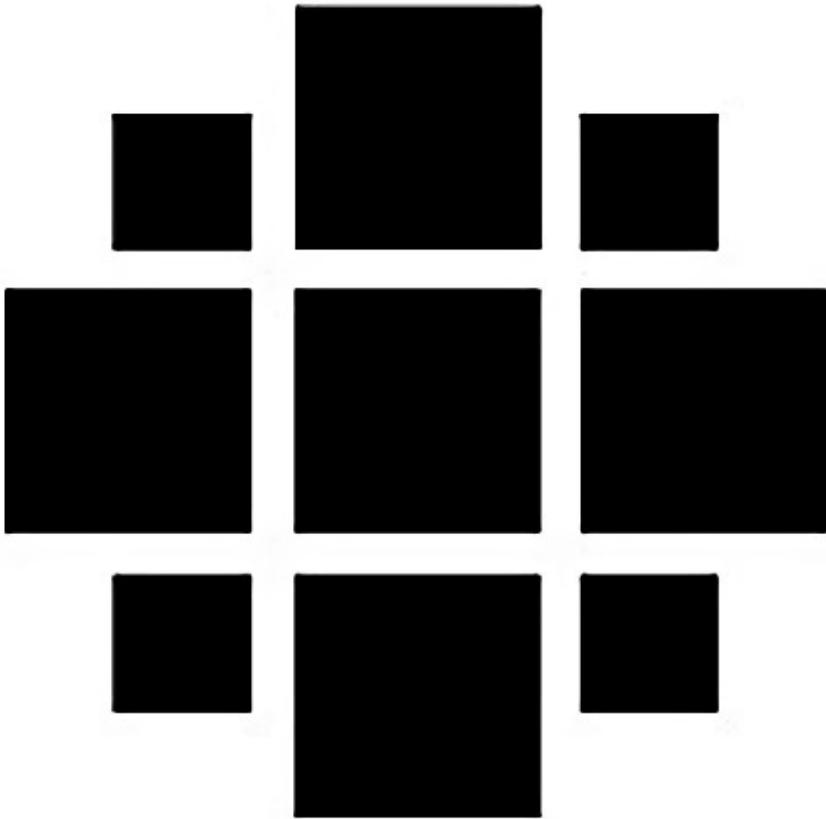


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK  
September 10, 2023



*An open community united in love and justice*

**Bold text indicates congregation participation**

\*Indication to stand in body or spirit

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

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PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

*Adagio from Organ Symphony No. 3 by Louis Vierne*

WELCOME

Lydia Mulkey

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Joanne Despotes

Where are the superheroes?

**Where can we find Superman or Batman? Where are the Avengers or the X-men?**

Listen to the cries, God, creation is broken!

**Not just floods and earthquakes, but hunger, violence, and neglect.**

The archnemesis of all things good wages war and pain.

**God, have mercy on us! Where are the superheroes?**

Perhaps there are heroes lurking in this very room. By the Spirit, one may have been given wisdom, another given faith, another may have gifts of healing, another the working of powerful deeds, and another may be a prophet. With our God-given powers combined, who knows what we might do! People of God, assemble!

\*PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you!**

\*OPENING HYMN

*God Welcomes All*

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

**God welcomes all, strangers and friends;**

**God's love is strong and it never ends.**

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Joanne Despotes

**Gracious One, there are days when we are overwhelmed by the challenges before us. There are times when we feel powerless. When it is so, gather us**

**together. You, the God who makes a way out of no way, are working within us to birth new worlds among us.**

*Time for Silent Prayer*

### ASSURANCE OF LOVE

Hear the good news, God has loved you from the beginning; God loves you now, and God will love you forever more! **Amen!**

### MUSICAL RESPONSE

*God Calls You Good*

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

**God calls me good, beloved child.**

**I am a treasure deeply prized.**

**And I can say to ev'ry doubting voice:**

**"God calls me good, beloved child."**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

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### TIME FOR SHARING

Alicia Reese

### \*SONG OF ILLUMINATION

*God of Abraham and Sarah* (Black hymnal no. 20)

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

(Tune: *Beach Spring*)

**God of Abraham and Sarah, God of Moses, Miriam's Guide;**

**God of David and the prophets, God in Jesus glorified:**

**Up from the dust you raise a people, breathe in the breath of life, of soul;**

**Down through the years the people praise you till alleluias make them whole!**

**God who dances in creation, spinning stars above our heads;**

**God whose face is scribed in music, by whose hand the earth is fed:**

**Up from the ground you raise the mountains, raise our spirits, lift our eyes;**

**Down through the years your people praise you till alleluias flood the skies!**

**God who loves the poor in spirit, God who comforts those who mourn;**

**Balm for wounds, the friend of sinners, taking the side of earth's forlorn:**

**Up from the depths you raise your people, giving them courage for the day;**

**Down through the years the people praise you till alleluias light their way!**

**In our lives from birth to dying, depth of sorrow, height of joy;  
Praising God in every season, let every key our hearts employ.  
Praise is the healing, praise, the glory, praise is the final mystery;  
Down through the years let people praise you till alleluias set them free!**

SCRIPTURE READING – 2 TIMOTHY 1:3-7

Joanne Despotes

SERMON

Lydia Mulkey

SERMON RESPONSE

*Jesus Calls Us, Over the Tumult* (Black hymnal no. 172, v. 1)

**Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea;  
Day by day that voice still calls us, saying, "Christian, follow me."**

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

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CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TESTIMONIAL

Leah Pollock

CALL TO THE OFFERING & COMMUNION

God is with you.

Alicia Reese  
& Lydia Mulkey

**And also with you.**

Let us open our hearts.

**We open our hearts to God and to one another.**

Let us give thanks.

**We thank God with joy.**

COMMUNION MUSIC

Sanctuary Choir

*Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether* by Harold Friedell

\*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*  
(Old Hundredth)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise Christ, all people here below;**

**Praise Holy Spirit evermore;**

**Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION  
& 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

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\*CLOSING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

**God of grace and God of glory, on they people pour thy power;  
crown thine ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.**

**Lo! the hosts of evil round us scorn thy Christ, assail his ways!  
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
for the living of these days, for the living of these days.**

**Cure thy children's warring madness; bend our pride to thy control;  
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
lest we miss thy kingdom's goal, lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.**

**Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore.  
Let the gift of thy salvation be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
serving thee whom we adore, serving thee whom we adore.**

\*BLESSING

Alicia Reese

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*Fivefold Amen*

**Amen!**

POSTLUDE

*Main Theme* by John Williams

Bobby Nguyen

# 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](http://firstunitedoakpark.com/calendar). Follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark](https://facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark)) for our weekly newsletter and lots more.*

## Interim Search Team Listening Session After Worship

Grab your root beer float and then join members of the Interim Pastoral Search Team for a brief opportunity to share your thoughts and hopes about our interim period. Please note, there will not be a formal update at this session.

## Fostering Connection and Support Begins on September 14

Fostering Connection and Support is a virtual, drop-in group that meets on Thursdays at 10 a.m. on Zoom. Come when you like; stay as long as you can. Email the office ([hvanderberg@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:hvanderberg@firstunitedoakpark.com)) for the Zoom link.

## Bible Study Resumes

Bible Study is starting up again on Sunday, September 17 from 9:45-10:45 a.m. in the conference room. Reverend Charlie Morris will lead the first three sessions, September 17 and 24 and October 1, on chapters in the book of Matthew.

## Mental Health Challenges: Faith and Mental Health

A panel of mental health experts will explore how faith can help us find meaning and purpose in the midst of suffering and help us connect with a community that cares during the first of a 2-part series on Current Mental Health Challenges. The Speaker Series meets in Centennial Hall on Sunday, September 17 from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

## Fall Fellowship Fair

The Fall Fellowship Fair will return for a second year after worship on September 17. Enjoy music, play some lawn games, and get your hot dog fix on the lawn after church next Sunday. Our ministry teams will be there to greet you and explain more about their work.

## House to Home's 10<sup>th</sup> Year Benefits Housing Forward

Check out the House to Home sign-up in the Lounge starting next Sunday. First United celebrates ten years providing the items that turn a house into a home. Sign up to contribute to this signature project using the QR code or signing up next week in the lounge.



# 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. Weekly Bible study and Speaker Series meet during Sunday education hour at 9:45 a.m.

## 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., September through mid-May, 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

Are you interested in singing in worship with our Sanctuary Choir? Rehearsals will resume in September. 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 – 7 p.m. here at the church, September through mid-May. 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)

Associate Pastor Lydia Mulkey – [lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com)

Associate Pastor Alicia Reese – [areese@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:areese@firstunitedoakpark.com)