

Tidings

766 Graceland Ave.
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Living Our Faith Through Service

May 2026 - Vol. 87 – No. 5



Living Our Faith Through Service
First Congregational UCC
Des Plaines

Living Our Faith Through Service

Celebrating where we've been—and listening for where God is leading us next

Over the past few weeks, something meaningful has been happening in our worship services. Instead of presentations or reports, we've been hearing stories—real, personal, grounded stories. And if you've been there, you've probably felt it too: a quiet reminder that *this is who we are*.

We've heard about care given and received. About ministries that make a difference not just “out there,” but right here among us. About moments when something small became something significant. And in each story, in its own way, we've caught a glimpse of what it looks like to truly live out our faith through service.

That's been the heart of this year's stewardship season. Not a campaign built on numbers or needs, but on witness. On gratitude. On the recognition that God is already at work among us—and the invitation to notice it, name it, and be part of where it's going next.

Our mission statement—*Living Our Faith Through Service*—isn't something we're trying to achieve someday. It's something we're already doing. In the Backpack Ministry, in the Wednesday Work Crew, in our Youth Ministry, in the quiet faithfulness of the Diaconate, and in so many unseen acts of care and connection that never make it into a report.

And yet, these past few Sundays have also reminded us of something else: this story isn't finished. Each speaker has, in their own way, pointed not just backward in gratitude, but forward in hope. Not with certainty or grand plans, but with a sense of openness—listening for where God might be leading us next.

That's an important shift. Because stewardship, at its core, isn't about maintaining what we have. It's about participating in what God is still doing. It's about saying, in whatever way we can, “Yes—I want to be part of this.” And that “yes” takes many forms:

It looks like time given to a ministry that matters.

It looks like talents shared in ways that build up others.

It looks like generosity offered not out of obligation, but as a response to grace.

It looks like prayer, presence, encouragement—often in ways that go unnoticed, but never unneeded.

In a couple of weeks, we'll move toward our Commitment and Pledge Dedication Sunday. And as we do, the invitation is a simple one—not to give out of pressure, but to respond out of trust. Trust that what we've seen and experienced together is real. Trust that God is not finished with us yet. And trust that each of us has a place in the unfolding story of this community.

If these past Sundays have shown us anything, it's this: We are already a church that lives its faith through service. Now the question becomes—how will we continue?

As we listen, as we discern, and as we respond, may we do so with grateful hearts, open hands, and a shared willingness to follow where God leads next. Because this story—*our* story—is still being written.

And each one of us is part of it.

With love,

Rev. Co

Worship Ministry

| | | |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| May 3 | Confirmation Sunday/Communion/Sunday Brunch | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00am – www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00am |
| | Lay Reader | Deb Alde |
| | Scripture Reading | 1 Peter 2:2-10 |
| | Delivering Flowers | Betty McMillan |
| May 10 | Mother's Day | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00am - www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship/Sunday Brunch | 10:00am |
| | Lay Reader | Ellen Alde |
| | Scripture Reading | 1 Peter 3:13-22 |
| | Delivering Flowers | Cindie Hoch |
| May 17 | Teacher Recognition | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00am - www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship/Potluck | 10:00am |
| | Lay Reader | Bob Crocker |
| | Scripture Reading | 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 |
| | Delivering Flowers | Marlene & Doug Laws |
| May 24 | Pentecost Sunday | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00am - www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00am |
| | Lay Reader | Jackie Schmitt |
| | Scripture Reading | 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 |
| | Delivering Flowers | Pam Lorvig |
| May 31 | Trinity Sunday | |
| | Service of Worship | 9:00am - www.fccdp.org |
| | Fellowship | 10:00am |
| | Lay Reader | Deb Alde |
| | Scripture Reading | 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 |
| | Delivering Flowers | Nancy Brink & John Foster |

Membership & Communications Ministry

Calling All Graduates!

Do you have a 2026 graduate in your family whose news you'd like to share in the June Tidings? If so, please forward to Debbie Walusiak at ecire58@sbcglobal.net by May 20. Photos welcome! Questions? Call 847/337-1443.

Mission & Outreach Ministry



Several church members attended the Exodus World Service/Project Survivor "Celebration of Hope" benefit dinner at Drury Lane in April. Pictured (clockwise from left) are Mary Pittman, Sharon Urry, John Foster, Nancy Brink, Paul & Jackie Schmitt and Daisy Farley.

...and, That's a Wrap for This School Year!

From Lowell Handy: As the school year comes to a close at the end of this month, the First Congregational Church Backpack Mission winds down. We served 10 students at North Elementary School for the duration and have only 4 more weeks of food to deliver. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation we have all the supplies needed to finish the year save for (seriously, this is it) a couple dozen fruit cups. Beyond that, we will be engaged in this mission again next year so any donations of food or money [mark the "memo" line for the Backpack Ministry] will be happily received and used in the 2026-2027 school year. Any questions? Contact Lowell Handy at handytrees@att.net

FCC 2026 *Relay for Life* Team Gains Support

Our church will participate once again in the *Relay for Life*, which is scheduled for Friday, June 19 from 6:00pm through 10:00pm at 120 N. Babcock Drive, Palatine. Fundraising continues this month and benefits the American Cancer Society. The team's goal is to raise at least \$6,500 or possibly beat last year's fundraising total of \$8,015.37. *To date we have passed the \$2,000 mark so thank you for that!*

On a related note, team captain Paul Schmitt reports that he received a letter of support for our church Relay team from Mike Quigley, Fifth District Illinois Congressman. In part, the letter reads "Your church's commitment to the American Cancer Society supports lifesaving research, fosters community partners and ensures no family faces cancer without support. It is truly communities like yours that make me proud to represent Illinois Fifth Congressional District. I wish the First Congregational Church of Des Plaines the utmost success."

You have an opportunity to be part of the relay by remembering those who have passed. Simply make a donation and include the name, relationship and words "in memory of" or "in honor of" for the luminary then forward to either Paul Schmitt or Garrett Pittman. Please make checks out to American Cancer Society. You can join our team, First Congregational, or donate by clicking on this link: [Relay-For-Life](#). For more information, contact Paul at: pschmitt9@hotmail.com.



Youth Ministry

Coming soon...an FCC micropantry stocked with basic nonperishable food items, for use anonymously by community members in need. Youth Ministry co-director Marissa Anderson is overseeing the project with our church's Pilgrim Fellowship Youth. Stay tuned for updates!



Finance Committee

Financial Report

For the month of March, our church had income of \$17,219 and expenses of \$31,463. Although this is a monthly shortfall of \$14,244 (due to lower than anticipated contributions and the timing of some expenses), year-to-date we are still running \$5,146 in the black. Thank you for your ongoing support of FCCDP and a special thank you to all of you who have kept up with your pledges and offerings this year. If you've fallen behind with your regular offerings, we ask you to prayerfully consider whether you might be in a position to "catch up" at this time.

Back by Popular Demand...Superdawg!

Think about a delicious Superdawg, lounging on a bed of yummy Superfries! Let your moth water! Once again, you can enjoy a delightful Superdawg meal, while supporting FCCDP. Simply present the attached flyer at either one of the two Superdawg locations, between Monday, May 25 (Memorial Day) and Sunday, May 31, 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!

Stewardship Drive Concludes May 10

During this year's Annual Stewardship Drive, you've heard personal stories and examples of how at FCCDP, we are **Living Our Faith Through Service**. And, how your gifts of your time, talents, and financial resources help us make a difference in people's lives, in our church, within the community, and beyond. Please prayerfully consider how, if each of us could give just a little bit more, we could do even more to help others. Then make your "faith promise" to God of how you plan to Live Your Faith Through Service by supporting FCCDP in the coming fiscal year. We hope you'll join us for worship on Stewardship Sunday, May 10, as we dedicate our pledges and offerings to further God's work.



Preliminary STA Sale Results Looking Good!

Please see the chart below for preliminary sale totals from this year's April rummage sale. Final results will be announced soon. A huge "thanks" to all those who volunteered their time to make this year's sale so successful and, especially, to Sale Chair Ellen Alde for her leadership once again. (Photos on following pages)

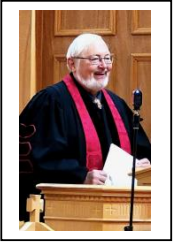
Special Thank You from Clothing

From Clothing Co-Chairs Tom Olsen and Charlie Warren We'd like to say a huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped in any way...big or small...in the clothing room for the STA sale. We'll start with Jim Foster, the WWC and others who set up and took down all the tables and racks, the PFers, students from Maine West, Notre Dame College Prep, Boy Scouts and all the adults who directed all of these great volunteers on Saturday morning. To Lydia Wetendorf and friends who set up the entire shoe/accessory room, Mary Lou Cameron, Sandy Flink, Pat Hurley, Joanne Kimball, Pam Lorvig, Nancy Meyer, Kelli Phillips, Jackie Schmitt, Jeannine Studinger, Linda Thomas, Stephanie Wetendorf...and all those we may have missed, a huge THANK YOU we couldn't have had a successful clothing room sale without you!

2026 Sta Sale Preliminary Report as of 4-26-2026

| Department | Before Sale | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Antiques | 0.00 | 58.00 | 702.00 | 764.87 | 1,524.87 |
| Bakery | 0.00 | 17.00 | 423.00 | 862.00 | 1,302.00 |
| Books | 0.00 | 12.00 | 143.00 | 398.80 | 553.80 |
| Clothing | 0.00 | 317.00 | 1,105.00 | 1,704.00 | 3,126.00 |
| Door | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1,470.00 | 0.00 | 1,470.00 |
| Electronics | 0.00 | 105.50 | 819.00 | 830.15 | 1,754.65 |
| Furniture | 0.00 | 88.00 | 0.00 | 953.00 | 1,041.00 |
| Holiday | 0.00 | 30.25 | 247.60 | 691.00 | 968.85 |
| Housewares | 0.00 | 558.75 | 1,220.00 | 1,605.00 | 3,383.75 |
| Jewelry | 3,680.00 | 94.00 | 838.25 | 473.10 | 5,085.35 |
| Tent | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 80.00 | 80.00 |
| food | 0.00 | 0.00 | 660.00 | 600.00 | 1,260.00 |
| Toys | 0.00 | 19.50 | 455.00 | 573.85 | 1,048.35 |
| Worker Food | 0.00 | 0.00 | 410.00 | 0.00 | 410.00 |
| Popcorn | 0.00 | | | 89.75 | 89.75 |
| Department Totals | 3,680.00 | 1,375.00 | 8,593.85 | 10,612.02 | 24,260.87 |
| Donations | 600.00 | 125.33 | 5.00 | 50.00 | 780.33 |
| Net Raffle Proceeds | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Total Income | 4,280.00 | 1,500.33 | 8,598.85 | 10,662.02 | 25,041.20 |
| Anticipated Expense | -742.27 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -742.27 |
| Worker Food | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Credit Card Fees | -0.45 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | -0.45 |
| Net Income | 3,537.28 | 1,500.33 | 8,598.85 | 10,662.02 | 24,298.48 |

In Memoriam



Rev. Dr. William G. "Bill" Grice III, First Congregational UCC of Des Plaines pastor emeritus who served as our church's senior minister for 28 years, passed away on March 31 after a lengthy battle with prostate cancer.

A lifelong resident of Des Plaines, he was a graduate of Maine West High School and Northern Illinois University. He also earned a Master's degree and a Doctorate in Ministry from Andover Newton Seminary in Massachusetts. He was ordained in 1973 at Christ Church UCC in Des Plaines, and his early years of ministry were spent

in Massachusetts and Maine before being called to FCC in 1980.

As senior minister, Dr. Grice officiated at countless weddings, baptisms and funerals and provided guidance and counseling to numerous individuals over the years. He led a weekly Bible study and annual adult retreats to Tower Hill Camp and established and led Grandparent & Me Camp for many years at Tower Hill.

He especially enjoyed playing his guitar for church functions such as the Sunday School's Birthday Sunday and Birthday Party for Jesus. He hosted several Spiritual Adventures to exhibits and museums in destinations such as Green Bay, WI; Kansas City, MO; South Bend, IN; Nauvoo, Union, Volo and Woodstock, IL. He also gathered a group of church members every year to help serve a Thanksgiving meal at San Lucas UCC, in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood.

While at FCC he was actively involved in the Des Plaines community, where he served as co-convenor of the Des Plaines Ministerial Association and longtime board president of the Self-Help Closet & Pantry of Des Plaines. The SHC&P was established at FCC in 1971.

Dr. Grice also served on the Des Plaines Library board and the Des Plaines History Center board and was a member of the Des Plaines Lions Club and Des Plaines Elks Lodge. In recent years, he wrote a regular column called Epiphanies for the Des Plaines Journal. In 2024 he authored a children's book, *Railroad Santa and the Holiday Train*.

Upon retirement from FCC, Dr. Grice and his wife relocated to the vacation home they built in Ann's hometown of Heavener, OK. They returned to Des Plaines upon the passing of Dr. Grice's parents and settled into the family home on Thacker Street.

Dr. Grice returned to FCC for the church's sesquicentennial celebration in 2019, and he hosted a celebration of his 50 years in ministry in 2023.

He is survived by his wife, Ann; sons Paul (Sandy), Will (Shannon), Jon (Anna) and Chris (Ashley) and several grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, William Jr. and Dorothy, and a granddaughter, Elizabeth.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Christ Church UCC in Des Plaines on Saturday, May 2: gathering at 9:30 a.m., service at 10:00 a.m., followed by a luncheon in Wobbe Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Tower Hill Camp and Retreat Center, Ronald McDonald House, Self-Help Closet & Pantry of Des Plaines, Des Plaines History Center, and San Lucas United Church of Christ.

Happy Birthday to You!!

Congratulations to the following church members/friends on their birthdays!!
*If you would like to add/remove a birthday OR have a name revision to share,
please contact the Church Office at 847/299-5561.*

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Melanie Donoghue | 01-May |
| Eric Jancsovics | 01-May |
| Ellie DuToit | 01-May |
| Nancy Quam | 02-May |
| Ken Walusiak | 02-May |
| Nina Masciopinto | 07-May |
| Izaan DuToit | 07-May |
| Jennifer Muhr | 10-May |
| Sue Almerigi | 13-May |
| Kathy Foster | 14-May |
| Corrine Bachar | 15-May |
| Betty Nanstiel | 17-May |
| Debbie Walusiak | 17-May |
| Anthony Almerigi | 18-May |
| Paul Meyer | 20-May |
| André Deadwyler | 22-May |
| Ben Cooper | 22-May |
| Keith Liston | 23-May |
| Amy Quam | 27-May |
| Chris Thomas | 27-May |

Save These Dates!

May 3 – Confirmation

May 10 – Stewardship Sunday

May 30 – Mission Trip to Pilgrim Park

June 7 – FCC Annual Meeting

October 3 - Craft & Market Day

From the Community



Church members Garrett Pittman and Corrine Bachar were featured in the Park Ridge Chorale's spring concert, American Movie Music of the 21st Century. Their "cheering section" that evening included several FCC members and friends!



***“Second Time
Around” Sale
April 2026***



From our Historian, Nancy Meyer

(Originally published May, 2010)

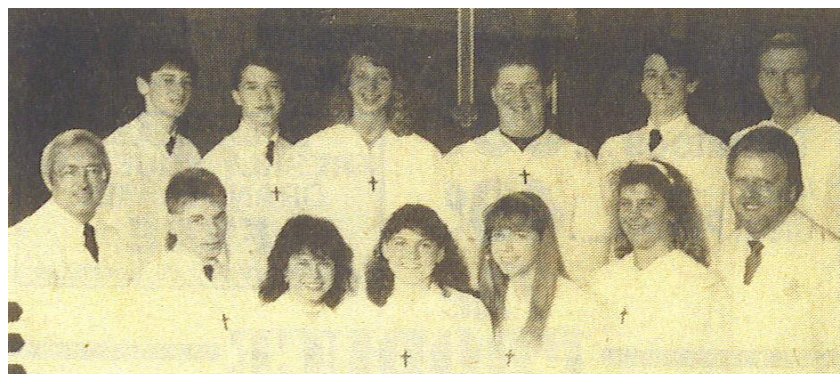
May at FCC means a new class of Confirmands will be accepted as members of our church. I don't know exactly what year we started having confirmation classes. Earliest member records, up through 1929, do not have new members received as confirmands, but by 1933 we do. Here's the Class of 1937 with Rev. Barwick.



As you note, they look a lot younger than our confirmation classes of today. Feb., 1946 Tidings says, "Our 1946 Confirmation Class will hold its first session in the Loesch Chapel this Saturday, Feb. 9 at 10 o'clock. Young people of the seventh grade and older are invited." The class on left is 1946. My 1956 Class with Dr. Brehm is on the right. I remember those Saturday morning classes, and sitting in the front rows of church every Sunday morning, taking notes, as we had to submit a synopsis of each sermon as part of our confirmation requirements.



According to "Our Fifth Quarter Century" history, the two-year Confirmation program for high school students was established in 1973. Here's the Confirmation Class of 1990 with Dr. Grice and Rev. Laaser.



(Continued next page)

It is a goal of mine as Historian to compile a book of ALL confirmation class photos. Perhaps there are some hiding in corners of the church I haven't had a chance to explore yet, but these are the years I have so far...1937, 1944, 1946, 1950, 1953, 1854, 1955, 1956, 1959, 1964, 1966, 1990, 1992, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009. Some are Xerox copies, some news clippings. Almost none have faces identified. So, in your 'spare' time, I'd sure appreciate you digging out YOUR FCC confirmation photo, scanning and emailing to me (nwmeyer255@aol.com) or copying and mailing to my attention at FCC, with as many faces identified as possible. I can supply the alphabetical listing of names of your confirmation class, if that will help.
(By the way, all photos printed in the Tidings are much clearer if you receive the Tidings via email.)

May 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Fundraisers: | | | | | 1 | 2 10:00a Bill Grice Memorial service |
| 3 Communion Confirmation Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship 10:30a Sunday Brunch @ Brunch Café | 4 | 5 | 6 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 11:00a Preschool Show | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 Mother's Day 9:00am Worship 10:00 am Fellowship Stewardship Sunday | 11 10:00a Creative Conversation | 12 12:00 Administrative Staff 6:00p Membership & Communications | 13 9:00a WWC 6:30p Music & Drama 7:00p Chancel Choir | 14 | 15 | 16 9:00a CMA Spring meeting |
| | 7:00p Finance 7:00p Wholly Ringers | 7:00p Worship Ministry | 6:00p PRC 7:00p Chancel Choir | | | |
| 17 Teacher Recognition 9:00am Worship Wholly Ringers 10:00 am Fellowship 10:00am Ministry Staff Potluck | 18 6:30p Property 7:00p Wholly Ringers Party | 19 Annual Reports Due | 20 Tidings Deadline 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 Pentecost 9:00a Worship 10:00a Fellowship Co off | 25 Memorial Day Office Closed | 26 | 27 9:00a WWC 10:00a Bible Study 7:00p Chancel Choir | 28 | 29 | 30 Work Week at Pilgrim Park until June 4 |
| 31 Trinity Sunday 9:00a Worship Chancel Players 10:00a Fellowship | | 7:00p Council | 7:00p Summer Choir | | | |

As off: 04/26/26



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FCCDP DONATION WEEK
Monday, May 25th thru Sunday, May 31st

Please support our Church!



First Congregational Church of Des Plaines

Living Our Faith Through Service

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



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