

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 31, 2017

COMING UP SUNDAY, JUNE 4

- * 9:30am worship and Baccalaureate Service. Rev. Pershey will share her sermon, *Gifted for a Purpose*, and we will share in Communion. The Western Springs School of Talent will provide the music.
- * Sunday School is available for 4yr olds to rising 5th graders and childcare is available for children 3 and younger.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, JUNE 11

- * 9:30am Worship service and Rev. Kirchherr will preach.
- * Summer Sunday school program starts.

SAVE THE DATE

The Semi-annual meeting will take place directly following June 25th worship.

www.wscongo.org

YOUTH CHAPEL CHOIR CONCERT

On Tuesday, **June 6 at 7pm** in the Sanctuary, the **Youth Chapel Choir of Boston Avenue United Methodist Church** in Tulsa, Oklahoma will perform. The Youth Chapel Choir is an accomplished 70 member ensemble of middle school and high school children. In addition to singing weekly anthems and liturgical responses, this talented group performs occasional major works, and tours annually. They have performed with distinction in major venues throughout America including the White House, the National Cathedral, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the Mormon Tabernacle. Their 2017 tour will take them to St. Louis and Chicago.

At their concert, they will present "Salt and Light," and will feature a diverse collection of choral works that explore key elements of Jesus' invitation to all people to be the "salt and light" of the world. Choral works by John Rutter, Franz J. Haydn, Z. Randall Stroope, Keith Hampton, and Rene Clausen will be included.

The performance is free and open to everyone. Please invite your friends and neighbors to this memorable evening of music.

LINDA CONLIN'S RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

We are incredibly excited to celebrate Linda's many years of service on **Sunday, June 11** at 10:30am! Linda has spent over 30 years welcoming the new members of our church; she has literally been the face of First Congo for so many of us. We hope that everyone is able to come and thank her for all she has done for our congregation.

If you have any questions or would like to help with the preparations, please contact Laurel Seidelman at lseidelman@comcast.net or at (708) 246-9119. **Additional information is also available on the website.**



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 summer program will be from **June 11 to August 20**, and 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 be in the Chapel, front lawn, and our recently completed God's Garden/Fellowship circle. Children age 4 to rising 5th graders will enjoy getting to know each other and worship together.

If you are interested in helping or have any questions, please contact Hope Sabbagha at hope@wscongo.org, or **check the website**.

All children are welcome; members, non-members, visitors, family from out of town, etc...



HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH

FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GROUP. This group meets from 7-8:30pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month. This group is open to anyone in the community who is walking with a family member with a mental illness. Please contact Meredith Onion with any questions (Meredith@wscongo.org).

GOD'S GARDEN/FELLOWSHIP CIRCLE is still accepting donations! There are trees in need of sponsors! Bushes in need of adoption! Flowers in need of a home! The garden is open to everyone, and the hope is it will open eyes and ears to the spirit of God in ways that may not occur indoors. It is a place where youth groups will enjoy fellowship, preschoolers and Sunday school students will read stories, small groups will meet, individuals will pray, and all will grow and revel in the beauty of God's creation. Please **visit the website** if you are interested in making a donation.

SCHOOL SUPPLY RECYCLING PROJECT. On **June 12** from 9am-noon, helpers of all ages are needed to sort and pack school supplies. Please join us at the Larson's home; come for as little or as long as you would like and enjoy lunch and swimming afterwards. If you have questions, know of schools/organizations in need of supplies, or have new or gently used school/art/office supplies to donate, please call Mary Lee and Jim at 708-246-3987.

MOMS IN FAITH. On July 20th in the evening is the Summer Book Discussion & Favorite Things Party. More info will be posted closer to the date, but the book we'll be discussing is 'At Home in the World' by Tsh Oxenreider. If you are interested in attending or joining Moms in Faith, please contact Katherine Willis Pershey at Katherine@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, and 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, and 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 (tilden@wscongo.org) 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!

CHURCH OFFICE SUMMER HOURS start after memorial day. The office will be staffed Monday—Thursday from 9am-12:30pm, and be closed on Fridays.

"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

[Link to sign up](#)

UCC DAILY DEVOTIONS

Did you know that our denomination, the United Church of Christ, publishes a daily devotional? Written by a team of pastors, these brief devotions are both thought-provoking and prayer-evoking.

A recent contribution penned by Matt Fitzgerald included these words: What are you really like? Freud said the truth of a person is held in tension. One part of us is a murky stew of unacceptable urges and feelings. The other part is the system of subconscious strategies we use to hold the murk at bay. When the tension holds, we present the world and the mirror the best face possible. To make it happen we deny, repress and project the parts of ourselves we can't accept. It's exhausting. But God sees straight into your heart. God sees the awful, cringeworthy parts. And She does not say, "What's wrong with you?" Instead God says, "I know what you have been through. I know what forces bent you. And I see the luster through the murk."

Powerful and true.

You can sign up to receive these devotions via email by clicking **[here](#)**.

Summer Concert Series

Please join Kathy Christian, organist, as she hosts our Summer Concert Series! The concerts will take place in the Sanctuary following Sunday worship, from 10:45-11:15am.

June 25—Erin Cleary, Soprano

July 9—Janet Mensen Reynolds, Mezzo-soprano

July 23—Vince Cefali, Tenor

Freshman Work Tour

Coming up this Sunday, the Freshman Work Tour departs for Washington, DC! All those participating should be in the church parking lot by **5pm**.

While the group is on their trip we ask the congregation to please keep these young people in your prayers – asking for safe travels, meaningful experiences and the chance to explore their faith in community with one another.

Library Corner

The Kemper Library, located in the education building, has a nice selection of books and materials for children and adults. The library is open to our congregation during most church hours. This month we will focus on our children's section which is located on the right when you enter the room.

We have a large selection of DVDs, including "VeggieTales" and "Penguins". These animated productions entertain and teach life lessons at the same time.

There is also a shelf of books containing Old Testament Stories and Children's Bibles.

We also have a new book: 'One World, Many Religions, The Ways We Worship', that looks to be a great family read!

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.

JOYS & CONCERNS

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold **Donna Nichols** in your prayers as she continues her chemotherapy treatments. We are also pleased to share that **Barry Orr-Depner** is recovering well at home, as is **Tom Shorrock**.

WEEPING WITH THOSE THAT WEEP. Our heartfelt condolences go out to **Marilyn Fraser** at the loss of her only sister, and to **Lori Glaser** at the loss of her mother. We are also keeping **Bill MacIntosh's family** in our prayers with his recent passing. His memorial service will be June 10 at 10:30am in the Sanctuary, with a reception to follow.

BAPTISMS. On May 21 we welcomed **James David Tilden** and on May 28 **William Conner Stout III** into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

MANY THANKS. While we are incredibly sad that Kent Taylor is retiring from the Chancel Choir, we feel enormously blessed to have enjoyed his musical gifts and talent for over 70 years. Kent has actually been singing at First Congo since he was a child, and also spent a number of years as the director of the boys choir. We are truly grateful for all the time and love he has shared with us.

NEXT GATHERINGS DEADLINE.

Submissions are due on Tuesday, **June 6 by 5pm**. Please email the information to Erica Alletto at Erica@wscongo.org (the next issue will go out the week of June 13).

CURIIOUS about what is happening at church? Check out the church **calendar on the website** to find out (Fyi—it is updated frequently, so check it often!)