

Lighting the Candles of Christmas

In the beginning, everything was engulfed in total darkness
and God commanded: "Let there be light."

The first Advent Candle is lit.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Unto them a light has dawned.

The second Advent Candle is lit.

The light shines in the darkness

and the darkness will never put it out.

The third Advent Candle is lit.

By the mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The fourth Advent Candle is lit.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

The Christ Candle is lit.

* **Hymn 119**—*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

Hymnal

Prayer of Reconciliation

**O God, in the beginning you spoke,
and creation was born, the object of your loving care.**

**In the fullness of time you spoke,
and the Word became flesh, Jesus, gift of your love.**

**We wonder at the miracle of creation;
we stand in awe before the mystery of the incarnation.**

Forgive us earthbound limitations.

This year let the miracle and mystery of Christmas happen for us again.

**We wait upon you with ready hearts, O God,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

* **The Peace**

* **Hymn 146**—*Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

Hymnal

A Reading: *The Coming of God*¹

Hymn 110—*Love Has Come*

Hymnal

A Reading: *This Year*¹

The Offering: We Bring Our Gifts to God

Offertory Music

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God, above time, above space, yet with us and in us in Christ,

we, your people, come to you today with thankfulness.

We give you thanks for the year that is passing.

We thank you for the many ways in which you have touched us,
in moments of great happiness, and in times of challenge or sorrow.

You are our eternal gift in Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

We thank you for the people who matter to us, near and far,

who have given themselves to us,

and through whom you have touched us by their love.

Thank you for your church, the community of faith with whom we journey together,

whose friendship we value, whose challenge we welcome,

and whose wide boundaries are not defined by time, or space, or death.

As we move on now into a new year, give us grace

to leave behind our regrets and failures,

to let go of the past with gratitude,

to leave in your hands the future in faith,

to live each moment in joyful discipleship,

and in the company of him who is always Emmanuel, God With Us. Amen.

* **Sending Hymn 132**—*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Hymnal

The Blessing

Postlude

¹*Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem. Westminster Press. 1980.*

LEADING YOU IN WORSHIP TODAY ARE:

Director of Music: Angel Gippert

Greeter: Mike Huddleston

Coffee Hour: Hosts: Phil & Judy Owen

PRAYER REQUESTS: Tracey Parker, Karen Keier, Marilyn Nesbitt, Dorene Adams, Vera McBride, Dick & Alma Ross, Al & Mary Alice Shrosbree, Nancy Schaefer, Ruth Krebs, Georgenia Keoleian, Seglinda Kelle-Pritchard, Margaret Babb, Tom Sandercock, Dick Forbush, Keith & Celia Metcalf
The Board of Deacons also requests prayers for: Church members whose last names begin with the letters N and O and for joy and thanksgiving for our Savior's birth.

FORT STREET OPEN DOOR—We will meet at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 29 in the church parking lot and travel either by van or car. After working, we'll stop for lunch before returning to the church. Questions? Contact Seglinda Kelle-Pritchard at (248)626-6514.

REMINDER FOR 2016 AND 2017 GIVING—In the flurry of the holidays, don't forget your financial commitment to the ministry of Northbrook! Receiving your 2016 offering before year-end will allow us to meet our budget. Also, if you haven't submitted your pledge for 2017, please do—it is an essential part of our plans for the coming year. Thank you for your faithful stewardship.

GIVING ENVELOPES—The 2017 Giving Envelopes have arrived! Please find yours in the Narthex.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER—Due to the holidays, the next newsletter will be published in early January.

HAT & MITTEN TREE—Please bring in new winter hats and mittens for our Hat & Mitten Tree. Place the items on the tree in the main hallway. Thank you!

MEN'S CONNECTION—will resume on Thursday, January 5 at 8:00 a.m.

SENIOR SOUPER SUPPER—will resume on Thursday, January 12 at 5:30 p.m.

FIND A WAY TO GET INVOLVED. SIGN UP NOW:

- CHANCEL AND WINDOW FLOWERS—2017 sign-up sheets are in Fellowship Hall. The cost of chancel flowers is \$45 and a pair of window flowers is \$25.
- COFFEE HOUR—Coffee and conversation are a match made in heaven. Please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall to host in the coming year. Questions? Ask Judy Owen.
- LITURGISTS WANTED—The sign-up sheet for liturgists is posted in Fellowship Hall.

ANNUAL MEETING ON JANUARY 29—SAVE THE DATE! Northbrook will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 29 following worship. A light luncheon will be served. We hope to see everyone there as we celebrate our accomplishments and look forward into the new year.

ZUMBA AT NORTHBROOK—You're sure to keep those New Year's Resolutions if you come to Zumba and see how fun a workout can be! During January, all newcomers get their first class free! For non-newcomers, if you come to three classes in January, you will get the fourth for free. Classes are Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. Questions? Abby Adair (248)798-8530 or abagaeladair@gmail.com.

NORTHBROOK CALENDAR

Monday, December 26—OFFICE CLOSED	8:00 p.m. AA Meeting—Men's Group
Tuesday, December 27—OFFICE CLOSED	
Thursday, December 29	8:00 a.m. Fort Street Open Door
Sunday, January 1— <i>Happy New Year!</i>	10:15 a.m. Worship & Communion
Monday, January 2—OFFICE CLOSED	