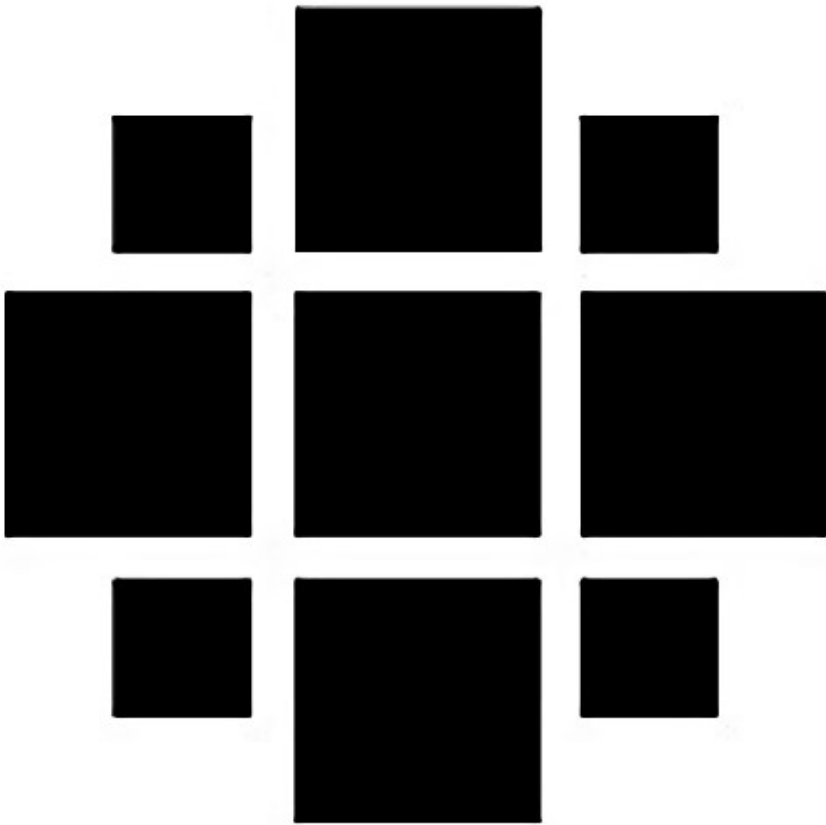


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

November 26, 2023



An open community united in love and justice

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Walter Whitehouse

Nun danket alle Gott (Cantata 79) by J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

WELCOME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Mark Breen

Let us muse over the faithfulness of God,

Bask in Their companionship,

Meditate upon Their sincerity.

Let's wax poetic about the nearness of God,

Ponder where They're close at hand,

Praise Their steadfastness in silence and song.

Give thanks to our God, constant and kind.

God is worthy of our contemplation; worthy of our celebration!

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir

Come, O Thankful People, Come (Black hymnal no. 422)

& Congregation

Come, O thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home;

all is safely gathered in as the winter storms begin;

God our Maker does provide for our wants to be supplied;

come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

All the blessings of the field, all the stores the gardens yield,

all the fruits in full supply, ripened 'neath the summer sky,

All that spring with bounteous hand scatters o'er the smiling land,

all that liberal autumn pours from its rich o'erflowing stores,

These to you, our God we owe, source from whom all blessings flow;

and for these our songs we raise, grateful vows and solemn praise.

Come, then, thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home;

come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Mark Breen

When our words and actions cause harm, may we seek repair. When loss brims over the walls of our hearts, may we seek mourning. When despair looms large in our lives, may we seek even a sliver of hope. When we distract ourselves from the present moment, may we begin again.

Time for Silent Prayer

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

Hear the good news. There is nothing you can say or do that could ever separate you from the love of God. You are loved, forgiven, and free. Amen.

MUSICAL ASSURANCE

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

God Calls You Good by Paul M. Vasile

**God calls you good, beloved child.
You are a treasure deeply prized.
And you can say to ev'ry doubting voice:
"God calls you good, beloved child.
God calls you good, beloved child."**

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

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

TIME FOR SHARING

Meghan Premo-Hopkins

*SONG OF ILLUMINATION

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

All People That on Earth Do Dwell (Black hymnal no. 7)

**All people that on earth do dwell, sing out your faith with cheerful voice;
Delight in God whose praise you tell, whose presence calls you to rejoice.**

**Know that there is one God, indeed, who fashions us without our aid,
Who claims us, gives us all we need, whose tender care will never fade.**

**Enter the sacred gates with praise, with joy approach the temple walls.
Extol and bless our God always as people whom the Spirit calls.**

**Proclaim again that God is good, whose mercy is forever sure,
Whose truth at all times firmly stood, and shall from age to age endure.**

SCRIPTURE READING – PSALM 100:1-5

Mark Breen

SERMON – WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

Lydia Mulkey

SERMON RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir

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

**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

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Sanctuary Choir

Thanks Be to God by Marty Haugen

Thanks be to God when people care, thanks be for friends and loved ones,
Thanks be to God forever and ever.

Thanks be to God for food and home, thanks be for health and laughter,
Thanks be to God forever and ever.

Thanks be to God when hatred ends, thanks be for peace and safety,
Thanks be to God forever and ever.

Teach us the way of your peace, kindle your fire within us,
Give us a vision of a world where people care for each other.

We shall overcome, we shall overcome, / We shall overcome someday.
Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe / That we shall overcome someday.

*DOXOLOGY

Sanctuary Choir

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

& Congregation

**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

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

Now Thank We All Our God (Black hymnal no. 419)

**Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices,
Who, from our parents' arms, has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.**

**O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
And keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.**

**All praise and thanks to God our Maker now be given,
To Christ, and Spirit, too, our help in highest heaven,
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.**

***BLESSING**

Lydia Mulkey

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

Sanctuary Choir
& Congregation

Fivefold Amen

Amen!

POSTLUDE

Walter Whitehouse


Nun danket alle Gott by Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

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.

Advent 2023: How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

Advent begins next week and we start our new series, "How Does a Weary World Rejoice?" With resources from A Sanctified Art, we invite you to look closely at the details of the Advent story and discover where joy is sprinkled throughout the narrative. We will have devotional booklets available in both print and electronic form as well as Advent calendars available for you to pick up starting next week.



How does a
weary world
rejoice?

Advent Worship

Dec. 3	11 a.m.	We Acknowledge Our Weariness
Dec. 10	11 a.m.	We Find Joy in Connection (& Hanging of the Greens)
Dec. 17	11 a.m.	We Allow Ourselves To Be Amazed
Dec. 20	6 p.m.	Liturgy for the Weary (Blue Christmas)
Dec. 24	11 a.m.	We Sing Stories of Hope (Virtual on YouTube)

Christmas Eve Worship at 5 & 8 p.m.

NEXT BEGINS NOW: Make Your Commitment Today

At this time of thankful attention to our blessings, the enduring gift of First United Church stands high. Our Capital Campaign, NEXT BEGINS NOW, embodies our gratitude and our vision for our church's bright future. Please express your own thanks by making a generous commitment now. Thanks!

Adult Education Service Project Next Sunday

Next Sunday, December 3, join Adult Ed at 9:45 a.m. in Centennial Hall to make a shawl, small blanket, scarf, or pillow for the migrants sleeping at the Austin Police Station. No sewing required and we will provide all necessary materials. The Bible Group will meet in the Conference Room at 9:45.

Alternative Christmas Store Starts Next Week

Shop the Alternative Christmas Store to benefit our local mission partners and/or support international fair trade. We also offer a way to donate directly to some of our Faith in Action Mission Partners. Shopping dates are December 3, 10, and 17 before and after worship.

Dinner & a Movie, December 1

Dinner & a Movie is meeting early in December for a showing of "Women Talking." Dinner at 6:00 p.m. (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 (free). Signup using Signup Genius (available in the eblast) or email Ron Haas (haas.inchicago@comcast.com).

FUSH Cookie Bake Orders Due Soon!

Help raise funds for youth activities and events while enjoying some delicious holiday treats. Cookies are sold by the dozen and are \$8 per box. Use the QR Code to order by December 1. Pick-up will be December 10.



MIDPOINT Christmas Party & White Elephant, December 2

Gather at 1033 Claremont, Oak Park at 7 p.m. for an evening of holiday celebration with MIDPOINT. Bring a treat to share, your favorite beverage, and a silly white elephant gift. Contact Barbara Metric (barbarametric@comcast.net) if you have questions.

Children's Ministry Advent Event, December 9

Join the Children's Ministry team in the lounge from 9-11 a.m. on December 9. Make an Advent wreath, Christmas ornaments, and a peg people nativity set. Take some fun holiday pics in the photo booth. This event is free and open to the whole community.

Sing We Joyous, December 9 & 10

The Oriana Singers, City Voices, and Pro Musica Youth Chorus will ring in the season with the holiday spectacular "Sing We Joyous" on December 9 at 7:30 p.m. and December 10 at 4 p.m. at First United. Visit oriana.org to purchase tickets and for more information.

Deck the Halls with Soup and Singing, December 11

Join other Prime Timers for a soup luncheon and a chance to sing Christmas carols at noon Monday, December 11, in Centennial Hall. Soup, bread, dessert, and cider will be supplied; the cost is \$5. RSVP by December 7 to Sher Watts Spooner (sandaspooner@comcast.net).

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.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT FIRST UNITED

Interested in learning more about First United Church? Look for members wearing gold buttons, talk to Pastor Lydia, or join us for a Newcomers class held three times per year. Next class to be held late winter or early spring.

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 the office (office@firstunitedoakpark.com) for more information.



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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark

Pastor Lydia Mulkey – lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com