

Minister: . . . Great is the mystery of faith.

People: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Minister: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit . . .

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*traditional*) (The Hymnal, page 16)

THE COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION (*unison*)

God of our salvation, we thank you for meeting us here in this sacred meal. You straighten the winding ways of our hearts and smooth the paths made rough by sin. As we go from this table, keep our conduct blameless, keep our hearts watchful in holiness, and bring to perfection the good you have begun in us. Amen.

***HYMN 9** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" *Tune: VENI EMMANUEL*

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

POSTLUDE The King of Glory Comes *Israeli folk song
arr. Aaron David Miller*

WORSHIP LEADERS

John W. Vest Associate Pastor
The Vespers Choir
John W. W. Sherer Organist and Director of Music

The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago

John M. Buchanan, Pastor

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vespers
6:30 p.m. Sunday December 7, 2008

A LIGHT IN THE CITY
**FOURTH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
www.fourthchurch.org

PRELUDE Benedictus (Blessed is the one who comes)
Alec Rowley

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Daniel Miller

Leader: In a hopeful time, a time like Advent, the psalmist declares, "Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for God will speak peace to God's people."
(Psalm 85:8–9)

People: **"Surely salvation is at hand for those who fear God, that God's glory may dwell in our land."**

Leader: We light a second candle on the Advent wreath to remind us that God's presence is becoming brighter in our world.

People: **The light of Christ reminds us to move beyond fear to caring, beyond self to neighbor, beyond protection to growth.**

Leader: A voice cries out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

People: **Soon the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.**

FIRST LESSON Mark 1:1–8 (page 32, N.T.)

***HYMN 13** "Prepare the Way" *Tune: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Eternal God, though you call us to be a prophetic people, we confess that we have kept silent when confronted by injustice and unrighteousness.

**Stand as you are able.*

We stand in silence as people go without food or shelter, as the poor get poorer and the rich get richer, as people are oppressed and marginalized for being different from those in power. Renew in us a zeal for the good news of Advent. Fill our mouths with your words of truth and justice, and may our actions reveal the passion of our commitment to your vision of a new heaven and a new earth. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Minister: Friends, believe the good news.

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PSALTER Psalm 85 (*responsively*) (page 514, O.T.)

ANTHEM “On Jordan’s Stormy Banks I Stand”
American folk melody
arr. David H. Williams

SECOND LESSON Isaiah 40:1–11 (page 627, O.T.)

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION MEDITATION by John W. Vest
WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

***HYMN 3** “Comfort, Comfort You My People” *Tune: PSALM 42*

***PROFESSION OF FAITH** (*unison*)

I believe it is a matter of faith to stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. I believe it is a matter of faith to recognize equally and love all members of God’s human family. There are no exceptions to God’s love. I believe God’s creation is good, beautiful, and sacred; therefore, to condemn any portion of God’s creation is to condemn a

portion of God. This is sin. I believe Jesus Christ came to us to free all people from sin and to make disciples—people willing to live Christ’s discipline of love and justice for all. I believe the Holy Spirit is that power within us that gives us courage and stamina to face the truth and to live it, even to die for it, as Jesus died. I believe in the resurrection, the victory over death, and the truth that is life for all in Jesus’ name. Glory is to God, the One in Three: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of Love.

*(Adapted from text by Ruth Duck
and Maren Tirabassi)*

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”
Eric H. Thiman

***DOXOLOGY** (The Hymnal, 592)

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

INVITATION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PRAYER

Minister: . . . who forever sing to the glory of your name.

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**
(sung) **heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.