

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

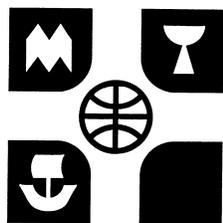
MAY 17, 2017

COMING UP SUNDAY, MAY 21

- * 8 am Reflective Chapel Service where Rev. Onion will share "Silence."
- * 9am & 10:30am Worship Services. Rev. Pershey will preach on John 14:15-21 in which Jesus tells his Disciples that he will be sending the Holy Spirit to dwell among them.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, MAY 28

- * Summer Worship schedule starts, 9:30am.
- * There is no Sunday school, but childcare is available.



THANK YOU!

Given that Rich's call to ministry first emerged out of a powerful experience of grace and gratitude on a work tour to Back Bay Mission, it was perfectly appropriate to celebrate his thirty years of faithful ministry by raising funds for partners in the Gulf Coast. We thought our goal of \$10,000 was an ambitious one, but in yet another powerful experience of grace and gratitude, our congregation raised \$23,840.56 for Back Bay! Thanks to all who shared their time, talent, and treasure to mark this momentous occasion in the life of our congregation - and thanks especially to our beloved Rev. Rich Kirchherr for hearing and responding to God's call. If you didn't hear his beautiful reflection on April 30th, be sure to catch it on the church website or through our iTunes sermon podcast (www.wscongo.org).

It's tempting to aspire for a \$30K donation for 30 years of service...

LINDA CONLIN'S RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

We are incredibly excited to celebrate Linda's many years of service, and hope everyone can join us on Sunday, June 11 following the 9:30 service! We are also collecting contributions for a Memory Book being made for her. Please feel free to share memories, good wishes, photos, etc... The written memories should be on the note card packets that are in the main church office (aka Beth Tracy's office); we would also love to have photos or physical mementos to make her book more meaningful.

Contributions should be enclosed in a zip lock bag and returned to the church office no later than **Monday, May 29**. If you have any questions, please contact Laurel Seidelman at lseidelman@comcast.net or at (708) 246-9119. FYI—Please be sure to include your name on anything you contribute, and your address if it needs to be returned to you.

Ageless Grace, Timeless Fitness

Interested in experiencing an anti-aging and fun fitness program for your body and brain?

On May 23, from 9:30-10:30am in the Seim room, the Tai Chi group will host Certified Ageless Grace instructor Carol Bottari (courtesy of Villa St. Benedict Retirement Community). Instead of doing Tai Chi that day, Carol will introduce us to The Ageless Grace Timeless Fitness program.

Join us to learn exercises for balance, breathing, flexibility and increasing the plasticity of your brain. All are welcome!

SAVE THE DATE!

On Tuesday, **June 6** we will host the Boston Avenue United Methodist Church Youth Choir for a special concert in the Sanctuary at 7pm. All are welcome to hear this critically acclaimed sacred choir.

Also, please be on the look out (weekly emails and website) for sign up information regarding meal provisions for the youth group.

HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PHOTOS.

Please submit a baby picture and graduation picture for the June 4th Baccalaureate Sunday video, even if you are not able to attend the HS Senior blanket making on Wednesday night! Pictures should be sent to Beth Tracy and questions can be directed to Cheryl Napoli.

Color your world! Join Back on My Feet for the most colorful run to hit Chicago! Back on My Feet needs 50 volunteers at [The Color Run Dream World Tour 2017](#) on Sunday, June 4 at Grant Park! The Color Run donates \$40 per volunteer to Back on My Feet so this is a great opportunity for team building, fundraising, and to meet our members. 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 a bit and help with race day clean up from 10am-2pm. Make sure you check YES when asked "are you associated with or were you recruited to volunteer by Back On My Feet Chicago?"! **Register to volunteer by May 26.**

Tower Chorale Spring Concert. All are invited to "Dream a Little Dream", performed by the Tower Chorale, which features a number of church members. There are two performances: **May 19** at 7:30pm and **May 21** at 3pm. Tickets are \$23 (students & Seniors are \$20 and children under 10 are free) and available on line or at the door. For more information call 708-580-0997 or go to the Tower Chorale web site.

FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

GROUP. This group meets from 7-8:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month, and is open to anyone who needs support. Please contact Meredith Onion with any questions (Meredith@wscongo.org).

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY. Don't forget to sign up for the new Pictorial Directory! LifeTouch will be taking photos on various dates and times from **June 7-24**. We hope everyone will participate, please note that you do not need to purchase anything to have your picture in the directory. Additional information along with the link to the scheduling module is available on our website under latest news. Please contact Jeannette Lloyd with questions: Jeannette@wscongo.org.

STYROFOAM #6 COLLECTION! The Green Team is sponsoring a STYROFOAM #6 collection on Sunday, **June 11** from 9am—12pm. As you may know, these products cannot be put in our blue recycling bags. The Styrofoam should be clean, and items like meat trays, cups, restaurant clam-shells should be in separate bags from BLOCK/packing type Styrofoam. FYI, Peanut Styrofoam cannot be accepted.

MEN'S CANOE TRIP. Sign up for the Men's Canoe Trip to the boundary waters is open! The trip is from August 31 to September 4, and the cost is still to be determined, but will most likely be \$250-\$300. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or have never been to the boundary waters, all are welcome! Contact Mike Tilden for additional information or to sign up.

ALL-CHURCH PICNIC. Save the date! **August 27** is the All-Church picnic at 10am in Bemis Woods. Our Spirit Worship Band will lead the service with Rich, Meredith and Katherine. After worship, we'll fire up the grills, prepare the food, and celebrate the joy of outdoor worship. Games and activities will be offered for the children, and a good time will be had by all!

BEDSPlus Volunteering

"To welcome the stranger is to acknowledge him as a human being made in God's image; it is to treat her as one of equal worth with ourselves - indeed, as one who may teach us something out of the richness of experiences different from our own." — **Ana Maria Pineda**

BEDSPlus Care, one of our mission partners, will provide transitional summer shelter for select clients from mid-June to mid-August. First Congo will host our neighbors the week of July 3rd, and we are looking for volunteers to sign-up for shifts and other once-a-week services. You can sign up during the week we are hosting, but we encourage you to help throughout the summer as well!

There are many ways to participate: night shifts (a minimum of two volunteers per shift), weekly laundry, breakfast supplies, and simple dinner meals. You can sign up for one shift or multiple, depending on what your summer schedule allows. The sign up program will automatically send you reminders two days prior to your shift. Questions? Please contact Erin Molek at volunteer@beds-plus.org or Meredith Onion at meredith@wscongo.org

Sign up: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094daaa62aa02-summer>

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

The Christian Education committee and Hope Sabbagha would like to thank all the Sunday school teachers for the 2016/2017 program year. These dedicated individuals shared Bible stories, personal stories of faith, and abundant Congo love to the children of our church. They are truly the hands of God and we are incredibly grateful for their service.

Rebecca Smith, Emily O'Donnell, Emily Dickett, Harper Hill, Georgia Panos, Kate Finney, Lisa Edgerton, Meredith Meyer, Aimee Tazic, Annie Nowak, Jennifer Bourgeois, Mathieu Bourgeois, Lauren Reynolds, Kate Miklosz, Christen Shorrock, Ann Stickman, Jane Ragains, Sarah Ragains, Deb Eskew, Megan Majernik, Ben Preshey, Clare Kralovec, Cathi Ward, Michelle Halm, Isabel Launspach, Megan Burke, Cindy Carsello, Katie Pogue, Alison McKenna, Tracey Scodro, Jack Scodro, Jim Kienzle, Julie Kienzle, Pete Soudan, Carrie Soudan, Jeff Vitek, Maggie Koch, Madison Lukowski, Kyle Branz, Lucas Watts, Lindsey Cwik, Lillian Walker, Sarah Flanagan, Terry Flanagan, Bob Papineau, Katie Kalus, Stacia Kopplin, Bryce Mitchell, Kristen Holman, Sarah Finnane, Katie Eavenson, Karen Pansing, Jenny Morgan, Amy Halm, Susan Becker, Alan Becker, Heidi Burtner, John Tuhey, Kelley Witzeman, Laura Gatland, Jeannette Lloyd, Catherine Dudley, Kelly Weinberger, Lisa McTigue, Dave Nehf, Dave Rounds, Tina Rounds, Jack Chamberlin, and Stephanie Mortimer.

Summer Sunday School

What do butterflies, whales, and pandas have in common? They are wonderful creatures God created, and will be three of the animals children will be learning about this summer in Sunday school. The theme for the summer Sunday school lessons is inspired by the favorite hymn, *All things Bright and Beautiful*.

Each week the children will learn about a different animal, sing songs, and do a craft or activity. The classes will take place in the Chapel, Fellowship circle, front lawn, and our recently completed God's Garden starting June 11 through August 20. Children ages 4 and up will enjoy getting to know each other and worship together. If you are interested in helping out with the class or have any questions, please contact Hope Sabbagha at hope@wscongo.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY

The last regular PF meeting of the year is on **May 21 at 7pm** in the Youth Room. This will be the inaugural showing of the video and slide show from the spring work tour and entire PF year! PF'ers **AND** parents are invited to attend—We hope to see everyone!

Mandatory Freshman Work Tour Meeting. If you are going on the Freshman Work Tour, you must be at the mandatory planning meeting at 6pm, May 21 (just before the regular meeting). This also includes the peer leaders. Please contact Mike Tilden with any questions.

Freshman Work Tour. On June 4, the freshman class of PF will depart for their mission trip to Washington DC. During the week long trip, the kids will be working and serving in soup kitchens, food pantries, and food banks; they will be learning what it means to be the hands and feet of Christ. Whether they are preparing food, serving food, washing dishes, or sitting down for to converse with a stranger, they will be exploring the ways their faith intersects, and intertwines with their life. It is an awesome opportunity for spiritual growth, and (hopefully) provides a chance to learn about themselves, and what their faith means to them. Along the way, they will also get a chance to visit museums, monuments, and maybe even squeeze in some fun along the way!



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 Erica Alletto at gatherings@wscongo.org.

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

BITS & PIECES

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold **Donna Nichols** in your prayers as she resumes chemotherapy treatments again, and **Barry Orr-Depner and Tom Shorrock** as they both recover from recent surgeries.

BAPTISM. On Sunday, May 14th we welcomed **Aniston June Murphy** into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

RUMMAGE. Thank you to everyone who was part of our amazing Spring Rummage Sale. We raised \$38,263—our 2nd highest total EVER!!! For anyone who doesn't know, the money raised by the Woman's Society Rummage Sale is donated to domestic and international charities to help improve the lives of those less fortunate. The outreach of Rummage is literally felt around the world.

WATERCOLORS. Please take time to enjoy the beautiful watercolor paintings that will be on display in the

light court until May 22. All works of art have been created in the watercolor classes, held on Wednesdays.

FIRST STEPS. On Mother's Day, Rev. Pershey read 'When God Made You' by Matthew Paul Turner during first steps. The book will soon be available in the Church Library for all to enjoy.

NEXT GATHERINGS DEADLINE.

Submissions are due on Tuesday, **May 23 by 5pm**. Please email the information to Erica Alletto at Erica@wscongo.org (the next issue will go out the week of May 29.)

CURIOUS about what is happening at church? Check out the church calendar on the website to find out! www.wscongo.org/calendar (fyi—it is updated frequently, so check it often!)

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

On May 7, we had the joy and privilege of welcoming into our family of faith the following new members. Please look for them when you are here next and extend to them a warm First Congo welcome.

Michael and Chrisy Jankowski met 15 years ago, were married 12 years ago by Pastor Rich, and live in Western Springs. Michael graduated from Aurora University and Chrisy from IU-Bloomington, both with business degrees. They have one daughter between them, Tecoa Tru (9). Michael has 3 daughters from his previous marriage: Lauren (25), Brigitte (23), and Emma (21), and Chrisy has 4 children: Kevin Manley (30), Morgan Manley (28), Paige Manley (26) and Chase Manley (23). All of her children were active in the youth group at First Congo, when she and her first husband were active members. Michael owns Wealth Planning Network in Oak Brook Terrace, and Chrisy manages several properties in Colorado, Illinois, and Hawaii - along with being a stay at home mom. They like to travel and enjoy their second home in Beaver Creek, Colorado. They love hiking, skiing, mountain biking, working out, snow shoeing and almost all outdoor activities. Their daughter Tecoa plays tennis and golf; she is on the Four Lakes ski team in Lisle and travels most weekends during the winter months. Sponsors: Mark & Missy Pignotti

Sarah and Mike Chomiak have been residents of Western Springs since 2008 along with their daughters Lizzie (Elizabeth, 10) and Amelia (8). They met at U of I-Champaign, were married and spent 10 years downtown in Wrigleyville before moving to WS. Sarah is currently a labor/employment attorney for Abbott Laboratories and travels regularly. One of her favorite activities is being a Girl Scout leader for both daughters' troops. She was introduced to First Congo through its preschool program; now Elizabeth is graduating from 5th Grade (Field Park) and will start at McClure in the fall. She plays viola and guitar, and enjoys volleyball, skiing, skateboarding, and most of all, socializing. Amelia is a very industrious 2nd grader; she adores their 20 year old cat and plays soccer, softball, basketball, and gymnastics. As a family, they enjoy spending time with friends and family, playing sports/games, doing craft/sewing projects, and watching movies. Sponsors: Jim & Julie Dickett.

Mike and Carey Spignese have lived in Western Springs for three years. Mike grew up in Lexington, MA; Carey grew up in Grosse Pointe, MI, and they have three children: Sean (5), JJ (3), and Will (1). Carey worked in commercial real estate for 15 years before deciding to stay home to raise the children. Mike has 25 years of software sales and sales management experience. They met on a blind date and were married in Stone Harbor, NJ. On the weekends, you will find them at one of the many wonderful parks in Western Springs (weather permitting) or following Boston sports teams: Red Sox, Celtics, Patriots, Bruins and more! They also love visiting their families in Michigan and Massachusetts. Sponsors: Scott & Jackie Guzek.

Genevieve Fitzgerald grew up on the Northwest side of Chicago with her mom and two sisters. Her dad and most of her extended family also lived in Chicago. She moved to LaGrange in 2004 and has 2 daughters, Charlotte (10) and Abigail (8). She teaches Spanish at LaGrange Highlands Elementary and Middle School. Before she was a teacher, she worked for the Welfare to Work program, helping women learn how to interview, obtain, and maintain jobs in order to support their families and get off welfare. The organization provided all the resources they needed - clothes, childcare, training, etc. Before that, Genevieve was an Alcohol and Drug counselor, helping men and women live healthy lives while staying clean and sober. She has an economics degree from Knox College and an MA from Loyola in Spanish and an MA from Dominican in Teaching. She is also a potter and loves to make things out of clay. She and her daughters enjoy being creative and love to read. Sponsors: Lauren Blanford & Bill Sarussi.

Joe and Leslie Rydberg moved to Western Springs in the summer of 2014. They have two sons, James (5) who loves soccer and wants to be a ninja when he grows up, and Ben (3) who loves basketball and wants to be a chef or a ninja like his brother. Joe is a chemical engineer at Citgo Refinery and loves to golf. Leslie is a rehabilitation physician at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab (formerly the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago). She loves reading and photography. Some interesting facts about the Rydbergs: Pastor Kirchherr was Joe's 7th grade basketball coach, and their dog, Torrey, likes to sit in the front yard and bark at everyone on their way to church (they live ½ block away). Sponsors: Bob & Eva Papineau.

Stephanie and Nick Myers were married in 2009, after meeting while working at the same publishing company in 2004, and moved to Western Springs in 2014 to raise a family. They now have three beautiful daughters: Charlie (4), Mardi (3) and Rae (21 months), and are expecting a little boy this August! Stephanie was born in Memphis, TN, and moved to Paris, France at age 14 where she finished high school. She went to university for two years in Bath, England, before moving to Chicago in 1998 to finish college at DePaul University. Nick grew up in LaGrange; in fact his mom and dad still live in the house he grew up in! In 2009, Stephanie founded Bottle & Bottega, a sipping and painting business in Chicago (you may know one of her franchises in LaGrange) while Nick started his career in real estate. In addition to her current role as Creative Director for Bottle & Bottega, she recently joined Nick as a realtor to create Myers Family Realty of Coldwell Banker LaGrange in January 2017. In their free time, Nick is a freelance writer and artist, and Stephanie loves to sing with the Spirit Worship Band at First Congo. Sponsors: Marty & Ann Kalas.

Jason and Adrienne Rodriguez moved to the Chicago area in 2008. Jason is originally from Toledo, Ohio and completed his undergraduate degree at University of Toledo in Biomedical Engineering. In 2003 he moved to Indianapolis, where he met Adrienne. She is originally from the Indianapolis area and works for the world's largest animal healthcare company, Zoetis, in pharmaceutical sales. They married in Indianapolis in 2006 and moved here so Jason could attend medical school at UIC. They have two young daughters, Reagan (4) and Reese (20 months), a beautiful Old English sheepdog named Sophie, and two cats. Adrienne enjoys running 5/10K races, shopping, gardening, and spending time with family. Jason is currently finishing his Cardiology Fellowship at Rush University Medical Center. He is a 3rd year Fellow and will complete his Electrophysiology Cardiology sub-specialty in 2020, at which point he will open his own practice. Jason enjoys Cubs games and loves the Blackhawks. Sponsors: George Rodgers & Kathy Fauth.

2017 Confirmation Class

Please join us in congratulating the 2017 Confirmation Class!, which was confirmed on May 7.

Lola Bingham
Madison Blum
Lauren Branz
Jasper Burns
Margaret Chudik
Patrick Dunleavy
Emily Ennis
Trenton Garrett
Ava Gaskey
Jessica Grundke
Joshua Jackson
Catherine Judy
Laura Klusendorf
Ian Larson
Peter Lloyd
Avery Mavon
Grace McTigue
Callum Mitchell
Gavin Monthye
Elias Newlin
Olivia O'Donnell
Carson Steere
Liam Wilson

