

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK
March 12, 2023



An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Mark Sudeith

Reflections on the Spirit by Joel Raney

WELCOME

Alicia Reese

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Marteki Reed

Justice-Making God—

Reveal those who are causing harm!

Hold accountable those who ignore the immutable worth of all people!

Bring down those who exploit our planet home and Her inhabitants!

In your protecting shade, cover the vulnerable.

In your rich soil, grow our community's practices of solidarity.

Meet us this day, our Fervent Protector

and our Partner in the Work of Compassion.

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

Breathe on Me, Breath of God (Black hymnal no. 292)

Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew

That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,

Until with you I will one will, to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God, stir in me one desire:

That every earthly part of me may glow with holy fire.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, so I shall never die,

But live with you the perfect life of your eternity.

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Marteki Reed

Living Wisdom, we long not only for an end to oppression, but a beginning for restoration. We long not only to be delivered from systems of harm, but into places that are soft and kind—full of rest and restoration, brimming with playfulness—Love bursting at the seams. Bless every effort working to undo the violence of exploitation. Bless every space of rest, play, and love we co-create along the way.

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

Hear the good news. God's love for you is indeed bursting at the seams. Whatever you have confessed, whatever you have asked for in prayer today, you have been heard. You have been held. You have been loved. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

MUSICAL RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir &
Congregation

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

TIME FOR SHARING

John Edgerton

*HYMN/SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Sanctuary Choir &
Congregation

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness (Black hymnal no. 286)

**Refrain: Spirit, spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free,
Spirit, spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.**

**You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep;
And over the eons you called to each thing,
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings." R/**

**You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
When they were confounded by their idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes. R/**

**You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
When you blew through your people on the rush of the wind. R/**

**You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams;
Our women see visions, our men clear their eyes.
With bold new decisions your people arise. R/**

SCRIPTURE READING – DANIEL 5

SERMON – THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Lydia Mulkey

*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

CALL TO THE OFFERING

John Edgerton

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Sanctuary Choir

Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art; thou my best thought, by day and by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true Word; I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord; thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tower; raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise; thou mine inheritance, now and always: thou and thou only, the first in my heart, High King of Heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Alicia Reese

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

*CLOSING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free

(Black hymnal no. 209)

**O Love, how vast, how flowing free, / O Love how filled with ecstasy,
That God a human form should take, and mortal be for mortals' sake.**

Not as an angel visiting, nor form celestial orbiting,

But born in flesh God chose to be, robed in our own humanity.

**For us baptized, and fasting long, for us was tempted by the wrong,
For us the pangs of hunger knew; for us the Tempter overthrew.**

**For us was beaten, whipped, and tried, and taken to be crucified,
So Love all this for us endured, and dying, life for us procured.**

**Arising from the dead again, our sovereign goes on high to reign;
And sends the Spirit to abide for strength and solace at our side.**

**Then for God's boundless love sing praise through endless ages, countless
days;**

**By Love we have been reconciled: salvation gained through God's own
Child.**

*BLESSING

Lydia Mulkey

*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

Mark Sudeith

Prelude on "Deo Gracias" by Healey Willan

*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) where we share our weekly newsletter and lots more!

Dinner and a Movie, March 17

Dinner and a Movie moves back one week this month to March 17. Join us in the lounge for a showing of "Descendant." Documentary filmmaker Margaret Brown follows descendants of the survivors from the Clotilda, the last ship that carried enslaved Africans to the United States, as they reclaim their story. Dinner at 6:00 (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 (free). Call Liz Swan (708) 567-3490.

Visiting Choir to Perform at First United, March 17

Enjoy an afternoon of music at First United before heading over to Dinner and a Movie! The Saline High School Chorale from Saline, Michigan will give a concert at 4:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary on March 17 as part of their spring choir tour. There is no cost for the concert and no need to RSVP.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PRESENTATIONS CONTINUE NEXT SUNDAY

If you have not yet had an opportunity to attend a Capital Campaign presentation or have new questions and would like to come back, please join us in Centennial Hall at 9:45 a.m. on March 19 or March 26. If you are not able to attend either session, but still have questions, please reach out to John Edgerton (jedgerton@firstunitedoakpark.com).

ADULT EDUCATION NEXT WEEK

Next Sunday, March 19, the Bible Group will share perspectives on John 9:1-41 (Jesus healing the man born blind, and the resulting confusion of the onlookers). We will meet at 9:45 a.m. in the conference room off the lounge.

LENTEN FELLOWSHIP: SOUP SUPPER, MARCH 22

Join us in the Chapel on March 22 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) to help us plan!

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 8th 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) 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).

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) for more information.



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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark

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