MARCH AT A GLANCE:

GROWIN’ GREEN MARKET GARDEN MARKET
SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2020
COMPOST PRE-ORDERS BEGIN MARCH 2
Shop for local and sustainable garden goods, food scrap composted, sustainably grown seedlings, native plants, rain barrels & more. Meet local farmers, learn about the CSA model, & sign-up for a produce subscription. For info, visit bit.ly/sarce-green-market.

STYROFOAM RECYCLING: MARCH 7, 9AM-12PM
Recycle your styrofoam the first Sat. of every month in Western Springs Rec. Center Parking Lot.

THE AGAPE RINGERS CONCERT: MARCH 8 AT 4PM, SANCTUARY
The Agape Ringers, Chicago’s premier handbell ensemble, will perform in concert (free will offering) with an assortment of music:
- Grieg / Mussorgsky / Beethoven
- Some Nights – F.U.N.
- A Million Dreams – The Greatest Showman
- Sacred / ragtime / contemporary Christian
They will also have marimba, timpani, cajons, tubular chimes (assorted), small percussion and body percussion, piano and organ, and vocals. Learn more about The Agape Ringers at www.AgapeRingers.org.

MEN’S BREAKFAST:
SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 7:45AM, SEIRIM
A favorite speaker returns! Dr. Kelly Flanagan’s talk is entitled “Everything I know about Living a Purpose-Centered Life [in 60 Minutes or Less].” The core concept: a purpose-driven life is lived from ego and fueled by ambition whereas a purpose-centered life is lived from true self and fueled by passion. Breakfast will be served.

HOPE & HEALING MINI-RETREAT: SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 9 – 11AM
Join us as we gather for a mini-retreat intended to nurture hope and healing in a whole person, body, mind, and spirit. Participants will engage the practices of gentle yoga, meditation, prayer, and journaling.
Every effort will be made to modify and adapt practices for a fully-accessible experience. The cost is $12/person and pre-registration is required. If you have any questions or concerns about accommodations, please contact Katharineuwscongo.org.

WORDS & MUSIC – LENTEN DEVOTIONAL LIVE!
MARCH 22, 2PM IN PLYMOUTH HALL
This month’s Words & Music program will be a live presentation of selected Lenten Devotionals centering on the theme of Hope & Healing. All are welcome for this musical and epistemic celebration! If you have any questions about The Band or Words & Music, please contact Ray at raywescongo.org.

SAVE THE DATE:
THURSDAY EVENING BOOK STUDY: APRIL 2 – MAY 7 (EXCEPT MAUNDY THURSDAY)
John Rodgers returns to lead a discussion of Conversions by Marcus Borg. April 2 – April 16 (except Maundy Thursday), Marcus Joel Borg (1942-2015) was an American New Testament scholar and theologian and among the most widely known and influential voices in progressive Christianity. As a fellow of the Jesus Seminar, Borg was a major figure in historical Jesus scholarship. He is the author of 15 books. Conversions is his final one published a year before his death. He retired as Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University in 2007 and died eight years later at the age of 72. Conversions reflects on Borg’s life and work and how he developed his beliefs and why they matter. His work is personal and invites you to reflect on your core beliefs. The result is an invitation for all progressive Christians who seek the best path for following Jesus today. Each chapter focuses on a distinct conviction which will guide you in your conversation and faith journey. Here are the titles of just a few of his chapters: “God is Real and a Mystery,” “The Bible can be True Without Being Literally True,” and “To Love God is to Love Like God.” Contact katharineuwscongo.org or REGISTER at bit.ly/thursday-book-study.

LET’S GET READY TO RUMMAGE!
APRIL 8, 6-8PM & APRIL 29, 10AM-12PM & 2-6PM
Gently-used donations will be collected via a convenient drive-through service in the church parking lot off Woodland Avenue from 9AM-7PM on Saturday, April 25 and 1-5PM on Sunday, April 26.

MOMS IN FAITH HOMECOMING 2020:
MAY 1, 11AM, PLYMOUTH HALL
On May 1, we will honor the 10th anniversary of the founding of this beloved ministry with a Homecoming Celebration. Everyone who has ever been a part of Moms in Faith is invited to gather for a potluck breakfast in Plymouth Hall. All participants – past and present – are welcome to join us for a celebratory potluck breakfast from 9-11 in Plymouth Hall.

MOMS IN GUATEMALA 2021: FEB. 7-12, 2021
INFO SESSION: MARCH 15, 2020 AT 3PM, PARLOR
Karen Teague and Katherine Willis Penney will be leading a trip to Common Hope on Feb. 7-12, 2021. Common Hope, based in Antigua, Guatemala, is tailoring a trip for our group focused on building mom-to-mom connections across cultures. The cost is $600/pp plus airfare with a fundraising requirement of $500pp. An info session will be held on March 15 at 3PM in the Parlor. Contact katharineuwscongo.org with any questions.

GATHERINGS
The latest events from First Congregational Church of Western Springs.

INVICTUS, composed by Howard Goodall
Sunday, March 15, 9AM & 10:30AM
Movement I, “Gethsemane”

Now we went Our Lord unto that holy place,
Sweet Gethsemane hallowed by his presence,
That blessed Garden, which did now embrace
His holy corps, yet could make no defence
Against those Vipers, objects of disgrace,
Which sought that pure eternal Love to quench:
Here his Disciples willed he to stay,
Whilst he went further, where he meant to pray.
— Excerpt from Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum, poem by Aemilia Lanyer nee Bassano (1569-1645)
Bring your Kleene.

Having come to understand that we cannot fully be an Easter people without moving through the darkness of Lent, Maundy Thursday and the stations of the cross of Good Friday, I have been touched most deeply by the accounts of the women in the Passion story. In particular, the pain and agony of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who witnesses her son’s betrayal, arrest, and beating; and, then who stands at the foot of the cross for his brutal crucifixion. And so the fact that composer Howard Goodall recognizes the role of women in the story makes this 21st century telling of the Passion all the more meaningful to me. To demonstrate this, Goodall has chosen primarily the writings of female poets from the 17th to 20th centuries for the lyrics of Invictus. Goodall also wants us to reflect on what this story has to tell us now. He notes, “Traditionally, the Passion narrative has taken excerpts from the Christian gospels to describe and reflect upon the final hours of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, his doubts in the Garden of Gethsemane, his trial, his public humiliation and torture, his crucifixion, his body’s disappearance from the tomb and the climactic miracle of his resurrection from the dead. Whilst this final event is one uniquely adhered to by believing Christians, much of the Passion in general – persecution of the innocent, malevolent authority exerting itself against ideas that threaten and challenge, the power of a peaceful, loving humility in the face of tyranny, the facing-down of fear – holds profound universal resonance for people of many faiths and those of none. It is this universal meaning that my Invictus: A Passion hopes to address, so that, like my 2008 Eternal Light: A Requiem, it might find relevance with choirs and their audiences or congregations everywhere.”
You will not want to miss this very special Lenten offering by our choir, soloists, orchestra, and pianist Kathy Christian under the direction of Music Director Ray Klumback.

Blessings,
Nedrick

To receive our weekly “Happenings” e-newsletter, please email Communications Manager Stephanie King-Meyers at stephanieuwscongo.org. For a complete calendar of events, please visit wscongo.org or call (708) 246-1900.
Lent is a time that invites us to remember Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. It is a time of reflection and self-examination. Many individuals are participating through the Lenten Connection small groups in Lectio Divina, the practice of scriptural reading, prayer, meditation, contemplation and action. Below is a list of Lent and Holy Week services and First Congo offerings. We hope you will join us this Lenten season.

FEB. 26: ASH WEDNESDAY, 6:30AM IN THE CHAPEL, 6:30PM IN THE SANCTUARY
We gather on the first day of Lent to pray, worship, and ask God’s forgiveness. We remember the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry. We recall that we come from dust, and to dust we shall return symbolized with crosses drawn in ashes on our foreheads or hands. We celebrate Communion and breakfast is served following the morning service, during which Deb Stankiewicz will offer a testimony.

MARCH 1: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
Katherine preaches and the bells will play. We also enjoy music from guest violinist Annie McBride. Communion is served.

MARCH 8: SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT [DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME – SET YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD!]
Rich leads the congregation on the theme of Hope and Healing from Spiritual Discipline in Lent, the Chancel Choir sings at 9AM and the Quartet at 10:30AM. We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism at 10:30AM. Communion is served.

MARCH 15: THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT
Meredith will lead the service as we enjoy a very special Lenten offering of Howard Goodall’s Invictus.

MARCH 22: FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
Meredith leads this FAMILY SERVICE on “Healing & Hope: A Community Affair” where 2nd graders and older are invited to attend. Communion is served.

MARCH 29: FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
Rich leads us on the theme of Hope for Healing in the miracle of hospitality. The Chancel Choir sings at 9AM and the Quartet at 10:30AM. Communion is served.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL: HEALING & HOPE
This year for Lent, we consider our lives and our faith through the lens of Healing & Hope. We explore these themes through Word and Sacrament in worship, and we invite you to read the stories of Healing and Hope in this year’s Lenten Devotional.

To receive these daily devotionals by email, please email Stephanie King-Myers at stephanie@wscongo.org.

APRIL 5: SUNDAY OF LENT/PALESTINE SUNDAY
On Palm Sunday we remember when Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem riding a donkey, greeted by cheering crowds waving palms and branches. It is a celebratory day, but we know that the crowds soon jeered, turning on him. Communion is served.

APRIL 9: MAUNDY THURSDAY, 6:30PM IN THE CHAPEL, 8PM IN THE SANCTUARY
On Maundy Thursday we remember the night before Jesus was betrayed, when he shared the Last Supper with his disciples and gave them a new Commandment: Love one another. At our 6:30PM service in the chapel, we remember that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as a sign of that love. At our 8:00PM service, the choir sings and members of the diaconate read passages about Jesus’ trial and death as candles are extinguished. Communion is served at both services.

APRIL 10: GOOD FRIDAY, 10AM IN THE CHAPEL, 5PM IN PLYMOUTH HALL
We remember with great sorrow that Jesus suffered and died on the cross, a powerful symbol of God’s love for all. Our 10am service will be accessible to worshipers of all ages. At 5PM, we move through a contemplative Stations of the Cross service. Following the service, the labyrinth is available to walk.

APRIL 12: EASTER SUNDAY, 7:30AM, 9AM & 10:30AM IN THE SANCTUARY
At our 7:30AM sunrise service, we will hear the Good News that death does not have the final word, and that Christ is Risen! We will participate in the flowering of the cross. At the 9AM and 10:30AM services, choir and brass will help us enter into profound celebration of resurrection and new life.

ORDERING EASTER FLOWERS
If you would like to purchase potted Spring flowers to decorate the altar for our Easter services, please visit www.wscongo.org/flower/ to order online, pick up an order form in the Education building or download it at wscongo.org/general-info-and-forms/.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUMMER INTERNSHIP
Seeking a Christian Education intern for the summer of 2020. The internship position begins around June 1 and ends around August 30, 2020. The intern will be expected to be present most Sunday mornings and work 5-6 hours during the week. This internship will provide the recipient with opportunities to teach Sunday School, school, implement musical opportunities each Sunday, and help with preparations for the 2020/2021 program year. The applicant must be 18 years old. Interested individuals should submit a cover letter and resume to Hope Sabbagho at hopeswango.org or Katherine Willis Penrey at katherine@wscongo.org by April 3.

HELP NEEDED!

Children’s Ministry News:
A family Lenten devotional is available for your family to use during Lent. The devotional’s theme is “prayer” and provides discussion topics, reflections, activities and meditative coloring pages. The devotionals will be on the table near the Light Court or from Hope.

Youth Ministry News:
Plymouth Fellowship News:
March 1: Group service project – Veterans Care Packages & Guest Speaker (7-8:30PM)
March 8: Work Tour Meal Crew Meeting (7-8:30PM)
March 15:
Work Tour Meeting for parents (6-7PM, Sanctuary)
Pre-Sanctuary Work Tour Meeting (7-8:30PM)
March 20-29: Spring Work Tour (Albany, GA)

Youth News:
March 4: Games Night
March 11: “Think, Believe. Do” video & discussion – Prayer Changes God
March 18: Minute 2 Win It

Confirmation News:
March 1: Class at 10:15AM (Murray Johnson teaching)
March 4: Food Pantry (3:45 - 6:45PM)
March 7: Styrofoam collection (9AM - 12PM)
March 8: Class at 10:15AM
March 15: Class at 10:15AM
March 18: Food Pantry (3:45 - 6:45PM)
March 22 and 29: No class (Spring Break)

Jog's Concerns:
WEEPING WITH THOSE WHO WEEP:
It is with heavy hearts that we share the news that Scott Flynn has died. Please hold Scott’s family in your prayers.

In Our Prayers:
Please keep the following individuals in your prayers:
Rev. John Rodgers (death of father), Brian Dunne (death of mother), Randy Skoda (death of father), Tom Remijas (death of sister), Leslie Ritter-Jenkins (death of sister), and Pat Gianone (death of brother).

WELCOME TO THE WORLD:
Congratulations to Mike and Jen Prim on the recent birth of their son Edison James Prim, born Feb. 4.
SAVE THE DATE:

THURSDAY EVENING BOOK STUDY
APRIL 2 – MAY 7 (EXCEPT MAundy THURSDay)
John Rodgers returns to lead a discussion of Convictions by Marcus Borg, April 2 – May 7 (excepting Maundy Thursday).
Marcus Joel Borg (1942–2015) was an American New Testament scholar and theologian and among the most widely known and influential voices in progressive Christianity. As a fellow of the Jesus Seminar, Borg was a major figure in historical Jesus scholarship. He is the author of 15 books. Convictions is his final one published a year before his death. He retired as Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University in 2007 and died eight years later at the age of 72.
Convictions reflects on Borg’s life and how he developed his beliefs and why they matter. His work is personal and invites you to reflect on your core beliefs. The result is an invitation for all progressive Christians who seek the best path for following Jesus today.
Each chapter focuses on a distinct conviction, which will guide our 5-session discussion and faith journey. Here are the titles of just a few of his chapters: “God is Real and a Mystery,” “The Bible can be True Without being Literally True,” and “To Love God is to Love Like God.”
Contact katherine@wscongo.org or REGISTER at bit.ly/thursday-book-study.

LET’S GET READY TO RUMMAGE!
APRIL 28, 6–8PM & APRIL 29, 10AM–12PM & 6–8PM
Shoppers from near and far look forward to these fall and spring sales and, thanks to hundreds of faithful volunteers and generous donations, shoppers are never disappointed.
Gently-used donations will be collected via a convenient drive-through service in the church parking lot off Woodland Avenue from 9AM–1PM on Saturday, April 25 and 1-3PM on Sunday, April 26.

MOMS IN FAITH HOMECOMING 2020
MAY 1, 9 – 11AM, PLYMOUTH HALL
On May 1, we will honor the 10th anniversary of the founding of this beloved ministry with a Homecoming Celebration. Everyone who has ever been a part of Moms in Faith is invited to gather for a potluck breakfast in Plymouth Hall. All participants — past and present! — are welcome to join us for a celebratory potluck breakfast from 9-11AM in Plymouth Hall.

MOMS IN GUATEMALA 2021: FEB. 7–12, 2021
INFO SESSION: MARCH 15, 2020 AT 3PM, PARLOR
Keri Teague and Katherine Willis Pershey will be co-leading a trip to Common Hope on Feb. 7-12, 2021. Common Hope, based in Antigua, Guatemala, is tailoring a trip for our group focused on building mom-to-mom connections across cultures.
The cost is $600/pp plus airfare with a fundraising requirement of $300pp. An info session will be held on March 15 at 3PM in the Parlor. Contact katherine@wscongo.org with any questions.
A WARM WELCOME TO CONGO'S NEWEST MEMBERS:

Nicola Bunick and Peter Fahrner grew up in Champaign-Urbana. After attending college at Notre Dame (Nicola) and Washington University in St. Louis (Peter), they moved to Washington, DC to start their careers. Nicola and Peter returned to the Midwest in 2018 to be closer to their families and decided to live in Hinsdale. They have an 8-month-old daughter, Cora, who enjoys spending time with her grandparents, eating solid food, and making new sounds. Nicola and Peter enjoy running, hiking, skiing, generally being outside, and exploring new places. They're excited to join the First Congo community and look forward to meeting new friends!

Sponsors: Tyler & Rebecca Kos

Erik and Kate Fassnacht moved back to the suburbs from Chicago in 2016. Kate grew up in Western Springs and Erik is from Elmhurst. They currently in Old Town, Western Springs with their two children (Will, 3.5, and Evelyn, 10 months). Kate is a special education teacher at New Trier High School and Erik is a writer. Erik's first novel "A Good Family" was published in 2015. As a family, they are looking forward to being a part of First Congo and getting involved in the wonderful community.

Sponsors: Christen & Tom Shorrock

Mike and Laura Glosniak moved to Western Springs in 2013 and immediately fell in love with its charming sense of community and quiet lifestyle. They both grew up in Hinsdale and currently reside in Old Town with their two daughters, Avery (8) and Maggie (6, almost 7), who both attend Laidlaw Elementary. Mike has been practicing real estate and corporate law since 2003 and is currently senior counsel with Duggan Bertsch, LLC, while Laura is a residential real estate agent with Compass, Hinsdale. During their “spare time,” they enjoy playing tennis, golf, paddle tennis and spending time with friends — but you can mostly find them shuttling their girls around between activities, cheering them on, and enjoying every second of it. Mike, Laura, Avery and Maggie are thrilled to become part of the First Congregational family.

Sponsors: Megan & Bill Joern

Sonja and Pat Martinez, with sons Sebastian (7), a first grader at Laidlaw and Lukas (4), in Pre-K at Grand Avenue Preschool, moved to Old Town Western Springs in November 2019 by way of Westchester. Though Sonja grew up in Germany and the DC area, they met in Chicago in 2007 and have lived in the area since. When they first visited First Congo, it became immediately clear that they had found a new home that meets the spiritual needs of their family. They are excited to join as members and get involved in various activities to meet like-minded neighbors, be it in social justice, Moms in Faith or family activities. Family hobbies include trying to master a trilingual household, travel, spending time outdoors for bike rides, snowboarding or football, cooking and reading.

Sponsors: Jeff & Katie Pogue

Tom and Sarah Wells recently moved to Western Springs from Chicago. Sarah works at Procter & Gamble in Sales, and Tom works at PepsiCo in Marketing Analytics. Sarah (maiden name Jeep) grew up in Old Town Western Springs so this is a homecoming for her! Tom grew up in Southern Illinois. Both attended the University of Illinois where they met. Tom and Sarah are currently expecting their first child in May 2020!

Sponsors: Stu & Lisa Smiley