



Rooted in  
Love

*They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.*

Psalm 1:3a



## A Stewardship Moment

by Donna Schaad

Since my dad was a United Methodist minister, going to church every Sunday was as natural as breathing. We always went to Sunday School, church camp, and youth group. When Ron and I married, my mom said, “We don’t care where you go to church, but try the United Methodist church first.” We did. During our several moves, sometimes we attended a United Methodist church and sometimes we didn’t.

When we moved to Rockford a little over three years ago, we once again began our search for a church home. With my mom’s words still ringing in my ears, we attended a number of United Methodist churches across the Rockford area. It wasn’t until David Jones invited us to SecondFirst that we finally found our church home. As we were becoming members, I loved hearing the story of how the First Presbyterian and Second Congregational churches became SecondFirst. I even shared the story in our Christmas letter.

I joined the choir. Ron began attending the Tuesday Men’s Prayer Breakfast and his love for gardening met a need of the Jeremiah Project and the church. He attended the adult Sunday School class, was recruited to be on Trustees, and is now the assistant treasurer. He is truly using his God-given gifts at SecondFirst.

I sang in the choir.

It wasn’t until Ron and I attended a leadership retreat where Pastor Rebecca introduced the theme of Belonging that it struck me that I didn’t feel like I belonged at SecondFirst. I was surprised. I shared the realization during the retreat with those at my table. Of course, they began listing all the activities where I could become involved. I tried some, but soon realized that I had to take the initiative to find my sense of belonging. Now I’m on the Worship Committee. I’m working with three others to organize the music library. Since COVID ended the Sunday morning choir rehearsals, I’ve been able to attend the adult Sunday School class. Even though it has been via Zoom, I’ve thoroughly enjoyed the class. I feel like I’m getting to know the class members, and I’ve even agreed to teach a few classes. Ron and I are both looking forward to being a part of a Gathering for Nine.

So, what have I learned from my various church experiences and commitment to growing in faith? Stewardship isn’t only about money, though Ron and I take our giving very seriously. It’s about using your God-given gifts in areas of service. It’s about reaching out to those in church whether they are new to SecondFirst or just someone you haven’t met yet. It’s about finding those forever-friends you can call on for prayer support. It’s about answering God’s call for you to find your own sense of belonging.

I’m finally getting there.