

# —Tower Tidings—

*“Love God. Love Others. Love the World.”*

First Baptist Church of Oak Park

January 2018

Come grow with us.



**FIRST BAPTIST**  
Church of Oak Park

## Dates to Know

- Monday, January 1**  
Church Office Closed
- Saturday, January 6**  
5:45 p.m. Cook County Jail  
Ministry Outing
- Monday, January 8**  
5:30 p.m. “Taking Down  
the Greens!”
- Wednesday, January 10**  
8:00 a.m. Men’s Breakfast  
5:45 p.m. Handbell  
Rehearsals Begin  
7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir  
Rehearsals Begin
- Saturday, January 20**  
9:30 a.m. Last “Journey to  
Wholeness” Class
- Monday, January 22**  
12:00 noon *Tower Tidings*  
Deadline
- Saturday, February 3**  
5:30 p.m. Pastor Parker’s  
Retirement Celebration
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## FROM THE PARKER PEN

*“...nothing in retirement will be as rewarding as pastoral ministry.”*

So this is it. The last of 330 “Parker Pens” that I have written over the past twenty-seven and a half years.

My impending retirement at the end of this month brings bittersweet emotions. I certainly look forward to many aspects of this next chapter in my life. It will be nice to travel. Linda and I will enjoy having more time together to explore the many educational and entertainment opportunities that Chicago offers. I will treasure the additional time to spend with my family, especially the grandchildren. It will be a relief to be free from some of the stresses of ministry, especially if I am to undergo harsh medical treatments.

**What a privilege it has been to spend hours studying God’s word for sermons and Sunday School classes. What an honor it has been to proclaim God’s word from the pulpit and to sense that my messages have offered comfort or insight.**

But nothing in retirement will be as rewarding as pastoral ministry. What a privilege it has been to spend hours studying God’s word for sermons and Sunday School classes. What an honor it has been to proclaim God’s word from the pulpit and to sense that my messages have offered comfort or insight. It has been humbling to participate in the most sacred times of people’s lives; birth, baptism, marriage, illness and death.

It has been a special joy to serve as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Oak Park. FBC is a remarkable congregation. Where else can you find such ethnic diversity? Where else can you find such a caring family? Where else can you experience such a gracious orthodoxy?

Because the pastorate has been such a rich experience (but not all the time!) I hope that January 31 will not mark the end of my ministry. Following a sabbatical of six months to a year, I want to explore ministry opportunities. Perhaps I will do some supply preaching or serve as an interim in the Chicago area. I might even take a part-time position at a church.

I am not the same person I was when I arrived back in 1990, and neither is the church. We have all grown and matured, often through painful trials. We have learned to handle conflict and other challenges in a healthy way. We have grown in our understanding of the Christian faith. We have learned to love and care for one another more deeply. Most of all, we have moved beyond “nominal Christianity” and have embarked on the exciting, but never-ending, journey of discipleship. It is a journey to become more Christ-like, which also means becoming our true and best selves.

Thank you for the privilege and honor of being your pastor for the past quarter century.

To God be the glory!

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—H.L.P.

## WE SAY "FAREWELL" TO PASTOR PARKER

*Retirement Celebration Saturday, February 3*

The First Baptist Church of Oak Park is looking forward to hosting the Retirement Celebration for Pastor Harry Parker on Saturday evening, February 3, 2018, 5:30 pm, at Elmcrest Banquets, 7370 West Grand Avenue, Elmwood Park, IL.

The congregation has been invited, as well as friends and colleagues of Pastor Parker, both near and far, over the years.

Invitations have been mailed. We are requesting RSVP's by January 15, 2018.

We hope you can attend to celebrate this significant milestone with Pastor Parker and his family. It will indeed be a special evening of celebration and fellowship honoring someone who has meant so much to all of us.

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—Lynne Williams

## JOURNEY TO WHOLENESS

*Last class January 20*

The final class of the Journey to Wholeness study will be held on Saturday, January 20 from 9:30 until 11:00 a.m.



Join us as we explore one of the spiritual disciplines that will open us to a deeper experience with Christ.

—Pastor Parker

## SARAH CIRCLE

Sarah Circle's December 2017 meeting was held at the home of Flora Grace Cudiamat, the traditional location/hostess of our Christmas season gathering.

Connie Stone shared a meaningful devotional during our Love Gift presentation. This was followed by some carol singing and an enjoyable game.

A beautiful story written Patsy Clairmont, a favorite speaker and author from the Women of Faith Forum, was read by Fay Havlick.



The program concluded with our traditional gift exchange using the "Wright Family" script which was introduced to us many years ago by our beloved Rose Everson.

A wonderful fellowship around Flora's sumptuous table of snacks and delicious treats was enjoyed by all.

Sarah Circle will not meet in January 2018 and will resume on February 12. Please look for updates in *Tower Tidings* and email notifications.

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Loving wishes to our church family and friends for a happy, healthy and meaningful new year.

—Perla Londres Waters

## STEPHEN MINISTRY



A Stephen Minister comes alongside a hurting person and meets with that person on a weekly basis to listen, care, encourage, pray, and provide emotional and spiritual support. Men are paired with men; women with women.

Over the years, well over one-and-a-half million people have benefited from the one-to-one, Christ-centered care of a Stephen Minister. This care is entirely confidential—no one knows the identity of a care receiver except for his or her Stephen Minister and the pastor or Stephen Leader who paired the two together.



"I can't stand to listen to anyone else preach. You reckon that means the Lord is calling me to the ministry?"

© 1964 Mary Chambers

First Baptist Church of Oak Park has been involved in the ministry for almost three decades. The current team is composed of experienced Stephen Leaders and Stephen Ministers, all with at least four years of dedicated commitment to the ministry, and with two Stephen Leaders with over 25 years of caring experience.

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In 2018, two new Stephen Ministers will be officially commissioned during our worship service, after their current training which is

jointly sponsored by us and two other congregations in our neighboring suburb of River Forest—Grace Lutheran Church and First Presbyterian Church.

**In 2018, two new Stephen Ministers will be officially commissioned during our worship service, June Vaughn and Jackie Williams.**

In anticipation of this special event, we ask for your prayers as June Vaughn and Jackie Williams prepare for this important step in their Christian walk and witness. We

praise and thank God for His enabling of these two to bear witness to His love and compassion through this ministry.

If you and anyone you know would like more information about Stephen Ministry, please contact any one of our Stephen Leaders—Mike Feuerabend, Elaine Tuber Feuerabend, Linzy Waters and Perla Londres Waters.

Blessings to all in 2018—God is our refuge and strength; thus, all will be well.

—Perla Londres Waters  
Stephen Leader

### IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

Christmas is always a busy time for me. Preparing the Sanctuary for our Preschool & Kindergarten's Christmas program and for our Christmas Eve morning and evening services took up a lot of my time in December.

We have replaced damaged windows and limestone in the tower.

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We currently are working on the side lights in the gym and adding/ changing lights in the sanctuary.

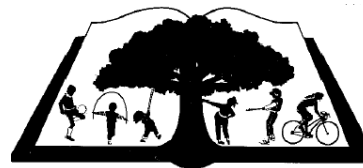
We purchased a new freezer in the kitchen and will be getting more new equipment shortly.

A new entry code system will be coming shortly so stay tuned.  
—Eric Hogan  
Building Manager



**"Hello. I'm here to install the new pastor."**

### PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN NEWS



We give thanks to Ms. Mary Lee and our children for singing with our church choir on Choir Sunday, December 10. The church was packed with a

combination of our church family and our Preschool & Kindergarten family. We appreciate all the families who brought their little ones to participate in singing *Once In Royal David's City* and *Silent Night!*

Our school Christmas program was well received by our families. Each classroom had prepared a song or carol and performed them beautifully. As a finale the entire school sang *Silent Night* complete with sign language. There were tears in the eyes of many audience members!

We look forward to 2018 as we continue to learn, to laugh and to feel loved with our children here at First Baptist Preschool & Kindergarten.

Peace and Love,  
—Ms. Barbara Branch, Director, and Ms. Mary Lee

## BAKE SALE THANKS!

*Sale brought in \$913.50!*

Thank you to everyone who shopped at our Bake Sale on December 17. What an overwhelming success! We are thrilled to announce that we raised \$913.50 from the sale, which will benefit the growth initiatives of the Church, including the development of our new website.



**We are thrilled to announce that we raised \$913.50 from the sale, which will benefit the growth initiatives of the Church, including the development of our new website.**

Special thanks to those who served on the Bake Sale Committee: Perla Londres, Cheryl Verville, Nancy Hogan, Susan Shields, Bertha Peterson, and Lynne Williams.

We especially recognize Elaine Feurabend for the beautifully decorated tables in holiday theme.

Moreover, we are so fortunate to have such wonderful bakers in

our congregation. Thank you to each and every one of you who made so many delightful, delectable items that we actually sold out of everything!

We are very grateful to everyone for sharing your many talents!  
—Lynne Williams

## THE “TAKING DOWN OF THE GREENS!”

The church this year has received many compliments on the beautiful appearance of our facility.

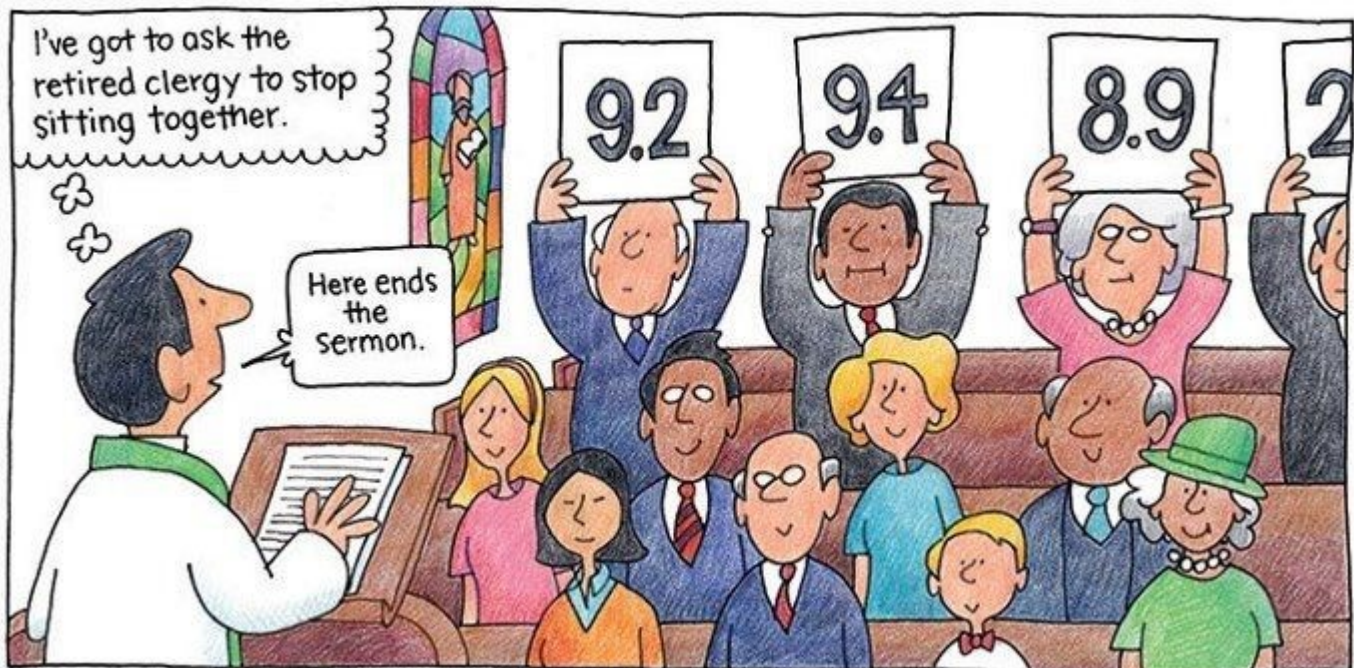
We'd like to thank all those who helped make this possible: **Karen Borgstadt, Barbara Branch, Elise Branch, Lorraine Feehan, Elaine Feurabend, Michael Feurabend, Judy Freisen, Eric Hogan, Nancy Hogan, Sharon Mullins, Jan Nelson, Bertha Peterson, Susan Shields, and Perla Londres Waters.** Everything looks wonderful.

Also, we will be taking down the decorations starting January 8 at 5:30 p.m. should anyone have some spare time. Much Thanks.

—Elaine Feurabend



## SERMON REVIEWS



D E C E M B E R  2 0 1 7	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<i>New Year's Day</i> 1  <b>Church Office Closed</b>	2	3	4	5	6
	7 9am Bible Study 10am Worship 10:30am India Telugu 11:30am Pastor's Class	8	9 7pm Spiritual Life and Worship Team	10 8am Men's Breakfast  5:45pm Handbells 7pm Choir	11 7pm Al Anon	12 7pm India Telugu Prayer Meeting	13 5:45pm Cook County Jail Ministry Outing
	14 9am Bible Study 10am Worship 10:30am India Telugu 11:30am Pastor's Class 11:30am Stephen Ministry	15	16 7 pm Ministry Support Team	17 5:45pm Handbells 7pm Choir	18 5:45pm Preschool Bd. 7pm Al Anon	19 7pm India Telugu Prayer Meeting	20 9:30am "Journey to Wholeness" Class
	21 9am Bible Study 10am Worship 10:30 a.m. India Telugu 11:30am Pastor's Class 11:30am Evangelism Team	22 12 noon <i>Tower Tidings</i> Deadline 7:30 pm Sarah Circle	23 7 pm Stephen Ministry	24 5:45pm Handbells 7pm Choir	25 7pm Al Anon	26 7pm India Telugu Prayer Meeting	27
	27 9am Bible Study 10am Worship 10:30am Ind. Tel. 11:30 am Pastor Class 11:30am Stephen Ministry	28	29	30 5:45pm Handbells 7pm Choir	31 7pm Al Anon	<u><b>Sunday Morning Schedule</b></u>  9:00 a.m. Mathew Studies & Living Waters Bible Study Class 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 10:15 a.m. Kids Kingdom 11:30 a.m. Pastor's Class	
<b>January Birthdays (When is <i>your</i> birthday?)</b>							
2. Stephanie Cole 3. Nicole Maskiell June Sengpiehl 4. Eunice Jones Joyce Kudo 6. Harry Parker			15. Anita Hall 19. Karen Borgstadt 20 Emily Almeroth 25. Kathy Ogundipe Perla Londres Waters			27. Robert Ansani 29. David Hensinski	



***Briefly Noted in our Church***

**Church Facebook Page**—Rachael Wallace is handling our church's Facebook page. If you are on Facebook and would like to become a friend, e-mail Rachael at [rachael.godinez.wallace@gmail.com](mailto:rachael.godinez.wallace@gmail.com). Or you can talk with her during our coffee time after our worship service.

**Individual Giving Statements**—After discussing the costs savings of postage and paper, we would like to advise everyone that we now will only send out statements at the end of the year. Should you need additional quarterly statements, please contact the office and we will gladly accommodate your needs.

**Coin Jar**—Please donate your loose change to our Preschool & Kindergarten program. Contributions are appreciated!

**Electronic Giving Option**—You may

have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account and transferred into the church account safely and electronically. You will also have the opportunity to view your giving history. Participants are invited to place a laminated "We Give Electronically" card located in the pews when the Sunday offering is received. Visit our website, [www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com](http://www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com) and click on "e-giving."

**Church Transportation**—The church has a wheelchair accessible van. Those who need a ride to church on Sundays may call Brent Friesen at 708/745-2187.

**Shuttle Service Sundays**—Free parking and free shuttle service is available on Sundays at the North Blvd. Parking Garage, just east of Oak Park Ave. The bus will pick you up at the elevator lobby.

**Interested in Membership?**—If you are interested in becoming a member of First Baptist you are encouraged to contact Pastor Harry Parker or Minister of Welcome Monroe Saffold. The steps are:

- Participating in the Inquirer's Class or the Discipleship Class
- Meeting with Evangelism Team/Spiritual Life and Worship Team members
- Baptism
- Welcomed into membership in Sunday service

• **Preschool Open Enrollment**—Year-round open enrollment is available for two to 12 year olds in our Illinois Star Rated Preschool, Kindergarten, and After School Program. For information visit [www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com](http://www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com), or call Director Barbara Branch, 708/383-1190.

**Membership Classes Offered**—If you are interested in becoming a member of First Baptist, you are invited to meet with Monroe Saffold for a six week Inquirer's Class. Monroe will work with your schedule to meet at the most convenient time. Contact Monroe at 708/439-0903.

**Cemetery Plots Available**—The church has cemetery plots available at a reduced cost at nearby cemeteries. Please contact the office or Linzy and Perla Waters for more information.

**Campbell Soup Labels Requested**—Your Campbell soup labels help support our missions! Bring your labels to the table outside the church office and deposit them in the box. Thank you! **Note: Campbell's will only accept UPC labels, so please clip them accordingly.**

**Briefly Noted in our Community**  
**Community Support Services**—Do you know of someone with Autism, Down Syndrome or another Intellectual/Developmental Disability? Since 1981, Community Support Services (CSS) has been offering family support programs to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families in the western suburbs of Cook County. Call 708-354-4547 extension 142 for more information or visit [www.cssservices.org](http://www.cssservices.org). CSS has offices in Brookfield and Cicero, Illinois.

**Park District Scholarships**—The Park District of Oak Park announces a Scholarship Program to assist low income families with fee assistance to Park District programs and passes. Contact Scott Sekulich at 708-725-2023 or [scott.sekulich@pdop.org](mailto:scott.sekulich@pdop.org).

**Adult Day Care**—The Oak Park Arms announces that they have recently opened an Adult Day Care program to benefit caregivers in the community. Brochures are posted outside the church offices or you can contact Pat Koko at 708-386-4040.

**The Bereavement Support Group**—Coming together to offer hope and:

- A safe place to tell your story about the death of a loved one and share your grief.
- Reassurance that you are normal.
- An opportunity to find common ground with others.
- A better understanding of your personal grieving process.

Third Monday of the month, 7 to 8 p.m. at Rush Oak Park Hospital, 520 S. Maple Ave., Conference Rm. A, Oak Park, IL. Facilitator: Charlotte Sugg, RN, LCSW. This is a drop-in support group. Call 708/660-5658 for information.

**Children's Clinic**—The Oak Park Children's Clinic provides top quality medical, dental and social services for Cook County residents who are unable to afford private health care. The clinic is located at 320 Lake Street. Call 708-848-0528 or visit [www.childrenscliniciws.org](http://www.childrenscliniciws.org).

**Grief Support**—Loyola Hospital sponsors grief support groups. Information is posted or call Nancy Kiel, 708-216-1646.

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program**—LIHEAP helps eligible low-income households pay for energy services. For information call 1-877-411-9276 or visit [www.keepwarm.illinois.gov](http://www.keepwarm.illinois.gov) or [www.nicorgas.com](http://www.nicorgas.com) and click on "Financial Assistance." The Salvation Army's "Sharing Program" also offers one-time assistance of up to \$450 for those not eligible for government assistance.

—Prayer Concerns—

We received the following message:  
*Dear Church Family, Words cannot express the gratitude that we feel toward God and toward our church family. From the prayers that were offered up, the visits, and the meals provided we felt comforted and nurtured. Going into surgery Cheryl knew that she was in God's hands and that no matter what happened He would take care of everything. It truly was amazing to see such an outpouring of concern and help to our family during that difficult time. Thanks be to God for his goodness and mercy, Cheryl is recovering better than expected. And thanks be to you, our friends and family for your love and kindness.*

—The Verville Family

Sympathy is extended to the **Saffold Family** on the passing of Pat and Monroe's sister-in-law, **Juanita Cole** in December. A memorial service was held on Wednesday, Dec. 19 at the Good Shepard Lutheran Church in Oak Park. May God comfort you at this time.

Continued prayers are requested for **Cecil Jones** as he was hospitalized at Elmhurst Hospital for breathing and other problems. He returned home following a stay at the Oak Brook Rehab Center.

We received the following message:  
*As we close out a second year on and off sick lists, Art and Jackie Skwerski want to thank the entire congregation at First Baptist Church of Oak Park for the support extended to them—visits from the pastor, greeting cards, home cooked meals, personal visits from friends and phone calls. They haven't been able to worship in person at many Sunday services but they understand they're on the prayer lists of many and knowing that warms their hearts. They thank you all.*

—Art and Jackie Skwerski

—Congratulations—

Congratulations to the **Dulski Family (Jimmy, Alexis, Noah and Eden)** who are expecting a new addition to the family. The joyous birth will take place in July 2018. Proud "Gigi" (aka **Yvonne Coffey**) is extremely excited along with the family. May God bless the family!

—Church Staff—

**Dr. Harry L. Parker**, Pastor  
**Monroe Saffold**, Welcome Minister  
**Barbara Branch**, Preschool & Kindergarten Director  
**Mary Lee Eneberg**, Office Admin.  
**Elaine Feuerabend**, Financial Secretary/  
Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator  
**Eric Hogan**, Building Manager  
**Joel Raney**, Minister of Music  
**Ricardo Zela**, Sexton

—2016-2017 Officers—

**Michael Feuerabend**, Leadership Team Chair  
**Cheryl Verville**, Leadership Team Vice-Chair  
**Don Mullins**, Church Clerk  
**Lee McDonald**, Treasurer  
**Michael Shields**, Education Team Leader  
**Nancy Feehan**, Evangelism Team Leader  
**Karen Borgstadt**, Ministry Support Team Leader  
**Lynne Williams**, Preschool & Kindergarten Board Chair  
**Brent Friesen**, Service Team Leader  
**Yvonne Coffey**, Spiritual Life and Worship Team Leader  
**Kathy Ogundipe**, Superintendent of Sunday School

**GREETERS**

**Jan. 7:** Elsa & Henry Anaya (E); Rob McGehee & Martha Pogue-Bennett (W)  
**Jan. 14:** Beth Bruner (E); Mattie Dickerson & Mattie Peals (W)  
**Jan. 21:** Dotty Vandervoort (E); Rob McGehee (W)  
**Jan. 28:** Rob McGehee (E); Marvin Pope (W)

**WORSHIP LEADERS**

**Jan. 7:** Gary Cole  
**Jan. 14:** Stephanie Cole  
**Jan. 21:** Stephen Forward  
**Jan. 27:** Perla Londres Waters

**NURSERY WORKERS**

**Jan. 7:** Dorothy O'Connor & Beth Bruner  
**Jan 14:** Dorothy O'Connor & Priscila An-sani

**Jan. 21:** Dorothy O'Connor & Miles Lee  
**Jan. 28:** Dorothy O'Connor & Nancy O'Toole

**USHERS**

**Regular Ushers:** Charlie Robinson, Monroe Saffold, Linzy Waters, Perla Londres Waters  
**Jan. 7:** Yvonne Coffey, Nancy Feehan  
**Jan. 14:** Elsa Anaya, Johnnye Branch, Chuck Courtney  
**Jan. 21:** Jackie Williams, Nancy Hogan  
**Jan 28:** Liz McDonald, Mattie Peals

**E-mail :** [firstbaptist820@sbcglobal.net](mailto:firstbaptist820@sbcglobal.net)  
**Web:** [www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com](http://www.firstbaptistchurchfoakpark.com)

**~Mission Statement~**

With Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, our mission is to glorify God and expand His Kingdom by leading people to become devoted followers of Christ.

**~Vision Statement~**

To be a loving and inviting Christian Fellowship, growing in faith through the Grace of Jesus Christ, seeking to transform lives in our diverse community and beyond through teaching, worship, evangelism and service.

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—Sunday—

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for Adults  
10:00 a.m. Morning Worship  
11:15 am Sunday School for Adults, Youth, and Children

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**First Baptist Church of Oak Park**  
820 Ontario Street  
Oak Park, Illinois 60302

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