



July 2025

First United Methodist Church

Pastor Alex Lee

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Office Hours:

9:00 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Monday-Thursday

Church Website

www.firstumcharvard.org

Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

for all ages

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Our Vision

We are a church for all people of Christ through our love and service.

Our Mission Statement

We are the followers of Jesus Christ coming together at the living body of Christ, allowing God to work in us, with us and through us for His purpose.

From the Pastor's Pen

I wanted to let you know that at the Annual Conference, held in June, I was appointed to serve you (church) for another year. This will be my fifth year serving you as a minister and I'm grateful for the opportunity to work together for the kingdom of God. I'm also humbled and encouraged by all your work making impacts in our community and beyond. I'm tasked with reaching out to the Hispanic community and sharing the good news. Thank you for your support, I'll let you know how you can participate in the mission of loving and serving.

This month's newsletter includes the Annual Conference report by our Lay Leader, Janet Hugg. I encourage you to read through it and share your thoughts with our leaders and fellow members. Our Northern Illinois Annual Conference represents diversity and unity; our communities are composed of diverse ethnicities and nationalities that come together under God's grace with many different experiences and backgrounds that show the Holy Spirit's works in many different ways.

The Annual Conference is about making connections for ministry beyond the local church. We are more than just a parish, our fellow sister churches come together in working for God's glory. All of us are part of God's big plan, we are the agents in sharing God's love to the whole world. I'm happy to report that the conference was a success and we are encouraged to continue the good work as God is with us.

There have been some decisions relevant to our church that have been made during the conference. A new apportionment formula has been approved. The percentage is dependent on the church income; in our case the apportionment will be lowered moving forward. In terms of our Conference's administration, the budget is balanced, thus there won't be an increase for the year 2026. I ask for your continued support of our church and the annual conference moving forward. We are all in this together, God's grace is enabling us to make a difference.

I hope you are having a great summer. We all deserve plenty of rest and recharge for all the work ahead. Enjoy some cool drinks during hot days and have fun with outdoor activities. I love summer and I hope you love it too.

Blessings,

Pastor Alex Lee

Report from the Northern Illinois Annual Conference 2025
Janet Hugg, Lay Leader

The Northern Illinois Annual Conference took place June 9-11 this year at the Renaissance Conference Center in Schaumburg and the theme was “Grace Is Sufficient”. There were about 700 clergy and laity members in attendance. This was my first experience with anything of this nature within my experience as a United Methodist and I found it enlightening, at times overwhelming, and overall affirming of what I believe and why I love my United Methodist faith. I also feel I have some sense of what it is like to be a representative in Congress! The legislative sessions were intense and filled with discussion, questioning, evaluating, amending, more discussion, and ultimately voting. I felt proud to be part of the discussion and humbled by the insight, opinions, and knowledge that others in the room brought to the discussion.

The constitutional amendments that were approved by the General Conference (all UMC churches around the world) in 2024 were put to a vote at this conference and all other Annual Conferences taking place around the world. This is basically the same as when an amendment is made to the US constitution and all states must ratify it. In our case the “Constitution” is our “Book of Discipline”. The first and probably most significant amendment has to do with worldwide regionalization of the UMC. This would organize our denomination into geographic bodies rather than having all our global churches be under the jurisdiction of the US church. This would allow for other countries or regions to adapt parts of the Book of Discipline to their respective cultural norms. The second amendment was for the addition of the words ‘gender’ and ‘disability’ to the list of characteristics that do not bar people from membership in a UM congregation. The 3rd amendment is intended to strengthen the Discipline’s wording on the UM stand against racism reading, in part, “Racism opposes God’s law and diminishes the image of God in each person. Racism must be eradicated. The UMC commits to confronting and eliminating all forms of racism, racial inequity, colonialism, white privilege and white supremacy in every facet of its life and in society at large.” The 4th amendment had to do with educational requirements for clergy voting rights at conferences and I don’t feel I need to elaborate on it for you. All these amendments were passed at this conference and our votes will be added to the tally of all other Annual Conferences before the amendments are formally adopted with a 2/3d’s majority.

At the local level, most of the legislative initiatives put forth by our conference centered around a commitment to recognizing the humanity in all persons and making a place for them in our society and in our churches. I was assigned to a group to discuss and vote on two initiatives. One called for our conference and its members to distance themselves by divestment from American companies that supplied war materials to the Middle East conflict. The second focused on resisting/challenging the political or religious groups supporting White Christian Nationalism in our country that seeks to combine patriotism and Christianity in a way that demeans and denies the humanity of any persons who don’t fit their mold. I voted in favor of both of these initiatives.

I’m happy to report that with the help of donations from our own church, the conference provided over 4,000 lbs. of personal and home cleaning supplies as well as \$1K in donations to Midwest Mission for relief efforts in natural disasters, wars, and poverty stricken areas.

If anyone has any questions about the legislation I mentioned, I would be happy to talk with you after church or whenever is a good time. I look forward to attending future conferences.

July Highlights

July Meetings

7/7 7:00 p.m. Trustee Committee Meeting
7/14 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting
7/28 7:00 p.m. Leadership Committee Meeting



July Ushers

Mark Dion
Ken Pedersen

Vacation Bible School

will be held at the
First Presbyterian Church
7100 Harvard Hills Road,
July 14th - July 18th from
9:00am - 12:00 pm.
For more information,
please contact the
church at 815-943-4474.



Liturgists for July

7/6 Janet Hugg
7/13 Please sign-up to be
7/20 Liturgist - your service is
7/27 greatly appreciated!



Have a safe and Happy
Fourth of July Holiday!



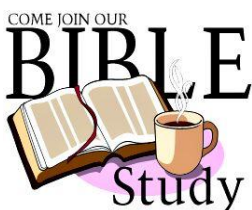
July Counters

Mark Dion
David Swengel



Senior Fellowship

Tuesday, July 1st
Tuesday, July 15th
at 9:00 a.m.



Women's Bible Study

Every Wednesday at the home
of Sharon Klingstedt
July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd
and 30th at 1:00 p.m.

Assisting in our Worship

on July 13th will be Stanley Campbell, the
first lay director of Rockford Urban
Ministries, a United Methodist program.
"RUM" is the missional outreach of 20
United Methodist Churches focusing their
resources on specific mission & programs.

Under Mr. Campbell RUM helped to
shut down liquor establishments and a
pornographic bookstore on Seventh St,
establish a non-profit fair trade store
with a wind generator and solar panels
on the roof. He also helped establish an
outreach to IV drug users and street sex
providers. He has spoken out for the
poor and against war. Mr. Campbell will
share some of the insights he has learned
from 38 years of working on urban missions.

