

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/

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

Martha's Mental Space

“Oil for the Lamp”

There was a great camp song from my childhood, “Give me oil for my lamp, keep me burning... keep me burning ‘til the break of day.”



Taken from the parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids—it prays for us to be prepared for the calling to which we have been called, to be prepared for the task at hand, to be prepared for the coming of Christ.

The life of faith is as much about the “elbow grease” of practice as it is the mental space of what we believe. We practice being community together—we worship God, we learn the gospel story, we enjoy fellowship, we love our neighbors, and we serve the community, TOGETHER.

I am praying about the things that will light our path as we begin our journey together. There are questions (so many questions) about the life of the congregation in this moment. And, there are other questions, shaping questions, that will help us discern how God is transforming us for our future.

Part of my work in the days ahead will be one-on-one conversations with our mission and ministry leaders and with our staff. It will include participation with our partner ministries like Jeremiah Development and Rockford Urban Ministries as well as connection with both the local Presbytery and the local UCC Conference.

One of the commitments I’ve made to this congregation is to pursue Dual Standing within the UCC. Toward this goal, I am presently enrolled at Pathways Seminary and am 4 weeks into a class on UCC History and Polity. This work has already increased my understanding of the UCC’s denominational roots.

Upcoming plans include an **Installation Service** on **June 8 at 2:30pm**. At this worship service, Blackhawk Presbytery will officially seal my service with this church. All members of this community are invited to attend. Kathy Lewes will represent the Illinois Conference. The Rev. David Jones, the Rev. Bob Saunders, and Elder Phil Davidson will be part of the installation commission. Most importantly (for me) my daughter Carolyn, her husband Adam, and my granddaughter Rose will be with us that weekend.

As the days ahead fill with light, I am grateful that God keeps us burning ‘til the break of day.

Martha Langford

The solar panels that grace our rooftops are now connected to ComEd. Reroofing is underway over the gym office, and solar panels will be installed there soon.



A little Missive From Your Moderator

The Tower

The monthly publication of

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UCC/FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PC(USA)

Rockford, Illinois

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June is Bustin’ Out All Over is a rousing production number from Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Carousel*, celebrating the coming of Summer which I can’t help but relate to the exuberance of this month within our church. With the arrival of Pastor Martha Langford comes the promise of all she has to share with us, beginning with her PCUSA Installation on June 8th. That same day she will lead a membership exploration luncheon for those who have expressed interest in joining Second Congregational/First Presbyterian Church. And that’s not all, this month we hope to recognize our student transitions and graduations at every level and circumstance. I also hear there is a fishing outing in the works.

The church office is humming along efficiently, and ministry teams have selected leaders for the coming year. Your moderator is feeling her way to be your link to the projects and endeavors 2nd/1st is undertaking, establishing lines of communication that ensure the congregation is informed as partners in those efforts.

I look to another song from that musical that will support and guide us along the way. *You’ll Never Walk Alone* expresses hope and encouragement to those facing challenges.

The lyrics speak to me of faith and trust and the ever-present love of God who never abandons us but is our constant companion, ensuring that in all we do, we never walk alone.

Yours,
Linda Oshita

Your New Office Staff Members (If you didn’t know yet)



Top from left-
Buliding Manager: Josh Hopkins
Receptionist: Jacquie Bradford
Bookkeeper/Bus. Mgr: Caryl Hay

Bottom Right-
Graphic Design/Media:
Charles Fernandez



Here are some faces to go along with the names you’ve heard thrown around here and there. Many of you already know who we are, and some don’t have a clue yet!

Josh is the building manager. He’s slinging tables like frisbees, so watch out!

Jacquie is the receptionist. She’s the one who greets everyone and assists members with all of the office type things... well, most of it.

Caryl is the money lady. She makes sure the lights stay on, and manages the business things.

Charles... I’m the one making the weekly/monthly newsletters and typing all of this out. Any typos, I’m sure more than one of you will let me know! (It’s OK, I promise!)

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECOND FIRST WEINGARTNER SCHOLARSHIP FUND

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL-FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

318 N. CHURCH ST. ROCKFORD, IL 61101

Name of Student_____

Date of Birth_____ Date of Application _____

Parents’ Name(s)_____

Home Adress_____

Phone_____ Email _____

High School_____ Year of Graduation_____

Name of College/Institution _____

Address _____

Student’s Current Status:

FR SO JR SR Full-Time Part-Time Anticipated Date of Graduation_____

Major Field(s) of Study

ESTIMATED COSTS OF EDUCATION

Tuition and Fees_____

Room and Board _____ Books and Supplies_____

Personal Epenes_____Transportation_____

Other _____

Total:_____

OTHER FINANCIAL AID, SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS OR LOANS Please list any other scholarships, grants, or funding already known, and amounts:

Exploring Membership Gathering

Have you considered deepening your connection with Second/First through membership in the church?

On Sunday, June 8th at 11:15am, the church will host a gathering just for you. We will enjoy a simple lunch, share the story of how we came to Second/First, and learn about next steps for entering into membership of the congregation.

We ask that you contact the church office to sign up, so that we can prepare ample food for the meal.

Questions? Please contact pastor Martha:

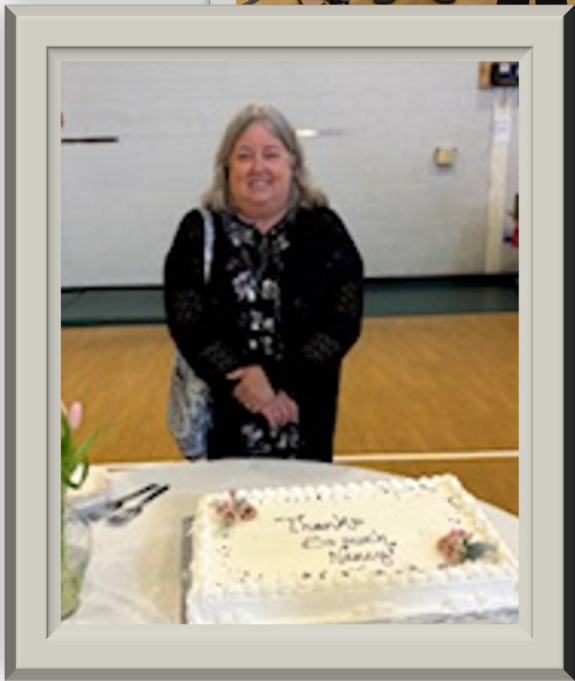
(Phone: 815.963.8431 Email: martha.langford@secondfirst.org).
Hope to see you there!

Gratitude to Second First Church!

Thank you so much for the lovely retirement reception you gave me on May 4 th . Your kind words, and gifts mean so much to me.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and support through the last 22 years. I have loved working for SecondFirst and will miss everyone. A special thank you to Maria for making the beautiful cake for my reception.

Love, Nancy



What's Happening This Month? (Save the Date!)

June 8th - 11:15am Exploring Membership Lunch

On Sunday, June 8th at 11:15am, the church will host a gathering just for you. We will enjoy a simple lunch, share the story of how we came to Second/First, and learn about next steps for entering into membership of the congregation. Details on page 6!

June 10th - Thrift Shop

On Tuesday, June 10th The Thrift Shop is open. Prices between \$1 and \$10. Cash Only.

June 15th - Donuts For Dad!

On Sunday, June 15th We will have Donuts For Dad after service. Happy Father's Day! Announcement to be made

June 22nd - During Worship: Graduate Contratulations

On Sunday, June 22nd during worship service, we will be congratulating our graduating students, and those students transitioning onto the next grade.



SecondFirst Merchandise

Plan for your activities wardrobe now.

Order your shirts, hats and water bottles now so you have them for church events, fellowship and volunteering and we now have many options for you to choose from. You can get the church logo on the upper right chest, the church logo full front OR you can choose the church logo on the upper right chest and a custom Word Cloud on the back

(Make sure to choose a shirt with "Word Cloud" in the description).

You can pick them up from "Embroid This" on North Second or choose to have them picked up at Church. If you have any questions, please reach out to Jennifer Archer.

https://stores.inksoft.com/second_first



Attention: Students pursuing post-secondary education!

Did you know that SecondFirst Church has scholarship funds available to support you as you further your education?

Funds can be used for trade school, community college, and/or 4-year universities. If you are a member of SecondFirst, you are eligible to apply. Applications are now being accepted for the Second First Weingartner Scholarship. Please contact the church office to receive one.

Applications are due by June 15, and scholarships will be awarded in August. Applicants can apply yearly. Gifts will vary due to the number of applicants and our return on investment.



Church members: Are you looking for a way to help the youth of our church? Donations can be made to the Second First Weingartner Scholarship Fund, so we can continue to award scholarships!

If you want to apply to the Second First Weingartner Scholarship... Digital copy link: https://www.secondfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/SFC-Scholarship-Application.pdf

On page 7 you will find a paper copy of the application. Turn in completed applications to the church office by June 15th!

June Calendar

Sunday, June 1 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School	Wednesday, June 11 10:00 AM- Staff Meeting	Saturday, June 21 9:00 AM- Bridge Clinic
Monday, June 2 11:30 AM – Serious Soup	Thursday, June 12 No Scheduled Activities	Sunday, June 22 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School
Tuesday, June 3 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast	Friday, June 13 Office is Closed	Monday, June 23 11:30 AM – Serious Soup 5:30 PM - Worship/Music
Wednesday, June 4 10:00 AM- Staff Meeting	Saturday, June 14 7:00 AM - Juneteenth Pancake Breakfast	Tuesday, June 24 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast
Thursday, June 5 7:00 PM – Choir	Sunday, June 15 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School 11:15 AM - Donuts for Dad 11:15 AM - FCE	Wednesday, June 25 10:00 AM- Staff Meeting
Friday, June 6 Office is Closed	Monday, June 16 11:30 AM – Serious Soup 5:30 PM - Missions	Thursday, June 26 5:30 PM - DVT
Saturday, June 7 9:00 AM- Bridge Clinic	Tuesday, June 17 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast	Friday, June 27 Office is Closed
Sunday, June 8 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School 11:15 AM - Exploring Membership Lunch 2:30 PM - Installation Service (PCUSA)	Wednesday, June 18 10:00 AM- Staff Meeting 6:00 PM - Trustees	Saturday, June 28 No Scheduled Activities
Monday, June 9 11:30 AM – Serious Soup 5:30 PM- Deacons/Fellowship	Thursday, June 19 9:30 AM- Carillons	Sunday, June 29 10:00 AM – Worship Service 10:20 AM – Sunday School
Tuesday, June 10 7:00 AM – Men’s Prayer Breakfast 9:00 AM – Thrift Shop	Friday, June 20 Newsletter Submission Deadline! Office is Closed	Monday, June 30 11:30 AM - Serious Soup

Please Note:
Outside of normal Sunday Worship, most events are subject to change. Cancellations happen, and so do new events. If you don’t see an event on here, but you see it posted elsewhere, just ask. We will get you the correct information. This Newsletter is published the last week of the previous month.