

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

NOVEMBER 9, 2015

THANKSGIVING DAY WORSHIP: 9:30am



come-as-you-are with a thankful heart

All are invited to join us for a 45-minute worship service on Thanksgiving morning at 9:30. We'll sing and pray together and hear a personal faith reflection from church member Dan Harps. Communion will be served by intinction.

COMING UP THIS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

At 9:00 and 10:30, Rich will preach a sermon on the story of the tax collector Zaccheus, and his decision to follow Jesus. His sermon is intended to prepare our hearts for Thanksgiving and to imbue our day with gratitude and hospitality. Our adult and youth handbell choirs will ring for us in both services.

Visitors who are considering joining our church on November 22*, should attend part 1 of a two-part new member orientation class at 10am in the Chapel. (Part 2 will take place at 7pm on Tues, November 17.) Our kids' choirs will rehearse at 10:00 and 11:35. At 10:15 our confirmands will have class in the Youth Room. Strategic Vision Team members will gather for a celebratory lunch and wrap-up session at 11:30 in the Seim Room. Plymouth Fellowship will meet at 7pm for the ever-popular Speed Dating event.

**To learn more about joining our church, contact Linda Conlin at ext. 216 or linda@wscongo.org.*

LOOKING AHEAD TO NOVEMBER 22 GIVING THANKS & SHARING MUSIC

After a brief interruption, Rich is bringing back his annual Thanksgiving Alphabet Sermon and will "spell" the word DISCIPLE. Each letter will be used to lift up something for which he is grateful. Our Chancel Choir will be on hand to lead us in singing the wonderful hymns of the season. At our 10:30 service, we will welcome new members into our family of faith. Our kids' choirs will rehearse at 10:00 and 11:35, and our confirmands will meet for class at 10:15. (Gift tags for our Annual Gift Collection will be available this morning. See article on page 3.)

At 4pm in our Sanctuary, Janet Mensen Reynolds and her daughter Lauren will perform a benefit concert to raise money for our Music Fund. A free-will offering at Our Favorite Things 2 will support First Congo's Music Fund, which is used to fund extraordinary purchases of equipment and instruments as well as fund major productions such as the Rutter Gloria (on Dec 6). Featuring everything from arias to Broadway classics, the concert is open to all. At 7pm, PF will have dinner together, hosted by the Red Family. (Poinsettia orders go on sale today!)

MEET SUSAN THRASHER

Susan Thrasher was unable to join the church with her new member group on Sept 27, but joined shortly after that. She was born and raised in Springfield, IL and was a member of the First Congregational Church where (former church member) Rev. Arthur Koch was the minister for years. She attended Indiana University (BA Economics) and Southern Illinois University (MA Economics). A job offer led her to Wall Street, where for almost 25 years she researched and chose the best pharmaceutical stocks for an investment bank's institutional client's portfolios. She retired 10 years or so ago to Bloomington, IN to enjoy the area and be closer to her parents. In 2014, Susan moved to Western Spring to be near her daughter, who is getting married in August. Susan started coming to First Congo in December, and shortly after discovered a health issue that will limit her church involvement until early spring. She enjoys reading, walking, volunteering, and also loves teaching economics (for anyone who wants to know more.)

She wants everyone to know that her email address susan@cardinalfan1206.com is for the *bird*, not the baseball team. Go cubs!

Susan's sponsor was Susan Bonnevier.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CHURCH COMMITTEES & COUNCIL

MEETINGS will take place on Monday night, November 16 at 7:00 and 8:30pm. (The groups will not meet in December.)

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF PILLARS for a fundraising event at LaGrange Country Club this Saturday, November 14, at 6:30pm. Tickets are \$25 (\$35 at the door) and include appetizers and one drink. (Additional drinks including soda, beer, and wine can be purchased at the event.) Live music will be provided by our Spirit Worship Band. All proceeds will be donated to Pillars, which serves 12,000 people annually and offers 25 distinct programs and services. To purchase tickets, etc., visit pillarscommunity.org/party-for-pillars-at-la-grange-country-club/.

MYSTERY OF THE SEASON. Hinsdale Chorale will present its annual winter concert on Sunday, November 29. Tickets for the 3pm concert, which will take place in our Sanctuary, can be purchased online at hinsdalechorale.org or over the phone by calling 312/510-1823.

MEN'S FAITH & FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST will meet on Saturday, Nov. 14. Men of all ages are invited to come to the Seim Room at 7:45am to enjoy fellowship and a light breakfast. Following breakfast, Advocate Healthcare President & CEO Jim Skogsbergh will talk to the group about the future of faith-based hospitals and health care.

Now that the colder weather has hit, it's time for a good book...Did you know our Kemper Library is filled with books and media you can borrow? There are children's books and videos and adult titles covering a variety of faith related topics, including health and parenting. Come check it out.



WOMAN'S SOCIETY

will hold its larger general meeting at 12:30pm on November 19, in the Seim Room. A representative from Western Springs' new

Safety Village will talk to the group about its mission and programs. Founded in 2010 by church member Amy Avakian, Safety Village educates young children on 55 facets of safety. Newcomers are always welcome to Woman's Society meetings and should call president Cynthia Kos to learn more or make a lunch reservation: 708/485-4760.

PRIMETIME CHRISTMAS PARTY. Mark your calendars, PrimeTimers, for this year's Christmas party on Saturday, December 12, and Brian and Zada Clarke' home. The party will begin at 6:30pm and will require that guests bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Watch for details coming soon.

TURN BURGERS INTO BUCKS. On Tuesday, November 17, from 11am – 9pm, turn your lunch or dinner into dollars for First Congo's Preschool. For one day only, First Congo Preschool will receive a 10% donation for every dine-in OR take-out purchase (including phone orders) made at Back Alley Burger in LaGrange by friends of First Congo. You do NOT need to be a student of the preschool to participate. All you need to do is mention when ordering that you are dining to support First Congo preschool. Thank you in advance!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2016: Drs. Kelly & Kelly Flanagan will host a marriage retreat on February 12-13, and the annual moms' retreat is scheduled for March 4-5 at Tower Hill.

THANKSGIVING & CHRISTMAS

SERVE A THANKSGIVING LUNCH TO CLIENTS OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES (CCS). On November 19th, CCS, despite looming budget cuts, will serve lunch at First Methodist Church of LaGrange and our help is needed. CCS is looking for folks to help cook turkeys/hams and some of the larger food items, as well as decorate the dining area. If you are interested in learning more and/or offering your help, please email Mike McNeily at mikesmcneily@gmail.com.

To learn more about CSS, which serves individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities by offering respite and job placement services, visit their website at cssservices.org.



ANNUAL ADVENT WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP — NOV 29. Our Children's Education Committee invites you to make your own advent wreath on Sunday, November 29 in Plymouth Hall. All supplies, including fresh balsam greens will be provided and refreshments will be served. Prepare your heart and home for the Christmas season. Adults and children of all ages are welcome anytime between 10am and 12:30pm. Suggested Donation: \$10 per wreath.

CHRISTMAS EVE POINSETTIAS. Orders will be accepted from Nov 22-Dec 13. A link to online orders will be available under Advent & Christmas under Latest News on our website, and order forms will be available at church during that period.



ANNUAL GIFT COLLECTION — DEC 6. Help us ring in the holidays with our annual gift collection for Bethel New Life and Aunt Mary's Storybook. The gift board will be available on Sunday, November 22 and the collection date will be December 6. Simply take a tag (listing the age and gender of the intended gift recipient) and bring it to worship — **unwrapped** — on Dec 6.

GIFTS OF HOPE MARKET — DEC 13. Finding a Christmas gift for someone who has everything has just gotten easier. Our annual Gifts of Hope, an alternative gift market, will be held from 9:30am-12:30 pm, Sunday, December 13. Shoppers can come to Plymouth Hall, enjoy coffee and refreshments and meet representatives from more than 20 local, regional and international charitable organizations and learn about their mission and good works. Then choosing from "wish lists" created by the groups, shoppers can make a donation that funds a particular purchase, such as a meal, a bag of seed or a pair of warm gloves. Cards will be given that explain a donation was made on behalf of a family member or friend for a meaningful Christmas gift.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP. As you are making plans for Christmas, consider worshipping with us at one of four services on Christmas Eve: Family Services at 3:30 & 5pm and Traditional Lessons & Carols at 8:30 and 10:30pm. Sign-up is currently underway for cast and crew members for the children's pageant, directed by Pastor Katherine. Email katherine@wscongo.org or visit Latest News at wscongo.org.

STAFF & PROCEDURE CHANGE

John McMahon, our Facilities Manager for the past year and a half, has left our staff effective this past Monday, Nov 9. We are thankful for John's hard work, especially during the renovation of the Education Building.

In addition to his supervisory and repair responsibilities, John participated in some of our cleaning and set-up duties. His absence will leave Felipe Hernandez and the Properties Committee with extra work until other assistance can be arranged.

In the interim, we ask for your help in three ways: please schedule your building use and set-ups in a timely manner, perform your own minor set-ups when possible (such as moving folding chairs within a room), and clean up to a reasonable extent after your events.

If you have questions or notice anything needing attention on our property, please contact Rich at extension 213 or Cheryl Murphy, Properties Chair, at 708-310-1022.

Felipe's new work schedule is Mon-Thurs 6am-4pm; Mornings only on Friday & Sunday. Please place all room set-up requests in Felipe's mailbox in the copy room. Work orders should be directed to Rich's attention. Both forms can be found on our website under [connect/forms & more](#).

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
November 29, 2015**

BITS & PIECES

IN OUR PRAYERS. Please hold in your prayers this week: **Mike McNeily**, recovering from surgery; and **Ben Rimmelle**, recovering from a bad fall.

WITH DEEPEST SYMPATHY. Our condolences go out to **Jennifer and Kevin Convery and family** on the recent passing of Jen's dad, and the family and friends of **Mary Ann Blood**, who also passed away recently.

ELLEN CHEVAS asked us to share the following note: *I want to thank you for all the help after my fall and surgery. And, I can confidently state we have outstanding cooks (at First Congo). The meals I received were wonderful. (I want recipes!)*

IF YOU'VE BEEN MULLING OVER traveling to Germany with a group from church next September, time is running out to sign up. Email Rich at rich@wscongo.org to sign up or learn more.

WE THANK YOU ONCE, we thank you twice for always being so nice.... Woman's Society would like you to know that whatever you did at Rummage is appreciated....bringing donations, unloading cars, set-up, take-down, sorting, hanging, feeding the workers, and selling....we couldn't do it without all the volunteers that come and create that very special community we call Rummage...A great big thank you sooo much goes out to Erin, Terri, Harriet, and Jane for their time, dedication and leadership...They make it look easy. We are also grateful for a staff who is understanding and willing to deal with the disruption. A number of shoppers thank us for having this sale...Woman's Society will be able to continue our giving to many because of you...Cynthia Kos, President

LARRY THE TOMATO IS MIA....Please check your shelves for a Veggie Tale DVD. Many are missing from the Kemper Library. Thank you.