



The BEACON

The Official Newsletter of Christ Church United Church of Christ, Des Plaines, Illinois
An Open & Affirming WISE for mental health congregation

Volume II, Issue IX

October 2025

From The Pastor's Desk: The Beauty of Transition

Dear Beloved Church Family,

As we step into fall, God's creation speaks to us in a language all its own. The crisp air, the falling leaves, the fields settling into rest—all of it tells a story of transition. At first glance, it might seem like an ending. The flowers fade, the leaves fall, the trees grow bare. And yet, in God's wisdom, this is not the end. It is preparation. What appears to be a loss is actually making room for renewal, for unseen growth, and for what is yet to come.

The colors of fall remind us of this truth. The yellows, oranges, and reds paint our world with beauty, signaling that while one season of life has come to a close, there is still something to celebrate. The leaves may no longer be thriving at their peak. However, they still glorify God in their brilliance before returning to the earth to nourish new beginnings. Even in transition, beauty remains.

Our life as a church is much the same. On October 3rd, we commemorate 133 years since this congregation first began its ministry in Des Plaines. That is a remarkable witness—133 years of worship, prayer, service, fellowship, and countless stories of God's grace woven through the generations. Since I began serving as your pastor four and a half years ago, I have been blessed to hear many of those stories and to witness the living faith that continues among us.

Yes, we are not as large a congregation as in decades past. Yet this does not mean the beauty of our life together has diminished. Instead, it means we are in a season of transition. Like autumn itself, our community is being reshaped for what is to come. The Spirit is preparing us, even now, for a future that we may not yet see, but for which we can trust God's promise.

The prophet reminds us: *"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43:19).*

May we open our eyes to the beauty of this season, remembering that God is present in every change, and that from every transition, new life will surely emerge.

In faith and action,

Rev. Gilbert

In this newsletter you can expect:

Nourishment through
Scripture.....2

Financial
Report.....3

Get
Involved.....4

Council
Report.....5

Rally Day 2025
Pictures.....8

Birthdays,
Anniversaries,
Memorials, &
Honors.....14

Calendar of
Events.....15

Nourishment Through Scripture

For all those who are following the Scripture lessons used during the Sunday Worship Services, here are the October 2025 Common Lectionary readings:

October 5: Lamentations 1:1-6; 2 Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10

October 12: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7; 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19

October 19: Jeremiah 31:27-34; 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5; Luke 18:1-8

October 26: Joel 2:23-32; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14



Pastor's Office Hours:

Sundays: By Appt after worship.

Mondays: Phone, Video, or Appt.

Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 10 am - 3 pm*

Thursdays: By Appt.

Sabbath: Fridays and Saturdays

**Can schedule later appointments on a case-by-case basis.
For emergencies, call the pastor on his cell: 224-250-9898*

Finance Manager's Office Hours:

Tuesday - Friday: 9 am - 12 pm

Administrative Assistant's Hours:

Tuesday - Friday: 9 am - 3 pm

STAFF MEETING: Tuesdays 10 am - 12 pm

The office phone is not answered.

COMMUNITY BACKPACK PROJECT

Suggested items - please, no peanut based snacks and no glass jars!

- Single-serve breakfast cereal
- Instant oatmeal packets
- Pancake mix (add water variety)
- Canned red beans
- One-pound bags of rice
- Pasta and pasta sauce (in cans or plastic jars)



- Canned tuna, beef or chicken
- Peanut butter and jelly (in plastic jars)
- Fruit cups, pudding cups, fruit snacks
- Individually wrapped snacks and chips
- Canned pasta (ravioli, beef-a-Roni, stew, or chili)
- Canned soup

Giving

Did you know our church offers online giving and text-to-give? They're easy to use and secure! You can give a gift of support online at <https://bit.ly/ChristChurchUCCGive> or give via text message by texting the amount you would like to give to 847-750-3007.



Kindness is free.
Let's sprinkle that stuff everywhere!



SUNDAY CHURCH MINISTRIES

	<u>Liturgist/Lector</u>	<u>Council Greeter</u>	<u>Streaming Coordinator</u>
October 5	Jessica Busse	Mandy O'Donnell	Judy Rosedale
October 12	Megan Shipp	Laura Hallberg	Mandy O'Donnell
October 19	Jacob Guerra-Martinez	Judy Rosedale	Mandy O'Donnell
October 26	Jazmyn Vasquez	Mandy O'Donnell	Judy Rosedale

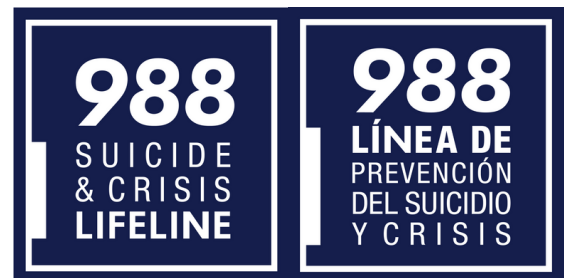


Ushers

October 5	Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat
October 12	Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick
October 19	Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat
October 26	Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick



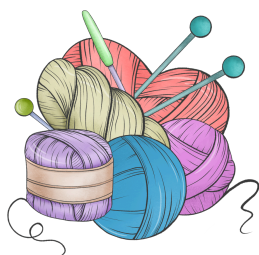
**SEPTEMBER'S AVERAGE
ATTENDANCE:**
57±



FINANCIAL REPORT

Christ Church UCC Des Plaines
Statement of Financial Activity
August 24 through September 20, 2025

	Week of Aug 24, 25	Week of Aug 31, 25	Week of Sep 7, 25	Week of Sep 14, 25	TOTAL
▼ Ordinary Income/Expense					
► Income	1,180.00	1,074.50	661.50	982.50	3,898.50
► Expense	10,636.00	4,122.34	11,002.65	227.45	25,988.44
Net Ordinary Income	-9,456.00	-3,047.84	-10,341.15	755.05	-22,089.94



Lets Get Involved!

GET IT TOGETHER: Tiny Toes & Big Hearts! Our Get It Together group crafted blankets, hats & booties for Project Baby Blanket! They'll bring a little love to NICU babies. Can you crochet or knit? Consider joining our group! The group meets on the third Wednesday of each month in the lounge. *The next meeting will be on October 15th, from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm.*

NOTABLES: The Notables will meet again to prepare for the coming busy season. As always, in Wobbe Hall from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. Contact Kyle Speer for more details.



MISSION COMMITTEE: On the first Sunday of every month, we collect food for the Self-Help Closet and Pantry of Des Plaines. The Red Barrels will be in the narthex.

Please, no expired food; here are a few suggestions:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| • Ketchup | • Body wash | • Men's, Women's, and children's all-sizes underwear |
| • Mustard | • Shampoo | • Ensure, Boost, Glucerna (generic ok) |
| • Mayonnaise | • Dish soap | • Canned dinners (hash, chili) |
| • Pasta sauce (plain) | • Laundry detergent | • Canned fruit |
| • Flour | • Paper towels | • Peanut butter |
| • Sugar | • Dog food (canned and dry) | • Jelly or jam |
| • Instant coffee | • Cooking oil | |
| • Juice (large bottles or boxed) | | |
| • Breakfast cereal (chocolate if possible) | | |
| • New or like-new clean bed linens and towels | | |



Please bring clean, dry plastic grocery bags. Thank you everyone for all your help.

Men's Lunch:

Next meeting is on Monday, **October 13th at 11:45 am.**

Sunrise Grill: 1930 E Touhy Ave, Des Plaines, IL 60018



Women's Breakfast:

Next meeting is on Tuesday, **October 14th at 9 am.**

Sunrise Grill: 1930 E Touhy Ave, Des Plaines, IL 60018



LIBRARY

NEW BOOKS IN THE LITTLE LIBRARY!

Looking for a good read? Thanks to our dedicated Faith Forward Commission, our Little Library is stocked with various books for all ages. Each book has been carefully selected and stamped with our library stamp.

Want to contribute? Please hand your book donations to a Commission member. Remember, only pre-approved books will be stamped.

Christ Church Council Meeting August 2025

Call to Order: 7:03 pm

Roll Call: Judy Rosedale, Bob Neil, Mandy O'Donnell, Holly Schmidt, George Bielat, Laura Hallberg, Pastor Gilbert

Prayer: Judy

Review of June 11, 2025 Council Minutes:

Motion and second to approve the June 11, 2025, minutes as sent out.

The motion passed to accept the minutes.

Review of the July 30, 2025 Financial Report

Motion to approve the July 30, 2025, Financial report as presented.

The motion passed.

Pastor's Report

Worship & Arts:

- Regular Worship services – Six (2 with communion – Lake Opeka counted as a Communion Sunday)
- Hosted The Harbour representative and the new Self-Help Pantry coordinator during two separate Sundays.
- The Annual Picnic & Worship at Lake Opeka was a success, thanks to beautiful weather and plenty of food to share.

Faith Forward Commission | Christian Education

- The Commission has held monthly events for the children as Sunday School is off for the summer.

Pastoral Care:

- Pastoral contact (pastoral care-related calls/texts, emails, in-person visits, greeting cards) = 62+
- Sent outgoing Self-help Closet and Pantry director, Debbie, a greeting card and gift card on behalf of the congregation from the discretionary fund
- Visited a congregant in Minnesota during my vacation
- A funeral for a non-member that I provided pastoral care to for a few years was held and officiated by a colleague during my vacation

Administrative/Personnel:

- Staff Meeting – Eleven (11)
- Continue to co-manage all social media. Updated website
- Seven (7) committee meeting(s)
- The Vision Committee continues to meet and explore options for our next chapter.
- Music Director position on hold until after the Special Congregational Meeting.
- Continue to help with tasks issued by the Vision Task Force, building tours, etc.
- Rental: Big Noise Theater for August and September
- Maranatha is moving out on September 1, 2025

Wider UCC & DP Community Meetings/Presentations/Events:

- DP Alliance Clergy Meeting (2)
- Attended Book Chat hosted by the Outreach Committee at the Des Plaines Library.
- Hosted debriefing meeting for the Community Pride Celebration in partnership with Speak DP & DP Clergy Alliance
 - The event was a massive success with lots of smiles.
- Convened IL Conference of the UCC level meetings – Three (3)
- Attended City Hall with the Clergy Alliance, Police & Fire departments' Chiefs.
- Hosted an Intergenerational LGBTQ Conversational event in partnership with the Center for Concern.
- Met with the director of the Center for Concern.

Committee ReportsFinance Committee:

- A member of the committee resigned.

Outreach Committee:

- Meeting to plan Rally Day with the FFC next week.

Building Committee:

- Maintenance tech and Custodian continue to maintain our building.
- We had a Pest Control inspection and no serious concerns were found.

Faith Forward Commission:

- Continuing with monthly events for the kids until Sunday School resumes.

ONA Wise Committee: No report.Missions:

- At the end of July, the checks for the organizations on our 2025 Benevolence Budget were issued and sent out.
- One organization was sent out in early August.

Memorial Garden:

- Our maintenance tech installed new solar lanterns.

Unfinished Business

- Vision Committee – provide information on one page to clarify before the Special Meeting.
 - Options to vote–
 - Sell and move to another location or
 - Do Not Sell and do nothing
 - Will vote on a secret ballot and count at the meeting
 - Vote to accept absentee ballots
 - If the decision to sell is made, the ultimate decision of what we will do will be determined by the council.
 - Any “profits” will stay with the church.
 - Motion to accept proposal for the Special Meeting, seconded, and a unanimous vote to pass the motion.

New Business:

- Stewardship Drive – will ask for speakers for the Sundays

Motion to adjourn at 8:22 pm passed.

2 of 2

<https://bit.ly/CCUCCAPP>

**Download Our New Church App!**

Stay connected with our church family anytime, anywhere. Access sermons, events, updates, and so much more—all right at your fingertips. Don't miss out on this convenient way to stay in the loop! Download it today!

**Scan to download
the app**

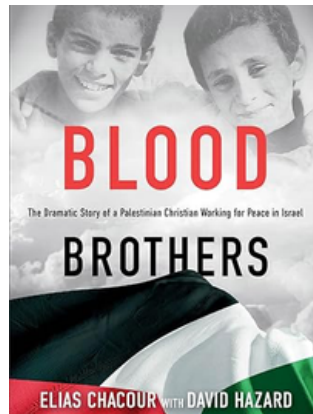


OR



2025 Annual Meeting

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26TH



Fall Book Series Concludes

Join Us for Our
October Book:
Stories of Faith,
Justice, and Resilience

Date & Time: Saturday, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM in
the Lounge

- **October 18: Blood Brothers by Elias Chacour**

Come for one discussion or all three—this is a space
for honest conversation, shared learning, and
spiritual growth.

**Here are the links to be able to purchase the
book:**

*Blood Brothers: The Dramatic Story of a Palestinian
Christian Working for Peace in Israel*

- **New:** <https://a.co/d/g6y6cGe>
- **Used:** <https://bit.ly/Chacour2025>



CHRIST CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

An open & affirming WISE for mental health congregation.

World Communion

Sunday

OCTOBER 5, 2025



Really Dory 2025



Thank you Jezze



A Word of Gratitude and Welcome

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Jezze for her faithful service and the many ways she has blessed our church community. Her gifts, dedication, and spirit of care have strengthened our shared ministry, and we send her forth with prayers of gratitude and blessing.

At the same time, we are pleased to warmly welcome Kat into this role. We look forward to the gifts she will share and the new chapter of ministry we will experience together.

With thanksgiving for Jezze and joy in welcoming Kat, we continue to give thanks to God for all who serve.



Welcome Kat



COMMUNITY BUILDING PEACE CIRCLES

Coming Fall of 2025

Experience deep connections and conversations with others in the community around topics impacting Des Plaines.

Participants will receive a \$25 grocery card.

Saturdays: ~~Sept. 13~~, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 13

11:00am - 2:00pm

First Church Des Plaines


668 Graceland Ave., Des Plaines, IL


www.FUMCDP.org



Join First United Methodist Church Des Plaines and SPEAK Des Plaines for a series of Peace Circles—spaces to connect, share, and build community. Rooted in Indigenous traditions and guided by values of inclusion and democracy, circles help us strengthen relationships and practice restorative skills.

 **668 Graceland**

 **Saturdays, 11 AM – 2 PM**

 **\$25 grocery gift card + refreshments provided**

Register here: <https://bit.ly/communitypeacecircles>

Open to all community members—leaders, youth, seniors, teachers, parents, first responders, business owners, and neighbors.

Space is limited; confirmations sent one week before each circle.



A Faith-Based Conversation on Welcoming the Stranger

Sunday, November 9th at 12 pm
Christ Church United Church of Christ
1492 Henry Ave, Des Plaines

Join us and you will:

- Learn about the categories of U.S immigration.
- Look to Scripture and our shared Biblical calling to care for the stranger among us.
- Participate in breakouts to consider how we as Christians think about immigration.




Scan to register or visit
exodusworldservice.org/faithbasedconversation

Questions? Contact Jody May
jody.may@exodusworldservice.org | 847.514.9924

CAMINO RISING PRESENTS:

Pathways to Work - Des Plaines Job Fair

Wednesday, October 29, 2025

 Time: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

 Location: Christ Church UCC,
1492 Henry Avenue, Des Plaines

Looking to Hire or Get Hired?

Join us for a dynamic community job fair hosted by Camino Rising — a nonprofit dedicated to supporting job seekers and connecting them with employers.

For Employers:

- Free participation for your organization
- Receive a table, chairs, and promotion in the printed employer directory
- Optional donation? Get extra visibility on event materials, Camino Rising's website, and social media

For Job Seekers:

- Meet local employers hiring now
- Resume review & career resources available
- Network and explore new opportunities

Space is limited — reserve your spot by October 15, 2025!

Connect, hire, and grow with our community!

Get more information and register now.

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/CRJobFair2025>

More Info: jobfair@caminorising.org



Hosted by Camino Rising — offering spiritual and professional support, job search assistance, and access to vital community services.

Healing Hearts. Restoring Lives



Illinois Conference
United Church of Christ



2025 Annual Celebration & TPIRC Education Summit

For Such a Time as This: Faith in a Time of Upheaval

October 30 – November 1, 2025

First Congregational United Church of Christ in DeKalb

Join us for a powerful three-day gathering of worship, workshops, fellowship, and visioning for the future of the Church. Special guests include The Many and the Rev. Dr. Ozzie Smith.

The business meetings will be hybrid via Zoom. However, participation may be limited. The link, meeting ID, and passcode will be sent prior to the event. The worship services will be livestreamed to our Conference YouTube channel and Facebook page.

EVENT COST:

The cost this year is **\$50 per person** and includes lunch on Friday and Saturday as well as the banquet dinner on Friday night. The optional trainings on Thursday are an additional \$25.

- Full Event – \$50 per person
- Retired UCC Clergy – FREE
- MIDs (1/2 Price) – \$25
- Virtual Only – FREE

REGISTRATION, SCHEDULE, TRAININGS, & WORKSHOPS:

- Register online by **Thursday, Oct. 16** (meal deadline).
<https://tinyurl.com/2025AnnualCelebration>
- Walk-ins welcome, but meals not guaranteed.
- Pre-event trainings on Thursday, Oct. 30: Boundary Training, Bias Awareness, UCC Polity.
- Special COM–MESA discussions also on Thursday (free, separate registration required).
<https://tinyurl.com/COMdiscussions>
- Workshops: Two blocks on Friday – review descriptions before registering.

Questions? Call 708-344-4470 (Mon–Fri, 8:30 AM–4:30 PM)

Memorials/Honors for *September*

In loving memory of Debbie Brunetti, *by Frank & Julie Staggs*

In loving memory of Ron Groll on his birthday and our 70th wedding anniversary, *by Kathie Groll*

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

- 3 - Kathryn Matthews
- 13 - Elaine Angsten
- 13 - Cathy Wiesner
- 29 - Tammy Fredrickson
- 30 - George Bielat
- 30 - Nicholas Harkovich
- 30 - Morrigan Kelso
- 31 - Ruth Hallberg



*Happy
Anniversary*

- 3 - Mindy & Bill Frost (55)
- 5 - Ruth & Irving Hallberg (68)
- 17 - Mandy & Kevin O'Donnell (16)

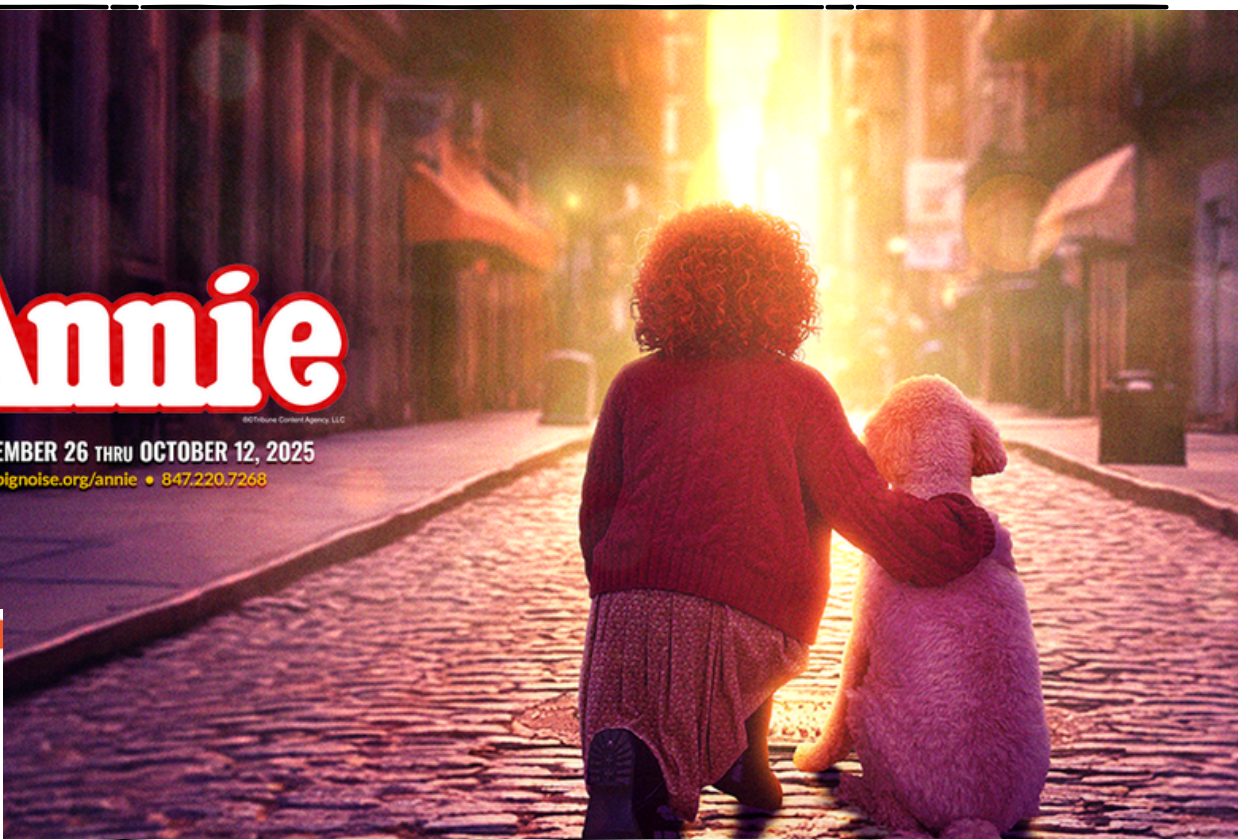
OCTOBER 3rd
Christ Church's
133rd Anniversary



Annie

SEPTEMBER 26 THRU OCTOBER 12, 2025

bignoise.org/annie • 847.220.7268



COMING UP IN OCTOBER

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>Time</u>
3	Membership Affirmations Deadline	-	-
	CHRIST CHURCH'S 133RD ANNIVERSARY		
5	World Communion Day /Mission Collection	Sanctuary	9:30 am
	Finance Committee Meeting	Lounge	11 am
8	Potluck	Wobbe Hall	6 pm
	Council Meeting	Lounge	7 pm
13	Men's Lunch	Sunrise Grill	11:45 am
14	Women's Breakfast	Sunrise Grill	9 am
	Vision Task Force Meeting	Lounge	1:30 pm
15	Get It Together	Lounge	10 am - 12 pm
18	Fall Book Series (<i>See insert for titles</i>)	Lounge	10 am - 12 pm
19	New Member Sunday	Sanctuary	9:30 am
26	Annual Meeting	Sanctuary	10:30 am
27	Faith Forward Commission Meeting	Lounge	5:15 pm
28	Vision Task Force Meeting	Lounge	1:30 pm
29	Pathways to Work Job Fair	Wobbe Hall	10 am - 2 pm



Potluck: Come and bring a dish for the potluck dinner. The dinner will be at 6:00 pm on **Wednesday, October 8th, 2025**. Join us for fellowship.

PLASTIC RECYCLING CHALLENGE

We are thrilled to share that our 4 partner churches have already surpassed the 1,000-pound goal to qualify the Self-Help Closet & Pantry of Des Plaines for a Trex bench! Since July 1, 2025, a total of 1,044 pounds of plastic has been collected through the joint efforts of Trinity Lutheran ELCA, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, First Church United Methodist Church, and Christ Church UCC. Thank you to everyone who made this possible! Please continue to bring in your recyclable plastics. Recycling continues as we help our earthy home.



"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul." - 3 John 1:2

Please keep the church office informed when you hear of someone needing prayers. During the months of **September**, our thoughts and prayers were with:

Marion Meseth*
Dawn Mashek
Linda Steckel*
Jack Storm
Sue Prunty
Marilyn Hoover*

Marilyn McCown
Dorothy Zemke*
Kelly Roberts
Helen Harney
Hope & Bruce Tschappat*
George Bielat

Homebound*
Our Country
Ukraine, Lebanon, Palestinian,
and Israeli citizens
Documented & Undocumented
Immigrants



**Christ Church
United Church of Christ**

1492 Henry Avenue
Des Plaines, IL 60016
847-297-4230

christchurchuccdesplaines.org

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@christchurchuccdesplaines

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Kyle Speer, Finance Manager & Music Coordinator

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Tommie Jordan, Custodian

Emanuel Alvarez, Maintenance Technician

The Beacon is the official newsletter of Christ Church United Church of Christ. Edited by church staff. Published monthly, August through June.

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988

Suicide and Crisis

Lifeline

Call or Text

