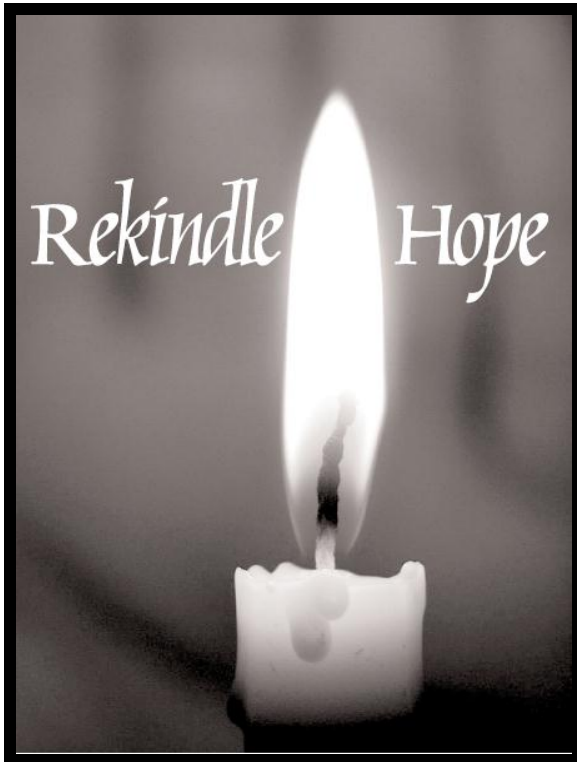


First United Church of Oak Park

11 Dec 2011

Third Sunday of Advent



An open community united in love and justice

848 Lake Street – Oak Park, Illinois 60301

708.386.5215 www.FirstUnitedOakPark.com

Preparing for Worship

"Lord, oil the hinges of our hearts' doors that they may swing gently and easily to welcome your coming." -Prayer from New Guinea

Gathering as God's People

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

GATHERING MUSIC *A Prelude to the Quempas Carol*

LUDWIG LENELE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Erik Guevara and Micah Easty

Verse 3 of *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

At his feet the six - winged ser - aph Che - ru - bim, with
5 sleep - less eye, Veil their fac - es to the pre - sence
10 As with cease - less voice they cry, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le -
15 lu - - - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Lord, Most High!

We wait and listen as God calls us to action:

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me
because the Lord has anointed me.
God has sent ME*

*to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim release for the captives
and liberation for prisoners,
to provide for Zion's mourners,
to give them a crown in place of ashes,
oil of joy in place of mourning,
a mantle of praise in place of discouragement. (from Isaiah 61:1-3)*

We light a third candle to remind us of the light of justice in the prophet's words.

We open our hearts to the light of justice, and ask for help to create a just world.

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 104*

We Hail You God's Anointed

ELLACOMBE

(black hymnal)

CALL to CONFESSION

Rick Steele

Hope, joy, forgiveness, life - these are the gifts God offers to us in this season of preparation and anticipation. But too often, we put God's love to the test, with our foolish behavior and unwise choices. Let us confess, out loud and in silence, the lives we lead, praying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Anointer of righteousness: you whisper songs about mercy to us, but we would rather rejoice in another's misery. When we would dam off the Spirit with our shoulds and shallnots, you knock down our words, so grace can flood into the world. While we gossip about the foolishness of our friends, you testify to us of their compassion and kindness.

Forgive us, Giver of grace. Salvation is your gift to us, not

something we can buy on sale. Joy is that seed you plant deep within us, so we may share the harvest with all we meet. Hope is the healing offered to our brokenness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This is the good news: God anoints us with grace and peace, not so we can become better than others, but so we can be the servants of a hurting and hungry world.

We will go, taking the good news with us, testifying to all we meet, with our words, our hearts, our lives. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. 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

Julie R. Harley

TIME for SHARING

Rob Leveridge

Listening for God's Word to Us

SONG of ILLUMINATION *Wait For The Lord*

Sing three times

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major and 3/2 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song, with lyrics: "Wait for the Lord, whose day is near." The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with lyrics: "Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!" The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/2 time signature. The notes are: Staff 1: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). Staff 2: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter).

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A READING from the
PROPHET

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (OT, p. 691)

Marylen Marty-Gentile

A READING from the
NEW TESTAMENT

John 1:6-8, 19-28 (NT, p. 91)

Leah Fowler

*HYMN 115
(black hymnal)

“The Baptist Shouts on Jordan’s Shore”

WINCHESTER NEW

SERMON

“Expectant”

Leah Fowler

Responding to God’s Word

OFFERTORY:

This is the Record of John

ORLANDO GIBBONS

(Please fill out pink prayer cards. We will receive the Christmas Offering as well as our regular gifts)

*DOXOLOGY
(Old Hundredth)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ all people here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE
and

Julie R. Harley

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 116
(black hymnal)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

*CHARGE and BENEEDICTION

SENDING MUSIC

Noël

LOUIS CLAUDE DAQUIN

Next Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011
11:00 am Worship – Fourth Sunday of Advent
Sermon: “Better Angels”
Scripture Reading: Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-56

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.

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.

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

ABOUT TODAY'S WORSHIP The Prayer of Confession was written by Thom M. Shuman.

TODAY'S OFFERTORY MUSIC from the Jacobean composer Orlando Gibbons sets the text in the form of a verse anthem (as opposed to a full anthem, which would have no solo passages).

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.

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS STORE If the ACS is new to you, 100% of our proceeds are returned to the local community and world wide organizations we sponsor, including donations made to Church World Service and the Walk-in-Ministry, as well as the artisans and fair trade organizations that provide the products on our tables. We ask you to rethink your shopping, shop at the ACS, 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! Selling hours are 9:30-10:55am, and 12noon - 12:30pm.

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, with guitars, piano, percussion and strings, and with 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 Rob – rleveridge@firstunitedoakpark.com.

ADULT EDUCATION DEC. 18 (9:30 AM)

Care for the Caregiver This 2-part series (Dec. 11 and 18) is taught by Ryan Whitmore, from WisdomFlame, a non-profit that offers care and support for caregivers of loved ones. This seminar will educate and empower people facing long-term care decisions and their loved ones who care for them. It will offer resources to support caregivers who face complicated situations and honor the legacies of elders as sources of wisdom.

Bible Study of the Minor Prophets meets in the Conference Room; newcomers are welcome!

THIS SATURDAY, DEC 17, DON'T MISS *SING WE JOYOUS*, First United's annual Christmas party extraordinaire! Come at 6:30 to nibble treats and browse the unique silent auction items, then at 7:30 enjoy an evening of glorious music, dances, Christmas carol sing-along, and WFMT's Carl Grapentine narrating Dylan Thomas's "A Child's Christmas in Wales," all surrounded by twinkling lights and candle light. And what will the "12 Days of Christmas" extravaganza be this year?!? Purchase all tickets at the door. Adults \$20, seniors/students \$15, families \$50. Free child care.

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. The cost is \$20 per person. Register by emailing jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com.

YEAR END STOCK TRANSFERS/IRA CONTRIBUTIONS

If you are planning a year end stock transfer please make it by Dec. 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 of 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.

Christmas Eve Services, Sat., Dec. 24

5:00 pm Christmas Pageant and Communion, led by our Church School

8:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion Service with guest musicians

11:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion Service with the sanctuary choir, liturgical dance and young adult readers

Please arrive 15 minutes early for a musical prelude at each service.

Christmas Day Service, Sun., Dec. 25

(no education classes)

11:00 am Christmas Worship – “What Child Is This?”

Luke 2:15-19

New Year’s Day Service, Sun., Jan. 1

9:30 am “Spiritual Practices in the New Year”

led by Julie in the Chapel

11:00 am New Year’s Day Worship

The Church offices will be closed on Monday, Dec. 26, Friday, Dec. 30, and Monday, Jan. 2.

Weekly Calendar

SUN., DEC. 11

Alternative Christmas Store
9–11 am & 12 –1:30 pm
FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
FUSH/FUJI Youth Groups 6 pm

MON., DEC. 12

FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Youth Board Meeting 7 pm
Planned Giving Committee 7 pm

TUE., DEC. 13

Communications Committee 8 am
FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Finance Meeting 7 pm
Shawl Ministry 7 pm
Youth Committee 7:30 pm

WED., DEC. 14

Bible Study 11 am
FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Adult Choir 7 pm

THUR., DEC. 15

FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Cluster Tutoring 6:30 pm
Advent Music and Prayer Service 7 pm
Sing We Joyous Dress Rehearsal 7 pm

FRI., DEC. 16

Sing We Joyous setup
FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Peace Prayer Vigil 7 pm
Christmas Carol-Sing-Along 7 pm

SAT., DEC. 17

Inner Peace World Peace 8:30 am
FUSH Cookie Bake 3:30-7:30 pm
Sing We Joyous Auction 4:30 pm - 9 pm
Sing We Joyous! 6 pm

SUN., DEC. 18

Alternative Christmas Store 9–11, 12-1:30
FUSH Cookie Bake 9 am
Education for All 9:30 am
Worship 11 am
Pageant Rehearsal 12 noon – 2 pm
FUSH/FUJI Youth Group 6 pm

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