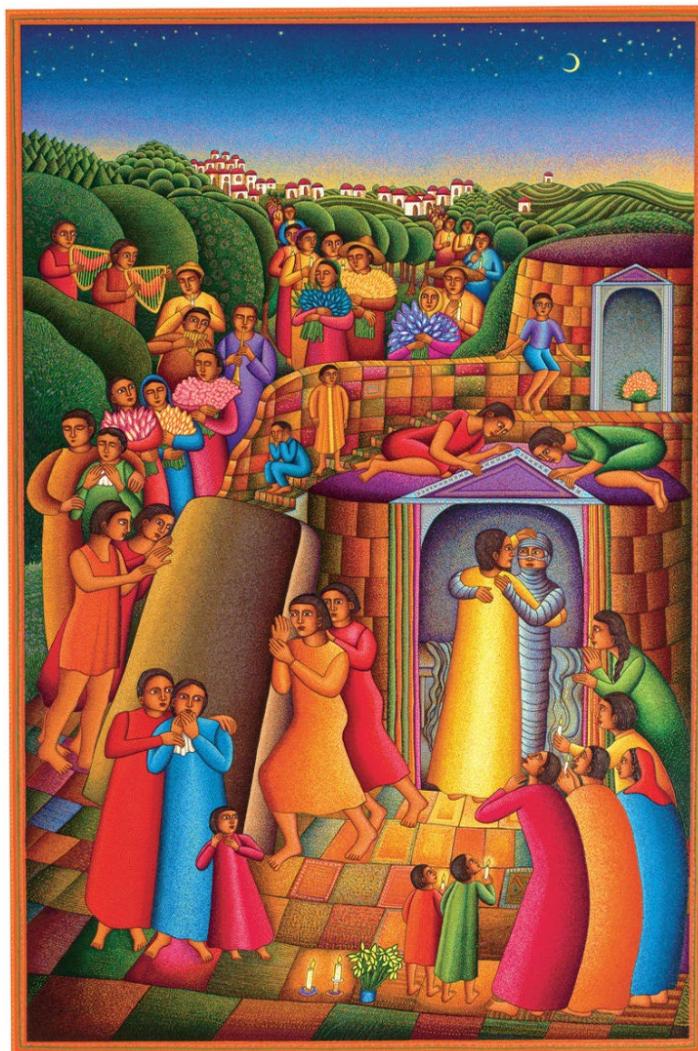


FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK



March 22, 2026

Living God's All-Inclusive Love

Fifth Sunday in Lent

11:00 A.M. Worship

Bold text indicates congregation participation

*Indication to stand in body or spirit

Prelude

Bobby Nguyen

Prelude and Fugue No. 3 in D Minor by Clara Schumann

Welcome

Michael Jones

*Call To Worship

Susan Macaulay

This is a time and space to mark this Season of Lent as a reflective and discerning people, called to face all that we hold. Grief, despair, love, joy: We bring it all here!

Let our worship be arms that can hold all that grieves us, and that embrace us on the journey toward Easter.

This is a gathering of a diverse and reflective community, called by God to remember and celebrate those who have not been remembered and celebrated enough.

Let our worship remember and celebrate the diverse contributions of women who have shaped us and our world.

This is the time when we are standing at the edge of the tomb, staring into the truth of the death-dealing forces of our world.

Let our worship be the song calling us forth from the grave, unbound and set free.

*Passing the Peace

*Opening Hymn #21 (Black hymnal)

God Reigns O'er All the Earth

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

Prayer for Wholeness

Michael Jones

Compassionate God, for the violence that brings death and death-dealing that brings violence, we grieve. For the times we have not listened to the wise women in our lives, we repent. For the times we allowed the forces of greed, anger, and division to bind us, we promise a new way. Praise God, who calls us by name back into life, and into the community that unbinds and frees us. Amen.

Kyrie (Black hymnal no. 751)

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Assurance of Love

Michael Jones

God's love for us is as bright as the brightest light and is showing new realities to us every day. New mercies are granted daily, and every day we have an opportunity to be changed forever and for good. This is the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Children's Anthem

Preschool-5th Grade Church School

Wa Wa Was Emimimo (Come, O Holy Spirit Come) from Nigeria

Invitation to the Children

Lydia Mulkey

Musical Response #524 v.1 (Black hymnal)

This Little Light of Mine

Time for Sharing

Lydia Mulkey

*Litany for Women's History Month Lydia Mulkey & Michael Jones

In the spirit of women who survived the middle passage, withstood and overcame the oppression of enslavement,

we give you thanks, O God.

In the spirit of women who dared obstacles and challenged unjust barriers and forged new peoples in new lands,

we give you thanks, O God.

In the spirit of women who refused to be browbeaten and held back, and opened new paths for others to follow,

we give you thanks, O God.

In the spirit of women who refused to be shut out and who demolished boundaries to open new spaces for sisters unborn,

we give you thanks, O God.

We live and breathe boldly and courageously in the assurance of divine guidance, anointing presence, and enabling power; in the Spirit not only of our ancestors in the sisterhood, but at the direction of Sister Wisdom, Sofia, who calls each and all to encourage her for the sake of God's glory.

Thanks be to God!

*Hymn of Illumination #521 (Black Hymnal)

In Solitude

Responsive Psalm

Susan Macaulay

Psalm 130, Adapted

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord; my soul waits, and in God's word I hope;

**My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.**

O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with God is great power to redeem. It is God who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Gospel Reading

Susan Macaulay

John 11:1-3, 17-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world." When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And

Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did and believed in him.

Sermon

Michael Jones

Sermon Response

Loosen By Aly Halpert

**Loosen, loosen, baby/You don't have to carry
The weight of the world in your muscles and bones
Let go, let go, let go
Holy breath, and holy name
Will you ease, will you ease this pain?**

We Welcome New Members Lydia Mulkey & Michael Jones

We welcome you into this community and promise to journey together with you in faith. We offer ourselves as siblings in Christ, committing ourselves to care for one another. We offer ourselves as partners in ministry and mission, working to further God's work everywhere. We offer ourselves as companions, joining each other as the Body of Christ, growing together in Christian faith and practice. By God's grace we share this covenant in the name of Jesus Christ who calls us to gather in God's name.

Fourth Sunday Offering

Stan Faust

This month's fourth Sunday offering benefits Learning Edge

Invitation to the Offering

Michael Jones

During the offering all are welcome to come down the two center aisles to bring offerings and/or pink prayer cards forward to the offering plates 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 Band

+*Landslide* by Stevie Nicks

I took my love, I took it down

Climbed a mountain and I turned around

And I saw my reflection in the snow covered hills

'Til the landslide brought me down

Oh, mirror in the sky, what is love?

Can the child within my heart rise above?

Can I sail through the changin' ocean tides?

Can I handle the seasons of my life?

Well, I've been afraid of changing

'Cause I've built my life around you

But time makes you bolder

Even children get older

And I'm gettin' older, too

Oh, I'm gettin' older, too

Ah, take my love, take it down

Ah, climb a mountain and turn around

And if you see my reflection in the snow covered hills

Will the landslide bring it down?

And if you see my reflection in the snow covered hills

Will the landslide bring it down?

Oh, the landslide bring it down

*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 & The Lord's Prayer Michael Jones

**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 (Sung to the tune of #451 Black hymnal)

God of the Women

**God of the women who answered your call,
Trusting your promises, giving their all,
Women like Sarah and Hannah and Ruth –
Give us their courage to live in your truth.**

**God of the women who walked Jesus' Way,
Giving their resources, learning to pray,
Mary, Joanna, Susanna, and more –
May we give freely as they did before.**

**God of the women long put to the test,
Left out of stories, forgotten, oppressed,
Quietly asking: "Who smiled at my birth?" –
In Jesus' dying you show us our worth.**

**God of the women who ran from the tomb,
Prayed with the others in that upper room,
Then felt your Spirit on Pentecost Day –
May we so gladly proclaim you today.**

**O God of Phoebe and ministers all,
May we be joyful in answering your call
Give us the strength of your Spirit so near,
That we may share in your ministry here.**

***Blessing**

Michael Jones

Postlude

Sanctuary Band

Want to Praise Him

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- Today's Call to Worship, Prayer for Wholeness, and Assurance of Love are adapted from Unbind: Service Prayers for the Fifth Sunday in Lent written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema from the UCC's Worship Ways resource.
- The Liturgy for Women's History Month was adapted from a liturgy written by Dr. Gennifer B. Brooks, Ernest and Bernice Styberg Professor of Preaching and the Director of the Styberg Preaching Institute at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary.
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+Sanctuary Band Song Description: *Landslide by Stevie Nicks – It is said Stevie Nicks wrote the song Landslide in her head, while staring out a snowy window at the aspen mountains. She was in a state of in-between, both physically and mentally, as she poured her frustrations into the lyrics. “I had been working as a waitress and a cleaning lady for years. I was tired.” she said. This song is a reflection of life, being unsure of what is and what is to come. Perhaps fighting against the currents of living while other times floating along with it. It begs the listener to ponder the fragility of life itself. “And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8 (Nicole Cerniglia)*

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.

Welcome New Members

We are so happy to welcome new members today! Please take a moment greet and welcome our newest members as you are able: Bryan James, Terrell James, Laura Loveless, Blake Mosser, and Charlie Thies.

Open Sanctuary in Lent, Wednesdays

The Sanctuary will be open from noon to 1 p.m. every Wednesday for prayer, meditation, and reflection. Come when you can and stay as long as you'd like.

Order Easter Lilies

Donate an Easter lily to honor a loved one this Easter. Orders due March 26. Use the QR code or pick up a paper form from the welcome desk.



Palm Sunday and Messy Church Next Week

Next week is Palm Sunday! After enjoying a messy morning in the gym, Church School will process into worship as part of the palm processional. Hosanna!

Adult Ed Speaker Series Next Week

History Professor Tracy McKenzie will continue his discussion of Lincoln and American civil religion on March 29. His topic for week two will focus on "The Second Inaugural Address." Meet in Centennial Hall at 9:45 a.m.

Bread Baking for Maundy Thursday, April 1

Gather in the kitchen the day before Maundy Thursday to bake bread for the table service. No experience necessary! RSVP using the Maundy Thursday QR code.

Maundy Thursday Worship, April 2

On April 2 at 6:30 p.m. we will gather in Centennial Hall to share a meal just as Jesus did with his disciples. Following our meal, we will journey through the tunnel to continue worship in the Sanctuary in the Tenebrae style. Can you help with the table service? Use the QR Code to sign up.



Easter Sunday Worship and Easter Egg Hunt, April 5 at 11 a.m.

Easter Sunday worship will be filled with music! Join us as trumpet, timpani, and a soprano soloist join with our choirs and organ for portions of Handel's Messiah. Stay after worship as laughter takes over during our egg hunt on the front lawn.

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! 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.

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.



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

Living God's All-Inclusive Love

www.firstunitedoakpark.com | 708-386-5215

facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark | Instagram @firstunitedoakpark

Lead Pastor:	Michael Jones – mjones@firstunitedoakpark.com
Associate Pastor:	Lydia Mulkey – lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com
Church Administrator:	Heather Vanderberg – hvanderberg@firstunitedoakpark.com
Financial Administrator:	Patricia Morales – pmorales@firstunitedoakpark.com
Choir Director:	Sally Sloane – ssloane@firstunitedoakpark.com
Organist:	Bobby Nguyen – bnguyen@firstunitedoakpark.com

Hymn Supplement: March 22, 2026 (Lent 5)

Opening Hymn – *God Reigns O'er All the Earth*

God reigns o'er all the earth! Green hills and valleys low,
The farms and towns in golds and browns God's grace and beauty show.
God reigns o'er all the earth! Stone banks and spreading plains,
In rainbow hues – reds, yellows, blues – of streams and country lanes.

God reigns o'er human life! Through youth and aging years,
In death, in birth, in grief, in mirth, in all our hopes and fears.
God reigns o'er human life! Our inspiration still.
Through all our schemes, in all our dreams, we see God's reigning will.

God reigns o'er time and space! In history's bygone days,
Christ's faithful folk in reverence spoke to bring God earnest praise.
God reigns o'er time and space! O'er galaxy and sun,
Through timeless years the cosmos hears the heavenly music run.

God reigns! Emmanuel! God with us every day,
In all our past and to the last, our comfort and our stay.
God reigns! Emmanuel! Let praise to Christ be sung!
God's presence here makes all things dear. Let joyful bells be rung!

Hymn of Illumination – *In Solitude*

In solitude, in solitude, I come to God in prayer,
In silence and simplicity, my spirit blossoms there.

Whene'er the world is troubling me, and stress is all around,
I see the presence of my God, and healing light is found.

In seasons of perplexity, in times of deep despair,
I light a candle in the night and turn to God in prayer.

And when my heart is burdened down with cares for those I love,
Too deep for words, with groans and sighs, descends the holy dove.

With psalms and hymns and songs of praise before my God I'll come,
Till death itself is past and gone, and I arrive at home.