

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

December 7, 2025



One with Mystery by Lauren Wright Pitman | inspired by Matthew 3:1-12 | graphic image
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Living God's All-Inclusive Love

Bold text indicates congregation participation

*Indication to stand in body or spirit

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

First United Brass

See Amidst the Winter's Snow arr. Todd Marchand

The Huron Carol arr. Todd Marchand

Still, Still, Still arr. By David Marlon

WELCOME

Middle School Church Schoolers

POINSETTIA PROCESSION

Bobby Nguyen

People Look East

SPECIAL MUSIC

Preschool Church School Class

Walking to Bethlehem & No Room For You by Sue Hawkins Duckett

POETRY PRAYER – *REPENTANCE CAN'T WAIT*

Don Sibley

Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

*CALL TO WORSHIP

3rd-5th Grade Church School Class

Prepare the way!

Deck the halls and light the candles.

Prepare the way!

Open the doors and sing a song of hope.

Prepare the way!

Make space in our hearts for a new kind of love.

Christ is coming.

Prepare the way!

*SPECIAL MUSIC

Kindergarten-5th Grade Church School Classes

Litany for Advent by Shirley W. McRae

ADVENT WREATH

The Sandquist-Pilcher Family

WE SING IN THE LIGHT

Now We Light a Candle by Cranham

**Now we light a candle, warmth in every heart.
Hope for new beginnings; hope for each new start.
May this candle never dim, may its light still grow,
As we learn to share this hope we've come to know.**

PRAYER FOR WHOLENESS

Church School Teen Leaders

Creator God—

**Not a day goes by when you do not invite us to be peacemakers and advocates,
Listeners and good Samaritans.**

**Not a day goes by when we are not asked to be a friend to a stranger
And a neighbor to those in need.**

**Not a day goes by when we are not asked to be the people you call us to be,
And yet, day after day, we lose sight of your hope for this world.**

**Forgive us for walking a different path,
And grant us the strength to prepare a new way—
Your way—here.**

Time for silent prayer

MUSICAL ASSURANCE OF LOVE

O Little Town of Bethlehem (Black hymnal no. 133 v. 3)

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the glorious love of heaven.
No one discerns God's coming, but in this world of sin,
Where yearning souls long to be whole, the dear Christ enters in.**

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD TO US

***HYMN OF ILLUMINATION**

The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore (Black Hymnal no. 115)

**The Baptist shouts on Jordan's shore, the earth shakes with the mighty roar,
Awake, let lazy sleep now flee: behold, the voice of prophecy.**

**Clean up your hearts, lay down the way, for God approaches day by day;
Prepare for such a worthy heir, for such a guest your house prepare.**

**O One who comes to set us free, O Child, to you our song will be,
With Father, Spirit mothering, to you shall praise forever ring!**

SCRIPTURE – ISAIAH 11:1-1, MATTHEW 3:1-12

Middle School
Church School Class

SERMON – REPENTANCE CAN'T WAIT presented by the Middle School
Church School Class

*SERMON RESPONSE

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (Black hymnal no. 131 v. 3)

**And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way, with painful steps and slow,
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

CALL TO THE OFFERING & COMMUNION

Pastor Phil Price

*The Communion Servers this month are members of the Children's and Youth Ministry
Teams*

*Beginning from the rear pews, an usher will invite everyone to come to the front of the
Sanctuary to share in the feast. As you reach the servers, take a piece of bread and a cup of
grape juice. Gluten-free, 9 major allergen-free crackers are available from the third server
on each aisle. Please eat and drink the elements as you receive them. Place your offering in
the plate and pink prayer cards on the communion table. Return to your place by the outside
aisles.*

OFFERTORY

Sanctuary Choir

Tell Us 'Bout a Baby by Joel Raney

There's a story being told throughout the land, 'bout a Savior sent down from God's own
hand.

We heard about how the angels sang, how heaven and earth with praises rang!
Tell us 'bout a baby born in Bethlehem.

Refrain: Tell us 'bout a baby, glory, hallelu! Tell us 'bout a baby, amen.

Tell us 'about a baby, glory, hallelujah! Tell us' bout a baby born in Bethlehem.

Wise men and shepherds spread the news. Jesus Christ is born King of the Jews!
Tell us all about his lowly birth, the humble Messiah comin' down to earth.
Tell us 'bout a baby born in Bethlehem. R/

Tell us, tell us, tell us all about that tiny stranger.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about that lowly manger.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about the shepherds kneeling.
Tell us, tell us, tell us all about God's love revealing.

Heavenly chorus sing out with joy. Fill the skies around us with news of the boy.
All of God's creation with one great voice join the angel choir. Let the nations rejoice. R/

*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 Middle School
Church Schoolers and 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

Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates (Black hymnal no. 117)
**Lift up your heads, O mighty gates; behold the glorious Ruler waits!
The Sovereign One is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.**

**Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

**Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to you; here, Christ, abide!
Let me your inner presence feel; your grace and love in me reveal.**

**So come, my Sovereign; enter in! Let new and nobler life begin;
Your Holy Spirit guide us on, until the glorious crown be won.**

INVITATION TO JOIN THE CIRCLE

Middle School Church Schoolers

*BLESSING

Middle School Church Schoolers

*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

First United Brass

The Holly and the Ivy arr. David Marlon

*The First United Brass is:
William Faust, Phil Price - Trumpet
Melinda Robinson - Horn
Larry Pearce - Trombone
Sharon Pearce- Tuba*

FROM THE DEACONS

As a reminder, you can report care concerns for yourself or others at any time by emailing the Deacons (deacons@firstunitedoakpark.com), using the Google form accessible by link in the eblast (or this QR code), or picking up a paper form at the Welcome Desk.



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.

FUSH Cookie Bake – Orders Due Tomorrow!

Support FUSH with your holiday cookie purchase. Order now through December 8 with the QR code or paper form. Pick up on December 14.



Cocoa, Coffee & Carols with Adult Ed Next Week

Get in the Christmas spirit next Sunday with Adult Ed. Join us in Centennial Hall for Cocoa, Coffee and Carols on December 14 from 9:45-10:45 a.m.. Please plan to join our own First United musicians for carol singing, treats and festive fun for the whole family.

Alternative Christmas Store Continues

You have just a couple more weeks to shop with purpose this Christmas season at the Alternative Christmas Store. Sundays before and after worship through December 14.

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve

Honor a loved one this Christmas Eve with a poinsettia dedication. Use the QR code or pick up a form at the Welcome Desk to dedicate a poinsettia. \$25 per plant (payable by check or cash). Include "Christmas Poinsettia" on the memo line/envelope.



Annual Vigil to End Gun Violence, December 8

Join Waging Peace at the annual Vigil to End Gun Violence remembering victims and supporting survivors on December 8 at 7 p.m. at St. Edmund (188 S. Oak Park Ave).

Prime Time Luncheon and Christmas Carol Sing-along, December 11

Enjoy a holiday potluck lunch and carols at noon on December 11 in Centennial Hall. RSVP to Janet Haisman (jhaisman59@gmail.com) by December 9 and note what you will bring.

Dinner and a Movie, December 12

Join Dinner and a Movie on December 12 for a showing of "Mami Wata." Dinner at 6:00 (\$5 donation); movie at 6:30 (free). Sign up using the link in the eblast or email Ron Haas at haas.inchicago@comcast.net.

Blue Christmas, December 17

Blue Christmas worship recognizes that there is a sad side to the Christmas season. Recognize and honor these feelings at a brief worship service in the Chapel at 6 p.m. followed by a soup supper in the lounge at 6:30.

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

Living God's All-Inclusive Love

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

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

Associate Pastor: Lydia Mulkey – lmulkey@firstunitedoakpark.com