

**UNITED IN FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**ORGANIZED EASTER SUNDAY,**  
**APRIL 12, 1998**  
**CELEBRATES ITS**  
**20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**



**United in Faith Lutheran Church**  
**A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America -**  
**Metropolitan Chicago Synod**  
**6525 West Irving Park Road**  
**Chicago, Illinois 60634**  
**(773) 283-2326**

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**Facebook & Twitter - UIFLC**

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Pastors, Interims, Interns and Ministry In Context Students.....	3
Called Pastors and Interim Pastors .....	3
Interns .....	3
Ministry In Context Students .....	3
Pictures .....	4
History of United in Faith.....	8
United in Faith: A Five-Year Journey, 1998 – 2003 .....	9
The Journey Continues: Years 6 - 10, 2003 - 2008 - A Living Hope! .....	20
The Journey Continues: Years 11 - 15, 2008 - 2013 - Renewal.....	27
The Journey Continues: Years 16 - 20, 2013 – 2018 – Transition .....	33
20For20 (completed between Sept 2017 and Oct 2018) .....	40
The Eight Predecessor Churches.....	44

# **Pastors, Interims, Interns and Ministry In Context Students**

## **Called Pastors and Interim Pastors**

Interim – Jeffery King - 4/1998 to 11/2000

Interim – Mark Bartusch - 4/1998 to 3/1999

Interim – (visitation pastor) Jill Ellen James - 4/1999 to 9/1999

Interim – Doug Kings - 3/2000 to 10/2000

Interim – (visitation pastor) Mary Beth Shepard – 10/13/1999 - 12/31/2000

Pastor – Gregory Moser - 11/2000 to 2/2013

Pastor – Dawn Mass-Moser Eck - 11/2000 to 9/2004

Interim – David Dennison - 9/2004 to 9/2005

Interim – Susan Schneider - 9/2008 to 10/2009

Interim – Lester White - 2/2013 to 11/2/2014

Interim – Eric Bodenshtab - 11/16/2014 to 9/15/2015

Pastor – Carla Thompson Powell - 9/16/2015 to present

## **Interns**

Erin Clausen – 9/2006 to 8/2007

Carrie Smith – 9/2007 to 8/2008

Julie Boleyn – 9/2008 to 8/2009

Richard Sheridan – 9/2010 to 8/2011

## **Ministry In Context Students**

Aaron Silco – 9/2017 to 5/2017

Liz Koerner – 9/2017 to 5/2017

Ruby Meyers – 9/2017 to 5/2017

## Pictures



**FIGURE 1 - JEFFERY KING**



**FIGURE 2 - MARK BARTUSCH**



**FIGURE 3 – JILL JAMES**



**FIGURE 4 - DOUG KINGS**



**FIGURE 5 - GREG MOSER**



**FIGURE 6 - DAWN MASS-MOSER ECK**



**FIGURE 7 - DAVID DENNISON**



**FIGURE 8 - SUSAN SCHNEIDER**



**FIGURE 9 - LESTER WHITE**



**FIGURE 10 – ERIC BODENSTAB**



**FIGURE 11 – CARLA THOMPSON POWELL**





**FIGURE 12 - ERIN CLAUSEN**



**FIGURE 13 - CARRIE BALLENGER SMITH**



**FIGURE 14 - JULIE BOLEYN**



**FIGURE 15 - RICHARD SHERIDAN**



**FIGURE 16 - AARON SILCO**



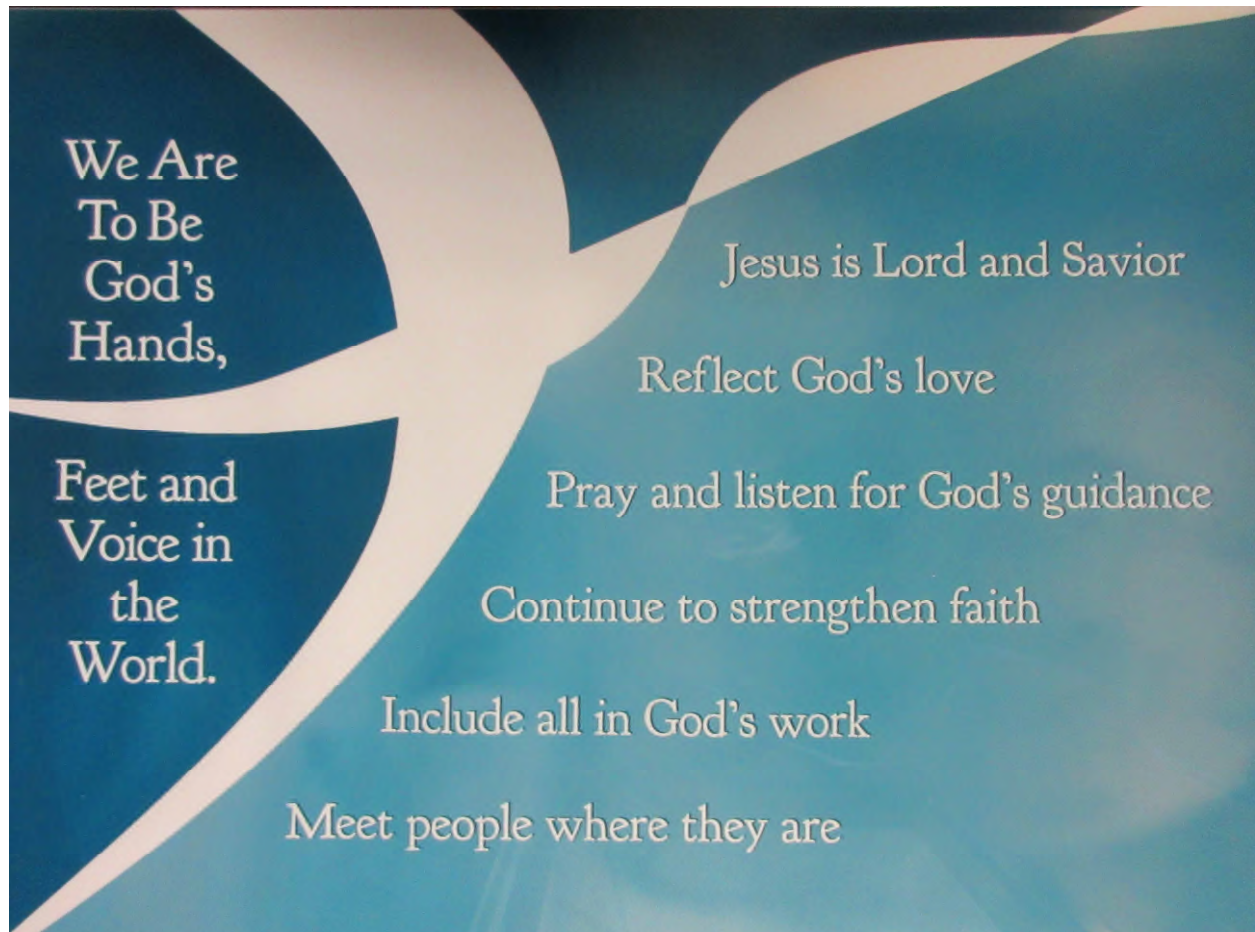
**FIGURE 17 - LIZ KOENER**



**FIGURE 18 - RUBY MYERS**

## History of United in Faith

United in Faith is a relatively young congregation. We have decided to document our history in five-year increments. The following four sections detail our history for the past twenty years.





**United in Faith: A Five-Year Journey, 1998 – 2003**

**United in Faith**  
**A Five-Year Journey**  
**1998 – 2003**

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Easter...Resurrection...Rebirth. Easter 1998...the rebirth of eight struggling churches on Chicago's Northwest Side. An event The Lutheran magazine called one of the top five religion stories of 1998 in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Eight Lutheran congregations of the Chicago Metropolitan Synod consolidated as United in Faith Lutheran Church. Hundreds worshipped at Taft High School on April 12th to witness, support and celebrate a church formation based on a call to mission. For this was not a consolidation to extend the life of the congregation another few years, but rather to become a leader in urban ministry, to serve rather than to be served. While celebrating their histories, the new congregation entered the wilderness, guided by a mission to serve God but in yet undefined ways. The eyes of many, inside and outside of the church, were watching, waiting to see if this model would work.

#### **United in Faith Predecessor Congregations**

*Gladstone Park  
Holy Communion  
Medill  
Nebo  
Our Lord's  
Our Saviour's  
Peace  
St. Andrew's*

#### **The Journey Begins**

The journey to Easter 1998 began many years before. Lutheran congregations (and later an Episcopal congregation) on Chicago's Northwest Side had long partnered for support, planning and programming as a larger parish organization under names such as 5 Point Parish, 10 Point Parish, and finally the Northwest Lutheran Parish (NWLP). Clergy and lay representatives from fifteen churches were delegates to this organization. Discussion in the early 1990s was focused on the congregations' dwindling memberships, high cost of building maintenance and repair, difficulty in attracting and keeping clergy, lack of funding, people and energy for mission. All of the churches, some more than others, could relate to these issues. Open forums were held to discuss possible solutions and actions. Consolidation of all of the congregations seemed to offer the most promise - and the most risk. Never before had so many churches attempted consolidation.

In November 1995 a Transition Team began to focus on the urgency of the situations and the opportunities and strengths within the congregations. Meetings were held with all congregation councils and clergy to communicate the situation.

#### **Sharing the Vision**

Joint programs across all of the congregations to expand ministry became the highest priority. Worship and Music and Children and Youth planning teams were started. Programs, a way for members to get to know each other, included Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, children's choir, a monthly Saturday Night service, potluck dinners, parish interns, youth director and youth group, Advent, Lent, Reformation, Thanksgiving Eve and Epiphany services, Bible study and women's retreats. An Adult Day Care Center partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Illinois was explored and the Retirement Research Council under the MacArthur Foundation donated a bus for this purpose through the Synod. This program was later put on hold due to difficulty in finding a suitable space for the program.

A ParishWide Page, containing news from the Transition Team and information on parish wide events, was published and distributed to all congregations. Retreats were held to deepen faith and focus on how to live out that faith. The differences between a maintenance church (the current churches) and a mission church

(the dream of the future) became sharper, the task of forming a new church became clearer and, at the same time, more formidable. Congregations were asked to vote on whether to “continue to participate in a process of negotiation with the other NWLP congregations toward some form of consolidation of these congregations to assure a revitalized Lutheran ministry on the Northwest Side of the City of Chicago” by March 1997. Nine congregations voted to move forward. In addition, Friends of the New Church (FONC), people who were interested in becoming the church of the future, organized. Some of the FONCs were members of churches that voted not to proceed with the consolidation.

### **Moving the Process Forward**

To assist in the process of further negotiation between congregations, Lutheran Brotherhood underwrote expenses of consultants. A Leadership Team, comprised of two delegates from each of the nine congregations, replaced the NWLP Transition Team and delegates. This team would define the proposed process of consolidation, lead information sharing, and facilitate discussion and dialogue on key issues and decisions – including grieving and celebration. The consultants and the Leadership Team began their Journey of Hope with a retreat in May 1997. The goal of consolidation on Easter 1998 was set. A parishwide public Commitment Liturgy was held at Luther North High School on June 1, 1997. The joy and excitement of worshipping together continued with monthly Sunday joint worship services.

Congregation involvement in defining the new church community and in identifying neighborhood mission opportunities began with a Future Search Conference prior to the Commitment Liturgy and continued with small group meetings over the summer. The summer meetings offered a chance to share information and hear members’ concerns. In September 1997 each congregation voted on a binding resolution to consolidate. Eight of the nine churches committed to continue on the road to consolidation as United in Faith Lutheran Church, a name determined by popular vote. For many, the decision to consolidate was logical, as it seemed there was no other way to continue ministry. But many hearts were saying ‘no’ to losing individual congregations. In October 1997 the formal decision was made to come together as one congregation on Easter Sunday 1998. The symbolism of Lent as a time of letting go and Easter as a time for celebration of rebirth was appropriate.

### **Developing a Structure**

The formal vote for consolidation into one not-for-profit corporation, known as United in Faith Lutheran Church was taken in January 1998. The first church council was formed, comprised of two elected members from each of the predecessor congregations and the FONCs. (The size of the church council would gradually be reduced to eight members as predecessor church affiliation became unimportant and a more workable size was desired.) Staffing and location issues were temporarily resolved. Early in the process the decision was made that all current pastors and staff would resign with the consolidation. None of the pastors were to be considered to lead the new church, as new pastoral leadership without ties to the old was desired. A similar decision was made regarding the church buildings. None of the current church facilities would be considered as a permanent location. If one congregation had to give up their facility, all would do the same.

Generous severance packages were provided to all pastors. Interim pastors were selected for the start of the new congregation. Staff members, such as administration assistants, musicians and choir directors were invited to apply for new positions as they were redefined. An office administrator and business manager were hired as well as a music team. A decision was made to temporarily locate at St. Andrew’s until a permanent site could be found.

As the countdown to consolidation continued, each of the congregations held special events to celebrate their histories. Archives were compiled, farewell dinners and final services were held. Good Friday services were a time for grieving losses.

## **Celebrating a Rebirth**

Easter Sunday 1998 – the celebration of our Lord’s resurrection – also marked the renewal of the congregations. The following Sunday the first services were held at St. Andrew’s - an early morning traditional service followed by a contemporary service. The tasks before the council were numerous. The first youth were confirmed in May 1998. Members signed the Charter on July 12, 1998. A constitution, reflecting the mission driven purpose, was ratified later in the year. A pictorial directory was published to facilitate the ‘getting to know you’ process. A mission statement was adopted in August:

Together in Christ,  
Reaching to God  
Reaching to Grow  
Reaching to Serve  
To share God’s love

Strategies and priorities for living out the mission statement were developed and budgeted. These two areas prompted some of the most contentious discussions as opinions differed on how to do neighborhood mission and how much it should cost. A Community Inquiry Report was completed by the consultants and considered as input to this process. These issues would not be resolved until a pastoral team was in place.

The combined membership at the time of the consolidation was just under nine hundred. Over the next two years this number, as expected, dropped to less than half. Most membership lists from the predecessor churches reflected inflated numbers for active membership. Some members decided that the merger was the time to transfer to a church closer to home. Other members transferred after finding the new church was not what they expected - programs were taking too long to get up and running, communication between the leadership and congregation was perceived as lacking, and disagreements characterized most meetings. The entire church council resigned in February 2000 due to disagreements and distrust, facilitating the election of members with fresh perspective and energy to move the congregation forward.

Selling former buildings and finding new sacred space were major hurdles to overcome. In September 1998 a firm was retained to auction the properties and a project team prepared the properties for sale. In December the auction, called the largest offering of churches, was held, resulting in the sale of all properties. A lease arrangement allowed for the continued use of the St. Andrew’s building until permanent space could be found. Meanwhile, a Sacred Space team was seeking a permanent site. Little vacant space was available for construction of a new facility. The focus moved to purchasing an existing facility. In April 1999 the congregation voted to negotiate the purchase of the former Vail printing site on Irving Park Road. The one-story, two-building property was desirable for:

- Location - on a major street with a bus route and in an area changing from light industrial to business and residential;
- Parking - its own lot plus neighboring business’ lots and street parking; and
- Handicapped accessibility – ground level buildings.

The near unanimous agreement to purchase this facility was a major turning point for the new congregation. Finally, it would have a place to call its own - contemporary sacred space that reflected the new beginning and outreach into the community.

## **Renovating the Sacred Space**

After the building purchase was final in November, the committee and congregation reviewed architectural plans and provided input. Initial plans to remodel both buildings were revised to first renovate the larger



East facility with offices, sanctuary, lounge and fellowship hall to keep the project on budget and facilitate an earlier move. Construction began in May 2000 with a target completion of November 1. Furnishings were chosen, donations of over one hundred sanctuary chairs were made, and an organ was purchased. The physical move was monumental. The first worship services at the new site were held on November 5, 2000. A 3-year capital appeal, Windows to the World, began in Fall 2001. Additional repairs, reconfiguration and rehab provided by this fund included replacement windows in the East building, painting

the exterior front of the buildings and opening the West building for youth and children's programs. Two new external signs were purchased to identify the buildings as the Worship Center and the Ministry Center. Upgrades to the West building and both facades, including a cross and atrium, will continue as funds are available.

### **Choosing the Leaders**

Interim pastors served while the pastoral call process proceeded. In October 1999 the congregation voted on two candidates. One of the candidates received a positive vote but removed himself from the process. A second vote took place in September 2000. Votes for both candidates were positive and both accepted the calls. Drawn by the challenges of urban ministry and the mission focus of the congregation, Pastors Dawn Mass-Moser and Greg Moser arrived in late November and were installed on November 26, 2000, the day the new church building was also dedicated.

### **Endorsing a New Vision**

Developing a new vision and values for the mission-driven congregation became a high priority. With input from pastors and the congregation, the following was approved in March 2001.

<p><b><i>Our Vision</i></b></p> <p>United in Faith is a community of united disciples offering gifts to the world that can be found no place else.</p>
<p><b><i>Our Values</i></b></p> <p>Weekly worship Children and Youth Every person who walks through our doors The Gospel of Jesus Prayer Faith Development Caring for the Elderly Feeding the Hungry</p>

Now the focus moved to using the vision and values to design the ministries of the congregation. To support the new ministries, permission-giving amendments to the constitution were adopted in October 2001. Governance structures, including the church council, became separate from the ministries structures. Ministries no longer reported to the church council. The council was freed up to oversee that the congregational life, business issues and ministries were congruent with our vision and values. The ministries would focus on living out the mission, lead by the vision and values.

### **Governance and Committees**

*Church Council*  
*Executive Committee*  
*Audit Committee*  
*Mutual Ministry Committee*  
*Finance Committee*  
*Property Management Committee*  
*Nominating Committee*  
*Call Committee*  
*Education Endowment and Scholarship Committee*  
*Mission Endowment Fund Committee*

### **The Ministries of United in Faith**

*Worship, Music and the Arts*  
*Stewardship*  
*Outreach and Hospitality*  
*Youth Ministry*  
*Children's Ministry*  
*Faith Development*  
*Service and Mission*  
*Homebound Visitation*  
*Prayer*  
*Fellowship*  
*Women's*

A ministry directors team - a representative from each ministry - began meeting semi-monthly in May 2001 to plan and program mission initiatives of the congregation. Three-year plans for each ministry area were developed at a retreat in April 2002. To find gifts within the congregation to carry out ministries, Faith Development and Stewardship ministries partnered to offer programs for the discovery and deployment of gifts in the church organizations, committees and ministries.

The format of an early traditional service and a later contemporary service on Sunday mornings continued. A third Sunday service will become reality as the congregation grows. A choir provided music for the contemporary service with occasional appearances at the traditional service. A second choir for the traditional service was later formed. Midnight Mass, a musical group, accompanied worship at the contemporary service and a hand bell choir rang on special occasions. A Decorative Arts team provided seasonal decorations.

Financial giving during the first few years was lower than anticipated due to the loss of members and, perhaps, some level of dissatisfaction. Acquiring a building, calling pastors, clarifying the mission, and an active Stewardship program has reversed the trend. The congregation has increased weekly giving and contributed generously to special appeals, despite the economic downturn in 2001 – 2003.

### **Living the Vision**

An Education Endowment and Scholarship Fund, established with funds from predecessor churches, each year has provided scholarships to students at all levels and tuition discounts to Luther North High School students. The Mission Endowment Fund, for gifts to the church through estate plans, was approved in

December 2001. This fund was established to provide annual distributions to benefit the congregation's ministries, the community and the ministries of the ELCA.

The Outreach and Hospitality ministry communicated to the community "gifts we offer that can be found no place else". On-going programs included: Our Daily Bread, a gift package delivery containing a loaf of bread to visitors; a website; major marketing campaigns including invitations, posters, banners, flyer distribution in the neighborhood, and newspaper advertising and publicity; a fall pig roast party and mission fair open to neighbors and friends (co-sponsored with Fellowship Ministry); and 'Explore Belonging' classes that explained what United in Faith was all about. This ministry also pursued grants to further outreach activities. The success of this ministry and others can be gauged by the one hundred new members received in the past two years. United in Faith was one of the few congregations in the ELCA to increase membership in this time period.

In December 1999, a Youth and Teen Group ministry was started by two of the congregations' young couples. The group experience was enhanced with the arrival of Pastor Dawn, a leader in Youth Ministries. In Fall 2001, the Northwest Chicago Community Youth Ministry, based on a successful model developed and implemented by Pastor Dawn in South Dakota, was launched in forty churches in the city and suburbs. Monthly events brought over two hundred youth together for speaker and musical events. At the local level, the program included Confirmation, resources for families, small group experiences, and learning, service and fellowship opportunities, all with the goal of passing on faith to the kids. A monthly Jesus Java Café, held between Sunday services, was only one of the many fundraising events that supported the entire youth program. Youth have attended national gatherings (a group of nineteen are planning to attend the 2003 Atlanta event) and mission trips (eight youth went to the Bahamas in the summer of 2002). In 2002 participation in this ministry was large enough to form two distinct groups – first year Confirmation and high school ministry. Youth also remained a part of the Lutheran Youth of the North Side organization that provided additional monthly service and fellowship opportunities with neighboring congregations.

Families with young children were one of the faster growing groups at United in Faith, often attracted by Vacation Bible School and Sunday School. The 2002/2003 school year marked the start of a rotational model Sunday School where stories from scripture were taught in innovative and creative ways. A video theatre, science lab, storytelling area, puppet theatre, pre-school room, drama stage and computer lab were all situated in the West building. Units of study lasted one month and members with varied gifts volunteered as teachers for each unit. While children were always welcomed at worship services, a staffed playroom was available during the contemporary service.

Faith Development opportunities expanded, offering spiritual gifts discovery, Lutheran Spirituality study, 'how to do Bible study' classes, adult Christian education targeted to those beginning their faith journeys, Lent programs (including the 2003 speaker series, The Holy Land in Conflict), The Lutheran magazine 'every home' subscription, a donation drive which supplied the church with seventy Bibles and Pastor Greg's Book Club. A Resource Center began to be developed.

Service and Mission ministry focused on feeding the hungry and caring for the elderly. The group has been instrumental in bringing the Golden Diners and the Food Pantry to United in Faith. They have offered individuals opportunities to serve in many arenas such as the food pantry, Golden Diners and a soup kitchen.

In October 2001 the City of Chicago's Golden Diner program, housed in one of the predecessor churches, was welcomed to United in Faith. Participation reached capacity as seniors received an inexpensive, nourishing lunch four days a week along with companionship, exercise, entertainment and educational events.

The St. Cyprian's Food Pantry relocated to the West building in February 2002 when its former site was shut down. United in Faith continued to donate food and money, and Christmas gifts to over seventy of the children served by the pantry.

A Homebound Visitation ministry began in March 2001 to involve members in shut-in visits. Volunteers regularly brought the sacrament and devotional materials, gifts from the Arts and Crafts group, and news from the congregation. Audiocassette tapes and VHS tapes of Sunday services also became available.

Prayer Ministry began to engage in intercessory prayer in June 2001. New methods to submit individual prayer requests were designed.

Fellowship in the faith community was an important aspect of the identity of United in Faith. Fellowship ministry directed the Sunday coffee hours, the annual pig roast (along with Outreach Ministry), holiday celebrations such as St. Patrick's Day dinners, Oktoberfest, Veterans Day Salute and Mardi Gras parties (along with Youth Ministry).

The Women of the ELCA organization continued to offer lunch and programs on a monthly basis. The first annual Women's Spring Brunch was held in May 2001. The church men served the women and a worship opportunity included Pastor Dawn's personification of a biblical character. One circle, Dorcas, continued to meet monthly for Bible study.

The Arts and Crafts group created gifts to sell (using the proceeds to donate to worthy causes) and gifts to donate, brightening the day for someone with a special remembrance.

The Seniors Club met monthly and provided educational events, fun, entertainment and food to sixty-five seniors.

What is a Lutheran church without bazaars and rummage sales? These have occurred annually and proceeds were donated to the special funds of the congregation.

The ministry of hospitality became well known and organizations sought meeting space. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Al-Anon, AA, Survivors of Incest Anonymous, and a Hispanic Bible study were all housed in the buildings. Ministries and programs at United in Faith brought over one thousand people through the doors each week.

United in Faith has become a model for church consolidations, taking bold moves for mission and not for survival. It has become a model for ministry by setting a vision and values to guide its ministries. Members and pastors are often asked to consult with congregations across the nation. The Board of Directors of The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago has made a site visit.

United in Faith has been blessed. It is no longer a congregation wandering in the wilderness. Ministries may change, expand and grow as they respond to the mission to serve God in the neighborhood and the world. United in Faith has a vision "to be a community of united disciples offering gifts to the world that can be found no place else".

Thanks be to God!



## TIMELINE

November 1995	Northwest Lutheran Parish (NWLP) Reconvened Transition Team Elected (for planning purposes)
February 1996	First Parishwide Page in congregational newsletters established
June 1996	First Parishwide Vacation Bible School
September 1996	NWLP Retreat to deepen faith in the Gospel and focus on how to live out that faith doing God's mission Parishwide Confirmation Program began
October 1996	Monthly Saturday Night Service began
February 1997	Easter 1998 first suggested as goal for starting date of new consolidated church
March 1997	Deadline for vote on continuing participation in process of moving towards consolidation in each NWLP congregation (result: 9 churches voted to continue in the process)
April 1997	Friends of the New Church (FONCs) formed
May 1997	First meeting of Leadership Team (2 members elected from each church which voted to continue participation, replaces Transition Team and NWLP Delegates) Future Search Conference
June 1, 1997	Parishwide Public Commitment Liturgy at Luther North High School; Leadership team installed
Summer 1997	Small group meetings to share information and hear concerns, dreams Monthly joint Sunday worship service began
September 1997	Eight churches vote 'yes' on binding resolution to consolidate Final vote on new church name: United in Faith Lutheran Church New church council formed (2 members from each predecessor church and the FONCs)
October 1997	Decision made to come together as one congregation on Easter Sunday 1998
January 1998	Final vote for consolidation of 8 churches into one Not-For-Profit corporation known as United in Faith Lutheran Church
February 24 1998	Incorporation for United in Faith Decision made to hold worship services at the former St Andrew's site until a permanent site was found
Good Friday 1998	Last services in former churches

### **Easter 1998 (April 12) Service at Taft High School marked beginning of consolidated congregation of United in Faith**

April 19, 1998	Worship began at the former St. Andrews Church
May 1998	First Confirmation
July 12, 1998	Charter Sunday
August 1998	Mission Statement adopted
September 1998	Firm retained to sell the former church properties; project team appointed
November 1998	Constitution ratified
December 1998	Auction of 8 former churches (largest offering of churches) Easter Service sited in Pioneer Press 1998 Year in Review First mission fair held Call committee commences work
January 1999	'8 struggling churches on Chicago's Northside merged' was named as one of the top 5 religion stories in the ELCA in 1998 as reported in The Lutheran magazine
April 1999	Vote to enter into negotiations to purchase former Vail printing site
June 16, 1999	Contract to purchase former Vail site signed
October 1999	Congregation consideration of Community Inquiry Report – defining mission and determining how to best reach out to neighbors First vote on pastoral candidates
November 29, 1999	Closed on the purchase of the former Vail site

Nov – Dec 1999	Forums to review architectural plans
December 1999	Youth and Teen Group formed
February 2000	Resignation of entire council
May 2000	Construction started at Irving Park site
June 2000	Second call committee began work
September 2000	Second vote on pastoral candidates
October 25, 2000	Began moving from former St Andrews site to new United in Faith site
November 5, 2000	First worship services at new site

**November 26 2000      Dedication of new church building and Installation of Pastors**

February 2001	Monthly Jesus Java Café began
March 2001	Home Communion ministry begun
	Adoption of vision and values
May 2001	First Annual Women's Spring Brunch
May 2001	Ministry Directors began to meet
June 2001	Prayer Ministry began
July 2001	Ministry director and ministry descriptions created
September 2001	House of God Warming Party
Fall 2001	NW Chicago Community Youth Ministry begins
Fall 2001	Windows to the World Capital Appeal for additional facility rehab
October 2001	City of Chicago Golden Diners program came to United in Faith
	Permission giving constitution adopted
December 2001	Mission Endowment Fund formation approved
February 2002	St. Cyprians Food Pantry moved to United in Faith
April 2002	Ministry directors and teams hold planning retreat to develop 3 year plans
Summer 2002	8 youth and 3 adults went to Bahamas on mission trip
September 2002	Come as You are Party
Fall 2002	Opening of West building to Sunday Church School after renovations; began new rotation with labs in Arts & Crafts, Puppet Theatre, computer, Story Telling, Science Lab, Pre-Kindergarten
	19 youth and adults signed up for July 2003 National Youth Gathering in Atlanta

## United in Faith Represents 730 Years of Ministry

United in Faith	1998-	5 years and counting!
Gladstone Park	1936-1998	62 years
Holy Communion	1966-1 998	32 years
Belmont Park	1918 -1 966	48 years
Gethsemane	1921-1 966	45 years
First Gethsemane	1870-1921	51 years
Lebanon	1904-1921	17 years
Medill Avenue	1927-1998	71 years
Nebo	1901-1998	97 years
Our Lord's	1934-1998	64 years
Our Savior's English	1909-1998	89 years
Peace	1923-1998	75 years
St. Andrew's	1924-1998	74 years

**The Journey Continues: Years 6 - 10, 2003 - 2008 - A Living Hope!**

# United in Faith

The Journey Continues: Years 6 - 10  
2003 - 2008

*A Living Hope*

**United in Faith Lutheran Church**

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## THE VISION AND VALUES REVISITED

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.  
1 Peter 1: 3 - 9

The foundation of United in Faith Lutheran Church is our Lord Jesus Christ. How this church would live out its mission was forged during the consolidation process of 8 congregations and during its first five years. The vision and values adopted both guided and served to support the carrying out of ministries and the meeting of challenges in years 6 through 10. As a result the faith and the systems that hold the congregation together and allow it to adapt to changing conditions are stronger and more clarified. Glory be to you, O Lord!

### Our Vision

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

### Our Values

Weekly Worship  
(Children and Youth *replaced*)  
Every Person Who Walks through our Doors  
The Gospel of Jesus  
Prayer  
Faith Development  
(Caring for the Elderly *replaced*)  
Feeding the Hungry  
Working for Justice (*new*)  
Engaging All People in the Life of the Church  
(*new*)

In January 2006 a process was started to review and evaluate the vision and values for relevance at that time and for United in Faith's future. No changes to the vision were deemed necessary. Two changes were made to the values. Not being satisfied with only reacting to injustice, '**Working for Justice**' was added. 'Children and Youth' and 'Caring for the Elderly' were replaced by '**Engaging all people in the life of the church**' to emphasize the inclusiveness of all ages.

## STAFFING THE VISION

Pastor Greg Moser, a chaplain in the Illinois Army National Guard, was called to active duty at Fort Polk, Louisiana in the fall of 2004. Pastor Dawn Mass Moser's job description was revised to cover the necessary duties previously performed by both Pastor Greg and herself. Some pastoral responsibilities were eliminated, and lay ministers took on larger responsibilities. Pastoral support was also provided by a senior seminarian from the Lutheran School of Theology. When Pastor Dawn took a leave of absence followed by reduced work hours, an interim pastor, Pastor David Dennison, was called until Pastor Greg returned in the fall of 2005. Upon Pastor Greg's return, Pastor Dawn resigned. Pastor Greg and the church council carefully reviewed and reflected on the congregational changes, pastoral needs and options, and recommended to enter the intern

program. The first intern, Erin Clausen, served 2006 - 2007 followed by a second intern, Carrie Smith, in 2007 - 2008. Based on the successful terms of these high-caliber interns, the decision was made to continue in the intern program. The third intern, Julie Boleyn, will arrive in Fall 2008. United in Faith rejoices in providing a learning environment - both teaching and learning from the interns.

In April 2007 the Music Director resigned. Job descriptions were developed for an organist/choir director and a pianist/Praise Band director. These positions were filled in Fall 2007.

Pastor Greg was again called up for service in Italy for several months in early 2007 and has been called to a yearlong deployment in Afghanistan beginning in the fall of 2008. An interim pastor, Pastor Sue Schneider, was called for this most recent absence. United in Faith supported their Pastor in a time of war so that the Word could be proclaimed, the Sacraments administered and pastoral counseling provided to American soldiers. United in Faith also trusted its ability to continue its ministry during pastoral absences and maintained its sense of calling for ministry on the northwest side of Chicago.

### STRUCTURING THE VISION

#### Governance and Committees

Church Council  
Executive Committee

Audit Committee  
Mutual Ministry Committee  
Finance Committee  
Property Management Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Call Committee  
Education Endowment and Scholarship Committee  
Mission Endowment Fund Committee  
Intern Committee (*new*)

Future Building Use Committee (*new*)  
Landscape Committee (*new*)  
Thrivent Coordinators (*new*)  
Web site Committee (*new*)  
Communication Committee (*new*)

opportunity to reflect on pastoral ministry in general as well as identify and encourage the intern's particular strengths and limitations in ministry. The **Future Building Use Committee** was formed to bring forth ideas and management for projects that will benefit United in Faith with improved and expanded facilities in the future. The **Landscape Committee** enhances the outside appearance of the buildings by planting and maintenance of flowers, shrubs and trees. **Thrivent Coordinators** help the congregation gain additional funding for projects supporting our vision and values from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The **Web site Committee** keeps [unitedinfaith.org](http://unitedinfaith.org) welcoming, current, complete, and reflective of activities and information. The **Communication Committee** was formed in 2007 to enhance ministries through the ease, coordination and standardization of communication.

#### The Ministries of United in Faith

Children's  
Confirmation (*new*)  
Decorative Arts  
Faith Development  
Fellowship  
Home Communion Visitation  
Hospitality  
Justice (*new*)  
Men in Mission (*new*)  
Outreach  
Prayer  
Service and Mission  
Stewardship  
Women's  
Worship and Music  
(Youth *replaced*)

Youth ministry became **Confirmation** and includes a Teen Group of post confirmation youth that participates in selected confirmation activities as well as their own separate activities.

**Decorative Arts** ministry was split off from Worship and Music and decorates the sanctuary seasonally.

New committees were formed as needs arose. The **Intern Committee** serves as support for the intern, collectively offering the intern the

Outreach and Hospitality ministry was separated into two distinct ministries. **Outreach** focuses on our neighbors and bringing them to our doors.

**Hospitality** focuses on Sunday morning greeters and follow-up calls to visitors.

**Justice** ministry focuses on the gospel of Jesus to do justice by working for the elimination of the root causes of injustice.

**Men in Mission** was formed in July 2007 to help the men of United in Faith get to know each other and move the church forward by helping men take a more proactive role in the church goals, youth, and other areas of concern.

Two groups that supported the ministries of United in Faith were dissolved in 2005: Arts and Crafts and Dorcas Circle.

#### **Statement of Affirmation and Welcome**

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 After an educational series of speakers on gay, lesbian, and transgender issues, United in Faith of this congregation which are based on its core values.

After an educational series of speakers on gay, lesbian, and transgender issues, United in Faith adopted in February 2004 this statement of affirmation and welcome as a public proclamation of its commitment to welcoming 'every person who walks through our doors'. United in Faith is designated a 'Reconciling in Christ' congregation.

## **Constitutional Changes**

At the annual meeting in February 2008, two changes were approved. One allowed for the awarding of educational assistance to students in Christian (instead of only Lutheran) pre-schools through high schools to allow more choices for Christian education. The second change extended the period of time for placing 50% of undesignated monetary gifts in the congregation's reserve fund to provide adequate funding for the operations of the church. All remaining undesignated funds are placed in the Mission Endowment Fund.

## **Funding**

In March 2003, the Family Crisis Fund was instituted due to the dramatic increase in the number of persons from the congregation in need of financial assistance due to loss of jobs, increased medical expenses, reduced work hours, etc. The Service and Mission committee administer the fund that receives donations from the congregation.

In July 2003, United in Faith was awarded a grant from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Fund for Mission Initiative to further outreach efforts including the third worship service that started in September of that year.

The Education Endowment and Scholarship Fund continued to provide annual scholarships and tuition to students. Almost \$15,000 was awarded in 2007.

A 3-year 'New Space for a Welcome Place' campaign to raise funds for the west building renovations began in Fall 2004.

A 'Raise the Roof' appeal in 2005 raised funds for repairs to the roof trusses in Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary.

Operating expenses continued to exceed income over these 5 years while membership remained steady.

### **Communication**

Pictorial directories were published in Fall 2003 and 2007.

In the summer of 2006, the Web site was overhauled to provide current and accurate information on all aspects of United in Faith. Most visitors meet United in Faith first at its Web site so the importance of this window was embraced. Newsletters and annual reports posted on the Web site enabled the printing and mailing of fewer documents.

Seasonal street pole banners outside our property were used to announce and call attention to our presence.

A new digital sign was installed outside the front door enabling scrolling messages and calling attention to the presence of a church in an untraditional building and setting.

Areas being addressed by the Communication committee include standard sign messages, a user-friendly Web site, reformatting newsletters and Sunday bulletins, a Welcome center and Welcome packet, consistent and pleasing display of information.

### **Property Improvements**

The Cross of the Resurrection, outside and above the front door, was dedicated in October 2003. It is representative of the story of United in Faith's history, the history of God's forgiveness and hope for the world. The old wooden cross represents the death experience that the previous congregations walked through. The tall aluminum cross with arms and hands stretched up to God represents the new life that United in Faith celebrates today.

In Fall 2004, a roof support truss in the Fellowship Hall cracked, rendering Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary unusable until repairs were made and all the trusses were reinforced. Worship was first moved to the west building and then to the lounge. The Golden Diners program was suspended. In April 2005 the worship space was rededicated

after the completion of repairs and all activities in the affected spaces resumed.

Funding from the 'New Space for a Welcome Place' campaign allowed renovations to the west building: roof, eyebrows in front of both buildings, new windows, updated bathrooms, new back door, crash bars on doors, windows in school room doors. In 2008, the Eagle Scouts painted the interior of the building. Major projects remaining in the west building and awaiting funding include: a sprinkler system, a new electrical system, and an atrium connecting the east and west buildings.

Landscaping improvements to the front and back areas included trees, shrubs, and flowers. Boy Scouts assisted in weeding these areas.

The grand piano was refurbished in September 2007 with substantial funds raised by the congregation.

The bus that was gifted to United in Faith at its start for a senior program was put up for sale in 2008 since the vision for a senior program that offered transportation was not realized.

A stand of candles, a kneeler, and a cross were installed in the sanctuary as a special place to light a candle, kneel, and pray.

A cleaning service was hired in 2007 to replace the individuals hired to perform these tasks.

### **Worship**

A third worship service was started in September 2003 to accommodate the growing attendance at the existing two services. This service was more contemplative and less structured, designed to appeal to the unchurched. The third service was eliminated in September 2007 due to low attendance and a desire to provide a full, standalone hour for education classes for both children and adults between services on Sunday mornings.

The music and liturgy continued to be highly regarded - varied, spirit filled, and celebratory. The Celebration Choir sings at the contemporary service. A children's choir, Schola United, has

been started. Midnight Mass, the praise band, continues to lead music at the contemporary service.

The new Evangelical Lutheran Worship book replaced the Lutheran Book of Worship in February 2008.

Multi-week themed preaching series were used periodically to explore topics in depth. Themes have included: King David, Summer Road Trip: Family Vacation with Abraham and Sarah, and Justice. Lenten and Advent services were also themed. 'Blue Christmas' services were held for those suffering from grief or loss in their life.

Worship attendance dipped slightly in the last 2 years mostly attributed to the deaths of elderly members who were a vital part in the consolidation of the 8 congregations and regular worshippers.

### **LIVING THE VISION Creating Traditions**

As a young congregation, new traditions were created over the first 10 years.

- \* Seasonal and holiday Fellowship and Outreach dinners
- \* Special food pantry collections for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas
- \* Spring Cleaning
- \* Annual Women's Spring Brunch (served by the men of United in Faith)
- \* Attending Lutheran Day in Springfield to discuss issues with representatives and meet other Lutheran advocates
- \* Wrapping cookies/packing health kits/serving dinner for The Night Ministry organization
- \* Youth summer mission/gathering trips (2003 Atlanta National Youth Gathering, 2004 Fort Apache, Arizona mission trip, 2005 Juarez, Mexico mission trip, 2007 Black Hills camping trip, 2008 Global Mission Event in LaCrosse, WI)
- \* Vacation Bible School
- \* Youth Summer camp at the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Camp (partial camperships given to all participating youth)
- \* Collection of Back to School Supplies for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
- \* Fall Rally Day/Block Party for the congregation, neighbors, and friends with food, music,

entertainment, registration, and information on the ministries of United in Faith (not held in 2008)

- \* Sunday Church School
- \* Weekly Bible/book studies
- \* Explore Belonging classes for people interested in learning more about United in Faith
- \* LifeKeys program for discovering spiritual gifts
- \* Christmas Bazaar in October
- \* Cookie Walk in December (Women of the ELCA)
- \* Wrapping gifts at Borders to benefit St. Cyprian's Food Pantry
- \* Donation of Christmas Gifts to the children of St. Cyprian's Food Pantry (over 150 gifts were given in 2007)

### **Serving**

Justice ministry highlighted issues of hunger, voters registration, refugees and displaced persons, the differently abled, women, racism, and economics through speaker series, monthly letter writing opportunities to legislators, workshops, events, and seminars, and a Christmas catalog of places to shop where proceeds from sales helped to employ the poor, feed the hungry, house the homeless, and more.

Faith Development held a series of events to highlight the Holy Land in Conflict including a Lenten speaker series, a presentation (cosponsored by WELCA) by a retired LSTC professor who served as a volunteer with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program, book club selections on Islam and from the Bishop of Jerusalem of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and Jerusalem, and a series of videos from Peace Not Walls. The Altar Guild acquired Communion ware crafted in the Holy Land.

Youth ministry raised funds for trips and activities through Sunday breakfasts, the Jesus Java Café, and chore auctions, and participated in community youth events and ministry projects (Crop Walk, St. Cyprian Food Pantry Christmas gifts and food collections, Christmas caroling to the shut-ins). As part of the intern's project focused on the ELCA's Book of Faith Initiative, over 80 Bibles were given away in the fall of 2007.

Other ministries continued their dedicated work:

- \* Communion visitation to those unable to attend church (over 100 visits made each year)
- \* Intercessory prayers as requested and maintenance of a prayer list for distribution
- \* Building and landscape maintenance and upkeep
- \* *The Lutheran* magazine subscriptions to all families
- \* Preparation of the altar for each service and maintenance of the paraments, vestments, and linens
- \* Preparation of youth for confirmation
- \* Raising up stewardship topics
- \* Monthly opportunities to grow in faith by the Women of the ELCA

United in Faith continued to host these organizations:

Boy Scouts  
Girl Scouts  
Golden Diners  
St. Cyprian's Food Pantry  
Senior Club  
Unfinished Objects (crafts/hobbies group)  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Al Anon  
Survivors of Incest Anonymous

Life at and around United in Faith is busy as we strive 'to be a community of united disciples offering gifts to the world that can be found no place else'. United in Faith has become stronger and bolder during its 10 years through a new birth into a living hope.

**Thanks be to God!**

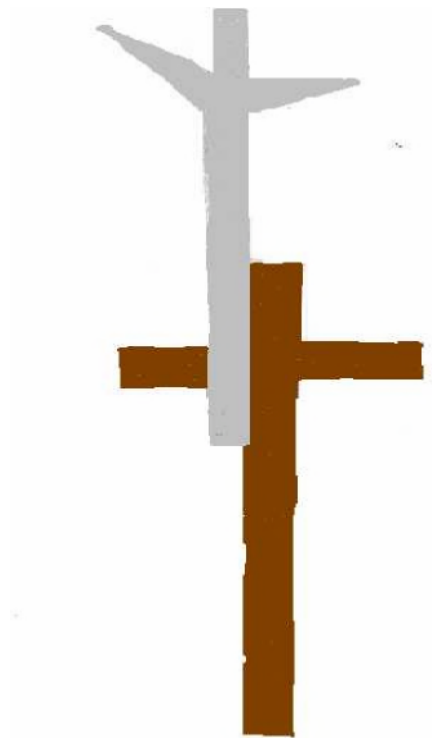


**The Journey Continues: Years 11 - 15, 2008 - 2013 - Renewal**

# United in Faith

The Journey Continues: Years 11 - 15  
2008-2013

**Renewal!**



**United in Faith Lutheran Church**

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[www.facebook.com/UIFLC](https://www.facebook.com/UIFLC)

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.  
Romans 12:2

The period of Years 11 through 15 began and ended with departures. In the Fall of 2008, Pastor Greg Moser left for a one year deployment to Afghanistan as a chaplain in the Illinois National Guard. In February 2013, Pastor Greg left United in Faith for a call to another congregation. The intervening years emphasized renewal with heightened spirituality, anxiety and drama due to the many changes, living our statement of affirmation and welcome, continued faithfulness and expanded ongoing ministry. In the midst of it all, Jesus Christ was proclaimed here in word and deed.

### STAFFING

With Pastor Greg's deployment, Pastor Susan Schneider was called as our interim pastor. As our second intern, Carrie Smith, departed, our third intern, Julie Boleyn, arrived in Fall 2008. We were challenged to "walk our talk" of being a welcoming congregation with the change in spiritual leadership. At the same time, there was also a changeover in the music staff. The music director who left was replaced by one person to work as the choir director and organist and another to work as the praise band leader and

pianist. The choir director/organist left after a year. Since that time, we have operated with a pianist/organist for the traditional service who also does choir direction and the praise band for the contemporary service.

Pastor Greg returned in the Fall of 2009. Our fourth intern, Richard Sheridan, began in Fall 2010. Pastor Greg continued to serve our congregation until resigning in February 2013. Shortly before his resignation, our administrative assistant position became vacant and a temporary

replacement was hired until the position was filled in May 2013.

Pastor Lester White was hired as our Intentional Interim Pastor after Pastor Greg's departure.

### THE CONGREGATION

Official membership statistics indicate that the number of confirmed and baptized members remained stable, ending the period at 207 and 242 respectively. New members plus baptisms balanced the losses due to death or transfer. As a congregation that stresses discipleship over membership, several in the congregation are not included in the official counts.

### RENEWAL

The intern's project as suggested by Pastor Greg at the time of his deployment was the initiation of a renewal effort based on Natural Church Development methodology. A team was formed to begin the process. An initial survey of members showed that Passionate Spirituality was our lowest dimension of the characteristics that make for a healthy ministry. In addition to ongoing activities of our ministries, such as Bible studies, book clubs, and small group gatherings, new activities to strengthen our spirituality were initiated and included:

- > Living the Lord's Prayer - a study that asked "what does it mean to be the church" and taught that God has a dream and we are in it

- > Raising awareness of God sightings, seeing God at work at UiF and asking how we can help

- > Incorporating prayer into meetings along with devotions; assigning prayer partners to youth on a mission trip; sharing of spontaneous community prayers during worship

- > Increasing use of the Taize worship format
- > Providing additional opportunities to support the Food Pantry with quarterly Brown Bag Sundays

> Moving from a Vision and Values church to one with a Purpose and Guiding Principles

#### Our Purpose

We are to be God's hands, feet and voice in the world.

#### Our Guiding Principles

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

Our Purpose and Guiding Principles were posted throughout the building to keep them in the forefront of our activities. Worksheets were developed for ministry and committee use to ensure that in planning activities our purpose and guiding principles were being fulfilled.

Subsequent surveys of the congregation showed that although Passionate Spirituality remained the lowest dimension, our focus on it was leverage to drive growth in all of the characteristics.

### STRUCTURED FOR OUR PURPOSE

#### Governance and Committees

Church Council  
Executive Committee  
  
Audit  
Call (*inactive*)  
Education Endowment and Scholarship  
Finance  
Intern (*inactive*)  
Mission Endowment Fund  
Mutual Ministry  
Nominating  
Property Management  
  
Communication (*inactive*)  
Computer Administrators  
Future Building Use (*inactive*)  
Landscape  
Renewal Team (*new*)  
Thrivent Coordinators  
Website

A **Call Committee** will be formed as part of the Transition period following the departure of Pastor Greg. The **Intern Committee**, which served as support for the intern, became inactive following the end of our intern program participation in 2011.

#### The Ministries of United in Faith

Children's  
Confirmation  
Faith Development (*inactive*)  
Fellowship  
Gay and Straight Together (*new*)  
Communion Visitation  
Hospitality  
Justice (*inactive*)  
Men in Mission  
Outreach  
Prayer  
Service and Mission  
Stewardship  
Women's  
Worship and Music

**Gay and Straight Together** ministry was formed in 2011 to commit time and energy to focus on outreach to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) community.

**Decorative Arts** ministry was merged back into Worship and Music. **Justice, Faith Development** and the Youth component of **Confirmation**, are currently inactive.

#### Funding

The Education Endowment and Scholarship Fund continued to provide annual scholarships and tuition to students. Almost \$5,000 was awarded to 5 students in 2012 and membership in the Luther High School North Association was maintained.

The Family Crisis Fund, administered by the Service and Mission ministry, is supported by the congregation and provides funds to meet critical financial needs.

Special appeals were made for furnace and roof repairs.

Although cash income has never covered cash expenditures, money received from the sale of the church buildings from the consolidation in 1998 has been prudently invested, and investment

income and occasional bequests have in many years offset the cash deficits. In recent years, cash income has somewhat stabilized and expenditures especially in the area of staff have been reduced significantly to close the gap left by the loss of investment income due to the recession. The cash deficit in 2012 was the lowest in a decade.

### **Communication**

Pictures for a pictorial directory were taken at the end of 2012 with the publication of the directory expected in mid 2013.

In 2010, United in Faith established a Facebook profile to have a more public presence on social media and to post more timely information, announcements, and requests for prayer support.

The website, [unitedinfaith.org](http://unitedinfaith.org), was redesigned in 2011 to be more user friendly.

A congregational forum was held on the fifth Sundays of a month to open the lines of communication and update the congregation on current and upcoming activities

Our intern, Richard Sheridan, held an educational seminar on interpersonal communication as an integral part of Christian discipleship.

### **Property**

Major projects included: furnace repair (2012) and roof repairs and replacement (2013). The front facades of our buildings were repainted in 2012, funded by an anonymous donor. The parking lot was repaved in 2011.

The Boy Scouts have assisted in several projects, including painting the interior of the west building and weeding the garden areas.

The church bus was sold in 2009 due to lack of use.

In 2012 a Spanish-speaking ministry began renting our west ministry center building for Sunday worship.

### **Worship and Music**

Early in 2008, the congregation acquired the new Lutheran hymnals, Evangelical Lutheran Worship. In January 2009, an envisioning opportunity was held for congregational input on worship.

During the year, our worship schedule included a Traditional service and a Praise and Worship (formally contemporary) service each Sunday morning except when there was a fifth Sunday in a month. Then one service was held, alternating the worship format. During the summer months, one service was held alternating each week between Traditional and Praise and Worship formats. Sunday school was held during a portion of each service except during the summer months.

The music and liturgy continued to be highly regarded - varied, spirit-filled, and celebratory. The choir sings at the traditional service. Our Praise band, The Voice of the Turtle

(originally called Midnight Mass), continues to lead music at the Praise and Worship service. Two large screens were installed on either side of the altar for the projection of the words to the songs used in the Praise and Worship service. They are also used to project videos and pictures for multimedia presentations. A new sound system was installed in 2009, funded by an anonymous donor.

Multi-week themed preaching series were used periodically on Sundays and during Lent and Advent to explore topics in depth. Themes included: Summer Road Trip: Family Vacation with Abraham and Sarah; Healing; Preparing for the Messiah; Basic Christian Living; A Season of Hope, A Life of Hope; What is Faith?; Can God Save Us?; and Teach Me to Pray.

Average Sunday worship attendance declined 17%, and the 2013 average attendance through Easter is 101.

## **LIVING OUR PURPOSE**

### **Continuing Traditions**

Some of our traditions, created over our 15 years continued, while some fell away as needs and passions changed and new events were held to supplement traditions.

- \* Care packages and a pen pal campaign during Pastor Greg's absence
- \* Summer concert series (2008)
- \* Bible giveaways
- \* Blessing of the animals in October
- \* Seasonal, holiday and special event Fellowship and Outreach dinners and pot lucks
- \* Annual Spring Cleaning
- \* Annual Women's Spring Brunch
- \* Men's Monthly breakfast meetings
- \* Girl Scout Pancake Breakfasts
- \* Easter and Mother's Day breakfasts
- \* Baby showers for new little ones
- \* Family game nights
- \* Stewardship Temple Talks
- \* Pampered Chef fundraiser
- \* Attending Lutheran Day in Springfield to discuss issues with representatives and meet other Lutheran advocates
- \* Wrapping cookies/packing health kits/serving dinner/making donations for The Night Ministry organization
- \* Youth summer mission/gathering trips (2008 Global Mission Event in Lacrosse, WI; 2011 mission trip to Hancock Co. Mississippi)
- \* Confirmation retreats
- \* Women's retreats (Prayer June 2009, Spirituality April 2011)
- \* Fall Rally Day/Block Party for the congregation, neighbors, and friends with food, music, entertainment, registration, and information on the ministries of United in Faith
- \* Explore Belonging classes for people interested in learning more about United in Faith
- \* Thanksgiving Eve worship services and pie sharing
- \* Christmas Bazaar in October (discontinued 2009)
- \* Cookie Walk in December
- \* Forum on end of life planning

\* Collection of Back to School Supplies for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, St. Cyprian's Food Pantry, and the children of Afghanistan

\* Special St. Cyprian's Food Pantry collections of food and funds for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas as well as quarterly Brown Bag Sundays

\* Donations to the children of St. Cyprian's Food Pantry of Christmas gifts (125 gifts in 2012) and Easter baskets (330 in 2013)

\* Making scarves for St. Cyprian's families and a special project by a member donating 1,000 hats

### **Serving**

Outreach events by the Gay and Straight Together ministry included a film festival, marching in the annual Pride Parade, a workshop on marriage equality, and celebrating Reconciling in Christ Sundays.

New Life for Old Bags is a ministry started by one of our members in 2010 that recycles plastic shopping bags to make sleeping mats for the homeless. All ages can participate in the process, which to date has recycled 549,500 bags into 785 mats representing 62,800 hours of volunteer labor. Although not an official ministry of the congregation, NLOB is supported by the congregation by providing office space and meeting space for monthly work days, in addition to workers.

Other ministries continued their dedicated work:

- \* Sunday Church School
- \* Weekly Bible/book studies
- \* Vacation Bible School
- \* Monthly communion visitation to those unable to attend church
- \* Intercessory prayers as requested, a monthly community prayer session and maintenance of a prayer list for distribution
- \* Addition of a stand of candles and kneeler in the sanctuary
- \* The Family Crisis Fund collection and disbursement
- \* Building and landscape maintenance and upkeep including computer infrastructure
- \* *The Lutheran* magazine subscriptions to all families

- \* Daily devotional booklets available to all
- \* Preparation of the altar for each service and maintenance of the paraments, vestments, and linens
- \* Greeters for Sunday worship services and "coffee and" supplied for Sunday morning fellowship, plus special desserts for celebrations
- \* Preparation of youth for confirmation
- \* Raising up stewardship topics
- \* Monthly opportunities to grow in faith by the Women of the ELCA

United in Faith continued to host these organizations:

Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts  
Girl Scouts and Brownies  
Golden Diners  
St. Cyprian's Food Pantry  
New Life for Old Bags  
Senior Club  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Al Anon  
Survivors of Incest Anonymous

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As this 5 year period comes to a close, United in Faith is entering into an Intentional Transition period as it prepares to call a new pastor. A Transition Team has been appointed to take the congregation through the following steps:

- > Coming to terms with our history
- > Discovering a new identity
- > Enabling needed leadership change
- > Renewing denominational linkages
- > Committing to a new direction in ministry

The Renewal Team will be renamed the Church Health Team to signify the ongoing process to assess and strengthen the health of the church using the Natural Church Development process. A recommitment to supporting the health of the church will be asked of each person in the congregation.

Putting Passionate Spirituality aside, the Church Health Team will engage the entire congregation in a spiritual gifts assessment. This will allow for personal growth plans for each person and deployment of the discovered gifts in appropriate ministries to fulfill individual passions. Instead of a focus on meeting the needs of our church, we can become an asset-based climate where members' assets drive the matching to opportunities and needs.

**Renewed in Christ,  
we remain United in Faith,  
striving to be God's Hands,  
Feet and Voice  
in the World**

**The Journey Continues: Years 16 - 20, 2013 – 2018 – Transition**

# United in Faith

**The Journey Continues: Years 16 - 20  
2013 - 2018**

## TRANSITION



**United in Faith Lutheran Church**

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So if anyone is in Christ, there is  
a new creation: everything old  
has passed away; see,  
everything has become new!  
2 Corinthians 5:17

The period of years 16 through 20 was one of transition. Our pastor of 12 years left for another call at the end of our 15th year. Those 12 years were part of our formative years and the pastor's leadership was a key component in implementing the reasons the congregation came into being with the consolidation. United in Faith entered into an **Intentional Transition** period as it prepared to call a new pastor. A Transition Team was appointed to take the congregation through the following steps:

- > Coming to terms with our history
- > Discovering a new identity
- > Enabling needed leadership change
- > Renewing denominational linkages
- > Committing to a new direction in ministry

This transition period allowed the congregation to consider new structures and new worship traditions.

A **Call Committee** was formed in 2014 and a call was given and accepted in 2015.

## STAFFING

Pastor Greg Moser served our congregation from November 2000 until resigning in February 2013 to accept another call. Pastor Lester White was then hired as our Intentional Interim Pastor. With his departure in 2014 the Reverend Dr. Eric Bodensstab stepped in as Interim Pastor, serving until 2015 when Pastor Carla Thompson Powell accepted a call.

With great sadness the congregation learned of the death of Pastor Greg on Christmas day 2016. He will always be remembered for his work in the formation of United in Faith and his leadership in our faith journeys. In honor of Pastor Greg, donations were made to ELIM for the creation of military kits.

In fall 2017 the congregation was assigned 3 Ministry in Context students from the seminary for a 1 year term: Elizabeth Koerner, Ruby Lee, and Aaron Silco; providing new ideas and energy within our community.

Worship music direction for our traditional service was led by an organist who also served as choir director. The Praise service was led by a band consisting of volunteer and paid musicians and song directors.

The Administrative Assistant position was turned over three times.

## THE CONGREGATION

Official membership statistics indicate that the number of confirmed and baptized members at the end of 2017 was 165 and 175 respectively (losses of 21% and 28% over 5 years). As a congregation that stresses discipleship over membership, several in the congregation are not included in the official counts.

## Purpose and Guiding Principles

Throughout this transitional period, our Purpose and Guiding Principles remained the same and continued to direct our ministries.

### Our Purpose

We are to be God's hands, feet and voice  
in the world.

### Our Guiding Principles

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



## STRUCTURED FOR OUR PURPOSE

### Governance and Committees

Church Council  
Executive Committee

Audit  
Call (*inactive*)  
Education Endowment and Scholarship  
Finance  
Intern (*inactive*)  
Mission in Context Lay (*new*)  
Mission Endowment Fund  
Mutual Ministry  
Nominating  
Property Management

(Communication - moved to Ministries as  
various Public Relations ministries)  
Computer Administrators  
Future Building Use (*inactive*)  
Landscape  
(Renewal Team - moved to Ministries  
as Church Health Team)  
Thrivent Coordinators  
(Website - moved to Ministries)

To supplement the overseeing of the operation of the congregation, several policies were adopted by the **council** including those regarding animals, firearms, and purchasing supplies.

**Constitutional amendments** were approved in 2018.

**Ministries** were reorganized into 3 **Areas of Commitment**, each with 2 **Areas of Focus**. Each Area of Focus has a Ministry Coordinator while each ministry maintains a Ministry Director. New ministries were added while some committees and ministries were dropped or split into multiple ministries.

**Shepherd's Staff** was added to assist with administrative operations and includes staying in touch with members, guests and visitors. Volunteer Coordination deals with the assignment of volunteers to the many positions available.

**Service Projects** are those that do not fall within a specific ministry, but are rather congregation-wide.

## The Ministries of United in Faith

### Christian Formation

#### **Christian Education**

Confirmation (*inactive*)  
Sunday School  
Vacation Bible School  
Youth (*inactive*)

#### **Spiritual Growth**

Bible Study  
Faith Development (*inactive*)  
Prayer  
Men in Mission (*inactive*)  
WELCA (*inactive*)  
Worship & Music

### Outreach

#### **Public Relations**

Marketing (*new*)  
Social Media (*new*)  
Website

#### **Community**

Gay & Straight Together  
Justice (*reactivated*)  
(Outside Groups)\*  
(St Cyprian's Food Pantry)\*  
Service Projects (*new*)

### InReach

#### **Member Care**

Volunteer Coordination (*new*)  
Communion Visitation  
Shepherds Staff (*new*)  
Stewardship

#### **Congregational Care**

Altar Guild  
Church Health Team

\* outside organizations hosted and supported by United in Faith

## **Funding**

The Education Endowment and Scholarship Fund continued to provide annual scholarships and tuition to students. Luther High School North closed in 2017.

The Family Crisis Fund, administered by the Pastor and Executive Committee, is supported by the congregation and provides funds to meet critical financial needs.

Special appeals were made for the new HVAC system in the West building. Committees and ministries held various fundraising events. Almost all of the cost was covered through donations and fundraisers as we recognized the importance of the West building for neighborhood group activities.

The new organ was also almost completely paid for by donations.

Cash income continued to be less than cash expenditures with investment income and occasional bequests offsetting the cash deficits. The Pastor position was decreased from full time to 3/4 time to assist in addressing the deficit as we go forward.

AmazonSmile was promoted as a way to provide additional funding. An auction of donated items was held in 2016 as another way to raise funds.

A grant from the Synod Fund for Mission was applied for and received (\$2500). It is used for marketing purposes - outside banners, invitation cards, flyers, local newspaper advertising for holiday services.

## **Communication**

A professionally produced pictorial directory was distributed in 2014. An internally produced pictorial directory was distributed in 2017 and updated early in 2018.

Congregational forums continued to be held on the fifth Sundays of a month, sponsored by council, to open the lines of communication and update the congregation on current and upcoming activities.

An educational event was held to introduce people to the usage of Facebook, Twitter and our website.

Facebook, our website and neighborhood social media (e.g. Nextdoor) were used to establish a presence and publicize events. People were also encouraged to use Twitter for these purposes, even live Tweeting during services.

Outdoor banners (2' x 6') were utilized more intentionally to publicize events that could be of interest to the community. An easily changeable banner stand/holder was installed in the front of the building and a set of grommets to hang a banner was installed on the brick wall by the back parking lot.

## **Property**

Major projects included: a new HVAC system in the West building (2017), a new roof on the East building (2013), a new organ (2016), LED lighting fixtures (2017), renovation of the Sunday School room (2017).

The folding chairs in Fellowship Hall were replaced by an anonymous donor (2017).

'Stained glass' panels were installed on the glass above the folding doors separating the sanctuary from fellowship hall (2016).

## **Worship and Music**

Our worship schedule remained the same. During the year, this included a Traditional service and a Praise and Worship service each Sunday morning except when there was a fifth Sunday in a month. Then one service was held followed by the congregational forum. During the summer months, one service was held. The one service Sundays used a blended format combining elements from both the Traditional and Praise services.

Sunday school was held during the year except during the summer months.

The music and liturgy continued to be highly regarded - varied, spirit-filled, and celebratory. The choir sings occasionally at the traditional

service. Our Praise band, The Voice of the Turtle, continues to lead music at the Praise and Worship service. The bell choir performs occasionally.

Multi-week themed preaching series were used periodically on Sundays and during Lent and Advent to explore topics in depth. God Sightings returned for Lent 2016. An Advent Blessing bucket was utilized in 2015. Pentecost 2017 brought a fire dancer and various languages to the service. The Reformation 500 service featured a variety of special music from many different global Lutheran traditions.

Metropolitan Chicago Synod Bishop Wayne Miller preached at our 20th anniversary celebration service on Easter, April 2018.

Average Sunday worship attendance in 2017 was 63, down 62% from 5 years ago.

## LIVING OUR PURPOSE

### Continuing Traditions

Some of our traditions, created over our 20 years continued, while some fell away as needs and passions changed and new events were held to supplement traditions.

- \* Blessing of the Animals in October
- \* Seasonal, holiday and special event Fellowship and Outreach dinners and pot lucks
- \* Annual Spring Cleaning
- \* Men's Monthly breakfast meetings
- \* Easter and Mother's Day breakfasts
- \* Stewardship Temple Talks
- \* Confirmation retreats
- \* Fall Rally Day for the congregation, neighbors, and friends with worship, food, music, games, service events and fellowship
- \* Explore Belonging classes for people interested in learning more about United in Faith
- \* Thanksgiving Eve worship services and pie sharing
- \* Cookie Baking and Walk in December
- \* Collection of Back to School Supplies for St. Cyprian's Food Pantry
- \* Special St. Cyprian's Food Pantry collections of food and funds for Easter, Thanksgiving, and

Christmas as well as quarterly Brown Bag Sundays

- \* Donations for the children of St. Cyprian's Food Pantry of Christmas gifts and Easter baskets
- \* New chrismos for the Christmas tree
- \* Hosting the LOMC Swing Choir
- \* Devotions written by members published in the monthly newsletter
- \* Children burying an 'Alleluia' banner for Lent
- \* Children assisting in collecting the offering at services
- \* Recognizing birthdays and anniversaries the first Sunday of each month

### Serving

Outreach events by the Gay and Straight Together ministry included marching in the Gay Pride parade, promoting marriage equality, workshops on bullying, self esteem and being transgender, and celebrating Reconciling in Christ Sundays.

Justice ministry hosted: a Fair Trade product sale; an offering of letters regarding Illinois state budget issues and Bread for the World; a 'Food for a Week' simulation event about food insecurity; an opportunity to decorate cards for Phil's Friends (cancer patients); a study of the draft ELCA document Faith, Sexism and Justice followed by a viewing of *Miss Representation*, a documentary exploring how mainstream media and culture contribute to the under-representation of women in positions of power and influence in America.

As we approached our 20th anniversary we also celebrated the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation by the nailing of the 95 theses on the church door by Martin Luther. To mark this occasion a door representing the Wittenburg Castle Church door was installed in the fellowship hall. Members of our community were asked to perform **500 Acts of Kindness** and to post them on the door.

In celebration and thanksgiving for our 20th anniversary, our vision is to offer 20 service projects to the community, turning our celebration outward, as our gift and a new way of engaging in the community, enabling us to be good stewards of the money and energy God has given us over the years. **Twenty For Twenty** is to bless local organizations and to be a visible

sign of God's grace to those around us. These activities take place over the year from fall 2017 to fall 2018, to bridge from our 20th year into our 21st year. A final anniversary celebration in fall 2018 will highlight these projects as well as the organizations and people we have partnered with. Events have included: a blood drive, a Reformation 500 book fair with book donations to a senior care facility, a Veterans Salute, supporting a housing center fundraiser. An indoor winter farmers market is scheduled for February 2018.

Other ministries continued their dedicated work:

- \* Sunday Church School
- \* Weekly Bible/book studies including online Bible studies
- \* Vacation Bible School and an incorporated service project (with participation growing each year)
- \* Monthly communion visitation to those unable to attend church
- \* Intercessory prayers as requested, a monthly community prayer session and maintenance of the prayer weaving where prayers petitions are posted in the sanctuary
- \* The Family Crisis Fund collection and disbursement
- \* Building and landscape maintenance and upkeep including computer infrastructure
- \* *The Lutheran* magazine subscriptions to all families
- \* Daily devotional booklets available to all
- \* Preparation of the altar for each service and maintenance of the paraments, vestments, and linens; seasonal decorations
- \* Gift Assessment seminars
- \* Greeters for Sunday worship services and 'coffee and' supplied for Sunday morning fellowship, plus special desserts for celebrations
- \* Preparation of youth for confirmation
- \* Raising up stewardship topics
- \* Operation Christmas Child - shoe boxes for children
- \* Installing a Little Free Library box on site (constructed by Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts)
- \* Volunteering at the Chicago Greater Food Depository and at Feed My Starving Children
- \* Various craft projects (e.g. quilts, fidget pillows) donated to those in need

United in Faith continued to host these organizations:

Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts  
Girl Scouts and Brownies  
Golden Diners (*closed in 2017*)  
Golden Rebels (*started in 2018*)  
St. Cyprian's Food Pantry  
New Life for Old Bags (*8th anniversary February 2018*)  
Senior Club (*meets at Bakers Square*)  
Alcoholics Anonymous  
Al Anon  
Survivors of Incest Anonymous

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Since the start of **Renewal** efforts in 2008, the Renewal team (now the Church Health Team) used the Natural Church Development methodology. Included were periodic assessments of our ministry to identify our strongest and weakest areas with subsequent activities to address deficiencies, and Gifts Assessment seminars. Starting in 2018 the team switched over to REVEAL methodology which measures and addresses the spiritual growth of our church. Every member was invited to take a survey to know if we are growing in our relationship with Christ and our love of God and others. The survey results serve as a baseline for a journey of spiritual transformation as we enter our 21st year as United in Faith. Periodic Gift Assessments seminars will continue to be held as needed.

In the summer of 2017 the council began a process of **mission planning** around three circles of endeavors - Proclamation, Service and Justice. The first step was an inventory of the important work United in Faith is doing. We expect the work with the REVEAL tool will impact mission planning of what we hope for in these 3 circles and what is necessary to support our hopes.

With the completion of the **Twenty for Twenty** projects in fall 2018 we will conclude our

anniversary celebration looking back on the blessings we provided and the community partnerships formed. An addendum to this document will be issued at that time.

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrod, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our

Lord.

Amen

LBW Evening Prayer

United in Faith openly **welcomes** and values every person who walks through our doors, regardless of race, nationality and ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, social and economic situation, ability, cultural reality and need. Further, United in Faith 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 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.

## **20For20 (completed between Sept 2017 and Oct 2018)**

*In honor of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, United in Faith embarked on a challenge to partner with neighborhood organizations and bless the community around us during the year surrounding our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We built new relationships and partnerships, learned more about our community, reached out with the love of God, and found new resources within our immediate neighborhood.*

### **(1) LifeSource blood drive**

In September 2017, we hosted a LifeSource blood drive in our building. LifeSource was thrilled by the opportunity to use our great fellowship space. Approximately 18 pints of blood were donated that day. Several United in Faith members donated snack items to keep the donors nourished, and many stayed around for moral support for those who donated blood.

### **(2) Augsburg Fortress book fair**

In October 2017, United in Faith members staffed an Augsburg Fortress book fair with Reformation themed books, for two weeks at United in Faith and for one afternoon at Bethesda Senior Care, located at 2833 N Nordica Ave, Chicago, IL 60634. After our book fair was complete at UIF, we donated a large stack of books to Bethesda Senior Care.

### **(3) Veterans Salute event**

In early November 2017, we hosted a Veterans Salute event in partnership with Billy Caldwell American Legion post, Chicago Public Library, and Portage Park Chamber of Commerce. Our Veterans Salute Event expressed our gratitude to those current and past military members. Refreshments were provided by the Portage Park Chamber of Commerce. A display of military memorabilia and a flag ceremony was provided by the Billy Caldwell American Legion post. The Austin-Irving branch of the Chicago Public Library hosted the event and provided neighborhood publicity. United in Faith participated by paying for a face painter and a musician who played patriotic music after the flag and honor ceremony.

### **(4) Northwest Side Housing Center Jimmy John's fundraiser**

Toward the end of November 2017, we benefited two organizations in one 20For20 event with our participation in the Northwest Side Housing Center Jimmy John's fundraiser. NWSHC had a fundraiser during their 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. We bought food through this fundraiser (part one) and then, we donated these lunches to St. Cyprian's Food Pantry volunteers (part two).

### **(5) Indoor Winter Farmers Market**

In February 2018, we hosted our first Indoor Winter Farmers Market, in partnership with Faith In Place. Even with a dramatic snow event that morning, we had a pretty good turnout at United in Faith. The Faith in Place Market had vendors selling soups, jams, baked goods, salsas, meats, honey, fair trade coffee and tea, winter-available produce, and more. Plenty of free samples, including fair trade coffee sponsored by the UIF Justice Ministry. This event required a large crew of volunteers, and we had a great turnout of United in Faith members

and friends. Next year's Indoor Winter Farmers Market is already scheduled for March 23, 2019.

**(6) National Veterans Art Museum fundraiser**

In April 2018, a couple United in Faith members attended an ice breaker and fundraiser of the National Veterans Art Museum. We donated funds toward the entry cost, allowing several community veterans to attend for free as well. National Veterans Art Museum is the only art museum in North American dedicated to show veteran art. It is located near Six Corners, and admission to the museum is free. The NVAM collection "was built to inspire an understanding of the impact of combat on the individuals who served, as well as our society at large." We were inspired by the many artists who shared their heart through art.

**(7) Olive's Neighborhood Garden for the Hungry**

That same month (April 2018), we made a donation to Olive's Neighborhood Garden for the Hungry, which is dedicated to funding their new bee garden when it is established. Olive's Neighborhood Garden is located at Laramie & Ainslie, Chicago and the future bee garden is at Laramie and Gunnison, Chicago. Olive's Neighborhood Garden for the Hungry is an award-winning garden in the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Chicago providing handpicked produce for local residents in need. Hives are being insulated for the winter, and NeighborSpace (a nonprofit urban land trust) plans to purchase the land from IDOT to be used for the bee garden.

**(8) Stress Relief Study Break Table during Wright College's finals week**

In May 2018, a crew of volunteers staffed a Stress Relief Study Break Table during Wright College's finals week. We offered snacks and stress relief toys – silly putty, bubbles, stress balls, DIY airplanes. We enjoyed talking to students, staff, faculty, and whoever we could to encourage them to keep working hard and hang in there through finals week.

**(9) Thank You luncheon for the staff at Youth Outreach Services**

A few weeks later, another volunteer crew staffed a Thank You luncheon for the staff at Youth Outreach Services. YOS has been in the neighborhood longer than UIF has, though their main office is downtown. United in Faith members brought lunch and shared a meal with the staff on a staff in-service day. We thanked them for all they do for youth and young adults who are struggling on the Northwest side (and throughout the city and suburbs). The staff were incredibly grateful and sent a thank you card the following week.

**(10) gift cards to the residents of St. Mary of Providence apartments**

In June, a couple United in Faith members presented gift cards to the residents of St. Mary of Providence apartments so that they could go on an "outing". St. Mary of Providence helps women with developmental disabilities meet life's challenges and reach their highest potential in growth, while promoting their dignity as human beings. We followed this up by another donation, when the Vacation Bible School kids decorated pencil cups for the residents.

**(11) Lydia Home's annual community festival: Hope Fest**

Also in June, a crew of United in Faith members volunteered as helpers at Lydia Home's annual community festival: Hope Fest. We followed up this 20For20 project by donating bags of trail mix to their clients and staff that were made by the kids at United in Faith's Vacation Bible School.

**(12) Kaya family from the Democratic Republic of Congo**

In June 2018, we had our first contact with the Kaya family from the Democratic Republic of Congo. A Lutheran Social Services of Illinois case manager brought their need to our attention, and throughout the months since, we have gathered donations of clothing, household items, furniture, and more. Mom, Dad, and two daughters now live in a 2-bedroom apartment.

**(13) St. Cyprian's Food Pantry Diaper Drive Baby Shower**

Also in June 2018, St. Cyprian's Food Pantry hosted a Diaper Drive Baby Shower to show people how the food pantry works and highlight a much needed commodity for those facing food insecurity and poverty. Food stamps cannot pay for diapers or wipes and most food pantries do not have the extra funding to offer these items all the time. United in Faith members donated approximately 8 packages of diapers plus 8 packages of diaper wipes, along with approximately \$500 in financial gifts.

**(14) free ice cream at Portage Park for National Ice Cream Day**

A very intergenerational crew of United in Faith members and friends handed out free ice cream at Portage Park for National Ice Cream Day on July 15, 2018.

**(15) refreshments for a monthly resident birthday party for seniors at Central Baptist Village**

On September 16, we provided refreshments for a monthly resident birthday party for seniors at Central Baptist Village. We brought and served cupcakes and ice cream to share with the residents.

**(16) refreshments for a community end of summer social at Portage Park Senior Center**

On September 17, we provided refreshments for a quarterly community end of summer social at Portage Park Senior Center. We brought and served root beer floats, fruit salad, cookies, cupcakes, cheese, and crackers. By the end, we even tried our hand at joining the seniors on the dance floor!

**(17) bake sale funds for Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center in Oregon, IL**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, a bake sale was held at United in Faith to raise funds for Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center in Oregon, IL. LOMC has been raising funds to renovate the Timbers and Meadows bunkhouses. We sent a total of \$415 raised to LOMC toward the campaign.

**(18) snacks for Our Saviour Lutheran School annual Walk-a-thon**

In October 2018, several United in Faith volunteers assisted at Our Saviour Lutheran School, by bringing snacks and smiles to the students after their annual Walk-a-thon. The walk was scheduled to be in Shabbona Park, but was moved indoors to the school gym due to weather.



**(19) Portage Park Farmers Market**

Also, in October 2018, a number United in Faith members assisted with the Portage Park Farmers Market. We brought volunteers to help vendors (and others) set up tables/booths at the beginning of the day. The day was cold and rainy, but we brought as much sunshine spirit as we could to the festivities. We also had volunteers that helped vendors (and others) tear down, fold up canopies, and carry items to their vehicles. We gave away free swag and snacks at a United in Faith table, while we greeted market goers with a smile.

**(20) toys for Ronald McDonald House**

Our last 20For20 is still in process. Later this month, we will donate a wide variety of toys, games, books, crafts, trucks, stuffed animals, and more to the Ronald McDonald House near Loyola Hospital in Maywood. These items will go into the Ronald McDonald House Toy Closet, which is used by patients and family members under age 21. Any child (whether patient or sibling) who stays at Ronald McDonald House gets to pick their own toy (or gift card) from the toy closet.

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## United in Faith: Predecessor Congregations

### **The Eight Predecessor Churches**

The following is a brief history of United in Faith's predecessor congregations and pictures of the church altars.

### **United in Faith Lutheran Church**



On Easter Sunday, April 12, 1998, eight churches merged to form United in Faith Lutheran Church (1998, ELCA). They included:

- Gladstone Park (1936, ULCA);
- Holy Communion (1966, LCA);
- Medill Avenue (1927, NLCA);
- Nebo (1901, Augustana);
- Our Lord's American (1934, ALC);
- Our Saviour's English (1909, United Norwegian);
- Peace (1923, ULCA); and
- St. Andrew (1924, ELCA)
- FONCs (Friends of the New Church)

## United in Faith: Predecessor Congregations



These are pictures of the altars of the eight churches and of United in Faith's.

Top row: Medill; Our Saviour's; Peace; and St Andrew.

Center: United in Faith.

Bottom row: Medill; Gladstone Park; Our Lord's; and Holy Communion.

**END OF  
20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
DOCUMENT**