Second Presbyterian celebrates its 175th anniversary in 2017, making it one of the oldest congregations in Chicago. The history of the church closely mirrors the growth and history of the city itself, which was only founded five years earlier. In this article, we will explore 13 interesting and little known facts about the church.

**Chicago mayors**
The congregation was organized on June 1, 1842 with 26 charter members, one of whom was Benjamin Raymond, then serving his second term as the mayor of the city of Chicago. Three additional mayors later attended the church – John Chapin (1846-1847), Walter S. Gurnee (1851-1853), and “Long” John Wentworth (1857-1858 and 1860-1861).

**First building**
A modest frame building, measuring 40’ by 60’, was constructed at the southeast corner of Randolph and Clark in 1842. Within a year, church trustee Silas Cobb suggested sawing the building in half and adding 20 feet to its length to encourage growth in the congregation. It was later sold to the Methodists and ended its life as the Illinois Central passenger station at Prairie Avenue and 16th Street.

**Rev. Robert Patterson**
Patterson served as the first pastor of the congregation from 1842 to 1874 and was the patriarch of a prominent family. His son, Robert Jr. was editor of the Chicago Tribune. Grandchildren included Cissy Patterson, editor of the Washington Times-Herald, and Joseph Patterson, founder of the New York Daily News. Madeline (Korbel) Albright, first female Secretary of State (under President Bill Clinton) was married to great-grandson Joseph Albright.

**Chicago Fire**
The second church building, located at the northeast corner of Washington and Wabash, burned in the Chicago Fire, but the walls remained standing. Church member Charles Kellogg built a new roof over the burned out sanctuary to house his ready-made clothing factory. The stones were later used to construct First Presbyterian Church in Lake Forest. Two Gothic Revival pulpit chairs survived the fire and are displayed in the church narthex.

**Robert Todd Lincoln**
President Abraham Lincoln’s son was appointed a trustee of the church in 1879, and served until he accepted the post as ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1889. The following year, his son Abraham Lincoln II died at the age of 16. Rev. J. Munro Gibson, who had served as pastor at Second during Lincoln’s early years as trustee, was by that time serving a church in London, and presided at the young boy’s funeral.

**President Grover Cleveland**
The President attended services at Second Presbyterian on April 30, 1893, having arrived in Chicago to officially open the World’s Columbian Exposition on May 1st. He arrived and departed the church with little fanfare, shaking a few hands along the way. A newspaper article noted that he deposited a $2 bill in the collection plate. Cleveland occupied a suite of rooms at the Lexington Hotel, 2135 S. Michigan Avenue, during his stay in Chicago.

**Booker T. Washington**
One of the first events to take place in the newly rebuilt sanctuary was a lecture delivered by the prominent educator on December 29, 1901. More than 1,500 people attended and hundreds more were turned away. Washington spoke about the importance of education and his work at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. He was invited back to the church for a second lecture.
in 1908.

Mission work in China
The congregation actively supported the work of missionaries in China for decades. In 1913, the church funded construction of the McPherson Academy for Boys in Ichowfu, Shandong province. The facility, which included classrooms and dormitories, was named in honor of Rev. Simon McPherson, third minister at Second Presbyterian.

North wing
The north wing of the building was added in 1917 during the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the church. Constructed at a cost of $50,000 and designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw, the wing included a kitchen, Sunday School rooms, and library, with a single-lane bowling alley in the basement level. Each space was lit with a large skylight which has since been covered over. Shaw prepared plans for completely dismantling the sanctuary, including windows, murals, and wood carvings, and rebuilding it in a new structure on the seminary campus. The surviving Michigan Avenue building was to receive a new sanctuary and be converted into a mission church.

Integration
The church congregation was integrated in 1958 during the pastorate of Rev. Ernest Ackerman. Nixola Barnes was the first African-American admitted to membership. A plaque in the sanctuary honors Ackerman as a “courageous pastor of the church.” Ackerman and his wife gave the beautiful bronze Celtic cross displayed on the communion table, made on the Scottish island of Iona.

Etta Moten Barnett
Long-time church member Barnett was an accomplished actress and vocalist and was the first black artist to perform at the White House in 1933, at the invitation of Eleanor Roosevelt. George Gershwin had her in mind when he created the role of Bess in Porgy & Bess, and she sang the role during the revival production. She later hosted an influential radio show and was appointed a U.S. emissary to ten African countries. She died in 2004 at the age of 102.

Other work surrounding the window will include the removal of the window’s old Lexan covering and the fabrication and installation of a new covering. The window’s steel frame will be examined and replaced if necessary. This work will be done by Neal Vogel of Restoric LLC. Bulley Andrews Masonry will provide the necessary repair work on the exterior masonry. Kelly Plastering will repair the interior plaster in the “Peace” window bay and Celtic Painting will then repaint the bay walls according to Shaw’s original color palette. The window’s reinstallation is expected by June 2018.
**Celebration of Chicago History**

**“The Great Chicago Fire”**

The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 was one of the most significant events in the history of the City. For three days fire blazed through the city destroying everything in its path and leaving over 90,000 people homeless. Friends will celebrate the legacies of this pivotal event with a special presentation “The Great Chicago Fire” delivered by Ginger Frere, MLIS, Newberry Library Scholar-in-Residence. Learn how the City was rebuilt out of the ashes and developed into one of the most powerful cities in the United States.

Join Friends and Landmarks Illinois on Wednesday, June 21 for a 6:00 p.m. presentation followed by a reception. Guided tour will be given from 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please RSVP by June 16 to historic2ndchurch@yahoo.com or 800-657-0687.

**Breakfast With Tiffany’s**

“Breakfast at Tiffany’s,” the iconic 1961 movie starring Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard, is a fixture of that era. So when you have nine large stained glass windows from the Tiffany Studios that need conservation work, why not celebrate their beauty and raise funds for their restoration with a “Breakfast with Tiffany’s” themed event! That is exactly what Friends of Historic Second Church did on April 22, 2017.

Guests were greeted by a cut-out of Audrey Hepburn as Holly Golightly and the melodies of the movie’s theme song, “Moon River” played by church organist Michael Shawgo. After coffee and tea, guests were led to the balcony by trained docents to view the Tiffany windows up close and to learn about Tiffany's glass-making techniques. Afterwards, a movie-themed breakfast of croissants, quiche and chocolate-covered strawberries was served.

**Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and contributions from February 2, 2017 - May 17, 2017.**

*Under $100*
- Thomas & Carole Ahern
- Anonymous

*Between $100-$499*
- Anonymous (3)
- Jeff & Linda Miller
- Priscilla Mims
- John & Sami Nordmark
- Janet Parker
- John & Sherrie Parr
- Dean Rapp
- Shelley & Elizabeth Reither
- Hilda Robinson
- Gary A. Schuetz
- David C. & Ruth Sharpe
- Lillian Staar

*Between $500-$999*
- Anonymous
- Hollis P. & Barbara A. Edmunds

*Between $1,000-$2,499*
- Stephen & Mary Kay Wysham

*Between $2,500-$4,999*
- Michael & Ann Belletire

*Between $5,000-$9,999*
- Michael & Mary Kay Wysham

*Between $10,000-

*Under $100*
- Judith Duvall & Michelle McNamie
- Allene Gregory
- Janet Smucker

**CELEBRATION OF CHICAGO HISTORY**

"The Great Chicago Fire"
### Baptismal Font Receives Protection

A new protective barrier has been installed around the baptismal font at the front of the church. The limestone font is intricately carved in the form of a dense cluster of lilies and lilies of the valley. There has been concern about growing damage to the fragile leaves and petals, which increasingly have been broken off. The font’s prominent location adjacent to the south aisle puts it in a heavy traffic area and in danger of being bumped. As the new barrier is one of the few new artifacts introduced to the sanctuary since Shaw’s reconstruction, considerable thought and analysis went into the design and material selection. It was decided not to use a foreign material but to use something already existing in the church sanctuary. The material chosen was historic iron, which was provided by fabricator Rocio’s Custom Metal Work. The metal was treated with beeswax while still hot from the forge to give it a black patina similar to what one sees on the cast registers in the aisle floors. Using iron allowed for a minimal profile and the dark finish helps the barrier recede from view. Rocio’s used historic metal connection details and the rigid barrier is firmly screwed into the floor.

The Mary Gene Yee (nee Moy) Memorial Fund provided Friends of Historic Second Church with most of the funding for the new barrier. The Fund was started by Judy Lussie in 2009 as a memorial to her mother who was a member of the church for many years. On Sunday, July 9, as part of the 175th Anniversary Celebration of the founding of the church, the font and its new protective barrier will be dedicated to Mary Gene Yee. The extended family, many of whom were baptized in the font, will be in attendance.

### Tour of the Villa Historic District

Saturday September 30, 2017
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
$25.00 per person

Our 2017 walking tour will take us to the historic neighborhood of the Villa, located on Chicago’s northwest side at Pulaski Road and Addison Street. The area was marketed beginning in 1907 with strict guidelines governing the size, style, placement, and cost of the homes. Distinctive features include tree-lined medians down Avers and Harding Avenues and rubble-stone planters at every corner. The 126 homes represent one of the largest collections of Craftsman and Prairie School style homes in the city, designed by architects including Clarence Hatzfeld, Arthur Knox, and John C. Christensen. The Villa District was designated a Chicago landmark on November 23, 1983.

The tour will be led by Bill Tyre, who consulted with Villa residents on the book written for the 90th anniversary of the Villa in 1997. Architect and Friends board member Nate Lielasus will assist. At the conclusion of the tour, attendees will be treated to a reception with light refreshments in one of the homes on Avers.

To reserve a space on the tour, please submit payment in the amount of $25.00 per person to: Friends of Historic Second Church 1936 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60616

### Second Presbyterian Public Tour Schedule:

- Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 p.m.
- Saturdays 11:00-3:00 p.m.
- Sundays (after worship service) 12:15 p.m.

Or call 800-657-0687 to arrange a private tour

### Join the “Peace” Window Conservation Team

It’s not too late! You can still be part of the Tiffany “Peace” window conservation team. Your contribution will enable us to reach the campaign goal. As of today, we need only an additional $45,000. Please send a check today or go online and click “Donate.”
**BECOME A 2017 MEMBER**

If you have not yet joined or renewed your membership in Friends of Historic Second Church for 2017, we invite you to do so today. You won’t want to miss out on any of the preservation work, newsletters, lectures, walking tours or historic events occurring at Second Presbyterian Church during the year. As the *Restore a Treasured Chicago Jewel* capital campaign nears completion, restoration work on Tiffany’s “Peace” window will be underway soon. On June 21, Friends will celebrate Chicago history with a lecture on “The Great Chicago Fire.” As a member you are always the first to know about the progress to restore Chicago’s only National Historic Landmark church and events to explore its artistic and historic legacy. And, you receive the satisfaction of knowing you were part of creating living history. Complete the form below or go online to www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org to join.

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**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

All members receive the newsletter *The Herald* and are recognized as donors in the newsletter.

**Tiffany Circle:** $40 Individual; $55 Family; $25 Student/Senior (62 yrs.+)

*Benefits include:* Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends’ merchandise.

**Arts & Crafts Circle:** $100 and above

*Benefits include:* Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends’ merchandise, and invitations to special members-only tours and programs.

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I/we wish to become a member of Friends of Historic Second Church or renew a current membership.

Name: ________________________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ________________________________________________________________________

Telephone: ________________________________________________________________________

E-mail: ________________________________________________________________________

Enclosed is my check for $ ____________ for membership at the following level:

____ Tiffany Circle: $40 Individual; $55 Family; $25 Student/Senior (62 yrs.+)

____ Art & Crafts Circle: $100 and above

____ Yes ____ No You may acknowledge my contribution in Friends’ publications.

____ Yes ____ No I prefer to receive my newsletter by e-mail.

____ Yes ____ No I am interested in volunteering for Friends’ activities.

If you wish to discuss sponsoring a restoration project, contact Friends of Historic Second Church at 1-800-657-0687.

Please return completed form with check made payable to:
Friends of Historic Second Church 1936 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL  60616.
Or renew online at www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org.

Memberships and gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Friends of Historic Second Church is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.
UPCOMING 2017 LECTURES AND TOURS

Howard Tiffen will present a lecture on Wednesday, September 27, entitled “On the Trail of William Morris.” Tiffen will provide a multi-media glimpse of Morris, his homes, his philosophy, his internal conflicts and his windows; and discuss how Morris came to influence the design and decoration of Historic Second Church. The 7:00 p.m. lecture will be preceded by a reception and tours of the sanctuary beginning at 6:00 p.m. Lecture is $10.

Two new events are being offered as part of the Chicago Architectural Biennial (CAB). On Saturday, October 7 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., architect Nate Lielasus will provide a Basement to Belfry tour of the church. During this inaugural tour at Second Presbyterian, guests will be given a behind the scenes look at areas of the church not typically visited on regular tours, from the basement dirt floor to the charred roof timbers. The tour will focus on original architectural features from the 1874 construction and evidence of changes during Shaw’s reconstruction. Tour price is $20.

Howard Van Doren Shaw and the Arts and Crafts Movement is the topic of the second CAB event. It is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 4. Preservation architect Virginia Greene will trace Shaw’s path during the early part of his 35 year career and take a closer look at social influences during the time. After her lecture, Greene will give a tour of the church whose interior Shaw designed. The group will then travel to the 1886 H. H. Richardson-designed Glessner House Museum on Prairie Avenue for lunch and a tour that highlights the cultural influences that affected the controversial design of the house. The cost is $40 per person or $32 for members.

Mission Statement

The mission of Friends of Historic Second Church is to preserve and restore the art and architecture of Chicago’s Landmark Second Presbyterian Church, educate a worldwide audience about its historical and cultural significance, and share those resources with the community.

Friends of Historic Second Church is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.