



SUN 8:15 AM
DECEMBER 22, 2024

Worship Service for THE LORD'S DAY
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

FOX CHAPEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Welcome to Worship

Words printed in **bold** are for the congregation to speak in unison.

* An invitation to rise in body or spirit.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND INVITATIONS

Rev. Ginger Thomas

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Christine & Dave Bennett

When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, "But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day." (Micah 5:2). But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, "But you, O Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, from you shall come forth for me..." What? What might God be calling forth from us?

God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God's promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God's love for all creation.

*HYMN 113

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

INVITATION TO SILENT PRAYER AND CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord Christ, we confess our willingness to be loved but also our reluctance to love. We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love but also our refusal to forgive. We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love but also our resistance to follow you without question. In this Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you with joy, as the shepherds; with obedience, as Mary; with love, as you have loved us. Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

People of God: Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose coming we announce in this season, is our righteousness. In Christ, we are made right with God. **Thanks be to God!**

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

All are invited to exchange signs of reconciliation and peace with others.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Micah 5:2-5a (OT, pg. 865)

Luke 1:46b-55(NT, pg. 57)

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

A Love Story

Rev. Roger Owens

OFFERING

Rev. Rebecca DePoe

Please complete a connect card and place it in the offering plate.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This is Christ's table, and all who seek to follow Christ are welcome at this table, regardless of their age or understanding. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to participate in the sacrament. The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is a good and joyful thing to give our thanks to you, Lord God of hosts...

...we sing your praise and join the unending hymn:

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.

God of Mary, whose womb bore the sacred fruit of our salvation...

...great is the mystery of faith:

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

God of holy expectation, let your face shine upon us...

...in you holy presence, one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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.

SHARING THE BREAD AND CUP

Today we will receive communion by intinction. Starting with the front row, come forward by the middle aisle with open hands. Receive a piece of bread, dip it into the juice, and eat. Gluten-free sealed elements are available on the table.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of abundance, with this bread of life and cup of salvation you have united us with Christ, making us one with all your people. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Participants Today

Rev. Ginger A. Thomas, Co-Senior Pastor (ginger@fcpc.us)

Rev. Dr. L. Roger Owens, Co-Senior Pastor (roger@fcpc.us)

Rev. Rebecca DePoe, Designated Associate Pastor (rebecca@fcpc.us)

Christine & Dave Bennett, Advent Candle Lighting and Reading

S.C. Toe, Guest Pianist

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