

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Second Sunday in Advent: Peace



December 10, 2023

9:30 am

We Practice Just Peace: doing justice, seeking peace
We are Open and Affirming: welcoming LGBTQ+ people
We are an Anti-Racism church
🎵 We Listen for the Still Speaking God
Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

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

GATHERING

Prelude

Tessa Kelsey, piano

Welcome & Announcements

Please sign the red friendship pad as it is passed to you and return it to the center aisle noting your neighbor in the pew. You may leave your email if you would like to receive our weekly newsletter.

If you want to know more, email the office at office@uccplymouth.org.

Sunday School for all ages begins after the Message for All Ages on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays. Children are welcome to fill a bag with books and toys, which are in the narthex, to use during worship.

Introit

Prepare the Way of the Lord. Alleluia

John Ferguson

Lighting of the Advent Candles

The Kelsey Family

Unison Advent Prayer

Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years you have given peace to your people. Help us to have your peace in our lives. We pray that, in this Advent season, we may, by what we do, show your presence to the sick, to the hungry, and to the lonely, so that they too may have peace. Amen.

*Those who are able may stand.

*Call to Worship

Liturgist – Georgene Fabian

Psalm 85:8-13, text adapted from Consultation on a Liturgical Psalter

One: I listen to God speaking; God is speaking peace.

Many: God is speaking peace, peace to faithful people.

One: Love and fidelity embrace; peace and justice kiss.

Many: God is speaking peace, peace to faithful people.

One: Fidelity sprouts from the earth; justice leans down from heaven

Many: God is speaking peace, peace to faithful people.

One: The Lord pours out riches; our land springs to life.

All: Justice clears God's way and peace keeps pace.

*Hymn

Comfort, Comfort O My People

NCH (black) #101

***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

**God of our ancestors and our children,
we give you thanks for John the Baptist
and other prophets who went before Jesus
preparing his way and giving knowledge
of salvation to the people.**

**We pray that in this hour you will
give light to our darkness and guide our feet
in the way of peace.**

Through Christ we pray. Amen.

Moment of Confession including Silence for Personal Reflection

God's Promise of New Life *(1 Peter 3:13-15, 18)*

One: We wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish;

Many: and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

One: Now, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

All: To Christ be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Response

Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

NCH (black) #122

**Come, O long-expected Jesus, born to set all people free;
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.**

Message For All Ages

Children and youth are welcome to come forward during the message for all ages if they like.

NCH (black) #325

**Child of love, our love's expression, love's creation, loved indeed!
Fresh from God, refresh our spirits, into joy and laughter lead.**

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture

Isaiah 40:1-11

Mark 1:1-8

One: The Word of God for the people of God. May we feel the Spirit stirring our hearts and uniting us as one in Christ.

All: Amen.

Message

“Advent Muscle”

Rev. Lynn Morrison

***Hymn**

O Day of God, Draw Near

NCH (black) #611

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Offertory

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

Lift up Your Heads, O Ye Gates
Lawrence Keating

Lift up your heads, O ye gates
And be ye lift up, and be lift up ye everlasting doors.
And the King of Glory shall come in.
Who is the King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty!
The Lord, strong and mighty in battle.
-Psalm 24: 7-10

***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.**

***Unison Offertory Prayer**

God of grace and mercy,
as you gave your life to love us and save us,
so we have turned our lives to you.

Receive these gifts as signs of a covenant of lives willingly rendered,
love freely shared to your glory.

Bless them to your service. Amen.

Prayers of the People

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

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

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (*debts/debtors*)

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.

SENDING

***Hymn** We Hail You God's Anointed NCH (black) #104

***Pastoral Benediction**

Choral Benediction Alleluia John Ferguson

Postlude Angels from the Realms of Glory Harold Rutz

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.
Feel free to let the music lead you out, or stay to listen, however the Spirit moves you.

Please join us downstairs after worship for refreshments and fellowship!
Coffee Hour today is sponsored by the Choir

Keeping in Prayer:

Prayers for Kristin, friend of Alice O'Connor, who has recently been diagnosed with cancer
Prayers and condolences for the family of Shirley LaShier, Jim & Linda LaPrad's sister-in-law, who recently passed away
Prayers of healing for Beverly McClain, longtime friend of Eleanor Spencer
Prayers of healing for Bob Dion, friend of Alice O'Connor
Prayers for Paulette Brace's son, Shawn Cassington, for ongoing medical issues
Prayers for Claire Pirnie, daughter of Diane Arsenault and Peter Pirnie and her son Micah as she continues through the process of divorce
Prayers for Tony Amodeo, friend of the LaPrads, who is undergoing cancer treatment
Prayers of comfort and strength for Ruth & Dale Mosher
Prayers for Sage Pirnie and her family, granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie
Prayers for Ellen who struggles with cancer, family member of Ruth & Dale Mosher
Prayers of healing for Sue Switaj
Prayers for our partner church in Zimbabwe, Masvingo UCCZ

If you have a prayer request 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

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| Today, December 10 | Advent Workshop after Worship |
| Today, December 10 | 5:00 pm Sunday Neters Yankee Swap |
| Monday, December 11 | 10:00 am Book Group |
| Tuesday, December 12 | 7:00 pm AA Meeting |
| Wednesday, December 13 | 11:00 am Lectio Divina |
| Wednesday, December 13 | 7:00 pm Council Meeting |
| Thursday, December 14 | 1:00 pm Knitting Group |
| Thursday, December 14 | 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal |
| Friday, December 15 | 8:00 pm AA Meeting |
| Sunday, December 24 | 7:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Service |

CHURCH LIFE

If you have artwork in the sanctuary, please tell the office who the artist is so we can give them credit. Email office@uccplymouth.org.

Book Group is reading Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston during the month of December. Join the discussion on Monday December 11 and 18 at 10am. Contact Kathy Henning for more information: henkat52@gmail.com.

Advent Workshop: Join us for some Advent fellowship and crafts for all ages after worship on Sunday, December 10! There will be cookie-decorating and many crafts available.

Sunday Nitters Yankee Swap will be hosted by Arline Bownes on December 10 at 5pm. If you are going to the Pemi Choral Society concert at 3pm, you are welcome to drop off your potluck dish ahead of time. And don't forget your Yankee swap gift! Arline's address is 36 Parker St in Plymouth.

Lectio Divina: All are invited to gather Wednesday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon for a Bible study modeled on Lectio Divina, the sacred reading of scripture. We'll begin with the Gospel of Mark, the first gospel written, and read through it listening for God's Still Speaking voice. Please join us. Rebecca Larson will lead us.

Sunday School focuses on Bible lessons, outreach projects, and family activities. The children will learn how to use the gifts God gave them to positively impact their community. Volunteers are always welcome! Please contact Jennifer for more details at faithformation@uccplymouth.org.

FROM MISSION & OUTREACH

Request from Pemi Valley Habitat for Humanity: Dale Mosher has asked if any church members or groups would be willing to bring a hot lunch for the volunteers working at **61 Pleasant St, Plymouth**. The volunteers work on Thursday, Friday (max: 8 people), and Saturday (max: 4 people). Suggestions are a hearty soup, stew, pasta, chili, chicken pot pie... Lunch should be delivered between 12 and 12:30 p.m., along with paper plates, plastic utensils, and napkins. "Cooks" are welcome to stay for lunch with the crew. The students at Holderness Academy have volunteered to bring a hot lunch on Sat. Dec 9, and each Saturday in January. Please sign up by contacting Ruth Martz (ruthm.joy@gmail.com or 603-630-7936). Thank you!

Star Child Christmas Giving Program: Once again, this year you can help children and youth in need through our Star Child program. Choose a gold star from the Christmas tree in the Narthex and on it find the sex, age, and sizes of a child in need of warm winter clothing. Then use the star as the gift tag for your gift. To be fair to all please value your gift at approximately \$50. We are also collecting cash donations to supply high school youth a gift card. We know that the gift cards and clothing make a real difference in their lives and make their Christmas a little brighter.

Christmas Eve Special Offerings: At morning worship on December 24, we will collect a special offering for the Christmas Fund, which helps the UCC care for retired clergy, with special help for lower-income retirees. At the Christmas Eve service our special offering will go to Habitat for Humanity, with 1/3 of the offering to Habitat International and 2/3 to Pemi-Valley Habitat for Humanity.

Our HOPE Fund can always use your help!

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

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.

FROM FINANCE

Support PCUCC with 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

If you have a family emergency and want to talk with a pastor, please call Rev. Ruth Martz at 603-630-7936 or you may call Eileen Torrey at 603-252-7513.

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| Alison Thatcher, Office Administrator | office@uccplymouth.org |
| David A. Williams, Director of Music | musicdirector@uccplymouth.org |
| Ashley Rose, Organist, Pianist | organist@uccplymouth.org |
| Jennifer Byam, Director of Faith Formation | faithformation@uccplymouth.org |
| Ann Thurston, Treasurer | treasurer@uccplymouth.org |
| <p>Guest Preacher: Rev. Lynn Morrison Guest Musician: Tessa Kelsey, piano</p> <p>Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ 4 Post Office Square, P.O. Box 86 Plymouth, NH 03264 (603) 536-2626 - office@uccplymouth.org - www.uccplymouth.org</p> | |

Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in November in our Community

If you have an upcoming birthday or anniversary, please email office@uccplymouth.org

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| Tucker Magrath | December 9 | David Williams | December 25 |
| Eileen Torrey | December 15 | Natalie Boyer | December 26 |
| Frank Tedeschi | December 19 | Robert Stewart | December 27 |

