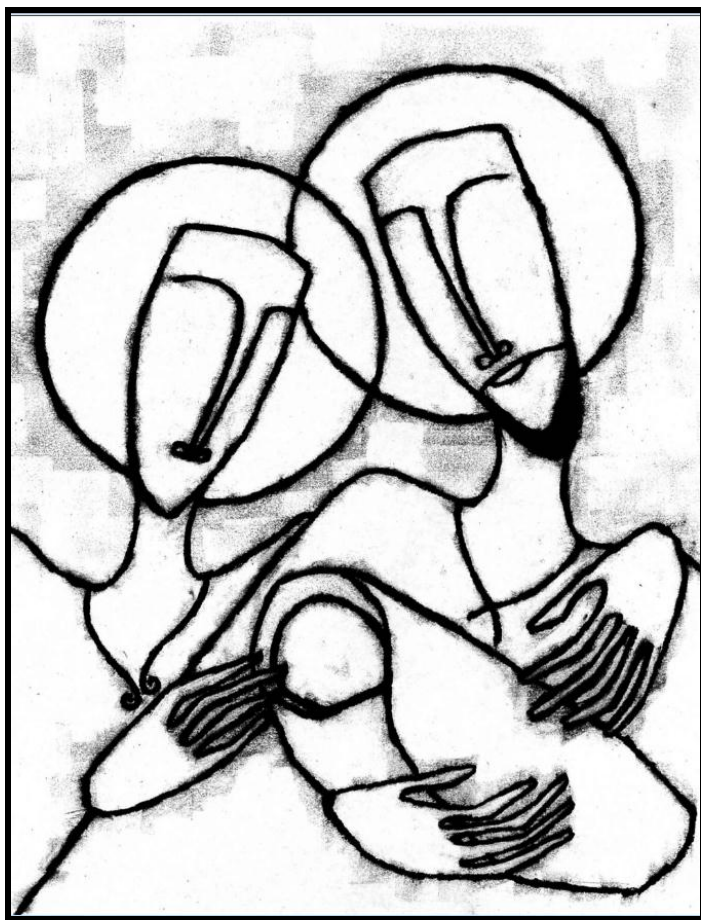


First United Church of Oak Park

25 Dec 2011 – Christmas Day



An open community united in love and justice

848 Lake Street – Oak Park, Illinois 60301

708.386.5215 www.FirstUnitedOakPark.com

Worship for Christmas Day

I must be the Virgin and give birth to God.
–Angelus Silesius (17th century German mystic)

*Please stand if you are able—**Speak in unison at the bold face areas.**
Please silence cell phones.

GATHERING MUSIC *Christmas Carol Sing* Bill Chin and Michael Surratt

INTROIT *Silent Night/Winter Snow* STILLE NACHT/Chris Tomlin
Gabrielle Worley, soloist

Gathering as God's People

**CALL to WORSHIP* Rob Leveridge

Our spirit watches for the potent moment
and in the midst of our celebrations,
God is a throbbing presence.
All of us are here.
All of us are ready.

Holy is the work now beginning.
Holy is this child's name from age to age, forever and ever.

You are here now, born among us.
You are here to birth new life in all.
We are here to birth new life.

We come to glorify and praise God for all we have seen and heard.
With the angels, let us sing Alleluia to our King!

**HYMN 30* *Born in the Night, Mary's Child* MARY'S CHILD
(blue hymnal) Gabrielle and Bill will sing the first verse and we'll join in on v. 2

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leah Fowler

In this new now, when everything has changed, we come to plead that you would be born in us today. Hear us.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy Child of Bethlehem, whose parents found no room in the inn,
may we see all who are homeless.

Holy Child of Bethlehem born in a stable,
may we see all who are living in poverty.

Holy child of Bethlehem, rejected stranger,
may we see all who are lost, alone and all who cry for loved ones.

Holy Child of Bethlehem, whom Herod sought to kill,
may we see all who live with danger and all who are persecuted.

Silence is kept...

Focusing on our own needs and lives is too easy.

Seeing only our friends and families is too easy.

Holy Child of Bethlehem, in you the eternal was pleased to dwell.

Help us we pray, to see the divine image in people everywhere. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

How silently your wondrous gift of grace is given.

You come to us, abide with us, and freely forgive us, Our Lord Emmanuel.

All thanks to you. Amen.

**PASSING*

The peace of Christ be with you.

the

And also with you.

PEACE

Please share the peace of Christ with those around you.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

TIME for SHARING

Listening for God's Word to Us

PSALTER READING

Psalm 98 (from the Common English Bible)

**Our responsive reading will include a sung refrain.*

**Sing to the LORD a new song
because he has done wonderful things!*

Sing to the LORD a new song
because he has done wonderful things!

**His own strong hand and his own holy arm
have won the victory!**

The LORD has made his salvation
widely known;

**he has revealed his righteousness
in the eyes of all the nations.**

God has remembered his loyal love
and faithfulness to the house of Israel;
**every corner of the earth has seen
our God's salvation.**

**Sing to the LORD a new song
because he has done wonderful things!*

Shout triumphantly to the LORD,
all the earth!

Be happy!

Rejoice out loud!

Sing your praises!

**Sing your praises to the LORD
with the lyre—**

with the lyre and the sound of music.

**Sing to the LORD a new song
because he has done wonderful things!*

With trumpets and a horn blast,
shout triumphantly before the LORD, the king!

**Let the sea and everything in it roar;
the world and all its inhabitants too.**

Let all the rivers clap their hands;

**let the mountains rejoice out loud altogether before the LORD
because he is coming to establish justice on the earth!**

He will establish justice
in the world rightly;
he will establish justice
among all people fairly.

**Sing to the LORD a new song
because he has done wonderful things!*

**GOSPEL
READING**

Luke 2:15-19 (NT, p. 58)

Marylen Marty-Gentile

**HYMN 53
(blue hymnal)*

What Child Is This?

GREENSLEEVES

SERMON

What Child Is This?

Marylen Marty-Gentile

Responding to God's Word

OFFERTORY

Poinciana

Bernier/Simon

**DOXOLOGY*

Gloria, Gloria

Jacques Berthier

*Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!
Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria, alleluia, alleluia!*

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

AND

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever, Amen.

Going Forth in Dedication and Service

**HYMN 356
(blue hymnal)*

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

NETTLETON

** CHARGE and BENEEDICTION*

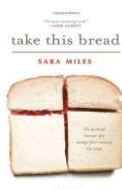
SENDING MUSIC

Christmas is Coming

Vince Guaraldi

Next Sunday, Jan. 1, 2012
11:00 am Worship –
Sermon: “What Can I Bring?”
Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

Welcome to First United



Are you new to First United? We'd like to give you a gift – no strings attached. A greeter or a pastor can give you a copy of the book *Take This Bread*, which is a story of someone who came to Christian faith as she engaged in service with poor and vulnerable members of her community. We hope this story will be a blessing to you as you grow in your own relationship with God, and we're very glad you have joined us for worship today!

All are invited to coffee hour immediately after worship in the lounge.

Our Council priority is to build relationships that Bless, Challenge and Transform... with God, with each other and with the world.

Our Vision for the Future has three core themes:

1. Moving from words to God-pleasing actions in our relationship with God.
2. Moving from individualism to intimacy in our relationship with others.
3. Moving from providing charity to changing structures of injustice in our relationship to the world.

We are a union church of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ. We seek to be an inclusive expression of Christ's body celebrating our diversity while finding our unity in Christ. We are a “More Light”/“Open and Affirming” congregation, committed to the full inclusion of GLBT people in membership and ministry, and advocating for full inclusion in political life.

Age-appropriate worship activities for children are available as you enter the Sanctuary. Children kindergarten age and younger may leave after Time for Sharing and go to Rooms 14 and 15.

Jesus Doll A Jesus doll is on the front pew near the worship baskets. Jesus is available for a child who may want to take him and sit with him during worship. Your child may need some comfort. Your child may want to tell Jesus a secret or story. Jesus is there for your child, just as Jesus is present for us.

Worship with Your Child Megan Aeschleman is pouring water into the font. Most churches don't have rivers running through their sanctuaries, so many, like First United, have fonts, beautiful basins that are stand-ins for the River Jordan where Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. Make sure your children can see today's baptism so that they can see August become part of the church, one of God's beloved children. Welcome, August!

During worship, please help reduce distraction by using restrooms located downstairs under the Lake Street entrance. Please use the side aisles and rear exits except for emergencies.

Ushers will close the doors to the sanctuary at 11:00 a.m. and ask latecomers to wait to enter until the first hymn. We wish to reduce distractions from the service for worshipers who are in the sanctuary.

Please contact one of the pastors if you have a prayer request, hospitalization or a personal or spiritual concern.

Contact our Church Council with questions or suggestions about our life together by e-mailing council@firstunitedoakpark.com.

The Deacons of the month are Pauline Geary and Natalie Nemeth. They will be available in the lounge for joys and concerns. You may send the Deacons a note by emailing deacons@firstunitedoakpark.com.

Today at First United

Today's cover art: Nativity © Jan L. Richardson, www.janrichardson.com

The art we have explored during worship is Madonna and Child by Janet MacKenzie. You may learn more about her by visiting her website www.janetmckenzie.com

Thanks to Gabrielle Worley for singing and playing with us today and to the Julian Chin Trio, Julian Chin (piano), Matt Orenstein (bass) and Jorge Leal (drums) for their jazz.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING Envision world peace! Your gift to our Christmas Offering will support the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship and the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, as well as our own peace and justice work here at First United. Please use the Christmas offering envelopes mailed to your home or those in the pew racks.

2011 FINAL PLEDGE PAYMENTS So far we are having a successful year at staying in the "black" but we are counting on members to fulfill their pledges. If you are not sure of your pledge balance please call the church office or send an e-mail to Julie O'Shea at financial@firstunitedoakpark.com.

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the light of the world.
Fill our minds with your peace, And our hearts with your love. Amen.
- Marcus Borg

Upcoming Events

CHRISTMASTIDE DEVOTIONAL SERVICES on Thursday evening Dec. 29 we will gather for simple, peaceful worship from 7:00 until 7:45 in the chapel. The service will be very simple, with singing and prayer, with guitars, piano, percussion and strings, and with a mixture of traditional hymns and praise and worship songs. In the midst of a hectic and complicated time on the calendar, this will be a time make space for calm and community. Join us! If you have questions, or want to join the group that will play the music, contact Rob – rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com.

SPIRITUAL RETREAT JAN. 7, 2012 Take time to discern your values and re-examine priorities. You are invited to a spiritual retreat on Sat., Jan. 7, at Dominican University's Priory Campus, led by Julie R. Harley. "Always We Begin Again" is our theme from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm. Register by emailing [jrjrh@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com). See the blue bulletin insert, which also describes our Jan. 8 Epiphany Concert.

FRANK YAMADA GUEST LECTURE ON JAN. 8 We welcome Frank Yamada, president of McCormick Theological Seminary, as our guest teacher for Adult Ed on Jan. 8, and also as our preacher that day. Dr. Yamada's class is called "The Difference Culture Makes in Biblical Interpretation." The class will be held in the chapel at 9:30 am. He will lead us through contributions from African American, Latino/a, and Asian American readers of the biblical text. We will also explore what it means to engage the Bible across differences of culture and race/ethnicity, and religion.

GOV. QUINN TO MEET WITH COMMUNITY RENEWAL SOCIETY SUPPORTERS We would like to bring 50 members of First United to a Martin Luther King Day Assembly from 9:30 am to noon on Sat., Jan. 16, at Kingdom Baptist Church in Austin (301 N. Central Ave.). Gov. Quinn and other state legislators will be there to hear from our youth and adults about justice priorities, including education funding reform, affordable rental housing and job opportunities for ex-offenders. To register, see

Sarah or Erin Harmon in the lounge or contact Julie (jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com).

WOMEN'S RETREAT FEB. 3-5, 2012, "COME OUT AND PLAY" Sign up for our annual Women's Retreat at Siena Center in Racine, WI. Rev. Mieke Vandersall, Director of Presbyterian Welcome in New York, will lead an exploration of the theology of play. The retreat begins on Friday night and ends at 1 pm Sunday, and it is held jointly with Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church. Cost is \$160 and financial scholarships are available by contacting Leah Fowler. For questions or registration info, contact Jackie Eckholm at 708-386-5478 or jmeckholm@comcast.net.

Weekly Calendar

SUN. DEC. 25

Worship 11 am

MON. DEC. 26

TUE. DEC. 27

Families Anonymous 7:30 pm

WED. DEC. 28

AA Marion Group 8 pm

THUR. DEC. 29

Christmastide Music and Prayer Service
7 pm

FRI. DEC. 30

Peace Prayer Vigil 7 pm

SAT. DEC. 31

Inner Peace World Peace 8:30 am

SUN. JAN. 1 – NEW YEAR'S DAY

Adult Ed 9:30 am

Worship 11 am

Julie R. Harley, *Lead Pastor*, jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com

Leah Fowler, *Associate Pastor*, lfowler@firstunitedoakpark.com

Rob Leveridge, *Associate Pastor*, rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com

Marylen Marty-Gentile, *Director of Children & Family Ministries*,
marylen@firstunitedoakpark.com

Rick Steele, *Pastoral Intern*, rick.steele@4Rmanagement.com

William Chin, *Director of Music Ministries*, bill@firstunitedoakpark.com

Michael Surratt, *Interim Organist*, msurratt@sbcglobal.net

Adam Wilson, *Office Manager*, office@firstunitedoakpark.com

Fred Henders, *Operations Manager*, operations@firstunitedoakpark.com

Julie O'Shea, *Financial Manager*, financial@firstunitedoakpark.com

Joan White, *Nursery School Director*, jwhite@firstunitedschool.com

Church phone – 708.386.5215 / Church fax – 708.386.7480

Office e-mail – office@firstunitedoakpark.com

Church Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8am – 4pm

Walk-In Ministry Hours: Monday – Saturday 10am-11am

Food Pantry Hours: Sat. 9-noon, Wed. 3:30-5pm except 1st Wednesdays 7-8:30pm

