



**FIRST UNITED CHURCH
OF OAK PARK
2 DECEMBER 2018
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

“Was there a moment, known only to God, when all the stars held their breath,
when the galaxies paused in their dance for a fraction of a second, and the Word,
who had called it all into being, went with all his love into the womb of a young girl,
and the universe started to breathe again, and the ancient harmonies resumed their song,
and the angels clapped their hands for you?”
—Madeleine L’Engle

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Sleepers, Wake! Johann Gottfried Walther & J. S. Bach

WELCOME

Please sign and pass the black Connections pad.

PROCESSION OF THE POINSETTIAS

Please join on the refrain

People, Look East

Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965)

BESANÇON

French folk melody



Peo - ple, look east and sing to - day; Love the guest is on — the way.

*PASSING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*OPENING SONG

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and
ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly
ex - ile here, un - til the Child of God ap - pear.
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

THE ADVENT WREATH

The Parker Family

This is the day we begin our journey to the Child, His Mother, and the manger.

May we kindle God's light together as we journey on the road back to Bethlehem.

It is a journey shrouded in a fading sun and a growing uncertainty as the world turns cold.
And we journey anyway.

May we kindle God's light together as we journey on the road back to Bethlehem.

We journey because we are drawn to God's light at the end: it is God's promise,
born into our lives.

May we kindle God's light together as we journey on the road back to Bethlehem.

We light this candle in hope. We bring this light of hope with us, together, on this journey.

Hope comes from the Child and our hope is dedicated to the Child lying in a manger.

Seeking goodness only, for our neighbors and for ourselves, may we kindle God's light of
hope within us.

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah

Yiddish folk song



Let us pray together.

Good and gracious God, help us take one step closer to you, toward the joy of unity with you. In this candle light, show us that the power of hope silences doubts and fears. Take this light, small but mighty, and magnify it within us until our hope chases away all shadows around our church, our community, our nations and our world. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Preschool, Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade

Clip, clop, clip, clop

Clip, clop, clip, clop, donkey on a journey, all the way to Bethlehem.
Mary, Joseph, angels watchin' over, all the way to Bethlehem.

Baby is a-comin', oh yeah

Melody: African-American spiritual "Train is a-comin', oh yeah"

Text by the children

Baby is a-coming, oh yeah
Keep him safe and warm, oh yeah
Help the mother Mary, help the father Joseph, oh yeah
Better tell the family, oh yeah

CALL TO PRAYER

As we enter the season of Advent, let us prepare ourselves to receive again, the good news. With humility, honesty, and trust, let us lift our voices in song and confession.

PRAYER

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

CAROL

**Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and we at war on earth hear not the tidings that they bring;
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the angels sing.**

SILENCE IS KEPT.

ASSURANCE

And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
O, rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.

Glory to God in the highest, and, on earth, peace and goodwill to all.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

SONG OF ILLUMINATION

How Far Is It to Bethlehem?

Traditional English Carol
3rd, 4th, and 5th Grades

How far is it to Bethlehem, not very far?
Shall we find the stable room lit by a star?
Can we see the little Child, is He within?
If we lift the wooden latch may we go in?

May we stroke the creatures there, ox, ass, or sheep?
May we peep like them and see Jesus asleep?
If we touch His tiny hand will He awake?
Will He know we've come so far just for His sake?

Great kings have precious gifts and we have naught;
Little smiles and little hands are all we have brought.
For all weary children Mary must weep;
Here, on His bed of straw, sleep, children, sleep.

God in His mother's arms, babes in the byre
Sleep, as they sleep who find their heart's desire.

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 33:14-16, OT p. 738

SERMON

Prepare for Christmas

8th Grade

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN 2

Blue hymnal

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

HYFRYDOL

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us pray.

Dear God, as we give our offerings today, we bring both our finances and our lives. As we walk this Advent journey, use all that we have and all that we are to prepare your world for the coming of Christ's light. Amen.

OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

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 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

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

*HYMN 411

Blue hymnal

Arise Your Light Is Come

FESTAL SONG

*CHARGE AND BENECTION

Drawing Near: A Blessing to Begin Advent

7th Grade
by Jan Richardson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

SENDING MUSIC

A Festive Intrada

Walter L. Pelz

TODAY AT FIRST UNITED



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.

SPONSOR-A-FAMILY GIFT DROP-OFF - Thanks for buying gifts for local needy families through the Sponsor-a-Family program. Gifts are due at church TODAY. If you didn't bring your gifts with you, contact Sher Watts Spooner (sandaspooner@comcast.net; 708-383-4408). We also need volunteer drivers Monday, December 3, to transport the gifts to northeast Oak Park. Drivers should arrive in the church parking lot at 7:30 p.m.

HOSPITALITY IN WORSHIP - 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 those who provide Hospitality through various ministries. This week we thank Art Guild members: John Zaruba, Jane Barker, Emory Mead, Linda Sandman, Sara Stevenson, Laurie Jolicoeur, Joanne Despotes and Ted Despotes; Greeters: Marsha Hubbuch, Marge Lyon, Anne Paluck and Debby Preiser; Lead Usher: Bob Larson; Sanctuary Guild members: Marilyn Heinrichs, Cindy Palombi and Nina Roher; and the 8th Grade Church School Acolytes. We ask forgiveness for any omissions. *We need more people for this work! 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

GOD IS IN THE DETAILS! Now that our sound system has been upgraded, we need volunteers to operate the sound board during worship and other events which take place in the sanctuary. We're seeking 6 to 8 people to be trained for this important task and serve on a rotating basis. Please see Pete Todd at the tech table either before or after worship to receive more information; or contact Pete at toddfamily@msn.com.

NURSERY SCHOOL REGISTRATION OPEN - Members of First United Church have priority status for Nursery School registration for the session beginning September 2019. Registration opens December 1 and priority extends until the school open house on January 15, 2019. Joan White would love to give you a school tour and answer your questions. Call Joan at 708-848-4910, for additional information.

BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP – There are many for whom the holiday season is not as joyous as it is for others. Our Blue Christmas healing service will be a time for prayer, reflection, silence, and maybe some singing. Join us on Thursday, December 13 at 7 p.m. in the Chapel. Take care of yourself this holiday season.

END GUN VIOLENCE, NATIONWIDE VIGIL - First United along with Congregations Committed to Peace are participating in a vigil commemorating the Sandy Hook mass shooting and honoring all the victims of gun violence. This year the event will be held December 13 at 7 p.m. and will be hosted by Oak Park Temple B'Nai Abraham Zion, 1235 N. Harlem Ave, Oak Park. We will honor the work of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the organization specifically named by the shooter in Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue. Please bring a small holiday gift or gift card, non-perishable food item, or a financial donation (checks made out to HIAS -Chicago).

2018 POINSETTIAS. It's time to order and dedicate 2018 poinsettias! Gifts of poinsettias purchased in memory or in honor of a loved one, commemorating an event, or for another reason important to you are appreciated. Fill out an order envelope, located at either sanctuary entrance, and return it in the offering plate or to the First United office by December 14. Or, go to the "Give" link on the home page of the First United website and you will find an electronic form to purchase a poinsettia. Those who are honored will be acknowledged in the Christmas Eve worship bulletins.

DINNER & A MOVIE – Friday, December 14: *Love, Simon*. Closeted gay teen Simon is mortified when his classmate Martin gets hold of Simon's intimate email to his online love. With the prospect of humiliation looming, Simon reluctantly agrees to help Martin get closer to Abby, Simon's female best friend. Dinner at 6 p.m. (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 p.m. (free). Call Cynthia Collazo at 708-383-9228 or sign up in the Lounge.

FUSH COOKIE BAKE! Next Sunday, plan to pick up your cookie order and if you have not paid in advance, please be ready with cash or a check. If you forgot to order, never fear! Check with us about buying the extras.

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.
- 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 Lydia Mulkey at 708.386.5215 or lmulkey@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 of the building. 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.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

- 9:00 am Alternative Christmas Store
- 9:00 am Sponsor-a-Family Gift Drop-Off
- 9:30 am Church School for all ages
- 9:30 am Technology Help Desk
- 11:00 am Hanging of the Greens Worship
- 12:15 pm Personnel Committee meeting
- 3:00 pm FUSH Cookie Bake
- 6:00 pm FUJI

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3

- 8:30 am FUNS Staff Meeting
- 9:00 am Sponsor-a-Family Gift Drop-Off
- 3:30 pm FUSH Cookie Bake
- 6:00 pm PADS Emergency Shelter
- 6:00 pm Monday Bible Study
- 7:00 pm Food Pantry Board meeting

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4

- 7:00 pm Children's Ministry meeting
- 7:00 pm FUNS Parent meeting
- 7:00 pm PNC meeting
- 7:00 pm Sing We Joyous rehearsal

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 11:00 am Wednesday Small Group
- 3:30 pm FUSH Cookie Bake
- 4:30 pm Food Pantry Program meeting
- 6:45 pm Deacon meeting

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 3:30 pm FUSH Cookie Bake
- 6:30 pm Cluster Tutoring

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

- 3:30 pm FUSH Cookie Bake
- 7:00 pm Sing We Joyous rehearsal

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

- 9:00 am Council Budget Workshop
- 9:00 am Advent Event!
- 11:00 am FUSH Cookie packaging
- 6:30 pm Sing We Joyous Silent Auction
- 7:30 pm Sing We Joyous Concert

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

- 9:00 am Alternative Christmas Store
- 9:30 am Church School for all ages
- 9:30 am Technology Help Desk
- 11:00 am Worship
- 12:00 pm Second Sunday Sundaes
- 4:00 pm Sing We Joyous Concert
- 6:00 pm FUJI and FUSH

PLEASE NOTE: The First United Office will be closed on December 25 with limited hours the rest of that week. It will also be closed on December 31 and January 1.

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

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| Gene Armstrong, Council Moderator | geneann1113@yahoo.com |
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| First United Church Nursery School | 708-848-4910, www.firstunitedschool.com |
| Housing Forward | 708-338-1724, www.housingforward.org |
| Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry | 708-386-1324, www.oprffoodpantry.org |
| The Kid's Kloset, children's clothing ministry | susanzaruba@gmail.com |
| Cluster Tutoring | 773-378-5530, www.clustertutoring.org |
| Pro Musica Youth Chorus | 708-406-9597, www.promusicayouthchorus.org |
| Samaritan Counseling Center | 847-446-6955, www.northshoresamaritan.org |



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

an open community united in love & justice

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