

The Spire



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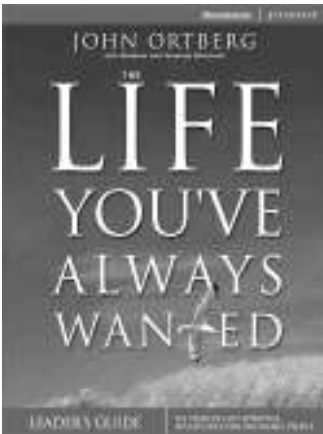
Southminster Presbyterian Church

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The Life You've Always Wanted



Spiritual discipline? Does that mean wearing a hair shirt or self-flagellation, such as supposedly practiced by the Opus Dei assassin in the fictional *The Da Vinci Code*? Not according to our Lenten studies author, John Ortberg. With "humor and sparkling anecdotes," and in ways that seem workable, Ortberg helps us learn how to "train," not just "try" for spiritual discipline.

Beginning on Sunday, March 5 and coordinated with worship themes, small groups will meet on Sunday mornings at 10:10 and on Tuesday evenings from 7:15 to 8:45. An optional potluck dinner will be held on Tuesdays at 6:30. Each study will begin with the showing of a very attractive video of that day's theme, featuring Ortberg with a group of college students.

Fourteen facilitators have agreed to serve as discussion leaders, while deacons have volunteered to help with meals. Southminster's own youth have offered their babysitting services, so childcare will be provided. Given this all-church effort, do consider inviting family members, friends and neighbors to what promises to be an exciting study.

The primary goal of spiritual life is human transformation. It is not making sure people know where they're going after they die, or helping them have a richer interior life, or seeing that they have lots of information about the Bible, although these can be good things. Let's put first things first. The first goal of spiritual life is the reclamation of the human race. It's morphing time.

-John Ortberg

Your Discipling Ministry Team: Marj Leopardo, Fay Michaelis, Jean Ward, Troy Gooding, Kathy Erickson, Melissa Parks, Maureen Cooke and Barb Peter.

Pastors' Perspectives

Lent and Life

On March 1, (Ash Wednesday), we enter the season of Lent. Lent is a period of forty days (not counting Sundays) before Easter and was originally a period of preparation (an education into the faith) for those who were to be baptized and received into the church on Easter.

I am very excited about our Lenten focus for preparation – *The Life You've Always Wanted* by John Ortberg. I like this focus for three reasons: it speaks to everyday, ordinary people like you and me; it presents a contemporized understanding of the spiritual disciplines that are and have been at the heart of our faith since Christ; and we can share in this experience alone as well as together.

There are thirteen chapters/parts to Ortberg's book. Some of these will be the theme for Sunday worship, beginning February 26 and continuing to Holy Week. The Sunday

I know that I am missing or lacking parts of "the life that I've always wanted" or that God has wanted for me.

theme/focus will also be explored during the adult education time between services. The remainder of the themes will be discussed at the Tuesday evening gatherings. Each is a "stand alone" topic. We will grow from every one of the thirteen parts in which we are able to participate.

I am finding some of the topics/questions profound: Where in my life am I "double-minded?" Why does

God command, rather than suggest, that we be joyful? What is a ministry of interruptions? What would my life look like if it were a God-centered, balanced life?

When I am honest with myself, I know that I am missing or lacking parts of "the life that I've always wanted" or that God has wanted for me. Maybe this is a time for me to discover what these are!

I invite and encourage you to join me in seeking *The Life You've Always Wanted* as we journey through Lent 2006.

Seeking with you,
Steve Pierce, Pastor



Homecoming

Dear Friends,

How wonderful it is to be back at Southminster! I missed you all so much during my leave, and I am anxious to see, talk and catch up with each one of you. While it was interesting to experience worship in different churches during my time away, it just never felt quite like home. It is so good to be back with this church family! Thank you for your warm welcome upon my return. I greatly enjoyed the receptions after each worship service on February 5 (there is a picture of one of the two cakes in my office if you missed seeing it!) I also want to thank you for the many birthday wishes I received from you last fall. It was a landmark birthday for me. (I won't mention which one, but you all seemed to know which one, anyway!) To be remembered by so

many of you made it a joyful landmark indeed.

I am excited, but not surprised to see that in your faithful hands Southminster's ministries are still vital, creative and growing. Many new things have taken place while I was away. I am eager to learn about them, and I am very excited about my areas of responsibility. As you probably know, I will preach every couple of months, assist Steve with pastoral care, and serve as the pastoral staff to the Senior High, Inviting, and Deacon ministries.

I want to thank you for allowing me to work half time while I pursue a Ph.D. in liturgical studies (worship) at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston. I am very aware that if you were to identify an ideal staffing configuration for Southminster, it might not include a half-time Associate Pastor. I am so grateful for your flexibility and your

support of my sense of call to deepen my knowledge in this critical area of our Christian life. I am confident that serving as your Associate Pastor while I study will help keep me grounded in the real-life applications of what I am learning, rather than becoming distracted by ivory tower musings. It is my fervent hope that I can share with you what I am learning in ways that will enrich our worship and deepen our spiritual journey together.

Again, I can't express how wonderful it is to be with you again. I look forward to reconnecting with each of you.

In Christ's love,

Lolly Dominski



Following Our Faith



Women Mentoring Girls

Just wanted to let those of you interested in taking part in this wonderful group that there has been a slight change in our March schedule. Instead of meeting on the first Sunday of the month, our meeting will be held on the second Sunday, March 12, 2006.

Time:	12:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Place:	Church Library/Conference Room
Lunch:	\$3.00 per person for sub sandwich, apple and soda
Topic:	Sisterhood Challenges: "When Someone Gets Angry with You" (Last month, we studied ways on how to deal with our own anger toward other people)
Scripture:	Proverbs 20:3 for Peace-Making

Christian of the month: Hildegard of Bingen, who wrote, "When anger tries to burn up my tabernacle, I will look to the goodness of God." (1098-1179)

Journey Forward² Mission Money

The following lists ways in which our Journey Forward² Mission Money has been used:

- Jill Milner/Joan Sarro - Faith in Practice Guatemalan trip, medical mission, supplies
- Presbyterian Aids Initiative
- Cure International - building new hospitals in third world countries
- First Presbyterian Chicago - Head Start Program
- Resource & Research Center - furniture for those moving from homelessness into an apartment
- Journeys From PADS to HOPE - new van
- Forman Christian College
- Dalit/Untouchables
- Young Men's Educational Network (YMEN) - computer for their lab
- Kathy and Aki Matsushima - Albanian Mission
- Linda McCarty - translator in Guatemala

Journey Forward² Update

Information related to the status of Journey Forward² was requested at the meeting of the congregation on February 12, 2006. (Journey Forward² is the project - construction and financing - that renovated our church home; it was completed in 2004.)

The current mortgage balance on the loan for this project is \$351,800. We have nineteen years remaining on a twenty-year loan. The interest rate on this loan is 5.48% through January 2010 and may (and probably will) change thereafter. A special debt reduction emphasis in 2005 resulted in gifts and pledges, which are being used to reduce the annual payment on the loan. Our annual loan payments are \$30,000. In 2006, \$11,800 will come from 2006 general fund receipts; the balance will come from the JF² special pledge/gift fund.

If you would like to make a gift to the JF² Mortgage Reduction Fund, please use the blue envelopes in your offering envelope box or the pew envelopes and check the JF² box. Further questions? Contact the Stewardship Finance elders, Sandy Weicher and/or Cushman Gray.

Children's Corner

Kingdom Doors Update

A disciple KNOWS, GROWS AND GOES with Jesus and the Gospel. The children in Kingdom Doors are learning the significance of these three words in the current unit of Kingdom Doors that began on February 19 and runs through March 26. Through the activities of the six different workshops (Art, Cooking, Evangelism, Journey, Nature and Storytelling), the children are learning what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Kiddie Kingdom Update

"Jesus is Alive!" is the Kiddie Kingdom unit for spring. The children will be learning about Jesus' Resurrection and about Paul and the Early Church.

From our Hearts to Theirs

A big envelope of Valentines was sent to the Ortolano Family of Gulfport, Mississippi from the children in Kingdom Doors -- another way to show this family the love of God and support from their Southminster Church family.



Mardi Gras Pancake Supper and Sock Hop



Last call to sign up for this year's Mardi Gras to be held on March 3, beginning at 6:45. The cost per person is \$5.00. To reserve your place for this fun evening, please call Sue McCurdy today! If you would like to send some of our Mardi Gras spirit down to our adopted Mississippi family, we will be collecting gift cards in any amount from either WalMart, JC Penney, Kmart or Sears to help Lisa Ortolano purchase much needed things for her home.



News from the Fox Valley Habitat Affiliate

Plans are underway for the second annual "Soiree" at the Sanfilippo estate in Barrington Hills in September. The Affiliate needs volunteers to help plan this major fundraising event. If you're interested, contact Bill Klaves at 847.836.1432.

Patterned after successful Habitat ReStore locations around the country, the Fox Valley Affiliate will open its own ReStore in Elgin this month. The ReStore accepts donations of new, used and excess building materials and appliances (all donated items are tax-deductible), which are then sold to the general public. Revenue is used to fund local Habitat homes. A Grand Opening celebration is planned for March.

It's Per Capita Time!!!

What, you say, is per capita? Per Capita is the amount Southminster pays to support the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. This year's Per Capita amount is \$27 per church member, including confirmed young adults.

If you have not yet submitted your per capita, there is a per capita envelope in your box of envelopes. We appreciate your assistance with this expense!!!

Green Tips

Radio Shack in Arlington Heights at 843 N. Wilke accepts old batteries for recycling. Please drop off used batteries instead of throwing them away.

Sharing Our Faith

Wanna Do a Good Deed This Month?



For many years, Southminster has joined other churches interested in helping girls learn to successfully raise their children despite difficult conditions. The "Have a Heart" spring shower for teenage mothers at Christopher House is scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, and once again, Southminster is accepting donations. Now through Monday, April 24 you can place your contributions in either of the two donation boxes, located in the PDO hallway and the church foyer. All donations are appreciated: diapers, bedding, clothing, furniture, etc. -- Mothers, you know what babies need. Please consider helping this worthy cause. Thank you.

"Street Saints" Award

Goodcity, a leading Chicago not-for-profit organization in collaboration with The Leadership Foundations of America, announced that 15 Chicago "street saints" were being recognized for their work in front-line ministry in some of Chicago's most impoverished communities. Southminster has given support to three of these organizations:

Ms. Cheryl Johnson, Research and Resource Center (RRC), provides household items and furniture to families transitioning from shelters.

Mr. Mike Trout, YMEN, prepares young men in the community for mature, Christian leadership, academic excellence and outstanding service to others.

Ms. April Bailey, Starfish Learning Center, works with grassroots service organizations in low-income, inner-city neighborhoods to create community entertainment projects.

SMPC Book Discussion

The SMPC Book Discussion Group will next meet on March 14 at 10:45 at Marjorie Leopardo's home, 806 S. Walnut, Arlington Heights to discuss the book *Teacher Man: A Memoir* by Frank McCourt.



Join us for a fun discussion. Call Marj at 847.255.2063 or Mary Kay Walsh at 847.255.5941 for details.

Operation Ortolano

A work crew of eight to ten people is planning to go to Gulfport on February 28 to work on Lisa Ortolano's house from March 2 through the 6. They plan on putting up dry wall and completing other inside work.

Check in next month's Spire for details of the trip.

Congregational Meeting Minutes

At the Congregational Meeting on February 12, Skip Skeggs was acknowledged for his years of service as Nominating Elder while Clara Hogreve and Eva Speedy were acknowledged for their service as Deacons.

Bill Vasilagombros was elected to serve as Personnel Elder, Joe Reibel, Sr. was elected to serve as Property Elder and Esther Skeggs was elected to serve a second term as Church-Life Elder.

Isabell Torbert, Eleanor Westfall and Jerry Westfall were elected to a second term as Deacons, while Karey Bourke and Sue Peterson were elected to serve as Deacons.

The following lists the elected officers of the corporation:

President	Sandy Weicher
Vice President	Cushman Gray
Secretary	Ruth Van Witzenburg
Treasurer	Meg Zimmermann (elected by Session per Book of Order)
Financial Secretary	Gail Rohlk

This and That

Whale of a Sale

Have you been waiting for an excuse to clean out your *stuff*? We all have more *stuff* than we need or want. Well, we have the place for your *stuff*.

On Saturday, May 20, 2006, the Church Life and Worship Committees are coordinating a Whale of a Sale to be held at the church. We need your unwanted *stuff* to make this event a success.

Proceeds of the sale will help pay for the renovation of the lower-level Music Room as well as a new sign in front of our church.

We plan to advertise this event and hope to see many people from our church and neighborhood in attendance. For those "outsiders" who come, we'll have information available about our children's, junior/senior high programs, mission, and all of the activities and great opportunities Southminster provides.

Mary Kay Walsh and Cathleen Von Oesen have agreed to lead this effort, and we already have about ten people offering to either help or be on the Steering Committee. However, the more hands we have, the less work and stress there is for each volunteer. We need YOU! We need your *stuff* and your help and we need you to invite your friends, neighbors and relatives.

So if anyone is interested in helping on May 20, or if someone is interested in being on the Steering Committee for this project, please either call the church at 847.392.1060, Mary Kay at 847.255.5941 (mwalsh1018@aol.com) or Esther Skeggs at 847.413.9883 (estherms@ameritech.net).



Thank You, Southminster

Dear Southminster — I cannot tell you how much I appreciated the gifts and reception you gave me. It was truly overwhelming. But, mostly, I must thank you for your friendship and trust. I treasure those gifts above all else.

Blessings to you all,

Linda McCarty

We would like to thank all our church friends for the cards and prayers for Will during his treatments for bladder cancer. Your kindness and concerns were greatly appreciated.

- Will and Clara Hogreve

A huge thank you to all of the Southminster individuals and families who helped make Christmas so special for 100 people who rely on Christopher House. Also, a huge thank you to all the Deacons who helped pack up and label all the gifts and to Jeff Miller for trucking it all to Logan Square.

In addition, we collected \$2,175.00 for food. This helped all of our families have a plentiful holiday week.

Thank you all for your constant and continued support of this project. Have a wonderful 2006.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to our wonderful church members for their support of the choir remodeling project at Sunday's bake sale. Everyone was so generous - bringing in sweets and buying sweets. We were overwhelmed with everyone's generosity.

-Southminster Choir



Opportunities

Spring of Life Habitat for Humanity Presents . . .

Circle Sunday, March 26, 2006, on your calendar when Spring of Life Habitat for Humanity will once again sponsor a fundraiser at the Metropolis Theater in Arlington Heights. Please come see Neil Simon's delightful play *Brighton Beach Memoirs* at 3:00 p.m. that afternoon. The ticket price is \$35.00; however, a dinner and theater ticket combo may be offered. Please check the church bulletin for further details.

The play explores the Jerome family. Life hasn't been easy for them, but you would never know it from the tales told by 14 year-old Eugene Jerome. Add together poverty, depression, and war, not to mention the pains of growing up, and you've got a real challenge. Through it all, however, the Jerome's stick together, and when you add Eugene's constant wisecracks, you get a witty and truly unforgettable memoir.

Hope you can join us for a wonderful evening of fun, remembering that the money raised goes to building another home in Elgin by the marvelous volunteers from Spring of Life Habitat for Humanity.

Do Church in the Balcony

For anyone interested in experiencing a "behind-the-scenes" look at Southminster, please join Erik Sealund in a tour of the sanctuary loft. Erik will demonstrate how equipment is used to enhance our worship service.

Some of the buttons are "way" cool--as you, too, can learn how to turn the sound down in the middle of a sermon or turn it up if you see people dozing in the pews. Erik will also show how images and videos are projected on the sanctuary screens.

So come take a tour with us on March 6, beginning at 7 p.m. For more information, call Erik at 847.392.7385.

Changes in Our Church Office Staffing

For some time, Betty Schwiesow and Doris Chute have loyally shared the position of staffing our church office. We are now in the process of seeking to employ a non-church member for 30 hours per week, Monday through Friday, to give the position added continuity and efficiency. Once we hire this individual, Betty will retire. (She wanted to work for two years when she took this job, and that was 16+ years ago!!) We hope to continue to employ Doris on a limited, part-time basis, assigning her special tasks where her experience and knowledge of Southminster will be particularly helpful.

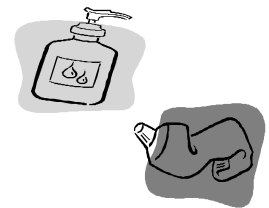
For more information regarding this transitioning process, contact Marcia Parker at 847.392.9010, point person of the Personnel Ministry's task force for this position.

Hygiene Kits and Socks for the Homeless

The Night Ministry has served people on the nighttime streets of Chicago since 1976 -- many are teens. Imagine a day without the comforts we take for granted such as general hygiene items. How can you help? During March, the mission team will collect items for hygiene kits, and the senior highs will put the kits together. We will also be collecting new, white athletic socks of various sizes, which is a major need for the homeless.

A typical hygiene kit includes the following, with the first two rows being most important: (Please purchase TRAVEL SIZE)

Soap	Toothbrush	Lip Balm	Disposable Razors
Shampoo	Toothpaste	Wash Cloths	Shaving Cream
Lotion	Deodorant	Towelettes	Comb/Brush



Missing!!!!

If you happened to take home the globe vases containing flowers from the Progressive Dinner, please return them to the church. Thank you.

Southminster Presbyterian Church

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Worship Lent 2006

The Life You've Always Wanted by John Ortburg

Wednesday, March 1 - Ash Wednesday 7 p.m. - (Family Friendly)
"Preparing Our Lives for God's Transforming Touch"

Sunday, March 5	The Practice of Celebration (Ortburg 4)	Rev. Barb Peter
Sunday, March 12	The Practice of Prayer (Ortburg 6)	Dr. Steve Pierce
Sunday, March 19	The Practice of Confession (Ortburg 8)	Dr. Steve Pierce
Sunday, March 26	The Practice of Secrecy (Ortburg 10)	Dr. Matsushima