



FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF OAK PARK

Sunday, August 9, 2026

www.firstunitedoakpark.com

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Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 A.M. Worship

Bold text indicates congregation participation – *Indication to stand in body or spirit

Prelude

Susan Macaulay & Sally Sloane

Slavonic Dance #8 Op. 46 by Antonin Dvorak

Welcome

Rev. Michael Jones

*Call To Worship

Craig Bechtel

The Wisdom of God yearns for our attention.

In chaos and in quiet, She reaches for us.

She reveals the true sources of our hope
and makes known the cause of our struggles.

Though evil works to fool and sway us,

we are rooted in care for each other.

Grounded in a promise of love,

made capable of brave and bold acts.

May God renew our faith.

*Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

*Opening Hymn #22 (Black hymnal)

Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped

Prayer for Wholeness

O Holy God: So often we expect life to wow and dazzle us. But you often come in the still, the small, and the meek. We want to be near your presence, even when it is not in the places we expect. When we are overloaded by constant stimulus and marketing, we pray that you would settle us with the unforced rhythms of grace. When our hearts are dried up by apathy and cynicism, we pray that you would open up the wellspring of your mercy. God, we are seeking you in hopeful expectation. Amen.

Assurance of Love

Blessed of God, receive God's transformative and liberating grace. Be made new in Christ. Let the love of God be your guide and assurance that the One who is gracious and merciful, is good to all, and abundantly lives within you and upholds all who fall and remains near to you. **Amen.**

Gloria #759 (Black hymnal)

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three-in-One;
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

Invitation to the Children

Gathering Response #524 v.1 (Black hymnal)

This Little Light of Mine

Time for Sharing

*Hymn of Illumination #32 (Black hymnal)

God of the Sparrow God of the Whale

Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Reading

Craig Bechtel

1 Kings 19:9-18

At that place he came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He answered, "I have been very zealous

for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.” Then the Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill, and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

Gospel Reading Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately he made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.” Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

*Sermon Response (see separate sheet)

God Calls You Good by Paul M. Vasile

Invitation to the Offering

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

Offertory

Elizabeth Perryman

God of the Deep by Dan Forrest

*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

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 #25(Black hymnal)

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

*Blessing

*Blessing Response

Go Now in Peace (Sleeth)

Go now in peace, go now in peace.

May the love of God surround you.

Everywhere, everywhere you may go.

Today's Liturgist: Craig Bechtel and his wife Kelly joined First United after searching for a "More Light" Presbyterian church in Chicagoland, as Craig's father and grandfather were Presbyterian ministers. He currently sings in our choir.

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-Call to Worship adapted from www.enfleshed.com.

-Prayer for Wholeness adapted from The Minor Key. <http://theminorkeys.blogspot.ca/>

-Assurance of Love adapted from liturgy written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

-Sermon Response "God Calls You Good" ©2017 Paul Vasile www.paulvasile.com.

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.

Blessing of the Animals and Outdoor Worship, August 16

Worship moves outdoors on August 16. Bring Fido and Mittens with you to worship for a special pet blessing. Bubbles and Tweety don't travel well? Bring a picture and we can bless them, too.

Backpack Blessing, August 23

The 2026-27 school year will be upon us before you know it. Student and teachers are invited to bring their backpacks to worship on August 23 for a special blessing as we pray for a happy, healthy, and safe school year!

Prime Time Breakfast on August 27

Mark your calendars for August 27 at 9 a.m. when Prime Time will once again gather at Al's Grill in Oak Park for their annual breakfast. This is a favorite event for our group as each person simply brings us a \$20 bill, and then each of us can order whatever we want to eat for breakfast. RSVP now or before August 24 to jhaisman59@gmail.com so that we can save you a seat!

Church School Registration Now Open!

God Is with Us. Rain or Shine. The 2026-27 Church School year begins on Gathering Day, September 13. Classes are available for children ages birth through eighth grade. Use the QR code to register so that we can plan for you!



Church School Carnival, August 30

Come to the lawn after worship on August 30 for games, prizes, food and fun as we get ready for the start of Church School! Register for church school before the carnival and there will be a special prize waiting for you.

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. Visit our website to read our land acknowledgment and open and affirming statement.

Interested in learning more about First United Church? Look for members wearing gold buttons, talk to one of the pastors, or watch for the next Newcomers class.

Assistive Listening System If you are in need of assistance in hearing during the worship service, please speak with one of the greeters.

Adult Education Adult Education takes a variety of forms. 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! Enjoy the Pray-ground throughout worship or take an activity bag to the pews. Childcare is available for children five and under in our nursery. Ask a greeter for directions.

Church School Church School is for children ages birth through 8th grade. We tell stories of the Bible using a lens of love and justice with singing, praying, and creating. Church School meets Sundays at 9:45 a.m., September through May.

Music Ministries Interested in singing or ringing with our choirs? We rehearse on Wednesdays September through May. Contact Music Director Sally Sloane for more information.

Youth Programs The junior and senior high youth groups meet on Sunday evenings from 5 – 7 p.m. here at the church, September through mid-May.

Transportation Assistance In need of a ride to church? Call or email: 708-334-2512 / FUCOP848@gmail.com.



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Living God's All-Inclusive Love

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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
Music Director:	Sally Sloane – ssloane@firstunitedoakpark.com
Organist:	Bobby Nguyen – bnguyen@firstunitedoakpark.com

Hymn Supplement: August 9, 2026

Opening Hymn – Sing Praise to God, Who Has Shaped

Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sustains all creation!

Sing praise, my soul, in profound and complete adoration!

Gladsome rejoice—organ and trumpet and voice – joining God’s great congregation!

Praise God, our guardian, who lovingly offers correction,

Who, as on eagle’s wings, saves us from sinful dejection.

Have you observed, how we are always preserved by God’s parental affection?

Sing praise to God, with sincere thanks for all your successes.

Merciful God ever loves to encourage and bless us.

Only conceive, what godly strength can achieve: strength that would touch and caress us.

Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high God commending.

All that have life and breath join you, their notes sweetly blending.

God is your light! Soul, ever keep this in sight: amen, amen never ending.

Gathering Response – *This Little Light of Mine*

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.

Hymn of Illumination – *God of the Sparrow God of the Whale*

God of the sparrow God of the whale God of the swirling stars

How does the creature say Awe? How does the creature say Praise?

God of the earthquake God of the storm God of the trumpet blast

How does the creature cry Woe? How does the creature cry Save?

God of the rainbow God of the cross God of the empty grave

How does the creature say Grace? How does the creature say Thanks?

God of the hungry God of the sick God of the prodigal

How does the creature say Care? How does the creature say Life?

God of the neighbor God of the foe God of the pruning hook

How does the creature say Love? How does the creature say Peace?

God of the ages God near at hand God of the loving heart

How do your children say Joy? How do your children say Home?

Sermon Response – *I Come with Joy*

God calls you good, beloved child. You are a treasure deeply prized.

And you can say to ev’ry doubting voice: God calls you good, beloved child.

God calls you good, beloved child.

God calls me good, beloved child. I am a treasure deeply prized.
An I can say to ev'ry doubting voice: Good calls me good, beloved child.
God calls me good, beloved child.

Closing Hymn – *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home:

Under the shadow of your throne your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone, and our defense is sure.

Before the hills in order stood or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.

A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.