

# First United Methodist Church of Oak Lawn

Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world

Greetings Siblings in Christ,



How is it with your soul? Founder of Methodism, John Wesley, would ask participants during small-group meetings called classes or bands this same question. Asking this question was meant to peel back the layers of their hearts and investigate the depths of their souls. Other related questions are: "How is your soul doing?" Or, "How is your spirit faring as you move into the Advent Season?"

These questions force us to take stock of our souls as we navigate this Advent Season. Some of us may feel ecstatic with the joy this season brings. Substantially, others may feel overwhelmed. We all may carry feelings of uncertainty as we navigate the rapidly changing political and social landscapes of our current lives. As we collectively navigate through the highs and lows this season brings, let's not forget the meaning of Advent.

It is during this time that we prepare for the birth of Jesus on Christmas. He is the light of the world. We prepare for Jesus' birth by actively living in his hope, peace, joy, and love. In John's gospel, chapter one, verse five, we are told, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Amid the plethora of issues that we all face, I am reminded, during this season of Christ's life-giving and transformative light, that the world's darkness shall not overcome it.

Further, John's gospel in chapter eight, verse twelve, tells us what Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." As we wait for Jesus' birth on Christmas Day this year, do so with great anticipation and joyfulness in your hearts. Jesus is the light of the world. His birth brings newness into our lives through Him.

We join in the joy of those celebrating their birthdays and anniversaries this month, praying that God will grant them many more years of joy, peace, and good health. Our prayers are also with those who need healing and those facing various life challenges. Let's continue to support one another in prayer and check in on each other.

Peace and Blessings, Rev. Beverly Dukes, Pastor

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

### **MEMBER PRAYER CONCERNS**

***Ongoing prayers for health and healing:*** Joan Wyma, Penny and Randy Millslagle, Joanne Bartlett, Gary Czemske, Phyllis Hogan, Maggie O'Bradovic

***Prayers of Thanksgiving:*** Changes in medication has enabled Donna Heinz to be back with us on Sunday mornings!

***PRAY FOR THOSE IN SERVICE:*** Loretta Caplinger, Air Force,; Christine Boyd, Army  
; Scott Boehn, Marines; Keith Danalewich, Navy

### **FRIENDS OF OUR COMMUNITY IN NEED OF PRAYER**

Dave Morris

Emily, granddaughter of Anne Boyd



SEND A CHRISTMAS GREETING TO THOSE SHUT-IN!



SEND a CARD!



MAKE A CALL!



## Happy Birthday to.....

2nd Alaine Koschnitzki 3rd Maggie O'Bradovic 11th Pete Gesell  
12th Chris Czemske 12th Maggie Kendryna 13th Greg Greiman  
14th Linda Sarracino 17th Tess Santoro 26th Abeer Alrabadi  
31st Chloe Santoro

## Thanks and celebration!

We received \$41,120 in pledges for 2026 on the first Sunday of our pledge drive. That is 77% of last year's pledged amount. (Please see more details on page 6)

## WHO'S AT CHURCH?

AA, NA, Al-Anon, Alateen, Jazzercise, Fit Your World, Friendship Fridays, Compassion Word Ministries, our food pantry guests and more! Many groups utilize our facilities and, although not all are directed by us, they become an extension of our community by helping us to be visible, and by reflecting values we hold as Christians, such as the importance of self-care; control of substances that can harm our physical bodies; creativity; acquiring knowledge and growth; and helping those less fortunate. We invite you to be aware of these various programs, and, if you should meet their members here, extend your hand in Christian fellowship and recognize them as part of our community. **Invite them to church, an event, or a circle meeting. Let them know their presence is a blessing!**

# DECEMBER CALENDAR OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**Sundays: Worship! 9 am**

**Kid's Sunday School 9:15   Adult Sunday School 10:15**

**Fellowship and “coffee and” following services.**

**Bible study Tuesdays 7-8 pm via Zoom**

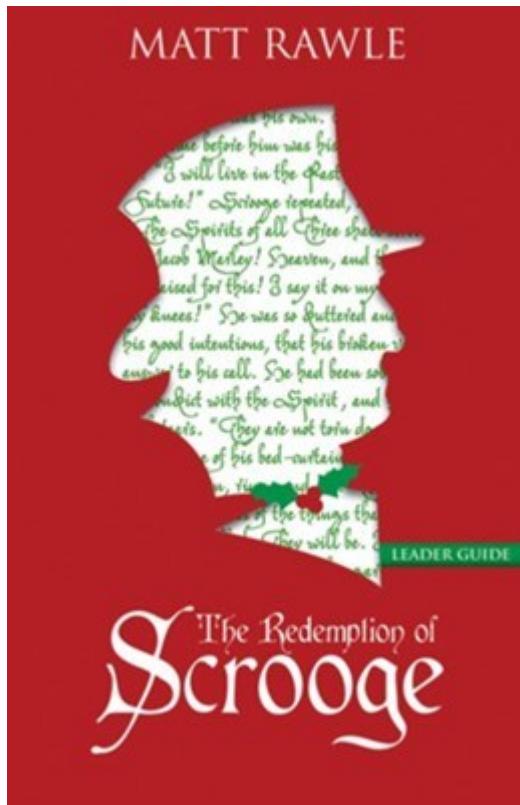
**Cookie Bonanza Dec. 6, 9 am - Noon**

**Christmas Eve Service and Shared Meal**

**5 p.m., December 24th**



# JOIN US FOR A CHRISTMAS BIBLE STUDY!



Beverly Dukes, pastor, is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:

Topic: Advent Study “The Redemption of Scrooge”

Time: Dec 4, 2025 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88651236176?pwd=EnBbaG3VvDRNYh7SleTnvs5UuNNbZn.1>

View meeting insights with Zoom AI Companion

<https://us06web.zoom.us/launch/edl?muid=5e849bdd-2f12-4837-9468-fd1eed2b0c2c>

Meeting ID: 886 5123 6176

Passcode: 726395

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One tap mobile

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+13126266799,,88651236176#,,,\*726395# US (Chicago)

## NEWS FROM YOUR FINANCE COMMITTEE!

Our 2026 pledge campaign is off to a good start. On Commitment Sunday we received pledges in the amount of \$41,120, which is 77 % of our 2025 pledged giving. 13 families have pledged to date, and 8 of those raised their pledge significantly. However, our annual operating budget is expected to be approximately \$110,000, which is \$68,880 dollars over current 2026 pledges. This year, loose offering, rental of the church building, and fund raisers such as parking lot sales and Pumpkin Patch made up much of that shortfall and will hopefully bring us to a year which ends in the black. We will continue to curb expenses by having a fully volunteer staff with the exception of Pastor Beverly, whom we employ part-time. We are thankful for those who have pledged to give, and given so generously. If you have not had the opportunity to respond, we ask that you do so prayerfully and generously, so that we may continue to serve our faith community and beyond. Thank you.

*You can access our Vanco giving page  
via this QR code. Pledge cards are available in the office.*



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### UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH WELCOMES YOU!!

**Rachel Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 9th at 9:30 a.m. at the church, for a  
Christmas Celebration. Debra Circle will not meet in December.**

**ALL WOMEN OF THE CHURCH ARE WELCOME AT EITHER CIRCLE...or both!...**

**FOR "FELLOWSHIP AND ..." COME AND SEE WHAT WE'RE ABOUT!**

**Pledge cards to UWF were distributed in November. Pledges can be turned in to Karen Santoro by December 31.**

**United Women in Faith**  
**Cookie Bonanza is on the way!**  
**Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**9:00AM – 12:00PM**  
**First UMC, Oak Lawn**  
**10000 S. Central**



**Cookie Contributions Welcome!**  
**Cookie monsters welcome to buy!**  
**\$12 a box**

Come on over to my house  
Christmas Eve....and bring the  
kids.

—God

Join us at 5 p.m. on December 24th, for  
an informal service and potluck dinner.

All welcome!



#### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9 a.m. in person worship in our sanctuary  
And available via Zoom in real time  
and on Facebook Live  
(Contact the church for Zoom links)

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL

9 a.m. age 3 through grade school  
Adult class at 10:15

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of Oak Lawn

Ministers: All members of the faith community Pastor: Beverly Dukes

Contact us: 100th and Central, Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Church Office: (708) 423-1170, Website: [www.FirstMethodistOakLawn.org](http://www.FirstMethodistOakLawn.org)

Find us on Facebook!

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Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church Bishop Dan Schwerin Rev. Dr. Audrea Nanabray, DS