

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK
August 31, 2025



Living God's All-Inclusive Love

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

Monodie by Olivier Messiaen

WELCOME

Pastor Lydia Mulkey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Blessed are those who delight in the commands of God:

Welcome the stranger.

Share what you have.

Remember those in prison.

Seek justice for your neighbors.

Let mutual love continue.

Let us praise God who opens our hearts to one another and fills our lives with the riches of love's blessings.

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

Earth and All Stars (Blue hymnal no. 458)

Earth and all stars, loud rushing planets sing to the Lord a new song!

Hail, wind and rain, loud blowing snowstorm sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things. We will sing praises with a new song!

Steel and machines, loud pounding hammers sing to the lord a new song!

Limestone and beams, loud building workers sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things. We will sing praises with a new song!

Classrooms and labs, loud boiling test tubes sing to the Lord a new song!

Athlete and band, loud cheering people sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things. We will sing praises with a new song!

Knowledge and truth, loud sounding wisdom sing to the Lord a new song!

Daughter and son, loud praying members sing to the Lord a new song!

God has done marvelous things. We will sing praises with a new song!

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Pastor Lydia

Our Creator, who binds our lives together, make us brave in our love for one another. When evil seeks to turn us against our neighbors, give us the strength to choose another way. When fear lures us toward trying to take control, remind us of the power of vulnerability. Let courage rise up among us and pride be cast aside.

Time for silent prayer.

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

Have you accepted how deeply loved you are? Are you aware that the Divine is delighted by your existence? If you only knew how boundless God's love is for you, your love for neighbor would be equally boundless.

INVITATION TO THE CHILDREN

MUSICAL RESPONSE

This Little Light of Mine

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. (x3)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

TIME FOR SHARING

*HYMN OF ILLUMINATION

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life (Black hymnal no. 543 vv. 1-4)

**Where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of clan and race,
Above the noise of selfish strife, O Christ, we hear your voice of grace.**

**In haunts of wretchedness and need, on shadowed thresholds framed with fears,
From paths where hide the lures of greed, we catch the vision of your tears.**

**From tender childhood's helplessness, from human griefs and burdened toil,
From famished souls, from sorrows' stress, we know your heart does not recoil.**

**The cup of water given for you still holds the freshness of your grace;
Yet long these multitudes to view the deep compassion of your face.**

SCRIPTURE READING – HEBREWS 13:1-8

SERMON – LOVE CONTINUES

Pastor Lydia

*SERMON RESPONSE

Teach Us Your Ways

**Teach us Your ways, teach us Your ways/As we learn from one another
Learn to love each other/Teach us Your ways.**

**Hallelujah, hallelujah/Let us learn from one another
Learn to love each other/Teach us Your ways.**

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

FIFTH SUNDAY OFFERING

*This special fifth Sunday offering will benefit the Pastoral Emergency Fund which allows
First United to support individual members and friends in times of particular need.*

CALL TO THE OFFERING

Pastor Lydia

OFFERTORY

Mack Loveless-Mancuso

Sonatina Op. 36 #1 Allegro by Muzio Clementi

*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 Lydia

**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

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant (Black hymnal no. 539)

Won't you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too.

We are pilgrims on a journey, we are travelers on the road;

We are here to help each other go the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shadow of your fear;

I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.

I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven we shall find such harmony,

Born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

Won't you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too.

INVITATION TO JOIN THE CIRCLE

Pastor Lydia

*BLESSING

*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

Toccata in F by Dieterich Buxtehude

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.

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.

Gathering Day Next Sunday! Worship Returns to 11 a.m.

Next Sunday marks the start of the program year. Worship will move back to 11 a.m. We hope you will stay after worship for our traditional Gathering Day celebration with root beer floats!

Church School Resumes Next Sunday

Church School is ready to welcome your preschool through middle school child starting next Sunday. Register using the QR code. Check-in will begin in the lounge at 9:30 and classes run from 9:45 to 10:45. Questions? Reach out to Pastor Lydia (lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com).



Youth Programs Resume September 7

Youth groups will kick off on September 7 for Middle School (6-8 grades) and High School. Both groups will meet from 5-7 p.m. on the church lawn. Parents, please join us as well for a meet-and-greet with our youth team. Use the QR code to register your youth prior to September 7.



Let's Gather Again! Small Group Sign Ups Coming Soon

Small Groups are returning this fall for a six-week journey of faith and fellowship beginning the week of October 5. Signups will be held in person on September 7, 14, and 21, with online registration also available during the signup period. Whether you've joined before or want to try something new, come and be part of this warm, welcoming time together!

Adult Ed Speaker Series Begins September 14

Join Adult Ed on September 14 at 9:45 a.m. in Centennial Hall for the first Speaker Series presentation of the year! Vicki Scaman, Oak Park Village President, and Rob Guenther, President of the Oak Park-River Forest Chamber of Commerce, will present and lead discussion on the top issues that they see facing Oak Park in the next twelve months.

Adult Ed Bible Group Resumes September 14

The Bible Group will resume on September 14 at 9:45 a.m. in the Conference Room. This fall, the group will struggle with stories full of apparent injustice that teach us about justice using “The Genesis of Justice (Ten Stories of Biblical Injustice That Led to the Ten Commandment and Modern Law)” by Alan Dershowitz.

Upcoming Faith in Action Opportunities

Monday, September 1: Join the #WorkersOverBillionaires Labor Day Rally 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in Scoville Park. Bring your signs and join thousands of communities around the country in taking a stand to support working families and a future for our country that is fair, just, equitable, and free for all.

Wednesday, September 10 - Saturday, September 13: Take in a special showing of “A Binding Truth” and join a webinar featuring the film's director and two main characters. There are three showings scheduled in Oak Park:

- September 10, 7-9 p.m. at Euclid Ave UMC (405 S. Euclid Ave.)
 - September 11, 7-9 p.m. at Unity Temple UUC Congregation Community Center (1019 South Blvd.)
 - September 13, 1:45-4:30 p.m. at Oak Park Public Library, Veterans Room (834 Lake St)
- Visit <https://tinyurl.com/yv64bssa> to register for the film showings and get information on the webinar.

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).



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