

Advent 2023

Light from Light

December 17, AD 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent
11 am



GATHERING TO PRAISE

Assisting Pastor: Darin Travis

Prelude

“Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella” arranged by Michael Burkhardt
Steve Gustafson, organ

***Welcome and Call to Worship**

From Isaiah, Psalm 118, Ephesians, James & Hebrews

Come beloved, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

The LORD is God and he has made his light to shine upon us.

Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead and Christ will shine upon you!

The light of the world has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon us.

Darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;

But the LORD will rise upon us, and his glory will be seen upon us.

And nations shall come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praises of the Lord.

O come let us by the Spirit adore the Father of Lights and his only Son, Jesus, who is the radiance of his glory!

***Hymn of Praise**

No. 133 “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

***Blessing God**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Mollie Thompson and Drew Nyman will light the Candle of Love.

***Scriptural Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession**

O God, in the midst of the Christmas pressures, forgive us for being deceived about what matters. We have lost the way to Bethlehem. We have gone so far down wrong roads that it is hard to turn back. Our hearts have hardened. Our minds have shrunk. Save us before it is too late! Lighten our darkness. Guide our steps. Illumine our minds to see the real Jesus. Soften our hearts and make them pliable in your loving, shaping hands, in the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Silent Confession**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Response**

IN DULCI JUBILO

**Good Christian friends rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door and man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

***Greeting and Announcements**

Children ages three through kindergarten are invited to Children's Church.

Offertory

"The People That Walked in Darkness" from *Messiah* by G.F. Handel
Scott Graham, baritone

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light,
And they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,
Upon them hath the light shined.

Please place your prayer requests and offerings in the plate as it is passed.

***Response Doxology**

GLORIA

**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!**

***Prayer of Dedication**



PROCLAIMING THE WORD

***Hymn of Preparation**

“God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen”

Time with God’s Word

Prayer for Illumination

2 Corinthians 4:3–6

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

In your light alone do we see light.

Sermon

Gerrit Dawson

“Catch Fire!”



RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Time of Reflection

***Hymn of Response**

No. 155 “Once in Royal David’s City” (vs. 1, 2 & 4)

IRBY

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

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.



BENEDICTION

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***Response**

Blessed be the LORD I AM, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, amen!

Postlude

“Once in Royal David’s City” arranged by Alice Jordan



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome. We are glad you're here. If you are visiting with us, please use the Visitor Card in the pew racks, our church app (FPCBR in the App Store) or online at fpcbr.org/connect.

Prayer Requests. We'd love to pray for you. Prayer requests may be sent to prayer@fpcbr.org, through the church app or by filling out a card in the pew rack.

Baptisms Today. Congratulations to the Agosta and Maranto families. Milo Agosta and Lillian Maranto were baptized at the 7.45 am service this morning.

Christmas Offering for City Ministry. Our annual Christmas offering (December 17–24) goes directly to support The Christian Outreach Center and the daily operations of Gardere Community Christian School. Offering envelopes are in the pew racks or you may use the online donation form. See today's insert for more information about these two ministries.

Last Day to Donate for Malachi Dads! Toiletry items are being collected for Christmas bags to be distributed to the Malachi Dads (prisoners) at Angola Penitentiary. Please consider making a donation and dropping it off at the Connection Center. Cash donations accepted.

Christmas Eve Worship. Three festive Christmas Eve services of carols, candlelight and communion: 11 am, 4 and 6 pm. Childcare will be available at all services. There will be no worship December 25.

New Year's Eve Combined Worship. Join us for our one 10.30 am service on December 31, 2023.

The Sweet Ache of Friendship: Braving Shadows and Chasing Heaven. Gerrit's new article about friendship is now at desiringgod.com. Hard copies are available at the Connection Center.

Daily Advent Readings. Daily Advent readings and prayers continue to be available in 4 different ways: 1) The church website (fpcbr.org/adventreadings), 2) Sunday morning email complete with links to passages for that week, 3) Church app and 4) Printed flyer at the Connection Center. Many thanks to Mary and Emma Harper Blumentritt for developing this year's readings and prayers.

Need a Pastor After Hours? Would you like to reach a pastor after hours? Please call the church office (387.0617) and press 5 to be connected to the pastor on call.

New Crying Babies/Nursing Mother's Room. Our Bride's Room now doubles as a Crying Babies/Nursing Mother's room on Sunday mornings. This location, as well as the Parlor, are available with closed circuit TV simulcasting the 9 and 11 am services.

Give Online. Visit fpcbr.org or go to the church app to make your gift online. You may also give through the U.S. mail.

Prayer Time: Join us at 10.10 am each Sunday for additional prayer in the Prayer Room (just to the left of the elevator in the Sanctuary building). One or more pastors/elders, along with others willing to intercede on your behalf, will welcome you.

*Scripture for Next Week: Isaiah 21:8-12; 52:7-9
Sanctuary services are video recorded and livestreamed.
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DEEPER IN CHRIST, FURTHER INTO THE WORLD

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