

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH *of Western Springs*

1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, Illinois 60558 † 708/246-1900



GATHERINGS

A PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH

MAY 10, 2016

God of Love,
You are with us in every
transition and change.
As we enter into this new era
with excitement and even
some anxiety,
we recall your deep
compassion, presence, and
abounding love.
We thank you for the gifts,
talents and skills with which
you have blessed us.
We thank you for the
experiences that have brought
us to this moment.
We thank you for the work of
others that gives breadth and
depth to our own work.
Be with us as we move
forward, rejoicing with you
and supporting one another.
We ask this in your Holy
Name. Amen.
{beliefnet.com}

COMING UP THIS SUNDAY, MAY 15

WORSHIP AT 9:30AM • FRB ACREAGE SALE

This Sunday is Pentecost Sunday. Rich will lead our one and only worship service during which we will read the traditional New Testament passage from the Book of Acts, chapter 2. Many say the story told marked the birth of the church. Our Spirit Worship Band will play, and after worship, representatives from Foods Resource Bank will be on hand for their annual acreage sale. (With our help, FRB will provide the funds necessary to cover the cost of the inputs such as seed, fertilizer and diesel fuel for the farmers from Park Street Congregational Church in Mazon. The crops produced will be sold and the proceeds used for food security programs around the world.) Both kids' choirs will rehearse at 10:30. At 2pm, there will be a meal crew meeting in the youth room for kids going on the freshman work tour in June. All PFers will have their year-end picnic at 3pm.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, MAY 22 :: FAMILY WORSHIP & CELEBRATION FOR JAN

Katherine will preach, our children's choirs will sing and all will celebrate the 20-year ministry of our Christian Ed Director, Jan Fraccaro. Jan's retirement celebration will take place immediately after the service in Plymouth Hall. All ages are encouraged to join us for this faithful and festive occasion. At 7pm in the Youth Room, PFers will view their year-end highlight video.

LOOKING AHEAD TO BACCALUAREATE SUNDAY, MAY 29

More than 40 high school seniors will be celebrated during our 9:30 Baccalaureate service. Singers from the Tower Chorale will share their musical gifts, and the service will conclude with a video tribute, produced by Meghan Bulger on behalf of our high school juniors.

1 Bench Down; 1 to Go.

Late last month, Dave Onion and Greg Vichick (pictured below) delivered 400 pounds of plastic caps to Green Tree Plastics in Evansville, Indiana. (The caps came from near and far — as far away as Greece, Cuba, India, and Italy, in fact; and were sorted by members of PF.) The bench is located outside the Light Court and will be delivered shortly to Tower Hill Camp in Michigan.

Now, we're on to bench #2 for Pilgrim Park in Princeton, Illinois. So far about 120 pounds of caps have been collected. The Green Team thanks everyone for bringing in their caps and keeping them out of the landfills. The Green Team also extends a heartfelt thanks to Woman's Society for its financial support with this project.

The collection bins for the caps are located in the Light Court.



Dave Onion & Greg Vichick try out our plastic park bench.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MEN'S FAITH & FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST.

The Honey Bee Café in Western Springs will be the site of this month's Men's Faith & Fellowship Breakfast. This Dutch-treat breakfast on May 14, will bring the group's program year to a close. Rich says, "Even if you have not attended a single meeting, this get-together will be a great chance to come (at 7:45am) and have breakfast and conversation with other men of the church."

DRESSES OF HOPE.

A new sewing group is forming here at church and all are welcome. Those who might be interested in sewing 'dresses of hope,' are invited to attend a "Question and Answer" session on May 16, from 9:30-11:30am in the Seim Room. If you are not able to attend, feel free to contact either Sue Schierholtz, Joann Everett or Julie Harps to learn more.



MAY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. This month's ministry and church council meetings will take place on Monday night, May 16. Committee meetings will begin at 7pm and Church Council at 8:30. (The Semi-Annual Meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Sunday, June 12. During that meeting, we will review and approve the slate of newly-appointed committee members.)

MASTER GARDENER TO PRESENT AT WOMAN'S SOCIETY.

Pat Menzenberger, Master Gardener with DuPage County, will be the guest speaker at the upcoming General Meeting of Woman's Society. The meeting will begin with lunch at 12:30 on Thursday, May 19. Pat's program on container gardens will begin at 1:30. Women's Society is open to women of all ages. To learn more about joining the group or attending an upcoming meeting, contact Woman's Society President Cynthia Kos at cynboby@sbcglobal.net.

SUMMER BOOK GROUP. This summer, Katherine Willis Pershey will facilitate a series of book discussions about justice, faith and racism. The series will begin on June 26 with *America's Original Sin** by Jim Wallis, continue on July 24, with *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson, and conclude on August 28 (tentatively), with *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The hour-long discussions will take place following worship and will include free childcare. If you're interested in participating (as your schedule permits), simply start reading and watch for more info in June.

FAITH IN ACTION

FIRST CONGO TO PROVIDE SUMMER SHELTER. At their meeting in April, Church Council members unanimously approved the motion to open our doors and serve as a summer shelter site for BEDS Plus. Working in partnership with several other area churches, BEDS Plus will now be able to offer year-round shelter for 10-15 of their clients.

Several volunteers are needed in a variety of capacities, such as:

- staffing nighttime shifts
- providing food items
- cooking/serving meals (dinner/breakfast)
- assisting with laundry

See more details and sign up to volunteer under Latest News on our website. (If you are unable to help July 3-9, you are welcome to help at another shelter location.)

BACK ON MY FEET is encouraging you to "Color your World" on June 5 by volunteering at the most colorful run to hit Chicago! Back on My Feet needs 50 volunteers to get colorful at the 2016 Tropicolor Color Run World Tour on Sunday, June 5 at Grant Park. Help out with race day check-in from 6-9am, race day festivities like water and cheer stations, color blast station or finish line festival from 6:30am-12:30pm or sleep in and help with race day clean up from 10am-2pm. When you sign up, make sure you click YES when asked "Are you associated with or were you recruited to volunteer by Back On My Feet Chicago?" Please register to volunteer by May 27.

(Volunteers are also needed for BoMF's Glo Run on July 16. Details are online under Mission & Outreach Volunteer Opportunities. First Congo is proud to support the work of Back on My Feet, a non-profit-organization that seeks to revolutionize the way our society approaches homelessness.)

BRIEFLY

GIVE TEACHING A TRY. Summer Sundays offer a great opportunity for young people considering teaching as a profession to give it a try! It's also a great chance for friends of all ages (including high school and college ages), parent/child and siblings to teach Sunday school together.

A fun and easy curriculum is provided. Classes are held after First Steps, during the single 9:30 worship hour. Three classes are offered: 4s, 5s & Kindergarten, rising 1st & 2nd grade, and rising 3rd-5th grade. Sign up online (www.wscongo.org) under Latest News, on the rolling board in the Light Court, or contacting Jan Fraccaro at jan@wscongo.org or 708-246-1900 ext. 215.

OUR WEDNESDAY MORNING WATER-COLORISTS are displaying their work. Come and take a look (before May 25) at the bulletin boards outside the Light Court area.

CAROLINE DOST TO RETURN IN JUNE. Former Summer Experience in Ministry participant Caroline Dost will attend Princeton Seminary in the fall and will be our Ministry & Mission Intern during the month of June. Stationed in the shared office, Caroline will participate in worship, pastoral care, and administrative support for the Mission and Outreach committee.

A Taha Family Update

By Kim Nichol

Our Syrian refugee family, the Taha's, settled here seven months ago and are doing well. The two sons, Ali and Mohammad, are both talented "football" players and are playing with AYSO. The daughter, Batoul, will soon be playing tennis on Senn High School's tennis team.

The mother is working at Misericordia in the laundry room, and the father is driving employees back and forth to their workplace at Wal-Mart. (Ever resourceful, he thought of this idea so they don't have to commute in by bus.) He has a C class CDL permit and is looking for a job. If anyone has a contact in a trucking company or has any ideas, please contact Mission & Outreach Committee member Kim Nichol or her husband Bob at kbnichol@sbcglobal.net or Robert.nichol@PNC.com.

Last week, the family went to the Chicago Botanical Gardens and really enjoyed it. Sadly, internet contact with their family back home has been intermittent because of the conflict there.

First Congo is proud to partner with RefugeeOne in resettling refugees from around the world who are fleeing war, persecution, violence, or genocide.

PASTORAL STAFF

Rich Kirchherr
Senior Minister

Katherine Willis Pershey
Associate Minister

Meredith Onion
Associate Minister

Deb Stankiewicz
Parish Nurse

Gatherings is a biweekly publication of the First Congregational Church of Western Springs. Articles for inclusion should be submitted to Meg Heinz at gatherings@wscongo.org.

Gatherings is emailed to members and posted on-line at www.wscongo.org.

BITS & PIECES

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold in your prayers this week: **Jane Adair** (home) and **Al Upstrom** (expected to be discharged on Wed. from Oak Trace.)

CONGRATULATIONS to Mary Lee Larsen on winning the 2016 Linda Moran Buddy Award for her distinguished and dedicated service with Buddy's Place.

IN SYMPATHY. Our condolences go out to **Perry and Sara Buffett and family** on the recent passing of Perry's father. Our hearts also go out to the McClure Junior High community, which is mourning the sudden and unexpected passing of sixth grader teacher, **Ashley Jurjovec**. As always, our pastors are available to talk with (or listen to) anyone needing support.

JANET MENSEN REYNOLDS extends her heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped with/attended her 20th Lyric Opera preview concert on May 1.

PF ELECTS NEW OFFICERS.

Congratulations to the following high schoolers recently elected to serve next year in these officer positions:

Presidents:

Meghan Bulger, Quinn Chudik

Devotional Officers:

Coleen Kirby, Fred Moody

Outreach: Molly Ferguson, Erin Sharkey

Trips/Retreats:

Jack Schaefer, Lucas Isaacson

Fundraising: Lucy Schaefer, Luke Watts

Secretary: Jeff Vitek

Treasurer: Claire O'Donnell

Associate Officers include: Jane Ragains, George Chlada, Tanner Mortimer, Lindsey Cwik, Bridget Shannon, Sydney Kaehler.

Next year's co-vice presidents will be selected by the freshmen while on their upcoming work tour in June.