



Gathering

Gathering Music "House on the Hill" *Pat Metheny*
"Prepare the Way, O Zion" *Frans M. Franzen*

Greeting

***Opening Responses**

(The congregational responses are in boldface type)

In this Advent season, we wait in the darkness—expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.

**In the darkness we see the splendor of the universe—
blankets of stars, the solitary glowing of planets.**

In the darkness the magi saw the star that guided them to the Christ child.

**In the darkness of the night,
desert people find relief from the cruel relentless heat of the sun.**

In the blessed desert darkness Mary and Joseph were able
to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.

**In the solitude of the darkness our fears and concerns,
our hopes and visions rise to the surface.**

We come face-to-face with ourselves and with the road that lies ahead of us.

And in that same darkness we find companionship for the journey.

In the darkness that contains both our hopelessness and our hope,
we watch for a sign of God’s hope.

God is with us, even now. Let us worship God!

* Stand as you are able

*Inspired by the radical hospitality of Jesus Christ, Fourth Church welcomes all of God’s children into the life of the church
regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, race, ethnicity, physical or mental ability, mental health,
educational background, economic situation, religious background, or documentation status.*

***Opening Song** “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Please note

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Advent Prayer of Confession

In Advent, in the waiting, we gather around this wreath. It's circular. No beginning. No end. A sign of God's constant love and faithfulness. God's love encircles us, no matter who we are or where we've been, and sets us free to love and serve our neighbor in response. Let's lay down our burdens in this waiting. Let's burrow into grace a little deeper as we pray together.

Holy God, as we prepare our hearts to welcome you, we know that we stumble. The way is bumpy and crooked; our choices are difficult and painful. Open the path before us, God. Forgive us for the missteps we take and for our tendency to try to hide from you. Hear us, O God, as we come to you in this time of silence, confessing those sins we speak only in our hearts.

(Please hold silence.)

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Assurance of Pardon

Each candle we light, a constant, familiar glow, flickers in us, enlivens us for the waiting and warms us toward what is to come. Friends, grace is becoming real: believe it.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, blessed, and sent into the world.

***Passing of the Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

All are invited to stand and share the peace of Christ with one another.

***Song** "Soon and Very Soon" *Andrae Crouch*

Welcome



Hearing and Proclaiming the Word

Canticle *Isaiah 35:1–10 (the congregation sings the antiphon)*

ANTIPHON (*unison*) **While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.**

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God. He will come with vengeance,

with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

ANTIPHON (*unison*) **While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.**

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

ANTIPHON (*unison*) **While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.**

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

ANTIPHON (*unison*) **While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.**

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Scripture Reading

Mark 1:1–8 (*New Testament, page 32*)

Sermon *Nanette Sawyer*

Responding to the Word

Musical Reflection

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.**

Sharing of Gifts *(Please place gifts, pledges, and prayer cards in the plate as it is passed.)*

Offertory Music "I Shall Be Released" *Bob Dylan*

***Doxology** *Lucy Smith*

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

The Great Thanksgiving

(The congregational responses are in boldface type)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise!

Sanctus *Lucy Smith*

The Communion

Communion Music "Come Ye Disconsolate" *Samuel Webbe Sr. and Thomas Moore*

Prayer after Communion (*unison*)

Holy God, you nourish us continually with your grace and love.

At table you bring us together into community and remind us of your presence with us.

**Bless us to be a blessing. Send us, strengthened and nourished, into the world
to share your transforming love with all. Amen.**



Sending

***Closing Song.** "Joyful Is the Dark"

*Benediction

Sending Music

Worship Leaders

Nanette Sawyer	Minister for Congregational Life
Alex Wirth	Minister for Evangelism
Lesley Conzelman	Lay Liturgist
Summer Zhao	Lighting the Advent Wreath
Lucy Smith Quartet	Lucy Smith, vocals Bryan Doherty, bass Marcus Evans, drums Tom Vaitsas, piano

A note on inclusive language

Incorporating ancient and contemporary traditions in this service, God is named corporately in a variety of ways that are gender neutral. This allows for your personal expressions as you are led to name the Holy in ways meaningful to you.

Acknowledgments

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FOURTH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
A Light in the City

PASTORAL STAFF

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

Advent and Christmas

Help decorate the Sanctuary and also memorialize or honor loved ones by contributing to the purchase of Advent and Christmas flowers and garlands. A list of those remembered will be printed in the Christmas bulletin. Contributions can be made online at www.bit.ly/FPCgifts or by using the forms in the literature racks. Contributions must be received by next Sunday, December 10 for names to appear in the Christmas bulletin.

Daily Advent devotions are available via email (sign up online at www.bit.ly/fpcdevotions); at facebook.com/fourthchurch, Twitter (@FourthChicago), www.fourthchurch.org; and in the literature racks.

“A Chanticleer Christmas” concert will take place this Tuesday, December 5 and Wednesday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Tickets are available online at www.cso.org; use the code CHANTICLEER to receive a 25 percent discount.

Lakeside Singers presents their “Love and Joy Come to You” holiday concert this Friday, December 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Tickets are available at the door and online (www.lakesidesingers.com).

Holidays a cappella with Chicago a cappella, will take place this Saturday, December 9 at 8:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Tickets are available online at www.chicagoacappella.org

The Christmas with Tower Brass concert will be Saturday, December 23 at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary; a freewill donation will be received at the door.

The Festival of Advent Lessons and Music service of worship will take place next Sunday, December 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. A cookies-and-cocoa reception hosted by Women at Fourth will follow.

Las Posadas Family Night will take place Friday, December 15 at 5:30 p.m. in the Gratz Center with a time for food, games, and festivities.

A Christmas musical presented by the Children’s and Youth Choirs will take place Sunday, December 17 at 10:30 a.m. in Buchanan Chapel.

The “Longest Night” service, which will be held Wednesday, December 20 at 6:30 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel, recognizes the feelings of loneliness, grief, and alienation that are often present during the holiday season.

Some Christmas Eve candlelight times will be different this year. With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday, that morning of December 24 we will worship at 11:00 a.m. only. (*There will be no 8:00 or 9:30 a.m. services that day.*) We will also gather for four candlelight Christmas Eve services:

- 4:00 p.m. Children’s Pageant
- 6:00 p.m. Family Service with Jazz
- 8:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols
- 10:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols

Christmas Day worship will take place at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

A New Year’s Eve Taizé service will be held at 7:30 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel on Sunday, December 31. That day we will also worship in the morning at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00 a.m. (*There will be no 4:00 p.m. jazz service on December 31.*)

Light Up a Life with Joy This Advent Season!

Gifts to the “Light Up a Life” offering touch countless lives by supporting congregational programs, mission, and community outreach—including Chicago Lights programs—as well as denominational efforts. Gifts can be made using the envelopes in the pew racks or by writing “Light Up a Life” on the memo line of a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church.



News and Opportunities

Worship

The labyrinth in Buchanan Chapel is available for walking this week on Monday and Tuesday from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sacred Pause meditative silence is offered on Tuesdays at 7:45 a.m. in Stone Chapel.

Morning Prayer is held on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. in Buchanan Chapel as a time to pray for Fourth Church members and those in need.

We gather for worship each Sunday at 8:00 a.m. (with Communion), 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and, for Jazz at Four with Communion, at 4:00 p.m.

Taking Communion to homebound members will be part of the Deacon ministry this Advent. If you know of Fourth Church members who would like to receive Communion at home, please call Carol Allerton at 312.640.5448.

News and Resources

A congregational meeting has been called by Session for next Sunday, December 10 following the 11:00 a.m. service. The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee will present Nanette Sawyer as their recommended candidate for the position of Associate Pastor for Discipleship and Small Group Ministry; the congregation will then vote on that recommendation.

We are counting on gifts pledged for 2017 to be fully fulfilled by year end to ensure the budgets of Fourth Church and Chicago Lights can be met. If you anticipate being unable to fulfill your pledge, please let Andrea Miller know (312.640.2576) so we might plan accordingly. Thank you!

Enrichment

The adult education class “Reformed and Always Reforming: Doing Church Differently,” led by Abbi Heimach-Snipes, meets on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. in Room 5D.

Men’s Bible Study meets this Tuesday, December 5 in the Loop at 7:30 a.m. To RSVP (*required*), contact Anne Ellis (312.573.3369; aellis@fourthchurch.org).

A meditation group hosted by the Replogle Center meets on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 7:45 p.m. in the Boyle Conference Room.

Christian Century Study Group meets Wednesday, December 6 at 6:00 p.m. in the Randolph Room.

Inquirers’ Class provides opportunity to learn more about Fourth Church. This one-session class—a prerequisite for membership—will next be offered next Sunday, December 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in the Page Smith Room. Class attendees are encouraged to worship with us at 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. that day.

Prorated membership rates for the Center for Life and Learning for adults sixty and more began December 1. Call Susan Quaintance (312.981.3386) for details.

Individuals experiencing life challenges can benefit from being paired with a Stephen Minister, who walks alongside them as a listening presence. The next fifty-hour training course for new Stephen Ministers begins February 3. Details are available in the literature racks.

A spiritual pilgrimage to Ghost Ranch, New Mexico, will be held April 6–13. Details are available in the literature racks.

Music and the Arts

CSO Concertmaster Robert Chen will perform this week’s free Friday Noonday Concert at 12:10 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel.

Volunteers/Donations Needed

Individuals to staff the Book Nook during the 12:00 noon Sunday Coffee Hour

Single-serving snack items for Fourth Church Meals Ministry and the Social Service Center

Large paper shopping bags for use by guests of the Social Service Center Share Shop and Food Pantry

Men's clothing (all sizes) for guests of the Chicago Lights Elam Davies Social Service Center Share Shop

Donations can be left at the reception desk. To sign up—or for additional volunteer opportunities—contact Robert Crouch, Director of Volunteer Ministry, at 312.981.3382 (rcrouch@fourthchurch.org).

Children, Youth, and Family

Sunday School classes meet at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Youth groups and Confirmation meet on Sundays at 11:00 a.m., with a weekly time for fellowship beforehand at 10:30 a.m.

Choirs for children and youth meet on Sundays in Room 4F: Cherub Choir (age 3–grade 1) at 9:00 a.m., Youth Choir (grades 6–12) at 10:00 a.m., and Children's Choir (grades 2–5) at 10:30 a.m.

Tunes for Tots, a time for parents and children up to two years old to sing simple songs together, meets on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in Day School Classroom B.

Fellowship

Young Adults, a group for those in their twenties and thirties, meets for their weekly Sunday Gathering—a time to discuss a different topic each week—at 12:30 p.m. in Room 5A.

For ways to connect with the community of Fourth Church, visit www.fourthchurch.org/community

Mission and Outreach

Holiday Bags are being collected by Fourth Church Meals Ministry for guests of Sunday Night and Monday Night Suppers. A list of needed items as well as bags to decorate are available at the reception desk. Items are to be returned by next Sunday, December 10.

The "Christmas Wishes" gift project collects gifts for Chicago Lights Tutoring students who might not otherwise receive them. Wish lists are available from Anne Ellis (312.573.3369; aellis@fourthchurch.org). Volunteers are also needed to help inventory and wrap gifts.

A candlelit prayer vigil for peace will be held on Wednesday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m. in Buchanan Chapel. On this anniversary of the Sandy Hooks shooting, we remember those who have been killed in Chicago and in other national tragedies.

Information about 2018 mission trips to Cuba; to Mexico to build rain cisterns; and to Washington, D.C., with the Interfaith Coalition Against Racism to learn about the history of oppression and resistance is available at www.fourthchurch.org/mission/trips and also in brochures in the literature racks.

The Benevolent Guild gathers on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. in Room 5B to create gifts for hospitalized children.

Chicago Shares voucher booklets—which offer a way to give to those in need on the streets while knowing that the \$1 gift will be redeemed at a grocery store or restaurant—are available by emailing Nancy Davis (ndavis@fourthchurch.org).

Gala of Hope 2018 will be Friday, March 2 at the Radisson Blu Aqua Hotel.

During Today's Worship

All are encouraged to use the prayer card, found in this worship bulletin, to offer joys and/or concerns. The cards will be collected during the Sharing of Gifts (simply place the card in the offering plate as it is passed). The prayer requests will be read by the pastoral staff during the week.

All, including children, are invited to the Lord's Table to receive Communion, which is served by intinction. The congregation will come forward by the center aisle to receive the bread (gluten-free bread is available in the paper "cup" within the basket of bread), which they will then dip into the chalice of nonalcoholic grape juice. Worshipers will return to their pews by the side aisles.

Worship also can be heard through the "T" setting of hearing aids.

Please silence all electronic devices when in the Sanctuary.

If your infant or small child needs care during the worship service, you may leave the Sanctuary and return as you wish. There is also an area in the left-side aisle where your child can play quietly.

Worship folders, containing quiet activities and a bulletin for children, are available from a greeter.

Printed copies of sermons recently preached at Fourth Church are available in the literature racks. They are also available at www.fourthchurch.org/sermons/index.html.

To notify pastoral staff of personal concerns, illnesses, hospitalizations, or deaths; to pass along a prayer request; or to arrange homebound Communion with a Deacon, contact Judy Watt, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care, at 312.573.3360 (jwatt@fourthchurch.org).

If You Are New to Fourth Church

Inquirers' Class explores Presbyterian history and beliefs. This one-session class is also a prerequisite for membership. Attend Sundays, December 10, January 14, or February 11 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in the Page Smith Room. We invite you to worship with us at 8:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. the day you attend the class. For details or membership information, contact Alex Wirth (awirth@fourthchurch.org; 312.981.3399) or go to www.fourthchurch.org.

Information about opportunities and resources available to you here at Fourth Church is available in the literature racks as you're leaving the church. You can also find information on our website (www.fourthchurch.org), our page on Facebook (facebook.com/fourthchurch), and in our weekly email newsletter (send addresses to news@fourthchurch.org).

If you are interested in considering baptism or membership at the 4:00 p.m. service at Fourth Church, please contact Nancy Davis (ndavis@fourthchurch.org) or any pastor involved in the service. Information is available about the Baptism Seminar and Inquirers' Class, which are necessary for preparation. A monthly opportunity to be baptized or join the church at the 4:00 service is available on December 24.

Sunday parking is available at 900 North Michigan (access from Rush or Walton Street) at the rate of \$8 between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Validation tickets for the 900 garage must be picked up from the Chestnut Street reception desk.

The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago

Church office: 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago, IL 60611.2014; www.fourthchurch.org
312.787.4570; Fax: 312.787.4584; www.facebook.com/fourthchurch