

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK



Living God's All-Inclusive Love
April 19, 2026

Third Sunday of Easter

11:00 A.M. Worship

Bold text indicates congregation participation

*Indication to stand in body or spirit

Prelude

Bobby Nguyen

Improvisation by Nadia Boulanger

Welcome

Lydia Mulkey

*Call To Worship

Joanne Despotes

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Easter is not an event that has occurred, it's an adventure that has begun:

not a place that we have visited, but a path on which we stand.

Easter is not a story complete, but unfolding with the promise of new life.

Easter is the season of wild hope, of dangerous intent, and of potent promise.

Today we continue the journey, and we re-enter the story.

We walk the path, ready to listen for words of hope and promise, the living

Christ revealed in sights and sounds, words and symbols.

Let us worship together.

*Passing the Peace

The peace of the Risen Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*Opening Hymn #104 (Blue hymnal)

Stephen Faust, timpani

Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

Online worshippers: the words to hymns listed in the hymnal are available as a supplement at the end of this bulletin.

Prayer for Wholeness

Lydia Mulkey

Living God, open our hearts to your presence, revealed in word and song, in hospitality and friendship, in sacrament and presence. Open our minds again so that we may recognize you when you meet us in unexpected moments. We long to be whole. Meet us in those moments when we recognize that through action or inaction, through words or silence, or through participation or lack of participation, we have caused or allowed harm to take place to others and to your creation. May love burn brightly within our hearts to inspire us to go on with renewed hope and spirit. Amen.

Assurance of Love

Michael Jones

The Good News is good not only in the season of Easter, but in all times and places in God's creation. God's Spirit continues to be our present companion. Be encouraged that the Holy One awaits to meet us where we are in order to journey with us to where we could be for the glory of God and the good of the world. This is the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Musical Response #236 (Black hymnal)

Halleluja

Invitation to the Children

Lydia Mulkey

Musical Response #524 v.1 (Black hymnal)

This Little Light of Mine

The Sacrament of Baptism

Community Covenant

In this act of surpassing grace, we witness the power of God. In baptism, we become newly aware of God’s abundant love and mercy. God calls each of us wherever we are, whoever we are, to share in the joy of God’s presence in a community of faith. As people who strive to follow Jesus Christ more closely each day, we welcome you, Bennett, to our common journey. Trusting God, we offer you our support and care.

New Testament Reading

Joanne Despotes

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.” Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Gospel Reading

Luke 24:13-35

Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the

things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him.” Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

***Hymn of Illumination #503 (Black hymnal)**

O Savior, Let Me Walk with You

Sermon

Michael Jones

Sermon Response

Sanctuary Band

We Belong to Each Other music by Annie Schlaefer,
words by Nikita Gill

**Every one, oh every one, oh every one of these people are ours,
Just like we are theirs. We belong to them and they belong to us.**

Invitation to the Offering

Lydia Mulkey

During the offering all are welcome to come down the two center aisles to bring forward offerings to the offering plates and/or pink prayer cards to the basket at the front of the sanctuary on the communion table. Prayer requests will be lifted up during the Prayers of the People. If you are unable to come forward, please ask a neighbor in the pew to bring it forward or lift a hand, and we will make sure there is someone to bring it forward for you.

Offertory

Sanctuary Choir

O Give Thanks by Eugene Butler

O give thanks to the Lord,

O give thanks to the Lord,

O give thanks to the Lord

Call upon His Name!

Sing to him, sing praises to Him

Sing to him, sing praises to Him

Sing to Him, sing praises to Him . . .

Tell of all His wondrous works!

Glory in His Holy Name

Tell of all His wondrous works

Glory in His Holy Name

Praise! Praise!

Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord, rejoice, rejoice!

Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord, rejoice, rejoice,

Sing to Him, Sing praises to Him

Glory in his Holy Name.

Seek the Lord and His strength and His presence
Seek the Lord and His strength and presence
O give thanks, to the Lord,
O give thanks to the Lord, O give thanks to the Lord!
Call upon His Name!

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore:
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.

Prayers of the People; Prayer of Lament for Creation

Creation calls to us

Michael Jones

To open our eyes to the devastation we have and are causing our earthly home.
The harm being done to trees, soils, oceans, air, and so much more.

Creation reminds us.

To recognize our oneness with all beings, human and non-human.

Creation calls to us.

To value the community of creation above human greed.

Creation is waiting for us.

To move from doing what is easy to doing what is necessary and right.

Creation is waiting for us.

To prioritize the needs of community over the convenience of self, for loving each other is a seed of hope.

Creation hurts and aches, and is lashing out!

She asks that we stop polluting, and remove the pollution from our seas, land, air, bodies and hearts.

Creation longs for us.

To lament over the devastation of war; the lives lost; Earth, the destruction of her land, and the assault on her climate. To be like the mustard tree seed that grows into a glorious tree in which a myriad of creatures, including human beings, find shelter, food, and protection.

Creation is waiting for us but will not wait forever.

In all these things and more, creation waits for us to remember our connection to it, before technology and self-sufficiency distanced us, before our creaturely instincts became dull behind concrete walls.

Oh God, we ask for radical courage.

To remember that we are creation within creation, for truly nature sustains us. Moreover, nature is God's face too - mottled with chlorophyll, adorned in foliage, dusted with feathers, and dewy in morning light.

May we be moved.

To assume our roles as creation's servants and protect it. To know that we are a human and nonhuman family, inhabiting the same home.

Amen, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer Lydia Mulkey

**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.**

***Closing Hymn #305 (Blue hymnal)**

Jesus, Our Divine Companion

***Blessing**

Michael Jones

***Blessing Response**

Go now in peace, go now in peace.

May the love of God surround you.

Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Postlude

Bobby Nguyen

God of the Expanding Universe by Richard Felciano

- Bulletin Cover by Moyers, Mike. Be Thou My Vision, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.
<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57145> [retrieved April 13, 2026].
Original source: Mike Moyers, <https://www.mikemoyersfineart.com/>.
- Call to Worship is adapted from words by Craig Mitchell (2005) & Iona Community. In “Emmaus Worship Service,” posted on Mountain Masala: Exploring Spirituality, Culture, Media and Cuisine.”
- Prayer of Wholeness and the Assurance of Love adapted by prayers written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.
- Prayer of Lament from Creation from the PCUSA Creation Justice Ministries' 2026 Resource - Canopy of Creation: Trees, Faith, and the Work of Justice.



Please join us on May 3 at 2:30 p.m. in Centennial Hall to honor Pastor Lydia and her wife Sam as well as First United member Vivian Gama who are expecting little ones this summer. Cake and punch will be served. Use the QR codes to access the baby registries.



Lydia & Sam



Vivian

Diaper Raffle: Anyone who brings a pack of Huggies diapers (any size) to the shower will be entered to win a fun prize. The moms will get to keep the diapers!

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.

Adult Ed Next Week

Art Spooner returns for the second part of “In Quest of Quest - Adult Version.” Have you ever wondered what our youth (and their teachers) are learning during the Quest confirmation class? Want to know more about how our Presbyterian and Congregational denominations fit into the whole church? Take this abbreviated version of the Quest journey that our teens experience as they explore our faith. We meet at 9:45 in Centennial Hall.

FUYA Meets Next Week

The First United Young Adults meet the last Sunday of every month. Meet in the lounge and we’ll head out after the service!

One Earth Film Festival Begins April 22

Faith in Action invites you to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of One Earth Film Festival with this year’s theme, GenWe: All Together Now. Running April 22-27, 2026, the festival features inspiring films that spark conversation, connection, and collective action for our planet. Visit oneearthfilmfest.org for more information.

Upcoming Worship Highlights – May 3

May 3 will be a busy but exciting day in worship. Our Church School kids will be leading prayer, reading the Psalm, and serving communion. In addition, we will welcome The Voices at BGSU, a diverse choir from Bowling Green State University whose repertoire focuses on traditional spirituals.

CROP Walk – May 3

First United has raised money as part of the local CROP Hunger Walk for over 40 years. The local Walk - Hunger Walkathon West - raises money for local hunger-fighting agencies and the international relief and development efforts of Church World Service. Use the QR code for more information about the walk and register to walk and/or donate to support our team!



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 one of the pastors, or join us for a Newcomers class held three times per year.

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! Kids are welcome to use our Pray-ground throughout worship or take an activity bag to the pews. 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.

Music Ministries Our Sanctuary Choir leads worship most Sundays and rehearses on Wednesday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. during the season and is welcoming new members! You don't have to commit to sing every week. Our Handbell Choir rings a few times per year and rehearses on Wednesday from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

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.



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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | 708-386-5215

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Organist: Bobby Nguyen – bnguyen@firstunitedoakpark.com

Hymn Supplement: April 19, 2026

Opening Hymn – *Christ Is Risen! Shout Hosanna!*

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: All creation is amazed.
In the desert all-surrounding, see, a spreading tree has grown.
Healing leaves of grace abounding bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits from the caverns of despair.
Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of resurrection, not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven never more shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim, demonic chorus: “Christ is risen! Get you gone!”
God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna, everyone!

Hymn of Illumination – *O Savior, Let Me Walk with You*

O Savior, let me walk with you in earthly paths of service true;
Tell me your secret, help me veer the strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move by some clear winning word of love.
Teach me the wayward feet to stay, and guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me your patience; let me be in closer dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong, in trust the triumphs over wrong.

In hope that sends a shining ray far down the future’s broadening way,
In peace that only you can give, with you, O Savior, let me live.

Closing Hymn – *Jesus, Our Divine Companion*

Jesus, our divine, Companion, by Your lowly human birth
You have come to join the workers, burden bearers of the earth.
You, the carpenter of Nazareth, toiling for Your daily food,
By Your patience and Your courage You have taught us work is good.

Where the many toil together, there You are among Your own;
Where the solitary labor, You are there with them alone.
You, the peace that passes knowledge, dwelling in the daily strife;
You, the Bread of heaven, are broken in the sacrament of life.