

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

SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

COMING UP SUNDAY, 9/10

- * 9am & 10:30am Worship Services.
- * Harmony Choir rehearsals start (11:35-12:15)
- * 3pm Preschool kick-off party.
- * 6pm, Confirmation meeting for parents and confirmands.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, 9/17

- * 8am, [Reflective worship](#) service in the Chapel.
- * 9am & 10:30am Worship Services.
- * 10am, New Member Orientation (Chapel)
- * 10:15am, [ACE Program](#) (details are on page 2).
- * 10:15am, Confirmation Class, Youth room.
- * 12pm, PF Kick-off picnic at Sereda Park.
- * 5pm, Words & Music in Plymouth Hall with the Spirit Worship Band.



www.wscongo.org

Transitions

I want you to know of two personnel changes that are underway. One, I think, will surprise you because it will not seem like a transition at all; Deb Stankiewicz, our parish nurse, becomes an employee of ours on Sept. 16. What?! You say? Deb has cared, advocated, and prayed with us for 28 years. Well, she has, but as an employee of Advocate Health Systems. We sent a monthly check to Advocate to cover her salary, but she was legally employed by them. Now that the parish nurse program has been eliminated at Advocate we are making Deb an employee of First Congo. This transition should be seamless to the congregation as she will continue her wonderful care and health ministry with us.

Our second transition has been prompted by our loyal and wonderful financial manager Lori O'Neill's decision to retire. Nancy O'Brien will begin her transition into the job this week, and she too will officially join the staff as our financial manager on Sept 16. We are so grateful to Lori for her leadership and solid management of our church's financial matters, and we are delighted that Nancy will continue this strong and steady work.

This is going to be a wonderful fall at the church.

See you in worship!
Rich



FALL RUMMAGE

Believe it or not, the fall [Rummage sale](#) is just around the corner! Please start setting aside items and (hopefully) time to donate!

Donation drop off (in the church parking lot):

Oct 14, 9am—1pm
Oct 15, 1pm—3pm

Sale:

Oct 17, 6pm—8pm
Oct 18, 10am—Noon, and 6pm—8pm.
(everything is ½ off for these last 2 hours of the sale).

All proceeds from Rummage are given to charitable organizations; local, national, and global.



ALL CHURCH PICNIC.

We want to offer a special thank you to everyone who helped make the church picnic a wonderful morning of worship and fellowship. We were blessed with amazing music from the Spirit Worship Band, meaningful words from some of our members, and an enormous selection of delicious food. We truly have an amazing family of faith.

HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH

BOOK AND BIBLE STUDY. Throughout the year Rev. Katherine Willis Pershey will be offering [book and Bible Study](#) sessions on Thursday nights in the Seim Room from 7—8pm. The fall sessions include *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis (September 7—28) and a Bible Study of 1 Corinthians (October—November 16). [Email Katherine](#) for more information or to sign up.

MOMS OF TEENS. [Fall Kick-Off!](#) Defining Your Role as a Parent. Parenting and mindfulness expert, Linda Renzi, Board Certified Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, will join us to discuss how to prepare our children for their path, rather than preparing the path for our children. She will also help us learn how to teach our teens to value themselves by modeling taking care of ourselves. Feel free to bring a friend and/or your spouse! Wednesday, October 4, 2017, 7-8:30 in the Chapel. Questions or to sign up for the Moms of Teens email list, [contact Meredith](#).

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT. Save the date! We have reserved a block of tickets for a performance of the musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* on February 25 at 2pm. The musical is at Drury Lane and tickets are \$58 for adults and \$36 for children/college students (It is recommended that children be at least 5 yrs. old.) Advance purchase is necessary; tickets will be sold on Sunday, Sept. 17 and 24 in between services in the light court. Online sales will also be available. Contact [Hope Sabbagha with questions](#) or to reserve tickets.

ACE PROGRAM. Sunday, Sept 17 at 10:15am in the Seim Room. [Two More...The Swiss?](#) (Scott Paeth, DePaul) We will examine the lives and legacies of two central figures of the Swiss Reformation: John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli, as well as the continuities and discontinuities between their theologies and that of the Lutherans.

PRESCHOOL KICKOFF PARTY! [Sunday, September 10](#) from 3-5pm we will gather on the front lawn to celebrate the start of the 2017/2018 preschool year! (We'll be in Plymouth Hall if it's raining). The party will start with a performance by magician Frankie Ace at 3:15, followed by bounce houses, crafts, and refreshments!

MOMS IN FAITH. [Moms in Faith](#) is kicking off our eighth year! Meetings are 9-11 in the Seim Room on Friday mornings. Speaker meetings are always open for drop-ins; this fall we'll be hearing from Cathy Cassani Adams of Zen Parenting on September 29, our own Mary Lee Larsen on November 17, and Bridget Spurduto of The Well Spirituality Center on December 1. Our first quarterly Moms Night Out (open to everyone!) will be September 27 at 7pm in the Seim Room. All are welcome—we hope to see many of our working mom friends and MIF alumna that night! If you have any questions or would like to register, please [email Rev. Katherine Willis Pershey](#).

HANDBELL CHOIRS. [Lord of the Ringers](#) (children's chime choir), rehearsal will begin on Monday, September 25 from 3:55-4:45pm. Tower Chimes rehearsal will begin on Tuesday, September 26 from 9-11:15am. Please contact KC Congdon with any questions, [kcongdon@wscongo.org](#).

PLEASE JOIN US! Thursday, September 21 at 1:30pm in Plymouth Hall, as we welcome Author Dr. Kelly Flanagan to discuss themes of his new book "*Loveable: Embracing What is Truest About You, So You Can Truly Embrace Your Life*".

DINING FOR WOMEN. Save the date! The [program year](#) will begin on October 10 (location TBD). After that, the group will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Please contact Laurel Seidelman for additional information: [lseidelman@comcast.net](#).

Senior Mystery Tour 2017

The end of the PF High School youth group program year is always bittersweet, especially for the graduating seniors. They have all these memories and experiences, but then it's just...over. Three years ago I decided I didn't want it to just be over after the last meeting, so we began a new tradition: the Senior Mystery Tour.

The Senior Mystery Tour is a weekend trip with the graduating seniors. What makes it special is they have no idea where we're going, or what we're going to do until we get there, and all cell phones are collected before we leave (one fun discovery was realizing how bad 18 year olds are at directions when they don't have their phones – yikes!)

This year was the 3rd trip (and Jimmy Tilden's first PF adventure!) and we packed the weekend full of adventures. We started on a Friday with lunch in South Bend, IN and a group picture in front of Touchdown Jesus at Notre Dame. Then we headed to Lansing, MI for dinner at a Lansing Lugnuts minor league baseball game. Saturday took us to Kokomo's Family Fun Center in Saginaw, MI for go-karting, mini-golf, roller coasters, bumper boats and arcades. Lunch followed in Bay City, MI. Then we headed off to Charlevoix, MI with a quick ice cream break at Wimpy's in Grayling, MI. Charlevoix brought a chance to jump in Lake Michigan (fairly chilly in June!) and a great BBQ dinner. Sunday morning we got back in the car and drove to Lake Leelanua for some fun on the water thanks to a wonderfully generous church family! Swimming, boating, bags, sunset & s'mores...what a day/night! Monday morning we began our trek home, stopping for a hike and lunch in Empire, MI.

After lunch we drove home...and the seniors slept. After years of being in PF and going on retreats and mission trips and staying up too late this was a fitting farewell. We will miss them, but hope they know they'll always have a home here at First Congo!

Mike Tilden

Sunday School

The 2017-2018 Sunday school begins on September 10. At both the 9am and 10:30am services, the teachers will meet the children in the Light Court after First Steps. We will also have a white board set up in the Light Court so everyone will know what classroom their children are in. As always, please contact Hope Sabbagha if you have any questions or comments.

FALL ACTIVITY! The Children's Ministries committee is partnering with Church World Service to offer a stewardship and faith formation opportunity for our families. **Wrapped in Love** will launch during our World Communion Sunday family service on October 1 and children will learn about the many ways CWS helps people in need. Each family will be invited to donate \$10 to cover the cost of a CWS blanket; the collection will take place in October. Donations can be placed in the offering basket or in Hope Sabbagha's mailbox, labeled "blanket project".

Curious about youth program events/schedules? Check out the calendar on our website!



The Welcome Team

New this year, Marcy Dusza will serve as the lay leader of our 27 person team, which will work with staff liaison, Jeannette Lloyd in her new position as New Member & Engagement Coordinator. On Sunday mornings, members from the welcome team wear gold ribbons, looking for and welcoming all visitors. They are a regular presence before and after worship.

Everyone can be part of our abundant hospitality and welcoming by passing the red pew pads during worship. This is also a wonderful way to meet visitors (and members) in your row. We also encourage you to introduce visitors to Jeannette or the Welcome Team, and to wear your name tags.

If you know of someone interested in finding out about membership, our next New Member session starts Sunday, September 17.

Part I is September 17 at 10AM in the Chapel (1st floor of the Education Building). We will share information about our ministries, and ways to become involved at church.

Part II is Tuesday, September 19 at 7PM, beginning in the Sanctuary with Rev. Dr. Rich Kirchherr, who will talk about our church's history, our UCC denomination, and our theology. Prospective members also get to know each other better, and practice what they'll do when they join the church on Sunday, September 24 during the 9AM service.

Please contact Jeannette if you have any questions, or are interested in joining the church.

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

STRAIGHT FROM HEAVEN. Our best wishes go out to Susan and Brent Gelbuda on the birth of their son Graham James on August 30.

WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO WEEP. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the **Faison family** on the passing of Bob's father Bill Faison; to **the Finlayson family** on the passing of their mother Barbara.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! The Church Office needs your help! We are looking for a few people who may be able to help with monthly mailings. Most likely it will be one hour of time or less. Please let Beth Tracy know if you can help, beth@wscongo.org, 708.246.1900, x210.

CONGRATULATIONS! We offer best wishes on the July 8 marriage of Hannah Bulger to Conor Muldowney. They were married in Dublin, Ireland, where they now live!

IN OUR PRAYERS. We hold all those impacted by Hurricane Harvey and the flooding in south Asia in our prayers. Our Mission & Outreach committee fast tracked a \$2,500 emergency grant to the [United Church of Christ Hurricane Harvey relief efforts](#). Please visit their website if you are interested in making a donation.

CURIOUS about what is happening at church? Look for our weekly email, sent out on Wednesdays, plus you can always go to our website—[Upcoming Events](#) or [church calendar](#).

GATHERINGS comes out monthly. Articles are due by the 20th of the prior month. Please email articles/submissions to erica@wscongo.org (the next issue will go out on October 4).

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS. Normal office hours have returned. Beth Tracy (office manager) is available Mon—Fri mornings, and Jeannette Lloyd (Engagement Coordinator) is avail Sun—Thurs mornings.