

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 2018

Sunday Mornings In April

Worship Services Held at 9am & 10:30am



APRIL 8

Katherine will lead the congregation in worship. Erin Sharkey & Luke Watts will offer the annual PF Presidents' report regarding the 2018 PF Spring Work Tour.

APRIL 15

Meredith will lead the congregation in worship. She will preach on how we sustain an intimate relationship with God for the long haul now that Lent has ended.

APRIL 22

Before we resume preparations for rummage, we will come together to worship. Rich will lead the service. The theme of this worship will be, "Accounting Errors for the IRS."

APRIL 29

Rich will lead the congregation in worship and will celebrate the Rite of Confirmation at the 10:30am service.

Celebrate Holy Week At First Congregational Church

Maundy Thursday, March 29

8pm, Meditative communion will take place in the Sanctuary immediately followed by a labyrinth walk in Plymouth Hall.

Good Friday, March 30

5pm, Stations of The Cross (childcare available during Stations of The Cross) followed by a labyrinth walk from 6:30pm to 8:30pm, all taking place in Plymouth Hall.

Easter Sunday, April 1

This morning an additional service, lead by Katherine, will be held at 7:30am and communion will be served. The 9am and 10:30am services, lead by Rich, will feature the Chancel Choir. All Easter services will take place in the First Congregational Church Sanctuary.

RUMMAGE SALE

Rummage Sale Drop-off Details

Saturday, April 21: 9am-1pm

Sunday, April 22: 1-3pm

We gratefully accept:

Gently-used toys, books, clothing, jewelry, collectibles, housewares, home furnishing, linens, and sporting equipment.

Unfortunately, we cannot accept:

TVs, computers/monitors, printers/fax machines, infant car seats, cribs, large sofas, and other oversized furniture, unframed mirrors, chandeliers/other hard-wired fixtures, ceiling fans, paint/chemicals, mattresses, large area rugs, and appliances.

EVERYONE

belongs, matters & is needed



HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH

REFLECTIVE CHAPEL GATHERING.

The next Reflective Chapel Gathering will take place April 15 at 8am in the Chapel. This month we will reflect on soul ventures - learning to understand our internal life by observing our emerging thoughts, feelings, and concepts of who we are and what we believe. Marv Baldwin will facilitate this month's service. For more information regarding Reflective Chapel Gatherings visit wscongo.org or contact Meredith at Meredith@wscongo.org.

MEN'S BREAKFAST. Join us April 14 at 7:45am in the Seim Room where the men of the church are invited to come together for a light breakfast, fellowship, and a program discussion. This month Rich will be examining the church of the future. For more information on the Men's Breakfast contact Rich at rich@wscongo.org or visit wscongo.org.

AN EVENING AT THE OPERA. Join mezzo-soprano (and church member) **Janet Mensen Reynolds** and her chorus friends at First Congo on May 6 at 7pm for a preview of the Lyric Opera's 2018-19 season. Songs and stories from the operas and tales from the composers' lives will be shared. This free concert is open to all. No registration is required. There will be one intermission and refreshments will be served following the concert.

STORIES & SONGS OF LOVE. Words and Music program continues April 29 at 5pm in Plymouth Hall. Join the Spirit Worship Band and storytellers for, "Love Is The Answer," inspirational stories and songs about friendship, sacrifice, and service. For more information regarding the Words & Music program visit wscongo.org or contact [Ray Klemchuk](mailto:Ray.Klemchuk).



NEW SMALL GROUP FORMING. A small group of women *in their middle years* at First Congo are seeking additional members for a six-week, small group faith study, beginning sometime after Easter. The group, which will be limited in size to twelve members, will meet on Thursdays from 4:30-6pm at group members' homes, taking turns each week to host and lead the discussion. Decisions about the future of the group will be made after the six-week pilot. To put your name on the list, please email Beth Tracy at beth@wscongo.org. (Once the pilot group fills up, we will see if there is enough interest to start a second twelve-member group.) Contact Meredith at meredith@wscongo.org with any questions.

PART-TIME SUMMER INTERN WANTED

The Faith Formation team is seeking a part-time summer intern to assist with the following:

- Summer Sunday School curriculum development and implementation
- Assist with preparation and implementation of 2018-2019 program year Sunday School class curriculum

Interested candidates should contact Hope Sabbagha at hope@wscongo.org for more information.

LABRINTH DURING LENT. The Paul Stiffler Labyrinth is open for self-guided walks during Lent. The labyrinth is a spiritual tool that gives us an opportunity to pray, repent, search our souls, reflect, look inward, seek justice, and rededicate ourselves and faith in preparation for the celebration of Easter. Please check the [calendar of events](#) on wscongo.org to be sure Plymouth Hall is available.

CONSIDER A CAR DONATION. Our refugees from Eritrea, Adiam Tekia and her 7th grade son Pawlos, are in need of a donated car. If you are able to donate an automobile to the Tekia's, please contact Kim Nichol kbnichol@sbcglobal.net.

Attention Parents of Graduating Seniors!



We have begun preparations to celebrate graduating high school seniors, but we need **YOUR** help! Here are six ways **YOU** can help First Congo honor our graduating high school seniors:

STEP 1

If you know of a graduating high school senior who is a member of First Congo **OR** that participates in PF, please email Michele Chudik at michele.chudik@gmail.com with the student's name.

STEP 2

No-sew blankets will be made and gifted to each graduating senior. Attend the annual blanket making party **Tuesday, May 1 from 6:30 to 8:30pm** for a ton of blanket making fun!

STEP 3

Prepare a letter of encouragement for your graduating senior. Letters may be e-mailed to beth@wscongo.org or dropped-off at the church office.

STEP 4

Email a favorite baby picture of your graduating senior to beth@wscongo.org. The baby photo will be included in a slideshow featured during the Baccalaureate Sunday service.

STEP 5

Attend the Baccalaureate Sunday service on **June 3 at 9:30am**.

STEP 6

Make sure to enter your graduate's email address into Realm. We want to stay in touch!

For questions regarding our graduating senior celebration contact Michele Chudik at michele.chudik@gmail.com.

Youth Group News

Plymouth Fellowship

- Mar. 23- Annual Spring Work Tour trip to Johns Island, SC to work with Rural Mission. Over 70 children and
 April 1: 12 adult volunteers will be painting homes in this coastal community. PF has been going to Johns Island for over four decades.
- April 8: PF Presidents (Erin Sharkey & Luke Watts) will give the annual President's Report about the spring trip during both worship services. PF will meet that night at 7pm in the Youth Room to create care packages for soldiers.
- April 22: Annual Progressive Dinner (6-8pm)
- April 28: Third and final soup kitchen at San Lucas Church from 10am – 2pm. We will feed approximately 100 people!
- April 29: House of Blues Gospel Brunch in the city

JRneys

- April 4: JRneys will have guests from the high school youth group to talk with them about the mission trips that the group does (Spring Work Tour & Freshman Work Tour). 7pm in the Youth Room
- April 11: Fun and games as JRneys plays several "Minute 2 Win It" games. 7pm in the Youth Room
- April 18: JRneys moves to 6:30pm and helps with Rummage Sale set-up

Confirmation Program

- April 1: No Class – Happy Easter!
- April 8: 5pm class with Meredith & Bob Kos – topic is "Labyrinth"
- April 15: 5pm class with Katherine – topic is "Faith, Belief & Doubt"
- April 21-22: Overnight Confirmation Retreat to Camp Manitoqua – confirmands will complete their statements of

Children's Ministry Update

Sunday School Teacher Sign-Up Has Begun!

Are you looking for an enjoyable way to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and serve our church? Consider joining the 2018-2019 Sunday School Teaching Team!

Each teacher will be the lead teacher for approximately 5-6 Sundays and the assistant teacher for 5-6 Sundays.

In August there will be an introductory teacher meeting as well as the opportunity to select the Sundays you would like to teach. No teaching experience is necessary and easy-to-follow lessons will be provided.

Use this Sign Up Genius link to register for the time and age group you would like to teach:

<https://goo.gl/tS9YT8>

IT'S MOVIE TIME. All First Congo families and friends are invited to the [LaGrange Theatre](#) on Saturday, April 7 at 9:30am for a **FREE** showing of the musical, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The theatre, located at 80 S. LaGrange Rd., LaGrange, can seat 300 people. Let's try to pack the place!

NEWSLETTER. [Click here](#) for latest Sunday School newsletter or visit wscongo.org. The newsletter can be found under the Summer Sunday School video.

QUESTIONS? If you have questions regarding any of the Sunday School information listed above please contact [Hope Sabbagha](#) at Hope@wscongo.org.



eBay Volunteer Needed For Rummage

Rummage needs one or two volunteers to coordinate the sale of high quality items and antiques through online venues. This is a terrific opportunity for someone who knows their way around eBay or other online sales sites and would like to volunteer from home. The Treasures Department chairs will assist with item pricing.

Volunteer responsibilities include: placing online ads, receipt of payments, shipping items, record keeping, and working with the treasurer on accounting. This is a chair position and you would qualify for early sale shopping. Contact Erin Molek at emolek@sbccglobal.net or 708.638.7818, or Mary Ann Rivas at JamrRivas@aol.com or 708.250.6593.

It's Rummage Time!

Donate - Volunteer - Shop

It's time for First Congo's annual spring rummage sale, taking place **April 24 & 25**, and we need **YOU!** Volunteer sign-up will begin after Easter. While advanced sign-up is appreciated, it is not mandatory. Please come when you can, as often as you can, for as long as you can.

There are a variety of ways to help with this all-church event, including donating your gently-used items, helping feed volunteers through donations of food and beverage, volunteering your time, shopping the sale, and praying for all who come through our doors the week of the sale – volunteers and shoppers alike.

Set-Up

Muscles needed! Bring gloves.

Wed., April 18, 6:30—8:30pm

Thur., April 19, 9am—3pm

GET YOUR
RID OF
STUFF

Rummage Drop-Off and Sorting

Muscles needed! Bring gloves.

Sat., April 21: **DROP-OFF from 9am-1pm** and sorting from 9am—5pm

Sun., April 22: **DROP-OFF is from 1-3pm**, and sorting 12:30—5pm



Sort and Price

Mon., April 23, 9am—5pm

Tue., April 24, 9am—Noon

Rummage Sale

Tue., April 24: 6—8pm

Wed., April 25: 10am—Noon **AND** 6—8pm (half-price and bag sale)

NOTE: Volunteers may shop early April 24 & April 25 from 4:45-5:45pm

Gear Down/Clean Up

Muscles needed! Bring gloves.

Thur., April 26, 8—10pm

Fri., April 27, 8am—Noon

Free childcare for children ages 1-10 will be available to volunteers the following days/times:

Sat., April 21: 9am – 5pm

Sun., April 22: 12:30 – 5pm

Mon., April 23: 9am – 5pm

Tue., April 24: 9am - noon

For more information regarding the rummage sale or to volunteer, be sure to read First Congo's weekly email or click the Rummage link located under Upcoming Events on wscongo.org.

A portion of the rummage profits support the work of the church, but the majority is given to charities and outreach initiatives close to home and around the globe. We hope you'll join us and be a part of something wonderful!

Mission Partner News



Volunteers needed to attend 40-hour domestic violence crisis training. The training will prepare you for providing crisis intervention. For more information or to register, visit www.pillarscommunity.org or call 708.995.3805.

Buddy's Place Spring Program Schedule

8 Week Session Begins April 3rd - Registration is open!

Buddy's Place is a family based children's grief support program for families with children ages 4-18 who have experienced the death of a someone important in their life, such as a parent, sibling, grandparent, or friend. The monthly gatherings and 8-week session are free to the families who attend.

Buddy's Place offers a monthly family support group that meets on the 2nd Monday of every month. All groups meet from 6:15pm - 7:30pm. The dates for the spring and summer monthly gatherings are:

Monday, April 9

Monday, May 7

Monday, June 11

Monday, July 9 (Annual Picnic)

The 8-week session is a family-based bereavement support group that provides support and grief education. It meets for 8 consecutive Tuesday evenings in Western Springs from 6:15pm - 7:30pm (April 3, 10, 17, 24, May 1, May 8, 15 and 22).

There is no cost to participate in Buddy's Place however registration is required. Additional information on Buddy's Place can be found on the [Buddy's Place website](#) or contact Michelle Halm at 708.995.3750 or buddysplace@pchcares.org.

Community Support Services (CSS) Passport To Learning Volunteers Needed

Come alone or bring a friend Friday, April 20th to help with CSS's fundraiser benefitting adults and children with developmental disabilities.

Location:

Hyatt Lodge on McDonald's Campus

2815 Jorie Blvd.,

Oak Brook, IL

Volunteer Shifts:

Auction set-up 10am-2pm

Registration and raffle sales 6-8pm or 7-8pm



For more information or to volunteer contact Michelle Jimenez mjimenez@CSSservices.org or 708.354.4547 Ext. 115.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO KENTUCKY

There is Still Time To Register

The Spiritual Journey to Kentucky is fast approaching and we have a few open spots. You are invited to join Rich Kirchner and the Christian Ventures Committee for a 3-day, 2-night, Spiritual Journey to Kentucky, **May 14-16**.

The cost is \$275 per person, which includes all travel, admissions, some meals, and 2 nights lodging.

For more information or to register, contact Rich at 708.246.1900 or rich@wscongo.org.

Eternal Light: A Requiem CD Available

THANK YOU to all who performed in the *Eternal Light: A Requiem* on March 11. If you missed this incredible experience or would like to hear it again, a CD of the *Requiem* is available for check-out in the Kemper Library.



Last Call For Easter Flower Orders!

There is still time to purchase springs flowers to decorate the altar for Easter Sunday worship services. We are also looking for volunteers to deliver flowers to church members needing some Easter cheer. To purchase flowers or to volunteer, contact Beth Tracy beth@wscongo.org or 708.246.1900 Ext. 210.

Gatherings is a monthly publication. Articles for inclusion in the May 2018 issue should be submitted to gatherings@wscongo.org no later than April 20. *Gatherings* is mailed and emailed to members, and posted on-line at www.wscongo.org.

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CHURCH OF
WESTERN SPRINGS

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PASTORAL STAFF

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Deb Stankiewicz
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JOYS & CONCERNS

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold in your prayers **Susan Becker** (recovering from shoulder surgery), **Jean Kadow** (Plymouth Place Health Center), **Susan Cummins** (recovering from hip surgery), and **Betty Stephens** (home after hip surgery). Also, please keep our youth and adult volunteers participating in the PF Spring Work Tour in Johns Island, SC in your prayers.

WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO WEEP. Our heartfelt condolences go to the family of **Joan Ludwig** who passed away Feb. 27. Also, **Jane Nepil's** memorial service will be held on April 14 at 1pm in the Sanctuary.

OFFERING PEW CARDS. You will now find offering cards in the pews. You are encouraged to place one in the offering plate as it is passed as an act of worship. Please contact Jeannette Lloyd with any questions jeannette@wscongo.org.

STYROFOAM RECYCLING. The Village of Western Springs and the First Congo Green Team will continue the Styrofoam recycling program throughout the year. The new recycling site is located in the parking lot adjacent to the Western Springs Recreation Center, 1500 Walker Street (northwest corner of the parking area). Styrofoam packing materials and clean Styrofoam food containers (free of tape) may be dropped-off on the first Saturday of the month from 9:00am-12:00pm. Packing peanuts cannot be accepted. They may be taken to your local packing and shipping store.

