

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Third Sunday of Advent - Love: Heartbeat of Justice



December 11, 2022

9:30 am

We Practice Just Peace: doing justice, seeking peace
We are Open and Affirming: welcoming LGBTQ+ people

☺ We Listen for the Still Speaking God

We are striving to be a Racial Justice church

Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

Please inquire to people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.

GATHERING

Prelude

“Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus”
Rowland H. Prichard, arr. byCarolyn M. Taylor

Welcome & Announcements

Please, if you are new to our community and want to be more involved, leave your email address in the attendance pad or email us at office@ucplymouth.org. We are delighted to get to know you! We have Sunday School between mid-September & mid-June. There are bags in the narthex which the kids may find to enjoy! You may contact office@ucplymouth.org to get more information about programming for any age.

Introit

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Kathy Henning & Rebecca Larson

*Those who are able may stand.

*Call to Worship

Liturgist – Steve Majeski

One: The mysteries of life compel us to seek Christ

All: We are not entirely sure about what it is that we seek . . .

One: And yet, God is ready for us and knows our every need.

All: And so, we say thanks and we sing praise – for being seen, for being known, for being loved.

One: Let the mysteries of our lives be answered with *the* Mystery of Love this morning, this week and all our days.

All: We pray that it will be so!

*Hymn

Maoz Tsur Y’shuati

NCH (black) #10

*Passing of the Peace

As we greet one another in the sanctuary, we invite you to text or email someone a note of peace today if you are worshipping from home. A hand-written note will work too!

One: God be with you

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Unison Gathering Prayer

Light of Christ, awaken us this hour to the glory of Your presence in our midst. Seeking the love of Christ throughout the season of anticipation, we look forward to your reign in our hearts. We long to understand your depth and love, and so we sing our praises. In Your presence, we name our shortcomings and sins. As we come before You more fully, enable us to behold Your creation, our neighbors and ourselves as Your beloved. May Your light within us shine through worship this day. This we pray in the name of the Word made flesh, the one called Love: Jesus Christ. Amen.

Moments for confession including silence for personal reflection

God's Promise of New Life

One: We tend to seek in less than sacred ways and so we re-center in this hour. As we await the Christ child, a reincarnation of God, let Love more fully become central to our lives. Let us find the fruits of the spirit this season.

All: No matter where we have been or who we are, we may turn to God in Christ. May we hear from the divine Messenger of Mercy today. We sing for God's grace together:

Response

Ubi Caritas

Music: J. Berthier

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,
u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.

Translation: Where true charity is, there is God.

The Ministry of Music from our Younger Faith Family Members

Any young friends (especially 5th grade and younger) may join in singing this morning. After their musical selections children and youth will be welcome to head to Church School. We typically have a children's

message during this time but this Sunday we are honored to hear our youngest friends raise their voices in song. Many thanks to Jenn and Ashley for coordinating this effort.

Go Tell It On The Mountain Joy To the World

And now we will sing as the youth depart for Church School.

NCH (black) #528:

You are the seed that will grow a new sprout,

You're the star that will shine through the day.

You are the yeast and a small grain of salt, a beacon to glow in the night.

Go, my friends, go to the world, proclaiming love to all:

Messengers of my forgiving peace, eternal love.

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Readings

Psalm 115: 9-15 (W)

Matthew 11: 2-11

One: Creator God, we pray that the meditations of our hearts and minds will be acceptable to you, for you are our rock and redeemer. May your Spirit move between words and hearing.

All: Amen

Message

What Did You Come to See?

Rev. Sara M. Holland

*Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

PH (red) #114

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

Pastor: O God, in your grace and mercy . . .

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

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

Pastoral Prayer

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.**

***We believe that God is revealed in persons of all genders and sorts; we also honor tradition.*

Offertory Anthem “The King Shall Come” Gilbert M. Martin
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:
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Offertory Prayer**

All: Holy Mystery of Love, accept our humble offerings on this very day. We pray these will become your word of truth in the world – freeing those imprisoned, bringing community to those who are most lonely and feeding those who are hungry. Grant us the strength and faith that we need to move with our offerings, letting our lives become testaments of the hope we have found in your Love. We pray all this in Jesus’ name and for Love’s sake. Amen.

SENDING

***Hymn** With Joy Draw Water NCH (black) #109

***Pastoral Benediction**

Choral Benediction “God of Love, Hear Our Prayer”

Postlude “O Sanctissima” Anthony Giacomo

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

Keeping in Prayer:

Prayers for Georgene Fabian who is recovering and healing
Condolences and prayers for friends and family of Winnie Oustecky

Prayers for Eileen Torrey who is recovering and healing

Prayers for Jaime Armstrong, niece of Marlin Collingwood,
who will be undergoing surgery for breast cancer

Prayers for Ellen who struggles with cancer,
family member of Ruth & Dale Mosher

Prayers of healing for Sue Switaj

Prayers for Alice Avery, who would love to receive cards at:
Genesis Rehabilitation, 175 Blueberry Ln, Laconia NH 03246

Prayers for Sage Pirnie and her family,
granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie

Prayers for Polly Bartlett, who struggles with cancer

Prayers for Mae Larson, Rebecca Larson's mother-in-law

Prayers for Anna Heine, who faces many hardships and obstacles

Prayers for the Masvingo UCCZ, our partner church in Zimbabwe

If you have a prayer request, you would like Rev. Sara to include in Sunday Worship, please write on the yellow card in the pews and place it in the offering tray, or send an email to plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org

This Week and More at PCUCC

Dec 11	1:00 Meal packing in Laconia – 5 years old and up!
Dec 11	5:00 Sunday Niters Potluck & Yankee Swap
Dec 13	*Deadline for ordering poinsettias*
Dec 13	7:00 AA Meeting
Dec 14	9:30 Lectio Divina
Dec 14	7:00 Blue Christmas Service
Dec 15	1:00 knitting group
Dec 15	7:00 Choir Rehearsal
Dec 16	8:00 AA Meeting
Dec 17	11:30 Staff Bruncheon
Dec 18	9:30 Advent 4: Joy, New Member Sunday; 2:30 pm – gingerbread houses followed by caroling
Dec 24	7:00 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

CHURCH LIFE

We invite you to join us for the annual Christmas celebration on December 24th at 7 pm. Come and listen for God's voice and await the Christ child in community.

If you want to create a ginger bread house on Dec 18th in the afternoon (2:30 pm), we ask that you **RSVP** to our office by Dec. 14th so we may prepare supplies.

Book Group will be meeting at 10:00 on the first and third Mondays in December to discuss Walking the Bible by Bruce Feiler. In January we will meet on the 9th and 23rd to discuss Afterlife by Julia Alvarez.

Sunday Niters this month will be hosted by Arlene Bownes at 36 Parker St in Plymouth. Please bring a dish to share and a wrapped gift if you would like to participate in the Yankee swap. Everyone is welcome, whether a long-time member or a recent visitor, whether single or partnered, whether young or in your golden years!

Knitting Group meets every other Thursday at 1:00 in the parlor. Come with your knitting, knitting questions, or just for some fellowship!

FROM MISSION & OUTREACH

Please donate to Plymouth Area Community Closet this month so that our community members can “keep the heat on” this winter. PACC has already been overwhelmed with applications for fuel assistance and it is only the beginning of November! Mission & Outreach has given \$500, and you can join the effort too. You can find a basket of donation envelopes in the Sanctuary near the narthex. Thank you for your generous support; your donation has a profound impact on our community.

Star Child Program: Once again this Advent you can help children in need through the Star Child program. Simply choose a star or heart from the Christmas Tree in the narthex. The Stars are for the little ones in Head Start who are in need warm winter clothing. The hearts are for high schoolers at Plymouth Regional and we give them Walmart gift cards. In order to be fair to all, the value of each gift is \$50. If this seems high to you, do as Pastor Sara did last year and pair up with another to reach the goal. Please turn in your gifts to the church office by Wednesday, December 21.

HOPE Fund: The HOPE Fund supports families at risk who need assistance paying for rent, heating, electricity, and medications. To give to the HOPE Fund, send your check to PCUCC and write HOPE Fund in the memo.

3rd Sundays – New Members! To live more fully into God’s call to be inclusive, every 3rd Sunday will be New Member Sunday. Whether people join or not, we will be ready to welcome folks every month. As people join, we will ask them faith related questions including confirmation of their willingness to attend a simple class. We hope these efforts are fruitful – all are welcome to follow the gospel call!

FROM FINANCE: Support PCUCC with no cost to you! By choosing our church as your favorite charity through **Amazon SMILE**, Amazon will donate to the charity you designate at no cost to you. Purchase a **Hannaford Gift Card** in the amount of \$100, \$250, or \$500 by contacting Linda LaPrad or Ann Thurston. For every card purchased from the Finance Committee, the church receives 5% with no additional cost to you.

We will offer the option of meeting digitally indefinitely. You may also catch our services (one week delayed) on Sunday nights on PBTv at 7:00 pm. (Local channel 1302.) Please check Constant Contact and the Facebook page for ongoing updates.

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00-2:00

Pastor’s Office Hours

Monday – Wednesday 10:30 AM – 3:30 PM or by appointment.

Pastor Sara keeps sabbath on Friday.

Email: plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org

Work Cell: 336-485-5618

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Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in December in our Community

Sara Holland	December 4
Tucker Magrath	December 9
Lucas Hyde	December 13
Eileen Torrey	December 15
Sylvia Shaw	December 17
Frank Tedeschi	December 19
David Williams	December 25
Natalie Boyer	December 26
Robert Stewart	December 27
Wilma Hyde	December 29
Judy Johnson	December 29

Email us at office@uccplymouth.org if you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next.

