



Join us for Worship Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

August 16, 2024

Dear Friends of Second Church,

Between my own high school years and 10 years as a teacher, I saw firsthand the many ways that schools honor the start of senior year.

At my high school, there was a tea in the library that it seemed like nobody thought to tell us about, but to which some people came impeccably dressed, as if they'd just happened to be sitting in the dining hall in a double breasted suit coat.

Much later, I worked at a school where the special traditions included a "Senior Bench" and a patch of "Senior Grass." These didn't seem to play much of a role in anything, and after the first few days of school, you would have been forgiven for not realizing that there was anything different about *that* bench or *that* lawn, but it was fun to watch during the first few days, as the new seniors were free to walk past the (imaginary) velvet rope and enjoy their new space.

Markers like those were a big departure from the debut of junior year, which never seemed to involve ceremonies or privileges at any institution I was ever part of, except maybe the right to stay up all night doing homework and worrying that it was all about to come crashing down.

Everyone always made junior year sound like a combat tour in Nam, or a trip around Cape Horn.

Whatever it was, it was not that.

I don't remember any true "casualties" from it, aside from having a lot more to do, unless you count casualties from the pressure. Certainly, there were certainly some of those, which manifested in one form or another.

But suddenly, there was this sense that, for juniors, People (who?) Were Watching...that There Would Be Consequences (what?) For Things Done and Left Undone. The piper's payment had at last come due.

(It's a reflection of the relative ease of our lives that junior year would seem so definitive for our futures—and that so much of what our futures promised could only be imagined within the framework of where we would end up going to college, but that's something to ponder at another time.)

I'm thinking about that sense of being watched.

More specifically, I'm thinking about how quickly the affirmation of being "seen" gave way to the anxiety of being judged.

Here in the church, we often encounter a similar dynamic with adults returning to church after many years away—they left (even fled) their childhood faith because the God they encountered there was a particularly tough customer, unimpressed by anything that fell short, forever pushing for the dimly attainable, regardless of cost or the actual depth of anyone's joy. It's not hard to see why the promise of eternity in the presence of such a God would seem chilly at best.

Yet despite the pain of all that, they feel moved to try again — anyway, some do — and much of the challenge they face is whether they can truly believe that they are **seen** by God — acknowledged, known, loved — and in that sense watched, in the way that a loving parent watches a young person with fascination and delight, and without that score-keeping sense of judgment they found in God when they were younger.

When we think of ourselves as seen by God, it is an invitation to acknowledge that we are loved and lovable, despite our shortcomings. It reminds us that there is much more to us than our hardest days, and infinitely more to God, who holds all our days within his tender hands.

See you in church,



Sermons are always
available online:
[2CCSermons](#)

If you can't make it in person, join us
via [Livestream for our 10:30
a.m.](#) Sunday service.

Children's Chapel this summer...

Now through August 25, children are encouraged to meet in the nursery from 9:30-10:30 a.m. for a very special summer worship experience for infants to school age children entering grade 5. This is in alignment with our Summer worship schedule.

Children's Chapel this summer will include worshipping outside, special guests, crafts, games, scripture lessons, prayer, and worship services designed with young hearts and wiggly bodies in mind.

For more information please contact Jenny@2cc.org

Registration not required but helpful for us to best know and love your child.



During the summer, Neighbor to Neighbor provides weekly additional food supplies to families with school-aged children who would otherwise rely on the free and reduced lunch program at school.

Please consider donating to their Summer Supplement food drive. Every donation directly supports families in need.

A collection bin is placed outside the 2CC nursery room door. Most needed items include canned meat, cereal, canned fruit, canned vegetables, and shelf-stable milk.

Mark your calendars...



HOMECOMING WEEKEND

at Second Congregational Church

Friday, September 6

*Pizza truck, bounce house, beer, wine & desserts starting at 5:30 p.m.
Critter Caravan Travel Animal Show from 6:00-7:00 p.m.*

Saturday, September 7

Regional Youth Ministry is hosting a carnival. 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 8

Worship under the tent at 10:30 a.m. with Bluegrass Band

All church BBQ hosted by our Deacons immediately after worship

Running Start Program at the YMCA

Helping Local Children Start The School Year With Confidence

Running Start is a program aimed at providing local school children with the opportunity to go **back-to-school clothes shopping**, empowering them to the start the new school year with confidence. This program is directly aligned with our commitment to nurture the potential of every child and teen.

As a volunteer, you will serve as “personal shopping assistants” for the program participants. It would be great to have members of the our local non-profits and community agencies participate; It is a wonderful opportunity to connect with families in a fun way to build and deepen connections.

Volunteering to help bring a local child back to school shopping is one of the best ways you can support our Running Start program. By volunteering your time, you can be an essential part of this transformative experience and create memories that will last a lifetime.

[**Click here to learn more or volunteer for Running Start
2024**](#)



River House Presents

Wonka

Free Entry



DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 PM
THE MOVIE STARTS AT 7 PM

AUGUST 30TH 2024

125 River Road Extension Cos Cob CT 06807



Please join us for a free indoor family viewing of Wonka.

Email : info@theriverhouse.org to register.

**"REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE
PROVIDED"**

*Donations
are Greatly
Appreciated!*





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