

Footsteps of Faith: “Be My Witnesses”

Course Syllabus

Location: Youth Suite

Class Time: Sundays at 11:00 a.m.

Course Teachers: Rev. Chelsea Guenther Benham
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Rev. Jonathan Reinink
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Course Objectives:

The Footsteps of Faith class seeks to:

- help each student identify his or her calling,
- equip the students for a lifelong journey of faith,
- send each student into the world with a blessing.

Course Outcomes:

Students will

- identify God-given gifts and capacities in a way that relates part of their faith journey to God’s working in the world.
- reflect on how the living word of the Bible and the faith stories of the early Church might influence their own journey of faith pursuing life in a living God.
- accept the gift and benediction of Second Presbyterian Church for high school seniors as it dedicates time, space, and resources for
 - learning about the faith stories of the past,
 - traveling and experiencing the history of the Early Church,
 - receiving blessings that are extended by the members of this congregation who created and support this course.

Attendance:

The class mainly meets from September-November and from January-April. Students must attend at least 15 of the 19 classes. If you must miss a class, please advise teachers at least 24 hours in advance.

Other requirements are as follows:

- Students will sign up to read scripture or participate in at least one worship service.
- Students will attend the Fall Youth Retreat **Saturday Nov. 5 - Sunday Nov. 6, 2016**
- Students will regularly attend Sunday worship.
- Students will attend a Shabbat service at IHC - **Friday TBA (5 pm)**
- Students will attend a service at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox - **Sunday TBA (9:30 am)**
- Students will be expected to attend fellowship events during the coming year. **Dec. 4 + Apr. 23.**
- Students will meet with Session for commissioning on **Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 6:30 pm**

Assignments:

Group Project:

Students will work together in small groups to create 10-15 minute presentations. There will be some time in class for research and group coordination, but some of the work will need to be done outside of class. Presentations to the class will focus on the history of geographical locations we will visit on our trip. It will be particularly helpful to research the make-up of the community at the time of the early

Christian church and some of the most important historical sites. Interview someone who has traveled to your location.

Presentation options include: **Athens, Corinth, Rome, Ephesus and Patmos**. Presentations should be informative, but please feel free to be creative and have fun with your project!

Presentations should include the following information: Geography & Location; Demographics & Interesting Facts; Historical Significance; Biblical Significant; Role in the Early Church; Highlights from an interview you did with someone who has been there.

Reflection Assignments:

Throughout the class, there will be opportunities to connect your life story with what we are studying in class. Below you will see prompts for three reflection assignments. **You will be writing two of the three reflection assignment options.**

Out of your two chosen reflection assignments, one may be a short paper (at least 1-2 pages) and one may be a creative expression of the question posed (i.e., a photograph, a painting, a short video, a poem, etc.). If you choose to express your reflection creatively outside of a paper, please include a short paragraph explaining your work and its connection to the reflection question posed. You may also choose to simply write 2 reflection papers instead. The choice is yours!

Note: Reflection assignments will be accepted (and returned) electronically. Please email your papers to Rev. Chelsea Benham on the due date at cbenham@secondchurch.org.

Everyone writes:

Mandatory Reflection: Due October 9, 2016

We have read and will read about different disciples (Paul, John, Peter) and communities (Corinth, Ephesus, Rome) that had different gifts they used to serve God.

- What are your gifts and how might you use them to honor God? How has your understanding of God's call on your life been clarified or changed?

Choose either:

Reflection #1: Due December 4, 2016

Paul has a major transformative moment in Acts 9 that changed the way he viewed his Jewish faith.

- Have you had a moment in your life when you felt God was asking you to change a behavior or belief you previously held? If so, what happened and how did people respond to the change?

Or

Reflection #2: Due February 26, 2016

Paul is constantly having to prove his credibility as a witness to Christ. Based on all of the persecution and opposition, it is amazing that he stays strong in his faith and mission to spread the Gospel.

- When you have doubts about your faith or are going through a difficult patch in your life, what carries you through those tough times? Are there people, Scripture verses, stories, art, or songs that provide strength and support in those difficult moments?

and

Testimony Assignment: Due March 19, 2016

In the book of Acts, we learn that one of the major themes within the early church was a call to witness or testify. Just like members of the early church, we too are disciples of Jesus Christ and we are called to tell others about how God has worked in our lives. Our hope is that, as you go out from Second

Presbyterian Church, you will be able to clearly express how God has worked in your life. As part of our covenant what we share with the group will be confidential.

Please prepare to share with your small group the story of how God has worked in your life through particular events, people, or moments of insight, and how you feel God is calling you to share your story with others in the future. Your testimony should be 1-3 pages, double spaced.

Footsteps of Faith: Course Schedule

SEPTEMBER

September 11, 2016

First Class
Orientation

September 18, 2016

Struggling with Scripture
Read: Handout

September 25, 2016

The Early Church
Read: Acts 1 and 2 in preparation for class
Signups for Group Projects and Scripture Reading

OCTOBER

October 2, 2016

Paul's Conversion
Read: Acts 9

October 9, 2016

Mandatory Reflection Assignment Due (email to cbenham@secondchurch.org)
Paul as a Missionary
Read: Acts 13 and 14 in preparation for class

October 16, 2016

Paul in Prison
Read: Acts 16-17:15

October 23, 2016

Paul in Athens
Read: Acts 17 in preparation for class
Athens Group Presentation

October 30, 2016

Paul in Corinth
Read: Acts 18 in preparation for class
Corinth Group Presentation

NOVEMBER

November 5-6, 2016 **Attend Youth Retreat**

November 13, 2016

Paul in Ephesus

Read: Acts 19

Ephesus Group Presentation

November 20, 2016

Paul in Rome

Read: Acts 28

Rome Group Presentation

DECEMBER

December 4, 2016

Reflection Assignment Option #1 Due (email to cbenham@secondchurch.org)

Social Lunch! – Meet at 12:30 pm at Capri (2602 Ruth Dr., Indianapolis, 46240)

December 11, 2016 – January 1, 2017

No Class – Christmas Break

Tentative Curriculum:

JANUARY

January 8, 2017

Island of Patmos & Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature

Patmos Group Presentation

Parents & Participants Trip Info Meeting: 12:00-12:30 pm

January 15, 2017- MLK Weekend

No Class

January 22, 2017

John of the Revelation & his Writings

Read: Selections from Revelation

January 29, 2017

?Worship at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 9:30am?

FEBRUARY

February 5, 2017

Art & Icons in Worship & Worship Spaces

February 12, 2017

Saints, Martyrs, & Iconography

Read: Acts 6:8-8:1

February 19, 2017 - President's Day Weekend (Youth Retreat)

No Class

February 26, 2017

Reflection Assignment Option #2 Due (email to cbenham@secondchurch.org)

Peter the Apostle

Read: Acts 2

MARCH

March 1, 2017 Ash Wednesday Service (7 pm)

March ?, 2017

Shabbat Service at Indianapolis Hebrew Cong., 5pm (Tour, Service, Optional dinner to follow)

March 5, 2017

Peter the first Pope

Read: 1 & 2 Peter

March 12, 2017

Peter vs. Paul: The Jerusalem Council

Read: Acts 15

March 19, 2017

Testimony Assignment Due (email to cbenham@secondchurch.org)

Share testimonies in class – **bring a paper copy to class**

March 26, 2017

Share remaining testimonies

APRIL

April 9 – 16, 2017 – Easter Break

No Class

April 23/30, 2017

Q&A Class (bring questions about course material) + Lunch to follow

MAY

May 7, 2017

No Class

May 14, 2017

MANDATORY CLASS MEETING

We will discuss final details for our trip

Tuesday May 16, 2017 – Footsteps of Faith Class Meets with Session at 6:30 pm

JUNE

June 8 – 19, 2017- Travel the *Footsteps of Faith!* (Subject to change)

11-Sep-16