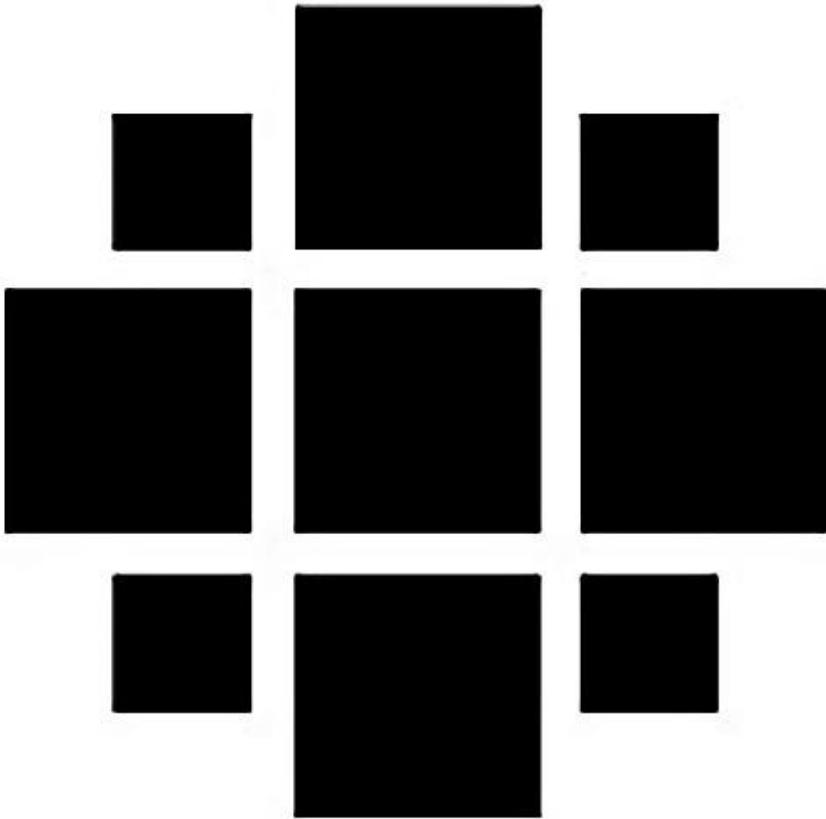


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK
September 24, 2023



An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

Pastorale by Charles Wesley

WELCOME

Lydia Mulkey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Susan Macaulay

The world cries out in distress. How shall we answer?

We cannot pass by as though nothing is wrong.

How shall we answer?

We cannot ignore the indignities and suffering of our fellow human beings.

How shall we answer?

We must be the loving neighbor wherever we can.

*PASSING THE PEACE

If there is to be peace in the world,

There must be peace in the nations.

If there is to be peace in the nations,

There must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities,

There must be peace between neighbors.

If there is to be peace between neighbors,

There must be peace in the home.

Of there is to be peace in the home,

There must be peace in the heart.

The practice of being peacemakers begins here, in our church home. May you find your heart changed, filled, renewed each time we pass the peace of God to one another so that we may become conduits of God's love and peace in our city, our nation, and our world. – *adapted poem attributed to Lao Tzu*

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

They Asked, "Who's My Neighbor?" (Black hymnal no. 541)

**They asked, "Who's my neighbor and whom should I love;
for whom should I do a good deed?"**

Then Jesus related a story and said,

"It's anyone who has a need, yes, anyone who has a need."

**There once was a traveler set on by thieves
who beat him and left him to die;**

A priest and a Levite each saw him in pain;

but they turned away and walked by, yes, they turned away and walked by.

**A certain Samaritan then came along
to bind up his wounds and give aid;**

He took him to stay at an inn until well,

and for all the service he paid, yes, for all the service he paid.

**I know who's my neighbor and whom I should love,
for whom I should do a good deed;**

For Jesus made clear in the story he told,

it's anyone who has a need, yes, anyone who has a need.

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Susan Macaulay

**Holy God of justice and mercy, we come to you this day seeking your healing
and reconciling love. The whole world seems to be crying out in pain. Too often
we tune out the cries of others because we are overwhelmed by their needs and
feel helpless in the face of such suffering. We look away, we cross over to the
other side where it is more comfortable. We put ourselves first.**

**Open our hearts and our eyes to see you, O God, in each person who cries out
for help. Empower us to action rather than apathy. Forgive us. Make us ready
to truly be your disciples, in word and deed.**

Time for Silent Prayer

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

**Friends, fear not. God's love is always reaching out to you, ready to receive you
again. You are God's beloved, forgiven and made whole.**

Thanks be to God!

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

TIME FOR SHARING

Lydia Mulkey

*SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Blest Be the Holy Other

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

**Blest be the holy other who has loved and lost and grieved.
The strife imposed could not undo God's love and grace received.**

**Blest be the holy other who's endured the worst of all—
the ignorant and petty few that would deny their call.**

**Blest be the holy other when the church has done them wrong.
God made us all, not just the men, to love and to belong.**

**Blest be the holy other now whose sacred worth we know,
who teach us where and when and how God's telling us to go.**

SCRIPTURE READING – LUKE 10:25-37

Susan Macaulay

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON -- HEROES LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Alicia Reese

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

NEXT IS NOW: CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Marteki Reed

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Alicia Reese

4th Sunday, Pastoral Emergency Fund

OFFERTORY

Sanctuary Choir

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy by Calvin Hampton

There's a wideness in God's mercy / Like the wideness of the sea;

There's a kindness in his justice / Which is more than liberty.

There is plentiful redemption / In the blood that has been shed;

There is joy for all the members / In the sorrows of the Head.

For the love of God is broader / Than the measures of our mind,

And the heart of the Eternal / Is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more simple / We should take him at his word,

And our lives would be all sunshine / In the sweetness of our Lord.

Fearful souls, why will you scatter / Like a crowd of frightened sheep?

Foolish hearts, why will you wander / From a love so true and deep?

There is welcome for the sinner / And more graces for the good;

There is mercy with the Savior, / There is healing in his blood.

*DOXOLOGY

Sanctuary Choir

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

& Congregation

(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.

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

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

My Life Flows on in Endless Song (Black hymnal no. 476)

**My life flows on in endless song; above earth's lamentation,
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing:
It finds an echo in my soul—how can I keep from singing?**

**What though my joys and comforts die? My Savior still is living.
What though the shadows gather 'round? A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that Rock I'm clinging;
Since Love commands both heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?**

**When tyrants tremble, sick with fear, and hear their death knells ringing;
when friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
In prison cell and dungeon vile our thoughts to them are winging;
When friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?**

**I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin: I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway smooths, since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing;
All things are mine since I am Christ's—how can I keep from singing?**

*BLESSING

Alicia Reese

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Fivefold Amen

Amen!

POSTLUDE

Bobby Nguyen

March from Scipio by G. F. Handel, arr. by N. Rawsthorne

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.

Sign Up for House to Home Today

Have you signed up to contribute to House to Home? This signature project provides household goods and small appliances to families moving from temporary to permanent housing. Use the QR code or sign up in person now through October 1! Questions? Reach out to Ann Tanner (847-977-5932; awtanner@gmail.com).



90+ Birthday Party Next Sunday

Stay after worship next Sunday (October 1) for a special celebration honoring First United members and friends who have reached their nineties and beyond! Cake will be served in the lounge.

Wholly: Worship for the Whole People of God

Wholly: Worship for the Whole People of God is a worship experience that explores holy ideas in an accessible way. Whether you are single or partnered, in preschool or retirement, have faith or fears, are on top of the world or struggling to hold it all together, you belong at Wholly! We debut Wholly on October 1 at 4:30 p.m. with a story, exploration, community meal, and blessing.

New Adult Ed Speaker Series

Next Sunday, Adult Ed presents the first of a three-part series on "Otherness in the Old Testament" with a look at the book of Deuteronomy, which advocates the extermination of indigenous populations from the land of Canaan. How do we handle the various readings of these texts today? 9:45-10:45 a.m. in Centennial Hall.

Celebration of Life for Bob Haisman, October 7

First United will hold a celebration of life for Bob Haisman on October 7 at 2 p.m. A reception at the church will follow the service.

Communication Survey

The Communications Team wants to know how YOU view First United. Read more about the upcoming branding project in the most recent Messenger Bell and submit your survey responses using the QR code now through September 30.



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 8th 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) to learn more.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Are you interested in singing in worship with our Sanctuary Choir? Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., September through May. 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 – 7 p.m. here at the church, September through mid-May. Contact Alicia Reese (areese@firstunitedoakpark.com) for more information.



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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark

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