

## WORSHIP LEADERS

**Erica Schemper** Pastoral Resident  
**Lugene Schemper** Liturgist  
**John W. W. Sherer** Organist  
**The Vespers Choir**

**Special prayer requests** are included in intercessory prayer in Stone Chapel on Sundays. Individuals can leave their prayer requests written on paper in the box outside the chapel or they can pray together with the Deacon who is in Stone Chapel after 11:00 worship.

**Daily devotions**, written by Fourth Church staff, are available in the literature racks and by e-mail from [devotions@fourthchurch.org](mailto:devotions@fourthchurch.org)

**For a preview of next Sunday's worship**, subscribe to the weekly e-mail newsletter [News@FourthChurch](mailto:News@FourthChurch) by sending e-mail addresses to [news@fourthchurch.org](mailto:news@fourthchurch.org).

**A prayer service in the style of Taizé** is held the fourth Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in Blair Chapel. The next service is Friday, January 27.

**For pastoral care;** to notify the church of illnesses, death, hospitalizations; to pass along a prayer request to be remembered in Morning Prayer; or to arrange homebound Communion, contact Elizabeth Andrews, Minister for Congregational Care at 312.274.9818 ([eandrews@fourthchurch.org](mailto:eandrews@fourthchurch.org)).

**Parking is available** Sundays at 900 North Michigan (access from Rush or Walton Street) at the rate of \$6.25 after 5:00 p.m.

### The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago

John M. Buchanan, Pastor

Church office: 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago, IL 60611.2014; [www.fourthchurch.org](http://www.fourthchurch.org)  
312.787.4570; Staff extensions: 312.787.2729; Fax: 312.787.4584

Fourth Presbyterian Church  
Sunday, December 25, 2005  
6:30 p.m.

# vespers

**PRELUDE** A Christmas Suite *Paul Manz*  
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice  
What Is This Lovely Fragrance?  
O Little Town of Bethlehem  
Let All Us Together Praise Our God

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Our God has done great things.  
People: **We will sing a new song to the Lord.**  
Leader: God's mercy is never-ending.  
People: **We will sing a new song to the Lord.**  
Leader: With shepherds and angels, maidens and kings,  
People: **we will sing a new song to the Lord.**

**\*HYMN 41** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" *Tune: ADESTE FIDELES*

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

*(unison)* **O God, you search us out and know us, in your never - ending love you make room for us. Yet we make no room for you, and fail to welcome Jesus into our lives. We do not love others with the love you show for us. We cut down those who might rise above us, and forget the poor and displaced. In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us. Open space in us for your son, Jesus Christ, to be born once again our lives. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

People Singing: **Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall. Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save.**

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*\*Stand as you are able.*

## CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

**PSALTER** Psalm 98 (*responsively*) (page 551, O.T.)

**ANTHEM** “To Bethlehem” *David M. Williams*

## SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1–20 (page 58, N.T.)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God .**

**COMMUNION MEDITATION** Erica Schemper  
GOD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MESS

\***HYMN 27** “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”  
*Tune: TEMPIS ADEST FLORIDUM*

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(*unison*)

**We believe in God, the creator and giver of life,  
who brought all creation to birth, who mothers us and  
fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.  
We believe in Jesus Christ: God born among us  
as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need  
for love, and calling us to rest in God  
as trustingly as a tiny child. We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
breathed into us at our birth, always  
drawing us on to be born again,  
nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.  
We believe in the reconciliation of the world to God,  
through Christ who entered our fearful darkness  
so that we might enter his glorious light  
and share the life of his resurrection. Amen**

## OFFERING

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Ding-Dong Merrily on High” *French carol*  
*arr. Charles Wood*

\* **DOXOLOGY** (The Hymnal, 592)

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

## INVITATION

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Minister: It is right to give you our praise, O God . . .

. . . who forever sing to the glory of your name:

People Singing: **Come to Bethlehem and see, him whose birth  
the angels sing. Come adore on bended knee,  
Christ the Lord the newborn King.  
Gloria in excelsis deo. Gloria in excelsis deo.**

## 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.**

## THE COMMUNION

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

(*unison*)

**God of mystery and might, we praise and worship you,  
for you entered our world as a child of humble birth,  
lived alongside us, and gave your life for us.  
By your Spirit, may our hearts burn in thanksgiving  
for this gift, that we may give as we have received,  
and live our lives as gifts of praise to you,  
in the gracious name of Jesus Christ, Amen.**

\***HYMN 40** “Joy to the World” *Tune: ANTIOCH*

## BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE** Noël *Malcolm Archer*