

*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

- “Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us . . . . . Sigfrid Karg-Elert  
Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending . . . . . Alan Ridout  
Angels We Have Heard on High . . . . . Patricia A. Sanders  
O Come, All Ye Faithful . . . . . Patricia A. Sanders

### Introit

- “Now the Heavens Start to Whisper” . . . . . American folk song  
*Now the heavens start to whisper, as the veil is growing thin.  
Earth from slumber wakes to listen to the stirring, faint within.  
Seed of promise, deeply planted, child to spring from Jesse’s stem!  
Like the soil beneath the frost line, hearts grow soft to welcome him.*

- \*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: *In the beginning was the Word—  
spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.*  
People: Trust the good news—God’s promise is true!  
Leader: *The Word was in the beginning,  
and through him all things come into being.*  
People: Eternal and near at hand, already and not-yet,  
God’s promise is the foundation of all life.  
Leader: *Trust in God!  
Wait with faith, giving voice to Christ’s love for all.*

### \*Prayer of Praise

- \*Hymn 123 . . . . . “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

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*\*Stand as you are able.*

## Advent Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

O promised Christ, we are a world at war;  
our peace depends on your coming.  
We are a broken people;  
our pardon depends on your coming.  
We are full of good intentions, but weak at keeping promises;  
our only hope of doing God's will  
is that you should come and help us do it.  
Lord Christ, Word made flesh, our world waits  
for your peace, for your pardon, and for your grace.  
Even so, come, Lord Jesus.  
Come to us in the silence and hear the confessions of our hearts  
that we cannot yet speak aloud:

*(Please hold silence)*

## Sung Response (*unison*)

“Wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27) . . . . . The Hymnal, 90  
Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

## Declaration of Pardon

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

## Concerns of the Church

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# Listening for the Word

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## Prayer for Illumination

### Canticle (*sung*)

“Blest Be the God of Israel” . . . . . The Hymnal, 109

### Antem

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” . . . . . Hugo Distler

*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,  
of Jesse's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.  
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 the glorious splendor, the darkness everywhere.  
True man, yet very God! From sin and death he saves us and lightens every load.*

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 1:1-6, 17-25 . . . . . New Testament, page 1  
Minister: *The Word of the Lord.*  
People: Thanks be to God.

Advent Sermon Series: A Tour of Gospel Homes  
“Christmas at Matthew’s House” . . . . . Shannon J. Kershner

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Responding to the Word

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\*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.

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

“Amen” . . . . . John Stainer

Offering

Offertory Anthem

“A Spotless Rose” . . . . . Herbert Howells

*A spotless rose is blowing, sprung from a tender root, of ancient seers’ foreshowing, of Jesse promised fruit; its fairest bud unfolds to light amid the cold winter and in the dark midnight. The rose which I am singing, whereof Isaiah said, is from its sweet root springing in Mary, purest maid; for through our God’s great love and might, the blessed babe she bare us in a cold winter’s night.*

\*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

Thanks be to you, O God, maker of heaven and earth—giver of justice, lover of righteousness, hope of the afflicted, and friend of the poor. Your faithfulness never fails. Take and use these gifts we offer to further your purpose in the world and to fulfill the promise of the world to come; through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

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Bearing the Word into the World

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\*Hymn 110 . . . . . “Love Has Come”

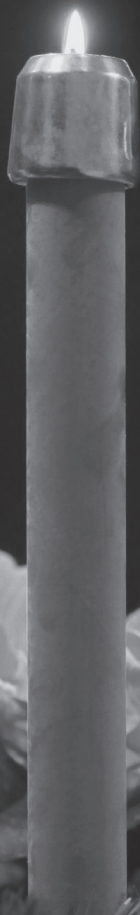
\*Benediction and Response

Postlude

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel . . . . . Adolphus Hailstork

# Christmas Worship

AT FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



## **Four Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

**Sunday, December 24**

**4:00 p.m.** Children's Pageant

*Matt Helms preaching*

**6:00 p.m.** Family Service with Jazz

*Shannon J. Kershner preaching*

**8:00 p.m.** Lessons and Carols

*Shannon J. Kershner preaching*

**10:00 p.m.** Lessons and Carols

*Shannon J. Kershner preaching*

## **Christmas Day Service**

**Monday, December 25**

**11:00 a.m.** in the Sanctuary

*Nanette Sawyer preaching*

## **December 31 Services**

**8:00, 9:30, and 11:00 a.m.**

**in the Sanctuary**

*Matt Helms preaching*

(No "Jazz at Four" Service)

## **New Year's Eve Taizé Service**

**Sunday, December 31**

**7:30 p.m.** in Buchanan Chapel

# Worship Leaders

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Alex Wirth, Claudia Winkler, Abbi Heimach-Snipes, Shannon J. Kershner

## Lighting the Advent Wreath

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Janet and Elizabeth Love

## The Music Today

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The Morning Choir; the Handbell Choir  
John W. W. Sherer, Organist and Director of Music  
Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist  
Briana Belding-Peck, Director of the Handbell Choir

## Worship Notes

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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; by writing “Light Up a Life” on the memo line of a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church; or online ([www.bit.ly/FPCgifts](http://www.bit.ly/FPCgifts)).

THE BULLETIN COVER QUOTE is a prayer from Walter Brueggemann’s book *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth*.

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 Advent Prayer of Confession is adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. 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.

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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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*This worship bulletin is printed on recyclable paper that contains recycled post-consumer waste and is acid free. All bulletins and inserts left in the baskets by the doors are recycled.*

**THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO**  
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