



# 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 IV

April 2025

## From The Pastor

*"When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'" - Luke 24:30-32 (NRSVUE)*

In the days after the resurrection, Jesus appeared to his followers not in grand, dramatic displays but in moments of community—walking with them on the road to Emmaus, breaking bread at a simple table, preparing breakfast on the shore. Each time, his presence transformed uncertainty into hope, despair into purpose.

Easter is a celebration of what happened and a call to live as resurrection people. Jesus invites us, time and again, to gather in community, to share in sacred meals, and to be nourished by faith and one another. As we step deeper into this Easter season, we are called to reflect: *What does it mean to be a church community? Who is missing from our table? How do we grow in faith and welcome all into Christ's love?*

Fellowship is not just about gathering together but about discerning *why* we gather. It is about embodying the radical welcome of Christ, who never turned anyone away. The church is not merely a building but a living, breathing community of people called to share grace, justice, and love. As we discern the future of our church's ministry, we must ask: How can we ensure that Christ Church UCC continues to be a place where all are truly welcome? What new life is God calling us to embrace?

Keeping hope alive, both in our spirits and in the community around us, requires us to trust in the resurrection promise—that new beginnings are possible, even when we cannot see them. Like the disciples at Emmaus, we may not always recognize Christ walking beside us. But when we gather at the table and break bread together, we are reminded that Christ is here, leading us forward in faith.

As we walk this road together, may we keep our hearts open to the Spirit's movement, trusting that God is not finished with us yet. May our church be a place of resurrection, where all who hunger for hope, belonging, and renewal find a seat at the table.

*Christ is risen! How will we live that truth in our lives and church today?*

*With hope and in Christ's love,*

*Rev. Gilbert*

### In this newsletter you can expect:

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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 April 2025 Common Lectionary readings:

**April 6, Fifth Sunday in Lent:** Isa 43:16-21; Phil 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

**April 13, Palm Sunday:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Luke 19:28-40

**April 17, Maundy Thursday:** Ex 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14; 1 Cor 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

**April 18, Good Friday:** Isa 52:13-53:12; Heb 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42

**April 20, Easter:** Rom 6:3-11; Luke 24:1-12

**April 27, Second Sunday of Easter:** Acts 5:27-32; Rev 1:4-8; John 20:19-31



### **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> |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>April 6</b>  | Kyle Speer              | Steve Bay              | Judy Rosedale                |
| <b>April 13</b> | Putz-Cheng Family       | George Bielat          | Mandy O'Donnell              |
| <b>April 20</b> | Nate Cheng              | Holly Schmidt          | Judy Rosedale                |
| <b>April 27</b> | Megan Shipp             | Judy Rosedale          | Mandy O'Donnell              |



### Ushers

|                 |                                                                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>April 6</b>  | Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr |
| <b>April 13</b> | Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick     |
| <b>April 17</b> | Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr |
| <b>April 18</b> | Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick     |
| <b>April 20</b> | Rita Barth, Gary Smith, Cathy Wiesner, George Bielat, Rahsaan Strode Jr |
| <b>April 27</b> | Jan Storm, Donna Boyko, Alice Barnhart, Julie Radman, Carolyn Amick     |



**MARCH'S AVERAGE  
ATTENDANCE:**  
50±



**988**  
SUICIDE  
& CRISIS  
LIFELINE

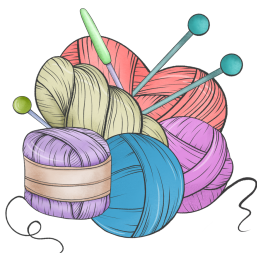
**988**  
LÍNEA DE  
PREVENCIÓN  
DEL SUICIDIO  
Y CRISIS

### FINANCIAL REPORT

#### Christ Church UCC Des Plaines Statement of Financial Activity

February 23 through March 22, 2025 (last 4 weeks)

|                           | Week of Feb 23, 25 | Week of Mar 2, 25 | Week of Mar 9, 25 | Week of Mar 16, 25 | TOTAL     |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| ▼ Ordinary Income/Expense |                    |                   |                   |                    |           |
| ► Income                  | 1,690.50           | 1,732.50          | 3,526.50          | 937.51             | 7,887.01  |
| Gross Profit              | 1,690.50           | 1,732.50          | 3,526.50          | 937.51             | 7,887.01  |
| ► Expense                 | 11,698.76          | 959.99            | 521.95            | 1,437.61           | 14,618.31 |
| Net Ordinary Income       | -10,008.26         | 772.51            | 3,004.55          | -500.10            | -6,731.30 |



### 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 April 16th, 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
- Mustard
- Mayonnaise
- Pasta sauce (plain)
- Flour
- Sugar
- Instant coffee
- Juice (large bottles or boxed)
- Breakfast cereal (chocolate if possible)
- New or like-new clean bed linens and towels
- Body wash
- Shampoo
- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent
- Paper towels
- Dog food (canned and dry)
- Cooking oil
- Men's, Women's, and children's all-sizes underwear
- Ensure, Boost, Glucerna (generic ok)
- Canned dinners (hash, chili)
- Canned fruit
- Peanut butter
- Jelly or jam



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

#### **Men's Lunch:**

Next meeting is Monday, **April 14th at 11:45 am.**

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



#### **Women's Breakfast:**

Next meeting is Tuesday, **April 8th at 9 am.**

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

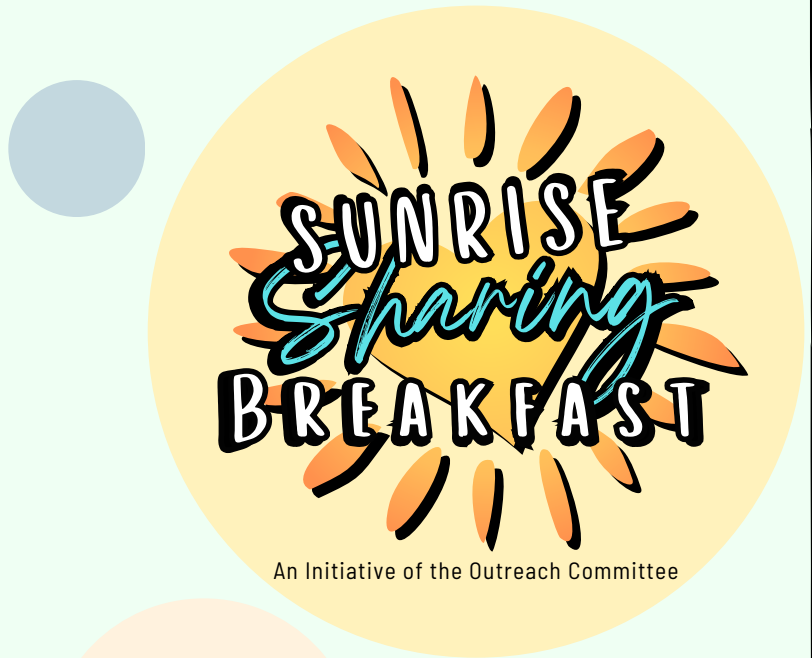
### **LIBRARY**



#### **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.



*Thank you for  
going above  
& beyond.*



**Christ Church Council Meeting February 2025**

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

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

Prayer: Alice

Review of January 2025 Council Minutes:

Motion and second to approve the January 8, 2025, minutes as sent out. The motion passed.

Review of the January Financial Report

Motion to approve the January 2025 Financial report as presented. The motion passed.

Officer Reports – none

**Pastor's Report****Worship & Arts**

Regular Worship services – Five (5), one (1) with communion

Faith Forward Commission / Christian Education

- Confirmation: 3 classes
- Two Immigrant-Focused Forum Sessions
- Welcomed Confirmation Class from Humanistic Jewish Congregation

**Pastoral Care**

- Pastoral contact (pastoral care-related calls / texts, emails, in person visits, greeting cards) = 27+
- One final visitation with anointment
- One (non-officiating) funeral service

**Administrative / Personnel**

- Staff Meeting – nine (9)– (includes with maintenance technician on Sundays)
- Continued to co-manage social media
- Updated website, new upgrades went live, including the app
- Five (5) committee meetings
- Meeting with Pastor Ady – Maranatha
- Mission Committee awarded up to \$500 for the Outreach committee for the Sunrise Sharing Breakfast
- Completed the Annual Report 2024 along with the Fiscal Budget Proposal 2025 - 2026

**Wider UCC & DP Community Meetings / Presentations / Events**

- DP Alliance Clergy Meeting
- Ecclesiastical Council for Pastor Mollie, Park Ridge UCC
- Speak DP Meeting (2)
- Multiple Immigration Justice Forums / Seminars

**Committee Reports****Finance Committee:**

- The Committee has its last meeting for the 2024 – 2025 Fiscal Year. Two members finished their term of one year under the new fiscal structure. Additionally, we had one member resign during their two-year term.
- The new members to join the committee at the end of the month will be able to serve two (2) two-year terms, a total of four years. The current chair and financial church secretary are entering the second year of their first two-year term.
- Church Training Center is meeting with Pastor Gilbert to initiate the process in transferring our QuickBooks to the cloud-based system.

**Outreach Committee:**

- The Outreach Committee is in the process of developing a schedule of events for 2025.
- Our first series of events will be Sunrise Sharing. It will be a series of breakfasts on Tuesdays in March from 7:30 – 9:30 am forcing those with food insecurity but including others for fellowship. Guests are welcome to Grab 'n Go or sit, eat and enjoy conversation.

Building Committee:

- Still waiting for the permits from the city. Information was submitted.
- The pumps were fixed, and the electrical aspects of the dishwasher were disconnected.

Faith Forward Commission:

FFC met on January 19th. The following items were discussed:

- Confirmation classes are ongoing. Two potential confirmands decided not to move forward with the program. One confirmation candidate remains.
- FFC will be having a candy-dipped pretzel sale in the spring to benefit the scholarship and camp funds. Details were discussed and information will be shared with the congregation in the coming weeks.
- Ideas for Mother's Day / Parent's Day were discussed.
- The due date for camp and scholarship applications was confirmed for May 11.

Personnel Committee: No reportMissions Committee:

- The Mission Committee met on Feb 4th. We talked about moving the Mission Bulletin Board from Wobbe Hall to the hallway on the way to the church. We believe it is seen by more people there.
- We should get speakers from some of our charities that our church supports through the Missions.
- After our discussion, the Committee agreed to donate up to \$500 from the Missions fund to help the Outreach Committee Project – Sunrise Sharing breakfast.
- Food themed collections for the foodbank will resume in March. They will be the first Sunday of the month. March will be canned veggies / fruit or Jello with the focus on the color green (food or label) for St. Patrick's Day. All donations are appreciated even if they do not meet the green color theme.

**Unfinished Business**

- Building: Steve mentioned that there is an opportunity to improve the basement ceiling for better access to pipes, etc. We are not sure if that is part of the work for the new bathroom but will see what can or will be done. Not sure if the current contractor's work covers it.
- Fiscal Budget Deficit: The council will set up a separate meeting to begin determining a plan for the future to cover the deficit as our money will run out in 3 – 5 years at the current rate.
- QuickBooks transition to the cloud – met with Keith who will do the work. He has the 2024 record and will set up the new format and share with Kyle and Pastor Gilbert for any changes. Once set up we will transfer to the new system and receive training.
- Annual Meeting: per prior communication, there will be no nominations from the floor. We will set up voting via phone for those who chose it to use it. The meeting will be in Wobbe Hall.

**New Business:**

- The Wise / ONA Committee will be sponsoring a Bobby Jo Valentine concert on May 8th at 7 pm.
- The recommendation will be for the church to become an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation. The vote will be at the annual meeting in February.
- Parking spots where the garden used to be blocked by a pole. We will move the pole.
- A motion was made to use Christ Church building for the Community Pride Celebration on June 7th from 1 pm until 5 pm if Oakton College cannot accommodate that date. The motion was passed by the council.

**Motion to adjourn at 8:04pm passed.**

2 of 2



THE TITHE.LY CHURCH APP  
Christ Church United  
Church of Christ

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<https://bit.ly/CCUCCAPP>

**Scan to download  
the app**



OR





### 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.

### 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.



The **ONA/WISE Committee** is on the lookout for new members! If you're interested in getting involved, please contact Kyle.

## FOR THE BACKPACK PROJECT



**HOP FOR  
HOPE!**

**SUNDAY APRIL 6, 2025**

Join us in spreading Easter joy by bringing Easter socks and candies for the kids of the Backpack Project. (Please no nuts) Happy Easter!

Mission Committee

**RITA, DONNA, LAURA, & HOLLY**

## Self-Help Closet & Pantry of Des Plaines

SHC&P is hiring for **two part-time positions** and seek community-focused, professional candidates to train under Debbie before her departure: **Community Outreach Director & Pantry Coordinator**. For more details, visit <https://www.selfhelppantry.org/jobs>.

To apply for these positions, email your cover letter and resume to the Pantry Hiring Task Force at [pantrydp@gmail.com](mailto:pantrydp@gmail.com), and enter the name of the position in the subject field.

**APPLY  
NOW**



# Bobby Jo Valentine

MAY 8, 2025

7 PM

CHRIST CHURCH U.C.C. DES PLAINES  
1492 HENRY AVE

TICKETS: \$20

MORE INFORMATION TO COME



## **SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES – APPLY BY MAY 11TH!**

The **Faith Forward Commission** pleased to offer three scholarships to support the educational and camp goals of our congregation:

**Rev. Dr. George Goebel Scholarship:** This scholarship is available to anyone in the congregation pursuing vocational, college, or graduate education. Recipients will be honored on **Sunday, June 8th**, during our Pentecost/Confirmation Service.

**Comstock Fund:** This scholarship helps cover the cost of sending children to HUG or Hug Tenderfoot Camp. It's available to community members wishing to send their children to camp.

**HUG Camp Fund:** This fund assists church members and their immediate families with partial tuition for HUG or Tenderfoot Camp.

**Applications are available in the office or online at <https://bit.ly/CCUCCScholarships> on our website [Faith Forward Commission] (the preferred method).**

**The deadline to apply is Sunday, May 11th. Don't miss out on these opportunities!**



# Memorials/Honors for March

In memory of Alan Klinke, Linda Steckel's brother, *by Bud and Elaine Hudson*

In memory of John Nix, *by Laura and Lauren Gillis*

In memory of John Nix, *by Charlene Dohse*

In memory of Phil on his 70th birthday, 3/9/25, *by Nancy Seils*

Remembering Linda Steckel's brother, Alan Klinke, *by Holly Schmidt*

In memory of Bill Shipp, *by Charlene Dohse, Holly Schmidt, Rita Barth, and Laura Hallberg*

In memory of Jean Branding on her 100th birthday, 3/17/25, *by Jack Branding*

In memory of Bill Shipp, *by Larry Zemke*

In memory of my daughter, Margie, *by Carol Borris*

Congrats to Jessie Maag for the ISBE award, *by Margaret Roeder*

## Happy Birthday!

2 - Thomas March

6 - Michael Skibbe

8 - Dorothy Zemke

15 - Mandy O'Donnell

15 - Henry Speer

15 - Lori Bruhn

15 - John Skibbe

24 - Rita S Barth (II)

25 - Robin Shore

27 - Jake Thorson

28 - Timothy Barnhart

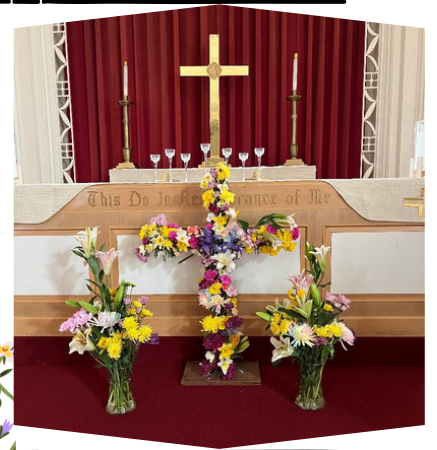
28 - William Frost

30 - Joe Busse



## Easter Cross

Our Easter Cross tradition continues as we rejoice in celebrating that Christ has risen. Everyone is invited to bring a "live" flower on Easter morning to place on the wooden cross. For further information, contact Elaine Hudson.



## 2025 SPRING HANDBELLS AND VOICES CONCERT

First Congregational Church Des Plaines  
766 Graceland Ave



<http://fccdp.org>

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE  
847-299-5561

FREE WILL OFFERING



APRIL 6<sup>th</sup>

6PM

JOIN US FOR A  
CORNUCOPIA OF  
MOVIE THEME SONGS

## COMING UP IN APRIL

| <u>Date</u>  | <u>Event</u>                                      | <u>Where</u>   | <u>Time</u>     |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>1</b>     | Lenten Book Study                                 | Lounge         | 11:30 am - 1 pm |
|              | Vision Task Force Meeting                         | Lounge         | 1:30 pm         |
| <b>3</b>     | Community Pride Celebration Planning Meeting      | Wobbe Hall     | 5:30 pm         |
| <b>6</b>     | Mission Collection                                | Sanctuary      | 9:30 am         |
|              | Faith Forward Adventures ( <i>Sunday School</i> ) | Sanctuary/Rm 1 | 9:30 am         |
|              | Confirmation Class                                | TBD            | 11 am           |
|              | Finance Committee Meeting                         | Lounge         | 11 am           |
|              | 2025 Spring Handbells and Voices Concert          | FCCDP          | 6pm             |
| <b>8</b>     | Women's Breakfast                                 | Sunrise Grill  | 9 am            |
|              | Lenten Book Study                                 | Lounge         | 11:30 am - 1 pm |
| <b>9</b>     | Potluck                                           | Wobbe Hall     | 6 pm            |
|              | Council Meeting                                   | Lounge         | 7 pm            |
| <b>12</b>    | Earth Day Clean-Up                                | Chippewa Woods | 11 am - 1 pm    |
| <b>13</b>    | Palm Sunday                                       | Sanctuary      | 9:30 am         |
|              | New Member Sunday                                 | Sanctuary      | 9:30 am         |
| <b>14</b>    | Men's Lunch                                       | Sunrise Grill  | 11:45 am        |
| <b>15</b>    | Lenten Book Study                                 | Lounge         | 11:30 am - 1 pm |
|              | Vision Task Force Meeting                         | Lounge         | 1:30 pm         |
| <b>16</b>    | Get It Together                                   | Lounge         | 10 am - 12 pm   |
| <b>17</b>    | Maundy Thursday                                   | Wobbe Hall     | 7 pm            |
| <b>18</b>    | Good Friday                                       | Sanctuary      | 7 pm            |
| <b>20</b>    | Easter Sunday                                     | Sanctuary      | 9:30 am         |
|              | Faith Forward Adventures ( <i>Sunday School</i> ) | Sanctuary/Rm 1 | 9:30 am         |
|              | Easter Egg Hunt                                   | Wobbe Hall     | 10:30 am        |
|              | Confirmation Class                                | Lounge         | 11 am           |
| <b>28</b>    | Faith Forward Commission Meeting                  | Lounge         | 5:15 pm         |
| <b>29</b>    | Vision Task Force Meeting                         | Lounge         | 1:30 pm         |
| <b>May 8</b> | Bobby Jo Valentine Concert                        | Wobbe Hall     | 7 pm            |

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

|                 |                         |                                |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Marion Meseth*  | Jean Henschke*          | Ukraine, Lebanon, Palestinian, |
| Dawn Mashek     | Marilyn McCown          | and Israeli citizens           |
| Linda Steckel*  | Dorothy Zemke*          |                                |
| Roy Sove*       | Kelly Roberts           |                                |
| Jack Storm      | Helen Harney            |                                |
| Sue Prunty      | Hope & Bruce Tschappat* |                                |
| Marilyn Hoover* | <b>Homebound*</b>       |                                |



**Christ Church  
United Church of Christ**

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

[christchurchuccdesplaines.org](http://christchurchuccdesplaines.org)

**Facebook & Instagram:**

@christchurchuccdesplaines

**Rev. Jon Gilbert Martinez, Pastor**  
[gilbert@christchurchuccdesplaines.org](mailto:gilbert@christchurchuccdesplaines.org)

**Jezze Patterson, Administrative Assistant &  
Digital Outreach Coordinator**  
[jezzle@christchurchuccdesplaines.org](mailto:jezzle@christchurchuccdesplaines.org)

**Kyle Speer, Finance Manager & Music Coordinator**  
[kyle@christchurchuccdesplaines.org](mailto: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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**988**

**Suicide and Crisis**

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