

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

**Reign of Christ
Sunday Before Thanksgiving**

November 22, 2020

9:30 a.m.



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.

GATHERING

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

"Adagio"

Kalliwoda

The beginning of the prelude is an invitation to personal preparation for worship.

Call to Worship

One: Today we celebrate Christ's reign here on earth; it can be hard to sense it at times, but God's benevolence is among us.

All: We will seek out this hope, we will declare this good news!

One: This week we aim to remember that God seeks us out, that God offers us a place of centering, no matter where we might be.

All: We will sing of God's might, we will listen for God's compassion, we will declare this good news!

One: This month and season we look for Christ's presence all around – in scripture, in song, in a passing encounter with a stranger.

All: We will work to embody God's Love as we move through the world. Let us begin our service with this, our worship.

Hymn

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

PH (red) #16

Verse 1

**Praise my soul the King of heaven,
To his feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who, like me, his praise should sing?
Praise him! praise him! Praise him! praise him!
Praise the everlasting King!**

Verse 2

**Praise him for his grace and favor
To our fathers in distress;
Praise him, still the same forever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Praise him! praise him! Praise him! praise him!
Glorious in his faithfulness!**

Verse 3

**Father-like, he tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame he knows;
In his hands he gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Praise him! praise him! Praise him! praise him!
Widely as his mercy flows!**

Verse 4

**Angels, help us to adore him,
Ye behold him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before him;
Dwellers all in time and space,
Praise him! praise him! Praise him! praise him!
Praise with us the God of grace! Amen.**

Gathering Prayer

One: O Holy God, we come together at the threshold of Advent. While we know our faith ancestors have named You as Alpha, Omega, Guardian, and Almighty, we have forgotten Your ever presence. Let us be reminded in this hour. Let us remember that in the midst of chaos and uncertainty You offer compassion for us, Your people. Let us feel Your reign here on earth. Let us be sure of Your presence. As we know You seek us out let us look for our place this morning, let us imagine the path to which we are called. Let us be brought back to Your centering Love.

All: Against all odds, Great Shepherd, You have sought us out. While we have turned away from Your Truth time after time and have ignored our neighbors' needs, You have remained faithful to Your covenant. Offer us the calm we need during this time and grant us strength to change the world for the greater good. We pray that we know your reign is ultimately sovereign and is ours to proclaim. Let us find Your Love this hour and be led by Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Silence for Personal Reflection

God's Promise of New Life

One: We think time and again that we are alone, we feel alone, often. We have found ourselves lost time and again. We wander around, sometimes with great aimlessness. We remember today that God seeks us and that we consider how God might bring us back to center.

All: Sure, we struggle as the human family and as individuals. Even still, we sense that God looks for us. We pray that in this hour we find unity with Divine Hope. There is nothing, nothing here, nothing anywhere else that will separate us from the Love of God in Jesus. It is for this promise and Spirit that we sing!

Response "Spirit of Love" NCH (black) #58
Verse 2

**Though we have frayed the fabric of your making,
tearing away from all that you intend,
Yet, to be whole, humanity is aching –
come, work with us, and weave us into one.**

Children's Message

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Readings Psalm 100, adapted Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24
One: Here end the readings from our tradition. May God point us to
gratitude for our holy call and lead us to declare compassion and
Christ's reign here on earth.

All: Amen.

Message "Sought Out & Brought Back" Rev. Sara M. Holland

Hymn "Jesus Shall Reign" NCH (black) #300
Verse 1

**Jesus shall reign wher-e'er the sun
does its successive journeys run;
God's realm shall stretch from shore to shore
till moons shall wax and wane no more.**

Verse 2
**Through Christ shall endless prayer be made,
Borne by the Spirit's ceaseless aid;
Like sweet perfume new hymns shall rise
with every morning sacrifice.**

Verse 3

**People and realms of every tongue
dwell on God's love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
their earliest prayers in Jesus' name.**

Verse 4

**Blessings abound where-e'er he reigns:
the prisoners leap to lose their chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
and all who suffer want are blessed.**

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

You will be invited to offer your personal prayers from the silence of your heart.

The Lord's Prayer

**All: 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.**

Offertory

"Angels Serenade"

G. Braga

We invite you to remember your support for the ministry of PCUCC.

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, you heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Offertory Prayer

All: Holy God, do reign down on us and these gifts this day. As You have searched for us, we have wondered what we may bring and if we have brought enough. Affirm what we bring, God, and multiply what is here. Let us know that with but a short time to live our impact may be great. Carry these gifts, Holy One, let them meet the children who are hungry, the vulnerable who have been cast aside, the lonely who simply want to connect. We pray all this for Love's sake. Amen.

SENDING

Hymn "Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing" NCH (black) #303

Verse 1

**Rejoice, give thanks and sing; your Sovereign God adore!
For Christ has robbed death's sting and triumphs evermore.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

Verse 2

**Our Savior Jesus reigns, the God of truth and love;
The Lamb who purged our stains is crowned with power above.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

Verse 3

**Christ Jesus cannot fail to rule both earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell are to the Savior given.
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice.**

Verse 4

**Rejoice in glorious hope, for Christ the Judge shall come,
And take the faithful up to their eternal home.
We soon shall hear a heavenly voice above
the trumpet's sound, "Rejoice!"**

Benediction

Postlude "Now Thank We All Our God" Johann Cruger

Keeping in Prayer

Dick Brace Patti Dyszinsky Annie Rice
Catherine Smith Eleanor Spencer

Prayers for Our Nation and for the World

Prayers for joy for Sam Lovett and his family as he has been approved
for ordination pending call!

If you have a prayer request you'd like Pastor Sara to include in Sunday Worship,
please email her at plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org.

Please keep in mind that sometimes email systems will autocorrect Rev. Sara's email address
so please double check that the email address is as listed here.

If you have not heard back from her about an important matter,
please contact Debbie at 603-536-2626 or office@uccplymouth.org.

This Week and More at PCUCC

Today – 9:30 AM Worship Service on Facebook Live
10:00 AM Virtual Sunday School
4:00 PM Confirmation

Tuesday, 9:15 AM & Wednesday (time to be determined)- Zoom Staff Meetings
Tuesday, 7:00 PM Interfaith and Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

Wednesday – 8:30 AM Prayers and Devotional

Wednesdays - December 2nd, 9th & 16th at 7:30 PM - Evening Advent Services

These will be contemplative in nature and will be focused on Hope.

December 9th will be a 'blue' service honoring those of us who feel
sad during the holiday season.

We understand that at least two people in our community have received
requests for money by email in the form of web gift cards from Ebay or iTunes.

These emails appear to be from Rev. Sara.

This has been happening at other churches as well, especially since
this past March when the pandemic began.

Usually, these emails will say they are from Rev. Sara,
but the email address will not match hers.

Rev. Sara's email is plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org.

*Please DO NOT respond to these requests; in fact,
we encourage you to block and report such malicious web activity.*
Another key indicator of such malintent often appears in subject lines.
The line might read: "I need your help now, please respond!"

Announcements

Faith Formation - Please join us, grades pre-k to 5, at 10 AM for our weekly bible story, music, craft and fun! Please contact Julie Kelsey at faithformation@uccplymouth.org for the zoom link! We look forward to seeing you soon!

Advent wreath kits are being made this week – please let us know if you or your family would like one! These will be complete with devotional material.

Building Use Update - Our Church Council has been diligent in putting together a building use policy which can be found on our church website and is posted throughout our building. At least through Christmas, we will only have small meetings on site (no more than 5 people with the exception of 7 for Sunday morning Worship) and no more than 12 people total in the church building. We encourage people to meet online when possible. Please review the policy when you have a moment.

Finance Committee - CHOOSE OUR CHURCH as your favorite charity on AMAZON SMILE and support our ministries and mission. We can be found by entering Plymouth Congregational Church or Plymouth* under Faith and Spiritual list only.

Once on AmazonSmile click on "Accounts and Lists" under your name, scroll down to "AmazonSmile Charity Lists" select "Faith and Spiritual" then either type Plymouth Congregational Church or Ply* to find all listings starting with Ply then select our church.

HANNAFORD prepaid grocery cards are available during this "stay-at-home" time of practicing safe distancing. Denominations of \$100, \$250 and \$500 are available. Finance orders cards regularly. Please let Linda or Larry know via phone or email what you would like to purchase. We'll let you know when to mail your check to the church. If you shop at HANNAFORD for your essentials, please purchase a prepaid card. The church receives 5% of each card purchased. Thank you for your continued support!

HOPE Fund - The need for assistance through our HOPE Fund will increase as families at risk need assistance paying for rent, heat, electric and medications. Please consider giving to the HOPE Fund. You can send your check to PCUCC and write HOPE Fund in the memo. Send to Plymouth Congregational UCC, P.O. Box 86, Plymouth, NH 03264.

We want to thank the congregation for the outpouring of generosity for the Hope Fund during this time of need; this will be critically important throughout the winter months.

Book Group - Here is our intended order of Book Group readings so that you can purchase or otherwise obtain them in advance:

November: *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert

December: *My Own Words* by Ruth B. Ginsberg

January: *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate

February: *The Yellow House: A Memoir* by Sarah M. Broom

Cheers, Peggy

Our church has moved to digital platforms for all events until further announcement. The Worship Services will be live streamed on our Facebook page and placed on YouTube. We are also working on getting our worship services on public television once again!

Please check for Constant Contact and the Facebook page for information about upcoming Worship Services.

Pastor's Office Hours

During this time of "physical distancing" and working remotely, Pastor Sara will be at the church for office hours Monday 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, Tuesday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM, Wednesday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM and Thursday by appointment though all church doors are locked.

Small meetings may be possible in person with masks.

Please feel free to contact her by email at plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org or on her work cell phone number at 336-485-5618 to set up a meeting.

The Rev. Sara M. Holland, Pastor

Deborah Healey, Office Administrator

David Williams, Director of Music

Ashley Paine, Organist/Pianist

Gale Adams, Co-Director of Faith Formation

Julie Kelsey, Co-Director of Faith Formation

Larry Spencer, Treasurer

Celia Woolverton, Grace Counseling

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Donna Castor, Liturgist

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