

United in Faith Lutheran Church

NEWSLETTER

August

| 2026

| www.unitedinfaith.org

A Word from Pastor Sharei

Dear Friends,

As I sat down to write this month's newsletter, I found myself asking the same question I seem to ask every August: How did we get here so quickly? Summer always seems to slip by in the blink of an eye. But perhaps that is also an invitation...to look again.

Over these past several weeks in worship, we've been practicing looking again, paying closer attention to where God is already at work in our lives and in the world around us. When we slow down long enough to do that, we begin to notice things we might have otherwise missed. And as I look again at our life together, I am filled with gratitude.

Over these past months, we have worshiped together, prayed together, served our neighbors, shared meals, welcomed visitors, celebrated milestones, and carried one another through difficult days. We have continued the work of being Christ's

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body in the world, not because we have done everything perfectly, but because we have shown up for one another with generosity, compassion, and faithfulness. Looking again reminds me that ministry isn't measured only in big moments. It is found in the countless acts of kindness, service, encouragement, and love that make up the life of this congregation. For all of that, I give thanks to God.

As summer begins to wind down, I also find myself looking ahead with hope. There are new opportunities for worship, learning, fellowship, and service on the horizon. I am excited to see how God will continue to shape us as we grow together in faith and continue living out our calling to love God and love our neighbors.

I hope you are able to savor these final weeks of summer, whether that means spending time with family and friends, enjoying a quiet afternoon, taking a vacation, or simply noticing the beauty of God's creation around you. Rest is a gift, and I pray you find moments to receive it.

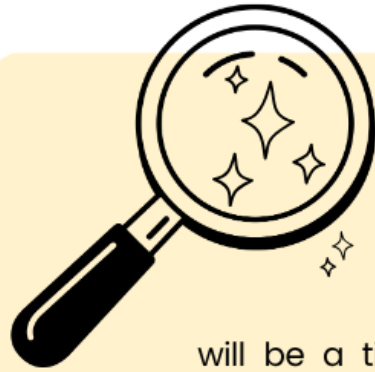
Finally, I invite you to join me in praying for all those preparing for a new school year. We lift up students of every age, teachers, school staff, administrators, and especially parents and caregivers as they

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navigate new routines and fresh beginnings. May this school year be one marked by curiosity, growth, safety, and joy. May God's wisdom guide them, God's peace sustain them, and God's love surround them each day.

Thank you for all that you do to make United in Faith the community it is. Thank you for looking again with me and for helping one another notice the many ways God continues to show up in our midst. I look forward with hope to all that God has in store for us in the months ahead.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Sharei



God Sightings Returns

At UIF some years ago, we added something called God Sightings to our Sunday worship services, & we want to try it again! God Sightings

will be a time when anyone can offer brief remarks on how they saw God working in their lives in the previous week

This is a chance to share how God touches our community & reflect on how God works in our daily lives. The time for God Sightings will be immediately before the announcements every Sunday in worship.

St. Cyprian's Non-food Monthly Donations: August 2026 — Diapers

The Justice Ministry encourages UIF members to donate a highlighted item each month. The food pantry only has funding for food items and clients still need to stretch their dollars to cover both food and all those daily necessities. We have asked for diapers before, but it is one of the top requested items from St. Cyprian's clients.



Once again, we are asking for diapers, always needed for infants and toddlers, but products for adults as well. A donation box is available as you come in the back door, just at the end of the ramp.

Thank you to all who contributed pet food in July!

A man named Pete contacted the UIF office asking if he could see confirmation photographs from 1957-1965 from when he was a member of Nebo Lutheran Church. Nebo is one of the 8 predecessor churches that merged to form United in Faith Lutheran Church in 1998.

Was this an impossible question to answer? Not at all! The archives working group had organized the records and a list of Nebo records was emailed to Pete and in the



process, we found photographs from all but one of the years he was looking for. He was organizing a Nebo confirmation reunion and took photos of the photographs, including close ups of some individual students.

Pete shared many stories about those students from long ago, including pointing out his year, 1960 for himself and classes with his siblings and cousins also. One story he told was about a girl, Joann, from his class. He enlisted in the Navy in 1966 and Joann wrote letters to him regularly. Then one day her letters stopped, but then he received letters from fellow choir members telling him she had died of leukemia. Other stories were about how various confirmands had gone

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on to have great careers as adults, or as Pete said, "Those confirmands were no slouches."

The reason we keep records from the past is not to hide them away, but to make them accessible for use in the present and future. Pete's visit pointed this out but also showed that sometimes records need to be protected. The confirmation photos had once been on public display and he noted that someone had drawn glasses on one boy and another girl's face had a hole poked through it. These are the one and only copies of these photos we have, however all-in-all Pete was very satisfied. The reunion he was planning will be greatly enhanced by having the photos to remember part of their early Christian education together at Nebo.

Some final notes about Pete. While he served in the Viet Nam war era, his ship patrolled off the coast of Russia. Upon his return he went to work in the stockroom of First National Bank and ended up becoming a second vice president there! Also, he is currently an active member of Grace Lutheran Church in Mt. Prospect. He is a living legacy of Nebo, and by extension United in Faith as well! The archives help us to remember and appreciate the extensive legacy that United in Faith represents.

~ Elisabeth Wittman

Your Generosity to Lutheran Social Services of Illinois!

During the months of April – May, members were encouraged to donate to LSSI, via a donation that would be matched from the UIF treasury. The final totals are in, & a check has been sent to LSSI on our behalf. The spring donations by UIF members totaled \$1,450! Therefore, the overall donation to LSSI was: **\$2,900!**

Thank you one and all for your donations! LSSI and several other Evangelical Lutheran Church in America social service agencies operate with “low overhead,” meaning less is utilized for agency operations and more of your donation goes directly to the services they provide. Services from LSSI are open to all in need, including us, but not just Lutherans.

While LSSI uses Good Shepherd Sunday every spring as their annual fund-raising time, you can continue to keep their work in your prayers throughout the year. And, of course, donations can be made at any time! LSSI has both a website and newsletter to keep in touch with their activities.

Website: www.lssi.org

To join the newsletter,

Call: 847-635-4686

Or e-mail: barb.hailey@LSSI.org

SIGN UP!

Invitation to lead in worship

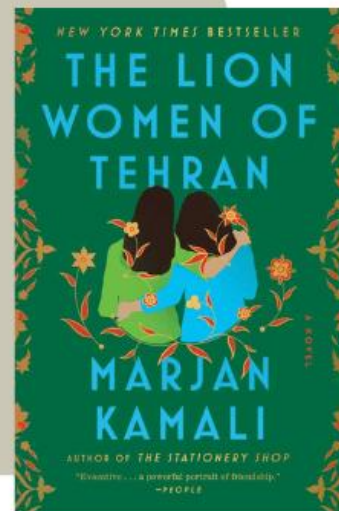
We are in need of greeters / ushers, readers & communion assistants. If you are feeling called to lead in worship, a sign up sheet is on the table in the fellowship hall.

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

Book Club

Join in the discussion of *The Lion Women of Tehran* by Marjan Kamali on Saturday, September 19 at 10:00.

Read the heartfelt, epic novel of friendship, betrayal, and redemption set against three transformative decades in Tehran, Iran.



United in Faith Lutheran Church

Treasurer's Report

January - June 2026

	Six Months Ended <u>06/30/26</u>
<u>Unrestricted:</u>	
Income (excluding investment activity)	\$ 783,494
Expenditures	<u>155,010</u>
Income over (under) expenditures	\$ 628,484
Investment Income & changes in market value	<u>\$ 45,913</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted net assets	\$ 674,397
<u>Educational Endowment:</u>	
Investment Income and changes in market value	\$ 43,821
Scholarships paid out	<u>0</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Educational net assets.	\$ 718,218
<u>Harriet Kurz Endowment:</u>	
Thrivent Investment income and changes in market value	<u>\$ 139,328</u>
<u>Increase (Decrease) in Total net assets:</u>	<u>\$ 857,547</u>

Comments from the Treasurer:

2026 income from church operations excluding Special Gifts is lower than spending by \$19,049 in June and is lower by \$109,215 YTD.

Income includes \$737,699 in Special Estate gifts from:

Harriet Kurz – \$729,220 in January 2026

Harriet Kurz – \$ 8,479 in February 2026

Investments returned a gain of \$37,225 for June & a gain of 185,241 YTD.

Educational Investments returned a gain of \$5,998 for June & a gain of \$43,821 YTD.

Total expense for June is favorable to budget by \$6,509 and is favorable to budget by \$48,306 YTD due to the Salaries YTD costs being higher than budget by \$155; the Ministry YTD costs being \$642 lower than budget; the Administrative YTD costs being \$5,640 lower than budget; the YTD Building costs being lower than budget by \$23,800 & the Ministry Directors' YTD costs being lower than budget by \$18,379.

From Understanding to Action: How We Can Build Fairer Communities Together

This month, the hope is that we continue building on our previous reflection on how recent federal voting rights decisions are impacting our country and state, as well as unpacking how gerrymandering distorts representation and silences voices, especially in marginalized communities. Recognizing the problem is a crucial first step, but as a community of faith, our calling doesn't end with awareness. Loving our neighbors means actively tearing down barriers to the ballot box and building systems that honor everyone's dignity. While district maps can feel out of our control, there are practical ways we can put our faith into action right here in Illinois.

First,

learn community organizing & build collective power.

True solidarity isn't doing work for people, but standing shoulder-to-shoulder with them. By connecting with local community organizations, we learn to listen deeply to our neighbors and build relational power to hold decision-makers accountable for the common good.

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Second,

remove practical hurdles for voters.

We can host nonpartisan voter registration drives, help neighbors renew state documents, and organize carpools to polling places so lack of transportation never silences a voice. Furthermore, writing to local representatives ensures polling sites are fully accessible for voters with disabilities and equitably resourced.

Finally,

serve at the front lines of democracy.

By volunteering as nonpartisan poll workers or election judges, we help keep polling locations open, secure, and welcoming for everyone.

Faithful civic engagement is an ongoing practice of neighborly love, justice, and shared power. Together, we can ensure every neighbor's God-given voice is counted.

August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	27	28 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	29	30	31 6:30pm AA	1 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
2 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	3	4	5	6	7 6:30pm AA	8 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
9 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	10	11 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	12	13	14 6:30pm AA	15 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
16 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	17	18 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	19	20	21 6:30pm AA	22 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
23 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	24	25 1:00pm Ladies Discussion Group	26	27	28 6:30pm AA	29 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org
30 10:00am Worship in person and livestreamed 11:00am Coffee Hour	31	1	2	3	4 6:30pm AA	5 9:30am AI-Anon 4:00pm Survivors of Incest- https://siawso.org



August birthdays

Catherine D.K. August 11
Violet S. August 13
Ken R. August 26
Evan P. August 27
Patrick O. August 28
Adelle W. August 30
Karine K. August 30



TO BE GOD'S HANDS, FEET
AND VOICE IN THE WORLD.



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