

# **Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ**

## **Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 8, 2019**

**9:30 AM**



**A Just Peace Church**

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**  
**A God is Still Speaking Congregation**

**Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't**  
**A compassionate community, intentionally inclusive,**  
**openly searching, joyfully serving in the way of Christ**



## The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is richly symbolic. As a whole, it represents the universal Community of God. The wreath is in the shape of a circle in order to symbolize the eternal dimension of the love of God for all things at all times. A circle has no beginning and no end. There is no temporal or spatial beginning and end to the love of God. At all times, and for all things, God's love is ever-pervasive throughout all of creation.

The circle of the wreath also sets the boundary for all that is inside the circle. All that is necessary for the spiritual and moral life is contained within the circle. All other things are extraneous and may even be destructive. At the center of the circle is the white Christ candle — a symbol of purity, perfection, and wholeness. In it the many virtues become one virtue. Surrounding that candle are four other candles depicting the governing virtues necessary for living a life of purity and perfection in the Spirit of Christ: hope, faith, love, and joy. When all the candles are lit, they establish a glow of warmth and peace that lights the entire wreath. This symbolizes the harmony that exists between the virtues as well as their interdependence.

The flame of each candle represents the inspirational and motivational aspect of each governing virtue — individually, and for the whole. In having the passion for hope, faith, love, and joy we -through God's grace- provide spiritual and moral light for ourselves and also for others. Each candle is rooted in the midst of evergreen foliage. Evergreen foliage symbolizes the naturalness of living according to the virtues in one holy community of diverse individual parts. It also symbolizes the enduring and undying commitment necessary for living in this Community of God. Evergreen thus symbolizes life itself — the only life worth living: a life lived spiritually and morally. The Advent Wreath is thus an allegory of life within the Community of God.

ADVENT WREATH READINGS  
by Rev. Bret Stuart Myers

# *Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ*

*A Just Peace, Open & Affirming, & God Is Still Speaking Congregation*

"An inclusive spiritual family shaping a better you for creating a better world.  
A place to make a difference."

## **Second Sunday of Advent**

**December 8, 2019**

**Sacred Fellowship 9:30 AM**

We are delighted that you are here today! We hope you will find us an affirming, uplifting, and committed family of faith. Here we work to make everyone, without any exceptions, to feel accepted, inspired, and encouraged in their spiritual journey. In dialogue, we seek to understand. In encouragement, we seek to heal. In all things we yearn to live by love, for peace, with joy. This is a place where your intellect will be challenged, your heart will be nurtured, and your spirit refreshed. Varying beliefs are expressed openly and freely, and your doubts will not be suppressed. We trust that we are all, every person and part of creation, continuing to be blessed by God's grace; and that in community we can help each other to see this grace alive in our lives and relationships. We hope to share our gifts with you, even as we pray that you will want to share your gifts with us. Whoever you are and wherever you may be in your life's journey, we invite you to be a part of our lives and our spiritual home. Welcome!

## **CALLED TOGETHER AS SPIRITUAL FAMILY**

### **Gathering Music**

#### **Welcome and Announcements**

Please sign the registration pads when they are handed out  
by the ushers and pass to your neighbor in the pew.

We ask that you please shut off cell phones and practice quietness during the service.  
Please join us for fellowship and refreshments after the worship in the Fellowship Hall.

\* = You are invited to stand as you are able.

### **Prelude**

**Welcoming the Light of Love in Our Midst**      Acolyte lights altar candle.  
We prepare ourselves for communing with the sacred as love's light is brought into our awareness. The light of love burns within and among each of us, and we carry that light into our sanctuary; visually reminding us of the image of the divine that lives in our hearts, minds, and souls – and that we nourish through our faith-filled fellowship.

### **Choral Introit**

## Postlude

### The Light of Love Goes into the World

Love's light is not extinguished from our worship, but is transferred from the flame of the candles to the passion in our hearts that we may go forth to let the light of love shine through us as we go to serve in the world.

### **WE GO FORTH AS PEACEMAKERS TO CREATE JUSTICE FOR ALL**

Our worship is fulfilled, and our purpose is confirmed,  
through our service as God's stewards to the world and all creation.  
Use the blessings God has given you as you share  
the joy in your heart, the wisdom in your mind,  
the love in your spirit, and the peace in your soul.

Thank you for sharing sacred fellowship with us.

Plymouth Congregational UCC is an open and affirming church, embracing diversity in our congregation and community, and affirming the dignity and worth of every person. We are an inclusive community of faith that celebrates God's presence through shared stories and experiences of sacred meaning on Sundays, and through the nurturing of divine values and virtues manifested in active practices in our daily lives. We welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of the church, regardless of race, ethnic background, gender/sexual identity, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive capabilities, nationality/citizenship, or circumstance of life. We are also a Just Peace church, emphasizing peace and nonviolence in all our relationships, personally and collectively, because we see the sacred worth of every person throughout this good earth. We are a Progressive Christian family of faith. We invite you to hear our experiences of the divine even as we are curious in learning about your own spiritual journey. We hope our values may intersect as together we strive to make our corner of the world a better place. Get to know us! We'd like to get to know you!

#### **Keeping in Prayer**

Ralph Reynolds    Mike & Michele Ettelston    Dick Brace  
Jesse Armstrong    Janet Taylor    P.V. George  
Pastor Bret's Mom, Ruth Ann Myers  
Sheri Stanley

Bob Feeny and Sam Lovett,  
members-in-discernment in the Merrimack Association

*If you have any prayer requests, please fill out a prayer card  
located in the pew rack and drop it in the offering plate.*

## **Save these Dates**

Tonight - Sunday Nites at Arline Bownes'  
December 14<sup>th</sup> – Lessons and Carols 3:00 PM

## **Announcements**

**Sunday Nites** - ...in the form of A Yankee Swap will hold forth at Arline Bownes, 36 Parker Street in Plymouth **tonight** at 5:00 PM. So bring an inexpensive, but useful gift to swap plus a food dish.

**Music** – Mark your calendars... On Saturday, **December 14th**, at 3:00 PM is Lessons and Carols at PCUCC. We will have 40 singers!!

**Mission News** - We will be collecting items for the organization, Voices Against Violence in Plymouth. Please bring items and put them into the laundry basket near the choir area. The wish list includes toilet paper, large trash bags, kitchen size trash bags, gas cards, laundry and dish detergent.

**Volunteers Needed** – PCUCC is in need of 15 readers for our Christmas Eve Candle Light Service on **December 24th** at 7:00 PM. Please contact Eileen or Debbie if you are able to help. Thank you!

**Feeding Our Children Together** – We are in need of plastic bags for the children's weekend food supply. Thank you for your donations!!

Hannaford is donating \$1.00 to FOCT for every bag that they sell. The donation will help support feeding the hungry. So if you need some bags, please look for the designated bags at Hannaford and support our local program to feed hungry children in Plymouth!

The Rev. Bret S. Myers, Interim Pastor  
Deborah Healey, Church Office Administrator  
David Williams, Director of Music  
Ashley Paine, Organist/Accompanist  
Larry Spencer, Church Treasurer  
Celia Woolverton, Grace Counseling

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Liturgist, Bill Heron

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*Please make an appointment with Rev. Myers if you would like to meet with the pastor.  
You may call the church office at 603-536-2626,  
email him at [revbmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:revbmyers@yahoo.com), or call/text his cell at 608-370-9472.*

*Bret's office hours are Sunday 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM, Tuesday 1:00-7:00 PM,  
Wednesday 1:00 – 8:00 PM, Thursday 2:00-5:00 PM and other hours by appointment.*