

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

24 DECEMBER 2017

11 P.M. CHRISTMAS EVE



*An open community united in love and justice*

# PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

“God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If He gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it.”

Pope Francis

\*Please stand in body or spirit. Please silence cell phones.

## GATHERING MUSIC

*Three German Christmas Carols*

Helmut Walcha

*Rejoice, Jerusalem!*

Thomas P. Gouin

Rejoice, Jerusalem! Jesus is born in Bethlehem. Heaven and earth now join to sing: Christ is the Lord, our newborn King.

After the journey, Mary lay; she bore the Christ in manger hay, Joseph, her husband meek and mild, guarded and watched the holy child.

Angels sang praises in the sky: Glory and praise to God on high! Praising the Lord for Jesus' birth, they sang of peace to all on earth.

Shepherds who watched their flocks by night looked up and saw a radiant light. Angels appeared and said to them, “Christ has been born in Bethlehem.”

Then they were struck with sudden fright as they were bathed in heavenly light. “Fear not!” the angel said to them; quickly they went to Bethlehem.

When they arrived they found the Child, sleeping beside the Virgin mild. Praising the son that God did choose, they ran to tell the wondrous news.

Magi from eastern land afar followed the brightly shining star. Bearing their gifts of precious worth, they worshipped Christ, the Lord of earth.

*Three Christmas Carols*

Paul Manz

*Verbum caro factum est*

15<sup>th</sup> Century English Carol

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Alleluia.

The Lord has made known his salvation. Alleluia.

Nigh to me, he called unto me, thou art my father. Alleluia.

## OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Please sign and pass the connections pad.

Deborah Kapp

# GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

## \*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

## \*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 41

Blue hymnal

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ADESTE FIDELES

## LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

The Burkland Family

We light a candle of hope:

**Hope for ourselves, and for God's beloved world.**

We light a candle of peace:

**Peace in our hearts, and on earth.**

We light a candle of joy:

**Joy to the world, and within our whole being.**

We light a candle of love:

**God's love for us and for all creation.**

Isaiah prophesied, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

Those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them has light shined."

We believe these promises are realized by a birth in Bethlehem.

We light the Christ candle in celebration of Jesus' birth:

**For a child has been born for us, a son given to us.**

**Glory to God in the highest.**

## \*CAROL

*One Candle is Lit*

CRADLE SONG

**Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play,**

**Where evil is banished and faith takes the day.**

**A babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes.**

**One candle is lit for God's loving surprise.**

## \*PASSING THE PEACE

Britt Cox

Jesus Christ, God's loving surprise, is our peace.

Let us share his peace with each other.

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

## CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (sung)

**Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

# THE GOOD NEWS IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

As we hear the good news and sing, please remain seated. Hymns are in the blue hymnal.

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Lydia Mulkey

**You surprised a world, O God, by coming not in clashing thunder or flashing lights, but in the quiet beauty of a child's face. As we hear again the story Jesus' birth, open our hearts and minds to your Spirit. Help us to understand the mystery of the love that Jesus embodies, and grant us the grace to share that love when and where it is needed most. We pray in the name of our brother, the babe in the manger, Jesus the Christ. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON	Isaiah 11: 1-9	
HYMN 48	<i>Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming</i>	ES IST EIN' ROS'
SECOND LESSON	Luke 2:1-7	Jake Levin
HYMN 25	<i>Away in a Manger</i>	CRADLE SONG
THIRD LESSON	Luke 2:8-20	
MEDITATION	One Candle is Lit	Deborah Kapp
HYMN 38	<i>It Came Upon the Midnight Clear</i> (vs. 1-2)	CAROL
FOURTH LESSON	John 1: 1-5, 14	Britt Cox
HYMN 31	<i>Hark! The Herald Angels Sing</i>	MENDELSSOHN

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Offerings are a sacred act of worship. We invite you to use the Christmas Offering envelopes in the pew rack to make a contribution, which supports the mission of First United.

### OFFERTORY

*Resonet in laudibus*

Z. Randall Stroope

Ring out in praise and joyful acclaim to the faithful in Zion: the one whom Mary bore has appeared. That which Gabriel foretold has been fulfilled: eia, eia. A virgin has given birth to God, as He wished in His divine mercy. This day appeared in Israel a king born of the virgin Mary.

### \*DOXOLOGY FOR CHRISTMAS

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God whose Dawn transfigures night;  
Whose Daystar shines for us on high,  
Whose Spirit brings into our sight  
The hope to which our world draws nigh. Amen.**

### BIDDING PRAYER

Deborah Kapp

### 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

## \*LIGHTING OF ALL CANDLES

Britt Cox

Christ, the light of the world, gives each one of us light  
so that we too may shine with gratitude, hope and love.  
Receive the light that comes to you:  
It comes from the Christ candle,  
but it reaches you only through our neighbors.  
Receive the light from a brother or sister in Christ.  
Hold the light, enjoy the light, and be thankful.

## \*HYMN 60

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

STILLE NACHT

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born."**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light;  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels let us sing,  
Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.**

## \*CHRIST AMONG US

Lydia Mulkey

Christ among us, Light of the World, heal our brokenness and bring us to wholeness. Ease our pain and bring us hope, strength and life. Give us a new heart, new hope and a new song, so that our prayers and deeds may be one. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Rejoice, believe and follow. Blow out your candles now, but take the light and love of Christ with you out into the world.

## \*HYMN 40

*Joy to the World!*

ANTIOCH

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing...**

**2. Joy to the world! The Savior reigns:  
Let us our songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy...*Continued on next page***

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found...

4. He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love...

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Deborah Kapp

**East:** May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth,  
fill you with joy and make you heralds of the gospel.

**West:** May Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness, who comes with healing in his wings,  
fill you with the peace that passes all understanding.

**All:** May Almighty God, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit  
Hold us forever close.

May God prosper the work of our hands,  
And may God bless us - every one - now and forever.

**SENDING MUSIC**

*In Dulci Jubilo*

J. S. Bach

**HANDBELL RINGERS:** Lura Honderich, Sophie Kerr, Adam, Kregg and Paul Raducha

**NEW YEAR'S EVE STICKY CHURCH.** December 31 - 11 a.m. in Centennial Hall

Start the year with sticky faith alongside family and friends! Worship will be interactive and kid-friendly, filled with intergenerational fun. Together we'll sing and pray and hear the stories of scripture, munch on breakfast, sing some more, and clean the space before going on our way.

**OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING** supports mission programming here at First United. Ten percent of the offering will be shared with RefugeeOne, the agency through whom we sponsor a refugee family. RefugeeOne does incredible face-to-face work with families just arriving in the US, and walks with them as they get accustomed to living in a new country, speaking a new language, learning new ways of life, etc. The organization is also active in advocacy. Thank you for the many ways that you contribute to the mission of First United.

## 2017 POINSETTIA DEDICATIONS

In loving memory of Quigg and Joan Porter and Margaret Davis, from Reneé Davis.

In honor of Howard Davis, from Reneé Davis.

In honor of Charles and Leona Summers, and Andrew and Barbara Sorenson, from Dale Sorenson and Carol Summers.

In memory of Bill May and David Rickert and Carol Faust; in honor of Julia Faust, love Stan and Sara Faust.

In memory of our mama and grandmama, Janie Mae Arnold, love Jan Arnold and Mary Anderson.

In loving memory of Richard Waichler, from Nancy Waichler.

In memory of John R. Sibley, from the Sibley Family.

In memory of Gardner C. Borden and Christine B. Jennings, from the Sibley Family.

## WELCOME TO FIRST UNITED. JOIN US ANY SUNDAY.

We're glad you're here to share our Christmas Eve service. Learn more about our church:

**WORSHIP.** Worship is our time to praise and grow closer to God. Worship each week includes song, prayer, learning, silence, and giving. Children participate fully in worship. We offer safe, quality childcare and quiet play for children five and under in our nursery. A member of the pastoral staff preaches every Sunday to lead the congregation in interpreting the word of God. An upcoming series of sermons will focus on the Sermon on the Mount and segue into Lent. To learn more about First United's approach to preaching, contact Interim Lead Pastor Deborah Kapp, 708-386-5215 (ext. 101) or [dkapp@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:dkapp@firstunitedoakpark.com).

**EDUCATION FOR ALL.** Church school and adult education classes are held at 9:30 every Sunday morning from September through late May. Children focus on Bible study, singing, and mission. Adult ed focuses on issues from Bible study to faith journeys to church history to current events to international conflicts. To find out more about the church's education classes, contact Lydia Mulkey, Associate Pastor of Education, at 708-386-5215 (ext. 103) or [lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com).

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.** Besides church school, First United also offers our NAEYC-accredited First United Nursery School. An open house for parents interested in enrolling children ages 2-5 will be Tuesday, January 16. Contact Nursery School Director Joan White at 708-848-4910 or [jwhite@firstunitedschool.com](mailto:jwhite@firstunitedschool.com).

**YOUTH MINISTRY.** On Sunday nights we welcome youth to FUJI (junior highs) and FUSH (senior highs) for dinner, fellowship, service projects and more. Both groups take weekend retreats to bond, relax, play and just chill. This summer's FUSH work camp will be in Port Orchard, Washington, to focus on housing. For more information, contact Alicia Reese, Coordinator of Youth & Children's Ministry, at [areese@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:areese@firstunitedoakpark.com).

**MUSIC.** First United offers our weekly Sanctuary Choir, our Casavant organ, and occasionally the added music of our Handbell Choir and church school children. Singers interested in joining our Sanctuary Choir can contact William Chin, Director of Music, at 386-5215 (ext. 108) or [bill@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:bill@firstunitedoakpark.com). Music at First offers a series of concerts throughout the year, starting with a program of Shakespeare-inspired music by brass and choirs on February 10.

**NEWCOMERS.** 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 full inclusion of LGBTQ people in membership and ministry. Interested in learning more? A New Members' class will start in late winter. Contact Britt Cox, Associate Pastor for Discipleship, at 708-386-5215 (ext. 105) or [bcox@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:bcox@firstunitedoakpark.com) for more information.

**MISSION.** We have mission partners that work both within the church and in the wider community, from Chicago's Austin neighborhood to the Middle East. We offer hands-on opportunities to tutor, to work with a refugee family, to help with the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry housed in our basement, and much more. We're a church that "walks the walk," which is reflected in the three paths of our Vision 2020 statement. We are moving from:

- **Words to witness** in our relationship with God.
- **Individualism to intimate fellowship** with other members of the church community.
- **Charity to changing structures** in our relationship with the world.



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