

# One Matters Award, Lake South

## Northern Illinois Conference 2026

*House of Praise United Methodist Church*

Chicago, IL – Lake South



House of Praise UMC was formed as a congregation in July 2024 through the faithful merger and profession of faith of two congregations: The Englewood Rust UMC and Kelly Woodlawn UMC, supplemented by several members of the congregation of Freedom United Methodist Church. After its inception, the newly formed House of Praise UMC congregation held a recommitment celebration to reaffirm our commitment to a bold and joyful vision that embodies the mission of the United Methodist Church and a commitment to growth through service, inclusive love, community outreach, and evangelism. The congregation has chosen hope and faith that God will do a new thing in the Englewood and surrounding communities through our commitment to embrace the future God has for us, versus division based on congregational differences. For the House of Praise UMC congregation, the profession of faith extends beyond the initial response to the invitation to Christian Discipleship at the altar to spiritual formation, spiritual growth, and service. Our commitment to this type of profession of faith is demonstrated through our actions and our ministries.



House of Praise UMC has experienced continued growth in membership through professions of faith of other UMC denominational members and new non-denominational members through both professions of faith and baptisms. Most recently, there were two Baptism Services, adding five youth members. During the conference years, we have added ten new members through profession of faith. Our current membership total has grown to 122 members, with an average of 70 members regularly attending in-person Worship Service and an average of 12 members participating in Sunday Worship Service online. We continue spreading the Gospel through our Facebook Live, which is viewed in other

countries. Our Laity is actively engaged in Noon-day Prayer in the Sanctuary; evening Prayer Calls on Wednesdays and weekly Bible Study on Thursdays. Our Adult Sunday School has an average attendance of 15 faithful members with two leaders guiding the journey through God's Word.



Through the profession of faith, House of Praise UMC added a Youth Coordinator who is actively building youth membership and engagement. An average of 15 to 20 children and youth participate in the Children's Ministry weekly. We are currently preparing for a second successful Vacation Bible School in 2026, building on the engagement and participation of 30 youth during the summer of 2025. Additionally, House of Praise youth are active participants in the Lake South District Monthly Youth Go Team Training and the BMCR Confirmation class... building toward the future. Our Evangelism Team keeps our college students connected through regular "care" packages, cards, and letters...connecting to the future.

By trusting in the faithfulness of God, House of Praise UMC continues growing through vibrant worship, consistent outreach, and evangelism. The congregation is committed to the UMC mission of creating disciples for the transformation of the world by focusing on actively living out discipleship. We profess our faith through demonstrations of love that reach beyond our walls. Our outreach programs focus on community engagement by offering programs and services tailored to meet the needs of our constituent community. Our outreach and evangelism ministries include prayer walks, health and wellness programs, reentry and expungement service awareness programs, community clothes closet ministry twice per year (seasonal), and our college student connection programs. House of Praise members are also participants in the District's Monthly GO Team Training and sponsor outdoor community outreach ministries during the summer months.

To the House of Praise UMC congregation, "profession of faith" has a deeper meaning of reaching beyond boundaries to demonstrate God's steadfast love. We partner with other neighborhood congregations to celebrate the goodness of God during joint Worship services and spirit-filled services during the seasons of Advent and Lent, which further demonstrates our commitment to connectional ministry.

The House of Praise UMC congregation believes that by demonstrating and professing our faith, our church will continue on a trajectory of growth and revitalization. The collective faith and resilience of our congregation demonstrate a true commitment to the growth of the House of Praise UMC's presence in Englewood and the greater community of faith.

