

The beginning of the prelude is a call to silent, personal preparation for the worship of God.

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

- Savior of the Nations, Come Dieterich Buxtehude
Three Advent Hymn Improvisations Paul Manz
Savior of the Nations, Come
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
“Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us
Benedictus Alec Rowley

Introit

“Prepare the Way of the Lord” Richard Proulx
Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight his paths. Rejoice, the Lord is at hand!

*Doxology (*sung*) The Hymnal, 606
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Call to Worship and Liturgy of the Advent Wreath

Reader 1: *In Isaiah 11:9 the prophet declares,*
“They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God,
as the waters cover the sea.”

Reader 2: *We light this candle as a sign of hope*
that truth will prevail, and justice be done for all people.
As we pray and work for truth, compassion,
and justice, near and far—

All: Risen Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives
and shine among us now.

Sung Response (*unison*) “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”
O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show;
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Prayer of Praise

**Stand as you are able.*

*Hymn 104 “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Gracious One, we confess that sometimes our eyes are half shut because we grow tired of looking for your presence. And we confess that at other times our eyes are half open because we are afraid to see too much. Even during “holiday time” our eyes might fill with tears, because this year, like every year, we know that what takes place in our home has little to do with your birth into this world.

But we are not sure how to make any of it different.

All we can do is ask for your forgiveness. Forgive us for eyes too dimmed by familiarity; hearts too dulled by past pain; and minds too numbed by consumerism and self-centeredness. Forgive us, we pray, and make us new again. Give all of us a bigger vision of what you can do— are doing—in us and among us. We pray in Advent yearning. Amen.

Declaration of Pardon

Minister: *Friends, believe the good news:*

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Concerns of the Church

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*responsively*)

Psalm 72:1-8. Old Testament, page 504

First Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10 Old Testament, page 602

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

*Gloria Patri (*sung*). The Hymnal, 581

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.

Second Lesson

Matthew 3:1-12. New Testament, page 2

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 96 “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

*Affirmation of Faith (*unison*) Apostles’ Creed

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.

Offertory Anthem

“Lo! How a Rose E’er Blooming” Hugo Distler
*Lo! How a rose e’er blooming from tender stem hath sprung; it came a floweret
bright amid the cold of winter, when half-spent was the night. Isaiah ’twas foretold
it, the rose I have in mind. With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God’s love aright she bore to us a Savior when half-spent was the night.
This flower whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air dispels with glorious
splendor the darkness everywhere. True man, yet very God! From sin and death
he saves us and lightens every load.*

*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.

Sealing the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

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: *It is truly right and our greatest joy . . .*

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

Sanctus (*sung*) The Hymnal, 572

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

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

Memorial Acclamation (*sung*) The Hymnal, 573

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

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.

The Communion

Communion Anthem

“Never Weather-Beaten Sail” Charles Wood

Never weather-beaten sail more willing bent to shore, never tired pilgrim limbs affected slumber more than my weary spirit now longs to fly out of my troubled breast. O come quickly, sweetest Lord, and take my soul to rest. Ever-blooming are the joys of heaven’s high paradise; old age deafs not there our ears, nor vapor dims our eyes; glory there the sun outshines whose beams the blessed only see. O come quickly, glorious Lord, and raise my soul to thee.

“O Radiant Dawn” James MacMillan

O radiant dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice, come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Isaiah had prophesied, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.” Amen.

Psalm 23 (*recited in unison after all have received the cup*)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*Prayer and Dedication of Our Homebound Elements (*unison*)

Gracious God, you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. As the bread and cup go out from this time of worship into times of worship at bedsides and in homes, we pray for those who will receive these elements of grace. May they also feel the way you tie us all together in you. May all of our love be your love reaching out into the life of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn 163 “Wild and Lone the Prophet’s Voice”

*Benediction and Response

Postlude

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

Worship Leaders

Judith L. Watt, Marcus Miller, Jeff Doane, Shannon J. Kershner

Lighting the Advent Wreath

9:30 Cris and Ken Ohr

11:00 Carla Janzen, Nicole Spirgen, and Sarah van der Ploeg

The Music Today

The Morning Choir

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

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

Worship Notes

THE “LIGHT UP A LIFE” OFFERING is being received throughout Advent. “Light Up a Life” provides opportunity to support congregational programs, mission, and community outreach—including Chicago Lights programs—as well as denominational efforts. “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.

THE ADVENT BANNERS, in the form of wings, convey the idea of Advent stillness and of waiting in the presence of angels. They were designed and painted by Eliza Linley of Berkeley, California.

THE BULLETIN COVER photo depicts Christmas lights on Michigan Avenue shining through the frost on a leaded-glass window at Fourth Church. The cover quote is from John Shea’s book *A Star at Its Rising: Advent Meditations*.

SOURCES AND CREDITS: Hymn tune names—as well as composers of the music and authors of the text—are listed in the hymnal with each hymn. The Prayer of Confession is inspired by a prayer found in *Cloth for the Cradle*, Wild Goose Worship Group. The words to “For the Life that You Have Given” are by Carl P. Daw Jr. © 1987; music is by Morgan Simmons © 1990, 1992 Hope Publishing Co.

Shannon J. Kershner Pastor

Victoria G. Curtiss Associate Pastor for Mission

Matt Helms Associate Pastor
for Children and Family Ministry

Hardy H. Kim Associate Pastor for Evangelism

Rocky Supinger Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

Judith L. Watt Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

Nanette Sawyer Minister for Congregational Life

Jeffrey Doane Parish Associate for Older Adults

Abbi Heimach-Snipes Pastoral Resident

John Buchanan Pastor Emeritus

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THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO
Church office: 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago, IL 60611.2014
www.fourthchurch.org | www.facebook.com/fourthchurch
312.787.4570 | Voicemail 312.787.2729 | Fax: 312.787.4584