United in Faith Lutheran Church

NEWSLETTER

November | 2026 | www.unitedinfaith.org

A Word from Pastor Sharei

Dear Friends,

Can you believe we are already in November? It feels like we were just welcoming summer, and now we're beginning to think about Advent and the end of another year. Where does the time go?

As I look back over these past few months, I am grateful for the ways we continue to show up as a congregation and live into our calling together.

Over the past several weeks, we have been exploring the connection between mercy and justice through our sermon series, From Mercy to Justice: Why Kindness Isn't Enough to Heal Broken Systems. We've welcomed community partners, learned about the work happening beyond our church walls, and had some important conversations about what it means to move beyond good intentions and into meaningful action.

Thank you to the partners who have joined us and shared their time, wisdom, and experiences. And thank you to

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everyone who has shown up, asked questions, and been willing to learn. I hope these conversations continue beyond Sunday mornings. We have one more opportunity to continue this work on November 15, when Rev. Nic Faison joins us for MONadvocacy. I hope you will join us!

We are also in the midst of our stewardship campaign, A Chorus of Generosity. The theme reminds us that each of us has a unique part to play in the life of our church. Just as many voices come together in harmony to make beautiful music, our individual gifts of time, talent, and financial support come together to make God's work possible.

And here's something I want us to remember… generosity isn't about everyone having the same thing to give or being able to give in the same way. We don't all have the same resources, time, energy, or capacity. But each of us has something to bring. Our gifts have value, not because they are equal in size, but because of what we can create together. When we recognize the value each person brings, we make room for more of us to participate in the life and ministry of this congregation. That is what community looks like.

And just like that… Advent is upon us!

This year, our Advent theme is Concentric Hope: Advent Circles of Joy and Sorrow. Advent is a season of waiting and preparation, but it isn't about pretending everything is wonderful or forcing ourselves to be joyful when life is hard.

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We can carry grief and hope at the same time. We can acknowledge the heaviness of the world and still make room for the possibility of something new.

Throughout this six-week series, we will explore the movement of childbirth through the images of womb, labor, and birth. We'll reflect on the places and people that nurture us, the work of caring for our communities and confronting what keeps people from flourishing, and the new life God is bringing forth in the world. It's an invitation to slow down, rest when we need to, and participate in the work that is ours to do.

As we move into this season, my prayer is that we make room for all of it… the joy, the sorrow, the waiting, and the hope. God is still at work, still nurturing life, and still making a way.

Friends, I am grateful to be doing this work alongside you and look forward to what lies ahead.

With grace and hope,
Pastor Sharei

As part of **From Mercy to Justice**, we'll welcome partners who are helping us learn what justice looks like in action. Join us for worship, conversation, and opportunities to engage more deeply:

November 15
Rev. Nic Faison returns to facilitate MONadvocacy, a racial justice resource grounded in play

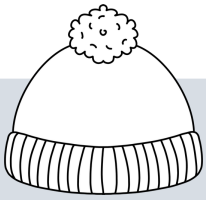
Seeking Synod Assembly Attendees!

Every year, United in Faith sends two people to the Metro Chicago Synod (ELCA) Assembly. Synod Assembly is the synod's annual meeting, with time for worship & learning from other congregations & church leaders. The 2027 assembly dates are TBD, but it typically takes place in late May or early June on a Friday and Saturday. We're seeking 4 people - two attendees & two alternates. If you're interested or want to know more, please speak with someone from the Nominating Committee (Denise Boyer, Janeen Devine, Gretchen Quillin) or Pastor. We will put together a slate of candidates by the end of November for the congregation to vote on at our Annual Meeting in February.

RefugeeOne Winter Gear Drive

Success!







A carload of hats, gloves, scarves, boots and coats was delivered to RefugeeOne from United in Faith. Thank you one and all for your support in donating winter gear that will go to refugee clients of the agency.



RefugeeOne is the largest refugee resettlement agency in Chicago. They supply support programs, health and wellness services and legal aid support to refugees and to others who are providing direct assistance to refugees.



To find out more about RefugeeOne, go to:
http://www.refugeeone.org
Or call: 773-989-5647

God's Work, Our Hands — Bingo

On November 7, please join us for an afternoon of Bingo with our neighbors at Central Baptist Village (4747 N Canfield Avenue, Norridge, IL 60706)! Arrive by 2:15p; bingo at 2:30p; finish up around 3:45p. We will bring the beautiful blankets, shawls, coasters, journals, & pens to be prizes for the residents.

RSVP appreciated but not required
katiejjewell@gmail.com



They are looking forward to our visit and time together. Please join us!

With heavy hearts we announce passing of Dawn Kuswik.

We extend our heartfelt condolences and prayers to her family and all those who are grieving her loss.

Holy Creator,

We lift up the memory of Dawn and all who are grieving her passing. Surround her loved ones with comfort in the midst of their sorrow. Hold them close in the days when grief feels heavy, and give them space to remember, to weep, and to share the love and memories that will remain. May your presence bring peace when words fall short, and may the promise of your eternal love sustain them.

In your holy name we pray.
Amen.

St. Cyprian's Non-food Monthly Donations: November 2026 — Pet Food

The Justice Ministry encourages UIF members to donate a highlighted item each month. The food pantry only has funding for food items and clients still need to stretch their dollars to cover both food and all those daily necessities. This month we are asking for: Pet Food.

A donation box is available as you come in the back door, just at the end of the ramp. Thank you to all who contributed period products during October!

Girl Scouts at United in Faith

We have been busy lately! We had a Daisy and Brownie play day with our Service Unit at Sayre Park and the weather was perfect! Our troops have been working on badges, and the older girls have begun working on a special badge that is from the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts called "Free Being Me" that promotes body positivity. And we just held our annual Juliette Low Rally with the Service Unit!

Cookie sales start in December! Stay tuned!

~ Janeen, Sharon, Catherine, Michelle & Colleen

St. Cyprian's Food Pantry
CHILI COOK-OFF
+
BAKED GOODS AUCTION
fundraiser

You're invited to our Chili Cook-Off & Baked Goods Auction for our neighborhood food pantry!

Our chili chefs will be cooking up their best recipes as they compete for the judges' vote and the coveted title "Chili Champ"! Bakers will be bringing their favorite pies & baked goods, competing for the highest silent auction bid and the title "Chief Baker"!

Menu: Chili (Mild to Spicy)

All you care to eat, while supplies last
Includes cornbread, crackers, cheese, & water

Price: $10 per person

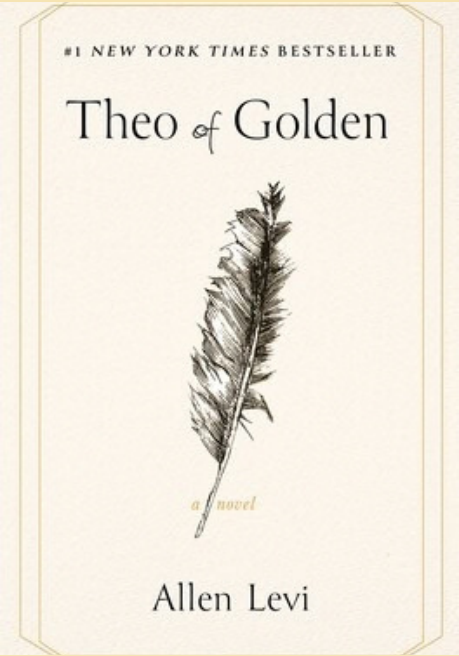
Credit cards accepted
Silent auction for pies & baked goods

Location: United in Faith Lutheran Church



Book Club

Theo of Golden is the endearing story of a curious old man who quietly moves into a southern city and, for reasons unknown to anyone but himself, undertakes a campaign of anonymous generosity. Theo's love for people, combined with his fondness for books, art, birds, and story, unite in a colorful expression of outreach and affection. Stories are shared, friendships are born, and lives, in response to his inexplicable kindness, are affirmed and transformed. The old man, no stranger to sadness and loss, quickly becomes a welcome presence in the community but his new friends and neighbors wonder, who is Theo? And why is he here?



Read the book to find out who he is and why he was there and then join the discussion on Saturday, November 21 at 10a.

Invitation to lead in worship

SIGN UP!

We are in need of greeters / ushers, readers & communion assistants. If you are feeling called to lead in worship, a sign up sheet is on the table in the fellowship hall.

If you would like more info before signing up, please talk to Pastor Sharei.

United in Faith Lutheran Church
Treasurer's Report
September 2026

	Nine Months Ended 09/30/26
Unrestricted:	
Income (excluding investment activity)	$ 807,250
Expenditures	266,209
Income over (under) expenditures	$ 541,041
Investment Income & changes in market value	$ 39,687
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted net assets	$ 580,728
Educational Endowment:	
Investment Income and changes in market value	$ 35,248
Scholarships paid out	(14,000)
Increase (Decrease) in Educational net assets	$ 21,248
Harriet Kurz Endowment:	
Thrivent Investment income and changes in market value	$ 82,217
Increase (Decrease) in Total net assets:	$ 684,193

Comments from the Treasurer:

2026 income from church operations excluding Special Gifts is lower than spending by $16,094 in September and is lower by $197,385 YTD.

Income includes $738,427 in Special Estate gifts from:

Harriet Kurz - $729,220 in January 2026
Harriet Kurz - $8,479 in February 2026
Rev. Barthel - $728 in September 2026

Investments returned a loss of $26,043 for September and a gain of $121,094 YTD.

Educational Investments returned a loss of $5,433 for September and a gain of $35,248 YTD.

Total expense for Sept. is favorable to budget by $9,030 and is favorable to budget by $43,015 YTD due to the Salaries YTD costs being lower than budget by $4,613; the Ministry YTD costs being $1,535 lower than budget; the Administrative YTD costs being $7,864 lower than budget; the YTD Building costs being lower than budget by $209 and the Ministry Directors' YTD costs being lower than budget by $28,794.

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	2	3	4	5	6 6:30pm AA	7 9:30am Al-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
8 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	9	10	11	12	13 6:30pm AA	14 9:30am Al-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
15 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	16	17 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	18	19 11:00am Justice Meeting	20 6:30pm AA	21 9:30am Al-Anon 10:00am Book Club 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
22 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	23	24	25	26	27 6:30pm AA	28 9:30am Al-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
29 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	30	1	2	3	4 6:30pm AA	5 9:30am Al-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org

November birthdays

Grace J	November 4
Steve C	November 5
Zach L	November 11
Lorraine E	November 20
Harold E	November 30

Lorraine E will celebrate her 102nd birthday on November 20!

Church has always been a large part of her life. Let her know she is still in our thoughts with a card or visit.

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