

## SecondFirst Church

Second Congregational UCC/First Presbyterian Church PC(USA)  
318 N. Church Street, Rockford IL 61101  
(815)963-8431  
www.secondfirst.org  
www.facebook.com/secondfirstchurch/

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AUGUST 2022

# THE TOWER

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UCC/FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

*Energizing downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace*



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Hard to believe it is August. Hard to believe we are narrowing in to the end of summer. Hard to believe the start of our program year is almost here. We officially begin everything again on Sunday, September 11! We have a bit of a change in our Family and Children Christian Education Ministry. Rachel Huffman is now our Youth Director! She will lead our youth on Sundays and in special events. Aubrey Barnett is now our Family and Children's Coordinator.

Aubrey was on staff a few years ago and we are so happy to welcome her back into the fold! Rachel and Aubrey will be working together to spruce up the third floor, making it an exciting and comfortable space for our kids. Stay tuned for further information in regards to upcoming events.

We will be continuing Pulpit Talks into the fall. So if you have a story to tell, please give me a call.

As the end of summer comes, let us step back and enjoy what's left of the summer. Please enjoy this poem by Siegfried Sassoon.

### Idyll

In the grey summer garden I shall find you  
With day-break and the morning hills behind you.  
There will be rain-wet roses; stir of wings;  
And down the wood a thrush that wakes and sings.  
Not from the past you'll come, but from that deep  
Where beauty murmurs to the soul asleep:  
And I shall know the sense of life re-born  
From dreams into the mystery of morn  
Where gloom and brightness meet. And standing there  
Till that calm song is done, at last we'll share  
The league-spread, quiring symphonies that are  
Joy in the world, and peace, and dawn's one star.



Jeff and Manny working hard to restore the floor.



Members of SecondFirst came out to support Rockford Urban Ministries Sunday, July 24, at a benefit concert at Spring Creek UCC.



Missions Team serves lunch for Habitat for Humanity.

## NEWS FROM OUR DENOMINATIONS

### UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SEPTEMBER ALL-CHURCH SUMMIT WILL NOW BE ONLINE ONLY



The general minister and president of the United Church of Christ announced today that a major denominational summit set for Sept. 19-21 will be solely a virtual event. "The Space Between: The Emerging Church in a

Post-Pandemic World" was originally planned as a hybrid gathering, with registrants participating online or in person in St. Louis.

Here is the announcement from the Rev. John Dorhauer: As we approach the deadline for early registration for the all-church summit in September, we are looking at very low participation for the in-person portion of what we were hoping would be a hybrid event. We believe in advancing the notion and practice of hybridity as a gathering paradigm, and also intend to refine our skills at conducting events in hybrid spaces. **Read more: [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)**

### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) STOP STIFLING AND START LEARNING FROM UNEXPECTED SOURCES



When is the last time you talked to a bird, a fish, or a plant, expecting to be taught about God? This is one of the questions the Rev. Dr. Dee Cooper explores with host So Jung Kim in the latest edition of Everyday God-talk, a production of the Office of Theology and Worship in the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Cooper, who will be installed as lead presbyter for Denver Presbytery on Aug. 13, is also a psychotherapist and Big Leap Coach who also runs an animal adventure business. The business, Adventures for the Wild at Heart, allows people to embrace their own wild nature through playful and healing animal encounters. Cooper uses Job 12:7-9 to ground her business. She points out God didn't invite Job to talk with his friends, who were espousing doctrinal positions about why his great suffering and despair might be occurring. Instead, the book of Job advises, "Ask the animals, and they will teach you ..." **Read more: [presbyterianmission.org](http://presbyterianmission.org)**



## REFLECTIONS FROM THE MODERATOR

by Phil Davidson

What do we know about the month of August? It was named after Augustus Caesar, founder and first emperor of the Roman Empire. [The month's official flower is the gladiolus.] The "dog days of summer" is often a description used for the month. And, it is the month that famed singer Elvis Presley died in 1977 (although some people say he is still alive... hmmm).

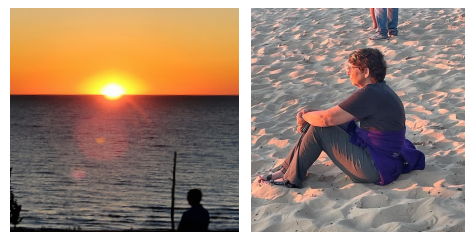
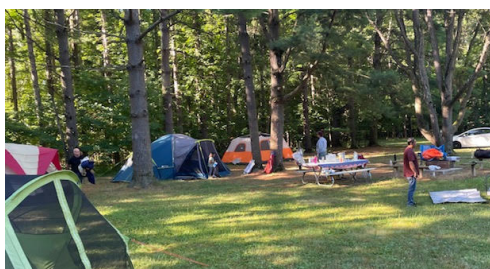
We can also think of August as the last full month of summer—which means fall is not far behind. That can lead to negative thoughts; because, as beautiful as fall can be, it is the precursor to winter...enough said. And, some are not ready to head back to the classroom either as a student or teacher, but others are eager to do just that.

But, really, August is another of God's blessings with katydids chirping, fireflies flying, and county fairs filled with happy families (eating way too many corn dogs and elephant ears). Jean Hersey says, "August is ripening grain in the fields blowing hot and sunny, the scent of tree-ripened peaches, of hot-buttered sweet corn on the cob. Vivid dahlias fling huge tousled blossoms through gardens..."

In the final analysis, whether it is the bright sunshine and warmth of August or the cold and sleet of winter, our church continues to serve downtown Rockford and beyond with God's grace.



A collection of photos from the Tower Hill Camping Trip. Fellowship, food, and beautiful sunsets!



## GOVERNING COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

### Staff Reports

- » Pastor Becky reported that she has been busy planning worship services, communions, baptisms, memorial services, meetings, and visits.

### Treasurer's Report

- » Assistant Treasurer John DeWaters reported that we continue at a loss, and congregation contributions have declined again.

### Trustees Financial Comments & Reports on Building Use

- » The building is in frequent use, and repairs are being done in the East Narthex. Trustees wishes to make plans for maintenance to avoid surprises and long-term issues.

### Ongoing Business

- » Covid Committee – A meeting is set to discuss possible changes to passing of the peace and coffee hour. Plans for outdoor events in September and October will also be discussed.
- » Music Director Search – Still no applicants. The committee is paying for additional postings and will discuss increasing the salary offer.

### New Business

- » The main topic under new business was Bylaw revisions related to "Designated Pastor." Discussion began with some history about the DP position. Bob Canfield answered questions and emphasized that adding this option to our bylaws allows for flexibility in church hiring. The motion to recommend these revisions to the bylaws to the congregation for their approval was passed.
- » A motion was made to dissolve the Ad Hoc Personnel Committee. Discussion followed on the history of the committee and whether it had served its purpose. The motion passed.

### One Minute Ministry Team Highlights

- » **Adult Ed** – Jim Ozee agreed to be chair.
- » **Mission** – Mitzi reported that Soup Kitchen helpers are needed for 6/18, and we are also preparing Habitat for Humanity lunches for 7/9.
- » **FCE** – Jennifer reminded everyone of the pool party on 7/17 and also the Summerfield Zoo supply drive. The youth will also be visiting Summerfield to deliver the supplies. Aubrey Barnett returns to the church staff as leader for the children. Rachel will continue focusing on the youth.
- » **Trustees** – Researching possibilities for removing electronic sign that was damaged in the car accident.
- » **Trustees** – Bob reported that the Rockford Mass Transit District is taking over the parking lot near Court Street Methodist Church and turning it into a bus wash. Court Street has been using that lot for parking. We are discussing options for them.
- » **Deacons/Fellowship** – Linda Mohaupt invited everyone to various events. On July 26 at 6:15, anyone interested will gather at Sinnissippi for the Rockford Concert Band performance at the bandshell. The all-church picnic is August 21 at Anna Page Park after church. Also neighborhood events on September 8 and October 6.



It was a joy to celebrate Arlene's Birthday!



# AUGUST CALENDAR

\*via Zoom

**Monday, August 1**  
11:00 AM - Serious Soup

**Tuesday, August 2**  
7:00 AM - Men's Prayer Breakfast  
10:00 AM - Staff Meeting  
11:00 AM - Thrift Shop  
6:00 PM - DVT

**Wednesday, August 3**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Thursday, August 4**  
No Hospitality Team

**Friday, August 5**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Saturday, August 6**  
No Bridge Clinic

**Sunday, August 7 Communion**  
Pulpit Talk Eleanor Babel  
8:30 AM - Coffee Class  
10:00 AM - Worship Service  
10:20 AM - Sunday School  
11:00 AM - Fair Trade Shop

**Monday, August 8**  
11:30 AM - Serious Soup  
5:00 PM - Deacons/Fellowship Team

**Tuesday, August 9**  
7:00 AM - Men's Prayer Breakfast  
10:00 AM - Staff Meeting  
11:00 AM - Thrift Shop  
5:00 PM - Adult Ed Team  
5:00 PM - Foundation Meeting

**Wednesday, August 10**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Thursday, August 11**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Friday, August 12**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Saturday, August 13**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Sunday, August 14 Jim Ozee Pulpit Talk**  
**Blessings of the Backpacks**  
8:30 AM - Coffee Class  
10:00 AM - Worship Service  
10:20 AM - Sunday School  
11:00 AM - Fair Trade Shop

**Monday, August 15**  
11:30 AM - Serious Soup  
12:00 PM - Program Planning

**Tuesday, August 16**  
7:00 AM - Men's Prayer Breakfast  
10:00 AM - Staff Meeting  
11:00 AM - Thrift Shop  
5:00 PM - Missions Ministry

**Wednesday, August 17**  
12:00 PM - Covid Committee  
5:30 PM - Trustees\*

**Thursday, August 18**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Friday, August 19**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Saturday, August 20**  
9:00 AM - Bridge Clinic

**Sunday, August 21 Church Picnic**  
8:30 AM - Coffee Class  
10:00 AM - Worship Service  
10:20 AM - Sunday School  
11:00 AM - Fair Trade Shop  
11:30 AM - Picnic at Anna Page Park

**Monday, August 22**  
No Serious Soup  
6:30 PM - Worship/Fellowship Team

**Tuesday, August 23**  
7:00 AM - Men's Prayer Breakfast  
10:00 AM - Staff Meeting  
11:00 AM - Thrift Shop

**Wednesday, August 24**  
12:00 PM - JD Executive

**Thursday, August 25**  
5:30 PM - Governing Council

**Friday, August 26**  
No Scheduled Activities

**Saturday, August 27**  
10:00 AM - Jubilee Soup Kitchen

**Sunday, August 28**  
**Preacher Kris Delmore**  
8:30 AM - Coffee Class  
10:00 AM - Worship Service  
10:20 AM - Sunday School  
11:00 AM - Fair Trade Shop

**Monday, August 29**  
11:30 AM - Serious Soup

**Tuesday, August 30**  
10:00 AM - Staff Meeting  
11:00 AM - Thrift Shop

**Wednesday, August 31**  
No Scheduled Activities

**OFFICE HOURS:** Please note the office hours are Monday-Friday from 8:00 am - 3:30 pm.



## ALL CHURCH PICNIC Sunday, August 21, After Church

It's that time again! Time for the annual church picnic on Sunday, August 21, right after church, at Anna Page Park shelter, sponsored by the Deacons/Fellowship Team. All the food is provided, and we'll be eating delicious brats, hotdogs, salads, and desserts. Our own "Up North 4" will be singing to us! Please come to enjoy good food and friendship in the warm, summer sunshine! See you there!

## JUBILEE SOUP KITCHEN Saturday, August 27, 10:00 am

You can be part of the team to prepare lunches for our neighborhood friends! We will meet at the Jubilee Center, the small building between Emmanuel Episcopal Church and Court St. If you can be there with willing hands, a ready smile, and a hat and mask, let Jean Herro know. Thanks so much!

## NEIGHBORHOOD ICE CREAM SOCIAL Thursday, September 8, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

We have new neighbors in the lofts and apartment buildings around our church building.

The Discernment and Vision Team (DVT) came up with the idea to invite our neighbors for ice cream so that we could all meet each other and get to know each other better.

The Deacons/Fellowship Team is implementing this idea, and we have invited our new neighbors to have ice cream with us on Thursday, September 8, 6:00 pm-7:00 pm, in our parking lot. It's important for our church members to be there, to share friendly faces and sociable conversation, and EAT ICE CREAM.

4 legged friends are welcome. See you there!



## BLESSINGS OF THE BACKPACKS Sunday, August 14

No matter your age, backpacks are important! Join us Sunday August 14 as we celebrate our annual Blessings of the Backpacks during worship.

## SAVE THE DATES

- AUGUST 14:** Blessing of the Backpacks
- AUGUST 15:** Staff Planning Meeting
- AUGUST 21:** Church Picnic
- AUGUST 27:** Jubilee Soup Kitchen
- SEPTEMBER 8:** Ice Cream Social
- SEPTEMBER 10:** Love Rockford Event in the gym
- SEPTEMBER 11:** Fall Kick Off
- SEPTEMBER 13:** Bible Study Returns
- SEPTEMBER 24:** Pig Roast
- SEPTEMBER 24:** Carillons



## GENTLY USED CLOTHING FOR LOVE ROCKFORD

The Love Rockford quarterly event will take place Saturday, September 10th at Court Street Methodist. There will be a clothing room component, so your gently used clothing is very much needed! You may either drop off clothing at Court Street or in our office at church with bags clearly marked for Love Rockford. Questions? Contact Darlene Riddle at [driddle88@gmail.com](mailto:driddle88@gmail.com) or 815-988-3573.

## THE THRIFT SHOP IS HAVING A GRAND RE-OPENING Starting weekly on Tuesday, August 2, 9:00 am - 11:00 am

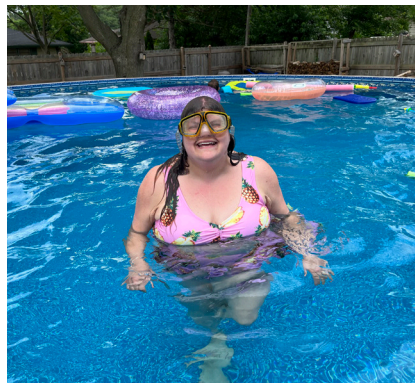
The shop has been part of our church mission, first by supporting our Pre-School, then our neighbors, contributing financially to the church and purchasing needed items for the kitchen and Serious Soup. Thanks to those of you that continue to support our mission. Jean Reese, Helen Morse, Ann Boline, Audrey Miller, Roxy and Alice Uphouse. Masks are required.



## UPCOMING worship schedule

- AUGUST 7:** Pulpit Talk Eleanor Babel
- AUGUST 14:** Pulpit Talk Jim Ozee
- AUGUST 21:** Becky Erbe [Church Picnic]
- AUGUST 28:** Kris Delmore Preach
- SEPTEMBER 11:** Becky Erbe
- SEPTEMBER 25:** Pulpit Talk Peter Joachim

# POOL PARTY!



## KFACT UPDATE

KFACT has been trying to keep our girls involved and connected this summer. We have many fun things planned and have already created some new KFACT "1st" and exposed the mentees to a few fun places here in our community. We enjoyed fun in the sun at Sand Park Pool and enjoyed a day of nature at Atwood.

We are excited for our upcoming volunteer event with Alpine Kiwanis Brat Days. This is always a fun event and allows us to give back to the Kiwanis community, we have graciously supported KFACT for many years.



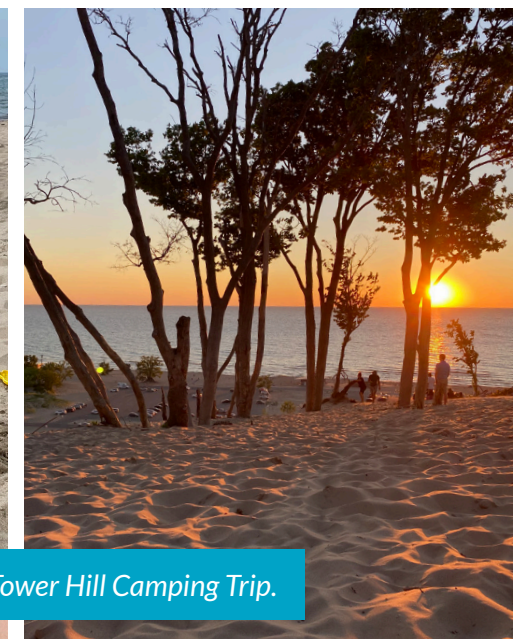
## JEREMIAH DEVELOPMENT

By Sue Kanthak

Jeremiah Development has hit a very important milestone! Since I became Executive Director in 2018, my main goal has been to become secondary to the residents' work in the neighborhood. To do with the neighborhood rather than for the neighborhood. To be able to earnestly listen to what those in the neighborhood are saying, what they are not saying, and respond to their needs by letting them guide us with their own solutions. Jeremiah Development has spent the last four years developing relationships through our newsletter, safety events, movies in the park, the garden, etc. Some of the programs JD does are birthed from the requests of our neighbors. These include:



1. **Newsletter** – Monthly, we keep the neighbors informed of the events happening in the neighborhood as well as provide important contact information.
2. **Movie nights/Game days** – There was a request for fun ways to gather and meet others in the neighborhood. We host these events monthly for the residents. Movies in the summer, games in the winter!
3. **Small engine repair program** – Several parents living in the neighborhood expressed very real concerns about their young sons and the battle they have trying to keep the streets from eating them alive. This was JD's response to those concerns.
4. **Computer Center** – Access to the Internet is very limited in this neighborhood. Residents were unable to make appointments for Covid vaccinations or learn new skills for job searches. We are currently partnering with Goodwill Industries and the Workforce Connection to provide software for self-guided classes and instructor-led programs to assist our neighbors with job skills and job searches. These computers are used daily and provide access to work, IDs, social services, and a host of other needs. A BIG thank you to Cheryl Rogers who volunteered every Tuesday from January through June to teach Microsoft Excel to our neighbors!
5. **Take -A- Book library** – This was an unplanned program that turned out to be well received. Goodwill offered books to us and we just put them out around the office. Before we knew it, people were coming to take books home. Not a day goes by when we don't have several people here looking through the books.
6. **Neighborhood Safety Events** – After hearing the concerns of the neighbors, we are hosting quarterly safety events that focus on safety areas they expressed a desire to learn about. In April, we hosted the Rockford Police Department as they provided personal safety training and property safety tips. We then distributed personal safety "screamers" to all who attended. In May, the Rockford Fire Department gave an interactive training on fire safety, complete with hands on fire extinguisher practice. Those attending received two fire extinguishers, a smoke detector, and a carbon monoxide detector. The firefighters installed the smoke detectors for anyone who was unable to do it themselves. Our next event in August will be led by the Winnebago Health Department with a focus on environmental safety. Attendees will leave with either an outdoor trash can with a lid or a kitchen trash can, depending on whether they rent an apartment or own their home. Our final event will be in October. We will have an electrician talk about home maintenance: where the breaker box is, how to turn off the main water in an emergency, etc. At that event, attendees will be given a toolbox with basic tools needed around the house.



A few more shots from the Tower Hill Camping Trip.