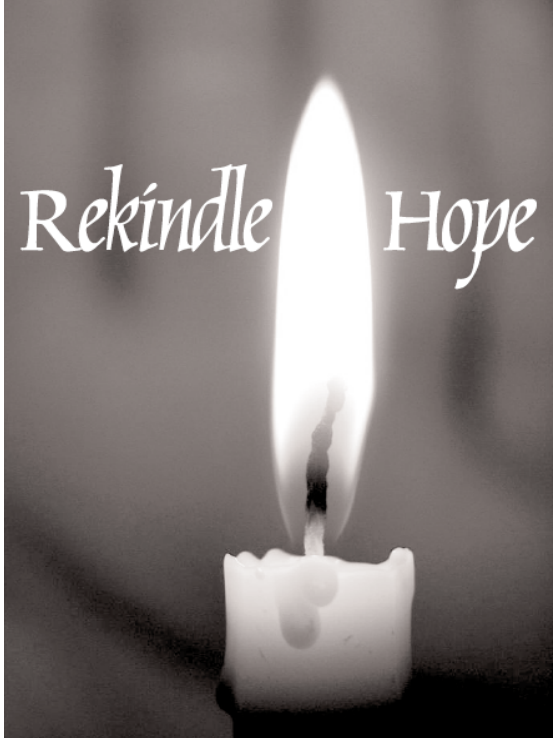


# First United Church of Oak Park

27 Nov 2011

First Sunday of Advent



An open community united in love and justice

848 Lake Street - Oak Park, Illinois 60301

708.386.5215 [www.FirstUnitedOakPark.com](http://www.FirstUnitedOakPark.com)

**Preparing for Worship**

“I have found it very important in my own life to let go of my wishes and start hoping. It is only when I was willing to let go of wishes that something really new, something beyond my own expectations, could happen to me.”

– Henri Nouwen

## Gathering as God’s People

GATHERING MUSIC

Sleepers, Wake!

J. S. BACH

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

Please silence cell phones.

### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Let all mor-tal flesh keep\_\_\_ sil - ence And with fear and  
tremb - ling\_\_\_ stand; Pon-der noth-ing earth - ly\_\_\_ mind - ed  
For with bles-sing in his\_\_\_ hand Christ our God to earth de -  
scend - - - eth Our full hom-age to de - mand.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, And with fear and trembling stand;

Ponder nothing earthly minded, For with blessing in his hand  
Christ our God to earth descendeth, Our full homage to demand.  
Be quiet...and listen to Isaiah’s words.

If only you would tear open the heavens and come down.

Mountains would quake before you like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil...

From ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any god but you, who acts on behalf of those who wait.

We wait.

**We sit in the darkness and wait for the Light's return.**

We light one candle to remind us of God's light which has come to all of us through Jesus Christ.

**We open our hearts to that light, and ask for help to shine with the brilliance of love.**

All of our waiting is a waiting for God.

**All of our waiting is a waiting for God.**

God of our hearts, we wait for you alone

**God of our hearts we wait for you alone.**

**\*HYMN 2**

HYFRYDOL

(blue hymnal)

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

**CALL to CONFESSION**

Gentile

Marylen Marty-

How can we stand in the presence of God? Let us confess those places where we need to grow to prepare for Christ to come into our lives.

**PRAYER of CONFESSION**

**God of the loving heart, we confess before you those places in our hearts where we have refused you entrance: people we have refused to love, habits we never get around to changing, good things we have left undone, and ways in which we hurt you, ourselves, and others.**

Silence

**Come to us in the light of your Christ. Shine on those places we have hidden from you. Show us new ways to live. Sweep clean the rooms of our hearts, that Christ may find a home among us. Be known among us now and forever! Amen.**

**DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS:**

This is the good news in Jesus Christ. We can stand before God, not through our own goodness, but through God's great kindness to us.

Rejoice and be glad, for God comes to you! Amen.

**\*PASSING**

the

**PEACE**

around you.

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

Please share the peace of Christ with those

**OUR LIFE TOGETHER**

Rob Leveridge

**TIME for SHARING**

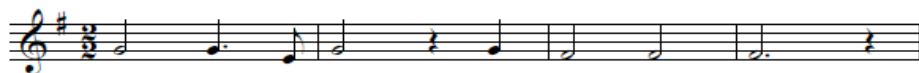
Marylen Marty-Gentile

## Listening for God's Word to Us

**SONG of ILLUMINATION**

Wait For The Lord

*Sing three times*



Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.



Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

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**A READING from the  
PROPHET**

Isaiah 64:1-9 (OT, p. 694)

Marylen Marty-Gentile

**A READING from the  
Julie R. Harley  
GOSPEL**

Mark 13:24-37 (NT, p. 50)

**SERMON**  
Harley

“Rekindle Hope”

Julie R.

**OFFERTORY:**

“Keep Your Lamps!”

ANDRE THOMAS

(Peter Todd, drum)

(Please fill out pink prayer cards. The Fourth Sunday offering will support our Pastoral Services

Fund, which assists church members in need.)

**\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;**

(Old Hundredth)

**Praise Christ all people here below;**

**Praise Holy Spirit evermore;**

**Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

### The Sacrament of Communion

## THE INVITATION

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

## SANCTUS

### Holy, Holy, Holy Lord

LAND OF REST  
arr. Richard Proulx

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Bles - sed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: Richard T. Proulx, © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-714599.

The pastor will pray, concluding with: “Great is the mystery of faith.”

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!

## PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

## SHARING THE ELEMENTS

Communion will be served by intinction. The ushers will guide you to the communion servers by the middle aisles. Take a piece of bread, dip it in the grape juice, and eat. Gluten-free bread is available in the glass bowls in the baskets.

## COMMUNION MUSIC

J. S. BACH

Savior of the Nations, Come

**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.**

**\*HYMN 9**

VENI EMMANUEL  
(blue hymnal)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

## **Going Forth in Dedication and Service**

**SENDING MUSIC**

J. S. BACH

Savior of the Nations, Come

**Next Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011**

**11:00 am Worship – Second Sunday of Advent**

**Sermon: “What’s Love Got to Do with It?”**

**Scripture Reading: 2 Peter 3:8–15a, Isaiah 40:1–11**

## **Welcome to First United**

take this bread

SARA MILES



**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.**

**The Wildly Important Goal** of First United Church is “creating and maintaining a framework that nourishes the spiritual welfare of the congregation.”

**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.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:deacons@firstunitedoakpark.com).

## **Today at First United**

**Alternative Christmas Store.....Open Today 9:30–10:45 am and 12 noon – 1pm** Thank you for shopping at the pre-Thanksgiving Sale on November 20th. Our full sale opens today and continues for the 4 weeks of Advent. This year, we have several **new** items, along with old favorites. We ask you to rethink your shopping, what you really need, what those around you really need, and to support our mission partners for another year. As our congregation continues its focus on relationships that bless, challenge and transform, please help to transform the lives of others, with purchases/donations from the ACS this year! It is truly a gift that keeps on giving. As a reminder, our Mission Partners represented are: Colores del Pueblo (Guatemalan goods), Equal Exchange ( fair trade coffee & chocolate), SERRV (artisans from around the world), Church World Service, Mamie & Richard (Columbia), Erie House pecans, Palestinian Olive Oil, OPRF Food Pantry, Walk-in-Ministry, and PADS.

**Our liturgy comes from Touch Holiness**, edited by Ruth Duck and Maren Tirabassi.

**Our Fourth Sunday offering this month will support the Pastoral Services Fund.** Our pastors use this fund to provide emergency financial assistance to church members in need. Please give generously; we have expended all funds this year.

**The flowers in the sanctuary today** were donated by Glenyss Gilliam in loving memory of Gwen Gilliam.

**Recognition for Judy Schoenbaum-Wood:** Please sign the large card in the lounge for Judy Schoenbaum-Wood, our office manager for the last 16 years, who is going through chemotherapy. We are collecting a cash gift to honor Judy for her long years of service. To contribute, please give cash or a check payable to “First United” before Nov. 30 to Julie O’Shea, our financial manager.

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**

**Advent Devotional Services:** Thursday evenings in December we will gather for simple, peaceful worship from 7:00 until 7:45 in the chapel. The services will be very simple, with singing and prayer. We will have guitars, piano, percussion and strings, and share a mixture of Advent 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 Pastor Rob – [rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com).

**Celebrate the season with Evening Division** on Thursday, Dec. 1. Sandy Jefferson, First United member and outstanding tenor, presents Christmas carols and music. Wassail bowl get-together is at 5:30pm, dinner at 6:00 and program begins at 7:00. Call Ruth Ashman at 708-366-3689 for dinner reservations or sign up at the Elders Desk.

**“Midwinter’s Tales” WIM & OPFT benefit** Walk-In Ministry and Oak Park Festival Theatre present their 5<sup>th</sup> annual benefit event: Midwinter’s Tales of peace, joy and hope on 12/3 at 7pm & 12/4 at 5pm at Unity Temple. Local playwright Belinda Bremner draws on such diverse sources as Wind in the Willows, the landmark social work of Jane Addams, and Yiddish folk tales of Hanukah to illuminate the spirit of caring and giving we feel as we express our diversity of beliefs. Refreshments & Raffle follow the performance. Advance tickets \$20 adults, \$15 students & seniors (\$5 more at the door) at [OakParkFestival.com](http://OakParkFestival.com) or by call WIM at 708-386-1946.

**Visit to the Oriental Institute Dec. 3** Professor Ted Hiebert of McCormick Seminary offered to lead us through the archeological artifacts from the period of the Minor Prophets at the Oriental Institute. We will meet Ted at the Institute at 1155 E. 58<sup>th</sup> Street at 10:30 am on Dec. 3. To carpool, please meet in the lobby at 7575 Lake St., the lobby of the Ronnow condo at 9:45 am (First United’s parking lot will be full.) Reservations are being made at the Cedars Mediterranean Kitchen at 53<sup>rd</sup> and Woodlawn for lunch before returning to Oak Park. There is a sign up sheet on the desk in the

lounge to indicate if you desire to go to the Oriental Institute and if you desire to be included in the lunch reservation.

**Adult Education Dec. 4 (9:30 am)**

**Bible Study** continues on the Minor Prophets– newcomers welcome  
**Family Life topic: 2011, the year Baby Boomers turn 65** Chris Damon leads this class to discuss implications of this milestone for Baby Boomers on our healthcare system, and ways we as Christians can prepare.

**The Holiday Food and Gift Basket Program needs sponsors** to buy Christmas presents for needy families again this year. You can take a gift tag for a family or just one individual. Sign up before and after church in November and buy gifts, to be returned wrapped and tagged, on Sunday, Dec. 4. Questions? Look for Sher Watts Spooner by the little Christmas tree in the lounge on Sundays in November, starting today; call her at 383-4408; or e-mail her at [sandaspooner@comcast.net](mailto:sandaspooner@comcast.net).

**Midpoint Christmas Celebration: All 30's, 40's and 50's JOIN US** for an evening of fun and fellowship **Friday, December 9th at 7:30 p.m.** celebrating the Christmas holiday! In the spirit of giving we will collect non-perishable food items and/or cash donations for the food pantry. We hope you will join us for optional caroling and fun with your beverage of choice. Location: Home of Jane Barker and Melinda Haag 7426 Iowa St. River Forest, Illinois 708.366.2541

**PrimeTime's Fourth Annual Carol Sing** – Join us on December 9 from 7 to 8:30 PM in the church lounge for a great beginning to the Christmas season! Rev. Julie Harley will share Christmas readings and poems, and we will sing many of our favorite Christmas carols. Afterward, we will enjoy refreshments and fellowship with our friends. As always, those who are in their 50's are welcome to join in the festivities! Please call or e-mail Anna Sadowski at (708)386-7896 or [annahsadowski@gmail.com](mailto:annahsadowski@gmail.com) if you think you'll be able to join us, or just stop by!

**Hold the date!** Sing We Joyous, First United's exuberant Christmas party, returns at 7:30 pm on Saturday evening, Dec 17. Mark your calendar now for an evening out with the family, or with your adult ed class, or your knitting group, or your fellow deacons!

**The First United Children's Choir!** Singers in third through eighth grades are invited to join us for rehearsals in the half hour immediately following the Sunday service. We sing in worship four times a year and have lots of fun learning great music and making friends. Contact Bill Chin for more information, or just come to our rehearsal in the choir room.

**Green Giving Cards are now in the pew racks.** Offerings are a sacred act of worship -- an opportunity to give back a portion of all we have received from God -- in gratitude and joy. The green giving cards in the pew racks provide a way for everyone to participate in today's offering -- either by celebrating having already given for the current period or making a credit or debit card donation. Please use these cards when you are not bringing an offering of cash or check --or in addition if appropriate.

**Kids Kloset Donations** In an effort to assist families with limited resources, we are establishing a free children's closet. We are collecting sturdy, gently-used, clean children's clothes (outerwear, backpacks, footwear & like-new toys). Donations can be dropped off M-F 9am-4pm at First United, 848 Lake St. Distribution will be at First United on Saturdays 9:30-11am. We'd also welcome volunteers to work Wed. or Sat. am.

**Spiritual Retreat Jan. 7, 2012:** Take time to discern your values and re-examine your 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, and the cost is \$20 per person. Register by emailing [jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com).

### **Year End Stock Transfers/IRA Contributions**

If you are planning a year end stock transfer please make it by December 15 so our investment company can complete the transaction and get the cash to the church by year end. Also, the IRA withdrawal contribution to charitable organizations tax incentive from the IRS (for those at least 70 ½ years old) has been extended through December 31, 2011. If you have an IRA that you are drawing from and can take advantage of this type on contribution to the church we will gladly receive it! To make this type of gift have your IRA make the check out directly to First United Church of Oak Park. Remember to let Julie O'Shea know about transfers when they have been initiated and if the proceeds are to be directed to the building loan or your pledge.

## **Weekly Calendar**

**Sun., Nov. 27**

Alternative Christmas Store  
9 - 11 am & 12 noon - 1:30 pm

**Mon., Nov. 28**

Commission on Prep. of Ministry  
9 am - 3:30 pm  
Hanging of the Greens Rehearsal 7  
pm  
Recovery Group 7:30 pm

**Tue., Nov. 29**

Families Anonymous 7:30 pm

**Wed., Nov.**

**30**  
Bible Study 11 am  
Hanging of the Greens Rehearsal 6  
pm  
Adult Choir 7 pm  
AA Marion Group 8 pm

**Thur., Dec. 1**

Clustor Tutoring 6:30 pm  
Parenting Skills Training 6:30 pm

**Fri., Dec. 2**

Peace Prayer Vigil 7 pm

**Sat., Dec. 3**

Hanging of the Greens Rehearsal 8  
am  
Inner Peace/World Peace 8:30 am  
Dances of Universal Peace 1 pm

**Sun., Dec. 4**

Alternative Christmas Store 9-11  
am & 12 noon-1:30 pm  
Education for All 9:30 am  
Worship 11 am  
FUSH/FUJI Youth Groups 6 pm  
Deacon Meeting 6 pm

Julie R. Harley, Lead Pastor, [jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Leah Fowler, Associate Pastor, [lfowler@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lfowler@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Rob Leveridge, Associate Pastor, [rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Marylen Marty-Gentile, Director of Children & Family Ministries,  
[marylen@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:marylen@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Rick Steele, Pastoral Intern, [rick.steele@4Rmanagement.com](mailto:rick.steele@4Rmanagement.com)

William Chin, Director of Music Ministries, [bill@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:bill@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Michael Surratt, Interim Organist, [msurratt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:msurratt@sbcglobal.net)

Adam Wilson, Office Manager, [office@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:office@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Fred Henders, Operations Manager, [operations@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:operations@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Julie O'Shea, Financial Manager, [financial@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:financial@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Joan White, Nursery School Director, [jwhite@firstunitedschool.com](mailto:jwhite@firstunitedschool.com)

Church phone - 708.386.5215 / Church fax - 708.386.7480

Office e-mail - [office@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:office@firstunitedoakpark.com)

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

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