcommittee thanks everyone for your commitment and generosity.

What joy will be ours when we are together again in body as well as spirit, praising in word and deed our Savior who has brought us through this current crisis, and who assures us a final resurrection beyond anything we can imagine.



EARTH CARE COMMITTEE

SUBMITTED BY LINDA MOHAUPT, CHAIR



MEMBERS

Armando Ramirez, Anne Stratemeyer, Jean Herro, Jim Delmore, Christine Krause, Mary Waters and Rev. Rebecca White Newgren (staff), and Linda Mohaupt, Chair

The Earth Care committee meets every 1-2 months, the 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm. As the weather got worse, we transitioned to in-person meetings with some of our members phoning in to participate. As we are becoming more comfortable with internet meetings, we may use this method even more.



In April, we had Ray Empereur, who trained with Al Gore of the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, speak to Coffee Class about our climate crisis. For more information, visit www.climaterealityproject.org.

In May, we had an Environmental Fair in the dining room after church, highlighting recycling.

We started collecting batteries and wine bottle cork recycling. Bring your batteries, including hearing aid batteries, and real corks to the collection area by the church office. We will take them to the city collection area.



In this same area is the collection for printer cartridges, cell phones, old glasses. We collect paper for recycling. We have a Fair Trade Store open on Sundays with a wonderful selection of food and other goods to purchase. We have a rain garden on the west side of our building. We use real dishes and silverware as much as we can throughout the building. We use electronic communication as much as possible.





CHURCH STATISTICS
SUBMITTED BY DAVID JONES, CHAIR

MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019: 481

ADDITIONS (1/1/19 – 12/31/19)

1. NEW MEMBERS: 3
2. CONFIRMANDS: 8

TOTAL ADDITIONS: 11

LOSSES (1/1/19-12/31/19)

1. DEATHS: 11
2. OTHERS: 5

TOTAL LOSSES: 16

MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2018: 476



NOMINATING COMMITTEE
SUBMITTED BY ANN STITES, CHAIR

The Nominating Ministry Team works to match the skills and passion of our church family with the appropriate ministry team. This year our team, with some helpful volunteers and suggestions submitted by the congregation, worked to fill over 40 spots on our church's ministry teams. We are grateful to both those who worked on the Nominating Ministry Team and those who agreed to serve on our church's Ministry Teams.

2021 - 2023

Moderator: Ann Stites

Vice-Moderator: Katy Paterson

Second Vice-Moderator: Phil Davidson

Treasurer: Steve Showers

Assistant Treasurer: Alicia Reese

Church Clerk: Jennifer Archer

Second Congregational Historian: Alice Uphouse

First Presbyterian Historian: Joyce Pogue

Session Ruling Elders:

2021: Terry Mohaupt **2022:** Mary Spindler* **2023:** Kristine Pando

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Roger Greenlaw*, Charlie Fry*, Tyler Pratt

2022: John DeWaters*, Steve Williams*

2023: Bob Bates, John Spindler, Lenore Lund*

DEACONESS/HOSPITALITY MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Darlene Riddle, Judy Wyatt*, Mary Young, Ann Boline*

2022: Arlene Noel**, Vera Edmonds**, Jean Herro**, Katy Paterson**

2023: Lori Gustafson, Linda Miller, Beth Gargani, Sue Sanders

DEACONS MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Alice Pampe*, Darlene Riddle, Katie Mitchell, Diane Pippel

2022: Linda Oshita*, Tim Riddle*, Vernon Carter, Tyler Noel

2023: Mary Spindler, Sally Baker, Wendy Hall, Troy Ackerman, Andrea Ackerman

DISCERNMENT AND VISION MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Bob Canfield*, Karen Olson

2022: Lenore Lund*, Ed Conklin

2023: Terry Mohaupt

Plus: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Second Vice-Moderator, Clerk

FAMILY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Sarah Hallberg*, Janet Jacobs, Youth: Nicholas Archer

2022: Kim Craft*, Karen Hill

2023: **Jessica Lindblade/John Lindblade (Will alternate filling one position)**

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Vera Edmonds*, David Noel*

2022: Linda Mohaupt*, **Mary Conklin**

2023: Peg Showers



NOMINATING COMMITTEE (CONT'D)
SUBMITTED BY JIM DELMORE, VICE MODERATOR, CHAIR

MEMBERSHIP (WELCOMING) MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Sandra Campa, Karen Hill

2022: Cara Keller

2023:

MISSION MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Marge Maynard*, Audrey Williams*, **Anne Stratemeyer, Jim Pippel**

2022: Holly Beeman*, John DeWaters*, Dick Larson, Kristine Pando

2023: Zan Picchioni, Joanne Johnson

MUSIC MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Sharon Cowman*, Liz Dickinson*, Donna Schaad

2022: Marilyn Hartzog, Jan Novak*, Jim Burright

2023: **Mark Stratemeyer**

NOMINATING MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Holly Hegge, Tyler Noel

2022: Diane Pippel*, Doug Phillips

2023: Jean Herro

Plus: Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Second Vice-Moderator

TRUSTEE MINISTRY TEAM:

2021: Jay Baker, Alice Uphouse*, Greg Makulec*

2022: Felipe Campa*, Alicia Reese, Ron Schaad

2023: **Jim Delmore, Peter Boline**

Plus Vice-Moderator, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer

INTERNAL AUDIT:

2021: Joyce Pogue*

2022: Greg Makulec

2023: **Jay Baker**

Note: Names in bold indicate a member new to the ministry team; names followed by an asterisk* indicate a second three-year term; names followed by two asterisks** indicate an ex officio member.