

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)*

Thank you, O God, for offering at journey's end a new beginning; for setting in the poverty of a stable the richest jewel of your love; for revealing, in a particular place, your light for all nations. Thank you for bringing us to Bethlehem, Host of Bread, where the empty are filled and the filled are emptied; where the poor find riches and the rich recognize their poverty; where all who kneel and hold out their hands are unstintingly fed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—from “Bread for Tomorrow” by Kate Compston

*HYMN 603 “Song of Simeon”

Tune: LAND OF REST

BENEDICTION AND RESPONSE

POSTLUDE Tambourine of Provence

Guy Morançon

WORSHIP LEADERS

Victoria G. Curtiss Associate Pastor

The Vespers Choir

Thomas E. Gouwens Associate Organist

Following the service all are invited for a time of fellowship outside the south (left) transept doors.

The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago

John M. Buchanan, Pastor

Church office: 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago, IL 60611.2014; www.fourthchurch.org
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vespers
6:30 p.m. Sunday December 28, 2008

A LIGHT IN THE CITY
FOURTH
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
www.fourthchurch.org

PRELUDE Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming *Johannes Brahms*
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming *David N. Johnson*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, our greatest treasure, came an explosion of true love.

People: **He shattered the walls of the proud fortresses of the world's powerful.**

Leader: He put his hand in the hand of the weak and brought peace to humble dwellings.

People: **We praise God, who comes as one of us, amidst the familiar and ordinary, with promises of hope.**

*HYMN 49 “Once in Royal David's City”

Tune: IRBY

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(unison)*

Lord, we confess we are blind, for we are afraid to fully see. You promise to heal the blind and that terrifies us. We have seen the light—and too often want to close our eyes to the full implication of your love and expectation. We ask you to shake us, but fear being broken. We ask you to bless us, but we fear being made whole. In your mercy, forgive and transform us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Adapted from “Bread of Tomorrow” by Neill Thew

DECLARATION OF PARDON

Minister: Friends, believe the good news.

People: **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

*Stand as you are able.

THE PEACE

Leader: Friends, believe the good news.

People: **And also with you.**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

PSALTER Psalm 148:7–14 (*responsively*) (page 550, O.T.)

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 52:7–10 (page 642, O.T.)

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM “’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime” *French carol*

SECOND LESSON Luke 2:22–40 (page 55, N.T.)

COMMUNION MEDITATION by Victoria G. Curtiss
LET NOTHING YOU DISMAY

***HYMN 38** “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” *Tune: CAROL*

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*unison*)

**We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good
news to the poor and release to the captives,
teaching by word and deed and blessing the
children, healing the sick and binding up the
brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving
sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the
gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and
sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths
of human pain and giving his life for the sins of
the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead,
vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of
sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.
With believers in every time and place, we rejoice**

**that nothing in life or in death can separate us from
the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

—*from A Brief Statement of Faith, PCUSA*

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.**

PRAYER

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

People: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**
(*sung*) **heaven and earth are full of your glory.**
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One
who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

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**