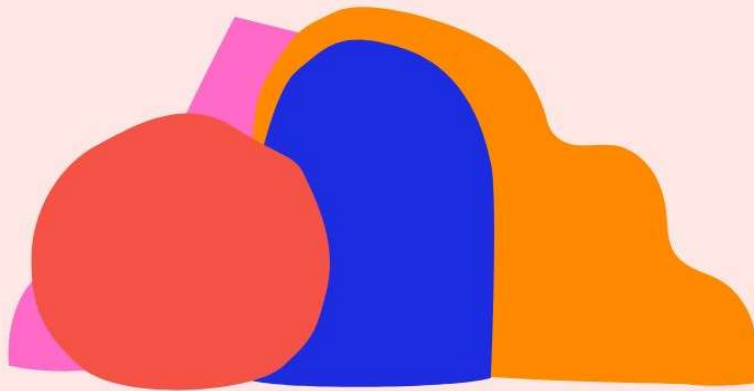


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

April 16, 2023



He has risen

An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Mark Sudeith

Hymn Prelude on 'Shall We Gather at the River' by Gary R. Smoke

WELCOME

Lydia Mulkey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Despotes

What will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ, who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

Congregation

Shall We Gather at the River (Black hymnal no. 597)

**Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod,
with its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?**

**Refrain: Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.**

**On the margin of the river, washing up its silver spray,
we will walk and worship ever, all the happy golden day. R/**

**As we reach the shining river, lay we every burden down;
grace our spirits will deliver, and provide a robe and crown. R/**

Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;
soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace. R/

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Joanne Despotis

Gracious God, calm me into a quietness that heals, and listens, and molds my longings and passions, my wounds, and wonderings, into a more holy and human shape...We confess that we are people who lose our way at times. You know our failures and shortcomings, but you see the sincerity of our efforts and love us completely. Help us to heal hurts we have caused, to forgive others, and seek forgiveness, as you forgive us, to love as broadly, deeply, and fully as you do.

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

We are Easter people, disciples of the Risen Christ, and nothing, in all of creation can separate us from the love of God.

Halleluia! Thanks be to God.

MUSICAL RESPONSE

Congregation

Now the Green Blade Rises (Black hymnal no. 238, v. 4)

**When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again like wheat that rises green.**

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

TIME FOR SHARING

Alicia Reese

*SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Congregation

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (Blue hymnal no. 172)

**My Shepherd will supply my need: Jehovah is His name:
In pastures fresh He makes me feed, / Beside the living stream.
He brings my wandering spirit back, / When I forsake His ways;
And leads me, for His mercy's sake, / In paths of truth and grace.**

When I walk through the shades of death Your presence is my stay;
One word of Your supporting breath / Drives all my fears away.
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, / Does still my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows, Your oil anoints my head.

The sure provisions of my God / Attend me all my days;
O may Your House be my abode, / And all my work be praise.
There would I find a settled rest, / While others go and come;
No more a stranger, or a guest, / But like a child at home.

SCRIPTURE READING – ROMANS 7:14-25

Joanne Despotes

SERMON – NOT WHAT I THOUGHT IT WAS

John Edgerton

SERMON RESPONSE

Congregation

Fifold Amen (Black hymnal no. 161)

Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Alicia Reese

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Mark Sudeith

Méditation-Prière by Alexandre Guilmant

*DOXOLOGY

Congregation

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
(*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 & 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

*CLOSING HYMN

Congregation

I've Got Peace Like a River (Black hymnal no. 478)

I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river,

I've got peace like a river,

in my soul.

I've got joy like a fountain, . . . in my soul.

I've got love like an ocean, . . . in my soul.

I've got faith like an anchor, . . . in my soul.

*BLESSING

John Edgerton

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Congregation

Halleluja (Black hymnal no. 236)

Halleluja!

POSTLUDE

Mark Sudeith

Alleluyas by Simon Preston

EVENTS AND UPDATES

Below is just a sampling of the news and events at First United. You can find our full calendar at firstunitedoakpark.com/calendar. Follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark) for our weekly newsletter and lots more.

FUSH STOCKS FOR SALE

Support our FUSH high school summer service trip with your stock purchase. Shares are \$20 and are available before and after worship in the lounge on Sundays through May 21. All stockholders will be invited to a meal after the trip to hear stories from our youth.

ADULT ED SPEAKER SERIES CONTINUES NEXT WEEK

Adult Ed will continue the series on "Misconceptions on Women in Biblical Interpretation" next week as Dr. Nancy Lee discusses Sarah, Hagar, and Abraham. Join us in Centennial Hall at 9:45. The Bible Group will also meet in the conference room to discuss the lectionary reading for the day.

DONUTS WITH DEACONS NEXT SUNDAY

Stay after worship next Sunday to enjoy donuts with our deacons! Not sure who your deacon is? Not sure what a deacon does? This is the perfect opportunity to meet our deacons and learn how they serve our First United community.

CROP HUNGER WALK IN HONOR OF SYLVIA MENNINGA AND DOUG WYMAN

Our local walk, Hunger Walkathon West, will take place on Sunday, May 7, and honors these two prior members of the planning team who have died within the last month. We have a proud history of participation in this community-wide effort which started with the Hunger Group that met at First United more than 35 years ago. Visit <https://bit.ly/2023CROPWALK> to join as a fundraiser/walker or to donate to the First United team/team member. Please consider joining us in the important effort to reduce hunger and hopelessness worldwide.

YOUTH TRIP REGISTRATIONS: FUJI SPRING RETREAT & FUSH SUMMER SERVICE

Calling all First United youth: Get your registrations in for the FUJI Spring Retreat and/or the FUSH Summer Service Trip. FUJI is headed to Tower Hill on May 5 through May 7. FUSH is headed to Sunset Gap, Tennessee on July 23 through July 29. Reach out to Alicia (areese@firstunitedokaprk.com) for the full details and links to register.

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 the office (office@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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Associate Pastor Alicia Reese – areese@firstunitedoakpark.com