

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 3, 2017

HOLY WEEK

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 13

8pm Service: An evening candlelit service, we'll hear the Gospel account of the Last Supper and share communion as Jesus and his disciples did on Holy Thursday more than 2,000 years ago. Throughout the telling of the story, the lights in the Sanctuary are extinguished, resulting in complete darkness. (Before bringing children, please consider if they can sit quietly through a few minutes of complete darkness.) After the service, guides will be available for walking the Stiffler Labyrinth in Plymouth Hall.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 14

STATIONS OF THE CROSS SERVICE, 5:30pm—On the eve of what would lead to Christ's crucifixion, Jesus told his disciples, "Sit here while I pray. I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." Walk the Way of Christ, keeping vigil, as we remember his last few hours of life and the moment of his death. This contemplative walk and this ancient story, can deeply inform our lives today.

LABYRINTH WALK: Please feel free to walk the labyrinth anytime between 7am—9pm. Guides will be available to assist new walkers or those with restricted mobility.

COMING UP ON PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 9TH

Blessing of the Palms at **8:15am** on the Tower Green. This 15-minute service, hosted by pastors from nine Christian churches in the Village, will mark the start of Holy Week.

At our 9:00 and 10:30 services, Meredith Onion will preach, communion will be served, and both the children's choirs and Spirit Worship Band will share their musical gifts. Following worship, all are welcome at 11:45am in the Seim Room for a discussion about Michael Eric Dyson's deeply challenging new book [Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon to White America](#). Contact Katherine Willis Pershey for more information.

Confirmation class will take place at 5pm and PF at 7pm.

EVERYONE 
belongs, matters & is needed

LOOKING AHEAD TO EASTER SUNDAY

Early risers will enjoy the contemplative nature of our **8am** chapel service led by Meredith, during which communion will be served.

At **9am and 10:30am** worshippers will sit in a crowded sanctuary and breathe in the fragrance of new life. Rich Kirchherr will preach about "The Real Story" and the Chancel Choir will grace us with their glorious voices. Hear the age-old story, sing the timeless hymns, and feel the sound of booming brass. Alleluia! He is risen indeed! (Overflow seating will be available in Plymouth Hall.)

Orders for Easter flowers are due by April 4th. Please see link if you are interested in ordering.

CONGRATULATIONS, JEANNETTE!

The Church Council is pleased to announce the promotion of Jeannette Loyd to the newly-created position of Engagement Coordinator. In her new position, she will be instrumental in connecting new and current members and friends of First Congo with opportunities for ministry, service, spiritual formation, and fellowship. This ministry is an important step in achieving the objectives arising from our Strategic Vision. In addition, she will assume Linda Conlin's new member ministry upon Linda's retirement on May 31.

Jeannette can be reached at jeannette@wscongo.org or 708/246-1900, x-212. Communications and administrative responsibilities previously handled by Meg Heinz and Jeannette Loyd have been assumed by Erica Alletto (Communications Manager), and Beth Tracy (Office Administrator). The Church Council and Executive Committee are grateful to the Congregation for its faithful support, which made possible the creation of the Engagement Coordinator ministry, and for its patience during the staff transitions.

SAVE THE DATE! A CELEBRATION FOR LINDA!

Please join us on June 11 after the 9:30am worship to celebrate the 30 years of service Linda Conlin has given to our congregation. Additional details will be available soon, but for now, please mark your calendar!

HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH

MOMS OF TEENS. A Millennial, a Pastor, and Psychologist walk into a room.... Lucky for us, this isn't a joke! These three will be joining Moms of Teens on **April 5th at 7pm** in the Parlor to discuss talking with teens about relationships and sex. To learn more, contact Meredith Onion at Meredith@wscongo.org.

WOMAN'S SOCIETY. Before the hectic days of rummage, come and relax with some of your rummage buddies at your day/evening home chapter meeting on **April 6**. Enjoy fellowship, Christian education, and the most up-to-date news of Woman's Society. Please remember to RSVP to your chapter secretary.

MEN'S BREAKFAST. The next gathering is on **April 8** at 7:45am at the Honeybee Café. All men of the church are welcome to attend.

WOMEN IN FAITH. All women of the church are welcome to gather in the Parlor on **April 12** at 7pm to discuss *Present Over Perfect* by Shauna Niequist. Contact Katherine Willis Pershey for more information: katherine@wscongo.org; 246-1900, x-220.

BIBLE STUDY: THE GOSPEL OF MARK. Rev. Pershey will be convening a group to study the Gospel of Mark this spring. The group will meet in the Kemper Library on Thursday evenings at 7pm for four weeks—**April 20th**, 27th, May 4th and 11th. To sign up or for more information, contact Katherine via katherine@wscongo.org, 246-1900, x-220.

BOIL & BUILD 'TILL THE SHIRMP HITS THE FAN!!! In celebration of the 30th anniversary of Rich's ordination, we are hosting an all-church, southern style shrimp boil in Plymouth Hall on Sunday, **April 30** at 5pm. The cost is \$20 per person; free for children 12 & under. Reservations are being taken every Sunday in the light court (space is limited) and additional information is available on the website.

MISSION OPPORTUNITY WITH 'REBUILDING TOGETHER'. We are sponsoring the rebuilding of a house in Robbins, IL on **April 29**. We will be part of a group of volunteers (including skilled union tradesmen) looking to make a difference in the life of a less fortunate neighbor. **Twenty volunteers** are needed to help with the project (no skills necessary): older teenagers are welcome to participate. It is a hectic day, but also fun and very rewarding. The home owner, Ms. Love, is a convivial and sweet woman who lives with her grandson (40). She is active in her church, serving as a deacon and a board member, and at 79, is proud to be the oldest member of the choir. Please contact Steve Kruchko if you would like to join us or have questions: steve@strombergallen.com. To learn more about Rebuilding Together, visit: www.rebuildingtogether-chi.com

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY. A new Pictorial Directory is coming! LifeTouch will be taking photos on various dates and times from **June 7-24**. Additional information and the link to the scheduling module are available on the website under latest news. Please contact Jeannette Loyd with questions: (Jeannette@wscongo.org)

NEW MEMBERS. We welcome all visitors and look forward to new members joining the church on Sunday, **May 7**. The 2-part orientation will be on Sunday, April 30, 10am, and Tuesday, May 2, 7pm. Please contact Linda Conlin if you are interested in joining then or have questions; linda@wscongo.org.

NEXT GATHERINGS DEADLINE. Submission deadline is Monday, **April 10 by 5pm**. Please email the information to Erica Alletto at Erica@wscongo.org (the next issue will come out on April 19th).

RUMMAGE!

It's Almost Time...

We hope you're putting aside your time and your gently-used rummage for our annual Spring Rummage Sale on **April 25-26**. There are numerous ways to help with this all-church event, including donating your rummage, helping feed the volunteers through donations of food and beverages, volunteering your time to help during the week of April 20-27, shopping the sale, and praying for all who come through our doors the week of the sale – volunteers and shoppers alike. Within the next week or so, sign-up links for volunteering and food donations will be posted under Latest News at wscongo.org. (While advanced sign-up is extremely helpful, it's not mandatory, so please come when you can as often as you can for as long as you can. Every hand and heart is needed!)

SET-UP: Wed, April 19 6:30-8:30pm and Thur, April 20 9am-3pm.

RUMMAGE DROP-OFF & SORTING:

Sat, April 22: **DROP-OFF from 9am-1pm** (see list of exclusions online), and sorting from 9am-5pm.

Sun, April 23: **Please note**, start time is 12:30, **DROP-OFF is from 1-3pm**, and sorting 12:30 - 5pm.

SORT & PRICE: Mon, April 24 9am-5pm AND Tues, April 25 9am-Noon.

SALE:

Tues, April 25: 6-8pm (volunteers can shop early Tue & Wed from 4:45-5:45).

Wed, April 26: 10am-Noon **AND** 6-8pm (half-price and bag sale).

TEAR-DOWN / CLEAN-UP: April 26 8-10pm AND Thur, April 27 8am-Noon.

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

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Looking for a way to finish strong with your Micah challenge? First Congo kids would love you to share your faith with them! The **Sunday School** program for the 2017/2018 school year needs 28 more teachers. Complete lessons, training, and lots of Congo love are available to you! Contact Hope Sabbagha for additional information or to sign up: hope@wscongo.org; 246-1900, x-215

briefly

UPDATE ON THE ENDOWMENT FUND. At the Annual Meeting, a request was made to provide additional data on the status of the Endowment Fund. The Endowment Committee will provide a full report at our Spring Congregational Meeting in June. Here is a summary of the Fund's 2016 activity:

Balance at 12/31/15:	\$1,927,092
Gifts to Fund:	141,000
Contribution to Church:	(100,000)
Investment income	145,158
Balance at 12/31/16:	\$2,113,250

The portfolio earned a return of 7.6 percent in 2016. The asset mix of the Fund was 66% stocks and 34% bonds.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Plymouth Fellowship

PF'ers recently returned from their Spring Break Work Tour mission trip to Baton Rouge, LA (63 high school students and 15 adult volunteers). They worked with The Arc of Louisiana, which does advocacy and support work with adults and children with disabilities.

April 9th—PF will meet for an Easter Egg Hunt at church, followed by a reflection about experiences from those that went on the mission trip. All PF'ers are encouraged to attend.

April 23rd—PF Presidents (Meghan Bulger & Quinn Chudik) will share a reflection at both services about the mission trip to Baton Rouge.

JRneys (Youth Room):

April 5: "Minute 2 Win It", Awesome prizes available for the winning team!

April 12: Another round of PenPal letters to our friends in Mississippi.

April 19: Assisting with Rummage set-up

Confirmation:

April 9, 5pm: Meet in the Seim room, then walk the Labyrinth.

April 29—30: Annual confirmation overnight retreat at Camp Manitoqua!!

May 7, Confirmation

Sunday: Breakfast at 9am, Confirmation at 10:30am service

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

STRAIGHT FROM HEAVEN. Our best wishes go out to **Ellen Welter** and **Craig Mawdsley** on the recent birth of their daughter **Nora Michele** on March 13. Congratulations are also in order for **Christina Ricordati** and **David Kluskens** who welcomed **Edward "Teddy" Larry** to their world on March 19.

WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO WEEP. Our heartfelt condolences go out to **Sarah King and her family** on the recent passing of Sarah's twin brother, Steve Christenson; and to the family and friends of **Ednae Campbell** on her recent passing.

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold the staff in your prayers as they adjust to their work life without Meg Heinz. Meg worked here for 14 years and everyone is better because of it. We

wish her the best of luck and look forward to seeing her often. We are also pleased to share some final thoughts from her:

"I tried to sneak out without a fuss, but you wouldn't let me. Thank you for the many kind words, notes, hugs, gifts and 'thank yous.' It has been a joy, an honor and a privilege to support the wonderful people of this church. Though my vantage point will change, I look forward to continue to serve alongside you here at First Congo. Thank you again for everything!" Meg Heinz

going deeper. growing closer.
THE MICAH CHALLENGE