

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

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

- Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine. Hieronymus Praetorius
arr. Erich Peterson
- “Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us Johann Ludwig Krebs
- Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming Johannes Brahms
arr. Robert King
- Gabriel’s Oboe Ennio Morricone
- The Angel Spoke to the Shepherds Heinrich Schütz
arr. Gary Olson

Introit

- “Our King and Savior Now Draws Near” Iain Quinn
*Our King and Savior now draws near; come, let us adore him.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.*

- *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: *The prophet Isaiah declares, “A young woman is with child,
and shall bear a son and shall name him Emmanuel
(which means God-with-Us). The risen Christ declares,
“I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

**Stand as you are able.*

Reader 2: *We light this candle as a sign of God's presence in Christ, now and always. That we may trust that God is with us and live in the light of Christ's coming—*

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, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Prayer of Praise

*Hymn 348 “Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending”

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

God of glory and light, you come to make your home among us,
yet we try to keep you at a distance, on the periphery of our lives.
You have drawn near to us, but we have shrunk back from you.
In mercy, forgive our resistance. By your Spirit, revive our love for you,
and put in us a new and willing spirit that welcomes you and your
purposes—in us, among us, and through us; for the sake of Emmanuel,
God with us. Amen.

Declaration of Pardon

Minister: *Friends, believe the good news:*
People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Reception of New Members (11:00)

Concerns of the Church

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*responsively*)

Psalm 80:1–7. Old Testament, page 511

*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.

Scripture Lesson

Matthew 1:18–25. New Testament, page 1

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

Homily Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 144 “In the Bleak Midwinter”

*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.

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

“We Wait and Hope for the Lord” Dale Wood

*We wait and hope for the Lord, for he is our help and shield.
In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.
Let your unfailing love be upon us, O Lord, as we put our trust in you.*

Offertory Cantata

“Christmas Cantata” Daniel Pinkham

- I. *What did you see, shepherds? Tell us!
Tell us what was revealed to you on this earth.
“We saw a child and a chorus of angels.” Alleluia.*
- II. *O great mystery and wonderful sacrament,
how the animals watch over the Son of God lying in a manger.
O blessed mother, whose womb carried Christ.*
- III. *Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill to all.
Let all the earth praise the Lord and serve the Lord joyfully!
Come before him with singing, joy, and exultation.
Know that the Lord is God; he made us and not we ourselves. Alleluia.*

*Presentation of the Offering and 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.

*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Holy God, you bless us with many gifts, you retrieve us from despair and fear, you visit us with surprising proclamations, and you intend for us good things. We thank you for your steadfast love, for sending signs of assurance, and for the gift of faith. Use our gifts to bring your comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for the sake of new life. Amen.


Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn 143 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

*Benediction and Response

Postlude

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice Michael Praetorius
arr. Aaron David Miller



Christmas Worship

“Longest Night” Service

Wednesday, December 21

6:30–7:30 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel

*For those experiencing pain, loss,
grief, or loneliness this season*

Four Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Saturday, December 24

4:00 p.m. Children’s Pageant

Matt Helms preaching

6:00 p.m. Family Service

Shannon J. Kershner preaching

8:30 p.m. Lessons and Carols

Shannon J. Kershner preaching

11:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols

Shannon J. Kershner preaching

Christmas Day Service

Sunday, December 25

11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Shannon Kershner preaching

(This is the only service on Dec. 25)

Worship Leaders

Nanette Sawyer, Ann Murray, Judith L. Watt, Shannon J. Kershner

Lighting the Advent Wreath

9:30 The Thompson–Schexnayder Family

11:00 The McGaan Family

The Music Today

The Morning Choir; Tower Brass; Laura Perkett, oboist;

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

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

Matthew Comerford, Artistic Director of Tower Brass

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.

TODAY’S CHRISTMAS CANTATA was composed by Daniel Pinkham in 1957 while he was teaching at Harvard. To best appreciate this music the listener should become a character in the Christmas story. The first movement begins by asking the shepherds what they saw followed by the shepherds’ frantic and somewhat chaotic reply about “a child and a chorus of angels.” The second movement depicts the wonder and tranquility of the manger scene. The final movement begins softly and builds throughout, portraying the joyful coming of Christ into our hearts and into the world. As the third movement begins, the angel chorus is in the distance singing “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” but the exultation grows with each reiteration of the chorus.

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 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. The Prayer of Dedication is from *Feasting on the Word Advent Companion*, © 2014. Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press.

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