
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ♦ DECEMBER 13, 2020



“Sow in Tears” by Hannah Garrity | Paper lace | Inspired by Psalm 126 (*See page 11*)

THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO



Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

- Savior of the Nations, Come Johann Sebastian Bach
- O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. Kenneth Leighton
- Gabriel’s Oboe. Ennio Morricone
- Savior of the Nations, Come Max Reger

Introit # “He Shall Feed His Flock” from *Messiah*. George Frideric Handel

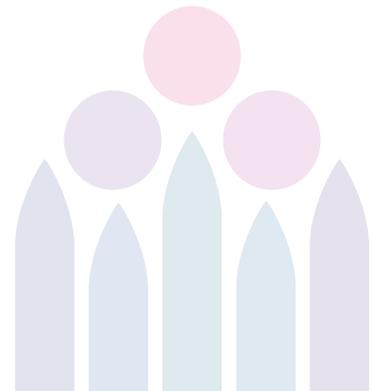
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto him, all ye that labor, that are heavy laden, and he will give you rest. Take his yoke upon you, and learn of him; for he is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

*Doxology (*sung*)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.† Amen.

Welcome and Call to Worship

Prayer of Praise



†Or “praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Hymn “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”

On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry announces that the Lord is nigh;
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every life from sin; make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare for Christ to come and enter there.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward;
without your grace we waste away like flowers that wither and decay.

Stretch forth your hand; our health restore, and make us rise to fall no more.
O let your face upon us shine and fill the world with love divine.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

O Great Writer, with a sky full of stars and a world full of flowers,
there should be no end to our joy.

And yet, instead of decorating our very being with joy,
we let it slip away like loose change.

Instead of singing like Mary, or dancing like David,
we pass by remarkable beauty and love most days, unfazed. Forgive us.

Teach us the ways of children, who laugh and dance and sing
as if joy is the very thing that keeps them alive.

Maybe they have joy figured out.

Now hear us, O God, as we come before you in silence,
confessing those sins that we do not speak aloud, but hold in our hearts . . .

(Please hold silence.)

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Declaration of Pardon

Leader: *Friends, believe the good news:*

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Solo :: “Jesus Christ the Apple Tree” Elizabeth Poston

*The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green;
the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.
His beauty doth all things excel; by faith I know
but ne'er can tell the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought and pleasure dearly I have bought;
I missed of all, but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.
I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile;
under the shadow I will be of Jesus Christ the apple tree.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.*

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter Psalm 126

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.”
The Lord has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.
Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
like the watercourses of the Negeb.
Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

Gloria Patri (*unison*)

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 Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11; Luke 1:46–55

Sermon :: “Those Who Dream . . . Sow Joy” Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

Hymn “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”

We are climbing Jacob’s ladder; we are climbing Jacob’s ladder;
we are climbing Jacob’s ladder, for the time is drawing nigh.

Refrain

Sisters, don’t grow weary; brothers, don’t grow weary;
children, don’t grow weary, for the time is drawing nigh.

New Members

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.

Offering and Prayer of Dedication

Offertory Solo

“Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion” from *Messiah* George Frideric Handel
*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Zion, behold, thy King cometh unto thee.
He is the righteous Savior, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.*

[†]Or “to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost.”

Bearing the Word into the World

Hymn “My Soul Gives Glory to My God”

My soul gives glory to my God;
my heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me:
yes, holy is God’s name.
All people will declare me blessed,
and blessings they shall claim.

From age to age to all who fear,
such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near,
dismissing selfish hearts.

Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied;
the rich seem suddenly poor.

Praise God, whose loving covenant
supports those in distress,
remembering past promises
with present faithfulness.

Charge and Benediction

Postlude :: “Sleepers, Wake!” A Voice Astounds Us Sigfrid Karg-Elert



Throughout Advent we are receiving a **“Light Up a Life” offering**, which helps shine God’s light of love on those who need it most this season, including **those in need of the warmth, clothing, and nourishment** provided by our Chicago Lights Social Service Center and Fourth Church Meals Ministry programs. Gifts can be made to this offering by noting “Light Up a Life” either in the comments section when giving online via **Venmo** or the Fourth Church website (**www.fourthchurch.org/give-online**) or on the memo line of a **check** payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church. * Although we will not have our annual Cookies-and-Cocoa reception this year, Women at Fourth is **inviting individuals to bake cookies, brownies, and other sturdy sweets** to share with our Sunday Night Supper guests on December 20. For details, email Anne Ellis (aellis@fourthchurch.org).

The Longest Night Service, for those experiencing grief and loss this season, will be held via Zoom this Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. For Zoom details, register at www.bit.ly/longestnight20 or email Carol Allerton (callerton@fourthchurch.org). * **On Thursday, December 24**, we will have two online services: the **Children’s Pageant** at 4:00 p.m. and the **Christmas Eve service** at 8:00 p.m. (*with a choral prelude beginning at 7:30 p.m.*). The services will be available on **our website**, www.fourthchurch.org, at **www.bit.ly/FPCworship** as well as via **Facebook Live** (www.facebook.com/fourthchurch) and **YouTube** (www.bit.ly/fpcvideos), where they can also be viewed afterwards. Those without Internet access are invited to join the services by **listening to them via phone by calling 888.916.9166 (toll-free)** at the time of the service. * Our online **Christmas Day service** will be available via the same platforms, including by phone, at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 25. * Likewise our online **New Year’s Eve Taizé service** will be available at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 31.

This year’s **Christmas with Tower Brass concert** will be online on Saturday, December 19 at 5:00 p.m. at www.bit.ly/fpcprograms * **Our organist, John Sherer**, will be playing this **Friday’s weekly Noonday Concert**, which will be streamed at 12:10 p.m. at www.bit.ly/fpcprograms, where the weekly performances can also be viewed in the following days.

Advent devotions written by Fourth Church members and staff are available as a **resource for personal meditation and prayer**. You can receive them in your inbox daily (sign up online at www.bit.ly/fpcdevotions) or read them online (www.fourthchurch.org/devotions), via Facebook (www.facebook.com/fourthchurch), or Twitter (www.twitter.com/fourthchicago).

Ensure you receive the latest updates from Fourth Church by adding your email address to our distribution list. Simply sign up at www.bit.ly/newsfromfpc

On Thursday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m. **Women at Fourth** will hold a “**Christmas Joy**” Zoom fellowship time for women. For details about any of these three opportunities, email Anne Ellis (aellis@fourthchurch.org). * If you would like to connect with others for a time of fellowship following worship today, please join us following the postlude for **virtual Coffee Hour via Zoom at www.bit.ly/fpcfellowship** (Zoom details are posted at www.fourthchurch.org). You can also take part in Coffee Hour **by phone**: dial 312.626.6799 and enter meeting ID number 963 5583 1751#. * Another opportunity to connect with others is in our **small groups**, which meet via Zoom once a week for four to six weeks. To express interest in joining one of the groups forming in 2021, email Anne Ellis (aellis@fourthchurch.org). *

“**God in the Cubicle**,” a two-week online class taught by Lois Snavely, begins today at 9:30 a.m. It looks at what it means to be called by God to a world of “secular” service and how we can bring the sacred into the secular without isolating ourselves. For Zoom details, register at www.bit.ly/aflcubicle * The last 2020 session of our online “**Foundations of Faith: An Hour a Week with the Bible**” class meets today at 12:30 p.m. with Joe Morrow guiding us on “Scriptural Journeys: The Enduring Power of Migrations in the Bible.” For Zoom details, register at www.bit.ly/fpcf20 * Also meeting via Zoom are **Men’s Bible Study** on Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. and the **Horizons Bible Study for women** on Wednesday, December 23 at 12:00 p.m. For Bible study details, email Anne Ellis (aellis@fourthchurch.org).

We are looking for Fourth Church members with **gifts for compassionate listening** to become Stephen Ministers and walk alongside individuals experiencing life challenges. The next fifty-hour **training course for new Stephen Ministers** will be offered in March 2021; for information about applying for the training, see www.fourthchurch.org/caring/stephen-ministers.html

“**Knitting and Crocheting** will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, December 15 at 4:00 p.m. and **Benevolent Guild**, which has been making face masks, meets via Zoom on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. For Zoom details for either of these gatherings, email Anne Ellis (aellis@fourthchurch.org).

We are grateful to all who have made gifts in support of our mission and ministry. Thank you! This monthly generosity report summarizes contributions to Fourth Church as of November 30, 2020.

Fourth Presbyterian Church Generosity Report — Contributions as of November 30, 2020				
<i>YTD = Year-to-Date</i>	YTD Actual	YTD Budgeted	YTD Variance	2020 Budget
Pledged contributions	\$2,550,105	\$2,605,761	(\$55,656)	\$3,111,000
General contributions	\$1,439,148	\$1,839,143	(\$399,995)	\$2,270,929
Restricted contributions	\$457,747	\$428,882	(\$28,865)	\$573,100
Total contributions	\$4,447,000	\$4,873,786	(\$426,786)	\$5,955,029

TwentiesThirties offers online opportunities for young adults. For details, email Joe Morrow (jmorrow@fourthchurch.org). * **Sunday School and family activities** are being held online. For details, email Briana Belding-Peck (bbelding-peck@fourthchurch.org). For details about **youth groups and Confirmation**, email Katie Patterson (kpatterson@fourthchurch.org). * For details about the **Center for Life and Learning** lectures and exercise classes for adults sixty and over, see www.fourthchurch.org/cll or email Susan Quaintance (squaintance@fourthchurch.org).

On Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. we gather for **Morning Prayer via Zoom**. Email Carol Allerton (callerton@fourthchurch.org) for the details. * **If you have a prayer request**, Dave Handley (dhandley@fourthchurch.org) is receiving these requests as part of our Morning Prayer and Deacon Prayer Ministries. * **If you would like to talk to a pastor**, please call the church (312.787.4570). * **To explore options for teletherapy** with our Replogle Center for Counseling and Well-Being, call the Center at 312.787.2729, ext. 2260. * If you would like to have a **one-time phone conversation with a Stephen Minister or arrange for ongoing talks**, please leave a confidential message at 312.573.3365.

We encourage you to mark your calendars for two events planned for January 2021: **“Faith in Uncertain Times: Reflecting on the Past and Envisioning the Future”** is an online Michigan Avenue Forum that will be held Thursday, January 14 at 7:00 p.m. That evening Lucy Forster-Smith will moderate a panel discussion bringing together Shannon Kershner; Horace Smith, Pastor of Apostolic Faith Church; Otis Moss III, Senior Pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ; David Crawford, President of McCormick Theological Seminary; and Ozzie Smith Jr., Pastor Emeritus of Covenant United Church of Christ. * On Saturday morning, January 23 at 10:00 a.m., David Hogue, Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Theology and Counseling at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary will lead a workshop on **“Loving Our Neighbor in a Time of Social Distancing.”** Watch for details about both of these events in the new year.

For the foreseeable future we are gathering online for **livestream-only worship**. * In addition to livestreaming our 11:00 a.m. Sunday service at www.bit.ly/FPCworship (*where the service is available throughout the week*), we make the service available via **Facebook Live** (facebook.com/fourthchurch) and **YouTube** (www.bit.ly/fpcvideos) at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. * Those without Internet access are invited to join the service by **listening to the service live via phone by calling 888.916.9166** (*toll-free*) at the time of the service (*the prelude typically begins around 10:45 a.m.*). * During the week we also make the service and sermon available via **podcast on iTunes and Spotify** (www.bit.ly/FPCpodcast); you can also receive our sermons **by email** (www.bit.ly/fpcsermons).

Watch our **website** (www.fourthchurch.org) for additional resources and ways to connect. Online events are posted on the church calendar at www.fourthchurch.org/calendar; we also encourage you to follow us on **Facebook** (facebook.com/fourthchurch) and **Instagram** (instagram.com/fourthchurch) for updates, sermon quotes, images from Fourth Church, and more.

Worship Leaders

Joseph L. Morrow, Rocky Supinger, Shannon J. Kershner

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Jeannine Forrest and Laura Lee Larson

The Music Today

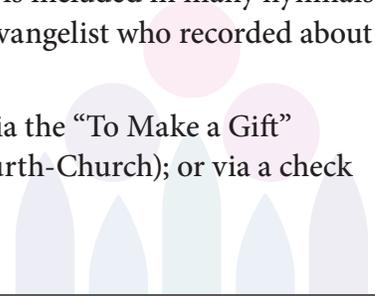
Laura Perkett, Oboist and Soloist

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

Worship Notes

EACH SUNDAY DURING ADVENT we will sing, after the sermon, one verse of “Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning.” This traditional gospel blues song, which is included in many hymnals, is attributed to Willie Johnson, an African American singer and evangelist who recorded about thirty songs between 1927 and 1930.

OFFERING GIFTS can be made at fourthchurch.org/give-online (or via the “To Make a Gift” button on our website: www.fourthchurch.org); via Venmo (@Fourth-Church); or via a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church.



Shannon J. Kershner Pastor

Lucy Forster-Smith Senior Associate Pastor

Associate Pastors

Matt Helms Children and Family Ministry

Joseph L. Morrow Minister for Evangelism and
Community Engagement (*Associate Pastor-Elect*)

Nanette Sawyer Discipleship and Small Group Ministry

Rocky Supinger Youth Ministry

David Handley Interim Minister for Caring Ministries

Jeffrey Doane Parish Associate for Older Adults

Maggie Shreve Parish Associate for Jail Ministry

John Buchanan Pastor Emeritus

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THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO

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TO NOTIFY PASTORAL STAFF of personal concerns, illness, hospitalization, or deaths or to request prayer, contact David Handley (dhandley@fourthchurch.org; 312.573.3360). (Please note: hospitals do not inform churches when a member is admitted.) Those experiencing difficult times are invited to consider meeting with a Stephen Minister: leave a confidential message at 312.573.3365.

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“Sow in Tears”

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Psalm 126 | Paper lace

Here, ripples of the waters of the Negeb frame the patterning of paper lace.

These ripples represent the restoration celebrated in Psalm 126. The patterns within the ripples represent the tears and seeds at the sowing, the mature stalk at the reaping.

To sow joy is a powerful move. As young parents, in our striving we each try to figure out where the money for the next month’s bills will come from. Simultaneously, we turn around and see our precious little ones looking to us for love, for strength, for righteousness, for how to do as Jesus would do. In those moments, even as the questions about how to keep our world on track swirl, we are compelled to sow joy, strength, and clarity in their hearts and minds.

As an educator, I have studied Culturally Responsive Teaching this year. In Zaretta Hammond’s book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, the initial, powerful, charge with this mindset is to see each student as an asset to the class discussion and community. That may sound insignificant, but it is expansive. Imagine if we intentionally sought to see each person around us as an asset to our collective and interwoven lives in community. How might our thinking change? How might the ripples of empowerment permeate our relationships and the relationships of those around us? Can we make this our intention? Can we sow joy?

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