

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

- Variations on an Old Carol Geoffrey Shaw
“What Is This Lovely Fragrance” Harrison Oxley
Fantasia on “O Come, All Ye Faithful” G. Shaw

Introit

- “Our King and Savior Draweth Nigh” Stephen Sturk

- *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: *In the beginning was the Word—spoken and breathed, a promise made and kept.*

People: Trust the good news—God’s promise is true!

Leader: *The Word was in the beginning, and through him all things come into being.*

People: Eternal and near at hand, already and not-yet,

God’s promise is the foundation of all life.

Leader: *Trust in God! Wait with faith, giving voice to Christ’s love for all.*

- *Prayer of Praise

- *Hymn 143 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

O promised Christ: we are a world at war. Our peace depends on your coming.

We are a broken people. Our pardon depends on your coming. We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises; our only hope of doing God’s will is that you should come and help us do it. Lord Christ, Word made flesh, our world waits for your peace, for your pardon, and for your grace. Even so: come, Lord Jesus.

Come to us in the silence and hear the confessions of our hearts that we cannot yet speak aloud . . . (*Please hold silence.*)

*Stand as you are able. †Or “Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.”

Kyrie (*sung*) The Hymnal, 551
Lord, have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy; Christ have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.

Declaration of Pardon

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

Concerns of the Church

Anthem :: “Love Came Down at Christmas” John Rutter
*Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas, star and angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine;
worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token, love be yours and love be mine;
love to God and all souls; love for plea and gift and sign.*

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson :: Isaiah 7:10–16 Old Testament, page 598

*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 :: Matthew 1:18–25 New Testament, page 1

Homily Shannon J. Kershner

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 144 “In the Bleak Midwinter”

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

*Affirmation of Faith (*unison*) Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. 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.

Prayer Response :: "Amen" Dale Wood

Offering

Christmas Cantata

"A Winter's Night" Cecilia McDowall

1. In Dulci Jubilo

In dulci jubilo, now sing with hearts aglow. Our delight and pleasure lies in praesepio
like sunshine is our treasure matris in gremio, alpha es et O! O Jesu parvule, for thee
I long away, comfort my heart's blindness, O puer optime, with all thy loving-kindness,
O princeps gloriae! Trahe me post te. O Patris caritas, O nati lenitas! Deeply were we
stained per nostra crimina; but thou for us hast gained coelorum gaudia. O that we were
there. Ubi sunt gaudia, in any place but there? There are angels singing nova cantica, and
there the bells are ringing, in regis curia. O that we were there.

2. O Little One Sweet

O little one sweet, O little one mild, thy Father's purpose thou hast fulfilled; thou cam'st from heaven to mortal ken, equal to be with us poor men, O little one, sweet, O little one mild. O little one sweet, O little one mild, with joy thou hast the whole world filled; thou camest here from heaven's domain, to bring all comfort in their pain, O little one sweet, O little one mild. O little one sweet, O little one mild, in thee love's beauties are all distilled; then light in us thy love's bright flame, that we may give thee back the same, O little one sweet, O little one, mild.

3. Noël Nouvelet

Christmas comes anew, O let us sing Noel! Glory to God, now let your praises swell.
Sing we Noël for Christ, the newborn King. Christmas comes anew, O let us sing Noël!
Angels did say, "O shepherds come and see, born in Bethlehem, a blessed lamb for thee."
In the manger bed, the shepherds found the child; Joseph was there, and the mother
Mary mild. Soon came the kings from following the star, bearing costly gifts from
Eastern lands afar.

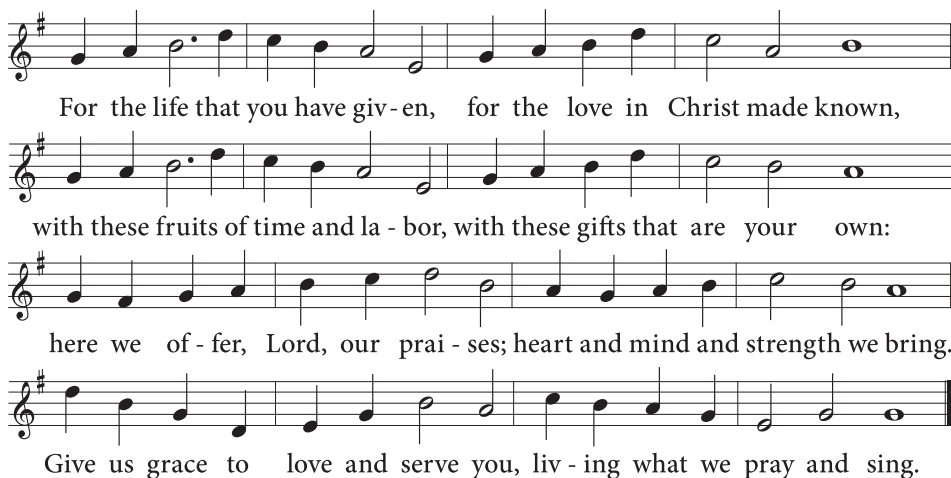
4. Still, Still, Still

Still, still, still the winter night grows still, and vesper bells have finished ringing. Warm in the eaves, the birds hush singing, still, still, still the winter's night grows still. Sleep, sleep, sleep well in Mary's arms. The star of the magi shines high above you. Angels are singing, O how they love you. Sleep, sleep, sleep well in Mary's arms. Joy, joy, joy, take joy in the greening of love. God comes to live our human story, comes as a child, relinquishing glory. Joy, joy, joy, take joy in the greening of love. Dream, dream, dream, dream now in the fullness of time. No need tonight for worry or warning, winter's sun will rise in the morning. Dream, dream, dream, dream now in the fullness of time. Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep well in Mary's arms.

5. Sussex Carol

O Christmas night, all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.
Then why should we on earth be so sad, since our redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty.
When sin departs before his grace, then life and health come in its place;
angels and all with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.
All out of darkness we have light, which made the angels sing this night;
glory to God and peace to all, O that we were there.
Glory to God and peace to all, now and forevermore. Amen.

*Presentation of the Offering and 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.

*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Thanks be to you, O God, maker of heaven and earth—

giver of justice, lover of righteousness,

hope of the afflicted, and friend of the poor.

Your faithfulness never fails.

Take and use these gifts we offer to further your purpose in the world

and to fulfill the promise of the world to come;

through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

Bearing the Word into the World

*Hymn 147 “The First Nowell”

*Benediction and Response

Postlude ♯ Toccata on “Joy to the World” Michael G. Dell

Worship Leaders

Lucy Forster-Smith, Joseph L. Morrow, Shannon J. Kershner

Lighting the Advent Wreath

9:30 The Wilson/Woo Family

11:00 The Richardson/Meyer Family

The Music Today

Morning Choir

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

Thomas E. Gouwens, Associate Organist

Worship Notes

THE “LIGHT UP A LIFE” OFFERING is being received throughout Advent. “Light Up a Life” provides opportunity to support congregational programs, mission, and community outreach, including Chicago Lights programs. “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. You can also make your gift using Venmo (@Fourth-Church) or online (at www.fourthchurch.org/give-online).

THE COMPOSER OF THIS MORNING’S CHRISTMAS CANTATA, Cecilia McDowall was born in 1951 in London. In 2014—the same year she wrote “A Winter’s Night”—she won British Composer Award for Choral Music. A critic recently wrote in *Gramophone*, “She constantly tweaks the ear with her range of spicy rhythms and colors then suddenly produces a highly atmospheric and grippingly expressive interlude which is just as compelling.”

Shannon J. Kershner Pastor

Lucy Forster-Smith Senior Associate Pastor

Associate Pastors

Victoria G. Curtiss Mission

Matt Helms Children and Family Ministry

Nanette Sawyer Discipleship and Small Group Ministry

Rocky Supinger Youth Ministry

Joseph L. Morrow Minister for Evangelism

Jeffrey Doane Parish Associate for Older Adults

Maggie Shreve Parish Associate for Jail Ministry

John Buchanan Pastor Emeritus

SOURCES AND CREDITS: The Prayer of Confession is adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook*. 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. The Prayer of Dedication is from *Feasting on the Word: An Advent Companion*.

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