

# 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

APRIL 5, 2016

*The first day of  
spring is one  
thing, and the  
first spring day  
is another. The  
difference  
between them  
is sometimes as  
great as a  
month.*



*Henry Van Dyke,  
Fisherman's Luck*

### COMING UP THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 10 STEEL PANS, LABRYINTH WALKS & MORE

At 9:00 and 10:30, our steel pan band will play the prelude and postlude music and Rich will offer a reflection and sermon that grows from Psalm 139. His sermon will be a post Easter reflection on the gift of our physical bodies and how we might treat them with the kind of respect that God might desire from us. Officers from our high school youth group will report on their recent Work Tour trip to Biloxi, MS. We will celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism at the 10:30 service. Our kids' choirs will rehearse at 10:00 and 11:35.

Following both services, our Christian Ventures Committee will host a guided labyrinth walk in Plymouth Hall. These walks include the recorded sounds of Gregorian chants and flickering candlelight. If you prefer not to walk but rather sit, doing so is welcome. Our confirmands will walk the labyrinth during their class at 5pm, and PF will meet in the Youth Room at 7pm.

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### LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, APRIL 17 BELLS, RUMMAGE & MORE RUMMAGE

At our 9:00 and 10:30 services, our hand bell choirs will share their musical gifts and Rich will preach a sermon entitled "The Good Life," which grows from the Gospel of Matthew 6:25-30. Rich's reflection will explore a Christian understanding of the balance of regrets and happiness.

Our kids' choirs will rehearse at 10:00 and 11:35, and Rummage drop-off continues today from 1-3pm. (Rummage sorting continues **after** worship, from 11:30-5pm. Feel free to wear your work clothes to worship!)

Confirmands will return this morning from their overnight retreat and will *not* have class today. PFers will enjoy a neighborhood scavenger hunt at 7pm.

## It's Time for our Holy Rummage Sale!

The time has come. Hopefully your calendar is clear and your rummage is piled up by the garage door. Even better: you've already signed up to volunteer via our online link. (If not, no worries — you can sign up now or simply come when your schedule permits.) **Free childcare is available for much of the week; indicate your needs when you sign up online.**

### Set-up

April 14, 8am-Noon

### Drop-off (parking lot)

April 16, 9-1

April 17, 1-3

(sorting continues till 5pm on both days)

### Sorting/Pricing

April 18, 9-5

April 19, 9-Noon

### Volunteer Shopping

April 19, 3:45-4:45

April 20, 4:45-5:45

### Sale Hours

April 19, 5-8pm

April 20, 10am-Noon & 6-8pm (1/2 price/bag sale)

### Tear-Down

April 20, 8-10pm

### Final Clean-up

April 21, 8am-Noon

If you can't work rummage, but would like to help in some way, please consider donating food/beverage items. All the details can be found on our website under Latest News:  
[www.wscongo.org](http://www.wscongo.org).

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### GETTING READY FOR GRADUATION.

The graduation season is almost upon us, and we are looking forward to celebrating our graduating high school seniors in worship on May 29 (at 9:30). Before then, however, our Diaconate invites all moms (and dads) of high school seniors to spend an evening together making a no-sew fleece blanket for their graduates. Specific instructions will be mailed in the coming weeks (via USPS and email), but until then, please mark your calendars for Thursday, May 12. The group will meet at 6:30 in Plymouth Hall.

### GIVE TEACHING A TRY.

Summer Sundays offer a great opportunity for pairs of high schoolers, siblings, parent/child and friends to teach Sunday school. 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 graders, and 3rd -5th graders.

For the '16-'17 program year, only nine teaching spots remain.

- One teacher is needed for the following teams:  
     9:00 2nd & 3rd grades  
     10:30 4th & 5th grades
- Two teachers are needed for 10:30 6th & 7th grade team.
- Five teachers are needed for the 9:00 4th & 5th grade team.

Sign up for summer or fall online under Latest News, on the rolling board in the Light Court, or by contacting Jan Fraccaro at [jan@wscongo.org](mailto:jan@wscongo.org) or 708-246-1900, ext. 215.

### FAITH WITH YOUR SLEEVES ROLLED UP.

A nice size group has signed up to help "rebuild together" on Saturday, April 30. The team, led by Mike McNeily, will be working on Ms. Sappington's Blue Island home, where she lives with two of her children and five grandchildren. There's still time to sign-up. Contact Mike at [mikesmcneily@gmail.com](mailto:mikesmcneily@gmail.com).

### 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.

### MEN'S FAITH & FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST.

All men of the congregation are invited to our monthly Men's Faith & Fellowship breakfast this Saturday, April 9, at 7:45am. After breakfast, the group will take a few minutes to discuss the future of the group. Rich says, "Even if you've never attended a breakfast, this would be a great chance to come to the Seim Room and meet some of the men of the church and provide some input into the direction of this faith and fellowship group."

### HELPING PARENTS ASSESS

**KINDERGARTEN READINESS.** First Congo Preschool is pleased to offer its Annual Kindergarten Q&A on Tuesday, April 12, from 9:15-11am. This program, which will take place in Plymouth Hall, is open to the community and features District 101's Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum, Dr. Sarah Coffey, as well as district kindergarten teachers. Admission is free. To learn more, email Amy Faison at [preschool@wscongo.org](mailto:preschool@wscongo.org).

### COMMITTEE MEMBER SURVEY.

Sometime before April 25, Strategic Vision Team members are hoping all committee members (on governing and non-governing committees) will take five minutes to complete a survey designed to assess personal satisfaction and overall committee vitality. You can find the survey under Latest News at [wscongo.org](http://wscongo.org).

# FIRST CONGO WELCOMES TWO NEW STAFF MEMBERS: BRIAN & HOPE

The Executive Committee is pleased to call Brian Cassin as our new Facilities Manager, effective April 11.

Brian has a long background in facilities management, having worked for most of his 34-year career at Loyola Medical Center in Maywood. A heart attack in 2010 gave Brian pause and led to a conscious decision to leave the stressful environment of health care facilities management. He took a few years off to spend time with his now 11-year-old daughter. When he decided to return to work, flexible non-profit work was high on his list of priorities, and he was delighted to run across our ad.



Brian lives in Darien with his wife, Donna Halinski, and daughter Mia (pictured above). He is number seven of eight children and enjoys spending time with his "extraordinary" 92-year-old mother. Brian, who will report directly to Rich, can be reached at ext. 234 and [brian@wscongo.org](mailto:brian@wscongo.org). His hours are expected to be 9-2:30 Monday through Friday.

At its Monday night meeting, the Church Council unanimously approved the hiring of Hope Sabbagha as our new Director of Faith Formation for Children.

Hope is no stranger to our Christian Ed programs. She has taught Sunday school for 18 years (the junior high class is her favorite!) and served two terms on our Christian Education Committee. Hope has a Bachelor Degree in Elementary Education and a Master's of Science in Applied Family and Child Studies. After teaching for 11 years, Hope became a stay-at-home mom and was active in the Butler schools, volunteering and chairing many committees and teaching enrichment classes.



Hope and her husband Elias (pictured) have been members of First Congo for 18 years. Their son Austin is a freshman at George Washington University and daughter Sydney a senior at Hinsdale Central HS. Hope will report directly to Katherine and can be reached at [hope@wscongo.org](mailto:hope@wscongo.org) and ext. 215. She will begin 'shadowing' Jan on April 11, to absorb all she can before Jan retires at the end of May. Hope expects to be in the office on Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.



*Rich explained at Monday night's Church Council meeting that according to our constitution, all support staff positions (such as Brian's) are called by our Executive Committee, and all program staff positions (such as Hope's) are called by our Church Council.*

## Online Member Directory

Welcome!

Login \_\_\_\_\_

User Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Password: \_\_\_\_\_

Login

Many of you hopefully received an email last week with information regarding our online LifeTouch Member Directory.

The link to this directory, which is password protected, can be found under Connect at [www.wscongo.org](http://www.wscongo.org).

If you didn't receive this email and would like to access the online directory, please contact Meg Heinz ([meg@wscongo.org](mailto:meg@wscongo.org)) or Jeannette Lloyd ([Jeannette@wscongo.org](mailto:Jeannette@wscongo.org)) to get your LifeTouch-generated username and password. (This login information can be changed and reset if you so choose.)

There are several advantages to using this online resource, namely that membership information is available at your fingertips. If you're out and need someone's contact information or if you're on the computer upstairs and your directory is downstairs, simply go to our website, click connect, then Member Directory. What's more, members can enhance their profile information to include interests and/or church involvement. We hope you'll take advantage of this convenience.

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](mailto:gatherings@wscongo.org). *Gatherings* is emailed to members and posted on-line at [www.wscongo.org](http://www.wscongo.org).

## BITS & PIECES

**IN OUR PRAYERS.** Please hold in your prayers this week: **Al Upstrom** (at Oak Trace).

**STRAIGHT FROM HEAVEN.** Our best wishes go out to **Michelle and Brian Boyd** on the recent home birth of their daughter, Emma Grace.

**IN GRATITUDE.** Thank you to all who filled blue house banks on behalf of BEDS Plus and the homeless neighbors it serves. Just over \$1120 was sent to BEDS Plus to support the wonderful work it does. May God be with us all as we seek to love our neighbor!

**CALLING ALL EARTH STEWARDS:** April is Earth Month, so if you need some ideas on how to celebrate, check out the Green Team's bulletin board...or feel free to add your own! (Earth Day is April 22; Arbor Day, April 29.)

**IN SYMPATHY....**Our condolences go out to **Dan and Amy Halm and family and TC and Michelle Halm and family** on the recent passing of Dan and TC's father, Robert Halm. Our deep sympathy also goes out to **Carrie Soudan and family** on the recent passing of Carrie's mother; to **Sally Rowen and family** on the recent passing of her husband Bob; and to the **family and friends of Jo Means**, who are mourning Jo's passing on April 2.

**Upcoming Memorial Services:**

*Bob Rowen: 1pm, April 8 in our Sanctuary; reception to follow.*

*Sam Sampson: 1pm April 11 in our Sanctuary; reception to follow (Caregivers' meeting is canceled for today; will meet next on May 9.)*

*Ingeborg Smith: 2pm, May 14 at Plymouth Place; reception to follow*

*Jo Means: Plans are not yet finalized*