

Round Robin

The Newsletter of the Second Reformed Church,
www.2refpella.org

February 2012

Pastor Sophie Writes

Dear Friends,

If I say the word “mindfulness” what do you think of? What does that word mean to you? What does it mean to go about your day “mindfully”?

I’m sure many of us have had the experience of driving along a highway and suddenly becoming aware that we do not remember anything about the last several minutes. We have been awake but hardly conscious. What landmarks have we driven by? Did we feel the warm sun coming through the window? Do we know what has been playing on the car radio? No, we have been lost in thoughts or fantasies and completely unaware of the present moment and our surroundings. To be brought back to the here and now is the experience of mindfulness.

Mindfulness is the experience of being fully present to and aware of the present moment. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience.

So much of modern daily life seems to conspire to not let us be present to the moment. We scarf down a quick meal on our way to one more activity, hardly pausing to taste or smell the aroma or feel the texture of the food, let alone think about how it got to our plate. We spend an evening after work “vegging out” on the couch in front of the television in a semi-dazed state. We take a walk outside with our i-pod buds in our ears and so we don’t hear the sound of the birds chirping in the trees or the squeak of cold snow on our sneakers.

Most spiritual masters have spoken about the importance of living mindfully....of being present in the here and now and experiencing all that the present moment has to offer. This present moment is the only time and place where we can encounter God. So, if we don’t show up, how can God meet us?



The next time that you are doing the dishes, why don’t you curtail your planning for the next day or your internal conversation with that aggravating person at work, and really feel the sensation of the warm water on your hands? Look at each plate or bowl or utensil. Touch them. Place them gently on drying rack. In other words, what if the next time you washed the dishes you did just that; washed the dishes.

Or what if the next time you took a walk, you looked at all the sights around you—the trees, the blades of grass, the rocks? What if you tried to smell all the smells on that route? What if you truly felt that cold wind, or the warmth of the

sun’s rays. What if you practiced mindfulness and were present to the present moment?

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NExT

New Exploration Together, or NExT continues to move forward. NExT is an initiative to ponder, pray and study the future of the church and more specifically Second Church. At the end of January, the NExT group held a weekend retreat, sharing different interviews each had done. Now they will be visiting various congregations around the Midwest to possibly glean ideas. Support NExT with an encouraging word to a team member and with your prayers.



The NExT group is Marcia Carter, Mark Ellingson, Lee Luhrs, Jason Taylor, Julia Tjeerdsma, Carol Williamson, Jon Witt, Bob Zylstra, Pastors Sophie and Steve, and Suzanne Vogel, facilitator.

SALT Melts Winter Blues

SALT—Sharing and Learning Together begins on Wednesday, February 29 at 6 PM in Fellowship Hall and continues for four Wednesdays (March 7, 21, 28—not March 14 due to Spring Break).

SALT is a good, warm, inexpensive meal shared family style. It is a great place for conversation with all ages. It is a great opportunity to practice Invitationality—introduce a friend to Second Church. It is a great place to get to know those people that you recognize, but never have a chance to chat with. Families with LOGOS children are always a part of the meal. The cost of the meal is \$3 for adults and \$1.50 for children ages 6-12. Around 6:40, we conclude with some brief intergenerational devotions—discussions, songs and prayer and by 7PM we are homeward bound.



Men in the Morning

On the first and third Tuesdays of the month—February 7 and 21 this month—all men are invited to a casual time of fellowship and prayer from 7 to 7:45 AM. It is a fun, easy-going time where we get to know one another better. The coffee pot is on. For those who have to be to work by 8 AM, we end promptly. Talk with Mike Morgan if you have any questions. Give it a try in February.



FYI Potluck

If you missed the January chile cook-off you missed a fun evening of good food and conversation. But never fear -- on February 23 at 6:00 pm let's get together again! This time it will be a potluck with a "comfort food" theme. Bring one large or two smaller dishes to share. Plates and utensils will be provided. Start thinking now about what it is in this cold weather that makes you feel cozy. Is it meatloaf, mac'n'cheese, tapioca pudding, chocolate cake? (No soup, please.) Can you remember why you call this dish your go-to when life gets a bit much? Where did the recipe come from?

Annie Wignall will share her personal challenge to make a difference in children's lives with school supplies. This would seem to give us a good combination of things to think about as we head into Lent. What things will you give up or take on? See you on the 23rd.

The Christian Heritage Corner

There is hardly a better example of the "communion of the saints"—our unity with all Christians in all times and place than the Christian Heritage Fund. Our community, even our giving, does not end with death.

The Christian Heritage Fund is about looking backward and looking forward. Look back in gratitude on all that Second Church has meant to you. Look back in gratitude for all those saints, no longer with us, but their generosity and planning, still assists us today.

But even more, the Christian Heritage Fund is about the future—this congregation's ability to respond with creativity and kindness to both opportunities and challenges that we cannot yet even imagine. Of course, the day-to-day "life blood" of a church comes from the gifts of its living members. But an endowment allows a church to see and seize possibilities, to overcome complications and to face the future with confidence. You can be part of that by supporting the Christian Heritage Fund. In life and in death, you can still be part of this community's gifts.

We tend to think that supporting endowments and estate planning is for others, not us. That is a mistake. People of all ages and incomes can support the Christian Heritage Fund right now. It involves no giving right now—only preparation and planning. Years from now, when most of us are gone, the Christians who are gathered at Second Church will look on us with admiration and thankfulness for what we have provided. Look back in gratitude. Look ahead in hope.

Thank you! Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who played a part in making our Christmas season joyful and beautiful—decorating, hanging the Advent boat, the children’s program, the young people who lit the Christ candle on Christmas Eve and more. Tim and Sally Baar, Jim and Sue Brandl, Jim and Diane Nelson, the Witt family, Bruce and Carla Schouten, and Gifford and Sherril Graham helped with decorating the church building. Joan Farver donated the beautiful wreaths on the front doors. Kris De Wild led the Christmas program.

The Friends of Coal Ridge Church thank everyone who participated in the annual Carol Sing. The generous free-will offering enabled us to repay substantially on the bank note we owe for painting the church in 2010 and for the new doors last summer. We continue to move ahead to maintain and preserve this precious landmark. Our heartfelt thanks to Second Church whose connection stretches more than a century, encompassing the pews, pulpit supply, Central students participating with musical groups (from the early 1930s!) And continuing to the present. Sincerely, The Friends of Coal Ridge Church



We received a thank you from Central College and Dave Sutphen informing us about the Norm Schouten Scholarship Award winners for 2011-2012. They are Olivia Schouten, Mollie Kingma and Brett

Schouten. Additionally, we received very nice thank you letters from Olivia, Mollie and Brett.

Thank you to all who contributed to the fight against world hunger through the October 9 CROP Walk. In 2011, \$13,564 was raised, an increase of 222 over 2010 and the fourth highest total in the 10 years for which records are available. Members of nine Pella churches made significant contributions and Second Reformed ranked fourth, donating \$1,030. More than \$5,000 was donated by Central College to compensate for the 630 students who gave up a full day’s meals with the college’s dining services. Special thanks to Andrea Taylor, who plays a key leadership role on the Pella CROP Walk board. Church World Service receives 75 percent of all donations with the remainder used to support the Pella Community Food Shelf.

Thank you so much to Second Church for helping with the Salvation Army Bell-Ringing this Christmas season. The combined efforts brought in \$11,250.86 in Pella!

Central College Campus Ministries, Sarah Schlager

Sunday School News

All ages have a place in Sunday School, each week after worship, 11 to 11:55 AM. SPLASH, our workshop rotation model for elementary age children, has a wave in February called, “Use It or Lose It: The Parable of the Talents.” It will include stations of art, drama, games and storytelling. Thanks to January’s SPLASH leaders, Jan Bensink, Jane Boswell, Ellie Gosselink and Anne Petrie.

Middle School and High School groups continue, with high schoolers involved in the Confirmation Process.

For adults, the Bible study of the prophet Isaiah continues, led by Chad Ray. On the north side of Fellowship Hall, we’ll be offering some shorter-term adult options. Pastor Sophie will share and explain about her “oblate” process at Our Lady of Grace monastery in Indianapolis. We have all heard Sophie talk about this and how it has shaped her, but here is the opportunity to get a more complete overview and have your questions answered. Pastor Sophie will present on January 29 and February 5.

The following three Sundays of February (12, 19, 26), members of the Library Committee will share about new books in the church library, as well great and all-time-favorite books of theirs. If you’re looking for some good reading, you won’t want to miss this. Various “readers” will share their recommendations each Sunday.

Living Green

The Outreach Council encourages you to practice Invitationality for our Living Green event on Tuesday, February 28 from 7 to 8:30pm in the Gathering Space. Bring your friends and neighbors to hear a brief presentation by Russ Benedict of Central College about living green—ways to be wise and earth-friendly in almost every aspect of life. Displays and information from various local farms, vendors and other sources will be available for conversation and perusal.

Painting in the Sanctuary

Last fall, the Consistory approved a plan to repaint the sanctuary in stages. The first stage was completed last year. Plans call for Brummel painting to begin working in the balconies in late February. This means that during the work week, the sanctuary will be filled with equipment and a painting crew for much of month. They will, however, tear down on Fridays, allowing us to continue to worship in the sanctuary as normal.



Ash Wednesday

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22—a day traditionally known as Ash Wednesday. Lent is the 40 day period in preparation for Easter. Traditionally, Lent was a time when new converts to Christianity underwent the vigorous preparation for baptism on Easter. To this day, Lent is still a time when Christians focus on rigorous discipleship and deepened commitment. Watch for future news on our Ash Wednesday plans.



Youth Group News

Thanks for all of the great comments again on the second showing of *Second!* It was a long process to get it finished, but it was certainly a labor of love.

Over the last couple of years, between adding a new youth room and working on the *Second* project, it's been a real time of reflection on what our story at Second Reformed has been.

When we chose to decorate the new youth room with 6 years' worth of pictures from youth group activities, I didn't even dream about what a trip down memory lane it would be. Then, to find several old photos from before my time, and see some of the past youth being silly and goofy while taking some of the same trips we still take today, was incredibly eye opening.

I don't think it hit me the hardest until Emily and I started pouring through the historical books we found in the archives. So much of who we are now, is who we were 50, 75, and almost 150 years ago – without even being consciously aware of it.

Over the last year, we've been trying to make a more intentional effort to keep in contact with former graduates – especially the ones we don't see around Pella every week. I try to talk to them about what their Second experience was like, particularly those who didn't grow up in our church.

It's interesting how many of the same themes come up of “family” and “belonging.” Many of them talk about our “Ethos” much like Sophie did in the video, even though they don't specifically use that word.

As I have the chance to participate with the NEXt group, I'm excited to see how our future will draw from our past. I have a feeling that the foundations laid for us by the congregation in 1863 will shine through in unexpected ways with NEXt's work.

Have a great month!
God bless, Jason

Book Reviews

If you're looking for some good new books, we have just purchased [Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church](#) by N. T. Wright. A noted Biblical scholar who writes with ordinary readers in mind, Wright discusses the Biblical views of life after death, judgment, the nature of paradise and hell, and their ramifications for the life and teaching of the church today. Recommended by Norm Kolenbrander, with suggestions for celebrating Easter that Pastor Steve would approve, this book is now on the New Book shelf in the library along with Wright's DVD series on Evil which was also used in a Sunday School class.

More locally, we now have [Sacred Acre: The Ed Thomas Story](#) by Mark Tabb with the Thomas family. More than the celebrated football coach of Parkersburg, Ed Thomas was a mentor and Sunday school teacher, and a prime mover in getting the town rebuilt after the devastating tornado. Read how the family and community respond to this first tragedy and the greater loss of Coach Thomas himself. Even non-football fans will appreciate the dedication of this man, his family and this community so close to ours.

[On Mended Wings: Transforming Lives and Communities in Nicaragua](#) by Carol Van Klompenburg with Donna Biddle. Full of journal entries, pictures, and firsthand stories, Carol's book relates the devastation of Hurricane Mitch and the praying community of varied North American missionaries and the Nicaraguan leaders who joined forces and formed the Nehemiah Center. Lives changed, obstacles faced, churches and communities on two continents growing in unexpected ways – pick up this book and prepare to be challenged.

We also have two novels by Kent Haruf: [Plainsong](#) and [Eventide](#). Writing about his own locality, the isolation of the high plains of Colorado with its struggling small towns and ranchers, Haruf builds community out of the resilience and character of neighbors and strangers looking out for each other. A citation for the National Book Award calls his work “a narrative of grace that builds in strength and feeling until, as in a choral chant, the voices in the book surround, transport, and lift the reader off the ground.”

Also on the New Book Shelf: [Finding A Spiritual Friend: How Friends and Mentors Can Make Your Faith Grow](#) by Timothy Jones; and two books on Islam, Mark Siljander's [A Deadly Misunderstanding: A Congressman's Quest to Bridge the Muslim-Christian Divide](#) looks at misinterpretations or translations of sacred texts that have fueled the conflict; Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf of New York City writes [What's Right with Islam Is What's Right with America: A New Vision for Muslims and the West](#).



Haiti Bound

This is our fourth 'solo' Haiti trip and I am always amazed at the way the spirit works to fill up the spots. We have an awesome group of people going, and United Christians International is doing awesome things that we get to be a part of. We will be gone March 10-19.



Your prayers and support are needed. Please consider making a donation that will help us further the projects United Christians International has underway, as well as supply food and medicine for mobile clinics both at UCI and the hospital in Pignon. We will be collecting donations during the month of February with March 4th being the last day to donate. All checks should be made payable to Second Reformed Church with "Haiti" written in the memo line. Should you wish to support a team member in prayer, please write "Haiti prayer partner" in the friendship pad.

We are blessed to be a small part of what God is doing in Haiti. We are humbled to join the hundreds who also seek to show God's love and mercy there. We are hopeful and appreciative of the many from our church family who will lift us up in prayer and help us care for those in need through their generosity.

Summer Mission Trip - NYC

Project Hospitality on Staten Island is again looking for groups that are willing to learn/grow/and be the hands and feet of Christ with them to the homeless they serve. Our church family has served with PH twice before, and we are headed there again the last week in June.

We will be working in food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and temporary housing. Many commented after the last trip five years ago that PH did a great job of not only opening our eyes to the poverty but teaching us about poverty. We also had a great time

getting to know each other and found some time to see NYC, which we plan to do again.



If you are interested in going to NY on our summer mission trip, please write "NYC" in the friendship pads. This trip is multigenerational – any age may come (those 13 and under must be accompanied by a parent/grandparent). For more specifics about cost/overnight accommodations/etc. pick up an information sheet in the church office.

Second Fridays at Second

Davis Folkerts' organ recital series, resumes on February 10 at 12:05pm. Enjoy music of the season. Practice invitationality.

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 - Sally Baar
Austin Bone
Joe Flaherty
- 2 - Duane Meyer
Heidi Lyons
Chloe Mathonnet-VanderWell
Doug & Nyla Heerema
- 3 - Dick Bowzer
Emily McMartin
- 5 - Randy Stravers
- 6 - Jim Brandl
Phyllis Danks
Kaitlyn Van Weelden
- 8 - Jason Tremper
- 10 - John Miller
Anne Petrie
Owen Taylor
- 11 - William Vanden Bosch
Ken Isaak
- 12 - Gifford Graham
- 13 - Janice Klein
- 14 - Molly Uhrich
Irv Huyser
- 15 - Genelle Morgan
Gary & Lois Boeyink
Bob & Charlie Zylstra
- 17 - Jim Emmert
Elsie Van Stryland
Jodi Pierce
- 18 - Clarence Den Adel
- 19 - Juanita Den Adel
Tom Waechter
- 20 - Bill Hinga
Rick Williamson
- 21 - Dale Jansen
Cierra Kooyman
Ingrid Stumo
Miriam Stumo
- 23 - Andrew Green
Lee Henry
Irv & Edith Huyser
- 25 - Karen Williams
- 26 - Brett Schouten
- 27 - John Ver Meer
Joanne Schafer
- 28 - Connie Hinga
Scott Haynie



February 2012						
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

Remember the Church in your Estate Planning