



The Glen Ellyn Reporter

*Newsletter of First United Methodist
Church of Glen Ellyn, Illinois*

January/February 2026

Pastor's Pen

Dear Church Family & Friends,

Thank you to ALL who participated in our Advent/Christmas Season at First UMC of Glen Ellyn and for helping us close out another year of ministry in 2025. There are some great videos and photos of all of our recent activities at www.geumc.org/media and on our Facebook page and Instagram profile. These events do not just happen, and I appreciate the work put in to make them happen.

I appreciate the churches that participated in our Advent Concert from our Prairie Central District. First UMC & Christ Church from Elmhurst, First UMC & Faith UMC from Lombard, Prince of Peace from Elk Grove Village, Friendship UMC from Bolingbrook, St. Andrew's from Carol Stream, and Bensenville UMC all made an effort to prepare a song to share. They also brought members from their churches, who had just attended worship and given an offering 5-6 hours earlier at their own churches yet gave over \$2,000 in our Advent collection for the Bishop's Emergency Fund to help local Immigrants. I recently received a heartfelt thank you from our District Superintendent for holding this event at our church and bringing the churches together. I appreciate her support.

I appreciate the church choir members that worked on the beautiful Christmas Cantata beginning in early October and presented it to the church on December 21. I'm also glad that Ginny was able to sing with us.

I appreciate Randy Nelson who works with the choir both Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings to make sure all the choir members are prepared and gives us a year full of quality and meaningful music. He is probably one of the most gifted musicians I have worked with in 40 years of ministry. And when he has another commitment scheduled? JoAnn Foss is there to make sure things run smoothly.

I know we still have many weeks of winter left, but the days are starting to get longer. I am sure it won't be too long before we start preparing music for Holy Week: Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter as Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18.

Thank you for being a part of this ministry as we work together to share the Good News of the Gospel!

Blessings for 2026,
Pastor Dave

Children & Youth Ministries

On Sunday, December 14, we enjoyed a no-rehearsal Nativity Pageant featuring our children and youth families. From Wise-people and the Star on the move to Shepherds with their fuzzy-headed Sheep, from Angel Gabriel and the littlest Angel to Mary and Joseph, you were all stellar. Thank you for helping us tell the good news of Jesus's birth.

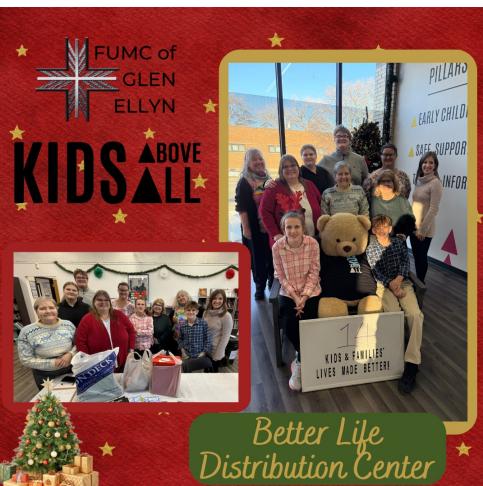


Family Nativity Pageant

THANK YOU to all who participated in **service projects in November and December**.



Thank you to all who donated to **Sleep Out Saturday**. We raised **a little more than \$1,000** to directly support the Transitional Housing Program for families with children through Bridge Communities. We partnered with First Congregational UCC and St. Mark's to bring out a great group of **12 youth and 5 adults who stayed the night** in the courtyard!



On Sunday, December 14, ten of us volunteered at Kids Above All's Better Life Distribution Center in Des Plaines. We wrapped gift donations for children and teens living in Lake County and we dropped off our gifts for three teens living in the Lisle group home. Our congregation provided over \$375 in gifts to these teens. And we will have money remaining to donate to Kids Above All to support their important work; an update on that total amount is coming soon as we still have some gifts coming in. Thank you for your generosity!

We have also had a fun time sharing in The Collective joint youth group events with First Congregational UCC and St. Mark's, including a Halloween party, Friendsgiving meal, and Christmas party.

Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, January 25, 5-7 p.m.:** Glow-in-the-dark Floor Hockey @ FCCGE
- **Wednesday, February 11, 6:30-8 p.m.:** Valentine's youth group party @ St. Mark's
- **Friday, March 13, 5-6:30 p.m.:** Feed My Starving Children (Aurora) packing shift. Wear your green for St. Paddy's weekend and join us to pack meals for children around the globe. Please RSVP to Pastor Laura by Sunday, March 1 to save your spot. We have 24 spots reserved. First Congregational UCC (FCCGE) and St. Mark's youth families will be joining us, and we will go out to dinner at a nearby location after the packing shift.

Children & Youth Ministries

Save the Dates

Our joint ASP Summer 2026 trip in collaboration with St. Mark's and First Congregational UCC of Glen Ellyn is confirmed for June 6-13. We will receive our location assignment in the spring.

Community VBS (Vacation Bible School) is scheduled for June 22-26, 2026 at First Congregational UCC of Glen Ellyn. We look forward to welcoming kids and volunteers. More details coming in late winter.



**United
Women
in Faith**

Women who come together to support one another, our local church, our worldwide church, and missions near and far... that's United Women in Faith! All women are welcome – no one has to be a member or a regular attender of this church to participate.

Save the date! Saturday, January 17, 9:30 a.m.

All women are invited to **Brunch and a General Meeting** at the church (dining room). We will have brunch and fellowship, elect officers for 2026, and hear a speaker from Milton Township detailing their food bank and other programs. We're hoping for good weather!

United Women in Faith Book Group

The book group will meet following worship on January 25 in the library to discuss *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee. "Four generations of a poor Korean immigrant family fight to control their destiny in 20th-century Japan." Everyone is welcome, even if you have not read the book.

The group will not meet in February. The next discussion will be on March 1 to discuss *Trash: A Poor White Journey* by Cedar Monroe. "Activist and chaplain Cedar Monroe writes indelibly about and for poor white people: about unlearning the American dream, untangling from white supremacy, and working for liberation alongside other poor folks."

"Practicing Hope," a spring/Lenten study beginning February 24

This is a United Women in Faith study but open to everyone! "How do we understand hope in the midst of hard realities? Is hope merely optimism? We will study Jesus's resurrection appearances and the example of early Christian communities to explore what it means to practice hope in God even when things seem to be falling apart."

This 5-week study, led by Sally Grenzow and Cheryl Peters, will meet at church on Tuesday afternoons from 1:30-3:00 p.m. beginning on February 24 and continuing March 3, 10, 17, and 24. Watch for more information closer to the start of the series.



United Circle News

United Women in Faith Circles are small groups of women that meet regularly to learn, pray, and support one another and the church. ***Circles always welcome any women interested!***

Hannah Circle

- In December we loved tasting and exchanging Christmas cookies! Our next meeting is Tuesday January 13, 7:00 p.m. at LuAnn Burkamper's: 4215 Black Oak, Lisle (630-624-3589). Program: travel with Martha Scatterday on safari in Africa and with Ann Robinson to Spain and the Camino de Santiago.
- Our February 10 meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. at Cheryl Peters' home: 322 Miller Ct., Glen Ellyn (630-469-5267). Program: "Carrying Our Faith Forward" from the UWFAith program book.

Ruth Circle

- We will meet Thursday, January 22, at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Sally Grenzow, 2283 Hiram Dr. Wheaton (630-725-8890).
- On Thursday, February 19, we will meet at 1:30 p.m. at the home of Lisa Rivers, 17 E. Morningside, Lombard (630-476-6758).

Beyond our local church...

Winter Mission U, January 11-25, all virtual, 2 studies to choose from: *Practicing Hope* and *Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival*. Information and registration here: <https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/index.php?eventid=859725&>

Assembly 2026 – it only happens once every 4 years... thousands of United Women in Faith together in one place for inspiring speakers, joyous worship, and warm fellowship. In 2026 it will take place May 15-17 in Indianapolis: register at uwfaith.org/assembly. Our Prairie Central District is offering scholarships, with priority given to first-time attendees. Deadline to apply is January 15. Contact Barb Doppelt at b.k.doppelt@gmail.com for the application form.

Mission & Service

FUMC Monthly Missions for 2026

January – People's Resource Center: Responds to basic human needs by providing food pantries in Wheaton, West Chicago, and Westmont; social services; computer training; emergency rent assistance; clothes closet; literacy; art; and job assistance. This help is free to DuPage County residents. <https://www.peoplesrc.org/>.



February – Native American Cultural & Environmental Center: Developing reuse of McKee House in Glen Ellyn for recognition of the Native Americans who first inhabited this area. The Center will preserve and promote Native American culture, the environment, and local history. Ask Martha Blumer about it or visit <https://fundthecenter.org/>.

March – Midwest Mission Distribution Center: This organization in IL and IA has staff and many volunteers who do a variety of tasks that help people in the US and around the world with health needs; disaster relief from floods, hurricanes, & tornados; and preparation of rice food bags. Ask Martha Blumer about it or visit <https://www.midwestmission.org/>.



Mission & Service

April – Walk-in Ministries: The Glen Ellyn Walk-in Ministry is an ecumenical partnership of 15 congregations whose purpose is to assist Glen Ellyn residents who need financial assistance. Vouchers are available for gas, food, prescriptions, and rent. FUMC has an office to help walk-in people.



May – We Grow Dreams: Offers job training and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Go to the West Chicago Greenhouse & Garden Center to purchase plants for indoors, gardens, & flower beds or to donate to this mission. Ask Barb Doppelt about it or visit <https://wegrowdreams.org/>.

June – Glen House Food Pantry: Provides essential groceries at no cost to people at risk of hunger. Donations of food & money are provided by local churches & the community. FUMC supports the pantry with donations of veggies & money from God's Garden and collection of items during February and October. Ask Lynne Nakashima or Mary Jane Chapman about it or visit <https://www.glenhousefoodpantry.org/>.



July – SCARCE (School & Community Assistance for Recycling & Composting Education): Stresses environmental education with innovative & hands-on programs for schools and organizations. Ask Dianne Batzkall about it or visit <https://www.scarce.org/>.

August – Humanitarian Service Project: Their mission is to alleviate the pain and suffering that poverty brings to seniors and children in DuPage and Kane Counties, without discrimination or exclusion for any reason. Ask Sue Rasch about it or visit <https://hsp.agency/>.



September – Red Bird Mission: This Appalachian mission has been supported by the UM Church for many years. It is in an isolated, rural, distressed area with chronic poverty, lack of jobs, and poor housing. The mission has a school, helps people with their health issues, has a food program, and works on improving homes. Visit <https://www.redbirdky.org/> to learn more.

October – Metropolitan Family Services: Gives low-income families access to job training, education, mental health services, career & family counseling, transportation, and childcare. Services also include a domestic abuse shelter. Talk with Pat Alstrin or visit <https://www.metrofamily.org/>.



November – UMCOR (UM Committee on Relief): This United Methodist fund provides swift aid & long-term recovery after natural or human caused disasters like war & famine. Essentials provided include food, water, shelter, & hygiene kits. Visit <https://umcmission.org/work/humanitarian-relief> to learn more.

December – PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter): The DuPage PADS organization provides a safe place to sleep in their interim housing center, a converted hotel which can house 200 people. This location provides meals for people as well as job training, GED classes, and assistance for children. Local churches and organizations lend their support. Visit <https://dupagepads.org/> to learn more.



Church & Social Action Committee

FUMC now has an ICE Policy. A copy is available at the Forest Avenue entrance to the great hall and in the atrium next to the sanctuary. The Church & Social Action committee developed the policy with guidance from the Northern Illinois Conference immigration committee. Our policy has been approved by the Ministry Council. It is intended to give guidance to people in the building in the event of the appearance of ICE officers. Previously churches were considered “sensitive locations” by Homeland Security policy. This policy was rescinded by the current administration which opens the possibility of ICE activity in churches.

Join us on January 11 after worship for a presentation by Lisa Rogers who works on the NIC Commission on Religion and Race and focuses on immigration issues. She will talk about the why and how of an ICE policy and give us an update on the current situation in Chicago and suburbs. Refreshments will be served.



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration on January 18

Plan to attend the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration with others from our congregation. Register with the link below and let Cheryl Peters cpeters322@gmail.com know of your interest. Carpools will be arranged.

Join people from across the conference in honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 18, 2:30 p.m., at Trinity UMC, Mt. Prospect. The service will include music, testimony, and prayer. Rev. Dr. Charles Woolery Sr. will preach. A light supper will follow. Read more and register now by visiting <https://www.umcnic.org/calendar/nic-mlk-celebration-2026>.

Green Team Ministries

Let's Kick Single-Use Plastic and Waste!

In 2026, some plastic just doesn't belong, especially single-use plastics. These disposable items, such as foam cups and containers, grocery bags, utensils, bottles, and packaging, make up nearly half of our plastic use. The creation of harmful microplastics and microfibers, consumption of plastic-contaminated foods, and open burning of plastic waste are just some reasons single-use plastics should be phased out.

We can't recycle our way out of this problem. **Twenty-two million pounds of plastic enter the Great Lakes each year**, just over half of which ends up in Lake Michigan. The EPA estimates that **Americans throw away almost 70 million plastic foam cups daily**. Plastic persists in the environment for hundreds of years, so nearly every bit of our plastic waste is still out there, clogging our landfills, littering our streets, polluting our parks, and more.

Information from Earth 911: <https://earth911.com/>

Let's honor and preserve the environment that God has blessed us with by avoiding plastic! It's a challenge but each one of us can make a small difference. If not you, who?

Community Rummage Sale

First United Methodist Church hosted another successful Community Rummage Sale this fall. The vision for the rummage sale is simple – to provide an opportunity for youth in our community to experience the joy of serving while also providing an opportunity for team building, parent involvement, and fundraising for local organizations. The sale is a community event where everyone is working with each other and for each other; it's an event that benefits the people in our community and encourages working in fellowship with neighbors.

With 2025 in the books, here is a look at the numbers:

⇒ 4 youth groups participating – Over 150 youth over 5 days

- Boy Scout Troop 45 (They host the Annual Pancake Breakfast)
- Glenbard West High School Choir (They hold their concerts in our sanctuary filling it to capacity. They also are a Permanent Endowment Grant recipient where PE funds provide rent subsidies for groups that hold events in our building)
- Glenbard West High School Theatre
- Anima Singers (They also rent our sanctuary filling to capacity)



⇒ Over 30 adult volunteers

⇒ Over 300 shoppers

⇒ Over 200 Individual Sales

⇒ Thousands of items donated, redistributed within our community and kept out of the landfill

⇒ \$4,500 raised in 8 Hours (Each group – Including FUMC – received \$900/each)

⇒ Much of the money distributed to the youth is then donated to other organizations such as Feed My Starving Children and Glen House Food Pantry

⇒ All remaining items were donated to The Epilepsy Foundation

⇒ The Permanent Endowment Fund helped defray costs for marketing and food

Thank you for your support!

Little Lambs Learning Center



Little Lambs
Learning Center

If you or someone you know with a small child is looking for a few hours to yourself each week, Little Lambs is the place for your child! Unlike a typical preschool, which offers 2 hours, Little Lambs offers 4 hours of "me" time for parents.

Registration for Summer and Fall 2026 is open! Please visit our website at <https://www.geumc.org/llc> or contact Stephanie at PDO@geumc.org for more information.

Finance Committee

Have you tried giving through our online portal? It is a quick, convenient way to make either a one-time or recurring donation. We have a variety of funds set up in the portal, such as the General Fund, Building Fund, and ASP, making it very simple to designate where you want your donation allocated. The QR code to the right makes it even easier! Just open the camera app on your smartphone, scan the code, click the link that pops up, and your browser will route you to the portal. Thank you for your faithful and generous support of our church and ministries!



November 2025 Year to Date Financial Recap

General Fund	
Balance January 1, 2025	\$0
Offerings and other income	\$323,699
Employee Retention Tax Credit	\$17,895
Transfer from Restricted Funds	\$47,488
Expenses	
Fund Balance November 30, 2025	\$391,861
	-\$2,779

Debt Reduction (Mortgage) Fund	
Balance January 1, 2025	\$0
Offerings	\$56,126
Transfer from Permanent Endowment	\$30,000
Mortgage payments	
Fund Balance November 30, 2025	\$101,223
	-\$15,097

Mission of the Month Donations **

** \$200 per month is added to donations by a Permanent Endowment grant		
January	People's Resource Center	\$513
February	Bridge Communities	\$548
March	Walk In Ministry	\$813
April	Midwest Mission	\$413
May	We Grow Dreams	\$736
June	Northern Illinois Food Bank	\$573
July	SCARCE	\$743
August	Humanitarian Service Project	\$513
September	Teen - Parent Connection	\$538
October	Metropolitan Family Services	\$613
November	Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans	\$603

Year to date Donations

Glen House Food Pantry	\$2,130
PATH	\$825
UMCOR Disaster Relief	\$1,891
PADS	\$200
Various United Methodist Recipients	\$549

Thank you for your faithful and generous support of all of our ministries!