

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

AUGUST 8, 2016

Celebration Sunday August 28

A new program year is upon us and it is our custom — not surprisingly — to celebrate! So after our 9:30 service on August 28, representatives from various church committees, choirs and clubs will line the walkway and clamor for your attention. You will have the opportunity to enjoy refreshments and learn about the many ways you can get involved here at church. Like anything else, the more you put into your faith life, the more you will get out of it.

If you'd like to host a table on August 28, please send an email by August 23 to RSVP@wscongo.org.

COMING UP IN 9:30 WORSHIP & MORE



AUGUST 14 — Rich will preach on the theme of faithfully surviving the election season. Coffee hour will be hosted by members of the Thursday Morning Book Group, which will resume on Sept 8 and welcomes new members.

Following worship at 10:30, members of our Christian Ventures Committee will meet in the Kemper Library.



AUGUST 21 — Meredith will preach, Hope Sabbagha will be commissioned, and a back-to-school blessing will be bestowed upon kids during First Steps. Members of our Mission & Outreach Committee, chaired by Kathy Vega, will serve ice cream floats during the coffee hour. (Two teachers are needed on the 21st to lead the 3rd–5th grade Sunday School class. The lesson is The House on the Rock, an all time favorite! Contact Hope if you can help.)

After worship at 10:45 in the Seim Room, Katherine will lead the final summer book discussion on *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. All are welcome to attend the discussion, during which childcare will be provided in Room 108. Contact Katherine at ext. 220 if you have further questions. Finally, at 11:15 in the Seim Room, our Mission & Outreach Committee will have their first meeting of the program year.



AUGUST 28 — Katherine will preach and members of our Preschool Committee will host the fellowship hour. We encourage members and guests take time to peruse the tables after worship and consider getting involved in a book or fellowship group, choir, ensemble or class.



SEPTEMBER 4 — Meredith will preach and members of the Tower Chorale will share their musical gifts. This Sunday marks the last Sunday with a single service. We return to two services at 9:00 and 10:30 on Sunday, September 11.

At 10:30, First Congo and Foods Resource Bank (FRB) will enjoy a Tour De Farms bike ride in Mazon. (More on pg 3.)



SAVE THE DATES & GET HEALTHY

Our Annual Flu Shot Clinic will take place in Plymouth Hall from 8:30am-Noon on Sunday, Oct 2. Shots are \$20 each, and appointments are not necessary. Shots will be available for ages 10 and older. Check, cash and Medicare B accepted.

Our Annual Health Screening will take place on Saturday, Oct 29, from 7:30-10:30am at Grace Lutheran Church.

Members ages 18 and older are invited to have a basic blood screening for \$50, (CBC, blood sugar, cholesterol, chemistry panel) and to add accompanying tests if desired at an additional cost. Through Advocate Health Care, our Parish Nurse Deb Stankiewicz is able to provide these tests at greatly reduced prices. These screenings are a valuable tool for assessing baseline health. And are not included in most annual exams. Copies of test results will be provided to share with your doctor.

Appointments are necessary and can be made by contacting Deb directly at ext. 218 or Debbie @wscongo.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SIGN UP DEADLINE APPROACHING FOR OCTOBER ADULT MISSION TRIP.

Plans are underway for an adult work trip to the Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi from October 2-7, and the sign-up deadline is fast approaching.

Back Bay Mission is a community ministry of the United Church of Christ, which meets the urgent needs of those suffering from poverty and its effects while building pathways to social justice. Over the years, First Congo has offered not only financial support to BBM, but has sent numerous work tour groups from Plymouth Fellowship as well as adult trips.

Housing restoration is a staple of Back Bay Mission's ministry. This program helps low-income families stay in their homes by making necessary renovations and repairs. During the October trip, First Congo volunteers will work with BBM's staff in painting, scraping, planting and lots more.

Rich Kirchherr says, "Don't worry if you are not a skilled worker, there is plenty of basic work as well as challenging work to go around." Back Bay Mission is about a 90-minute drive from the New Orleans airport, so if travelers can't make the full week, perhaps an abbreviated trip is doable.

Folks who are interested in going on the trip or would like to learn more, should let our trip organizers know by August 15 — Mike Thiessen (mike.chicago@gmail.com) and Gary Doten (doten7@gmail.com).

MINISTRY AND CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS.

August 15 was the original start date of these monthly meetings, but Church Council and many committees are opting to wait and meet next month instead. Please notify Brian Cassin at brian@wscongo.org if you will be meeting, so he will know if and how to prepare the meeting rooms. Next month's meetings will be held on Sept 19 and will include Church Council at 8:30.

WOMAN'S SOCIETY is set for the new year. The board will meet for its monthly meeting on September 6 at 1pm in the Seim Room. New chapters (day and evening) will meet on Thursday, September 8. There are several new members and more are welcome to join this intergenerational fellowship and service organization. Contact Cynthia Kos to learn more at cynbobty@sbcglobal.net. (Member or not, we hope you're putting aside time and rummage for our fall rummage sale on Oct 18 & 19.)

BOOK RELEASE PARTY. Katherine's latest book, *Very Married: Field Notes on Love and Fidelity*, hits bookstores on September 27, so please join us for a book release bash on Friday, September 30, from 7-9pm in Plymouth Hall. The Spirit Worship Band is preparing a full set of sing-along love songs. Refreshments will be served, and the author will say a few words and sign books. All ages are welcome!

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET — GO!

Parents, please mark your calendars for the following start dates*:

JRneys	Oct 5, 7pm
Confirmation	Intro Meeting for both parents AND confirmants on Sept 11 at 6pm in the Sanctuary
PF	Sept 18 at Sereda Park (Time TBA)

***Reminder: All children, youth and teens planning to participate in any of our youth programs (Sunday school, music ensembles, and/or youth groups) must register in advance, preferably by August 15. See Latest News at wscongo.org.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING

for those teaching 3-year-olds to 5th grade will take place in the Seim Room on August 18 at 6:45pm. On Sept. 1 at 7pm, 6th and 7th grade teachers will meet to prepare for the year. Please contact Hope Sabbagha if you have any questions.

BRIEFLY

REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY for new and returning members of Moms of Faith. Over the past several years, the group has gathered from 9-11am on Friday mornings to share honestly about their lives, pray for one another, grow as women of faith, and nurture deep and abiding friendships. Moms in Faith is not a clique or a club, but a community centered in Christ and open to all. Moms in Faith is coordinated by a Steering Team that works closely with Associate Minister Rev. Katherine Willis Pershey. To learn more, see the Ministries tab on the homepage of our website at wscongo.org or contact Katherine at katherine@wscongo.org.

Moms in Faith is excited to welcome blogger and author Dayna Ruttenberg on September 16. As Dayna says, "Parenting can be glorious, and amazing, and frustrating and mind-numbingly boring." Her talk will explore questions of heart and soul, faith and parenting, and their implications for parents of young children. (This event is free of charge for registered MIF members; \$5 for guests.)

CALLING ALL BOOK LOVERS. We are in need of a volunteer to help maintain the Kemper Library. No experience necessary. If you're interested and would like to learn more, contact Katherine Willis Pershey at Katherine@wscongo.org or ext. 220.

A STATEMENT ABOUT STATEMENTS. Financial statements were mailed last week and will be resent via email this week as a trial. Please watch your inbox for them. If you receive the paper statement but not an electronic version, please contact Lori O'Neil at ext. 221 or Meg Heinz at ext. 210. Thank you.

Speaking of statements, we recently received a check from Cetera Investment Services without a name attached. Please contact Lori O'Neil if you are the donor, so the gift will appear on your next statement.

Ride Tour de Farms & Help Fight Hunger



"The 2014 Tour de Farms was one of my favorite church events for my whole family. It included all of my favorite things: being outside, together with family/friends, food!, worship, and a great cause!" – anonymous First Congo Pastor

Bike enthusiasts of all ages are invited to our second Tour De Farms ride through the Mazon countryside and corn fields on Sunday morning, September 4. The ride starts at 10:30am from Park Street Congregational Church. Riders can choose from a 10-mile or 5-mile route to Harford Woods (complete with petting zoo), where at 11:30 there will be a communion and thanksgiving worship service, followed by a BBQ cook-off lunch featuring burgers and hotdogs. A free-will offering will support our Foods Resource Bank growing project with the people of Park Street Congregational Church. See more details online under Latest News. (Bike transport to Mazon is available upon request with advanced sign-up.) Please RSVP to RSVP@wscongo.org.

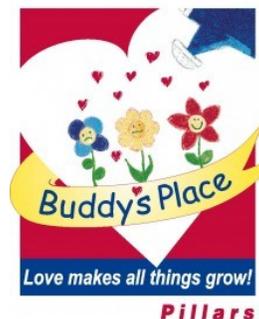
FAITH IN ACTION



Through pledge dollars and volunteer hours, First Congo is proud to support the work of Pillars, a nonprofit

organization that connects its clients with the people or resources they need to get back on their feet. Serving 12,000 people, Pillars is the largest nonprofit provider of mental health and social services in Chicago's western and southwestern suburbs. Their name comes from the belief that it is important to uphold each member of our community.

Pillars invites us to "stand strong" with them by volunteering as a Crisis Advocate or registering for their 8-week fall bereavement program.



Sign-up is underway now at www.pillarscommunity.org.

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.

BITS & PIECES

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold in your prayers this week: **Sue Madsen** and **Pamm Zomchek**.

WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO WEEP. Our condolences go out to: **Elsie Stiffler and her family**, on the passing of her beloved husband and our dear friend and former pastor Paul Stiffler; **Tom & Jean Larson** on the passing of Tom's mom; **Jonathan & Dayna**

VanWyngaarden on the passing of Jonathan's father; **Cheryl & John Murphy** on the passing of Cheryl's father; **Joe & Judy Gaylord** on the passing of Joe's sister; and **friends and family of Bill Emshoff**, who passed away on July 26. Bill's Memorial Service will be held in our Sanctuary at 11am on Saturday, September 3. A reception will follow in the parlor.

IN TRANSITION. Meb & Dal have settled into their new home and would love to hear from old friends: 9800 East Evans Ave., Denver, CO 80247.

BIG THANKS FROM LITTLE

DRESSES. Our devoted dressmakers want to acknowledge and thank church members Paula Buttel and Carol King for donating 72 bolts of fabric for Little Dresses of Hope. Even though the group has been busily cutting and sewing, it hardly made a dent in the fabric.



Interested stitchers are invited to join this ministry and call Joanne Everett at 708/246-7025 for more information.