Footsteps of Faith: “Be My Witnesses”
Course Syllabus

Location: Youth Suite

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

Course Teachers: Rev. Jonathan Reinink
                 Rev. Madison VanVeelen
                 cell # (609) 937-4105  cell # (502) 436-3958
                 jreinink@secondchurch.org  mvanveelen@secondchurch.org

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, and send each student into the world with a blessing.

- Help each student talk about and explore his or her calling
  - Our goal is to help each student identify his or her gifts and to give each participant the opportunity to articulate and share his or her faith journey.

- Equip the students for a lifelong journey of faith
  - Our goal is to bring the Bible to life, to share the living word of the living God. Learning and sharing in scripture, we hope to make the story of early Christians a part of our faith story.

- Send each student into the world with a blessing
  - Our goal is for the students to know they are sent out with the love of God and to give them the confidence and assurance to articulate, proclaim, and live out Christ’s love in the world.

Attendance:
The class meets in the fall from Sept-Nov and in the Spring from Jan-March. Students must attend at least 16 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 Aspire Youth Retreat Saturday Nov. 7 - Sunday Nov. 8, 2015.
- Students will regularly attend Sunday worship.
- Students will attend a Shabbat service at IHC - Friday Feb. 5, 2016 (5 pm)
- Students will attend a service at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox - Sunday Apr. 17, 2016
- Students will be expected to attend fellowship events during the coming year. Dec. 6 + Apr. 24.

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!
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 Madison on the due date at mvanveelen@secondchurch.org.

Everyone writes:
**Mandatory Reflection:** Due October 11, 2015
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 6, 2015 (No one chose this one…)
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 28, 2016 (Everyone will do this one…)
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 20, 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 13, 2015
   First Class
   Orientation

September 20, 2015
   Struggling with Scripture
   Read: Handout

September 27, 2015
   The Early Church
   Read: Acts 1 and 2 in preparation for class
   Signups for Group Projects and Scripture Reading

OCTOBER

October 4, 2015
   Paul’s Conversion
   Read: Acts 9

October 11, 2015
   Mandatory Reflection Assignment Due (email to myanveelen@secondchurch.org)
   Paul as a Missionary
   Read: Acts 13 and 14 in preparation for class

October 18, 2015
   Paul in Prison
   Read: Acts 16-17:15

October 25, 2015
   Paul in Athens
   Read: Acts 17 in preparation for class
   Athens Group Presentation

NOVEMBER

November 1, 2015
   Paul in Corinth
   Read: Acts 18 in preparation for class
   Corinth Group Presentation

November 7-8, 2015 Attend Youth Retreat

November 15, 2015
   Paul in Ephesus
   Read: Acts 19
   Ephesus Group Presentation
November 22, 2015
Paul in Rome
Read: Acts 28
Rome Group Presentation

DECEMBER

December 6, 2015
Reflection Assignment Option #1 Due (email to mvanveelen@secondchurch.org)
Social Lunch! – Meet at 12:30 pm at Capri (2602 Ruth Dr., Indianapolis, 46240)

No Class – Christmas Break

JANUARY

January 10, 2016
Island of Patmos & Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature
Patmos Group Presentation
Parents & Participants Trip & Security Info Meeting: 12:00-12:30 pm

January 17, 2016- MLK Weekend
No Class

January 24, 2016
John of the Revelation
Read: Selections from Revelation

January 31, 2016
Revelation Continued
Read: Selections from Revelation

FEBRUARY

February 5, 2016
Attend Shabbat Service at Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, 5pm
(Tour, Service, & Optional dinner to follow)

February 7, 2016
Saints and Martyrs
Read: Acts 6:8-8:1

February 10, 2016 Ash Wednesday Service (7 pm)

February 14, 2016 - President’s Day Weekend (Youth Retreat)
No Class

February 21, 2016
Peter the Apostle
Read: Acts 2
February 28, 2106

**Reflection Assignment Option #2 Due (email to mvanveelen@secondchurch.org)**
Peter the first Pope
**Read:** 1 & 2 Peter

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**MARCH**

March 6, 2016
Peter vs. Paul: The Jerusalem Council
**Read:** Acts 15

March 13, 2016
Icons Presentation & Discussion with guest, Nick Ison

March 20, 2016 – Palm Sunday
**Testimony Assignment Due (email to mvanveelen@secondchurch.org)**
Share testimonies in class – **bring a paper copy to class**

March 27, 2016 – April 3, 2016 Easter Break
**No Class**

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**APRIL**

April 10, 2016
Share remaining testimonies

April 17, 2016
**Worship at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, 9:30am**

April 24, 2016
**Q&A Class (bring questions about course material) + Lunch to follow**

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**MAY**

May 1 – 8, 2016
**No Class**

May 15, 2016
**MANDATORY CLASS MEETING**
We will discuss final details for our trip

**Tuesday May 17, 2016 – Footsteps of Faith Class Meets with Session at 6:30 pm**

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**JUNE**

June 9 – 19, 2015- **Travel the Footsteps of Faith! (Subject to change)**