

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

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

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.

*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

Psalm 72:1-9 Old Testament, page 504

Anthem

“Christ Is Nigh” Scottish folk tune; arr. Mark Schweizer

Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding; “Christ is nigh,” it seems to say. “Cast away the works of darkness, O ye children of the day.” Wakened by the solemn warning let the earthbound soul arise; Christ, our sun, all ill dispelling, shines upon the morning skies. He comes down like fragrant showers, raining on the fruitful earth love and joy and hope, like flowers springing on his path to birth; see before him on the mountains peace, the valiant herald go, righteousness, in flowing fountains, from the hills to valleys flow. Kings and monarchs bow before him, myrrh and gold and incense bring; for all nations shall adore him, laud and praise, their offering. Unto him shall prayer unceasing, with our daily vows ascend; his great kingdom still increasing, kingdom that shall have no end. Lo, the lamb, so long expected, comes with pardon down from heaven; let us haste, with tears of sorrow, one and all to be forgiven. Honor, glory, might, and blessing be to God, the Father, Son, and the everlasting Spirit, while eternal ages run.

First Lesson

Isaiah 11:1-10 Old Testament, page 602

Minister: *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

Minister: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

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

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

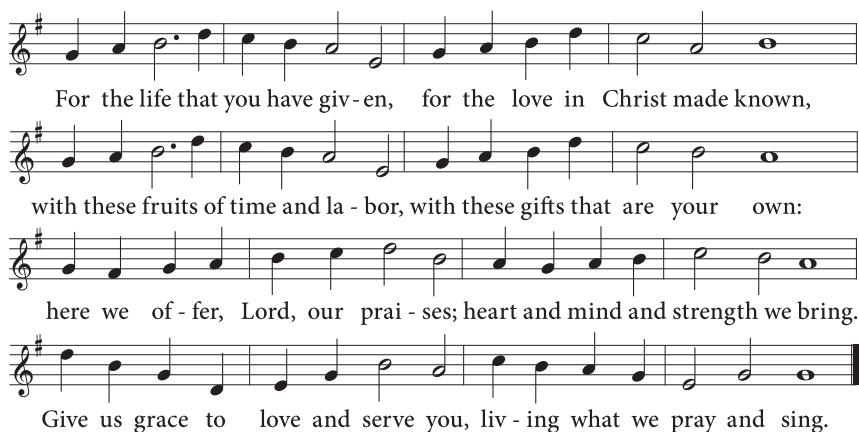
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead; 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.

Offering

Offertory Voluntary

Bicinium and Aria from *On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry* . . Bruce Neswick

*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 up 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:*

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.*

Prayer after Communion (*unison*)

O God, in this meal we have been given a foretaste of the feast that
is to come. Help us always to be alert to your gifts in our midst;
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

Toccatà from *On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry*. Bruce Neswick

Worship Leaders

Judith L. Watt, Clark Costen, Shannon J. Kershner

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Clark Costen and Samme Forbes Orwig

The Music Today

The Chancel Choir; Laura Perrett, oboe; Amy Anderson, violin
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.

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.

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