

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

January 18, 2026



Living God's All-Inclusive Love

Bold text indicates congregation participation

*Indication to stand in body or spirit

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

Bobby Nguyen

Flutes by Jean Langlais

WELCOME

Pastor Lydia Mulkey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Susan Macaulay

God has a new dream for us!

We are not sure we are ready for change.

God has a new dream for us!

We are listening for God's calling.

God has a new dream for us!

Let's reimagine together with God. Amen.

*PASSING THE PEACE

*OPENING HYMN

Dream God's Dream

Dream God's dream. Ho-ly Spi-rit help us dream of a world where
 there is jus-tice and where ev-'ry-one is free to build and grow and love
 Fine
 and to sim-ply have e-nough. The world will change when we dream God's dream.

1. I'm dream-ing of a world where the col-or of one's skin
 2. I'm dream-ing of the call God is of-fer-ing to me,
 3. I'm dream-ing of the way that I want my life to go.

will mean less than what's with-in that per-son's heart.
 how to use my en-er-gy and my best gifts.
 I've got hopes and I've got goals I'd like to meet.

A world where wa-ter's clean, and where air is safe to breathe
 To do the work of Christ, to say God please use my life
 I'll reach high for the stars, but I won't for-get the scars
 to refrain

and ev-'ry child born has e-nough to eat.
 to spread your healing love and to live your truth.
 of Christ who died to show that the dream's for all.

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PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Pastor Lydia

God of renewal, we confess that we don't like change and that, sometimes, we resist new things. When we don't participate in your new dreams, we miss out on our potential. Forgive our dragging feet, and move us forward to renew, rebuild and reimagine.

Time for silent prayer.

ASSURANCE OF LOVE

God was with the people through war, captivity and exile. God called them back to renewal and rebuilding. In the same way, God is with us through every loss, ready to rebuild on the other side. Be assured that God's steadfast love is strong enough to overcome all and to dream again. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE CHILDREN

Pastor Lydia

MUSICAL RESPONSE

This Little Light of Mine (Black hymnal no. 524 v.1)

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

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

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

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

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

TIME FOR SHARING

*HYMN OF ILLUMINATION

Take My Life, God, Let It Be (Black Hymnal no. 448)

Take my life, God, let it be consecrated faithfully.

Take my moments and my days, let the flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my spirit, let it move at the impulse of your love.

Take my intellect and use all its powers as you choose.

Take my will; your will be done! Make your will and mind be one.

Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwelling place.

Take my love and help it grow; let my loving overflow.

Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's community.

SCRIPTURE READING – NEHEMIAH 4:1-9

Susan Macaulay

SERMON – OUR ROLE IN GOD'S DREAM

Pastor Lydia

*SERMON RESPONSE

Come, Let us Dream (TUNE: O WALY WALY)

Come, let us dream God's dream again/Come, one and all, let us ascend

The mountain top where those of old/Saw God's new day on earth unfold.

The lame shall walk, the blind shall see,/The doors swing wide, all prisoners free,
The lowly raised, the proud brought low./This is God's dream: let justice flow.

When hatred ends and war shall cease,/So all may dwell in deepest peace,
Then be assured the time is near/When perfect love casts out all fear.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

STEWARDSHIP TESTIMONY

Mark Breen

SPECIAL MUSIC

Laura Loveless, Keely Tyson,

Dream God's Dream with lyrics by Mark Smylie

John Zaruba, &
Craig Bechtel

Once again it's pledging time. 'Tis sweet commitment time.

When we gratefully consider all we must do.

We must pay the bills, salaries, and maintenance, too.

But there is so much more that God asks of me and of you.

God shining bright above you. In breezes God whispers "I love you."

God calls out the best we can be. Dream the dream of God with me.

So won't you give, plant the mustard seed, five thousand mouths to feed.

Grow caring community. Dream the dream of God with me, you see.

Give to share the stories of old. Now give to grow a faith that's bold.

To bring God's flock to the fold. Just praying this: God dreams sunbeams to find you.

God dreams you leave all worries behind you. However hard your hardships may be.

Dream a little dream, dream a little dream, dream the dream of God with me.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Pastor Lydia

OFFERTORY

Sanctuary Choir

Here I Am, Lord by Daniel Schutte (*Lyrics available in the blue hymnal at no. 525*)

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

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

Pastor Lydia

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

Called as Partners in God's Service (Black hymnal no. 495)

Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.

Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of visions, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, makes us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

*INVITATION TO JOIN THE CIRCLE

Pastor Lydia

*BLESSING

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Go now in light, go now in light
May the love of God surround you
Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

POSTLUDE

Bobby Nguyen

It's a surprise . . .

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.

Dream God's Dream: Stewardship 2026-27

We are so glad you are here as we launch *Dream God's Dream: No Dream Too Big. No Gift Too Small*, First United's 2026-27 Stewardship Season. Please watch your mail this week for a letter and pledge card with more information. And mark your calendars for February 15 when we conclude our season with a celebratory worship service and potluck lunch!

January Glove Collection

Place your new or gently used gloves or mittens in the collection basket next to the offering table on Sundays in January. Guiding Light of Hope will distribute your donations to those in need.

Office Closed, January 19

First United will be closed on January 19 in observance of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Adult Ed Speaker Series Next Week

On January 25, we welcome back former Oak Park Village President, Anan Abu-Taleb, who will share his thoughts on the crises in the West Bank and Gaza. Centennial Hall; 9:45 a.m.

Pastor Michael's First Official Worship, January 25

We are thrilled to welcome Pastor Michael Jones as the new Settled Lead Pastor of First United. Pastor Michael's first "official" Sunday will be January 25. Please stay after worship for a celebration in the lounge.

Volunteer Opportunity: Provide Dinner to Anderson Emergency Shelter Guests

First United has committed to providing dinner to guests at Housing Forward's Anderson Emergency Shelter (112 S. Humphrey, Oak Park) on Monday, January 26. Use the QR code to sign up. Contact Tara Dull (tdull@sbcglobal.net) with questions.



Parents' Night Out, January 30

Drop your children at First United for a fun night of games, dinner and a movie while you enjoy a child-free night out. Use the QR code to get the full details (time, cost, etc.) and to register your kids!



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 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. 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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www.firstunitedoakpark.com | facebook.com/firstunitedoakpark | 708-386-5215

Interim Lead Pastor: Phil Price – pprice@firstunitedoakpark.com

Associate Pastor: Lydia Mulkey – lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com