

*The beginning of the prelude is a call to silent,
personal preparation for the worship of God.*

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

Variation on a Noël Jean Langlais

Introit

“Alleluia, to Us a Child is Born” Jain Quinn
*Alleluia, to us a child is born; come, let us adore him, alleluia.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.*

*Doxology (*sung*). The Hymnal, 606

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

*Call to Worship

Leader: *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.*

People: Alleluia, Alleluia!

Leader: *Jesus, Child of the living God, splendor of Light Eternal;*

People: **Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, mighty God, everlasting Lord;**

Leader: *Jesus, Prince of Peace, Shepherd of souls; perfect in holiness:*

People: **Glory to you, Righteous God.**

Leader: *Let us worship God.*

*Hymn 110 “Love Has Come”

*Stand as you are able.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light shining in the darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little, and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace and live in the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.

Declaration of Pardon

Minister: *Friends, believe the good news.*

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Concerns of the Church

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*responsively*)

Psalm 148 Old Testament, page 550

Anthem

“In the Bleak Midwinter” Harold Darke

*In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan;
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak mid-winter, a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.
Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,
a breast full of milk, and a manger full of hay.
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel, which adore.
What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him, give my heart.*

First Lesson

1 Samuel 2:18–20 Old Testament, page 235

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

*Gloria Patri (*sung*). The Hymnal, 581

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.

Second Lesson

Luke 2:41–52. New Testament, page 55

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Our Childhood’s Pattern” Victoria G. Curtiss

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 5 “God the Sculptor of the Mountains”

*Affirmation of Faith (*unison*). Colossians 1:15–20

Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;
in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible.

All things have been created through him and for him.

He himself is before all things,

and in him all things hold together.

He is head of the body, the church;

he is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead,

so that he might come to have first place in everything.

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,

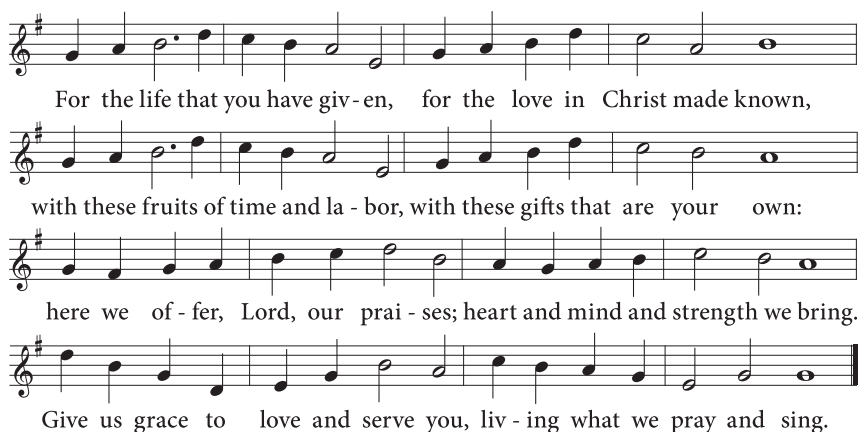
by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.

Offering

Offertory Voluntary

Of the Father’s Love Begotten Wilbur Held

*Offertory Response



For the life that you have giv - en, for the love in Christ made known,
with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these gifts that are your own:
here we of - fer, Lord, our prai - ses; heart and mind and strength we bring.
Give us grace to love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

Sealing the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

Minister: *The Lord be with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: *Lift up your waiting hearts.*

People: **We lift them to the One whose heart longs for us.**

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

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

Prayer

Minister: *It is truly right and our greatest joy . . .*

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

Sanctus (*sung*) The Hymnal, 552

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.

Minister: . . . *Great is the mystery of faith:*

Memorial Acclamation (*sung*) The Hymnal, 553

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The Lord’s Prayer (*unison*)

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by 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

Communion Anthem

“Under the Stars” George F. Reynolds

*Under the stars one holy night, a little babe was born.
Over his head a star shone bright and glistened ‘til the morn.
And wise men came from far away, and shepherds wandered where he lay
upon the lowly bed of hay under the stars one night.
Under the stars one blessed night, the Christ child came to earth.
And through the darkness broke the light of morning at his birth.
And sweet hosannas filled the air, and guardian angels watched him where
the virgin mother knelt in prayer under the stars one night.
Under the stars this happy night, we wait for him once more.
And seem to see the wondrous sight the shepherds saw of yore.
O baby born in Bethlehem, come to us as you came to them
and crown us with love’s diadem, under the stars one night.*

Prayer after Communion (*unison*)

Almighty God, you have shed upon us the new light of your incarnate
Word. May this light, enkindled in our hearts, shine forth in our lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn 140 “Once in Royal David’s City”

*Benediction and Response

Postlude

Improvisation on “On This Day Earth Shall Ring”

Worship Leaders

Victoria G. Curtiss

The Music Today

The Chancel Choir; Gillian Hollis and Craig Palmer, soloists
Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

Worship Notes

THE “LIGHT UP A LIFE” OFFERING is being received throughout December. “Light Up a Life” provides opportunity to support congregational programs, mission, and community outreach—including Chicago Lights programs—as well as denominational efforts. “Light Up a Life” gifts can be made using the special offering envelopes found in the pew racks or by writing “Light Up a Life” on the memo line of a check made payable to Fourth Presbyterian Church.

FOURTH CHURCH OFFERS A VARIETY of worship opportunities on Sunday, including an 8:00 a.m. Communion service, worship at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m., and a jazz service with Communion at 4:00 p.m. Each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m., Morning Prayer is held in Buchanan Chapel as a time to remember in prayer members of the Fourth Church congregation and those in need. We also offer a monthly prayer service in the style of Taizé, which meets this month on Thursday, December 31 (New Year’s Eve) at 7:30 p.m.

SOURCES AND CREDITS: Hymn tune names—as well as composers of the music and authors of the text—are listed in the hymnal with each hymn. The words to “For the Life that You Have Given” are by Carl P. Daw Jr. © 1987; music is by Morgan Simmons © 1990, 1992 Hope Publishing Co.

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This worship bulletin is printed on recyclable paper that contains recycled post-consumer waste and is acid free. All bulletins and inserts left in the baskets by the doors are recycled.

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