

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK
22 APRIL 2018
EASTER FOUR



An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Do I exist as a human being? My answer is: *I am commanded – therefore I am.*
There is a built-in *sense of indebtedness in the consciousness of [humanity]*, an awareness
of *owing gratitude*, of being *called upon* at certain moments to reciprocate,
to answer, to live in a way which is compatible with the grandeur and mystery of living.
- Abraham Joshua Heschel

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Chaconne in F minor

Johann Pachelbel

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Please sign and pass the black Connections pad.

Lydia Mulkey

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

* INVOCATION

God of infinite imagination, our Creator,

God of unfailing love, our Redeemer,

God of intercession and compassion, our Advocate:

Teach us to contemplate you in the beauty of the universe, for all things speak of you.

Awaken our praise and thankfulness for every being that you have made.

Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined to everything that is.

* HYMN 455

All Creatures of Our God and King

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

blue hymnal

LITANY OF CONFESSION AND PARDON

John Chapman-Rienstra

(adapted from Joel 1-2 and Isaiah 55)

Hear this, O elders, give ear all inhabitants of the land!

Lament. Mourn. Be dismayed. Wail.

The fields are devastated, the ground mourns;
for the grain is destroyed, the wine dries up, the oil fails.

The crops of the field are ruined,

the seed shrivels under the clods,

the storehouses are desolate.

How the animals groan!

Because there is no pasture for them,
even the flocks of sheep are dazed.

To you, O Lord, I cry, for fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,
 and flames have burned all the trees of the field.
 Even the wild animals cry to you
 because the watercourses are dried up.
 Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
 Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,
 for God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

SILENCE IS KEPT.

Relying on God’s grace and mercy, God’s determination to redeem and transform,
 let us hear again words of prophetic promise:

**For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace;
 The mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song,
 And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.**

***PASSING THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.
 And also with you.

TIME FOR SHARING

Britt Cox

LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD TO US

SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Refrain

Al - lel - lu - ia, al - lel - lu - ia! Give thanks to the ris - en Lord.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - lel - lu - ia! Give praise to His_ Name.

Verse

2. Spread the good news o'er all the_ earth:

Je - sus has died and has ri - sen. D.C.

SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 1:27-31 and 2:4b-9, 15, OT p. 1

Elizabeth Brewer

SERMON

Images of God

Deborah Kapp

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN 266

Thank You, God, for Water, Soil, and Air

AMSTEIN

blue hymnal

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

OFFERTORY

For the Beauty of the Earth

John Rutter

For the beauty of the earth, for the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth over and around us lies:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise.

For the beauty of each night, of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon and stars of light:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise.

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise.

For each perfect gift of thine to our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine, flowers of earth and buds of heaven:
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise.

*DOXOLOGY

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God whom we adore.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Britt Cox

**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.**

LITURGY OF FAREWELL

Deborah Kapp

Leader: Our church family is constantly changing.
People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up.
People commit themselves to one another.
Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives.
Individuals move into our community and church life.
Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences and new opportunities.
It is important and right that we recognize these endings, beginnings, and changes.
Today, we share the time of farewell with a colleague who is leaving.

Britt: I thank First United, its members and friends, for the love, kindness,
and support shown me these last four years.

I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made.

I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted.

As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

**We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness
and accept that you now leave to minister in a new call.**

We express our gratitude for your time among us.

We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes.

Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Britt: I forgive you and accept your gratitude,
trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

*VOWS OF RELEASE

Do you, the members and friends of First United Church of Oak Park release the Reverend Britt Cox from the duties of Associate Pastor?

We do, with the help of God.

Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry as Pastor of The Church of the Three Crosses?

We do, with the help of God.

Britt, do you release First United Church from turning to you and depending on you?

Britt: I do, with the help of God.

Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and for the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Britt: I do, with the help of God.

PRAYER

O God, we give thanks for remembered times when we, together, shared the life of faith. We thank you for the moments we have shared with Britt in worship, in learning, and in service. We pray that Britt will be aware of your Spirit's guidance as she moves to her new call, in the name of Jesus the Savior.

God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

GOING FORTH IN DEDICATION AND SERVICE

***HYMN 42**
black hymnal

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

AZMON

***CHARGE**

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

The Lord Bless You and Keep You
Sanctuary Choir

Peter C. Lutkin

SENDING MUSIC

Tone Piece Op. 22, No. 1

Niels W. Gade

TODAY AT FIRST UNITED

TODAY'S SANCTUARY FLOWERS are in celebration of Britt Cox's ministry at First United.

APRIL'S FOURTH SUNDAY OFFERING, received today, will be contributed to New Moms.



PLEASE RECYCLE your bulletin in one of the bins near the Sanctuary exits.

JOIN THE DEACONS for prayer and anointing in the chapel following Worship.

HEARING AMPLIFICATION DEVICES--INCLUDING T-COIL CABLES, LARGE PRINT BULLETINS, BIBLES AND HYMNALS are available for use during worship. Please talk to a greeter to obtain these items and return the amplification device to the greeter. Large print bibles and hymnals should be returned to the table behind the middle pews.

IT'S A WRAP! The organ will be played today for the last time until the new roof is finished, which will be around the end of August, weather permitting. To prevent damage from dust and debris, the organ will be wrapped in plastic tomorrow. Rap musicians are welcome to attend the wrapping ceremony.

HOSPITALITY IN WORSHIP - Help Wanted! It takes many hands and hearts to make our worship pleasing in the sight of God. We are grateful to our worship and music leaders and to the folks who minister in the background in other profoundly important ways. This week we thank Lead Usher Carl Nauert; Greeters: Rose Buckner, Christine Davis, Joanne Despotes, and Marilyn Kauffmann; and the Church School Acolytes. We ask forgiveness for any omissions. If you think one or more of these Hospitality Ministries might be a fit for you, please contact Joanne Despotes at jdespotes@gmail.com or 708-209-1377.

EVENTS AND UPDATES

DINNER & A MOVIE - Friday, May 4: *Loving*. Recounting a landmark chapter in the struggle for civil rights, this absorbing drama depicts the 1958 arrest and imprisonment of Richard and Mildred Loving for violating Virginia's law against interracial marriage. Dinner at 6 p.m. (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 p.m. (free). Sign up in the lounge or call Nancy Pennington, 708-386-9195.

FLOWER POWER - First United is sponsoring FLOWER POWER to benefit mission partner New Moms. Make a tax-deductible Flower Power donation of \$10 to \$15 today in the lounge. Church School classes will plant Mother's Day pots of flowers for the moms on May 6. Celebrating 35 years of service in Austin, and now also in Oak Park, New Moms has helped more than 3,000 young mothers break the cycles of abuse and poverty, and gain housing, education, and jobs.

LEAVING A LEGACY - Please consider making a legacy gift to First United through your will or by designating the church as a beneficiary of your IRA, life insurance, or pension plan. When you make such a gift, please let the church know. We want to thank you and add you to our list of Kindred Spirits. Questions? Contact Gene or Ann Armstrong (geneann1113@yahoo.com or 708-657-4484) or any of the pastors.

TUNNELS, TOWER AND MORE TOUR is a big success. Last Sunday, a small tour group enjoyed John Zaruba's stories of our building's many nooks and crannies including the labyrinth of underground tunnels, the bell tower with our original bell, organ pipes, and so much more. The first two tours filled up, so John has opened a third tour on May 13. Sign up soon at the Elder Desk. Also, if there is interest in future tours, you can give John this information. These tours are part of our Centennial Celebration - Building for the Ages.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION - Our church has a deep history and legacy of faith, as we learned through documents, photos, paintings, stained glass windows, and stories. If you missed this event, you are welcome to pick up the Celebration History booklet and Chapel Stained Glass booklet and take your personal tour. Special thanks to Church Council (reception host); Don Sibley (photographer); Dennis Cobb (booklet layout); history interpreters: Dan Pietrini, Vickie Engelhardt, Lois Merrill, Barbara Ballinger and Alicia Reese; John Zaruba (Tower, Tunnels and More tour); Ann and Gene Armstrong, Debby Preiser, Barbara Metric, Cate Readling (reception hospitality); Debby Preiser (photographer); Emory Mead (banner); Amanda Swanson (flowers); and Patrick Guinan (logistics).

SIMPLE WAYS TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT – “GREEN TIPS” FROM THE FIRST UNITED GREEN TEAM

- 🌿 **Bike, walk, use public transportation, or carpool** whenever possible.
- 🌿 **Turn off your car engine** if idling for 10 seconds or more.
- 🌿 **Use reusable bags.** Keep several bags in your car or wherever is most convenient. Free reusable bags are available at many locations around town; one convenient place is the “share a bag, take a bag” rack in the First United Lounge, where you can also donate any extra bags you may have.
- 🌿 **Take a weekly survey of your refrigerator and plan menus around the inventory.** Waste less food by setting aside a time each week to take stock of what’s on hand.
- 🌿 **Buy in bulk and skip the packaging.** Purchase bulk items in jars and small cloth bags, so no single use plastic is necessary.
- 🌿 **Use travel mugs or water bottles** when you buy coffee or pop. Many outlets offer a discount when you provide your own cup.
- 🌿 **Just say NO!** to plastic straws, Styrofoam containers, and disposable cutlery.
- 🌿 **Print as little as possible.** When you have to print, print on both sides of the paper.
- 🌿 **Use desktop recycling.** If your office doesn’t have a recycling program, start one, or just bring your scrap paper home and recycle it there.

- 🌿 **Recycle printer toner cartridges.** Next time you're at an office supply store, check out how easy it is.
- 🌿 **Roughly 50 devices and appliances in the typical American household are always drawing power,** even when they appear to be off, including phone chargers, computers, TVs and set-top boxes, even electric toothbrushes! Putting them on a power strip makes it easy to turn them off completely.
- 🌿 **A free energy audit of your household** can be scheduled with a simple call to ComEd at 1-855-433-2700. Plus, they give you free LED's and other stuff.
- 🌿 **Buy Energy Star appliances** when purchasing. The extra cost will pay for itself over just a few years. Plus, ComEd will give you an energy rebate in many instances.
- 🌿 **Set your air conditioning temperature a little higher** in the summer and heating temperature a little lower in the winter.
- 🌿 **Use ceiling fans summer and winter** to distribute air and use less energy overall.
- 🌿 **Buy insulated shades/curtains if possible.** In any case, always close shades or curtains at night to conserve heat and open them during the day to let the sunshine in. On hot, sunny summer days, close the shades on the west side to keep out the heat.
- 🌿 **Be sure to have storm windows,** separate or integrated. Caulk the windows every few years.
- 🌿 **Practice rain water management.** Disconnect downspouts from the sewer system and install rain barrels.
- 🌿 **Recycle bottle caps.** Did you know that, after years of saying that plastic bottle caps are NOT recyclable, the technology has changed so that they ARE recyclable? Check with your recycler – some want bottle caps left ON, and some want them left OFF.
- 🌿 **Instead of Ziploc bags,** reuse small plastic containers with lids such as deli containers, etc.
- 🌿 **Encourage the kids** to bring lunch containers and bags home for reuse.
- 🌿 **Join the village composting program.** You can learn about the program and enroll at <https://www.oak-park.us/village-services/refuse-recycling/compostable-program>. (You can sign up with neighbors to save money.)
- 🌿 **Make handkerchiefs and dishtowels.** Cut from old t-shirts for an easy no-sew option or sew your own.
- 🌿 **Adopt natural lawn and garden maintenance practices** – no toxic chemicals. (It's easier than you think.)
- 🌿 **Save seeds.** Lettuce and other greens are especially easy to let flower and "go to seed," while also adding beauty to your garden. Many will also seed themselves in subsequent years, making your edible gardening much simpler in years to come.
- 🌿 **Use edible plants as ornamental plants.** A lovely plant for a balcony or yard is Swiss Chard Bright Lights. It's pretty to look at and provides ongoing yumminess. Snip the outer leaves and add to scrambled eggs, smoothies, etc.
- 🌿 **Mix herbs or small lettuces in with bright flowers,** whether in balcony containers or the yard.
- 🌿 **Use homemade cleaning supplies.** Mix vinegar/water in a reusable spray bottle for multipurpose cleaning and use baking soda for tough grease.

Moving from

words to witness
in our relationship with God,

individualism to intimate
fellowship in our relationship with other members of the church community,

charity to changing
structures in our relationship with the world.

WELCOME- We're glad you joined us for worship. Learn about First United:

- Visit the welcome desk in the lounge or the visitor table in the narthex to receive more information about the church and a gift to take home with you.
- Sign the registration pad when it's passed. Include your email to receive our weekly e-news and devotional!
- Speak with any greeter or minister or join us for coffee hour following worship.
- Contact Britt Cox at 708.386.5215 or bcox@firstunitedoakpark.com for information about Newcomers Gatherings and any additional questions.

ABOUT US - 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 GLBTQ people in membership & ministry.

ABOUT WORSHIP - Worship is our time to praise and grow closer to God. Worship each week includes song, prayer, learning, silence and giving. If you have any questions about what we do, please ask a minister or a member.

WORSHIP WITH CHILDREN - We welcome all children to participate fully in worship. Age-appropriate worship activities and books are available as you enter the sanctuary. We offer safe, quality childcare and quiet play for children five and under in our nursery (just off the lounge). Accompanied by a parent, these children may leave after Time for Sharing.

RESTROOMS & WiFi - Accessible restrooms are located off the church lounge. Free Wireless Internet is available in all areas except the Sanctuary. Network: 'FirstGuest', password: 'FirstUnited'.

GIVING - Offering envelopes are in the pew racks. You can also give one time or recurring gifts online at www.firstunitedoakpark.com/giving.

SUNDAY, APRIL 22

9:30 am Education for all ages
 9:30 am Technology Help Desk
 11:00 am Worship
 12:00 pm Reception for Britt Cox
 3:00 pm PFLAG
 6:00 pm FUJI
 7:00 pm Men's Group

MONDAY, APRIL 23

9:00 am Sanctuary Organ Covering
 9:00 am CPM Meeting (presbytery)
 6:30 pm CMA Justice and Witness Ministry
 7:00 pm Food Pantry Board meeting
 7:00 pm Personnel Committee meeting

TUESDAY, APRIL 24

9:00 am Sanctuary Organ Covering
 4:00 pm Pro Musica Youth Chorus
 7:00 pm Faith in Action Committee meeting
 7:00 pm Newcomers Committee meeting

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25

11:00 am Wednesday Small Group
 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, APRIL 26

6:30 pm Cluster Tutoring
 7:00 pm Housing Subcommittee meeting

FRIDAY, APRIL 27**SATURDAY, APRIL 28**

9:00 am Youth Sunday Rehearsal

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

9:30 am Education for all ages
 9:30 am Technology Help Desk
 11:00 am Worship
 12:00 pm Tower, Tunnels and More tour
 5:00 pm Quest to The Boulevard
 6:00 pm FUJI
 7:00 pm Men's Group

**CONTACT THE FIRST UNITED OFFICE MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY 9 AM TO 5 PM
 708.386.5215**

Deborah Kapp, Interim Lead Pastor (ext. 101)
 Britt Cox, Associate Pastor of Discipleship (ext. 105)
 Lydia Mulkey, Associate Pastor of Education (ext. 103)
 Alicia Reese, Coordinator of Youth & Children's Ministry
 William Chin, Director of Music (ext. 108)
 Michael Surratt, Organist
 Amanda Swanson, Manager of Operations (ext. 102)
 Dennis Cobb, Administrative Assistant (ext. 100)
 Maureen Wheeler, Financial Consultant (ext. 106)
 Susan Samek, Financial Assistant (ext. 109)
 Keith Liesse, Manager of Building and Grounds
 First United Church Nursery School
 Housing Forward
 Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry
 The Kid's Kloset, children's clothing ministry
 Cluster Tutoring
 Pro Musica Youth Chorus
 Samaritan Counseling Center

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 708-848-4910, www.firstunitedschool.com
 708-338-1724, www.housingforward.org
 708-386-1324, www.oprffoodpantry.org
 susanzaruba@gmail.com
 773-378-5530, www.clustertutoring.org
 708-406-9597, www.promusicayouthchorus.org
 847-446-6955, www.northshoresamaritan.org



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