

SecondFirst Church

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)
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www.facebook.com/secondfirstchurch/

Non Profit
Organization US
Postage PAID
Permit No. 3734
Rockford, Illinois

AUGUST 2021

THE TOWER

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UCC/FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace



FROM REV. REBECCA WHITE NEWGREN

Hello Church,

On Sunday the children made good fun of our live streamed worship service. They cover their faces with a black screen. They mouthed inaudible words into a microphone. They even held one kid up sideways. Many thanks to the actors and to Madeline Archer for writing this skit.

It's true. Our current set-up needs a wish and hope every Sunday as we plug our impressive sound system into a cheap gaming device and cross our fingers it will work. Want to help?

Video Improvement Project

- Goal: \$25,000 (including a \$5,000 gift to Pilgrim Park)
- Dollar for dollar match from the First Presbyterian Endowment



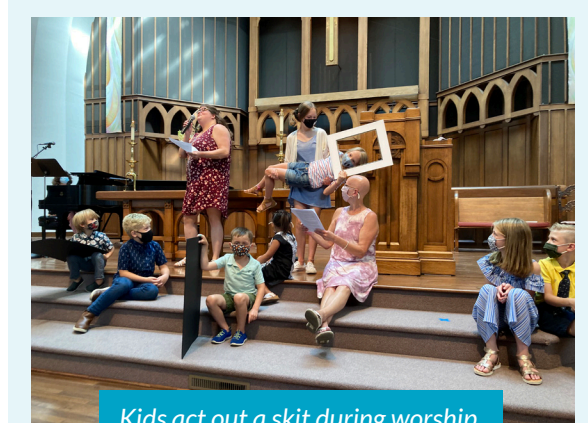
The new system will have three mounted and one mobile camera run from a portable video mixer that can be streamed to multiple platforms. It will be easier to use and more reliable.



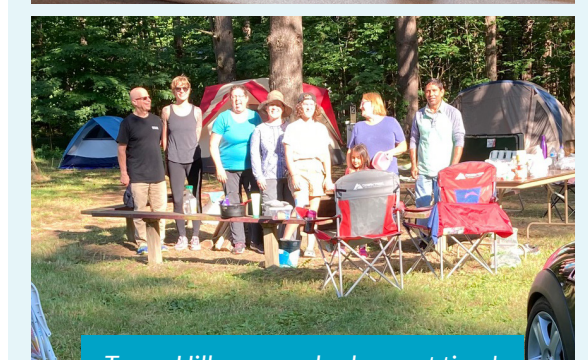
Many thanks to the committee who has worked on the details of this project and fundraiser. I'm glad we will be able to reconnect with Cleveland Chapel at Pilgrim park that Second Congregation built in honor of longtime pastor Dr. Joe Cleveland in the 90's.

Covid has changed our world in many ways. One of them is that we are connecting to one another in digital spaces more than ever. Our leadership is committed to making worship online an excellent experience. With this fundraiser, you can participate, too!

Peace to you,
Rev. Rebecca



Kids act out a skit during worship.



Tower Hill campers had a great time!



NEWS FROM OUR DENOMINATIONS

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CHURCH LEADERS WELCOME BASEBALL NAME CHANGE IN CLEVELAND



Cleveland's Major League Baseball team will take the field in 2022 with a new name: Guardians. United Church of Christ leaders welcomed the team's July 23 announcement.

For decades, the denomination has pressed for the name "Indians" to be replaced.

It's been 30 years, in fact, since the UCC General Synod first spoke out — in July 1991 — against the "negative stereotyping of Native Americans" in sports and commerce. Now, instead of using a name that sometimes brings out fans in face paint and fake feather headdresses, the Cleveland team will take inspiration from iconic statues on a bridge near its stadium: the Guardians of Traffic. **Read more:** www.ucc.org

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) PRESBYTERIANS URGED TO SPEAK OUT FOR MILLIONS OF UNDOCUMENTED PEOPLE

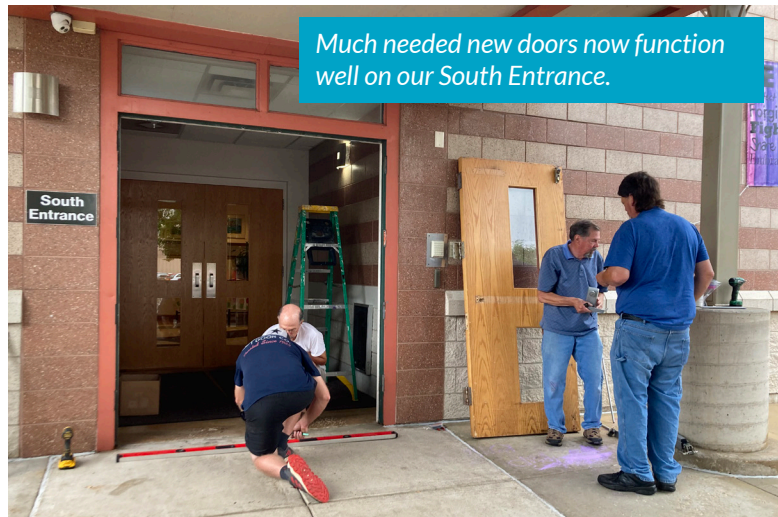


The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness is asking people to contact their senators on behalf of millions of people living in the United States without immigration status.

The Capitol Hill office (OPW) is calling for support of two bills before the Senate — the American Dream and Promise Act and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act — which, among other things, provides a pathway to citizenship for people living under Temporary Protected Status (TPS), Dreamers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, and essential workers. "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has advocated for a pathway to citizenship for many years," the Action Alert from OPW reads. **Read more:** presbyterianmission.org



Showers of Blessing, Inc. are a welcome service in our community.



Much needed new doors now function well on our South Entrance.



Check out the new atrium glass... now not broken! Thank you to the Second Con Foundation for this needed repair.



BELONGING

What does it mean to call a place home? Who is allowed to become a member of a community? When can we say that we truly belong? In the next few months, the Deacons Ministry Team will unwrap what it means to belong. To begin with the Deacons will be creating a visitation committee based on the United Church of Christ's 'Called to Care,' program. If you would like to be part of this great opportunity to visit homebound or members in need, please give Linda Oshita, chair, or Pastor Becky a call.

MODERATOR'S REFLECTIONS

One thing that comes with being Second Vice-Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Moderator is a list of which committee and team meetings to attend. At first I was a bit apprehensive as I looked at the list, but as I began to attend meetings I was surprised. I found I enjoyed attending most of the meetings and learned so much about the church that I didn't know.

I do appreciate that our meetings for the most part have been on Zoom. It saves me a trip to church and allows me to attend meetings from a variety of locations. I know a Zoom meeting isn't quite the same as meeting in person. We have all missed the face to face human connection. Some of our board and team meetings have resumed meeting in person.

There are still some team meetings that I haven't had a chance to attend. I hope to get to those meetings soon.

As much as I appreciate our paid staff, I have come to realize after attending board and team meetings, how vital our lay leadership is to the life of our church. The people who volunteer their time and talents at church are amazing. We could never afford to pay for their labor and expertise.

Thank you to those of you who go to meetings, serve as officers, work on short term and long term projects, and in general make things happen. Our church is indebted to you. Keep up the fantastic work.

Gratefully,
Katy Paterson



4th Annual Community Trunk Party to provide dorm essentials for Rockford girls!!!

Fitness Works
3619 Morsay Dr
Saturday, August 7th
Donation Drive
10:00am-12:00pm



It's a Girl Thing!

KFACT WISH LIST FOR COLLEGE GIRLS

Dorm Room Essentials > Standard Basket Items:

- » XL twin comforter
- » XL twin sheet set
- » XL twin mattress pad
- » Hangers
- » 7 bath towels
- » 2 packs of face towels (12 count if possible)
- » 2 pillows
- » Roll of quarters for washing clothes
- » Laundry pods (preferably All, Gain, or Tide due to allergies)
- » Laundry basket or hamper
- » Shower caddy and shower shoes (flip-flops are ideal)
- » Iron and mini ironing board
- » Empowerment picture or framed message for the mentee's journey

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL ITEMS - You can choose any of the items listed below that you want to include in the standard basket:

Personal Care/Hygiene

Shower basket, multicultural shampoo and conditioner, body wash, towels, toiletries

School Supplies

Book bag, laptop, laptop storage bag, USB drives, wireless printer, power cords, notebooks, pens, pencils, highlighters, folders, computer paper

Gift Cards

Best Buy, Wal-Mart, Target, Bed Bath & Beyond, RVC bookstore if applicable

AUGUST worship schedule

AUGUST 1

Communion

Sermon: Revelation Part 1, Rev. Rebecca White Newgren
Music: Bob Bates on Organ

AUGUST 8

Outdoor Worship, Baptism

Sermon: Revelation Part 2, Rev. Rebecca White Newgren
Music: Valerie Blair and Jim Burrigh

AUGUST 15

Sermon: Revelation Part 3, Rev. Rebecca White Newgren

AUGUST 22

Sermon: Pastor Becky Erbe

Music: Julie Cook Ramirez, classical guitar

AUGUST 29

Blessing of the Backpacks

Sermon: Psalm 100, Rev. Rebecca White Newgren

Rockford Urban Ministries hosted their welcome event for Rev. Violet Johnicker as associate director in our gym. Rev. Johnicker is the pastor of Brooke Road UMC and brings a wealth of community organizing experience.



Thanks to Jess Lindblade, Family Ministry Team chair, for filling our children's worship boxes.

AUGUST CALENDAR

Sunday, August 1, Communion

8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School

Monday, August 2

11:30 AM – Serious Soup

Tuesday, August 3

7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast

Wednesday, August 4

10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
7:00 PM – Worship Ministry

Thursday, August 5

No Scheduled Activities

Friday, August 6

No scheduled activities

Saturday, August 7

JD Health Clinic in Gym 11:00 am

Sunday, August 8, Outdoor Worship

8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School

Monday, August 9

11:30 AM – Serious Soup
5:00 PM – Deacons Ministry

Tuesday, August 10

7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast
6:00 PM – DVT

Wednesday, August 11

10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
12:00 PM – Covid Committee

Thursday, August 12

No Scheduled Activities

Friday, August 13

No Scheduled Activities

Saturday, August 14

10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, August 15, Church Picnic

8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:30 AM – Church Picnic Anna Page Park Shelter

Monday, August 16

11:30 AM – Serious Soup

Tuesday, August 17

7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast
5:00 PM – Missions Ministry

Wednesday, August 18

10:00 AM – Staff Meeting
5:00 PM – Trustees Ministry

Thursday, August 19

No Scheduled Activities

Friday August 20

No scheduled activities

Saturday, August 21

No Scheduled Activities

Sunday, August 22

8:30 AM – Koffee Klass
10:00 AM – Worship Service
10:20 AM – Sunday School
11:15 AM – Family CE Ministry Team

Monday, August 23

11:30 Serious Soup

Tuesday, August 24

7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast

Wednesday, August 25

10:00 AM – Staff Meeting

Thursday, August 26

9:30 AM – Carillons
5:30 PM – Governing Council

Friday, August 27

No Scheduled Activities

Saturday, August 28

10:00 AM – Bridge Clinic

Sunday, August 29

Blessing of the Backpacks

Monday, August 30

11:30 AM – Serious Soup

Tuesday, August 31

7:00 AM – Men's Prayer Breakfast



ANNUAL BACKPACK BLESSING

Sunday, August 29

All ages are invited to bring backpacks to be blessed for the upcoming school year. Each student will receive a tag especially for backpacks during the Early Word.

THE BRIDGE CLINIC MOVES TO TWICE A MONTH

Our free medical clinic that operates with volunteers from the medical school has saved lives by safely staying open during the pandemic. They are now open twice a month.



FAIR TRADE STORE OPENING SOON

We have the same good coffee (including a new one-Dave Jones favorite), same good chocolate still at sale price \$3.00. The same good fruit preserves, tea, almonds, cashews, olive oil, salsa, and mustard. We have cute gourd ornaments, birdhouses and other items. Stop in and look around. Volunteer Help is needed: Pleasant working area, Nice clientele, 1/2 hour a week, a Mission for the church. Sign up sheet is on the Fair Trade door. Contact: Eleanor Babel

JEREMIAH DEVELOPMENT'S LOVE ROCKFORD EVENT

Jeremiah Development's Love Rockford Event is scheduled for Saturday, September 25. We are starting to collect clothes now. All clean, gently used clothing is welcome, but winter clothing will be especially appreciated. We do not want shoes, purses, accessories or household goods. Please drop bags off at church in bags clearly marked Love Rockford. If you have any questions, or would like to assist in sorting the clothes, please Contact: Darlene Riddle



SUMMERFIELD FARM & ZOO FAMILY SERVICE PROJECT

The youth are collecting donations to help support the animals at Summerfield Zoo in Belvidere, which was negatively impacted by the pandemic. There will be a box in the narthex to collect donation items through Thursday, August 15. Items Needed: Paper towels, Clorox wipes, Simple Green, Dish scrubbers, Dish soap, Bleach Feeding Supplies: Canned fruits & vegetables Gift cards: Cherry Valley Feed & Supply, Woodman's, Valli Produce, Costco, Sam's Club, Home Depot, Menards, & Farm & Fleet. (*Please hand any gift cards to Miss Rachel or specify Summerfield Zoo for monetary donations)



PEANUT BUTTER FUNDRAISER WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

We raised \$840 for the Rock River Valley Food Pantry to buy peanut butter (they can buy more for the money than we can) for children who would have otherwise been hungry this summer without their school lunches. Good job, church!

ALL CHURCH PICNIC AT ANNA PAGE PARK August 15, 11:30am, Food Provided

The all-church picnic is back on our church calendar again, after months of us not being able to get together due to COVID. Put it on your calendar. Some things are the same as always: we're meeting at the shelter at Anna Page Park right after church. We'll start eating by 11:30 am.

The things we are now used to: COVID rules will apply, so stay home if you have any signs of illness, and wear a mask if you have not been vaccinated. The new things: we are providing all the food, served appropriately according to COVID guidelines. This will NOT be a potluck. The food is important, but what's more important is to eat with each other. We need to be with each other. Put our picnic on your calendar for August 15, and we'll see you there!

Up North 4 will sing to us during our lunch. We'll be eating brats or hot dogs and buns, chips, potato salad, baked beans, ice cream sandwiches, and bottled water. RSVP to debbie.wise@secondfirst.org to tell us you are coming, by August 9.





What's happening in the garden? You may have noticed the garden beds have been going through a transformation. With former board member Ashley Sarver's leadership, we are working on Creative Placemaking opportunities. She recruited artists who worked with neighborhood residents to design the mini murals on the garden beds. Then over 2 very hot days, the artists, JD volunteers, and neighbors gathered to paint the boxes. The many people who wander through or near the garden were drawn in asking questions. We were able to promote the use of the garden and help them pick vegetables. It's been a wonderful opportunity to connect with neighbors!



July 24th food distribution – Thank you to the Men of Court St United Methodist Church for hosting the summer food distribution and all the volunteers from the three churches and Boylan High School for working in the heat and making sure 175 boxes of food got into cars feeding 500 hungry men, women, and children!

August 7th Jeremiah is playing a supportive role in a collaboration between the Coronado Haskell Neighborhood Association and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois. The Community Care Fair is open to everyone in the Rockford area. We will be distributing 500 school supply kits and fresh produce. This is in addition to a great kids area with jump ropes, nutritional activities, and lots of fun stuff. Agencies will be on-site to distribute information and connect people to services they need.

September 25th is LOVE Rockford! After a year off due to Covid, we are happy to say LOVE Rockford is back.



Movies in the Park – Thanks to a generous donation from Goodwill, we are restarting Movies in the Park! Our first movie is Aug 21st. Please join us and the JD neighbors at 8:30 pm at Haskell Park for a family friendly movie. There will be movies on September 18th and October 16th. If you like to pop popcorn, please let me know!

If you'd like to help out with any of these future events, please contact us at admin@jeremiahdevelopment.org or (815) 627-0001.



Winnebago County!
 You are invited to our
Community Care Fair
 in partnership with Coronado Haskell Neighborhood Association, Rockford Illinois

NO COST MEDICAL SCREENINGS

Saturday, August 7, 2021 — 11 am-2 pm
Second First Church, 318 N. Church Street
Rockford, IL 61101

No Cost Health Care and Wellness Resources Include:

- Local health and service providers
- Blood pressure checks
- Medical screenings
- Mental health and education resources
- Head Start Program applications

Family Fun Activities

- Face painter
- Balloon Artist
- Photo Booth

We're Here to Help You. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) can help you and your family understand your health insurance options.

KIDS CORNER!
 Back to school supplies!
 • Nutrition education
 • Health and wellness resources

EXPECTING PARENTS!

Health and wellness resources:

- BCCHP Special Beginnings®
- Baby safety resources
- Mental health resources

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, health status or disability.
 ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-774-8592 (TTY: 711).
 UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-877-774-8592 (TTY: 711).
 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation,
 a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



A Grain Mill for the Family Gardeners of Saut-d'Eau

The political situation is tense in Haiti since President Moise was killed 3 weeks ago. In spite of all the tension in Port-O-Prince and other large cities, James Casimir and family (Wife Odette, son Jamesson, with his son Jaidyn, and Rosey's son Josanny) all arrived safely (July 10th) for a visit to Saut-d'Eau. Political unrest seldom reaches their town in the central highlands of Haiti.

Our Spring fund drive for Food Security for the people of Saut-d'Eau has shifted from supplying tools and seeds for planting family gardens, to purchasing a GRAIN MILL FOR THE GARDEN CROPS. The success of our three annual fund drives (2018-2019-2020) for Tools & Seeds has increased the level of food security for hundreds of families. This Spring we are focused on building a (Co-op) Grain Mill so that people can grind their corn and rice into cornmeal and rice flour, critical for their family meals. The only mill in the region was over an hour away, but it closed during the pandemic and was expensive to use. This new Mill will greatly increase local food security and raise just enough money from users to maintain the equipment and staff the Mill as a Co-op for the people. James has already secured the necessary electrical service to the neighborhood to run the Milling Machine.

The Milling Machine will cost \$10,000. An anonymous donor started our fund drive with a gift of \$7500, so our goal was to raise the additional \$2500 to secure funding for the mill. Thanks to all, we have received \$3275.

The Mill project will also require the building of a large Shed or open-air building to house the Mill and that will cost about \$18,000-20,000. 'Pouky' is James' 501c3 who is applying for a grant from another donor source in our city to build the Shed. We will use the residual funds raised by SecondFirst Church to help 'furnish' the Mill Building for public use when it is completed. Stay tuned for more information and pictures as our project progresses.

If you have any questions, or would like to join the Haiti Interest Group at SecondFirst Church, please contact:
 » Roger & Carolyn Greenlaw: rgreen97@aol.com, csgreen52@aol.com
 » James & Odette Casimir: casimir0401@gmail.com



CHILDREN AND YOUTH UPDATE

By Rachel Huffman, Children and Families Coordinator

"Ah summer! The time of vacations, school break, sunshine, and outdoor parties. It is also a time when we get to do vacation Bible school, pool parties, and so much more! After a year where it felt like so much was put on hold, we are finally seeing one another in person again and getting to do all of the wonderful activities that we have so deeply missed.

The VBS theme "I Wonder..." takes a timely approach to examining this world that God made for us and to determining what God's purpose for us as unique individuals is. Oh, and we are going to have some fun while we are at it! I am hoping that this VBS journey will encourage them to take in all of the wonders around them and consider them from a spiritual standpoint, as well as inspiring them to be the unique children of God that they are called to be. Join us Sunday mornings!



Rachel reads to the kids during worship.