



SOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"Welcoming the Transforming Spirit"

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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Presbyterian Church Launches Groundbreaking Bible Reading Campaign

Joining Thousands Nationwide Participating in *The Story*

"The Bible is central to our faith," said Pastor Deborah Swift of South Presbyterian Church, "but many people are intimidated by its scope and size. The Story gives us a way to journey from Genesis to Revelation together in 31 weeks so everyone understands God's story and how their story intersects with it."

Rochester, NY [September 10, 2011]– The Bible is the best-selling book in history, but how many people in Rochester are actually reading it? A Gallup survey reports the average American household has four Bibles. However, research by [Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life](#) (2008) found that only 16 percent of Americans read the Bible every day.

South Presbyterian Church is hoping to reverse this trend, starting with its own congregation. Reverend Swift believes that *The Story*, a Zondervan best-seller, is an effective tool to increase Biblical literacy, helping readers understand God's story from Genesis to Revelation and how their own stories intersect with God's. Consisting of 31 chapters of carefully-selected scriptures (taken from the New International Readers Version) sequenced in chronological order, *The Story* presents the word of God in an engaging format, reading like a novel.

"I want the people in our congregation, as well as the city of Rochester to realize the incredible love God has for them and how their story is found in our Holy story," said Pastor Swift.

The Story Church Campaign is a unique program providing up to 31 weeks of curriculum for children, teen and adult Sunday school. When accompanied by reading through the five age-related books (*The Story*, *The Story: Teen Edition*, *The Story for Kids*, *The Story for Children*, and *The Story for Little Ones*), the entire church can be literally on the same page for 31 weeks. South Presbyterian is beginning the experience in September, but people can join at any time.

South Presbyterian Church invites you to experience *The Story*. Sunday services start at 10AM at 4 E. Henrietta Rd. near the University of Rochester and at the end of each week, the theme of worship reflects the reading for that week. Each reader is encouraged to become part of a group discussion at least once a month – more often if the group or person so desires. *"Our first groups are already meeting,"* notes Swift, *"and regardless of age, every one of those present felt they had a different understanding of the Bible after just one week. We can't wait to see what happens next!"* Group times may be obtained by calling the church office at 585.271.5078, logging on [to www.SouthPC.org](http://www.SouthPC.org) or visiting Facebook. Books are reasonably priced but no one will be turned away; if you want a book and intend to study with the church, they will make sure you get one.

"This is not about converting people," she added, *"nor is it about promoting only one Biblical interpretation. Presbyterians believe that God's Spirit speaks to us each through Scripture; just as at Pentecost, we each hear the message in a way that has meaning for us. What this book does is help us discuss what that message might be for each one of us at any given time."* Swift assures that people are welcome to the book groups and *The Story* program without having to worship at South or join their church.