

Tidings

766 Graceland Ave.

Des Plaines, IL 60016



March 2025 - Vol. 86 – No. 3

Living Our Faith Through Service

Lent: A Season of Letting Go and Giving Back

Lent is a special time when some people make a deliberate choice to give up something important to them. This helps them focus on living a better life and feeling closer to God. During Lent, we learn that making sacrifices can actually make our lives richer and help us connect with others and the world around us. It's not always easy, but sometimes giving something up can actually make life better—not just for you, but for others too.

That's what Lent is all about. It's a time when we let go of things that might be getting in the way of a full and meaningful life. Sacrificing something we like is important for living a good life. It helps us become better people and work together to take care of the Earth. This isn't about punishing ourselves, but about caring for everyone, including future generations. By living more simply, we can help others live better lives too. It's about making choices that help us grow closer to God and to the people around us.

At first, sacrificing something might sound like a loss, but actually, it can lead to something even greater. When we choose to live with less, we make more room for kindness, love, and connection. Imagine if everyone shared a little more, cared a little more, and thought a little less about themselves—what kind of world would that create? Lent teaches us that small sacrifices can have a big impact. Our choices help us live simply so that others can simply live.

One of the biggest lessons of Lent is that life isn't just about "me." It's about us—our families, our communities, and even people we've never met. When we choose to be kind, share what we have, or stand up for what's right, we're living out God's love in the world.

Jesus spent his life caring for the sick, feeding the hungry, and welcoming those who felt left out. During Lent, we're invited to follow his example. That means looking for ways to make the world a little better—maybe by standing up for a friend, helping a neighbor, or being kind to someone who's having a tough day.

Lent isn't just about giving something up for 40 days and then going back to normal. It's about learning to live in a way that brings more love, justice, and peace into the world. It's

about realizing that we're part of something bigger—God's plan to heal and restore everything.

So, this Lent, think about what you can let go of, not just for the sake of sacrifice, but to make space for something greater. Maybe it's more time with family, more kindness to others, or more awareness of how your choices affect the world. In the end, Lent isn't about losing—it's about gaining something even better: a heart that's more open, a spirit that's more generous, and a life that's more in tune with God's love.

With love,

Rev. Co

Worship Ministry

March 2	Communion/Brunch	
	Service of Worship	9:00a – www.fccdp.org
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Ralph Murdy
	Scripture Reading	Galatians 1:1-12
March 9	First Sunday in Lent	
	Service of Worship	9:00a - www.fccdp.org
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Rhonda Yost
	Scripture Reading	Romans 10:8b-13
March 16	Second Sunday in Lent	
	Service of Worship	9:00p - www.fccdp.org
	Fellowship/Potluck	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Jackie Schmitt
	Scripture Reading	Philippians 3:17-4:1
March 23	Third Sunday in Lent	
	Service of Worship	9:00a - www.fccdp.org
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Lowell Handy
	Scripture Reading	1 Corinthians 10:1-13
March 30	Fourth Sunday in Lent/Youth Sunday	
	Service of Worship	9:00a - www.fccdp.org
	Fellowship	10:00a
	Lay Reader	Youth
	Scripture Reading	2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Please join us for our Ash Wednesday worship service at 7:00pm on Wednesday, March 5

Children's & Adult Education Ministry

Can You Help the Easter Bunny?

Our annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Sunday, April 13 after the worship service. The Easter Bunny has requested a donation of empty plastic eggs this year, to ensure that **lots** of treats can be hidden on the playground. If you can help, please bring your plastic egg donation to church on Sunday morning or leave it in Rev. Co's office between 9:00am and 1:00pm during the weeks. More Easter Egg hunt details coming soon!

Membership & Communications Ministry



Our "third Sunday potluck" in February drew a good crowd despite the snow and cold weather.

Have You Ever Been to our Bible Study?

All are welcome to join us on Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Barwick Room or on Zoom. A new topic was introduced recently. In *The Third Day: Living the Resurrection*, Tom Berlin uses his gifts of storytelling and understanding the Scriptures to connect the reader to the experiences of several individuals around Jesus in his final days, focusing on new life and redemption rather than loss. Join Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas as they feel the despair of losing Jesus and the surprise and joy that awaits them in the resurrection. Please see Notes from Co for a link to the discussion material or speak with Rev. Co for details.

Creative Conversation Welcomes All for Lively Discussions

Creative Conversation is FCCDP's book club. It meets once a month, on the second Monday of each month, at 10 a.m. in the Barwick Room for about an hour. All are welcome. Each member of the group has the option of reviewing a book of her/his choosing, which others can read from the library (ordered ahead), audio book or on a tablet. The choice is the reviewer's and every genre is open for discussion. Reviewers may choose their own patterns for the review, which will ultimately involve opening the discussion to the others present. There have been some really powerful discussions in the past. The **March 10** selection is *West with Giraffes*, by Lynda Rutledge. Whether you've had a chance to read the book or not, we hope you'll join us for what we expect to be a lively discussion.

From Our Congregation...

Did you know that Deb Alde not only rings bells in our Wholly Ringers handbell choir but also plays the saxophone? You can see for yourself at two concerts this month! Deb is participating in **Big Bands Sounds of Deerfield** at 1:00pm on Sunday, March 2 at the Patty Turner Center, 375 Elm Street (tickets \$10) and in **Switch Time Jazz** at 7:00pm on Thursday, March 6 at Garden Terrace Banquets, 100 Wellington Ave., Elk Grove Village (tickets \$9 or \$10).

Mission & Outreach Ministry

March Update from Our Backpack Ministry

Due to the great generosity of the congregation, the Backpack supplies are pretty much ready for most of March. The promised request for Spring Break special bags has already brought in almost everything we need. The one item we have yet to acquire are small packages of pancake mix that take only water to prepare (and we have funds to purchase those if need be and should we get more than we need, the Community Backpack Project can certainly use them). Otherwise, come April we will need some more of the following: canned pasta with meat (\pm 16 oz.), peanut butter, plastic jars of jelly, cans of condensed soup (child favorite types), and should one feel so moved a package of gallon zip-lock plastic bags. Questions? Contact Lowell Handy handytreesh@att.net.

Save the Date!

Our church once again will be represented in the annual *Relay for Life* to benefit the American Cancer Society. This year's local event will be held on June 13 in Palatine. Watch future Tidings and Notes from Co for more information or speak with Paul Schmitt for details.

Drivers Sought

Our church's next turn to deliver Meals on Wheels to local shut-ins runs from April 21 to May 16. If you can help with this important ministry or to learn more, please speak with Richard Schacht.

Music Ministry

Are Those Bells I Hear?

Our Wholly Ringers Handbell choir, under the direction of Ellen Alde, will host its annual Spring Concert at church on Sunday, April 6 at 6:00pm. This year's concert theme is *CORNUCOPIA of MOVIE and TV theme songs*.

A little background about the choir. Have you ever wondered how the current bell choir came to be known as the Wholly Ringers? The Wholly Ringers originally started as the Adult Handbell Choir from 1980 to 1992, under the direction of Irene Alde. In 1993 our current director, Ellen Alde, took over the responsibilities of directing and combining the three handbell choirs - Adult, Children and High School - into one choir. Our current intergenerational choir is composed of eleven ringers, with more than 100 years of ringing experience. This year's concert marks the 26th year of providing handbell concerts for your pleasure.

Come join us on April 6 at 5:00pm for the potluck dinner, bring your favorite dish to share and stay for the concert at 6:00pm.

Property Ministry

Calling All Game Lovers...

The Property Ministry will host an all-church Game Night in Brehm Hall from 6:30pm to 9:00pm on Saturday, March 15. Card games, board games, bags and more. Free event for all ages. Childcare **not** provided. Options could include card/board/bags games. Feel free to bring a snack to share. Bottled water provided. Questions? Speak with Roger Alde.

Youth Ministry



Our Pilgrim Fellowship (PF) youth traveled to Crystal Ridge (formerly The Rock Snowpark) in Franklin, WI for snow tubing in February.

Finance Committee

Financial Report

For the month of January, the church had income of \$26,599 and expenses of \$33,581, for a monthly shortfall of \$6,981. Year-to-date, however, we are still in a positive position of \$1,818. Thank you for keeping up to date with your pledges and offerings, supporting church fundraisers, and making special contributions throughout the year. Your financial support of FCCDP is greatly appreciated!

“Second Time” Updates from our STA Chair

First things first: STA March drop-off dates are Sunday March 9 following service and Wednesday March 12 from 10:00am to 11:00am.

The Sale date of May 3 is rapidly approaching...so many things to cover in this blast of news.

- Thank you to those who have donated treasures and memories for the May 3 sale and for labeling those items, especially bed linens. Keep up the GREAT work!
- As promised last month, VOLUNTEER FORMS are now available on the credenza outside the Church Office. If you have access to GOOGLE and would like to fill out the online version, please send me an email and I will return the favor with the Volunteer Form link. We need the forms (paper or online version) returned to the office by April 20 as I need to order food for workers by April 22. If you have family, friends or neighbors that would like to help at the sale then by all means give them a copy of the form.
- Just FYI: We will also be accepting **donations of baked goods**, more information to come as we get closer to the sale date.
- At this point in time, we are taking SMALL furniture (must fit in your car). As we get closer to the sale, we will start taking larger furniture such as outside furniture, larger toys; **however**, no sofas, overstuffed chairs, bedroom sets, breakfronts, tube TV's, appliances such as washers/dryers, etc. I think that covers this month.
- Don't forget that sale volunteers get to shop early on Thursday, May 1 from 6:00pm to 7:30 pm. Room chairs shop at 5:30 pm.

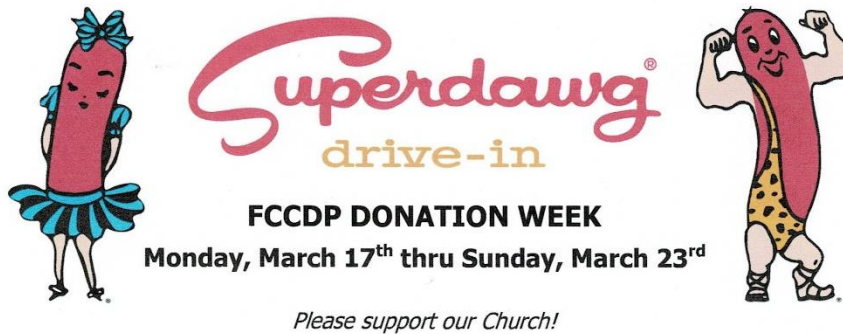
If you have any questions, please contact Ellen at ealdefccdp@gmail.com. Thanks for your continuing support. Be safe.

Spring Bake Sale Just in Time for Easter

Whether you're hunting for Easter treats or other spring goodies, this all-church Holiday Bake Sale could be just what you're looking for! Orders will be accepted from Sunday, March 23, through Sunday, April 6, with pick up of baked goods on Palm Sunday, April 13. Order forms will be available on the credenza outside the Church Office and, for your convenience, will also be included in Co's Notes. If you have questions about the sale or can bake a special treat to be included, contact Garrett at gpittman7@gmail.com or by phone at 847/404-7635.

Time for a Superdawg

Think about a delicious Superdawg, lounging on a bed of yummy Superfries! Let your mouth water! Now you can enjoy a delightful Superdawg meal, while supporting FCCDP at the same time. Simply present the attached flyer at either one of two Superdawg locations, between Monday, March 17 and Sunday, March 23, and FCCDP will receive 20% of the total purchase amount. Paper copies of the coupon flyer must be presented; sorry, pictures on your phone won't be accepted. However, flyers will be readily available on the credenza outside the Church Office or can be printed out from the church website or Co's Notes. Help us spread the word by distributing flyers to your friends, relatives, and co-workers!



First Congregational Church of Des Plaines

Living Our Faith Through Service

766 Graceland, Des Plaines 60016
(847) 299-5561
www.fccdp.org



Valid at either drive-in location:

6363 N. Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, IL
(773) 763-0660

333 S. Milwaukee Avenue
Wheeling, IL
(847) 459-1900

Please present a printed paper copy of this flyer at Superdawg.
Flyers cannot be distributed at either Superdawg location.



Save the Date...

FCCDP's 2025 Craft & Market Day will be held on **Saturday, September 27**. Mark the date on your calendar. You'll hear more about this Annual Church Fundraiser over the coming months. We expect to begin accepting table reservations from crafters and other vendors in early June.

Got Books?

Creative Conversation's book sale in Webster Hall will start soon and book donations are welcome. Your books, CD's and DVD donations are needed to make this fundraiser a success. No encyclopedias or technical books, please! The books can be placed on the right side of the stage. All the books that are not sold will be donated to our STA Sale. For details contact Katy Berman.

Pastoral Relations Committee

Living Our Faith Through Service

After a full year of research, analysis, and discussion, the Pastoral Relations Committee recommended to the Church Council that the church adopt a new Vision Statement and Mission Statement. These Statements were developed to help guide church growth in the years ahead, while answering these important questions.

- Where do we want our church to be in the next 5 to 10 years?
- Where do we feel that God wants us to be?
- Does our new Vision and Mission excite people in positive terms?

Church Council voted to adopt the following statements:

Vision Statement

We endeavor to be a welcoming community of faith where we serve God by serving others, embodying Christ's love through compassionate outreach, meaningful relationships, and transformative acts of kindness that uplift our neighbors and inspire hope.

And to guide us as we work to achieve that Vision ...

Mission Statement

Living Our Faith Through Service.

Happy Birthday to You!!

Congratulations to the following church members/friends on their birthdays!!

***If you would like to add/remove a birthday, please contact
the Church Office at 847/299-5561.***

Marcy Vedral	01-Mar	Jimmy Larson	19-Mar
Clay Thompson	05-Mar	Nate Bryers	19-Mar
Evan Tomsic	05-Mar	Ralph Engler	21-Mar
Zensanna Yost	07-Mar	Lindsay Skarbek	21-Mar
Kallie Haas	11-Mar	William Hinderliter	26-Mar
Barb McCullough	11-Mar	Ann Schwiger	27-Mar
Madeleine Larson	11-Mar	Jim Larson	27-Mar
Mia Thomas	11-Mar	Olivia Pelletiere	28-Mar
Cahlan Cameron	11-Mar	Marissa Skarbek	28-Mar
John Lodewyck	12-Mar	Ryan Johnson	30-Mar
Rebecca Quam	14-Mar	Cindie Hoch	30-Mar
Betty McMillan	15-Mar		



Scout Sunday 2025 at FCC in February



We celebrated “Souper Bowl Sunday” in a big way in February, thanks to the efforts of our Sunday School students and PFers. A special offering was collected for the Self-Help Closet & Pantry, and funds also were raised through football game chance squares benefiting the 2025 PF summer mission trip. A huge shout-out to Sue Almerigi for preparing her delicious homemade soup!



From our Historian, Nancy Meyer (From *The Tidings* 10-9-09)

If you recall from my last article, First Congregational Church was founded 140 years ago, on Oct. 24, 1869 with 13 members, meeting in the school or members' homes. A quote from our 1969 Centennial Book, "One of the important reasons for looking back 100 years on events of this sort, is that it shows clearly that if a project is worthwhile and prudent, one need not fear to go ahead with it, even with only a few determined people, and limited resources. These founders knew that their number would grow. They knew that they would strengthen each other by their association together, and they knew that they would strengthen their families and young people by both the spiritual and fellowship activities developing around an organized church."

Also remember streets were just dirt wagon tracks and houses concentrated in the area between the river and Lee Street, and between Thacker Street on the south and Perry Street on the north. Again from our Centennial book, "Clerk's records tell us little of the plans and construction of our first church building. We do know that Alfred Parsons, who was the owner of large tracts of land and was developing a subdivision west of town (Graceland Avenue), donated one of his lots for the proposed church building. Franklin Whitcomb, owner of the brickyard and one of the church trustees, donated the brick and took charge of the building until its completion. Who made the drawings and who actually built it are not disclosed by the records. Work progressed on this building through 1871 and on February 18, 1872 a Dedication Service was held."

This description was written many years later by Mr. C.A. Wolfram as he knew it as a boy in 1889. "The building contained only a main sanctuary. The church was entered from Graceland Avenue on the front. One climbed up six wooden steps, went over the stone door sill and through a double door into the vestibule. Looking up one saw a trap door with ladder and bell rope, for the belfry and steeple were right above. Pushing aside the swinging doors on either side of the entry way, one entered the auditorium of the church. There were two aisles leading to the platform in the center of which stood the pulpit. Most imposing was a chandelier hanging down in the center of the room, containing eight oil lamps with chimneys and globes."

Again, from the Centennial Book, "Membership remained small for many years. Both participation and contributions were hard to come by. The fall of 1873 saw a panic followed by a depression lasting several years. But 25 years later (1897) the church was enlarged by adding a central heating plant and Sunday School rooms, dining room and kitchen at the west end of the sanctuary. In 1911-1912 the main entrance was moved to the side of the building, gaining considerable needed floor space, with the platform where the main entrance had been."

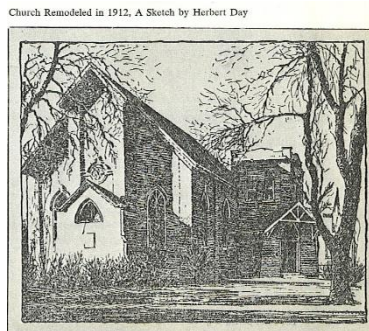
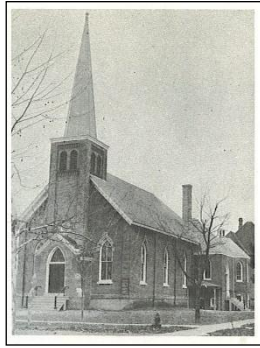
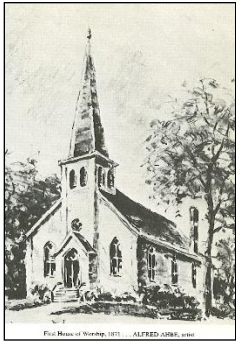
Our original church building still stands today at the southwest corner of Prairie and Graceland Avenues, used as the Masonic Temple.* Wonder what it looks like inside??

1871

1899

1912

2009



Note: 1871 sketch was done by Alfred Ahbe, Dorothy Grice's late brother! *Now for sale in 2025

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Communion 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship Confirmation Class 10:30a Sunday Brunch	3 7:00p Wholly Ringers	4	5 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 6:00p Music & Drama 7:00p Ash Wednesday	6	7 7:30p Pool Party Prairie Lakes	1 8
9 Daylight Savings Lent 1 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00am Ministry Staff STA-Drop-Off	10 10:00a Creative Conversation 7:00p Finance 7:00p Wholly Ringers	11 12:00p Administrative Staff 6:00p Membership & Communications 7:00p Worship Ministry	12 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study STA-Drop-Off 6:00p PRC 7:00p Chancel Choir	13	14	15 6:30p Game Night
16 Lent 2 9:00am Worship Wholly Ringers 10:00am Fellowship 10:00am Potluck Confirmation Class	17 6:30p Property Ministry 7:00p Wholly Ringers	18 6:00p Chair Meeting	19 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 7:00p Chancel Choir	20 Tidings Deadline	21	22
23 Lent 3 9:00am Worship No Sunday School 10:00am Fellowship	24 Preschool closed until the 28 th – Spring Break 7:00p Wholly Ringers	25 7:00p Council	26 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 7:00p Chancel Choir	27	28	29
30 Lent 4 Youth Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:00am Fellowship 10:00a Neptune Society Confirmation			Fundraisers: Superdave March 17 to 23 Holiday Bake-Sale			

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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847/299-5561