

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Minister: Arise, shine: for your light has come.

People: **O God, we live as if the light had never defeated the darkness in the world or in us.**

Minister: And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

People: **We confess that we ignore the Christ you sent to be among us, to be in us.**

Minister: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.

People: **We’ve kept the birth of your Son confined to the Christmas season and do not yearn for his birth each moment in our waiting hearts.**

Minister: And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

People: **Lord, you came to us in the fullness of time. Forgive us for not opening our eyes to your coming. It’s time that we prepare for your coming. Let the earth ring with song. Let the light break forth. Let us all rejoice in the miracle of love. Let Christ come into the fullness of our time. Amen.**

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Minister: Friends, believe the good news.

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

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PSALTER

Psalm 80:1–3

(page 511, O.T.)

***GLORIA PATRI**

(The Hymnal, 579)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Luke 2:1–7; 1 John 4:7–12, 16

(pages 54, 226, N.T.)

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

JOHN BUCHANAN

The God Who Lives in Our Love

“So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.” 1 John 4:16 (NRSV)

***HYMN 36**

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

Tune: CRANHAM

*** APOSTLES’ CREED**

(unison)

**I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the
right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

(unison)

**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 and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

PRAYER RESPONSE

“Amen”

John Stainer

OFFERTORY CANTATA

“Magnificat”

Aaron David Miller

- I. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. You have looked with favor on your lowly servant. And from this day all generations will call me blessed. You, O most mighty, have done great things for me; holy is your name. You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.
- II. You have shown the strength of your arm; you have scattered the proud in their conceit. You have cast down the mighty from their thrones and have lifted up the lowly. You have filled the hungry, sent the rich away empty. You have come to the help of your people. You remember your promise of mercy made to our forebears, Abraham and his children forever.
- III. Glory to God! Glory to the Father. Glory to the Son. Glory to the Holy Spirit. Amen. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE



For the life that you have giv-en, for the love in Christ made known,
with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these gifts that are your own:
here we of - fer, Lord, our prai-ses; heart and mind and strength we bring.
Give us grace to love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

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*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

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.**

All: **God of mystery and might,
we praise you and worship you,
for you came in silence, while all lay sleeping,
to enter our world as a child of humble birth.
We thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ,
born of your handmaid Mary.
In his face we behold your glory,
for in his life as in his death is your gift of salvation.
By your Spirit, make our hearts burn with thanksgiving,
that we may give as we have received.
Let our whole lives be gifts of praise to you,
God of love and peace, in the gracious name of Jesus Christ,
your Son, by the power of your Holy Spirit, now and forever.
Amen.**

*HYMN 22

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

Tune: REGENT SQUARE

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Improvisation

Aaron David Miller

Christmas Worship

AT FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

■ **Blue Christmas Service** ■

Wednesday, December 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

*For those for whom the Christmas celebration
is made difficult by loss and sadness*

■ **Four Christmas Eve Candlelight Services** ■

Friday, December 24 in the sanctuary

4:00 p.m. *Children's Pageant*

6:00 p.m. *Family Service* ♦ John W. Vest preaching

8:30 p.m. *Lessons and Carols* ♦ John Buchanan preaching

11:00 p.m. *Lessons and Carols* ♦ John Buchanan preaching

■ **Christmas Day Service** ■

Saturday, December 25 in the sanctuary

11:00 a.m. ♦ Victoria G. Curtiss preaching

*A traditional Christmas dinner in Anderson Hall will be
served at 12:30 p.m. Dinner tickets are available during
Coffee Hour and at the reception desk during the week.*

■ **Sunday Worship with Christmas Hymns and Readings** ■

Sunday, December 26 in the sanctuary

9:30 and 11:00 a.m. ♦ *(No 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. services)*

■ **New Year's Eve Taizé Service** ■

Friday, December 31 at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary

WORSHIP LEADERS

9:30 a.m. Adam H. Fronczek, Joyce Shin, John Buchanan

11:00 a.m. Adam H. Fronczek, Joyce Shin, John Buchanan

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

9:30 a.m. Russell Gloyd and Jeanne Bishop

11:00 a.m. Nancy Baird

THE MUSIC TODAY

9:30 a.m. Tower Brass; the Morning Choir;
Laura Perkett and Callie Thompson, soloists

11:00 a.m. Tower Brass; the Morning Choir;
Laura Perkett and Callie Thompson, soloists

John W. W. Sherer, Organist and Director of Music

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist and Handbell Director

Matthew Comerford, Artistic Director of Tower Brass

WORSHIP NOTES

This morning's Prayer of Confession is from *The Worship Sourcebook* (Calvin Institute of Christian Worship).

This morning's Cantata, *Magnificat*, was commissioned by Fourth Church in 2009. Today it is performed for the first time. Its composer Aaron David Miller, who is Director of Music and Organist at House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, also served as Associate Organist at Fourth Church from 1999 to 2001.

The "Light Up a Life" offering is being received throughout December. This year-end giving campaign supports congregational programs, mission, and community outreach, including Chicago Lights programs, and denominational programs. "Light Up a Life" gifts can be made using the special offering envelopes found in the pew racks or by writing "Light Up a Life" on the memo line of a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church.

PASTORAL STAFF

John M. Buchanan, Pastor

Calum I. MacLeod, Executive Associate Pastor

Victoria G. Curtiss, Associate Pastor for Mission

Adam H. Fronczek, Associate Pastor for
Adult Education and Worship

Donna Gray, Minister for Children and Families

Sarah A. Johnson, Minister for Congregational Care

Linda C. Loving, Minister for Evangelism

Joyce Shin, Associate Pastor for
Congregational Life

John W. Vest, Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

John H. Boyle, Parish Associate

Thomas C. Rook, Parish Associate

Kerri N. Allen, Pastoral Resident

Matthew J. Helms, Pastoral Resident

David A. Donovan, Associate Pastor Emeritus