

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent  
February 26, 2023



*An open community united in love and justice*

# PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

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PRELUDE

Mark Sudeith

*Lonesome Valley* arr. by Anthony Giamanco

WELCOME

Alicia Reese

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Let us settle into stillness.

Slowly, ever so slowly, let us center our minds and our hearts.

*Silence*

O God, calm us into a quietness

**that heals and listens,**

and molds our longings and passions,

**our wounds and wonderings**

into a more holy and human shape.

**Let our cares and weariness fall away.**

*Silence*

We are one with the universe.

**We are one with the sun and the stars.**

We are stardust.

**And to dust we shall return.**

We are one with One who is Mystery, who created you and me,

**and whose Spirit lives in us.**

\*PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you!

**And also, with you!**

\*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley* (Blue hymnal no. 80)

& Congregation

**Jesus walked this lonesome valley, / He had to walk it by Himself;**

**O, nobody else could walk it for Him, / He had to walk it by Himself.**

**We must walk this lonesome valley, / We have to walk it by ourselves;**

**O, nobody else can walk it for us, / We have to walk it by ourselves.**

**You must go and stand your trial, / You have to stand it by yourself,  
O, nobody else can stand it for you, / You have to stand it by yourself.**

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

John Edgerton

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

MUSICAL RESPONSE

*Give Me a Clean Heart* (Black hymnal no. 188)

**Give me a clean heart so I may serve you.**

**God, fix my heart so that I may be used by you.**

**For I'm not worthy of all these blessings.**

**Give me a clean heart and I'll follow you.**

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

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TIME FOR SHARING

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Graders

SCRIPTURE READING – MATTHEW 4:1-11

John Edgerton

\*HYMN/SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Preschool – 5<sup>th</sup> Graders

*May the Words of My Mouth* by Joseph M. Martin & Brad Nix

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing unto  
You, O God.

May the works of my hands and the path that I walk be pleasing unto You, O  
God.

For You are my Redeemer, the Rock of my salvation.

I long to bring You honor in all I say and do.

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the works of my hands and the path that I walk be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the songs that I sing and the gifts that I bring be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the life that I live and the ways that I give be pleasing unto You, O God.

For You are my Creator, my Shepherd and my Guide.

I long to be Your helper and follow by Your side.

May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing unto You, O God.

May the works of my hands and the path that I walk be pleasing unto You, O God.

Amen. Amen.

SERMON – A DRESSER OF SYCAMORE TREES

John Edgerton

\*SERMON RESPONSE

*In the Midst of New Dimensions* (Black hymnal no. 391, v. 1 & refrain)

**In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,  
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate ways?**

**Refrain: God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,  
We your people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.**

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

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CALL TO THE OFFERING

Rev. Larry Morris

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday for the Inclusive Collective

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lydia Mulkey

**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, the power, and the glory forever.**

**Amen.**

## GOING FORTH IN DEDICATION AND SERVICE

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\*CLOSING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*Come, Labor On* (Black hymnal no. 532)

**Come, labor on. Who dares stay idle on the harvest plain  
while all around us waves the golden grain?**

**And to each servant does the Savior say, "Go work today."**

**Come, labor on. Claim the high calling angels cannot share;  
to young and old the gospel gladness bear.**

**Redeem the time; its hours too swiftly fly. The night draws nigh.**

**Come, labor on. Away with gloomy doubts and faithless fear!  
No one so weak but may do service here;  
Though feeble agents, may we all fulfill God's righteous will.**

**Come, labor on. No time for rest, till glows the western sky,  
till the long shadows o'er the pathway lie,  
And a glad sound comes with the setting sun, "Well done, well done!"**

\*BLESSING

John Edgerton

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*Now Is the Time Approaching* (Black hymnal no. 609, v. 1)

**Now is the time approaching, by prophets long foretold,  
When all shall dwell together, secure and manifold.  
Let war be learned no longer, let strife and tumult cease,  
All earth a blessed garden that God shall tend in peace.**

POSTLUDE

*Processional on 'Ora Labora'* by Hal H. Hopson

Mark Sudeith

*The Deacons are available after worship in the Chapel for a time of private prayer and conversation.*

# EVENTS AND UPDATES

*Below is just a sampling of the news and events at First United. Follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark](https://facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark)) where we share our weekly newsletter and lots more!*

## "SHARE YOUR LOVE": PRIMETIME POTLUCK DINNER ON MARCH 3, 2023

Following the theme of First United's Stewardship Campaign, PrimeTimers (60+) will hold a potluck dinner from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, March 3, in Centennial Hall. Bring a picture of something you love (a wedding photo, a family portrait, a snapshot of a pet or favorite vacation spot, a nature image such as a sunset, mountain, beach, or forest trail, etc.) and a dish to share (appetizers, main dishes, salads/side dishes, and desserts). \$5 per person to cover other costs. Please RSVP no later than March 1 to Janet Haisman ([jhaisman59@gmail.com](mailto:jhaisman59@gmail.com)).

## Lenten Fellowship: Soup Supper Wednesdays

Join us in the Chapel on March 8 and March 15 to share a simple Lenten supper of soup and bread (and mac n' cheese). Supper will run from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and carry a suggested donation of \$5 per individual or \$20 per family of 4 or more. Please RSVP to Alicia Reese ([areese@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:areese@firstunitedoakpark.com)) to help us plan!

## NEWCOMER'S CLASS STARTS NEXT WEEK

Considering becoming a member of First United? Our Newcomer's Class starts next week and runs through April 2. Meet at 9:45 a.m. in the Chapel on March 5 for a building tour and introductions. RSVP to Lydia Mulkey ([lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com)).

## LOVE FIRST. UNITED LOVE.

Consecration Sunday was a joyous celebration. It was a blessing to witness the stream of individuals and families gathering at the altar to affirm their love for First United with a pledge of financial support for the year ahead. We are more than half way toward meeting our 2023-2024 pledge goal. If you are still making your pledge decision, please act today! Every gift counts as we unfold our ministries of love and service in the coming year.

## ADULT ED DURING LENT

Our Adult Ed speaker series will be on hiatus during the six Sundays in Lent to allow space for upcoming education sessions on the proposed capital campaign (more on that in the upcoming Messenger Bell). The Bible group will continue to meet weekly at 9:45 a.m. in the lounge. If you are a speaker series regular, check out the Bible Study during Lent!

# WELCOME TO FIRST UNITED!

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 & ministry.

## ADULT EDUCATION

Faith formation doesn't end after Church School. Adult Education takes a variety of forms, from small, group Bible studies to Sunday morning speaker series. Watch the Thursday Eblast for the latest offerings.

## CHILDREN IN WORSHIP & OUR NURSERY

We love to have children in worship! Age-appropriate worship activities and books are available as you enter the sanctuary. We also offer safe, quality childcare and quiet play for children five and under in our nursery. Ask an usher for directions.

## CHURCH SCHOOL

Church School is for children ages birth through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Meeting Sundays at 9:45 a.m., we tell stories of the Bible using a lens of love and justice with singing, praying, and creating. Contact Lydia Mulkey ([lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com)) to learn more.

## MUSIC MINISTRIES

We hope you enjoy the music of our Sanctuary Choir and soloists in worship. COVID-19 has altered the way we do music, but music remains deeply important to our worship experience. For more information contact Bill Chin ([bill@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:bill@firstunitedoakpark.com)).

## YOUTH PROGRAMS – FUJI (JR. HIGH) & FUSH (SR. HIGH)

The youth groups meet on Sunday evenings from 5 – 6:30 pm here at the church. Contact Alicia Reese ([areese@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:areese@firstunitedoakpark.com)) for more information.



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[www.firstunitedoakpark.com](http://www.firstunitedoakpark.com) | [facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark](https://facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark)

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