

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 13, 2015

MAKE TIME FOR
P E A C E
THIS SUNDAY AT 5pm



All ages are invited to
a 45-minute service
this Sunday, April 19
celebrating
PEACE.

Come to Plymouth
Hall and relax in the
company of friends.
Hear The Word from
Rich Kirchherr. And
enjoy the music of
George Harrison, Elvis
Costello, Cat Stevens,
and John Mayer,
performed by our
Spirit Worship Band.

LOTS COMING UP THIS SUNDAY, APRIL 19 WORSHIP AT 9:00, 10:30AM & 5:00PM

This spring marks the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War and the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. As the end of both of these wars were being negotiated, some remarkable examples of generosity of spirit emerged. Rich will reflect on these examples as glimpses of God's work in the world. Additionally, the presidents of Plymouth Fellowship, our high school youth group, will speak about their recent experience on work tour. And, Phase 2 of our 1st Congo4Congo initiative, will be launched.

As part of Phase II, our children will receive on Sunday a farm activity sheet and silo. As learning activities are completed, kids can color in their farm acreage and deposit coins (seeds) into the silos. The silos will be collected on May 10, and the proceeds will be donated to the Foods Resource Bank Katanga Kamina growing project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Also on Sunday, our Green Team will collect your Styrofoam recyclables at the main Sanctuary entrance and the Light Court. Our kids choirs will rehearse at 10:00 and 11:35, and during the Adult Christian Exploration hour, David Foxgrover will return to conclude his two-part presentation on Pluralism: If Jesus is the way, are other religions wrong? All are welcome at 10:15 in the Seim Room. Our confirmands and Plymouth Fellowship members will Give Peace a Chance at 5pm in Plymouth Hall.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SUNDAY, APRIL 26 WORSHIP FIRST, THEN RUMMAGE

Meredith will preach and our bells will ring at 9:00 and 10:30. The first of two new member orientation classes will meet at 10am in Room 115. (See article on page two.) Our kids choirs will rehearse at 10am and 11:35.

Rummage sale prep continues from 11:30am-5:00pm, with drop-off in our parking lot from 1-3pm. (See rummage article on page three.) While your enthusiasm for rummage is greatly appreciated, please hold off on starting to work until *after* our 10:30 service. Rummage volunteers are welcome to wear 'work clothes' to worship to avoid a trip back home to change. PF will meet off-site. (Time TBA)

Social Justice Corner: Serving God's People

The Outreach Committee will soon be sponsoring a refugee family and is looking for a group of individuals to help.

The group will work with the assimilating agency, Refugee One, and the settling family. The agency assists with things such as teaching English as a Second Language, learning public transportation routes, and providing job training.

First Congo will be responsible for furnishing and setting up their apartment, welcoming them to our country, and periodically involving them in our church activities. Many church members who have helped acclimate refugee families have developed long-lasting friendships with them.

This subcommittee, which includes Jan Struckman, Stephanie Mortimer, Murray Johnson, and Kim and Bob Nichol, needs 5-7 more volunteers. The group is also looking for garage space, so that it can begin accumulating furnishings for the family's apartment.

If you have questions or can help in any way, please contact Kim Nichol at kbnichol@sbcglobal.net or 708-306-1845.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

VISITORS ARE INVITED TO JOIN. New members will join the church on Sunday, May 3, during the 9:00 service. There is a 2-part orientation class in preparation for joining: Part I, Sunday, April 26, at 10 am in Room 115. Part II, Monday, April 27, at 7 pm in the Sanctuary. Both meetings will take approximately an hour and a half. Childcare and Sunday School are available for the April 26 meeting. Please contact Linda Conlin if you are interested in joining at this time or if you have any questions: linda@wscongo.org, 708-246-1900, ext. 216.

CHURCH TRAVEL TO GERMANY. In September of 2016, as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we are looking to organize a trip to Germany. The trip may include Berlin, the Rhine River, the Romantic Road, Munich and several days in the area where Luther served and started the Reformation. We would anticipate this trip to include a combination of sightseeing, fun, fellowship and education. If interested in learning more, please contact Rich at rich@wscongo.org or ext. 213.

AN EVENING AT THE OPERA CONCERT. Janet Mensen Reynolds and her friends from the Lyric Opera Chorus will return for their 19th annual An Evening at the Opera concert on Sunday, May 3. Accompanied by the renowned pianist Patrick Holland, they will sing famous arias, duets, and other pieces from the Lyric's 2015-2016 season. The concert starts at 7pm in our Sanctuary and is presented as a gift to the community by the family of Pauline and Elmer Kennedy. Following the concert, refreshments will be served in the parlor.

MEN'S FAITH & FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST ON MAY 9. Rich is delighted to welcome Jim Skogsbergh, President and CEO of Advocate Health Systems as a guest at the Men's Faith & Fellowship breakfast on May 9.

Advocate is the largest hospital system in the Midwest and is affiliated with United Church of Christ. In the fast-changing world of healthcare, there are many questions about the future of faith related hospital systems, and many questions in general about the future of healthcare. "Thus," Rich explains, "we are honored to have Jim as our guest and speaker at our men's breakfast next month." All men of the congregation are invited and are welcome to bring a friend.

After the program, men can work off their breakfast by helping lay mulch around the church property. ▼

MORE MULCH MADNESS.

John McMahan, our Facilities Manager, is inviting members to come to church on Saturday, May 2 or May 9 at 9am to help spread this year's mulch supply.

If possible, please bring a rake, shovel and gloves. (A few additional wheelbarrows would also be helpful.) Questions? Call John at ext. 234. All ages (and genders) welcome!



PUTTING OUR FAITH INTO ACTION

TEACHING MINISTRY. Sunday school teaching spots are still available. Why not join a team of six teachers and share the discovery of God's love with the children of our church? Teaching is in pairs, the commitment is 10 Sundays between September and May (5 as lead, 5 as assistant) with curriculum and training provided.

The remaining openings are:

3s, 4s & Pre-Kdg – 2 at 9:00; 2 at 10:30
 Kdg & 1st grade – 2 at 9:00; 4 at 10:30
 2nd & 3rd grade – 3 at 9:00; 10:30 team is full
 4th & 5th grade – 3 at 9:00; 1 at 10:30
 6th & 7th grade – 3 at 10:30 (class not held at 9:00)

Contact Jan Fraccaro (jan@wscongo.org or 246-1900x215) for more details or to sign up. Other sign-up options include the rolling board near the Light Court or online.

CAN YOU SPARE AN HOUR A WEEK? A volunteer is being sought to pick up food at Hinsdale's Whole Foods once a week on Wednesday mornings and deliver it to the Hinsdale Food Pantry in downtown Hinsdale. According to Carol Johnson, who has been making the weekly run since last fall, "It takes less than an hour each week, but you have to be 'in town' and have your own transportation." If you are interested or have questions regarding this outreach effort, please contact Carol Johnson at 708-369-9320 or CarolJnsn@aol.com.

TIME TO GET YOUR RUMMAGE ON. Our Annual Spring Rummage Sale is almost upon us....We hope you're putting aside gently-used rummage as well as time to help with this remarkable all-church outreach event.

Gently-used donations* of toys, books, housewares, clothing and more will be collected in the church parking lot from 9am-1pm on Saturday, April 25, and 1-3pm on Sunday, April 26. (Sorting will continue both days until 5pm.)

Profits from the sale will be donated to a number of local, national and international non-profit organizations, so everyone's a winner.

Please check out our website to find the following:

- Donation guidelines
- Volunteer sign-up (very helpful and encouraged but not required)
- Link to donate food/beverage items

Thur, April 23	8am-1pm & 6:30-8:30pm, set-up
Sat, April 25	9am-5pm (with drop-off from 9-1; free childcare available)
Sun, April 26	11:30-5pm (with drop-off from 1-3; free childcare available)
Mon, April 27	9am-5pm (free childcare available)
Tue, April 28	9am-Noon (prep); 5-8, sale *NOTE NEW SALE TIMES
Wed, April 29	10am-Noon, sale; 5-8, 1/2 price sale
Thur, April 30	8am-Noon, final clean-up

* Please be sure to reclaim anything you may have left behind in the kitchens and/or our lost and found bin in the copy room. If not picked up by next Monday, they will be donated to the sale.



A fun and fulfilling volunteer activity is fast-approaching. All hands need to be on-deck for this year's Rebuilding Together event on Saturday, April 25. Rebuilding Together Chicago is a one-day home rehab project in and around Chicago.

This year's homeowner is a grandmother who has two daughters and one grandchild living with her in Maywood.

Approximately 20 volunteers are needed from First Congo to help ensure the home is "WARM, SAFE & DRY," per the requirements of Rebuilding Together. The group will gather in the church parking lot at/near 7:30 am and leave together. Volunteers can expect to return to church at/near 4 pm.

Mike McNeily, a regular volunteer for Rebuilding Together, explains, "You don't need to be good with a circular saw in order to participate....All skill levels are welcome and needed."

To learn more about Rebuilding Together, visit their website at rebuildingtogether-chi.com/. Mike welcomes any questions you might have (mikesmcneily@gmail.com) and adds:

"This event is a lot of fun and also a great way to get to know some wonderful people."

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 Meg Heinz at gatherings@wscongo.org.

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

**NEXT GATHERINGS
DEADLINE
5pm
April 29, 2015**

BITS & PIECES

IN OUR PRAYERS...Please hold the following members in your prayers this week: **Byron Shinn, Peggy Rodman** (home recovering from gall bladder surgery), **Marion Vipond** (Lexington Square), **George Sutherland** (home) and **Katie Palermo** (home).

OUR CONDOLENCES go out to **Kathy and Achim Seifert** and family on the recent passing of Kathy's father.

STRAIGHT FROM HEAVEN. Our love and best wishes go out to **Anne and Tony Nowak** on the April 4 arrival of Emilia 'Millie' Anne; to **Danielle and Rob Kos** on the arrival of (and successful heart surgery for) Landon Robert, born on March 27; and to **Doug and Natalia Eichstaedt** on the March 28th birth of their son, Alfred Douglas.

SUMMER SABBATICAL. As it is her tenth year of pastoral ministry and her fifth year at First Congo, Katherine will take her first sabbatical this summer, from June 15-August 15. While her original intention was to begin doctoral studies in preaching at Chicago Theological Seminary, she has deferred her admission to the D.Min program and will instead begin writing a book to be published by Herald Press. She will spend a week at a writing retreat in Minnesota, but otherwise the Persheys will be around town most of the summer.

IN HONOR OF EARTH DAY (APR 22) AND ARBOR DAY (APR 24), our Green Team urges you to care for our Mother Earth by picking up litter around the village, in forest preserves, parks or planting a tree, shrub or native perennial.

Corrections to last issue: Kevin and Katie Kalus had baby Ryan, not Marty and Katie Kalus. (Marty and Amy Kalas go together.) Wilma Harley (and her late husband Emil) are still members of the church, not former members as was printed in Gatherings.