

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

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## Gathering around the Word

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### Prelude

Poem of Peace . . . . .	Jean Langlais
Idyl . . . . .	Richard Purvis
Prelude in G Minor . . . . .	Marcel Dupré

### Introit

“O Come, Let Us Sing to the Lord” . . . . .	Stephen Sturk
<i>O come, let us sing to the Lord.</i>	
<i>Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving.</i>	
<i>Let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise.</i>	

\*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

Leader: *We lift our eyes to the Lord.*  
People: God created the heavens and the earth.  
Leader: *We raise our voices in song and speech;*  
People: we raise our voices in prayer and praise.  
Leader: *Let us worship God!*

### \*Prayer of Praise

\*Hymn 612 . . . . . “We Praise You, O God”

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*\*Stand as you are able.*

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Everlasting God, we must confess  
how we have not lived fully as your people.  
We serve many masters—  
work, wealth, power, addictions, fear—  
yet find no hope in them.  
We hear the cries of the poor and the lonely  
and shut the doors of our hearts in response.  
We ignore our own brokenness  
and always respond with a quick “I’m fine.”  
Forgive us, O God. Forgive us and heal us.  
Make us well, so that by our healing  
we might be part of your hope and love that others need in their lives,  
even as Jesus Christ, our brother and Savior, brought these gifts to us.  
We pray in his name. Amen.

Declaration of Pardon

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

Concerns of the Church

Anthem

“Pilgrim’s Hymn” . . . . . Stephen Paulus  
*Even before we call on your name to ask you, O God,  
when we seek for the words to glorify you, you hear our prayer;  
unceasing love, O unceasing love, surpassing all we know.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
Even with darkness sealing us in, we breathe your name,  
and through all the days that follow so fast, we trust in you;  
endless your grace, O endless your grace, beyond all mortal dream.  
Both now and forever, and unto ages and ages. Amen.*

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Listening for the Word

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Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*responsively*)

Psalm 90 . . . . . Old Testament, page 517

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

Glorify 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 25:14–30 . . . . . New Testament, page 27

Minister: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon . . . . . Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

\*Hymn 691 . . . . . “Lord, When I Came into This Life”

\*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.

Reception of New Members (11:00)

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

“O Lord, Hear Our Prayer” . . . . . Eric H. Thiman

*O Lord, hear our prayer, and let our cry come before thee.*

Offering

Offertory Anthem

“A Psalm of Praise and Thanksgiving” . . . . . Michael McCabe

*O praise the Lord, ye nations; praise him ye people, O praise the Lord. Praise him in the sound of the trumpet; praise him in dances. Praise him on lute and harp; praise him with strings and praise him with pipe. Grant us this day, O Lord, a blessing for thy house, that those who hunger for thy holy word may find it here. We give thee thanks and praise this day. O praise the Lord, ye nations; praise him ye people. O praise the Lord and give him thanks this day. Let all the people praise the Lord, both now and evermore.*

\*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

Now, in these moments of gratitude,  
 we offer you a portion of all which you have given to us, gracious God.  
 We do so, trusting that you will take them,  
 multiplying them in your kingdom,  
 so all might be blessed by your love, your peace, and your hope. Amen.

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Bearing the Word into the World

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\*Hymn 694 . . . . . “Great God of Every Blessing”

\*Benediction and Response

*Worshippers who wish to do so are invited to sing along with the choir during the Benediction responses.*

Postlude

Fugue in G Minor . . . . . M. Dupré

## Worship in the Reformed Tradition

As the headings in our bulletin remind us each week, the center of our worship is **the Word**—by which we mean both Scripture and the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ. Our Scripture witnesses to God and God’s activity. When it is read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ the Living Word is present by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. It is this Living Word that is the center of everything we do in worship.

That worship follows the pattern we see in Isaiah 6 (page 597 of the Old Testament): adoration, confession, absolution, thanksgiving, and service. Overwhelmed by God’s majesty and glory, we **gather together in praise** offered through song and prayer.

In the face of that great goodness of God, we also see how we fall short of being who we were created to be and so we join in a **prayer of confession**. We then proclaim the **forgiveness** that we know in Jesus Christ. We live our lives in this cycle of realizing where we fall short, being honest to God about that, and then recognizing that God always forgives us, even before the words are on our lips, and lets us start new.

As we listen for the Word of God, **Scripture** is read. The **sermon** is proclaimed. We respond to the Word with thanksgiving, joining in **song** and **affirming our faith**, using words from the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s *Book of Confessions*—whether it be the Apostles’ Creed, a Brief Statement of Faith, or one of the other professions of faith—or words taken directly from Scripture.

Following Jesus’ instruction to pray, in the **Prayers of the People** we bring human need before God in hope, trust, and thanksgiving for God’s faithfulness, concluding with the **Lord’s Prayer**. Our response of thanksgiving also includes the giving of our material goods, bringing to God the **offerings** of our work as symbols of our gratitude and our acknowledgment that everything we have comes from God. In prayer we **dedicate** these gifts and our lives to the work of the church and God’s mission.

God then **sends** us, like Isaiah, back out into the world in service. Our final **hymn** of grateful praise moves directly into a **charge and blessing** to take what we have heard, to take what we have learned, and to actively live it out in the world, looking for God’s work all around us.

## Worship Leaders

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9:30 Nanette Sawyer, Kathryn Burkhardt, Judith L. Watt, Shannon J. Kershner

11:00 Nanette Sawyer, Kathy Kidder, Judith L. Watt, Alex Wirth,  
Shannon J. Kershner

## The Music Today

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The Morning Choir

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

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

## Worship Notes

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FOURTH CHURCH OFFERS A VARIETY of worship opportunities on Sundays, including an 8:00 a.m. Communion service and a jazz service with Communion at 4:00 p.m. Each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m., Morning Prayer is held in Buchanan Chapel as a time to remember in prayer members of the Fourth Church congregation and those in need. We will also offer a service in the style of Taizé on Sunday, December 31 (New Year's Eve) at 7:30 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel.

THE BULLETIN COVER image depicts leaves floating in the Michigan Avenue courtyard fountain. The cover quote is from Fred Craddock's book *Preaching through the Christian Year, Year B*.

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**Shannon J. Kershner** Pastor

**Victoria G. Curtiss** Associate Pastor for Mission

**Matt Helms** Associate Pastor  
for Children and Family Ministry

**Rocky Supinger** Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry

**Judith L. Watt** Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

**Nanette Sawyer** Minister for Congregational Life

**Alex Wirth** Minister for Evangelism

**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](http://www.fourthchurch.org) | [www.facebook.com/fourthchurch](https://www.facebook.com/fourthchurch)  
312.787.4570 | Voicemail 312.787.2729 | Fax: 312.787.4584