



July 2026

**First United
Methodist Church**

Rev. Hye-Eun Chon

Church Office: 815-943-5422

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Pastor's phone:

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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 am grateful for God's love and grace in bringing me to the First United Methodist Church of Harvard, allowing me to begin my first solo pastoral ministry at such a beautiful and wonderful church.

Reflecting on God's plan and will in granting me—despite my limited pastoral experience—such a great opportunity to serve at the Harvard First United Methodist Church, I will pray ceaselessly, committing myself to serving the church and its congregation members with all my heart, and I will strive to unite our efforts so that this could become a church that pleases God and brings comfort and joy to everyone.

I am reminded of the words in Proverbs 16:9: "The human mind plans the way, but the Lord directs the steps." Although I made various plans based on my own thoughts as a finite human being, experiencing how God ultimately led me to the Harvard First United Methodist Church makes me wonder and reflect on the nature of God's mysterious providence.

Looking at the stars in the dark night sky, we might find ourselves speechless before that vast expanse; likewise, looking out at the endless sea, we might feel as though we are being invited into a world of infinite mystery. When we experience the diverse mysteries of the deep underwater world while scuba diving or gaze at countless stars from an observatory, we could reflect and meditate on eternity and mystery toward the transcendent God.

God's will and plan transcend human understanding, thought, and expression; they are truly beyond words, that is, indescribable and ineffable. The divine plan and providence that guided the journey of my life and led me to Harvard First United Methodist Church surpass my own thoughts and plans, bearing witness to God's ineffable love and grace.

On the one hand, I wonder about Harvard First United Methodist Church and its community; at the same time, I am filled with great anticipation as I contemplate God's profound and mysterious providence regarding how God will use me as God's instrument and how God's plan for this will unfold.

Blessings,

Rev. Hye-Eun Chon

Report from the Northern Illinois Annual Conference 2026

Janet Hugg, Lay Leader

Last week from Sunday through Tuesday (June 14-16th) I attended the Northern Illinois Annual Conference in Schaumburg. Bishop Schwerin's theme for the 2026 church year is Practicing Hope and that theme was very evident in all the programs, learning sessions, and group discussions and activities. I found this year's conference to be really inspiring. The sessions were filled with praise music, thoughtful group discussions, examples of church outreach and mission, and recognition of youth in our denomination who are making a difference. It was very exciting to see Pastor Alex receive his commission along with six other pastors and Ji was there to place his robe on him. Sean, Jason, and Alex's mom were there as well.

In the Laity session on Sunday afternoon we listened to 5 young people, 2 in high school, and 3 in college articulate their views on hope for the future of the church and their part in it. They were amazing! Each of them responded to questions from the moderator with wisdom and understanding far greater than my own. Three of these young people were of a Hispanic background and two were Asian Indian.

One of the most uplifting and exciting events is when 200 of us, including Pastor Alex, gathered outside the conference center Monday night with our signs to march, chant, and sing our way out to the major highway near there to show the UM support for immigrant rights and human dignity. The honks from the many cars passing signaled their agreement with our message. We also learned of the NIC rapid response team actions during the Midway Blitz when ICE descended upon the city of Chicago. Their banner read "We are UM, if you come for one of us, you come for all of us." They had whistle patrols to warn of ICE coming, passed out information on legal rights, there were bike patrols & school patrols to assure safe passage for the children to and from school. They brought water to protesters choking on tear gas, and they picketed and prayed at detention centers.

At each conference there are several pieces of legislation proposed and the voting members are divided into smaller groups, each group dealing with two of the proposed legislations. After each group discusses and perhaps amends each proposed item, it is voted on within the small group and then their decision is presented later to the whole group to either accept their decision or vote against it. I would compare this to the legislative process in Washington between the house and senate. My group's legislative documents were fairly simple and did not warrant much discussion other than to approve them for presentation to the whole conference for a vote.

Alex introduced me to Rev. Christina Kim who is our NIC missionary in Tanzania Africa where she has been instrumental in building a comprehensive secondary school complete with dormitories, science labs, a library, cafeteria, and sports facilities. The Bishop's Appeal for 2026 will directly support this project which is geared toward theological studies and clergy development in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines.

I brought our donations to the mission challenge and we have already received a letter of thanks. In all, over 7,000 lbs. of items, filling 3 trucks were donated.

I could go on a lot longer about everything I experienced. It was a very educational and uplifting three days for me and I look forward to using some of the things I learned there at our church.

July Highlights

July Meetings

- 7/6 7:00 p.m. Trustee Committee Meeting
- 7/13 7:00 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting
- 7/20 7:00 p.m. Staff Parrish Committee Meeting
- 7/27 7:00 p.m. Leadership Committee Meeting



July Ushers

Mark Dion
Ken Pedersen



Have a safe and Happy
Fourth of July Holiday!



Liturgists for July

- 7/5 *Please sign-up to be*
- 7/12 *Liturgist - your service is*
- 7/19 *greatly appreciated!*
- 7/26



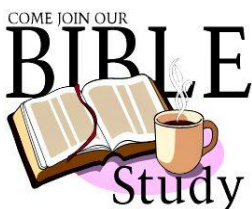
July Counters

Mark Dion
David Swengel



Senior Fellowship

Tuesday, July 7th
Tuesday, July 21st
at 9:00 a.m.



Women's Bible Study

Every Wednesday at the home
of Sharon Klingstedt
July 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd
and 29th at 1:00 p.m.

We Warmly Welcome...

Rev. Hye-Eun Chon to our church family and to the community of Harvard! Growing up in a family where both her father and grandfather are Methodist pastors, she was lead to the church and pursued her theological education. She studied organ music (liturgical, church and sacred) in Seoul, Boston, Princeton, and Evanston. She graduated from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary with a PhD on May 8, 2026. We pray that God blesses her ministry to us and the community of Harvard!



