

JANUARY  
2025

# United in Faith News

## JANUARY

*Why are we  
Here?  
We are to be  
God's  
hands,  
feet and  
voice  
in the  
world.*



### Welcome to 2025!

According to the google box: 30% of us make New Year's resolutions. Energetically make promises to ourself or with our family... [Please insert your own resolution here.]

It can be so easy to get caught up in the wishful thinking of eating less and walking more. (Can you guess my perennial resolution?) Only to get a better offer over lunch, week after week. Maybe you will read more, or spend more time with [fill in your favorite person]. Maybe you will save more money? Eat better? Reduce stress? All good plans.

But chances are many of these promises will fall away and our energy get hijacked. By February we are over it. This is a shared national joke.

In the church though, January is also the Season of Epiphany.

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate The Magi who came to the manger and saw with their own eyes: God come to earth in the body of a child.

<sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. (Matthew 2:10-12)

In a moment the prophecies that guided them were met in this child and they were overwhelmed with joy. They experienced Epiphany.

According to Oxford Languages online: " an epiphany is a sudden and striking realization, or a moment when you suddenly understand something important." Part of that understanding was that they needed to leave by another road. The way that brought them there was no longer open. And so they stepped into a new world with eyes open to wonder and joy.

January is a time of new beginnings and continued preparation for the year to come. As the days lengthen and the light of Emmanuel (God with us) reaches deeper into our lives, we have a chance to be struck and suddenly understand important things.

I invite you to open your eyes to what God is revealing to you on your journey. What important things are you be struck by? What new understanding is waiting under the winter stars to brighten your way and your heart this new year? What roads are opening for you?

I look forward to sharing the wonders of this Season with you.

Peace,  
Pr. Jeanie

At  
United in Faith,  
The Guiding  
Principles are:

+

Jesus is  
Lord and  
**Savior**

+

Reflect  
God's **Love**

+

Pray and  
**listen** for God's  
guidance

+

Continue to  
strengthen  
**faith**

+

Include **All**  
in God's  
**work**

+

Meet people  
**where they  
are**

## JANUARY BOOK CLUB SELECTION

Join us to discuss the historical novel, *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro, a Booker prize winner, on **Saturday, January 18 at 10:00**. A butler who served his lordly employer with loyalty and dedication in the pre-war years realizes his mistake too late.

"In the summer of 1956, Stevens, a long-serving butler at Darlington Hall, decides to take a motoring trip through the West Country. The six-day excursion becomes a journey into the past of Stevens and England, a past that takes in fascism, two world wars, and an unrealized love between the butler and his housekeeper." (goodreads)

Even if you have seen the movie, you will want to read the book.

*From Justice Ministry*



January 6  
January 14  
January 24  
January 31

James Haas  
Stephanie Chobot  
Judi Schira  
Leah Escalante

Church office is closed  
Monday, December 23, 2024 until Tuesday, January 2, 2025

## 2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Please pick up your 2025 offering envelopes  
on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

Thank you

**ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE  
TO RICH GUZIK at [reguzik@ameritech.net](mailto:reguzik@ameritech.net)  
BY **January 2, 2025****

## **UNITED IN FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH EDUCATION ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP**

UNITED IN FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH EDUCATION ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP United in Faith Lutheran Church has established an Education Endowment Scholarship Fund which is available to members of our congregation. Students who have a financial need can apply for assistance. Eligible awards can be for any Christian pre-school through high school as well as any post-secondary school and can include special educational needs or gifts at any level of education. Each application is carefully reviewed by the Education Endowment Scholarship Committee. Awards are based on need and funds available. The application forms are available in the church office and must be completed in full to be considered for a scholarship for the school year 2025-2026 and returned no later than January 31, 2025. Place the completed form in the church mail box marked "Scholarship" located in the hallway or give to any scholarship committee member. All information on the application will be treated as confidential.

- Applicants must be active members of United in Faith Lutheran Church.
- Identify, to the best of your knowledge, all school related expenses for the school year, plus any other source of income or assistance you have to meet those expenses.
- Applicants and their parent(s)/guardian(s)/legal care giver(s) must participate in the life of United in Faith Church. This can include but is not limited to: serving as an acolyte, usher, reader, assisting minister, Sunday School aide or teacher, participation in fund raising activities, and assisting with church events to the extent that is reasonable and possible.
- Attendance at worship is required.

The Committee will then give careful consideration for awards on each application. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision by March 31, 2025. An applicant may receive a scholarship in subsequent years as long as they meet the requirements. Scholarship amounts may vary from year to year based on the number of applicants and funds available each year. If you have any questions, or are interested in joining this committee, please contact Bonnie Maginnis 773-237-5357. The Education Endowment and Scholarship Committee Pastor Jeanine, Bonnie Maginnis, George Schultz

## **NEW LIFE FOR OLD BAGS**

NLOB will next meet on Saturday, February 1 at 10:00 am.

As of December 1, 2024 they have:

made 7,001 mats

repurposed 4,900,700 plastic bags

volunteers have worked 560,080 hours

75 new mats have been completed since September 30, 2024

# Pre reading for the February Annual Meeting

## Our Welcome Statement and RIC Status

In 2004 United in Faith became a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation after developing and approving our current welcome. Reconciling Works, the organization that administer the RIC program, reviews welcome statements and approves RIC status based on a set of requirements. These requirements were recently updated. A proposed welcome statement with these new requirements has been developed. The statement has also been updated to refer to our current "Purpose and Guiding Principles" instead of our previous "core values." All changes are noted in *italics* below. The proposed statement will be presented for a vote of approval at our annual meeting in February 2025 by the Justice Ministry.

### Principles and Commitments to guide Welcome Statement revisions:

The purpose of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the nation program.

To be recognized as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Partner, your faith community will:

1. Clearly state a welcome to people of "all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions" or "LGBTQIA+" and name its commitment to "racial equity" or "anti-racism" in its welcome statement.
2. Be open to calling an LGBTQIA+ and Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) Rostered Leader.
3. Allow sanctuary/community space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings.
4. Make a meaningful contribution annually to support the national RIC program.

A meaningful contribution is determined by your faith community, its budget, and the understanding that your generosity funds the RIC Program. Meaningful contributions vary for each RIC partner.



## Girl Scouts at United in Faith

Girl Scouts of United in Faith wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The time has finally come---COOKIE SALES HAVE BEGUN! (I know you all couldn't wait to hear that!) If you don't have a favorite Girl Scout among your family and neighbors, don't despair! I can help you find Girl Scout cookies!

The Juniors, Cadettes and one Senior went camping to Juniper Knoll in November, and in December the Juniors went to see the ZooLights at Lincoln Park Zoo. We all had a holiday pizza party together before breaking for the holidays.

We are still collecting small size toiletries to make up hygiene kits, and are happy to take any off your hands! We also can use washcloths, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and razors.

Thank you all!

Janeen, Sharon, Catherine, Michelle, Colleen, Dawn, and Cathy

Continued from “Pre-Reading for Annual Meeting”

## **United in Faith CURRENT Welcome Statement**

United in Faith, as a community of united disciples offering gifts to the world that can be found no place else:

affirms its intention to openly welcome and value every person who walks through our doors regardless of race, nationality and ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation and gender identities, marital status, social and economic situation, abilities, cultural realities and needs;

supports efforts to share with all, God's gifts of love, acceptance and grace;

invites all people, uniquely created by God, to experience the word of God, communion and the promise of the risen Christ;

and encourages all people to participate fully in the ministries of this congregation, which are based on its core values.

## **United in Faith PROPOSED Welcome Statement**

United in Faith, as a community of united disciples *striving to be God's hands, feet and voice in the world:*

affirms its intention to openly welcome and value every person who walks through our doors regardless of race, nationality and ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identities and gender expression, marital status, social and economic situation, abilities, cultural realities and needs;

supports efforts to share with all, God's gifts of love, acceptance and grace;

*commits to racial equity and anti-racism;*

invites all people, uniquely created by God, to experience the word of God, communion and the promise of the risen Christ;

and encourages all people to participate fully in the ministries of this congregation, which are based on its core values.

**You will be able to prayerfully discuss and vote on this proposed change at the Annual Meeting.**

Mary Oliver's "Snowy Night" reminds us to pay attention and to be with what is present, whether we understand it or not. It invites us to welcome, instead of to shun, the dark and be open to what we don't "know" and instead step into wonder.

## Snowy Night by [Mary Oliver](#)

Last night, an owl  
in the blue dark  
tossed an indeterminate number  
of carefully shaped sounds into  
the world, in which,  
a quarter of a mile away, I happened  
to be standing.  
I couldn't tell  
which one it was –  
the barred or the great-horned  
ship of the air –  
it was that distant. But, anyway,  
aren't there moments  
that are better than knowing something,  
and sweeter? Snow was falling,  
so much like stars  
filling the dark trees  
that one could easily imagine  
its reason for being was nothing more  
than prettiness. I suppose  
if this were someone else's story  
they would have insisted on knowing  
whatever is knowable – would have hurried  
over the fields  
to name it – the owl, I mean.  
But it's mine, this poem of the night,  
and I just stood there, listening and holding out  
my hands to the soft glitter  
falling through the air. I love this world,  
but not for its answers.  
And I wish good luck to the owl,  
whatever its name –  
and I wish great welcome to the snow,  
whatever its severe and comfortless  
and beautiful meaning.



## Dunning Read Natural Area

Need a walk in the prairie or a little bit of woods?

It is only a hop skip and a jump away on Irving Park Road. Please stop in and step away from the traffic and hullabaloo.

This is your friendly Public Service Announcement for the month!



# January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 6:30pm AA 7:00pm Girl Scout Service Unit 286	<b>4</b> 9:30am Al-Anon 1:00pm Knitting Group 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- <a href="https://siawso.org">https://siawso.org</a>
<b>5</b> 9:00am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed	<b>6</b> 9:00am Food Pantry 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	<b>7</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts	<b>8</b> 10:00am Justice Team	<b>9</b> 9:00am Food Pantry	<b>10</b> 6:30pm AA	<b>11</b> 9:30am Al-Anon 1:00pm Knitting Group 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- <a href="https://siawso.org">https://siawso.org</a>
<b>12</b> 9:00am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed	<b>13</b> 9:00am Food Pantry 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	<b>14</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 9:00am Food Pantry	<b>17</b> 6:30pm AA	<b>18</b> 9:30am Al-Anon 10:00am Book Club 1:00pm Knitting Group 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- <a href="https://siawso.org">https://siawso.org</a>
<b>19</b> 9:00am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed	<b>20</b> 9:00am Food Pantry 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	<b>21</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts 7:00pm Church Council	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 9:00am Food Pantry	<b>24</b> 6:30pm AA 6:45pm Girl Scout Event - Movie Night	<b>25</b> 9:30am Al-Anon 1:00pm Knitting Group 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- <a href="https://siawso.org">https://siawso.org</a> 6:30 pm Girl Scout Event
<b>26</b> 9:00am Coffee Hour 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed	<b>27</b> 9:00am Food Pantry	<b>28</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 9:00am Food Pantry	<b>31</b> 6:30pm AA	<b>1</b> 9:30am Al-Anon 10:00am NLOB 1:00pm Knitting Group 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- <a href="https://siawso.org">https://siawso.org</a>



† **UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETING** †  
**UNITED IN FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025**  
**11:00 A.M.**

All members of United in Faith are invited  
to the **ANNUAL MEETING**

This is an important meeting of our membership to review past activities,  
look to the future and to elect new Council members,  
Synod Voting Members and a Nominating Committee.  
Please plan to attend!

UNITED IN FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
6525 West Irving Park Road  
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