

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020

7:00 pm



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.

Prelude

"Silent Night"

Franz Gruber
arr. by Carolyn M. Taylor

Selected pieces of the Christmas Offering are listed on the back of the bulletin.
The prelude is an invitation to silent, personal preparation for the worship of God.

Words of Welcome

Lighting the Advent Wreath and the Christ Candle

Litany to Open

One: Hope is here, for we have heard the good news of Christ's coming.

All: Joy is here, for we have seen God's compassion.

One: Love is here, for the angels are singing around us, and still there is a star ahead to follow.

All: May the whole world delight in the promise of peace. O come, let us adore him!

One: Christ is born!

All: Love has come! Let us hear these stories of old and proclaim this throughout the lands. Let us adore this moment!

Hymn

O Come, All Ye Faithful

PH (red) 132

All Verses - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Opening Prayer

Origen, 185-254, adapted

One: May Christ touch our eyes as he did those of the blind. Then we shall begin to see those things which are invisible. May Christ open the eyes of our heart to contemplate God in Spirit, through Jesus Christ, to whom belong power and glory through all eternity.

All: May we sense the divine being among us this evening - in our homes, at our dinner tables, by our bedside. Let us find peace this evening and let us dare to dream of miracles and hope for a hurting world. Let us imagine that we might become the hope that we find in the manger - a hope that prevails against all odds. Let us proclaim that perfect Love of the manger - the one that casts out all fear!

Hymn

Angels from the Realms of Glory

NCH (black) #126

Verses 1, 2 & 3 - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

A Message for All Ages

Gratitude for Tomie dePaola's Book "The Legend of the Poinsettia"

Hymn

What Child is This

PH (red) #140

Verses 1 & 2 - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Luke 2:1-14

Natalie Boyer

Hymn

In the Bleak Midwinter

PH (red) #128

Verses 1, 2 & 4 - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Luke 2:15-20

Anna Boyer

One: Here end the readings from our tradition. May God grant us the faith provided by these words and may Spirit move between words and hearing. Let us center around our faith on this holy evening.

All: Amen.

Message

“Any and All”

Rev. Sara M. Holland

Hymn

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

PH (red) #120

Verses 1, 2 & 3 - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Prayer for Christmas

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

"Es ist ein Ros entsprungen"

Traditional German

We invite you to support Habitat for Humanity this year.

Please write Habitat in the memo line of any check you write out for our community this evening.

Response

As with Gladness Those of Old

NCH (black) #15

As they offered gifts most rare at the manger plain and bare,

So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,

All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

All: This is the night of radiant promise and joyful song! Shine on, O holy light, in the darkness of our world! Sing, O holy angels, in the stillness of our hearts!

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to all. Amen.

Litany of Love and Light

One: Shepherd of the stars, we remember your gentleness,

All: your humility and courage, revealed in a mother's trembling hopes in a stable,

One: amid the pain and beauty of human birth.

All: Once again we believe that love is stronger than fear; that violence can be transformed; that forgiveness is more potent than rage.

One: Open our hearts to your Bethlehem presence so that your love may be known through our lives.

All: This we pray in the name of Mary's child, Jesus. Amen.

Love Shines

John 1:1-5, adapted

One: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Christ was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Christ, and without Christ not one thing came into being. What has come into being in Christ was life, and the life was the light and love of all people. Love shines in the face of fear, and fear does not overcome love.

(As we light candles in the sanctuary, we invite you to light a Christ candle or a few symbolic candles at home. Recall that the warmth emanating may remind us of Holy Spirit that was embodied in the life and teachings of Christ Jesus.)

Hymn

Silent Night

PH (red) #138

All Verses - Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Closing Prayer

(Please be cautious with any candle/s you have burning at home.)

Hymn

Joy to the World

PH (red) #130

Verses 1 & 3, Hymn is located at the end of the order of worship.

Benediction

Postlude

"O Holy Night"

Adolphe Adam

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.



2020 Christmas Dedications

In Loving Memory Of:

Sara & Harold Moses
and Guy Taylor

Mac Bownes

Rick Fabian

Loved Ones In the Love,

Pierson, Hahn & Torres Families

Jeanette Coley, Mary Young,

Robert Karl Wunsch & Tina Leehr

Our Parents, Muriel & Robert W. Pollock, Sr.

and Caroline & Arthur J. Anderson, Jr.

David Starck

Elizabeth W. Cheney

By:

Paul R. Belyea

Arline Bownes

Georgene Fabian

Carol Hahn

Rev. Sara M. Holland

& Elizabeth H. Coley

Chris Pollock

Hanna Starck

Ann Thurston

In Thanksgiving for:

Our Wonderful Family

and Our Wonderful Friends

Our Children Who Love & Support Us

Our Family and Church Family

Alice O'Connor

Ken & Nance Ruhm

Eileen & Bill Torrey

In Celebration of:

Birth of Forest LaPrad

The Hope Fund

By:

Linda & Jim LaPrad

Bea & Woolsey Conover

The white poinsettia given by the choir is dedicated
to members of the heavenly chorus.

After Christmas, you may pick up your poinsettias on Sunday, December 27th, between 10:30 am-12:30 pm. Eileen and Sara will be at church to let you in. Or on Monday thru Thursday, the following week, during regular church office hours between 9:00 am-2:00 pm. If you would like to pick up a poinsettia to take to a shut-in or to those that are ill, please, please do so. Let us know who you are taking the poinsettia so we don't duplicate.

Many thanks to Fran Taylor for ordering and picking up the poinsettias from Moulton Farms and helping arrange the poinsettias to prepare our sanctuary for Christmas!

Welcome to Worship!

We are grateful for your participating this evening. If you are new to worshipping with Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, the following information may be helpful:

- We are an Open & Affirming congregation where LGBTQ+ people are invited into the life and ministry of our church
- We are a Just Peace church that affirms that peace is possible in human history and prays ceaselessly that peace may prevail on Earth.
- We celebrate our Christian heritage and seek to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- We worship regularly on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Church School is currently held via zoom at 10 am.
- Our Sunday morning services are live streamed on our Facebook Page and can be viewed at any time on our website: www.uccplymouth.org.

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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Anna and Natalie Boyer, Liturgists

Jan Bass, Special Music

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

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O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin: John F. Wade, 1711-1786
Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, and others

ADESTE FIDELES Irregular
John F. Wade's "Cantus Diversi," 1751

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
3 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
We would em - brace thee, with love and awe;
Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry given;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
Who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

BIRTH

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord! A-men.

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

126

James Montgomery, 1816; alt.

Luke 2:8-20; Matt. 2:1-2, 9-11



1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your flocks by night,
3 Sag - es, leave your con - tem-pla-tions, bright-er vi - sions beam a - far;
4 Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend-ing, watch-ing long in hope and fear,



As you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro-claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light:
Seek the great De - sire of Na-tions, guid - ed by Christ's na - tal star:
Sud - den - ly, your prayers at - tend-ing, Christ be - side you shall ap - pear.



Refrain



Come and wor-ship, come and wor-ship, wor-ship Christ, give thanks and sing.



James Montgomery, English journalist, raised a strong voice against injustice in his newspaper Sheffield Iris, in which this hymn was first printed on December 24, 1816. The tune is named for Regent Square Church in London, today a congregation of the United Reformed Church in England and Wales.

Tune: REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7.
Henry T. Smart, 1867


What Child Is This, Who, Laid to Rest

140


William C. Dix, 1837-1898

GREENSLEEVES 8.7.8.7. with Refrain
Traditional English Melody

In unison



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is sleep - ing?
2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are feed - ing?
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, Come peas - ant, king, to own him;





Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet, While shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
Good Chris - tian, fear: for sin - ners here The si - lent Word is plead - ing.
The King of kings sal - va - tion brings, Let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.




REFRAIN



This, this is Christ the King, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing:



Haste, haste to bring him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y.



BIRTH

In the Bleak Midwinter

Christina G. Rossetti, 1830-1894, *alt.*CRANHAM *Irregular*
Gustav T. Holst, 1874-1934

1 In the bleak mid-winter, Frost-y wind made moan,
2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, Nor earth sus-tain;
3 An-gels and arch-an-gels May have gath-ered there,
4 What can I give him, Poor as I am?

Earth stood hard as i-ron, Wa-ter like a stone;
Heaven and earth shall flee a-way When he comes to reign;
Cher-u-bim and ser-a-phem Throng-ed the air;
If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;

Snow had fall-en, snow on snow, Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-win-ter A sta-ble place suf-ficed The
But his moth-er on-ly, In her maid-en bliss,
If I were a wise man, I would do my part; Yet

In the bleak mid-win-ter, Long a-go.
Lord God al-might-y, Je-sus Christ.
Wor-shipped the be-lov-ed With a kiss.
what I can I give him— Give my heart.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, *all.*MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.D. *with Refrain*

Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847

Arr. by William H. Cummings, 1831-1915



1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of peace! Hail the Sun of right-eous-ness!



Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold him come, Off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, Risen with heal - ing in his wings,



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Silent Night, Holy Night

Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848
Tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885

STILLE NACHT *Irregular*
Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Shep-herds quake at the sight,
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light

Round yon vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild,
Glo - ries stream from heav-en a - far, Heav-en-ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia;
Ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

Sleep in heav-en - ly peace, Sleep in heav-en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

ANTIOCH C.M.

Attr. to Georg F. Handel, 1685-1759

Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns: Let men their
 3 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

And heaven and na - ture sing, And
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
 And won - ders of his love, And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love. A - men.

heaven and na - ture sing.
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of his love,