



2017 ANNUAL APPEAL FOR
FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
AND CHICAGO LIGHTS

October 7, 2016

Dear Friends,

This year marks the 145th year since our congregational forebears came together to help God create the Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago—and in so doing to light a light that has shone brightly ever since. The torch that has been passed from generation to generation is now ours. We are the inheritors and caretakers of that flame, that light that provided a place to gather for young adults moving from home to the big city at the turn of the twentieth century, a haven for Japanese Americans to worship during World War II, a nurturing environment for Cabrini-Green children to learn in the 1960s.

Today that light in the city continues to welcome people looking for a place to come together and belong, be they older adults or Social Service Center guests. Our doors remain open to neighbors such as Chicago Sinai in need of more worship space. Fifty-two years later, we are still partnering with 400 wonderful children of Chicago Lights Tutoring who are with us each school year. And always, as this congregation has faithfully done for 145 years, we strive to be present in ways that bring light to places where there are new needs, ongoing pain, and changing realities.

In his Beatitudes, Jesus says, “You are the light of the world.” Not you *should be* or you *will be*, but you *are*. Being light in this world is at our very core; it is our identity not just as a church but as individuals. Our calling, proclaimed in the Beatitudes and professed in baptismal liturgies: “Let your light shine.”

Our baptism calls us to embody Christ’s love in everything we do—including in and through our giving. This month I invite you to reflect on how you embody that love, how you let your light shine—and how your giving supports this light in the city. The legacy left—in the form of invested funds—by those who have come before us sustains the building and operations of Fourth Church. But it is our giving that funds the actual ongoing mission and ministry. It is our giving that enables us to continue living out of the call to let our light shine in the city.

Without your gift, without my gift, that work does not happen. So I ask you to join me in making a light-shining pledge to the 2017 Annual Appeal for Fourth Church and Chicago Lights. If you have not pledged before, please consider doing so this year. If you have pledged, please consider increasing your gift. The simple reality is that to make the light shine brightly in 2017—from Sunday School to the Chicago Lights Urban Farm, from transcendent music in worship to Meals Ministry bag lunches for those on the streets, and all that you see on the enclosed page—we need \$3 million in pledged gifts for Fourth Church and \$500,000 in pledged gifts for Chicago Lights.

We will dedicate our pledge commitments on All Saints’ Sunday, November 6, as we remember those who have gone before us, giving thanks for the legacy—and vision—they have left us. We will place our pledges in the offering that day (if you mail in your pledge in advance or make it online, we will have cards for you to add to the offering), and we will dedicate them to the work of God’s kingdom, to the shining of God’s light for all. I hope you will be with us then, as we sing “for all the saints who in glory

shine” and pledge together, in the words of the hymn “Come! Live in the Light!” to “shine with the joy and the love of the Lord, . . . to act with justice, to love tenderly, to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.”

Let us let our light shine!

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon J. Kershner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'S'.

Shannon J. Kershner

Pastor