

# FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

January 28, 2024



*An open community united in love and justice*

# PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

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## PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

*Diapason Movement* by John Keeble

## WELCOME

Rev. Beth Dickerson

## INVOCATION

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

Sher Watts Spooner

This is the day that God has made;

**let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

O come, let us worship and turn to the Divine;

**let us kneel before God, our Maker.**

Blessed be the name of God from this time on and forever more.

**From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Creator be praised.**

It is good to give thanks to God, to sing praises to your name, O Most High;

Let us share our thanksgiving and praise with God!

### \*PASSING THE PEACE

May the peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

### \*OPENING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*Forward through the Ages* (Black hymnal no. 377)

**Forward through the ages, in unbroken line,**

**move the faithful spirits at the call divine;**

**Gifts in differing measure, hearts of one accord,**

**manifold in service, one the sure reward.**

**Wide grows God's dominion, reign of love and peace;**

**for it we must labor, till all strivings cease.**

**Prophets have proclaimed it, teachers testified,**

**poets sung its glory, martyrs for it died.**

**Not alone we conquer, not alone we fall;**

**in each loss or triumph, lose or triumph all.**

**Bound by God's far purpose in one living whole,  
move we on together to the shining goal.**

## PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Rev. Beth Dickerson

Gentle and holy God, we acknowledge to you, to one another, and to ourselves that we are not what you have called us to be. We have stifled our gifts and wasted our time. We have avoided opportunities to offer kindness, but have been quick at times to take offense. We have pretended that we could make no contribution to peace and justice in our world and have excused from risk-taking in our own community. Have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and help us to live our lives differently. We pray in the name of Jesus, whose call to follow haunts our every prayer. Amen.

*Time for Silence*

## ASSURANCE OF LOVE

One fact remains that does not change: God has loved you, loves you now, and will love you always. This is the good news that brings us new life.

## MUSICAL RESPONSE

*Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive*

**"Forgive our sins as we forgive," you taught us, Lord, to pray,  
but you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say.**

**How can your pardon reach and bless the unforgiving heart  
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bitterness depart?**

**In blazing light your cross reveals the truth we dimly knew:  
what trivial debts are owed to us, how great our debt to you!**

**Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls and bid resentment cease.  
Then, by your mercy reconciled, our lives will spread your peace.**

## LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

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### TIME FOR SHARING

Rev. Beth Dickerson

### \*HYMN OF ILLUMINATION

*Pass It On* by Kurt Kaiser

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

**It only takes a spark to get a fire going  
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing;**

That's how it is with God's love  
Once you've experienced it;  
You spread His love to everyone;  
You want to pass it on.

What a wondrous time is spring,  
When all the trees are budding  
The birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming  
That's how it is with God's love  
Once you've experienced it;  
You want to sing / It's fresh like spring,  
You want to pass it on.

I wish for you my friend  
This happiness that I've found  
You can depend on Him,  
It matters not where you're bound  
I'll shout it from the mountain top  
I want the world to know  
The Lord of love has come to me,  
I want to pass it on.

I'll shout it from the mountain top,  
I want my world to know,  
The Lord of love has come to me,  
I want to pass it on.

SCRIPTURE READING – I CORINTHIANS 12:4-11

Sher Watts Spooner

SERMON –

Rev. Beth Dickerson

THE WONDROUS & MYSTERIOUS SPIRITUAL GIFTS OF GOD

SERMON RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*God of Change and Glory* (Black hymnal no. 177, v. 1)

**God of change and glory, God of time and space,  
when we fear the future, give to us your grace.**

**In the midst of changing ways give us still the grace to praise.  
Many gifts, one Spirit, one love known in many ways.**

***Refrain:* Many gifts, one Spirit, one love known in many ways.  
In our difference is blessing, from diversity we praise  
one Giver, one Word, one Spirit, one God  
known in many ways, hallowing our days.  
For the Giver, for the gifts, praise, praise, praise!**

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

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FOURTH SUNDAY OFFERING

Marcus Payne II

Lighthouse Foundation of Chicagoland

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Rev. Beth Dickerson

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Sanctuary Choir

*It Is Well with My Soul* by Gary Matheny

When peace like a river, attends my way;  
When sorrows, like sea billows, roll;  
Whatever my lot, you have taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate  
And shed his own blood for my soul.

He lives—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;  
My sin, not in part, but the whole,  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

And, Lord, haste the day when our faith shall be sight,  
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,  
The trumpet shall sound, and the Lord shall descend;  
Even so, it is well with my soul.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Laurie Jolicoeur

**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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INVITATION TO JOIN THE CIRCLE

Rev. Beth Dickerson

\*CLOSING HYMN

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*In the Bulb There Is a Flower* (Black hymnal no. 433)

**In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

**There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;  
there's a dawn for every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

**In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

\*BLESSING

Rev. Beth Dickerson

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Sanctuary Choir  
& Congregation

*God Be with You* (Black hymnal no. 81, v. 1)

**God be with you till we meet again; / By good counsel guide, uphold you,  
With a shepherd's care enfold you: / God be with you till we meet again. 2x**

**Refrain: Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Jesus' feet;  
Till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.**

POSTLUDE

Bobby Nguyen

*Allegro from Five Pieces for Musical Clock* (WoO 33) by Ludwig van Beethoven

# 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.*

## Reception to Welcome Interim Pastor Phil Price on February 4

Interim Lead Pastor Philip Price leads his first worship service at First United on February 4. Stay after worship to welcome Pastor Phil with a light luncheon in Centennial Hall!

## Youth Ski Trip, February 4

All FUSH and FUJI youth are invited for a day of skiing at Alpine Valley Resort in East Troy, Wisconsin. We'll go up by van from First United, spend the day skiing (or riding) and be home the same day. Sign up using the link in the FUJI/FUSH email and contact Katie O'Shea ([KFO0305@gmail.com](mailto:KFO0305@gmail.com)) with questions.

## New Speaker Series Starts Next Sunday, February 4

In February, Adult Ed turns focuses on Migratory Journeys: Seeking a Better Life. The series begins as Linda Sandman & Rich Wheelock, Jackie Eckholm & David Wilson, and Sara Stevenson & Mark Breen reflect on their experiences following the Civil Rights Trail through Nashville, Atlanta, Tuskegee, Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, and Memphis. Meet in Centennial Hall at 9:45 a.m.

## Dinner and a Movie, February 9

February's showing of Dinner and Movie features *Captain Fantastic*. Dinner at 6:00 (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 (free). Use the Signup Genius link in the weekly eblast or email Ron Haas ([haas.inchicago@comcast.net](mailto:haas.inchicago@comcast.net)) to RSVP.

## Ash Wednesday Worship, February 14

Yes, you read that right, Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year. First United will hold a family-friendly service at 6:30 p.m. on Ash Wednesday to put away the pressures of the world that ask us to perform and to put on brave fronts. To silence the voices that ask us to be perfect. We gather to remember that we are dust and to dust we shall return.

## FUNS Registration Is Open for All

First United Church Nursery School is now accepting registrations for the 2024-2025 school year. We are a part-day program offering 2, 3 and 4-day-a-week classes for 2-year-olds, and 4 and 5-day-a-week classes for children ages 3-5. Registration forms are available on our website at [www.firstunitedschool.com/enrollment](http://www.firstunitedschool.com/enrollment). Questions? Call or email Amy Cardin at [acardin@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:acardin@firstunitedoakpark.com) or 708-848-4910.

# 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 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 are Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., September through May. 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 Lydia Mulkey ([lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com](mailto:lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com)) for more information.



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