

# Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Epiphany Sunday; Baptism of Jesus



**January 8, 2023**

**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 working to become a Racial Justice Church

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

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

# GATHERING

Prelude

Coventry

arr. Robert J. Powell

**Meditation:** *It is through water that the Holy Spirit overcomes all injustice, bringing to fulfillment all the gifts of God... gifts, such that humankind might thrive in the moisture of justice, and stream to spiritual things in the current of truth.* -Hildegard of Bingen (12th cent.)

## 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@uccplymouth.org. We are delighted to get to know you! Sunday School runs from mid-September to mid-June. Feel free to gather toys, books, and children's bulletins, which can be found in the narthex, for your children to enjoy during their time in worship or use the nursery downstairs. You may contact office@uccplymouth.org to get more information about programming for any age.*

Introit

God Is in His Holy Temple

\*Those who are able may stand.

**\*Call to Worship**

Liturgist – Wayne Martin

One: People of God, disciples of Christ, today we recall that Jesus came to the waters of baptism.

**All: In the sacrament of baptism, God affirms us as beloved children.**

One :In baptism we are joined to Christ and to one another in holy covenant.

**All: We are baptized by water and by the Spirit of God, who anoints us for ministry and for service.**

One: Baptism is the mark of welcome into the church, the sign of God's call to Christian discipleship.

**All: Therefore on this day, the whole church, the Body of Christ, remembers, celebrates, and gives thanks. Let us worship God!**

**\*Hymn**

Praise to the Living God

NCH (black) #8

**\*Passing of the Peace**

*If you are at home, we invite you to send someone a note of peace today.*

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

Loving God, as Jesus rose up from the waters he experienced an epiphany, the revelation of your love and your call. Today we open our hearts to you, that we might understand in a new way how deeply you love us, and how urgently you call us to serve one another with a bold and tender love. Amen.

## *Moments for Confession and Silence for Personal Reflection*

### God's Promise of New Life

One: When Jesus was baptized by John, he opened his life to the voice of God. The voice of our God is powerful, full of majesty!

**All: Give us ears, O God, to hear the cry of polluted waters,  
Give us ears to hear the voices of those who cry out for pure water.**

One: The voice of our God breaks the cedars of Lebanon, shakes the wilderness!

**All: Shake our hearts and break up the stony places within us.  
Shake institutions that oppress and discriminate against your people.  
Shake governments that seek war and not peace. (Silence)**

One: The voice of God makes Lebanon skip joyfully, like a calf at play!

**All: God, forgive us; renew in all hearts the joy of freedom.  
Drench us in the baptism of compassion;  
Ignite us with your Spirit of justice. Amen.**

**Response**                      As With Gladness Those of Old                      NCH (black) #159

**As with gladness those of old did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward beaming bright;  
So, true Morning Star, may we evermore your splendor see.**

## Message For All Ages

*Children and youth are welcome to come forward during the message for all ages if they like. The message for all ages will truly be intergenerational this morning so if children want to stay in the pews that is okay too!*

***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 29

Matthew 3:13-17

One: Gracious God, let us sense your Spirit calling us to look, to listen, and to serve. We pray that your voice enlivens us, in heart, mind, and body.

**All: Amen**

## Message

“Baptism: Troubled Waters and Sky Broken Open”

Rev. Ruth Martz

# RESPONDING TO THE WORD

## Recalling Our Baptismal Promises

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be a disciple, to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, to resist oppression, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ, as best you are able?

*(Respond silently in your hearts).*

Pastor: And do you promise, according to the grace given to you, to grow in your faith and to be a faithful member of the church, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering God's mission in all the world?

*(Respond silently in your hearts).*

Pastor: I now invite you to join me in a Prayer of Commitment.

**All: By your Spirit, Gracious God, grant us:**

**Love for others, Joy in serving you, Peace in disagreement,  
Patience in suffering, Kindness toward all people,  
Goodness in evil times, Faithfulness in temptation,  
Gentleness in the face of opposition, Self-control in all things.  
Then strengthen us for ministry in your name. Amen.**

## \*Hymn

O Holy Dove of God Descending

NCH (black) #285

## 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** Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized arr. Kenneth Lowenberg  
*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

**O God, you desire goodness and peace for all creation.  
Each of your creatures, all of your children,  
live within your being, and you live within them.  
Release your Spirit and fly like a dove through our troubled world.  
May our gifts this morning help to spread the good news of your love,  
which has the power to cross all human barriers. Amen, and Amen.**

## SENDING

**\*Hymn** United by God's Love NCH (black) #392

### \*Pastoral Benediction

**Choral Benediction** God of Love, Hear Our Prayer John Helgen

**Postlude** Two Scottish Airs arr. Robert F. Swift

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  
Prayers for Eileen Torrey  
Prayers for Paulette Brace for a speedy recovery from surgery  
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  
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 communities affected by war and for all immigrants  
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](mailto:plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org)*

## This Week and More at PCUCC

Jan 9	10:00 am Book Group
Jan 10	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Jan 11	9:30 am Lectio Divina
Jan 12	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Jan 12	5:00 pm Meals for Many
Jan 12	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Jan 13	8:00 pm AA Meeting
Jan 22	5:30 pm Sunday Evening Service

## CHURCH LIFE

**Knitting Group** meets every other Thursday at 1:00 in the parlor. Come with your knitting, knitting questions, or just for some fellowship! Contact Linda LaPrad for more information: [llaprad297@gmail.com](mailto:llaprad297@gmail.com).

**Book Group** will be meeting at 10:00 on January 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss Afterlife by Julia Alvarez. Contact Peggy Martin for more information: [pmartin03223@yahoo.com](mailto:pmartin03223@yahoo.com).

**Sunday Evening Services:** On January 22<sup>nd</sup> Pastor Holland is launching a Sunday evening service. This service will take place on the lower level at 5:30 pm each week until mid-June (reconvening in September). It will be casual and use some components of the Sunday

morning service but be a different setting and atmosphere. Come one and all – let’s worship together! Periodically, pizza will be served.

### **FROM MISSION & OUTREACH**

#### **Our HOPE Fund and Little Food Pantry are in desperate need of your support!**

The HOPE Fund supports families at risk who need assistance paying for rent, heating, electricity, and medications. Right now, with rising fuel, electricity, and rent prices, the need is greater than ever. To give to the HOPE Fund, send your check to PCUCC and write HOPE Fund in the memo. If you know of someone who is in need, please put them in touch with the church office or Pastor Sara. Our Little Food Pantry in front of the church is always in great need of being filled. You can put items right in the pantry or bring them to the church office. Our Little Food Pantry serves many people in need in our community.

### **FROM FINANCE**

**Support PCUCC with no cost to you!** By choosing our church as your favorite charity through **AmazonSMILE**, 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](mailto:plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org)

Work Cell: 336-485-5618

Rev. Sara M. Holland, Pastor	plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org
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Jennifer Byam, Director of Faith Formation	faithformation@uccplymouth.org
Ann Thurston, Treasurer	treasurer@uccplymouth.org

Guest Preacher: Rev. Ruth Martz

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Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in January in our Community

Rohan Magrauth	January 1	Steve Majeski	January 22
Alan Mather	January 1	Jerry Larson	January 23
Nance Ruhm	January 2	Briggs Adey-Merrithew	January 24
Janice Nielson	January 13	Marlin Collingwood	January 24
Hanna Starck	January 15	Rebecca Caron	January 25
Ashley Rose	January 16	Sophie Kelsey	January 26
Butch Castor	January 18	Peggy Martin	January 27
Sandy Larson	January 22		

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to:  
 office@uccplymouth.org

