



# Fourth Presbyterian Church

*First Sunday of Christmas*

December 31, 2023 • 10:00 a.m.

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## Gathering around the Word

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### Prelude

Carol . . . . .	Gerald Finzi/arr. Robert Gower
What Child Is This . . . . .	Ralph Vaughan Williams/arr. Stanley Roper
Whence Is That Goodly Fragrance . . . . .	Harrison Oxley
A Child Is Born . . . . .	Everett Titcomb

### Introit

“Ding-Dong! Merrily on High” . . . . . French carol/arr. Charles Wood  
*Ding-dong! Merrily on high in heaven the bells are ringing; ding-dong!*  
*Verily the sky is riven with angel singing: Gloria, hosanna in excelsis!*

### \*Doxology

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

### \*Call to Worship

One: *The Holy One who is seated on the throne says to us,*

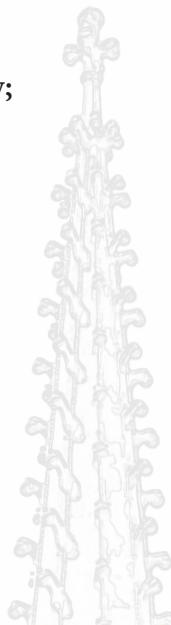
All: “See, I am making all things new!”

One: *A new heaven and a new earth,*

All: where God dwells fully among all people.

One: *As one year passes into the next, let us live with hope*

All: that God’s promises for our future will be fulfilled.



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\*Please rise in body or spirit. †Or “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

**\*Hymn 143 . . . . . “Angels from the Realms of Glory”**

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
you, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great desire of nations; you have seen his natal star:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:  
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

**Prayer of Confession (*unison*)**

Eternal God, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love,  
we leave this year aware of the fragile gift that is time.

Often we find ourselves captive to human measures of time,  
striving for that which never satisfies  
and failing to take time to do justice and love kindness.

Slow us in our stress and quicken us in our patience,  
so that we use our time in ways that accord with your love. Amen.

**Declaration of Pardon**

One: *Believe this good news:*

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**\*Exchange of Peace**

Leader: *The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.*

People: And also with you.

*We invite you to greet those around you, wishing them “peace” or “the peace of Christ,”  
and encourage those online to use this time to share your presence with us, using the online form.*

## Welcome and Announcements

### Anthem

“There Is No Rose” . . . . . Stephen Caracciolo

*There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bare Jesu. Alleluia. For in this rose contained was heaven and earth in little space, res miranda. By that rose we may well see there be one God in persons three, pares forma. Leave we all this worldly mirth, and follow we this joyful birth, transeamus. There is no rose of such virtue as is the rose that bare Jesu. Gaudeamus.*

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### Listening for the Word

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### Prayer for Illumination

**Psalter** . . . . . Psalm 148

One: *The Word of God for the people of God.*

All: Thanks be to God.

### \*Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:<sup>†</sup>  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

**Scripture Lesson** . . . . . Luke 2:22–35

One: *The grass withers, and the flower fades,*

All: but the word of our God shall stand forever.

**Sermon** . . . . . Nanette Sawyer

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<sup>†</sup>Or “to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost.”

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## Responding to the Word

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\***Hymn 115** . . . . . “Away in a Manger”

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

\***Affirmation of Faith (unison)** . . . . . from the United Church of Canada

We are not alone,  
we live in God’s world.

We believe in God:  
    who has created and is creating,  
    who has come in Jesus,  
    the Word made flesh,  
    to reconcile and make new,  
    who works in us and others  
    by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

(Continued on facing page)

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

## 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

### Offertory Anthem

“Cradle Hymn” . . . . . Kim André Arnesen  
*Hush my dear, lie still and slumber, holy angels guard thy bed. Heavenly blessings without number gently falling on thy head. See the kindly shepherds round him, telling wonders from the sky! When they sought him, there they found him, with his virgin mother by. See the lovely babe addressing; lovely infant, how he smiled. When he wept, the mother’s blessing soothed and hushed the holy child. Mayst thou live to know and fear him, trust and love him all thy days; then go dwell forever near him, see his face, and sing his praise! Amen.*

**\*Offertory Response** . . . . . Hymn 712, v. 3

In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today,  
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.  
O God who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ your Son,  
help us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.

**\*Prayer of Dedication** (*unison*)

Loving God, we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ,  
through whom we have received adoption as your children.  
With Jesus our brother, we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world,  
that we may live as heirs of your promises to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.

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**Bearing the Word into the World**

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**\*Hymn 136** . . . . . “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

*Refrain:*

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;  
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. (*Refrain*)

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. (*Refrain*)  
Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. (*Refrain*)

**\*Charge and Benediction**

**Postlude**

Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella . . . . . French carol/arr. Keith Chapman

# You are invited!

December 31, 2023–January 6, 2024



*The following pages are our invitation to you—an invitation to explore in the coming year the many opportunities for learning, serving, and community building at Fourth Church as well as an invitation to connect with one another, our staff, and the varied resources available to you here. We hope you will spend a few minutes looking over the opportunities and identifying those that interest you!*

## Welcome!

**We are glad to be worshiping with you today** and invite you to continue to join us at this intersection of faith and life as we share God's grace with one another and the world through worship and ministries of healing, reconciliation, and justice. ✽ Inspired by the radical hospitality of Jesus Christ, we welcome everyone, without exception, into the life of this congregation!

## Joining us online

Each Sunday our worshiping body is a wonderful mix of those online, on the phone, and in the pews. For those who prefer to worship online or who are unable to join us in person, next week we resume **livestreaming our 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. services** on our YouTube channel ([www.bit.ly/fpcvideos](http://www.bit.ly/fpcvideos)), where they can be viewed any time after the services begin. (*Today we are livestreaming this 10:00 service. For tips on how to watch—from the beginning—a service that is already in progress, see [fourthchurch.org/watch-from-the-beginning](http://fourthchurch.org/watch-from-the-beginning)*) ✽ **Those without Internet access** are invited to listen via phone by calling 888.916.9166 at the time of the services.

## Joining us in person

If you like to join us for **in-person worship**, next Sunday we resume our schedule of gathering at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. (*Today we are worshiping at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.*) ✽ On Sundays the **doors open for worship** a half hour prior to each service. There are three fully accessible entrances, without steps, that lead to the Sanctuary: on Michigan Avenue (*through the glass Loggia doors between the courtyard and the main Sanctuary doors*); at 126 E. Chestnut; and at 115 E. Delaware. ✽ **Sunday parking** is available at 900 N. Michigan (*access from Rush or Walton*) at the rate of \$9 for 6 hours (*and \$18 for up to 12 hours*) and at the Hancock garage (875 N. Michigan, *enter from Delaware or Chestnut*) at the rate of \$10 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Validation tickets for the garages must be picked up from an usher. ✽ **Worship can be heard** through "T" or "T-coil" settings of hearing aids. ✽ Please silence **electronic devices** during worship.

**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](http://www.bit.ly/newsfromfpc)

## **Joining us with children**

**Children** are always welcome in worship! **If you need to step out to comfort your child**, the Hospitality Suite, on the second floor of the Gratz Center, is a quiet space for families where worship is livestreamed. During morning services **nursery care** is available on the fourth floor of the Gratz Center for infants through two-year-olds.

## **Let us know you're worshiping with us!**

Please let us know you are here by filling out an information form. Those worshiping with us via livestream will find a link to the online form—which takes only 20 seconds to complete!—included in the descriptive text below the video (*after exiting full-screen view*); a QR code is also displayed during the “Welcome and Announcements” that can be scanned with a phone camera to take you to the form. Those worshiping with us in person are asked to use the **information pads in the pews**, passing them down the pew so worshipers have opportunity to greet one another by name following the service.

## **Worship podcasts and sermon text**

During the week the Sunday morning **service and sermon is available via podcast** on multiple podcast platforms and at **fourthchurch.org/podcasts** ☀ You can also receive the previous Sunday morning’s **sermon text** ([fourthchurch.org/sermons](http://fourthchurch.org/sermons)) **by email** by subscribing at [www.bit.ly/fpcsermons](http://www.bit.ly/fpcsermons).

## **Prayer and meditation**

Those who would like to **offer individual prayers of praise or concern with a Deacon today** are invited to do so in Stone Chapel (*through the door to the right of the pulpit*) following the service.

☀ On Wednesdays we gather at 9:30 a.m. for **Morning Prayer via Zoom** and at 10:00 a.m. for **in-person Morning Prayer** in Buchanan Chapel. For Zoom details, email Nancy Benson-Nicol ([nbenson-nicol@fourthchurch.org](mailto:nbenson-nicol@fourthchurch.org)). ☀ Buchanan Chapel is open for **opportunity to walk the labyrinth** between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. this Tuesday and Wednesday. ☀ A **Sacred Pause time of meditation** is offered virtually by our Repogle Center for Counseling and Well-Being at [facebook.com/repolglecenterforcounselingandwellbeing](https://facebook.com/repolglecenterforcounselingandwellbeing) on Tuesdays (7:45 a.m.) and Saturdays (8:30 a.m.).

## **Exploring the Bible**

**Men's Bible Study** meets via Zoom on Tuesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. **Horizons Women's Bible Study** meets via Zoom on Wednesday, January 10 at 12:00 and 6:30 p.m. For Zoom details for these studies, email Simon Crow ([scrow@fourthchurch.org](mailto:scrow@fourthchurch.org)). ☀ Matt Helms and Rocky Supinger invite you to tune in to their **“Bible Top Ten” podcast** ([www.fourthchurch.org/podcasts](http://www.fourthchurch.org/podcasts)). This lively, informative, and often amusing podcast explores the Bible through a rotating series of top ten lists.

## New Year's Eve Taizé Service

This evening we invite you to join us, our neighbors, and our friends from Holy Name Cathedral at 6:30 p.m. in our Sanctuary for a candlelit **New Year's Eve Taizé service** (*in person only*). This Taizé service offers moving music, space for prayer, and meditative pause for reflecting on the year past and looking ahead to the year to come. A Coffee Hour time of fellowship will follow.

## This morning's opportunities

Those worshiping in person are encouraged to **greet one another during Coffee Hour** in Anderson Hall and the Commons following worship, where there is also opportunity to learn about ways to get connected with one another and Fourth Church. ☀ Also following the service a **pipe organ tour** begins at the front of the Sanctuary. ☀ On exhibit in the Loggia is "**Light in the Darkness**," featuring the artwork of Jan Brandt and Amy Hanks.

## Get connected

A new session of fitness classes along with lectures and arts courses for **adults sixty and over** kicks off Tuesday, January 2, when the **Center for Life and Learning** begins their winter programming. See [fourthchurch.org/cll](http://fourthchurch.org/cll) for details. ☀ **Knitting and Crocheting** gathers Tuesday, January 2 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 5B. ☀ Next Sunday, January 7, **Sunday School** for children from three years old to fifth grade resumes at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. Also next Sunday, **eighth-grade Confirmation** will meet at 9:30 a.m. in Room 5G; **Junior High** (*grades 6–7*) will gather at 9:30 a.m. in the Bumpus Room; **Senior High** will meet in the Bumpus Room at 11:00 a.m. ☀ "**Finding Faith in Hard Times: When Bad Things Happen to Good People**" is the topic of a three-week Adult Education class led by Amy Pagliarella beginning next Sunday, January 7 at 11:00 a.m. in Borwell Dining Room and via Zoom. For Zoom details, register at [www.bit.ly/aefindingfaith](http://www.bit.ly/aefindingfaith) ☀ **Books by Women** will discuss *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley on Tuesday, January 9 at 6:00 p.m. in the Bumpus Room. ☀ **Benevolent Guild**, which creates sewn and crafted items for those in need, meets on Wednesday, January 10 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 5B. *Sewing experience is not necessary*. ☀ "**The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Future of American Democracy**" will be the topic of our next **Michigan Avenue Forum**, which will be held on Wednesday, January 31 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Our speaker will be **Robert P. Jones**, author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Hidden Roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future*.

## Joining together in service

Each of us has gifts and **talents to share** with our community. Perhaps it is lending a listening ear, serving meals, or tutoring a child. As you think about your vision for 2024 and new things you might explore, we invite you to browse the various **volunteer opportunities matching your interests** at [www.bit.ly/fpcvolunteers](http://www.bit.ly/fpcvolunteers) or contact Robert Crouch ([rcrouch@fourthchurch.org](mailto:rcrouch@fourthchurch.org)).

## Reflections for the season

**Daily devotions**, written by Fourth Church members and staff and based on **favorite hymn texts of the season**, are available as a **resource for personal meditation and prayer**. We invite you to receive them in your inbox (*subscribe at [www.bit.ly/fpcdevotions](http://www.bit.ly/fpcdevotions)*), read them online ([www.fourthchurch.org/devotions](http://www.fourthchurch.org/devotions)), or share them via Facebook ([www.facebook.com/fourthchurch](http://www.facebook.com/fourthchurch)). ☀ Our “**Rhythm and Word**” **video series** offers ten minutes of midweek music, scripture, and prayer for viewing at home. A new video is released each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. on YouTube. To receive them by email, sign up at [www.bit.ly/rhythmandwordemail](http://www.bit.ly/rhythmandwordemail); you can also subscribe to our YouTube channel ([www.bit.ly/fpcvideos](http://www.bit.ly/fpcvideos))

## When the season isn’t easy

Feelings of grief over losses can be heightened at this time of year. Expectations for the holidays can be different from the realities. The season can be lonely, and **the turning of the year can be both challenging and an opportunity** when we seek someone to walk alongside us in embracing change and possibilities. Fourth Church’s **Reogle Center for Counseling and Well-Being** offers various resources and a supportive environment for reflecting on, exploring, and coping with such experiences. To learn how the Reogle Center can help, call the Center at 312.787.8425 or visit the Center’s website: [www.reoglecenter.org](http://www.reoglecenter.org)

## Pastoral care and a listening presence and witness

To **talk to a pastor** or **notify pastoral staff** of personal concerns, illnesses, hospitalizations, or deaths, email [caringministries@fourthchurch.org](mailto:caringministries@fourthchurch.org); if the situation requires immediate attention, please call the church at 312.787.4570 to be connected to the Minister on Call. ☀ To **submit a prayer request** to our Morning Prayer or Deacon Prayer Ministries, email [caringministries@fourthchurch.org](mailto:caringministries@fourthchurch.org) ☀ For **those facing life’s challenges**, Stephen Ministers provide a listening presence. To talk with a Stephen Minister, please leave a confidential message at 312.573.3365.

## A farewell and a congregational meeting

Senior Associate Pastor **Lucy Forster-Smith will be retiring** on January 14. Lucy will preach at both services that morning, and we will have a reception in her honor during Coffee Hour that day, as we gather to thank her for her ministry among us and wish her well in retirement. ☀ Session has called a **congregational meeting for Sunday, January 14** following the 11:00 a.m. service for the purpose of formally dissolving the pastoral relationship between Lucy and Fourth Church. The meeting will be both in person in the Sanctuary and online.

## **Stay connected**

We hope to stay connected with you in the year ahead! Please do take some time to explore any of the opportunities that interest you—or even just make you curious. You can find details about them and **additional ways to connect** with one another and this congregation, whether in person or online, on our website: [www.fourthchurch.org](http://www.fourthchurch.org), where you will also discover various **resources**. ☀ To see all that is going on at Fourth Church, we encourage you to bookmark our **online church calendar**, which is accessible from our website's home page and at [fourthchurch.org/calendar](http://fourthchurch.org/calendar) ☀ We invite you to **follow us** on YouTube ([www.bit.ly/fpcvideos](http://www.bit.ly/fpcvideos)), Facebook ([facebook.com/fourthchurch](https://facebook.com/fourthchurch)), and Instagram ([instagram.com/fourthchurch](https://instagram.com/fourthchurch)). ☀ Look for information, updates, and **snapshots of life at Fourth Church** in our weekly email newsletter, to which you can subscribe at [www.bit.ly/newsfromfpc](http://www.bit.ly/newsfromfpc)

## **Making year-end gifts**

For those wanting to have a year-end gift applied to our 2023 budget or fulfill a 2023 Stewardship pledge by credit card, charges must be made to the card by 11:59 p.m. tonight (Sunday, December 31) in order for those **gifts to be credited as 2023 contributions**. For those wanting to make a gift or pledge fulfillment by check and have the gift recorded as a 2023 gift, those checks can be placed in today's offering. Mailed checks need to arrive in envelopes that have been postmarked with a 2023 date.

## **Campus hours this week**

**The Fourth Church campus will be closed** tomorrow (New Year's Day). ☀ **The Sanctuary will be open** this week on Tuesday through Friday, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., as we welcome to our space our guests, neighbors, visitors, tourists, and any who seek a midday place of rest, prayer, and beauty.

## **Worship Leaders**

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Joseph L. Morrow, Sharon Williams, Nanette Sawyer

## **The Music Today**

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Morning Choir

Michael Rees, Organ Scholar

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

## **Worship Notes**

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OUR “LIGHT UP A LIFE” OFFERING provides funds for Fourth Church programs supporting our neighbors and congregation; for Chicago Lights, as it extends kindness and love to those who are most vulnerable; for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance; and for the Presbyterian Church (USA) Joy Offering. To make a gift to this special offering, designate “Light Up a Life” when giving online via the church website ([www.fourthchurch.org/give](http://www.fourthchurch.org/give)) or via Venmo or write it on the memo line of a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church. Those worshiping in the Sanctuary can also use the offering envelopes found in the pew racks.

**Tom Are Jr.** Interim Pastor

**Lucy Forster-Smith** Senior Associate Pastor

Associate Pastors

**Nancy Benson-Nicol** Caring Ministries and Spiritual Formation

**Matt Helms** Children, Family, and Welcoming Ministries

**Joseph L. Morrow** Evangelism and Community Engagement

**Nanette Sawyer** Discipleship and Small Group Ministry

**Rocky Supinger** Youth Ministry and Worship

**Amy Pagliarella** Parish Associate for Caring Ministries

**John Buchanan** Pastor Emeritus

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### **THE FOURTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO**

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