

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

24 DECEMBER 2019 – 5 P.M.

CHRISTMAS EVE



Nativity by Sadao Watanabe, 1972

An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

“To reverence the child in each human heart is to reverence the Christ everywhere.”

- William L. Wallace

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

GATHERING MUSIC

Christmas Carols

arr. Helmut Walcha and Paul Manz

WELCOME

Please sign and pass the connections pew pad.

Jojo Desir

WE GATHER

THE ADVENT WREATH

Foster- Simbulan Family

We have waited for weeks. In fact, we have waited all our lives for this time, this blessing. This is when we pray our “yes,” like Mary; when we are finally ready to have God enter into our lives, filling us with a sense of calling and purpose. We nurture within ourselves the light of God’s hope, God’s peace, God’s joy, and God’s love.

The light grows brighter.

The Advent candles blaze, reminding us of the gifts of God.

As we light the Christ candle, the light at the center of all the other lights, may we re-center ourselves in Christ. Jesus said, “abide in me, as I abide in you.” Life in Christ places us at the center of God’s heart, and places God at the center of our hearts.

There, like the candle we are about to light, we are surrounded by hope, peace, joy, and love.

This is the light of Christ, the Word made flesh. This great light lives among us. By it we behold God’s glory—full of grace and truth. Rejoice, people of God!

The light has come into the world!

The Christ candle is lit.

*CAROL

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King.

Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”

Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;

With the angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!

Late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin’s womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,

Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

***PASSING THE PEACE**

Simon Bade

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

WE HEAR THE STORY

As we hear the story, please remain seated for all hymns.

SONG OF ILLUMINATION

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin,
Where yearning souls long to be whole, the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

Luke 1:26-32, NT p. 56

Jackson Hickok-Fletcher and Leah Pollock

SPECIAL MUSIC

Mary, Did You Know?

Colin Lonergan

THE BIRTH

Luke 2:1-7, NT p. 58

Simon Bade

CAROL

Away in a Manger

CRADLE SONG

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
 And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
 Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
 What the gladsome tidings be, which inspire your heav'nly song?
 Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
 Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
 Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

SHEPHERDS JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM Luke 2:15-18, NT p. 58

Patric Desir

CAROL

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell, the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
 In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
 Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

They look-ed up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far;
 And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
 Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the northwest; o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
 And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.
 Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.

THE WILD STAR

Matthew 2:1-11, NT p. 2

Lorenza Foster- Simbulan

WE RESPOND

*CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
 Come and behold him, born the king of angels!
 O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
 O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Patric Desir

Offerings are a sacred act of worship. We invite you to use the green giving cards in the pew rack to celebrate what you've already given or to make an additional donation.

OFFERTORY

In Dulci Jubilo

Paul Manz

*DOXOLOGY

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

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

Mitch Readling and Julio Desir

Amazing God, you love us so much that you came to us as an infant.

Born in a stable because there was no room at the inn.

You call us to love the world as we have been loved by you.

Wrapped in swaddling clothes, you slept in a manger because there was no crib.

You command us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Shepherds welcomed you.

You call us to create an inclusive church in which everyone is welcomed and loved.

No one was turned away from the stable door.

You keep calling us to open our doors, to welcome the outcasts, house the homeless, feed the hungry, and turn over the tables in the temple.

Lambs and cows, chickens and donkeys, adults and children, angels of all kinds surrounded you.

Help us create a world and a church in which all of your children are safe and loved, affirmed, welcomed, and fully accepted, where we all have a community of angels surrounding us.

One star brighter than the rest led the world to your door.

May our love and work in the world be a beacon of hope to the hopeless, a ministry of welcome to those who have been hurt by hatred, greed, or violence. May we always seek to make the powerful accountable, especially when they are us.

Dear child of Bethlehem, as we remember the stable and the manger, the dusty roads you walked and the cross on which you died, give us the faith and courage to tell your truth and make it our own. May your story guide us and help us claim the sacredness in our own lives and stories. Help us follow you with all of our hearts and minds and souls and strength, for you are our hope and our redeemer. Amen.

CAROL

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

CAROL

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King":
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

**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!**

**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.**

**For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.**

WE GO OUT TO SERVE

THE GIFT

John 1:1-5; 14, NT p. 91

Jojo Desir, and Reid Stemley

*CAROL

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.

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Lydia Mulkey, Stella Severson, George Severson

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

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

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Christ rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nation prove
the glories of God's righteousness
and wonders of God's love, and wonders of God's love,
and wonders, wonders of God's love.

As you leave, please deposit your candles in the baskets by the entrances.

SENDING MUSIC

In Dulci Jubilo

J. S. Bach



STICKY CHURCH. December 29 - 11 a.m. in Centennial Hall - End 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 and programming at First United. Ten percent of the offering will be shared with the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) and will be used for Syrians who have been displaced from their homes inside Syria. Displaced families need help with heating fuel for their homes, food, and housing costs during the brutally cold winter months. Without the help provided by NESSL global partners, they suffer greatly and may begin the difficult and dangerous process of trying to immigrate to another country.

Thank you for the many ways that you contribute to the mission of First United.

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. 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.

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.

NURSERY SCHOOL. First United 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.

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. For more information, contact Alicia Reese, Pastoral Associate for Youth & Congregational Care, at 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. Music at First offers a series of concerts throughout the year, continuing with the fifteenth annual "Twelfth Night" concert on January 12, featuring choirs and other musicians from the Oak Park musical community in a free performance.

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 Lydia Mulkey, Associate Pastor for Education, at 708-386-5215 (ext. 103) or lmulkey@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.



First United Church of Oak Park

An open community united in love & justice

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

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First United Church Nursery School	708-848-4910, www.firstunitedschool.com
Housing Forward	708-338-1724, www.housingforward.org
Beyond Hunger	708-386-1324, www.gobeyondhunger.org
The Kid's Kloset, children's clothing ministry	susanzaruba@gmail.com
Cluster Tutoring	773-378-5530, www.clustertutoring.org