

The Spire

May 2017

Southminster

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

www.spcah.org

- May 7** *Hospitality to the Other*
Acts 8:26-39
9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- May 13** *Hospitality of Love*
Romans 12:9-18
9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- May 20** *Radical Hospitality*
Genesis 18
9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- May 27** *Memorial Day*
TBD
- June 4** *Pentecost*
Acts 2
One Service 10:00 a.m.





Dear Southminster Family of Faith,

We are now in the glorious season of Eastertide, that period between the celebration of the resurrection and the birthday of the church at Pentecost. I hope you enjoyed our Easter celebrations. I loved seeing all the children engaged in our Easter Egg Hunt between services Easter Sunday Morning and having so many of them in worship! Thank you to all who participated in the Lenten Dinner Series on Tuesday evenings and those who joined us for the participatory worship experience, "Cry of the Whole Congregation," on Maundy Thursday.

Our focus during Eastertide has been on hospitality. Hospitality is the Christian response to the good news that our Lord is Risen. We have looked at hospitality along the road, journeying to Emmaus. We looked at the hospitality of the early church through the account that comes from Acts 2. In the weeks ahead, we will be continuing with this theme as we move towards Pentecost.

May God bless you as we move into spring and look forward to the summer! God is doing many great things here at Southminster. It's an honor to serve our Lord with you! And as always, I'll see you in church!

In Christ,

Pastor David

The CAT Results are IN!

Last month, the Council received the report from the Holy Cow Consulting group that facilitated our Congregational Assessment Survey that we took earlier this year. We are excited about sharing those results with you! A special congregational meeting has been scheduled on June 4, Pentecost Sunday, to report what we have learned. On Pentecost we will have ONE SERVICE of worship at 10:00 a.m. followed by the congregational meeting. This meeting will include a report from the CAT Team and the slate of officers for Elders and Deacons that Nominating will put forward. We will also give an update on our pastoral transition process. Please plan to join us for this exciting meeting!



Discovering and Engaging with Islam

During the mid-hour over the last couple of weeks, we have begun a new series on Discovering Islam. This series is a joint venture of the Justice and Discipling teams here at Southminster. On April 23 and 30, I gave a general overview of the belief systems and practices relating to Islam. I am excited to have a colleague, Rev. Dan McNerney, join us for the next two classes that will take place on May 7 and 21. Dan will be speaking to us about how we as a congregation can engage with

Muslims both on an individual level and congregationally. He has worked with other Presbyterian churches in the Presbytery of Chicago that also have desired to reach out to Muslim groups in their area. I hope you will come and hear his experiences and suggestions for ways that we can be hospitable to those in our midst.

VBS 2017 - Safari to Tanzania

Are you and your kids ready for Southminster's VBS 2017?

This summer kids 3 years old (potty trained) to current fifth graders will "Safari to Tanzania," Monday through Thursday, June 19 – 22, from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Our safari wraps up on Sunday, June 25, with our Celebration Sunday.

You can register for VBS 2017 at www.spcah.org. Just click on Vacation Bible School under the Children/Youth tab on the Home page.





Dear Friends,

Acts 2 vs 44-47A ⁴⁴ *All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need... ⁴⁶ they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people...*

Christ is risen! Wait a minute, Liz, Easter is over, you might be saying. But although Easter Sunday has passed, we are now in the season of Eastertide. Eastertide is 50 days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost Sunday will take place on June 4. Pentecost is the time when Jesus' first followers were mobilizing and spreading the news that they had experienced the risen Christ, and they were living their lives differently because of it. Many of them were pooling their resources, living communally, and making sure no one in their community was in need. Others were deeply impressed because these Jesus followers had the welfare of others in the forefront of their lives and actions.

You too have the opportunity to help those in need by volunteering for our Community Service Day on Saturday May 6. Details to sign-up are in this issue. This month you can also attend a Q Place equipping meeting on May 10 at 7:30 p.m. in SPC's library to learn how to love your neighbor and share your faith in a comfortable and appropriate way. So how are we today like this first community in the book of Acts and how are we different? What do we need to reclaim, as Acts 2:47 expresses to have, "glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people in our hearts..." How can the fact that Jesus was raised transform how we live? The answers will be different for each of us, but these are the questions I would like each of us to ask during this time leading up to Pentecost on June 4. It is a season for rebirth and new life. How will you now live differently?



The Reverend Elizabeth Nickerson

Beautiful
MESS

Motherhood for
Every Moment

Sherry Surratt & Tracey Eyster

Come Mondays: 10:45 - 11:45
A new Moms' Group begins May 8

Join us downstairs in "The Loft"
Free, quality child care provided.

Info/RSVP: liz@spcah.org

As much as women desire to become mothers, sometimes the challenges and circumstances are not what they ever expected. Being a mom is wonderful, but it's also hard. Moms wonder: *Am I enough? How can I love today when my child is deliberately disobeying me? Why can't I get it together? Am I getting anything right?* This 6-session study helps each mom discover (or remember) that she is the mom God chose for her children. God is working through her life, and she is a beautiful mom.

Youth @
Southminster

**Kjirstin Almos, Children's and Youth
Ministry Director**

Kjirstin@spcah.org

Youth Game Night!

There will be a youth game night at the church on May 21st from 6:30-8:30 for all youth in grades 6-12. Friends are welcome to come this evening of fun and fellowship. Dessert will be served. Please RSVP to Kjirstin Almos (Kjirstin@spcah.org) or Cathleen Freels (crfreels@hotmail.com).

Calling all canoers!

This summer, Southminster will go on the annual canoe



trip to the Boundary Waters in Minnesota. This year the trip will start on Saturday July 29th and end on Saturday August 5th. This is a great opportunity for high school students (including current eighth grade students who will enter high school in the fall) as well as recent graduates and young adults to have a spiritual experience in God's good and beautiful creation. Please RSVP to Cathleen Freels (crfreels@hotmail.com) or Kjirstin Almos (Kjirstin@spcah.org) by May 14 if you are interested.

**Save the Date for the Annual
Youth Car Wash!**



The youth's annual car wash is coming up on Sunday, June 11th! Youth will be washing cars during both services and during the mid-hour. Proceeds will go towards this year's canoe trip. We hope to see you there!

Children's
Times

**Kjirstin Almos, Children's and Youth
Ministry Director**
Kjirstin@spcah.org

Over 60 kids and their families attended a very successful Easter Egg hunt! It was a great way to celebrate Easter together!



VBS is coming soon! Parents, please register your kids soon so we can plan a successful VBS. Registration can be done online at spcah.org or by downloading a paper application. Paper applications will also be available in the Narthex on Sunday mornings.

Volunteer sign up is also going to be available starting this Sunday in the Narthex. We need your talents, so please sign up!



“I Began to Feel God’s Love Again”

Recently, I was teaching at a Stephen Ministry event where someone introduced me to “Megan,” a woman in her early 30’s who wanted to tell me her story about receiving care from a Stephen Minister during a difficult transition in life. Megan prefers to remain anonymous—but she gave me permission to share her story with you so you’ll know about the powerful difference Stephen Ministry made in her life.

—Amity Haugk

Amity: **What led you to receive the care of a Stephen Minister?**

Megan: It all began soon after I moved to [a new city] to live near my family. I had just ended an eight-year relationship and was depending on them to be my support system. But a few months after I arrived, they unexpectedly had to move away—so I felt very, very alone. Not long after they moved, my grandfather passed away. It was one of the hardest times of my life.

I knew I needed to talk to someone, but I hadn’t lived in the city long enough to

develop close, comfortable friendships that I could depend on. But my new church had Stephen Ministry. When I found out what Stephen Ministry was, I talked to my pastor about getting a Stephen Minister.

How did your relationship with your Stephen Minister start out?

It started off a little bit slow. I wasn’t sure how I’d feel about sharing deep, personal things with someone I didn’t know very well. But her consistency, compassion, and care for me

really came through. I realized that my Stephen Minister was a safe person who wasn't going to share what I told her with anyone else. From there we developed a deep relationship until I felt like I could truly share anything with her.

“My Stephen Minister did a wonderful job of creating a warm, caring space for me to process my emotions and work through my issues.”

What was it like to meet with your Stephen Minister?

We met weekly. Sometimes she'd come to my house and we'd sit and talk, and other times we'd go walking together. During our visits, she just let me talk while she listened. As I was talking through things, I realized that it was helping me to make sense of everything that had happened and how I was feeling. She accepted my feelings, including the ones that seemed risky to share—and that was really helpful.

I actually didn't need advice from her—I needed acceptance and affirmation. I had a lot of loneliness, a lot of hurts, a lot of uncertainty inside. I needed to be validated and not put down. My Stephen Minister did a wonderful job of creating a warm, caring space for me to process my emotions and work through my issues.

Could you tell me about a caring visit that stands out for you?

Definitely. It was a few months into our relationship, and I'd begun to trust my Stephen Minister

with some of my most difficult issues. As we were walking around a track, with the wind blowing in my face, I suddenly realized that she was literally walking right beside me as I journeyed through my pain.

I'd been struggling with some spiritual wounds that were pretty intense and needed healing—things I didn't want to share with family and friends. But on that visit, as my Stephen Minister walked next to me, I felt safe and comfortable. So I shared my deepest hurts with her—some really painful things that I feared she might judge me for and that made me wonder if God could possibly love me.

After I told her those things, I was really nervous and dreading her response. I was worried that she would think I was an awful person. But instead, she put her arm around me and said, “I'm sorry you had to go through that.” And that was a turning point for me. To go from fear of judgment to a positive affirmation of care, empathy—and even sorrow for what I'd been through—it was so meaningful. That's when I began to feel God's love again.

I've heard other care receivers say that their Stephen Minister helped them experience God's love. Could you tell me more about how that happened for you?

The fact that God is invisible makes it hard for me to experience him sometimes. I'd been through some very negative experiences in life that caused me to question whether God even existed—and, if he existed, whether he loved me. I truly wondered, after all the things I'd done and the mess I'd been through, if God could still love me.

I somehow knew intuitively that I needed a person that I could see and touch. I think that's truly why I asked for a Stephen Minister. When my Stephen Minister was able to share her concern and her sorrow over my experiences, God was there loving me *through* her. I experienced

God's sorrow and *God's* compassion and *God's* love—and it made all the difference for me.

What I needed the most was her unconditional love—to know that no matter what I shared with her, no matter what I'd done, she cared for me. Her care showed God's love for me. I needed to know that there was one person in the world who knew everything there was to know about me—the good, the bad, the ugly—and still loved me. It was the tangible expression of God's love in my Stephen Minister that changed my life.

How did your caring relationship come to a close?

My Stephen Minister helped me get to a place where I was able to deal with my issues without her. As that happened, our visits tapered off from weekly to every other week to every three weeks. We decided to meet for the last time on my birthday, and that was a very special day for me.

Based on your experience, how would you describe what Stephen Ministers do?

Stephen Ministers do a lot of listening and ask really good questions that help you talk through

“I realized that my Stephen Minister was a safe person who wasn't going to share what I told her with anyone else.”

your thoughts and emotions. Stephen Ministers are there for you when it seems that no one else is. Just having someone to talk to—week after week—to bounce ideas off of, can help bring clarity into your life and help you sort through whatever it is you're dealing with.

The most important thing my Stephen Minister did for me was to provide spiritual care that led to spiritual healing. Doctors can take care of our physical needs, and counselors can help with our emotional needs. Pastors focus on spiritual needs, but can't possibly care for every person in their congregation who needs it. So sometimes there's a real gap when it comes to meeting spiritual needs. My spiritual wounds were the gap for me—the neglected part inside me that hadn't been taken care of. God used my Stephen Minister to really fill the spiritual gap.

“What I needed the most was her unconditional love—to know that no matter what I shared with her, no matter what I'd done, she cared for me. Her care showed God's love for me.”



“Stephen Ministers help those they care for experience God during those times in life when they might be wondering, *Is God even there?*”

How do you think Stephen Ministers help fill that spiritual gap?

God’s love is always there, but sometimes it can be really hard to feel it, especially when you’re going through a crisis. That’s probably when people doubt God’s presence the most, when their faith is the most vulnerable. But a Stephen Minister is Jesus’ hands and feet, just being there and caring for a hurting person. Stephen Ministers express God’s love in a tangible way that care receivers can feel. Stephen Ministers help those they care for experience God during those times in life when they might be wondering, *Is God even there?*

What would you say to someone who’s considering receiving care from a Stephen Minister?

Asking for a Stephen Minister is the best thing I could have done for myself. Stephen Ministry is transformational. As a care receiver, you’ll grow so much through your Stephen Minister’s care, concern, and compassion for you—you may not even recognize yourself afterward! And you’ll be a lot better off for it.

I would encourage anyone who is suffering, discouraged, or going through a difficult time to ask for a Stephen Minister. And if someone offers a Stephen Minister to you, say, “Yes!” It really is life-changing.

Completed applications for Stephen Ministry are due May 11 to Pastor Liz. For more info about Stephen Ministry at Southminster, speak with Pastor Liz. Applications are available in the church office or at stephenministry@spcah.org.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry is a lay caring ministry being used by thousands of congregations to increase care and outreach to hurting people.

Through Stephen Ministry, congregations are able to equip and empower a team of lay-people—Stephen Ministers—who provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people experiencing grief, unemployment, hospitalization, loneliness, divorce, financial stress, a terminal illness, or other life difficulties.

Visit www.stephenministries.org to learn more about Stephen Ministry and to watch online video stories about the difference Stephen Ministers are making in people’s lives.



Dear friends,

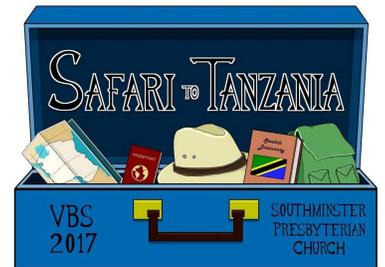
Well, Easter and the Easter Egg Hunt are now behind us, which means it's time to focus on Vacation Bible School! Vacation Bible School, or VBS, is the biggest children's event of the year. For four nights, this church is filled with kids who go from station to station learning about God in a variety of ways! It's a very special event for the kids who participate as well as the adults and youth who help put on VBS.

This year Southminster is using a different type of theme: a cross-cultural VBS. This type of VBS focuses on another country and helps kids learn all about this other nation and how they worship God there. The country this year is Tanzania in Eastern Africa. Each day's theme will come from a Swahili word and the Bible lesson with it. For example, one night will be all about sifa (pronounced see-fa), which means worship. The kids will learn about the story of Paul and Silas in jail and how they worshipped God despite being in such a difficult situation. This connects back to Tanzania because worship is so important, but it's also different. A cross-cultural VBS is a great opportunity for kids because it broadens their worldview while helping them learn more about our Christian faith. They'll learn to appreciate Tanzanian culture and understand that we can (and should!) learn from them. This year will also be very special as each evening will have videos from missionaries currently serving in Tanzania. These will help kids connect with what the daily life is like there.

Of course, VBS does not happen without a whole lot of help! Each night, elementary kids rotate through six different stations which each have two leaders, and the preschoolers rotate through their own stations. There's also all the behind-the-scenes work of registration, snack and meal prep, photographers, audio help, and office assistance. Everyone has a skill that is helpful at VBS! Starting this Sunday, there will be a sign up in the Narthex for the various roles involved in VBS along with more detailed descriptions. If you would like to learn more before then, feel free to email me at kjirstin@spcah.org.

God bless (or, as they would say in Tanzania, Mungu akubariki),

Kjirstin



Put Your Faith in Action—Bring Justice to Springfield!

Join Southminster members on May 9 for the Community Renewal Society's "2017 Day of Faith" at the Capitol in Springfield, Illinois. All ages are welcome!

Southminster members and up to 100 other congregations from the Chicago area will rally and visit with state legislators, asking them for the following:

1. Pass laws that help people with criminal records get jobs and educational opportunities so they can support their families
2. Make it easier for people to file a complaint of police misconduct



We'll leave from the First United Methodist Church of Arlington Heights on Euclid Avenue at approximately 6:00 a.m., and will return by 6:00 p.m. You'll receive training on board the comfortable motor coach—and also time to rest. No experience required!

For more information, contact Linda Waycie at lwaycie@wowway.com or [847-577-6307](tel:847-577-6307), or Cindy Greenwood at cngnrwood@gmail.com or [847-404-8404](tel:847-404-8404)

"Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people..." Isaiah 10:1-2



The Counseling Corner at Southminster

Making a Difference in our Community

Time has a wonderful way of showing us what really matters.
-Margaret Peters



Lately I've been thinking; there just aren't enough hours in the day. The older I get, the faster time is moving. I know myself. I can always find something to do. I like routine, and organization is a skill I continually work to improve on. Like a lot of people, I work and have commitments as well as a daily to-do list. I enjoy my work as a therapist, and I love spending time with family and friends. In addition, I like to volunteer whenever I have the opportunity. I'm sure others of us are leading very busy lives and have difficulty prioritizing. How do you prioritize your day? How do you list things of importance? I recently attended a workshop where we completed the following exercise: We were asked to make three columns: 1. Always valued, 2. Often valued, and 3. Sometimes valued. We were then asked to categorize our activities under one of these columns. Then, from all three lists, we had to choose our top three important activities. Determining the top three was very challenging. Many of my daily activities take priority, but my facilitator mentioned that priorities can and will change from day to day. While space does not allow me to list them all, the following are some of the activities I included on my three lists: physical and mental well-being, personal growth, spiritual growth, divine presence, family time, helping others, friendship, intellectual stimulation, intimate relationships. These were some of the activities from which I carefully selected my top three most important activities. It was an interesting assignment, and I encourage you to come up with what is most meaningful to you and to think about how you value and prioritize your time. What you do with your time? If you could, what would you like to rearrange or change?

Warm Regards,
Cynthia Apelbaum

Care Ministry / Deacons of the Month



Edie Jendal
847.427.2145



Wilma Shull
847.255.9348

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 are sick, help provide transportation if needed, pray with you about a concern, or connect you with other resources at the church. Please call or email the deacon of the month who can connect you with our caring ministry and your deacon.

Edie Jendal and Wilma Shull are your Care Ministry/Deacons for May.

For Your Marriage



"Whoever is not against us is for us." (Mk 9:40) Remember, that "us" is more than just family and friends. If others

act in accord with the values that Jesus taught, welcome them and learn from them regardless of creed. Who do you know like this?

foryourmarriage.org



7 Ways to Becoming a Better Observer

In 2008, the television series *House* was the most-watched program in the world! Most say its popularity was due to Dr. Gregory House—the character played by actor Hugh Laurie—a character that, in many ways, House modeled after the infamous, special, and eccentric Sherlock Holmes. Although Holmes was an investigator and House was an unconventional misanthropic medical genius who led a team of diagnosticians investigating viruses, deadly bacteria and poison, both of these fictional men shared extraordinary skills of observation—uncanny abilities that hooked literary fans for years and most recently, TV viewers of *House* for eight seasons.

Fiction or reality?

Although these intriguing, captivating characters are only fiction, it is a real possibility that each one of us can become a bit more like them. We can all tune our brains to pay better attention! We just need some practice.

Up for the challenge?

Although it might sound counterintuitive, one of the best ways we can train ourselves to observe more in the world is to learn what we can ignore! Since it is impossible to pay attention to everything, we have to decide what we want to focus our senses on. Keen observation is about igniting and accessing all the senses.

In his blog post, “How to Boost Your Observational Skills and Learn to Pay Attention,” Thorin Klosowski gives us a few challenges that can start to help us to do that:

It's easy to not pay attention to the world. For most of us, our default is to ignore what's around us. But doing so makes us miss out on inspiration and fails to develop our curiosities. Here's how to train yourself to pay a little more attention to the world around you.

We know that getting out and taking a walk can boost creativity and a little mindfulness can help with all sorts of things. Being observant means watching people, situations, and events, then thinking critically about what you see. The more you pay attention, the more often you'll come up with new ideas. The trick is to challenge yourself to look at every day in a new way.

Train Yourself to Look for the Stuff that Matters to You

Our brains aren't meant to see everything. We focus on specific things then filter out everything else. However, you can tune your brain to pay attention to new things with a bit of practice.

Whether you're starting a new job or exploring a new hobby, you need to retrain your brain to pay attention to what's important at that moment. This sounds simple, but it does take a bit of effort.

Challenge Yourself to Pay Attention to New Things

Challenge yourself to see things differently. These challenges can be anything, but it's probably best to start with something that matters to you. Here are a few ideas to start with:

- **Watch people in crowded areas:** Spend time watching people. Look at how they act in crowded spaces, how they interact with others, and how they navigate the rush of it all.
- **Assign yourself a scavenger hunt:** Pick something and look for it throughout your day. This could be any thing. Find it, take a picture, or note it. When you're done, try to figure out why that stuff is there.
- **Watch the local news (or read the local paper):** The local news is a great way to get to know your neighborhood, faults and all, and this helps you pay attention to all kinds of new things.
- **Walk with an expert:** Take a walk with friends who have different careers and hobbies than you. Let them teach you new things about the space around you. It might be local history, geology, or ancestry.
- **Take a "soundwalk":** Go on a soundwalk where you find origin points of sounds. Explored the area in a new way and train your ear to listen for new things.
- **Take field notes:** Pick a place, sit down, and write or sketch everything you see. This trains your brain to pay attention and observe more of the world.
- **Take on a 365 Day Photo Challenge:** Take a photo a day for a full year, adding different challenges each day to keep things interesting. This trains your mind to look through a camera lens a little differently.

Choose any challenge. Don't be afraid to leave your comfort zone. Just because you have no aspirations to be a designer doesn't mean you can't take notice of the typography on local buildings.

Learn to Watch People Better

Inanimate objects are one thing, but observing and understanding people is a science unto itself. Most of us are pretty good at observing during high-tension situations, but we slack off during the everyday interactions. But as former FBI agent Joe Navarro tells us, it's best to observe both the comfort and the discomfort:

Finally, what do we assess for? Two things primarily: danger and comfort. Not just those two things, but let's start with them. Simply ask yourself at all times, "How does this situation or this individual make me feel?" For example, you are walking to your car at night and you see someone out of the corner of your eye walking briskly and you sense that you will both intersect. Your limbic brain senses this for you and lets you know something is not right. But you have to heed that inner voice, that discomfort in your brain saying, "warning - possible danger," so you become more alert. You look for a well-lit area, and you wisely change your pace or return to the safety of the store.

Assessing for comfort can really open your eyes. When you are with someone new ask yourself, "Does this person make me feel comfortable at all times?" If he or she doesn't, then the question is "why?" We must never ignore clues that say something is wrong, no matter how bad we want a friendship to work. Your subconscious is always working to protect you. It is there for a reason, but you have to be prepared to observe and recognize what you sense.

Of course you should pay attention to a conversation, but it's also worth keeping a watchful eye on everything else that's happening. It's not just about keeping yourself safe or spotting inconsistencies. When you're observing people and paying attention, you'll notice all kinds of new things about them.

Keep an Eye Out for Patterns

Observing is great and the more you do it, the better you'll get at it. But it's far more useful once you can pick out the patterns. Tiny snippets of observations are helpful, but they're not useful for creative or intellectual endeavors if you don't have a broader view of how the world works. The same goes for anything you see out in the world. Observing the world is just the first step. Until you start piecing all that together into something larger, it's hard to do anything with the information you gather. The more you observe, the more you ask why; the more you ask why, the more you learn. The critical thinking that follows is what can help you come up with new ideas and learn more about the world around you.

Adapted from <http://onq.qplace.com/2017/04/7-ways-to-becoming-a-better-observer/#.WPjAkvrKM>



Special Q Place Meeting

Come to learn more about hospitality, building relationships with our neighbors, and learning to talk about your faith in natural ways. All are welcome to this special meeting with Jeff Klein.

Jeff Klein, Q Place National Church Partnership Director
Wednesday, May 10 at 7:30 p.m.
Southminster Library

Please let us know that you plan to attend. RSVP to Kathy Erickson at Lievph@aol.com or Todd Peterson at tpeterson403@comcast.net.

Where you come to know.

Loving Hands Stitchers

Please join us for our May meeting on Saturday, May 6, at 10:00 a.m. in the SPC Library. We'll have our second group activity of making PLARN (plastic yarn) to be crocheted into mats for the homeless. Now that the weather is warming up and shelters are closing, many of our homeless will be living out on the street and will need a protective barrier from the cold or wet concrete. No stitching skills are necessary for this activity. But if you can crochet, Sandy Cartwright will show you how to work with the PLARN to make the actual mats. We'll begin our meeting with some announcements followed by show-and-tell and then we'll start on our activity. Bring lunch, as we will break at noon, and those who can stay may continue working for another hour or so. We look forward to seeing you and working together to fulfill God's mission of loving our neighbor as ourselves.

For more information contact Jan Tossman 847.259.2679 or email silkpalette@gmail.com If you arrive for the meeting after 10:10 a.m., call Jan's cell phone at 847.772.6559 and someone will meet you at the side door.



Wednesday night, April 5, may have been damp and dreary, but the spirit and enthusiasm was anything but at Feed My Starving Children! Approximately 30 adults and children joined forces with others in the community to pack 29,808 meals to feed 81 kids for 1 year! SPC surpassed the staff's expectations by packing 138 boxes in total. The total cost of the product that goes into these meals came to \$6,557.76. This really puts it in perspective. Our commitment continues to "Pay It Forward." The Schaumburg FMSC facility continues to grow and has added more packing stations to serve more children in need around the world.

Thank you to all who took time to help Feed My Starving Children. Next time, let's all bring a friend who hasn't experienced the joy of helping others in this way.

The Mission Team

Meals on Wheels

In August, Southminster Presbyterian Church hosts Meals on Wheels. We will have 2 routes. Please look at your vacation plans to see which day you will be available to serve seniors lunch (prepared by the Lutheran Home at 800 W. Oakton). Please direct any questions to Ellen Riggs at 847.660.4999. Map routes will be posted on the kiosk in the Narthex every Sunday from May 7 through August. Thank you for your service.



Pentecost Offering



Each year on Pentecost Sunday, we celebrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit as a bringer of new life with an Offering intended to nurture the faith of those newest among us.

The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people in Christ and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world. Presbyterian congregations are finding new ways to minister to children at risk in their own communities. General Assembly programs are advocating for children and developing youth and young adult leaders. SPC will distribute 40% of this offering. The Pentecost offering is June 4. Please give prayerfully.

Help us to participate in the promise of the Holy Spirit - which is "for you, for your children, and for all . . ."— Acts 2:39.

My Pilgrimage Experience *by Jan Tossman*

I was fortunate enough to take part in the Chicagoland Presbyterian Pilgrimage 2017, which took place in April. I want to briefly share my extraordinary experience with you so that you might consider making this journey next year.

From the moment I arrived at the De Koven Center in Racine, Wisconsin, to the last goodbye hugs, I was treated like a long-lost relative (rather like the prodigal son) and so lovingly cared for throughout my three day stay. The Pilgrimage staff, including servers of all kinds, spiritual leaders, and talented musicians, poured out Christ's loving spirit on all of us who made this journey for the first time. With joyful hearts, they shared their time, energy, spiritual gifts, and powerful testimonies, making this one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

I am so grateful that my brothers and sisters at Southminster encouraged many of us to take this leap of faith and experience Pilgrimage for ourselves. They wanted to share what they had received from their time on Pilgrimage, knowing that we would also treasure this special time together as one body. They told us that no words could truly describe this emotional, unforgettable, energizing experience, and they were so right! I also appreciate my husband's unselfish encouragement, knowing that I would have a wonderful time, despite the fact that he was unable to go.

I have returned from Pilgrimage with a deeper understanding of and relationship with our Lord Jesus. I saw Him in the faces and in the generous hospitality of those who served us as Christ served—with unconditional and unending love. I made new friends and broadened my perspective of what it means to be a child of God. I am especially proud of our Southminster musical team. They joined with two other talented musicians to lift everyone up with their extensive repertoire of beautiful music and banter throughout the three action-packed days. I don't know how they did it, but God saw them through.

I look forward to helping build a stronger Christian community by word and example and extending myself even further in the days ahead. I feel so blessed to have had this experience and will be returning next year to serve in some capacity. I hope you will consider stepping out on faith and joining us next year. It would be my honor to serve you as I have been so graciously served.



Chicagoland Presbyterian Pilgrimage #27 was an amazing, faith-filled experience! This Southminster group experienced an abundance of God's love and grace, and we hope that you will consider joining us next year. Save the date: June 7-10, 2018.