

Northern Illinois Conference 2025 One Matters Award

First United Methodist Church

Arlington Heights, IL – Lake North

First United Methodist Church of Arlington Heights

(FUMCAH) remained rooted in its mission to *love*

boldly because a better world is possible, while

navigating *a year of transition* with the retirement of longtime Deacon Lynn Mikels and a season of interim leadership under Rev. Rick Carlson. That steady faithfulness of FUMCAH members bore fruit in continued baptisms and professions of faith, setting the stage for a new chapter of ministry.



When the new pastoral team (Pastor Brittany Isaac and Asst. Pastor David Profitt) arrived on July 1, they followed Annual Conference guidance and held a dozen small group listening sessions. “I heard a strong commitment to inclusion and to intergenerational ministry,” said Pastor Brittany. “We’ve built on the firm foundation of warmth that already existed while experimenting with new ways to connect the community to the church.”

FUMCAH’s long-standing programs reflect a commitment to inclusive, intergenerational ministry. Whether it’s 4x8 Groups sharing meals, the lively Wednesday night JAM



(Jesus, Art, & Music) program that brings all ages together for music and dinner, or groups like the Green Team, LGBTQIA+ support, and other affinity groups—it highlights the congregation’s diverse and welcoming spirit.

This culture of a welcoming spirit that embraces first-time guests is coupled with a follow-up process to fuel real growth. Worship attendance—both online and in person—has increased 20% year-over-year. A weekly testimony in worship allows the congregation to see how God is moving in the community.

Membership has remained steady, with eleven youth confirmed and six adults professing faith in 2024. Just four months into 2025, the church has already celebrated five baptisms and welcomed 15 new members. Four more are planned for June along with more new members. A focused communications strategy has helped extend our reach.

Once a month, FUMCAH offers **Starting Point** to introduce mission and values to newcomers. **Next Steps** offers a three-week series inviting people to grow deeper in their faith life through Wesley's General Rules. "We are also re-imagining adult Sunday School," says Pastor David.

Through outreach, service, and active community engagement, FUMCAH lives its mission to *Love boldly, because a better world is possible*. Looking ahead, the church hopes to expand its part-time pastoral role into full-time and will soon launch a new website to welcome those seeking a spiritual home more effectively.

