

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

August 17, 2025



Living God's All-Inclusive Love

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

Lambert's Fireside and Fellowes' Delight by Herbert Howell

WELCOME

Pastor Phil Price

*CALL TO WORSHIP

As sunlight dazzles on lakes and sunsets blaze through the sky,

Let the brilliance of our Creator's love guide us to discover God's way for us.

With the cry of the loon rising up into the dusk or the shouts of children playing in a field,

Let the melody of God's love sung through Jesus help us to receive God's word for us.

Like the granite running jagged through the hills or creeks flowing from source to sea,

Let the presence of Spirit ground us so we may know God's strength within us.

As sunlight dazzles on lakes and sunsets blaze through the sky,

Let the brilliance of our Creator's love guide us to discover God's way for us.

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

All Things Bright and Beautiful (Black hymnal no. 31)

Refrain: **All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,**

All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.

Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings,

God made their glowing colors, and made their tiny wings. R/

The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,

The sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky. R/

The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,

The ripe fruits in the garden, God made them every one. R/

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Pastor Phil

We profess and we confess. We profess our highest aspirations and hopes. We dream of lofty places of justice and peace. We sustain a dream of a joy that covers the earth, and that offers daily bread for all. We lift up prayers that offer forgiveness and receive grace. We confess that often we fall short of all that we profess. Forgive us when we travel on paths of self-righteous judgment rather than seeking the harder and rarer pathways of reconciliation. Forgive us when we hold on to simple stories of half-truths, and are willfully blind to whole stories that complex and that don't fit into neat categories. Forgive us for those times we are quicker to action and slower to understand. Be in us the still small voice of wisdom and discernment, clarity and grace.

Time for silent prayer.

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

The good news is that God is not done with us. We serve a God who yearns for us; who will not let go; and who longs for our return. We speak of a God who is with us even when we are not with God; who loves us, even during those times we fall in love with other priorities, who seeks us even when we don't want to be found. God seeks to heal us where we hurt, to lift us when we are down and to find us when we have lost our way. Thanks be to God.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

*HYMN OF ILLUMINATION

God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale (Black hymnal no. 32, vv. 1, 3 & 6)

**God of the sparrow, God of the whale, God of the swirling stars,
How does the creature say Awe? How does the creature say Praise?**

**God of the rainbow, God of the cross, God of the empty grave,
How does the creature say Grace? How does the creature say Thanks?**

**God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart,
How do your children say Joy? How do your children say Home?**

SCRIPTURE READING – DEUTERONOMY 10:17-19

MATTHEW 25:34-40

MESSAGE – FUSH MISSION REPORT

Youth: Jad Abboud, Romy Auch, Frannie Hill, Katherine Hollister-Mennenga,
Margie Milinovich

Adults: Meghan Aeschleman, Maddie Gillette, Sofie Karnowski, Katie O'Shea

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

Pastors Phil & Lydia

MUSIC FOR THE BLESSING

Bobby Nguyen

His Eye Is on the Sparrow

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Pastor Phil

Communion Servers this month are members of the Sanctuary Choir and Sanctuary Band.

OFFERTORY

Pastor Lydia

Bless the Beasts and the Children by DeVorson/Botkin

*DOXOLOGY

**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

Pastor Phil

**Our Creator, our Mother, and 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 & SERVICE

*CLOSING HYMN

All God's Critters Got a Place in the Choir by Bill Staines

Refrain: **All God's critters got a place in the choir**

Some sing low, some sing higher

Some sing out loud on the telephone wire

And some just clap their hands, or paws or anything they got now

Well, listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom

Where the bullfrog croaks and the hippopotamus

Moans and groans with a big to-do

And the old cow just goes "Moo."

Well, the dogs and the cats they take up the middle

The honeybee hums and the crickets fiddle

The donkey brays and the pony neighs

The old coyote howls. R/

Well, listen to the top where the little bird sings

The melody with the high voice ringing

The hoot owl hollers over everything

And the jaybird disagrees.

Singing in the nighttime, singing in the day

The little duck quacks and he's on his way

The 'possum don't have much to say

And the porcupine talks to herself. R/

Everybody here is a part of the plan

We all get to play in the great critter band

From the eagle in the sky to the whale in the sea

It's one great symphony. R/ 2x

INVITATION TO JOIN THE CIRCLE

Pastor Lydia

*BLESSING

Pastor Phil

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace, go now in peace

May the love of God surround you

Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

POSTLUDE

Bobby Nguyen

The Short-Tempered Clavier, IV. D Major by P.D.Q. Bach

EVENTS AND UPDATES

Below is a sampling of the news and events at First United. We invite you to subscribe to receive our monthly "Messenger Bell" newsletter and our weekly "News & Events" eblast by visiting firstunitedoakpark.com.

Welcome New Members

Last week in worship, we welcomed Amy Bender, Willie Coppage, Vivian Gama, and Rich Pokorny into membership at First United. So glad to have you here!

When did you last read the U.S. Constitution?

Read the U.S. Constitution aloud with members of our faith community. Join us in the chapel on Tuesday, August 19, 2-3:30 p.m. RSVP to Pete Todd (ptodd@firstunitedoakpark.com) or Sara Stevenson (stevensonsa@comcast.net).

Blessing of the Backpacks, August 24

Bring your backpacks to worship on August 24 for a special blessing for a safe, happy, and healthy school year! Teachers, bring your bags, too!

Fourth Sunday Offering Next Week

Next week is the August Fourth Sunday offering benefitting Chico Religious Leadership Network on Latin America. Our immigrant communities need our generosity and solidarity!

Church School Registration Carnival, August 24

Join the fun after worship on August 24 for food, carnival-style games and fun on the church lawn. You can also get registered for Church School!

Prime Time Breakfast at Al's Grill, August 28

Join Prime Time at 9 a.m. on August 28 at Al's Grill (1100 Madison, Oak Park) for breakfast! \$20 pp will cover breakfast, tax and tip. Please RSVP to Janet Haisman (jhaisman59@gmail.com) by August 25.

First United Closed, September 1

First United will be closed and all staff will have the day off on September 1 for Labor Day.

Music Ministry Rehearsals Resume, September 3

Music rehearsals begin September 3! Bell Choir will rehearse September 3 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Sanctuary Choir will rehearse from 7:30-8:30 p.m. in the choir room. Contact Dr. Sally Sloane (ssloane@firstunitedoakpark.com) for more information.

WELCOME TO FIRST UNITED!

We are a union church of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ, dedicated to sharing Christ's radically inclusive love. We welcome all, regardless of who you love, where you've come from, what religious background you have, or where you are on your faith journey. As a More Light/Open and Affirming congregation, we are committed to the full inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in membership and 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. Contact Lydia Mulkey (lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com).

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 at 9:45 a.m. September through May.

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).

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Our Sanctuary Choir leads worship most Sundays and rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. during the season. Our Handbell Choir rings a few times per year and rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Both programs run September through May. Contact Sally Sloane (ssloane@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).



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

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