

# THE ECHO

March 2024

A PUBLICATION OF EDEN UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## KINGDOM VALUES FOR TRYING TIMES

Our Lenten journey is unfolding with this theme, as we encourage one another to reconnect with values core to the journey with Jesus. So far, our worship services have emphasized the work of God as we seek to connect with, or receive people not typically in our comfort zone. And, we've revisited the important values of safety and resilience pictures in the lifestyle of the Sermon on the Mount. (When we follow those teachings in Matthew 5-7, we find the Spirit shapes us for lives strong enough to withstand the storms of life; we find ourselves built on rock, not sand.)

Most recently, we revisited the parables of Matthew 13. There, we are reminded that "kingdom power for change" looks like patience (not passivity), long steady growth of small things (mustard seeds) into larger impactful things (sheltering trees or invasive weeds) and yeast which must disappear in and mingle with other ingredients in order to make real *nourishing bread*.

What values are you in need of remembering and reclaiming in these difficult days? What orients you? We bless your journey, your struggles, your questions. Join us for the remaining weeks and for the Holy Week activities described in this issue.

In Christ's Peace,  
*Pastor Jacki*

## LENT: Look in the Surprising Places

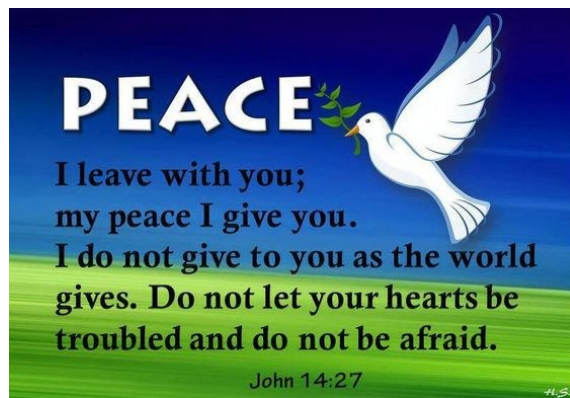
What has surprised you during this season thus far? Maybe it is something you have heard during worship, a message from Pastor Jacki or me, or something that happened completely outside of the church.

In these trying times, it may feel that there are only bad surprises. Surprising things are happening in our world, all the time, and they may seem like there are always bad, scary or disconcerting, but I think you can come across grace and mercy in the most surprising of places—from the people, places, or things that we would never have expected.

God is working in all times and all places. Maybe it is time to dive a little deeper and wonder without our normal preconceived maps as Pastor Jacki does, and discover the things that we never thought we would.

I pray you all have a deep and fulfilling season.

Be well,  
Sarah Foster  
Minister of Community Care



# WORSHIP



## MARCH READERS

Penny Dahmer—3rd  
Debi Thomas—10th  
David Chernich—17th  
Ed Thomas—24th  
Jeff Lorenty—28th  
Mike Edens—31st

## MARCH USHERS

Daryl and Katie Dahmer—3rd  
Ed and Debi Thomas—10th  
Kelly & Jeff Lorenty—17th  
Ed and Debi Thomas—24th  
Daryl and Katie Dahmer—28th  
Daryl and Katie Dahmer—31st

## COMMUNION ASSISTANT

Penny Dahmer—3rd  
Debi Thomas—24th  
Penny Dahmer—28th  
Zach Thomas—31st

**Reminder: Our worship service is offered  
each Sunday at 10am in person and via**



**Join Zoom Meeting by clicking visiting:**  
<https://ministrelife.zoom.us/j/2954166836>

Or call in by dialing: 1-312-626-6799  
Meeting ID: 295 416 6836

*Remember, all services are recorded and can  
be found at a link at  
[www.edemuccchicago.org](http://www.edemuccchicago.org)*



## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FOR FEBRUARY

February 4: 8 on Zoom; 17 adults and 3 children at 5051  
February 11: 10 on Zoom; 22 adults and 9 children at 5051  
February 14: 3 on Zoom; 16 adults and 1 child at 5051  
February 18: 10 on Zoom; 20 adults and 6 kids at 5051  
February 25: 8 on Zoom; 18 adults and 4 kids at 5051



We ask for your prayers and blessings on the Hunt-Colon family as we serve them in worship and fellowship on Sunday, March 17 at 11:30am. Together, we'll bless and baptize Kylie Lissette Colon, age 15 months.

## OUR CHURCH COUNCIL

Ed Thomas—President  
Linda Stirk—Vice President  
Rotating (vacant)—Secretary  
Gene Schnarr —Chair, Deacons  
Larry Pavia — Co-Chair, Christian Education\*  
Daryl Dahmer—Chair, Trustees

\*serving with Nora Edens

**PASTOR:** Rev. Jacki Belile, CPC  
Hours: 11 am—5pm (Generally) and by appointment

**OFFICE MANAGER:** Sue Kawecki  
In-Office Hours Tues & Thurs  
2:00-6:00PM  
[info@edenuccchicago.org](mailto:info@edenuccchicago.org) 773.283.5557

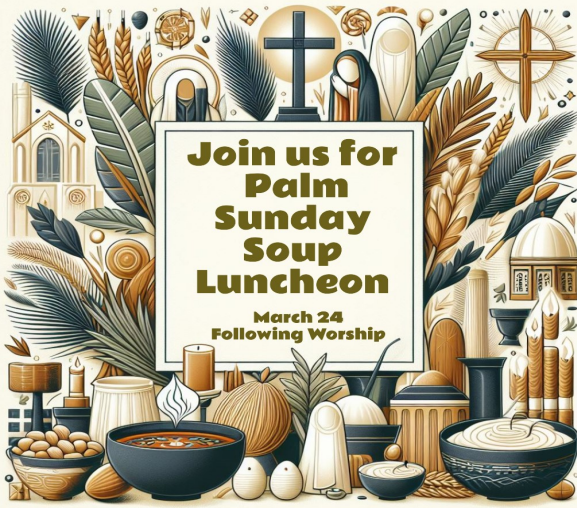
**MINISTER OF COMMUNITY CARE:**  
Sarah Foster

**BUILDING & PROGRAM HOST:** Larry Pavia

**PASTOR EMERITUS:** Rev. Dr. Steve Angel

Do you need an updated directory? If so, contact Sue at the office for an updated copy.

# FELLOWSHIP



## KEN REIMER SERVICES

Ken Reimer, a longtime member of Eden and Jefferson Park, passed away January 15, 2024. Please join family and friends in celebration of Ken Reimer's life. Memorial services will be held March 23, 11am at Daly-Leach Chapel in Hamilton, MT.



The services can be livestreamed at [www.dalyleachchapel.com/livestream](http://www.dalyleachchapel.com/livestream).

## Birthday Blessings

### MARCH

Nora Edens – 5th  
Debra Miranda – 7th  
\*Robert Lutzow – 13th  
\*Dennis Beize – 15th

*\*Note: we include in our birthday and anniversary lists the names of loved ones who have departed unless family members request that we not do so. We hope this will serve as a meaningful reminder of the "ties that bind" eternally.*



## In Memoriam

### IN MEMORY OF LAWRENCE J. PFEIFFER, SR.

August 22, 1939-January 31, 2024

We have shared in worship and prayers the news of the passing of this dear Eden friend and neighbor. We remember the faithfulness of this disciple, and all for whom he cared. We hold Phyllis, Anthony, Beth, Grace and the entire family in prayer. Larry was a devoted church and family man and we give thanks for his testimony -- beloved father, husband, grandfather and great-grandfather. A private memorial service will be held after Easter.

PLEASE KEEP THESE FRIENDS IN YOUR PRAYERS:



# GROWING TOGETHER

## FAITH-FUL FILMS THIS SEASON:

Consider these stories as you reconnect with Christ's "kingdom values."

Based on the inspiring true story of the first American saint, a nun who fought for humane treatment, better living conditions, and increased compassion for immigrant orphans at the turn of the 20th century. Contact [info@edenuccchicago.org](mailto:info@edenuccchicago.org) to get in on this March field trip.



## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

*Held 11:30am-12pm each Communion Sunday*

We've held three of these conversations to date, with each feeling a good blend of connecting and constructive conversation. An estimated 15 people have attended one or more of these opportunities to reflect themes like sharing our gifts at Eden and beyond, outreach and growth, and our mission activities (grant-funded and otherwise). It's a relaxing environment in which to learn about Eden's life, ask questions and share good ideas (without being on a committee!)

Join us April 7th to share and learn more about our grant-funded activities and funding partners in the wider church.

## MEMBERSHIP CLASSES BEING FORMED NOW

Our Spring membership classes will be held in March-April. Typically these are 2-3 sessions and include those interested in learning more, as well as other longer-time members. Contact Pastor Jacki if interested.



Consider plunging into this series as a March or April commitment, in order to take away a fresh experience of the Jesus story and its power then and now.



Pics from our Tuesday After School program-Thanks to volunteers Larry, Nora, Gwynne, Eleanor, Sarah D, Sarah F and Megan.



# GROWING TOGETHER

## “KEEPING THE HIGH WATCH” --- *Celebrating, Connecting, Completing in 2024*

“Keeping the watch” is a phrase from the Biblical book of Habakkuk which inspired and anchored me throughout 2023. I shared on this theme as I presented my pastoral report and reflection at our Annual Meeting on January 28. I felt this vibe alive in the whole fellowship that day, as we navigated the closure of one year and set course for the next. Each program report from others was Spirit-led, with a realism and a reach for whatever God has next for us.\* We started some visioning and feedback activities that have been carried through new Community Conversations. We especially treasured the Treasurer! David Angel shared his final report with us, along with perspective and encouragement worthy of the charge to “keep the high watch.”



I’m still journeying with all that it means to me personally, but it surely involves a call to stay focused on God’s character, the sufficiency of God’s grace, Christ’s redemption and our clear mandates and values in a changing and difficult world. To stay “prayed up” and in the right study and companionship so that I might stay objective and empathic in the present, and keep my “eyes on the prize” for a long-term perspective (that’s Apostle Paul in Philippians 3). Focus, but with a faith horizon! Keeping past, present and future in right relationship in my mind. This is the spirit with which I invited us to think about 2024 in terms of the 3C’s --

**Celebrating** - God! Each other! Our 110th anniversary in May! And so much more

**Connecting** - With each other, our neighbors and space partners, our extended family

**Completing** - Projects in works like cookbook, memorial garden, basement rehab (next phase of prep), policies etc.

I recently discovered a whole website with Unity Christian teachings on this at [www.highwatch.org](http://www.highwatch.org). One author there says that in high watch “one is enabled to view all things and all conditions as God sees them.” Oh, that’s my prayer!

*What does “keeping the high watch” mean to you?*

In Christ’s Peace,  
Pastor Jacki

\*For a complete packet from our business meeting, contact Sue at 773-283-5557 or [info@edenuccchicago.org](mailto:info@edenuccchicago.org)

## ALL HANDS ON DECK (for peace and joy)

We remind you that we’re a little “light” on the usher and zoom host roster. Please contact Sarah or Katie if you could occasionally help with one of these. We’re crafting rosters around people’s availability as we stitch it all together, with whatever loaves and fishes are available...

# OUTREACH



## BRIDGING JEFFERSON PARK MEETINGS *Monthly Gatherings Began in January*

We have rebooted the important coalition project entitled “Bridging Jeff Park” with monthly meetings in January and February. This is an organization that we initially convened in 2019 with the goal of pulling together the different organizations already working in the neighborhood to learn more about our history as a community and think about how we could work together on the current troubles our community is facing.

More than 15 people from the neighborhood have gathered for a time of fellowship and planning for the upcoming year. Many shared the vision of continuing to make our work intergenerational—reaching out to seniors and youth as we look at how we can aid our unhoused neighbors as well as our newest neighbors from around the world. We are just beginning again in this work, but already there is excellent energy toward this work and the possibilities that the new year brings. Please keep an eye out for updates and enhancements if you are interested in joining us!

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 19th. Dinner opens at 6pm; meeting will follow 6:30-7:30pm.

## EDEN SUPPORTS UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS

As mentioned in the above article, the Bridging Jeff Park project includes a current emphasis on wise support of the long-term unhoused and recent migrants. As of the Fall, Eden now houses funds - under the BJP project -- to assist our unhoused neighbors. At present, these funds total a little more than \$6000, which will be used for staff coordination, supplies, hospitality, education. A 2024-2025 plan and budget will be the topic of the March 19th meeting.

### S u m m e r FUN CAMP

**Monday - Friday, June 10 - June 21**  
**9:30 am - 3:00 pm, Ages 6 - 14**

Come and join us for Summer FunCamp 2024! Each day will be a new, interesting activity or experience. Limited space. Multiple Adult Staffing & Safety Protocols. Outdoor activities are subject to weather and admissions / availability. Camp drop-off at Eden UCC, 5051 W Gunnison (at LeClaire). One Full Week of Camp (5 days) @ \$130, or \$35 /day - There's a 30% Family Discount for 2nd child +. Financial assistance is available. For details, visit: [info@edenuccchicago.org](mailto:info@edenuccchicago.org)

**SPONSORED BY: EDEN UCC & REDEEMER OF CALVARY UMC**

**EDEN UCC**  
5051 Gunnison, Chicago  
(773) 283-5557  
[www.edenuccchicago.org](http://www.edenuccchicago.org)

**Redeemer of Calvary**  
Redentor del Calvario  
5001 Gunnison, Chicago  
(773) 545-8989



# OUTREACH/STEWARDSHIP



One Great Hour of Sharing is one of our special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. We will receive this mission offering by mail, on-line at our website and in church throughout the month of March.

## IT'S TIME TO SHARE

## GRANT TEAM UPDATE

We've received and utilized more than ten grants over the last seven years! Thanks to Katie Dahmer and David Angel, especially, for their long-term service on the "Grant Oversight Team." Also, to Pastor Hope Chernich for earlier years of service, and Sarah Foster's recent input. This team has worked with Pastor Jacki to discern which grants to seek, and the shape of program priorities which are a good and logical fit with our goals (and pace) of "inreach and outreach" to grow Eden's family.

The Trustees worked with Pastor recently to craft a Letter of Interest for a grant from Partners for Sacred Spaces. If we are invited to apply (and receive funds), these funds would be used for reclaiming the basement for use. It has been closed since January 2023 until we can complete foundation and tile repair, abatement, mold alleviation etc.

In March, we will be reporting and submitting a renewal request for "In Good Company" to support weekly inter-generational meal-based fellowship and learning opportunities. We are currently deciding on whether to apply for a second round of funds from ReKindle at Columbia Seminary, which supported our 2022-2023 "Embodying Sanctuary for a New Day" program which followed our rededication.

## S4 REPORT

The Sustainable Solutions Team (Sarah, Larry, Hope, Pastor Jacki, Pastor Hope Chernich and Coach Caleb) are working on the chief goal of 2024 -- "Eden Open: Embodying Sanctuary for a New Day." In a nutshell, this is all about proactive increase in space sharing that generates revenue, and all the space improvements for security, accessibility, functionality and aesthetics which make this possible. (And, which increase our own joyful experience of all our spaces!)

Thanks to Mike Dwyer for bringing new energy & ideas for publicity, and to Nora Edens & Lori Dwyer for fresh thoughts on improving the Fellowship Hall, specifically. Contact Sarah Foster for more info.

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

We will be holding a "Labors of Love" day on Saturday March 16th from 2-4pm.

In anticipation of Palm Sunday and Holy Week, we are planning to spruce up and clean the Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, the kitchen, parlor, washrooms and stage areas.

We welcome your assistance in this endeavor, and also any help in supplying rags for dusting, paper towels, window cleaner, etc for this event.

Respectfully submitted,

Trustees—

Daryl Dahmer (Chair)  
Debbie Lorenty  
Ed Lorenty



## FORGET-ME-NOT FUND

The **Forget-Me-Not Fund** is grateful for the thoughtful gifts received from Mary Abbott and Daryl Dahmer in memory of **Ken Reimer**.

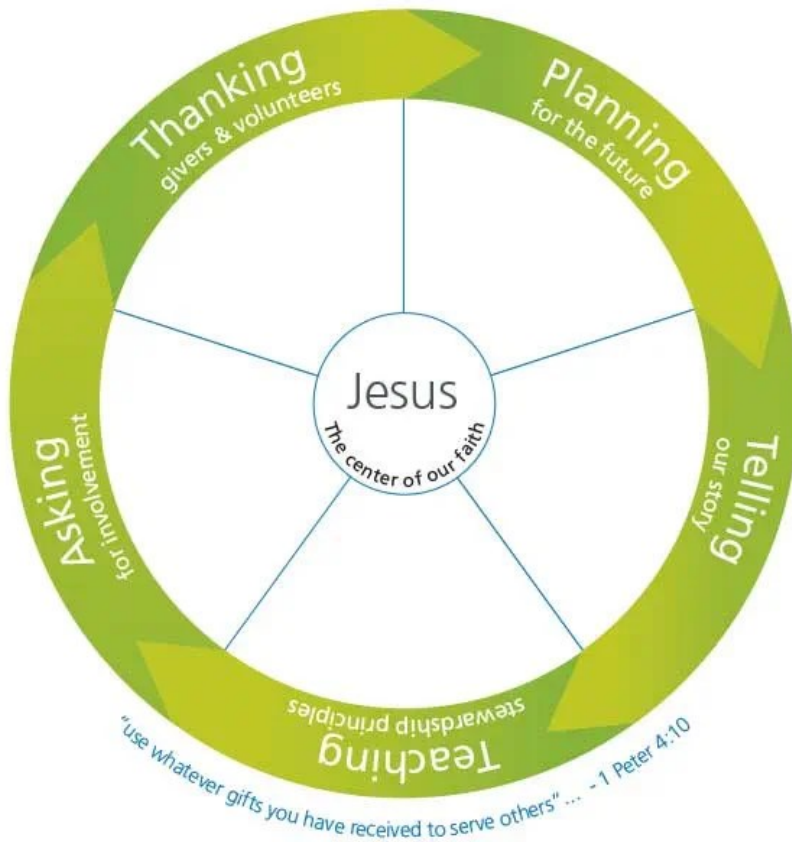
Many thanks, also, for the generous donations received in memory of **William Fleck** from the following: Mary Abbott, Richard and Christine Blumenthal, Lisa Carpino, Daryl and Penny Dahmer, Kaitlyn Dahmer, Lee and Jane Dahmer, Fritz Fleck, Marilyn Fleck, Douglas and Melissa Fleck, Eric and Mindy Schloss, American National Sprinkler and Lighting, and Taylor Precision Products.

Penny Dahmer  
FMNF Administrator



# STEWARDSHIP

## MANNA FOR THE MOMENT



I encountered this Stewardship Wheel at a recent Pastors' Conference. It's a tool published by a stewardship ministry of the Mennonite Churches, USA. I really appreciate the simplicity and whole person/whole community vibe of it! I invite YOU into conversation about how we can grow in stewardship at Eden, perhaps using this as a tool for check-in and visioning? One bit at a time, we grow. Manna for the moment!

Forward in Faith,  
Pastor Jacki



Second Century Fund opened 2022 for continued building improvements for current and new outreach. Checks to Eden UCC, memo line: Second Century Fund.



Scholarship and merit awards for Eden college students (application dependent). Checks to "Eden Scholarship Fund". Fund administrator Gene Schnarr.



Gifts support faith-based curriculum and experiential learning of youth and adults, as well as fundraising and outreach events which support these. Checks to "Eden Christian Education Committee". Fund administrators Larry Pavia and Nora Edens, CE Co-chairs.



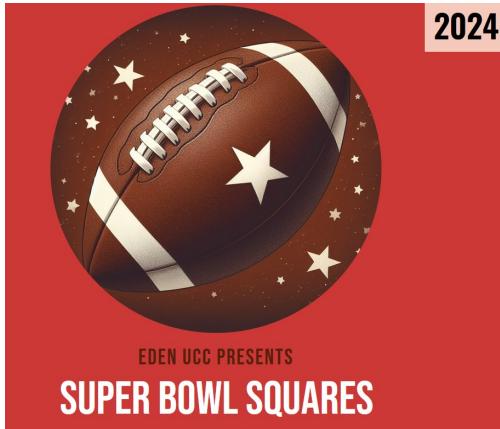
Designated gifts given in memory of loved ones from Eden and beyond, ministry space improvements such as musical instruments, landscaping, kitchen needs etc. Checks to Eden UCC, memo line: Forget-Me-Not Fund. Fund administrator Penny Dahmer.



Supports outreach programs such as R-Space After School, Summer Camps, adult learning, seniors' groups and space improvements to host these. Checks to Eden UCC, memo line: GEF- General. Contact: Treasurer David Angel.



# STEWARDSHIP



2024

## SUPERBOWL SUNDAY (AND THE SQUARES) WERE A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!

Oh what fun! The Potluck Party for Super Bowl Sunday was second to none. Thank you to all those who came out!

A special shout-out to Sarah for cultivating our Super Bowl Square website. We could not have done it without her hard work.

After all was said and done, we came away with a net gain of \$1080.

## TREASURER TRANSITION UPDATE

**We're in-between!** We've documented our financial flow processes, and contracted with Leslie Lepeska, a bookkeeper, to research and navigate a software transition and the data transition to get up and running. In the meantime, officers, staff and account signers are making sure the bills are paid, funds are designated accurately and rudimentary "old school" reports being made to Council. Thanks to David Angel for his long-distance support. An informational Zoom update will be held on Wednesday, March 20 at 8pm. The session will be recorded for sharing. Please consider attending or viewing. If you are interested in taking on some or all of the Treasurer duties this spring, or at the June 2024 election for a two-year term, please explore with Ed Thomas.

## QUEEN OF HEARTS UPDATE

*We're rolling!*

Three weeks in, and the "pot" for this 50/50 Raffle is \$1000 and growing. (Winner is the one who chooses the card which is the Queen of Hearts. All tickets discarded each Monday after drawing, so the chances start over. Complete rules at [www.edenuccchicago.org](http://www.edenuccchicago.org).)

Each Monday, we need a team of at least three Eden members and friends to join us for the 8pm drawing broadcast on Facebook Live on Eden's Facebook page. Thanks to Noel Brooks, Sheri Brooks, Ed Lorenty, Debbie Lorenty, Pastor Jacki, Patty Halloran, Eva Skowronski and Cathy Klatt for help so far. Please let us know if you can be on the roster some Monday from 7:15pm-8:15pm. Contact [info@edenuccchicago.org](mailto:info@edenuccchicago.org).

EDEN+UCC  
Eden United Church of Christ



## EDEN UCC Queen of Hearts 50/50 JACKPOT

**\$5.00 (cash only)**

DRAWINGS MONDAYS 8PM  
STARTING FEB 19

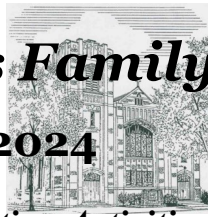


**CAN YOU FIND  
THE QUEEN?  
BUY YOUR  
TICKETS  
TODAY!**

# SAVE THE DATE

## ***In Good Company: 110 Years of Growing Eden's Family***

**MAY 17-19, 2024**

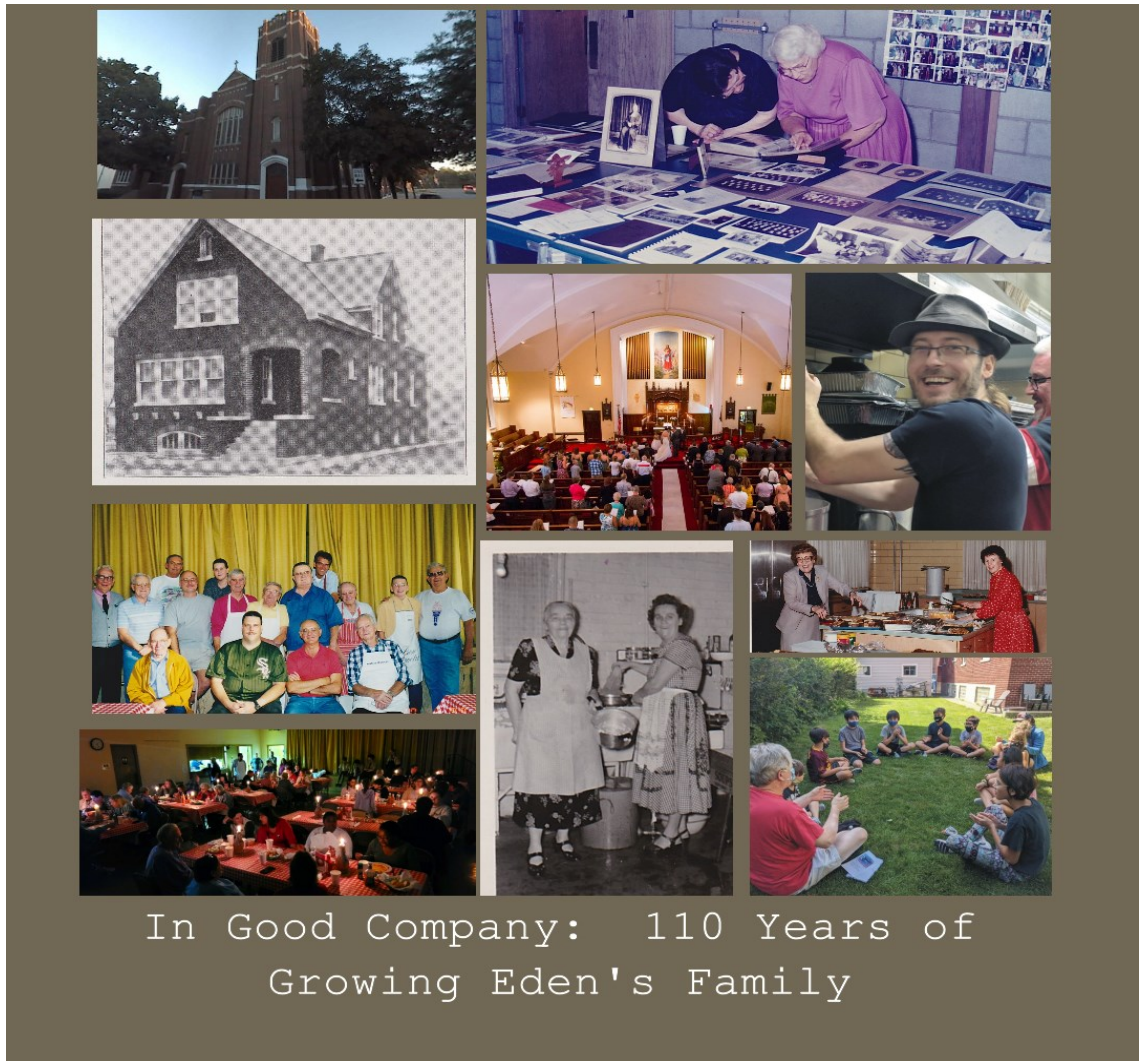


***Planning for the Anniversary Celebration Activities is underway!***

“Keep company with me,” Jesus says in Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message). What an invitation! An eternal invitation.

We’re still deepening in our understanding of what that means for our day and time. “In Good Company” is one way we’ve named our values for being together for the journey. And, the kind of people we want to be when people happen upon us. It names our dinners, grant-funded outreach and more.

It may just name the long-awaited cookbook project, as we reboot with a vision of 110 inspired recipes and other inspiring morsels!



**In Good Company: 110 Years of  
Growing Eden's Family**

***All this is on our mind as we approach our 110th Anniversary Weekend on May 17-19. Watch for a full schedule in a special mailing after Easter.***

***We invite you to share in writings or videos any special memories you have about the “good company” of the Eden companions and ancestors who have served the Lord in this place. We also encourage your attendance (or later viewing) of our worship services in April as we share Eden stories in worship.***

# CALENDAR AND EVENTS

## ONGOING

**Mondays, 8pm.** Weekly drawing for the Queen of Hearts 50/50 JACKPOT at Rabbits Bar and Grill, 4945 W Foster. See complete info on our website. Must be present to win weekly consolation prize for ticket drawn. Get your tickets today after church (\$5 each); available only at Rabbits and Eden. Ask Noel, Sheri or Jacki for more info.

**Tuesdays, 3-5pm. R-Space After School Time** for ages 6-14. See Larry or Nora for more info, and registration form at [www.edenuccchicago.org](http://www.edenuccchicago.org).

**Thursdays, Neighbors' Breakfast 9:15am. Lucky Grill.**



## UPCOMING

**March 10: Scout Sunday Celebration** in Worship and Fellowship Hour. Join us for a special worship service and fellowship hour in celebration of our mutual commitment to the support and development of these precious young people in our Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, Webelos, and Boy Scouts .

**March 16:** Labors of Love Work "Day", 2-4pm. Join us for cleaning and pruning! ( A master list will be made available in advance, in case you want to help but can't make this afternoon slot.

**March 17: 11:30am.** Baptism service with Hunt Family.

**March 19:** Bridging Jeff Park monthly meeting. 6pm dinner opens, 6:30pm meeting.



## Holy Week

**Palm Sunday/Blessing of the Palms - Sunday, March 24.** 9:30am @ Roberts Square Park (SE Corner), Process to Church. Soup Luncheon after Worship.

**Maundy Thursday, Mar. 28th,** 5:30pm Fellowship Meal with CCJP friends (at Eden); 7pm Worship, including Communion and Ritual of the Nails.

**Good Friday, March 29;** 12-7pm. Sanctuary Open for Silent Prayer. Hour of Vigil Music and Prayer with Marta Johnson, 7-8pm.

**Holy Saturday, March 30;** Easter Preparations in Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary; 9:00AM-Noon

**Easter Worship @ 8am;** Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt following.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## EDEN UCC Holy Week Schedule

### **PALM SUNDAY**

**March 24**

**BLESSING OF THE PALMS**  
9:30AM

@Roberts Square Park  
Worship Service 10AM  
Soup Luncheon after WORSHIP

### **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**March 28**

**5:30PM Fellowship Meal**  
WORSHIP includes COMMUNION

7:00 PM

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

**March 29**

**7:00PM**  
**MUSIC & PRAYER**

@ THE CROSS

### **HOLY SATURDAY**

**March 30**

**EASTER PREPARATIONS**  
**IN FELLOWSHIP HALL & SANCTUARY**  
**9AM-NOON**

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

**March 31**

**WORSHIP SERVICE 8:00AM**  
**FOLLOWED BY EASTER DINNER**  
**& EASTER EGG HUNT**