

The Spire

December 2017



Southminster

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

www.spcch.org

December Worship

Counter-Cultural Christmas in the Creche

December 3

Mary

Luke 1:26-38

9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship

December 10

Joseph

Matthew 1:18-25

10:00 a.m. Single Worship

December 17

Shepherds

Luke 2:8-20

9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship

December 23

Traditional Candlelight Worship

Jesus

7:30 p.m.

December 24

Christmas Eve Morning Worship

Angels

10:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Family Worship

Jesus

4:30 p.m. Special Christmas Music

5:00 p.m. Worship Service

December 31

The Prince of Peace

Luke 2:21-32

10:00 a.m. Single Worship





Dear Family of Faith at SPC,

I hope you all enjoyed a blessed Thanksgiving and are ready to dive into the season of Advent! We have had a very busy fall so far, as we have explored our Spiritual Gifts and entered into Mission Possible 2.5. Thank you to everyone who participated in Stewardship Sunday by bringing forward your pledges for 2018. If you have not yet submitted your pledge, please send it to the Church Office, c/o Ed Gudonis, and he will take care of it. As you heard during worship over the

last few weeks, we are asking the congregation to increase their pledge amounts for 2018 in order to accommodate an increase in our operating budget that will relate to staffing changes. In order for us to effectively reach out to children and young families, we need to be able to hire a Children's Ministry Director who will have the gifts and skills to build this ministry. We cannot do this without your help! Please let me know if you have any questions regarding our 2018 Budget and Ministry Plan. I would LOVE to talk with you!

I am very excited for our Advent Season here at SPC, which will be highlighted by the debut performance of *Joe and Mary: A Christmas Wedding* that was created by our very own Jim Peterson! Jim approached me with this concept back in June 2016, my first month at Southminster. A year and a half later... we have two sold out shows ready to go! I'm looking forward to participating as Rabbi Fiddleschticks, always happy to remind everyone of our "traditions!"

Please note that **we will be having ONE SERVICE for three of the five Sundays in December.** Our first SINGLE SERVICE Sunday will be **December 10** when we will enjoy our children's Christmas Pageant performance, led by Kari Sealund and Sue Thomson. We will also have a SINGLE SERVICE on Sunday, **December 24**, and Sunday, **December 31**. Our focus in worship will be on the characters in the Creche, specifically Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds, and the Angels. We will dedicate our final December worship service to Peace on Earth and ask that you respond to the bulletin inserts over the next few weeks, requesting your thoughts and prayers for peace within our world, our nation, our families and ourselves.

As is our Christmas Eve tradition at Southminster, we will offer a classic lessons and carols candle-lighting service on December 23 at 7:30 p.m. and a family-focused contemporary Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. on December 24. We hope you will join us for one or both of these inspirational services.

May you have a blessed Christmas season, and as always... I'll see you in church!

In Christ,

Pastor David Carlton



Adopt-a-Family Christmas

You can still sign up for our Adopt-a-Family Christmas Project. Choose a person, persons, or entire family for which to buy Christmas gifts/food donations this season. Sign up will continue on Sunday, December 3, until all families on our list are matched with an SPC giver.

Our delivery date for all gifts and food donations is Saturday, December 9. You must drop off your gifts at Southminster in the Chapel between 8:00 and 9:45 a.m. on December 9 to ensure they are delivered to the families. All gifts must be dropped off at SPC on that date before our delivery truck leaves. We will only be making one delivery. Late gifts will not get to the families.

Thank you, Southminster. Your generosity has always made this project a success. We hope you will join us





Dear Friends,

“Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in Bethlehem skies. See all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises: Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.”

~ *Love Has Come*



The season of Advent is upon us. Advent means “beginning” and is the start to our church’s liturgical calendar as we prepare for the birth of our Savior! I love the fact that Advent did not start the Sunday after Thanksgiving this year, as it sometimes does. We have had a whole week after Thanksgiving to begin to prepare for the coming of our King. So this year, I urge you to think about how to prepare your hearts to welcome Christ. Let’s set aside the busyness, and simplify things this year. Let’s focus on celebrating relationships rather than material gifts and decorations. Let’s cut through the distractions of the season that keep us from simply loving, serving, and spending time with those we love. Christmas is about Christ and Christ is about God’s saving love for us. This season, let’s focus on loving God and loving others, and let go of everything else.

In Christ,

The Reverend Elizabeth Nickerson

Dear Southminster Church Community,



This is to let you know just how much I am appreciating all the prayers, thoughts, support, kind words and deeds that you have sent my way as I battle cancer. I hope to return to Southminster in the near future.

With prayerful thanks to all of you,

Beverley J. Atkins

Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

What Does the Christmas Joy Offering do?

Support our past and present leaders:

By supporting the Board of Pensions, the Christmas Joy Offering honors the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families in need. Thanks in part to this offering, church workers can receive critical financial assistance to support them through life’s challenging circumstances. These gracious actions bear witness to our faithful response to God’s charge to love one another as Christ commanded.

Preparing the way for future leaders:

PC(USA), with its historic commitment to higher learning, has long promoted education And leadership development through the establishment and support of racial-ethnic Schools and colleges. Our future racial-ethnic church leaders can receive much-needed assistance while discovering and pursuing professions at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges.



Adult Discipling Advent Series

What must Joseph have thought at being thrust into the position of taking care of his pregnant wife? Join us at 10:10 a.m. on four Sundays in December when we’ll focus on the man who was given the privilege of raising the Son of God. Adam Hamilton’s book *Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph* gives us some insight into what Joseph must have felt and thought regarding his imminent responsibility. **This series runs December 3 through December 24.** We hope you can join us.



Dear Friends,

November is such a busy month for so many of us; sometimes it's hard to find time to take a break and catch our breath. This is something I have been talking with our Youth about on Sundays in the Loft. "Be still and know I am God" means to find some time in this crazy, hectic over-scheduled world of ours to stop, breathe, and feel God's presence. I know it's hard to do sometimes! We did a bit of that during our Senior High Retreat up at Covenant Harbor in Lake Geneva along with seven other Presbyterian Churches.

Our Children soon start a new Sunday School Advent series called *A Star is Born* that will teach them about the birth of Jesus. They've also been practicing their songs each week as well as singing at home to get ready for the Christmas Pageant. They are really excited for our December 3rd practice and Moorings performance later that afternoon. Don't miss the big event during the 10:00 a.m. single worship service on December 10!

In Christ,

Kari

Many Thanks for 400 Baskets



We extend our gratitude to Southminster members and PDO families for their kindness in contributing food and paper goods to help fill over 400 Thanksgiving baskets for the Christopher House community. Fifty-plus energetic volunteers from Southminster, First Presbyterian, Barrington and Park Ridge churches arrived at the Chris House gym at 10:00 a.m. November 20 ready to pack the bags that would be delivered to needy families at three sites: Chris House School on Belden, Logan Square on Altgeld, and Uptown on Winthrop.

Including seven from SPC, our group of packers we were able to complete packing and labeling bags by noon before beginning our Auxiliary business meeting, at which we enjoyed fellowship and heard a delightful, children's choral performance.



Please know that your contribution is significant. Your caring gesture and outreach to connect communities through giving is so appreciated. We thank you for your generous hearts.

In Christ,

Christopher House Representatives: *Vicki Robery, Marie Ann Maytum, Jean Walker, Sandy Pifer, Keith North, Judy and John Kating*

For Your Marriage



Celebrate achievements that you know are important to your spouse. Let your kids know when and why you are proud of each other, especially when it is for things that might not be important to anyone else.

foryourmarriage.org



Join us at Southminster on **Sunday, December 10, at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary** and enjoy the Harper Festival Choir as they perform a free concert. Come hear holidays favorites, including "Let it Snow" and "Do You Hear What I Hear?" as well as other inspiring carols that will surely rouse your Christmas spirit.

Children and Youth



Kari Sealund · Youth Director and Children's Coordinator

Children's Christmas Pageant Performances

We invite you to come to the Christmas Pageant when Southminster's children share their Christmas spirit with us all through song and celebration. Below is our schedule of performances:



Children's Christmas Pageant Performance Schedule

Sunday, December 3, 12:30 p.m.	Full rehearsal at Southminster
Sunday, December 3, 4:00 p.m.	Performance at The Moorings
Sunday, December 10, 10:00 a.m.	Performance during our single worship

Christmas Pageant

Covenant Harbor Youth Retreat



We had a great group for the youth retreat up at Covenant Harbor in Lake Geneva. We had time to get away to smell the fresh, crisp air and enjoy worship, fellowship, and hanging out. Some kids even scaled the huge climbing wall!

We also enjoyed some quality God time with youth from other Presbyterian churches. A great time was had by all!



Edgar Gabriel's

Enjoy a concert of holiday music by violinist Edgar Gabriel and his band StringFusion, who will perform new and exciting versions of holiday classics plus original songs by violinist Edgar Gabriel from their Holiday CD entitled *Tidings of Groove*.

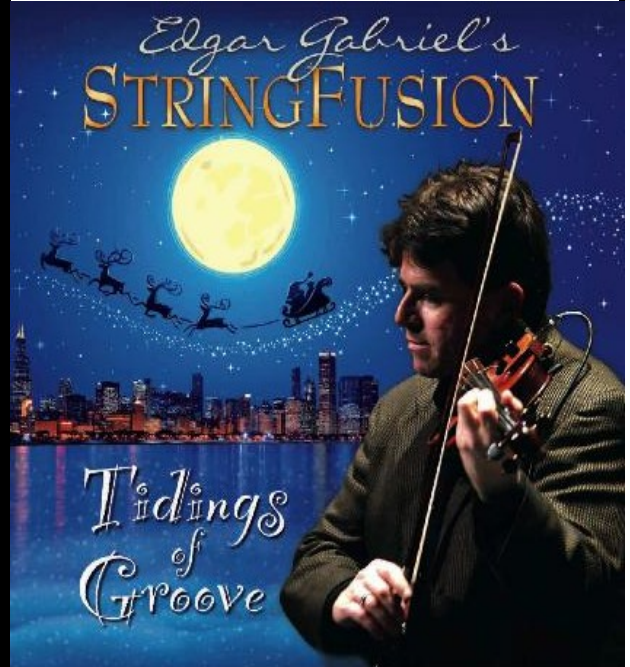


StringFusion combines music styles of jazz, funk, fiddle, blues, world and classical.

www.stringfusion.com

StringFusion

Holiday Concert



Tuesday, December 5

7:30 pm

Southminster

Presbyterian Church

916 E. Central Road

Arlington Heights

www.spcah.org

Admission is free, but a free-will offering is accepted. This concert is open to the public; everyone is welcome.



Holiday
**SHOP &
 SHARE**



d'Vine Wine And Gifts
 243 East Northwest Highway
 Palatine, Illinois 60067



Shop Anytime During The Holiday Season!
Monday November 13, 2017 thru December 31, 2017

And 15% Of Your Purchase Will Be Donated To Faith Community Homes

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHILE HOLIDAY SHOPPING!
 EVERY PURCHASE BENEFITS FAITH COMMUNITY HOMES**



- Wine And Craft Beer
- Specialty Food Items
 - Unique Gifts
- Seasonal Decor
- Hostess Gifts
- Gift Baskets



this holiday
Season



Offer May Be Used Multiple Times During The Designated Period ~ Present Flyer In Person Or On Mobile Device

Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly

Celebrate with your Faith in Action team at the annual CRS Martin Luther King, Jr. Assembly!

- Worship with church members across Chicagoland
- Celebrate the legacy of Dr. King
- Hear from candidates for Illinois governor

A free bus will pick us up in Arlington Heights. Please let us know you are coming by emailing Linda Waycie lwaycie@wowway.com or Cindy Greenwood cngnwood@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY RENEWAL SOCIETY

MARTIN LUTHER KING FAITH IN ACTION ASSEMBLY

&

GOVERNOR'S CANDIDATE FORUM

“

The hope of a secure
and livable world
lies with
disciplined
nonconformists
who are dedicated
to justice, peace
and brotherhood.

”

OLD ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH
700 WEST ADAMS, CHICAGO
JANUARY 15, 2018
8:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.
8:00 A.M. REGISTRATION

   @crschicago
Register at bit.ly/CRSMLK18

#CRSMLK



Christmas in the Neighborhood Where you come to know.

I love this time of year. Besides the wonderful opportunity to celebrate Christ's coming to earth as our Redeemer, it seems as though most people are more open to get-togethers that include a spiritual emphasis. For many years, our family has looked for ways to celebrate Christmas not just with our family and friends from church but also with our neighbors.

For several years we have gone Christmas caroling with neighbors. A few years ago when we caroled at Jane and Paul's house for the first time, they enjoyed our singing so much that they asked if they could join us the next year!

One year we had a Christmas Cookie exchange party. Three of us planned and prepared and invited ladies from the neighborhood, and eight came! We shared favorite Christmas traditions and what Christmas meant to each of us, and we all took home delicious cookies. We were excited to see how our casual sharing in the party gave us an indication of what our neighbors believed about Jesus.

Last Christmas we had a Christmas party which included a reading of the Christmas story. After sharing Christmas goodies together and laughing over ice breaker questions, we handed out a printed copy of the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke and facilitated a short discussion about it. Everyone seemed to enjoy the story and the chance to talk openly about what it meant to them.

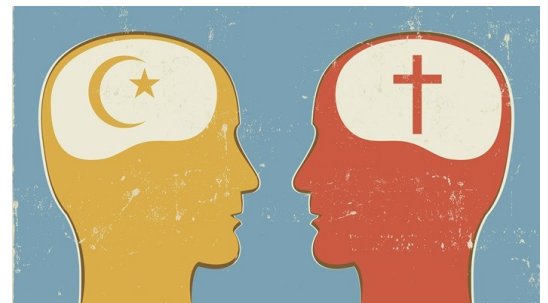
Out of these Christmas activities over the years, Q Place groups have started up in our neighborhood. In those groups, neighbors who had never spent time investigating Scripture have thoroughly enjoyed discovering God's Word for themselves. As groups began, I wasn't always sure where participants were in their spiritual journey. Some, like our skeptical friend Phil, acknowledged faith in Christ at the end of our discussion on "What Difference Does Jesus Make?" Another friend Janet said that as we were studying the Bible in our group, she was learning how to trust God through a terminal illness. As groups progressed, many confessed belief in Christ. Neighbors have gone back to church, some have recommitted their lives to God, and some have risen to the task of facilitating Q Place discussion groups of their own.

I am thankful for this wonderful, loving, relational time of year when God opens many doors for us to love our neighbors as ourselves. What about your neighborhood or workplace or workout center? Maybe you could invite people into a time of laughter, joy, and celebration at this wonderful time of year called Christmas. I challenge you to pray about it and look for opportunities. I'm confident they are waiting to be discovered.

Nancy Klaassen
Q Place Catalyst
Ottawa, IL

Inter-faith Small Group

We are excited to announce a new inter-faith small group forming between Southminster and Islamic Society of Northwest Suburbs, a mosque in Rolling Meadows. This small group's first meeting is at 7:00 p.m. at Southminster on Friday, December 1, when we will begin a dialogue between faiths that will provide an opportunity for Christians and Muslims to develop genuine friendships and better understand each other and our different faiths. We will not debate our faith, but listen to each other in a friendly, respectful, non-threatening manner.



Beginning in January 2018, this group plans to continue one-hour meetings twice a month, alternating between Southminster and the mosque. If you are interested in committing to this small group, please call either Dennis Rich at 224.520.2831 or Linda Waycie at 847.577.6307.

A Stephen Ministry Story

A STEADY REMINDER OF GOD'S PRESENCE

Mark and I had been married 26 years. Our sons were 18 and 20. We loved being parents, but with our younger son graduating high school, we were eagerly anticipating the empty nest and having more time for each other.

In the fall, when our younger son started college, Mark began having stomach issues and back pain, which would linger for a few days and then disappear, only to reappear later. He also developed a cough. When his doctor ordered an MRI, the results were devastating—Stage IV pancreatic cancer, already in his liver and both lungs. Mark was only 53.

Our lives were turned upside down. I suddenly found myself trying to provide emotional support to Mark and our sons during the worst experience any of us had ever endured. I wanted and needed to keep myself together to focus on caring for Mark, but I was emotionally drained—full of sadness and terrified of what the future held. I had always been a “take responsibility for everything myself” kind of person. However, I *knew* I couldn't do this alone.

I talked to my pastor about it, and she suggested matching me with a Stephen Minister. I agreed, and less than two weeks after Mark was diagnosed, my Stephen Minister came for the first of her weekly visits.

It's difficult to convey how important this Stephen Ministry relationship was for me. Our pastor was wonderful, and we had an amazing amount of support from many other people, but the time I spent with my Stephen Minister was the only time in the week when I could truly focus on my own needs. She was there just for me.

My Stephen Minister let me know that, while she was very concerned for Mark, her role was to be *my* support—to listen and help me process what I was feeling and going through, without giving advice or telling me what to do. The consistency of our Stephen Ministry relationship was crucial in helping me cope. Her weekly visits became an anchor in my life—something I could rely on when everything else was so uncertain. She was a steady reminder of God's presence, helping me know I was never alone.

The time I spent with my Stephen Minister was the only time in the week when I could truly focus on my own needs.

She was there just for me.

continued on other side

Although Mark and I chose to talk publicly about his condition, my Stephen Ministry relationship was completely confidential. I knew I could share anything with her, and that's where it would stay.

Mark's illness progressed rapidly—ten weeks of treatment, followed by six weeks of hospice, and then his passing. My needs changed as I went from being a wife to being a caregiver to being a grieving widow and dealing with everything that the loss of a spouse entails. Through it all, my Stephen Minister's love and support continued. She was there for me at every stage of my journey. It was never easy, but my Stephen Minister helped me through the most difficult moments of my life.

I really can't say enough about how much I appreciate my church's Stephen Ministry. The compassionate, consistent, and confidential support of my Stephen Minister was so important in helping me cope—and then begin to heal.

Her weekly visits became an anchor in my life—something I could rely on when everything else was so uncertain. She was a steady reminder of God's presence, helping me know *I was never alone.*

Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry being used in over 12,000 congregations across the United States, Canada, and 29 other countries.

With Stephen Ministry, congregations can equip a team of lay caregivers—called Stephen Ministers—to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people experiencing grief, divorce, major illness, loneliness, financial stress, and other life difficulties.

To learn more about Stephen Ministry and to watch videos about the difference Stephen Ministers are making in people's lives, visit stephenministries.org/stories.

You can also contact Stephen Ministries at (314) 428-2600 to request a free packet of information on how to begin this caring ministry in your congregation.

Stephen Ministries • 2045 Innerbelt Business Center Drive • St. Louis, MO 63114
(314) 428-2600 • stephenministries.org



Are You in Need of a Stephen Minister?

Is life more than you can handle alone right now?

Are you adjusting to a new job, a change in marital status, a serious illness, the death of a loved one, a recent move—or just experiencing a lonely or difficult time in your life?

Could you benefit from having someone who would listen and care and walk with you through this difficult time?

There Is No Need to Struggle Alone!

Everyone goes through difficult times. Having someone to care, to listen, to share God's love with you can help you get through the confusion, stress, or loneliness you may be experiencing. God does not intend for you to struggle alone.

Consider allowing a Stephen Minister to walk with you on your journey to wholeness

Are you in need...

of a caring, Christian who will listen, empathize, encourage, pray, provide *confidential* care, and patiently support you as you work through a crisis or difficult time?

or

Do you know someone, ...

perhaps a friend, neighbor, co-worker, colleague, or relative, who could benefit from this type of care?

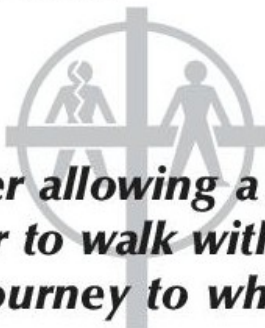
Southminster has trained Stephen Ministers ready to help you.

To be put in touch with a Stephen Minister, please call Pastor Liz at 847.392.1060 or email liz@spcah.org.



STEPHEN MINISTRY

"Christ Caring for People through People"



Stephen Ministers Care

Our Stephen Ministers provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care to people who are:

- Grieving the death of a loved one
- Hospitalized or recovering from hospitalization
- Lonely or discouraged
- Coping with a terminal illness or caring for a family member with a terminal illness
- Unemployed or in a job crisis
- Disabled or caring for an ill or disabled family member
- Moving or relocating
- New to the congregation or the community
- Anticipating the birth or adoption of a child
- Homebound or institutionalized
- Transitioning into retirement
- Dealing with the crisis of aging
- Facing a life transition
- Experiencing a spiritual crisis
- Victims of a disaster or accident

And for people facing countless other crises or life challenges or who are going through a difficult time and could benefit from the care of a supportive Christian friend.

What Is a Stephen Minister?

A Stephen Minister is ...

- A child of God who walks beside a hurting person;
- A caring Christian who really listens;
- A member of our congregation who has received 50 hours of training in how to provide distinctively Christian care;
- A person who is ready to focus on your needs;
- A trustworthy confidant who will keep everything you say—and even your identity—confidential; and
- Someone who will faithfully meet with you on a weekly basis for as long as your need persists.

A Stephen Minister is NOT ...

- A counselor or therapist;
- A problem-solver;
- Someone who runs errands or helps with chores; or
- A casual visitor.

Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide you with the confidential, one-to-one Christian care you need to make it through a crisis or help you through a difficult time.

Why Stephen Ministry?

Because the Bible tells us to:

“Love one another as I have loved you.”
John 15:12

“Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
Galatians 6:2

“Encourage one another and build each other up.”
1 Thessalonians 5:11a

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”
Romans 12:15

“Serve one another in love.”
Galatians 5:13

“Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers and sisters, be compassionate and humble.”
1 Peter 3:8

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”
Ephesians 4:32

The Stephen Ministry logo, with the broken person behind the cross and the whole person in front of the cross, symbolizes that we are all broken people and that it is only through the cross of Jesus that we are made whole.

Stephen Ministers will help guide you in your journey from brokenness to wholeness.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Matthew 11:28



Northwest Compass Project

On Saturday, November 18, a small group from Southminster performed a mini mission project at Northwest Compass, painting a bathroom and cleaning and sealing the reception area.

Located in Mt. Prospect, Northwest Compass is an agency that provides food, housing, child care, and job programs to people in the Northwest suburbs facing hardship. Through education, empowerment, and emergency services, the agency assists those facing crisis toward a positive and productive life.

Are you interested in helping with Southminster's many mission opportunities? Email Jean Walker at jw13pr4@aol.com or Sandy Pifer at Lucille111@aol.com for ways that you can help.



Habitat for Humanity House Build - Last Call!

Southminster workdays for Spring of Life/Habitat for Humanity are almost gone. Our house in Des Plaines is our first new build since 2008 and is the 14th house for the partnership. There is still much to do, and we are in need of volunteers at all skill levels.

Southminster workdays are the following Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to approximately 2:00 p.m.

December 9 and 23

Lunch is provided. If you are interested, email Tom Snyder thomaspsnyder@hotmail.com.



Care Ministry / Deacons of the Month

Every member and friend of Southminster is assigned to a parish, which is overseen by two deacons. Deacons can bring meals to you when you're sick, help provide transportation if needed, pray with you about a concern, or connect you with other resources at the church. This December we have one deacon of the month, Tom Manusos. Please call Tom and he will connect you with our caring ministry and your deacon.



Tom Manusos
847-392-2667



Merry Christmas