



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 III

March 2025

From The Pastor

"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." – Isaiah 43:19

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As we stand on the horizon of spring, we witness the world awakening. Buds begin to bloom, the days grow longer, and the air carries the promise of renewal. Spring is a reminder of God's faithfulness, a season where new life emerges from what seemed dormant, and opportunities arise for growth, change, and hope.

Yet, even as nature reminds us of God's ongoing work of renewal, we cannot ignore the realities of suffering in our world. Our nation finds itself in a time of great political uncertainty, where policies and budget decisions are shaping the lives of so many—sometimes for the better, but too often in ways that bring hardship. Families struggling to afford food, individuals unable to access healthcare, and communities losing vital resources remind us that justice is not just a political issue but a gospel calling.

As followers of Christ, we are not called to turn away from these struggles but to step into them with open eyes, compassionate hearts, and informed minds. We are called to stand behind, beside, and before our siblings who are unheard, unseen, and overlooked. The work of Christ was never about comfort but transformation—seeing the brokenness in the world and choosing to be part of God's healing.

This season invites us to see life in a new way, to open our hearts to the movement of the Holy Spirit, and to ask, "Where is God calling me to bring renewal? How can I be a voice for justice? In what ways can I embody Christ's love?"

May this season be one in which we do not simply celebrate new life but actively participate in it—by seeking truth, advocating for the vulnerable, and embracing the changes that bring us closer to God's vision for the world.

May we have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts ready to act.

*With hope and in Christ's love,
Rev. Gilbert*



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Nourishment Through Scripture

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



March 2, Transfiguration Sunday: Ex 34:29-35; 2 Cor 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36

March 9, First Sunday in Lent: Deut 26:1-11; Rom 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13

March 16, Second Sunday in Lent: Gen 15:1-12, 17-18; Phil 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35

March 23, Third Sunday in Lent: Isa 55:1-9; 1 Cor 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

March 30, Fourth Sunday in Lent: Josh 5:9-12; 2 Cor 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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: 8:30 am - 1:30 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 PROGRAM

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

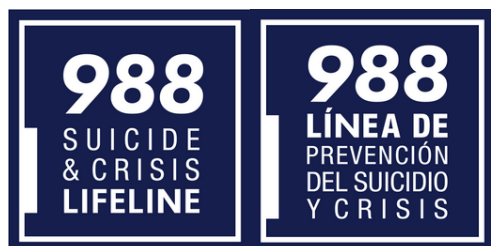
	<u>Liturgist/Lector</u>	<u>Council Greeter</u>	<u>Streaming Coordinator</u>
March 2	Holly Schmidt	Mandy O'Donnell	Mandy O'Donnell
March 9	-	Bob Neil	Judy Rosedale
March 16	Jacob Guerra-Martinez	Holly Schmidt	Mandy O'Donnell
March 23	Putz-Cheng Family	Mandy O'Donnell	Judy Rosedale
March 30	Jessica Busse	Laura Hallberg	Mandy O'Donnell



Ushers



March 2	Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr
March 9	Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick
March 16	Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr
March 23	Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick
March 30	Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr

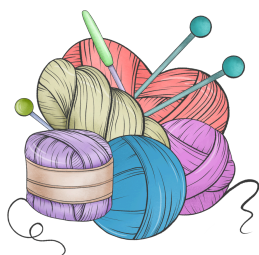


**FEBRUARY'S AVERAGE
ATTENDANCE:**
45±

FINANCIAL REPORT

Christ Church UCC Des Plaines Statement of Financial Activity January 26 through February 22, 2025

	Week of Jan 26, 25	Week of Feb 2, 25	Week of Feb 9, 25	Week of Feb 16, 25	TOTAL
▼ Ordinary Income/Expe...					
▶ Income	3,659.00	6,138.50	1,217.50	492.50	11,507.50
Gross Profit	3,659.00	6,138.50	1,217.50	492.50	11,507.50
▶ Expense ▶	13,651.89	1,927.00	1,934.28	227.45	17,740.62
Net Ordinary Income	-9,992.89	4,211.50	-716.78	265.05	-6,233.12



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 March 19th, 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 Monday, **March 10th at 11:45 am.**

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



Women's Breakfast:

Next meeting is Tuesday, **March 11th at 9 am.**

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

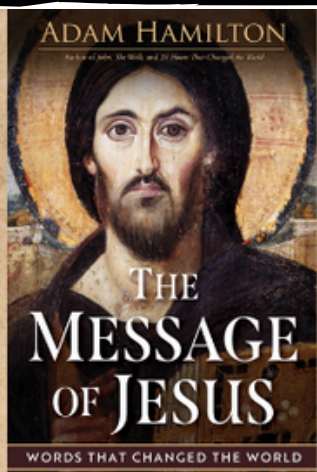
LIBRARY



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.



LENT BOOK STUDY – THE MESSAGE OF JESUS

Tuesdays, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
March 4th, 11th, 18th,
April 1st, 8th, 15th



Join us for our Lent Book Study on *The Message of Jesus* by Adam Hamilton!

We'll meet Tuesdays from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM, starting March 4th (skipping March 25th). Large print copies are available for \$15.50, and digital versions can be purchased online. Cash or checks can be dropped off in the office or Sunday's collection with a note referencing the Lent Book Study 2025.

Cost should never be a barrier—just let us know if you need assistance. Don't miss this chance to dive deeper into Jesus' teachings!



Be a Part of the Immigrant-Welcoming Committee! 🤝🌍

Our church is committed to being a welcoming space for all, including immigrants and refugees in our community. The **Immigrant-Welcoming Committee** will focus on executing the choices the congregation made during our annual meeting and a covenant from it. If you feel called to this important ministry, we invite you to join us! Please see **Rev. Gilbert** if you wish to help.

Christ Church Council Meeting January 2025

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

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

Prayer: Judy

Review of November Council Minutes:

Motion and second to approve the December 11, 2024, minutes as sent out. The motion passed.

Review of the November Financial Report

- The Memorial Garden account has approximately \$3K. Consider using this to replace some of the pavers.
- Circle of Friends funds to be moved the general fund and then close the account. This was agreed upon by the members of the Circle of Friends.
- *Motion to approve the December Financial report as presented. The motion passed.*

Officer Reports – none; appreciate the formatting of the budget

Pastor's Report**Worship & Arts**

Regular Worship services – Six (6), two (2) with communion

Faith Forward Commission / Christian Education

- Inter-generational Christmas Pageant December 15 completed and successful
- Confirmation: one class

Pastoral Care

- Pastoral contact (pastoral care-related calls / texts, emails, in person visits, greeting cards) = 122+ (includes Christmas greeting cards)
- Five visits with communion
- One final visitation with anointment
- One funeral service

Administrative / Personnel

- Staff Meeting – seven (7) – (includes with maintenance technician on Sundays)
- Continued to co-manage social media
- Updated website, new upgrades will go live this month
- Three (3) committee meetings
- With assistance from the Finance Manager, drafted the first draft of the Fiscal Budget Proposal 2025 – 2026

Wider UCC & DP Community Meetings / Presentations / Events

- DP Alliance Clergy Meeting
- Ecumenical Blue Christmas Service at St. Martins Episcopal Church
- Interview with The Journal
- Rev. Tyler Yost's Ordination at First Congregational Church of Evanston

Committee Reports**Finance Committee:**

- Authorized the transfer up to \$75K to aid in the deficit from the Klaus Fund
- Voted and passed to fund the restroom renovation from the Trust Fund to the amount of up to \$30K including fixtures like the toilet and sink. The vote with 4 of 5 members present. One voted in favor with hesitation
- Reviewed the first draft of the Fiscal Budget Proposal for 2025 – 2026.

Outreach Committee:

The Outreach Committee will be meeting in January to discuss the 2025 Outreach Activities. There are no activities scheduled for January 2025.

Building Committee:

- Itemized proposal for restroom renovation received and attached for the Council's review. The Trust Fund will be funding the cost, therefore, a vote from the council is no longer needed.
- We are looking to replace the microphone pack utilized by the Pastor as it has been cutting out during the services and is 2 decades old.

Faith Forward Commission:

FFC met on December 9th. We reviewed and voted on the proposed budget for 2025 – 2026. We discussed possible future fundraisers. We revised plans and needs for the Christmas Pageant.

Personnel Committee:

The Pastor's annual review is complete. The Committee has unanimously approved a raise, awaiting the Council's seal and documentation.

Missions:

All the gifts for San Lucas were returned on time. Met with Carmen from San Lucas on January 2, 2025, and exchanged the gifts. Thank you for your donations. You made many children VERY, VERY, Happy.

Unfinished Business

Bathroom Addition: We are at the permitting level, and it is currently sitting at the city level. Work can begin within 2 weeks of receiving the permits.

Electrical: they are coming 1/18 or 1/19 to disconnect the dishwasher and replace the electrical panel for the pump.

Cradles to Crayons: will provide boxes for our clothes drive.

The set up of QuickBooks (on the cloud) will be \$3000 and will include some training.

The motion to accept the bid from the Church Training Center to set up our cloud base QuickBooks and provide training for \$3000 was made and passed.

Budget:

We have a \$135K deficit for 2025. The recommendation from Finance to cover \$75K. The remainder comes from the Klaus Fund. Will need to bring the discussion to the Annual meeting. Recommend disbanding the Klaus Fund Committee and move to the Council to administer the grant process.

Motion to cover the deficit up to \$140K from the Klaus fund and bring the Klaus Fund management to the Council at the annual meeting was made and passed. Amended to approve the total deficit of \$209k+ by Council members after initial meeting.

By-law changes:

Rev. Gilbert will send the updated by-laws out to the council for review and approval by the council.

Annual Meeting:

Nominations for council and committees need to be made by January 31, 2025. There will be no nominations from the floor. The Pastor and Council president will be the nomination committee so those interested in a position on council, or a committee should contact them. Motion made and carried out to update the nomination process.

New Business:

The Pastor's review was completed and the Personnel committee. A motion was made to accept the Personnel Committees salary increase as provided. The Pastor's new contract begins February 1, 2025.

Motion to adjourn at 8:55 pm.

2 of 2



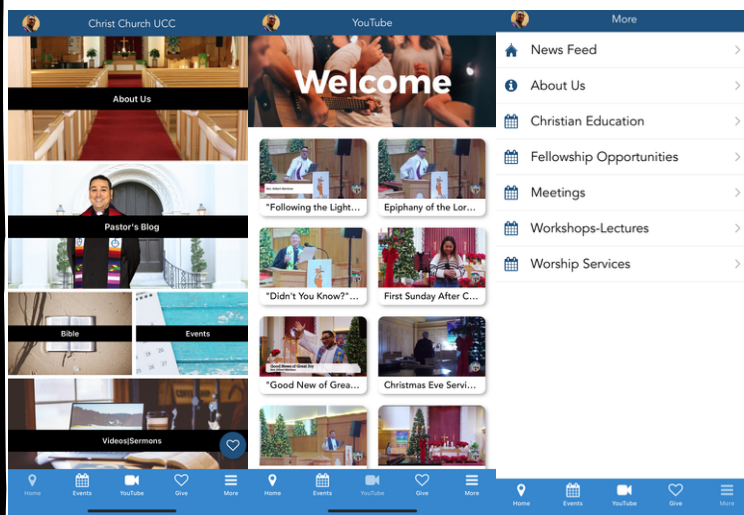
**Sign up by March 10
using the QR code or
contact Kelli Harrison at
RevKelloH@gmail.com
with questions.**



The Addict's Wake: This Award Winning Documentary Explores The Family And Community Impact of The U.S. Addiction Crisis And Where We Can Find Hope

March 12, 2025 at 7PM at United Church of Rogers Park
(1545 W Morse Ave, Chicago)

Join us for a free screening of the educational version of the documentary "The Addict's Wake" followed by a panel discussion with addiction recovery workers, social service workers, and faith leaders. Light snacks provided. Children and teens under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are free but are required for attendance.



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THE TITHE.LY CHURCH APP

**Christ Church United
Church of Christ**

Join the Creation Justice Committee! 🌱🌍

Are you passionate about caring for creation and promoting environmental justice? We are forming a **Creation Justice Committee** to explore ways our church can be more sustainable, advocate for climate justice, and care for God's creation. If you are interested in joining or learning more, please reach out to Kyle or Andrea.



SHARING OF THE JELL-O



SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2025



Mission Committee For the Backpack Project

Rita, Donna, Laura & Holly

Please bring canned vegetables and boxes of Jell-O. Thank you for your support!

Donations will be collected on the first Sunday of March, April, and May.



BE THE LIGHT

You're here to be the light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. Matthew 5:14

ucc.org/oghs



One Great HOUR
OF SHARING

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It connects you to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development efforts around the globe. When disasters strike, or when individuals are displaced due to violence or poverty, OGHS ensures immediate response and ongoing recovery.

Through your support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, microfinancing, and women's empowerment. By partnering with Global Ministries and international response networks, OGHS maximizes its impact. Your contributions help meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring long-term, sustainable solutions for affected communities.

OGHS offering date: March 30, 2025

BOBBY JO VALENTINE

HEART-OPENING, AWARD-WINNING FOLK/POP

Save the date

MAY 8, 2025

7 PM

MORE INFORMATION TO COME

"Bobby Jo has both the spirit and songs that bring us back to believing. Whatever our faith, he has the humor, compassion, words, and music to help us believe again."

-Dar Williams

"Catchy songs with good tunes and intelligent, thoughtful lyrics in the tradition of Bob Dylan, Cat Stevens, and Bruce Hornsby."

-Stephen Schwartz, Tony award-winning creator of *Godspell*, *Wicked*, and *Pippin*



Memorials/Honors for February

In memory of Al Angsten & Dolores Tomscheck, by Larry and Dorothy Zemke

In memory of Lorraine Volberding Grupe, by Laura Volberding Gillis

In memory of my mom, Amy, on her birthday 2/6, by Rev. Gilbert Martinez

In honor of our son, Ace, on his birthday 2/2, by Jacob & Rev. Gilbert Martinez

In memory of John Nix, by Elaine Angsten, Kathleen Groll, Tom and Carol Volberding Keyes, Karen Schug Springman, Pam Roeske, Pat Brenna, Doug Wells, Nancy Lampert, The Staggs Family

In memory of Dolores Tomscheck, by Kathleen Groll, Laura Hallberg

In loving memory of my son, John Nix, by Barbara Nix

In memory of Carl Odell Malone, by Ken & Betty Mattheis

In loving memory of my mother on the anniversary of her passing 2/16, by Rev. Gilbert Martinez

In celebration of our anniversary honoring Jacob on 2/16, by Rev. Gilbert Martinez



1 - Aimee Martinez

5 - Cathy Chappell

8 - Laura Hallberg

8 - Maria Perez

9 - Kyle Speer

9 - Mike Harkovich

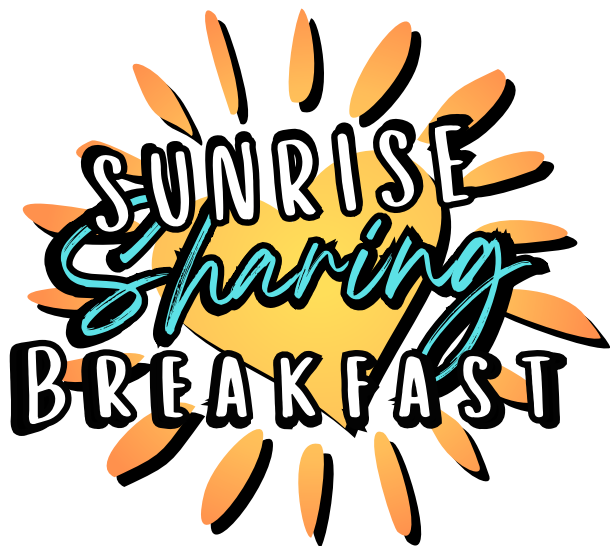
14 - Barbara Nix

24 - David Wajda

27 - Frank Staggs

1 - Roy & Sally Sove (73)

22 - Larry & Dorothy Zemke (56)



An Initiative of the Outreach Committee

Join us for "Sunrise Sharing," a FREE welcoming breakfast gathering every Tuesday in March from 7:30 AM – 9:30 AM in Wobbe Hall.

📍 Christ Church UCC – Wobbe Hall
1492 Henry Ave, Des Plaines, IL
Enter through the ramp door off our parking lot.

☀️ Enjoy a light continental breakfast featuring:

✅ Fresh muffins ✅ Boiled eggs

✅ Assorted breakfast items ✅ Coffee, tea, & juice

Fellowship or Grab & Go: You're welcome to sit, eat, and enjoy conversation or simply pick up breakfast to go—whatever works best for you! Let's start the morning together with good food, community, and kindness. ☀️
We look forward to sharing breakfast with you! 🍰 🥤 🍷

COMING UP IN MARCH

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>Time</u>
2	Finance Committee Meeting	Lounge	11 am
4	Sunrise Sharing Breakfast	Wobbe Hall	7:30 am - 9:30 am
	Lenten Book Study	Lounge	11:30 am - 1 pm
5	Ash Wednesday	Sanctuary	7 pm
9	Daylight Savings Time	-	-
	Faith Forward Adventures (<i>Sunday School</i>)	Sanctuary/Rm 1	9:30 am
	Confirmation Class	Lounge	11 am
10	Men's Lunch	Sunrise Grill	11:45 am
	Council/Finance/Building Meeting	Wobbe Hall	5:30 pm
11	Sunrise Sharing Breakfast	Wobbe Hall	7:30 am - 9:30 am
	Women's Breakfast	Sunrise Grill	9 am
	Lenten Book Study	Lounge	11:30 am - 1 pm
	Community Pride Celebration Planning Meeting	Wobbe Hall	5:30 pm
12	Potluck	Wobbe Hall	6 pm
	Council Meeting	Lounge	7 pm
16	ONA/WISE Committee Meeting	Lounge	11 am
18	Sunrise Sharing Breakfast	Wobbe Hall	7:30 am - 9:30 am
	Lenten Book Study	Lounge	11:30 am - 1 pm
19	Get It Together	Lounge	10 am - 12 pm
23	Faith Forward Adventures (<i>Sunday School</i>)	Sanctuary/Rm 1	9:30 am
24	Faith Forward Commission Meeting	Lounge	5:15 pm
25	Sunrise Sharing Breakfast	Wobbe Hall	7:30 am - 9:30 am
30	One Great Hour of Sharing Offering	Sanctuary	9:30 am
April 1	Lenten Book Study	Lounge	11:30 am - 1 pm

POTLUCK: Come and bring a dish for the potluck dinner. The dinner will be at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 in Wobbe Hall. Join us for fellowship.



"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 **February**, our thoughts and prayers were with:*

William "Bill" Shipp*
Marion Meseth*
Dawn Mashek
Linda Steckel*
Roy Sove*
Jack Storm
Sue Prunty

Jean Henschke*
Marilyn McCown
Dorothy Zemke*
Kelly Roberts
Helen Harney
Marilyn Hoover*
Hope & Bruce Tschappat*

Homebound*

Ukraine, Lebanon, Palestinian,
and Israeli citizens



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United Church of Christ**

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Kyle Speer, Finance Manager & Music Coordinator
kyle@christchurchuccdesplaines.org

Hana Fujisaki, Church Organist

Leslie Thomas, Church Pianist

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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Lifeline

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