

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Third Sunday in Advent A Pageant Prequel



Woodcarving of the Holy Family at Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem , 2016 - SCCL

December 15, 2024

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 an Anti-Racism church
Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

*Please inquire with people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.
Worship Services may be viewed online at the Plymouth UCC Facebook Page:
"Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ Plymouth NH"*

GATHERING

PRELUDE Savior of the Nations, Come arr. Judith L Maggs

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please sign the **red friendship** pad 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. Children are welcome to fill a bag with books and toys, which are in the narthex, to use during worship.

There is no Sunday School this morning.

Instead, the children are presenting the Christmas Pageant Prequel.

*Those who are able may stand.

INTROIT O Come, O Come, Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL, arr. Thomas Helmore

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE

Candle Lighters: Cristina and son Cooper LaRue with Maris Thatcher- Forgues

One: On this Third Sunday of Advent, we remember Isaiah speaking words of promise to the people: “The ransomed of God shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; joy and gladness shall encompass them, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

All: We light the Candles of Hope and Peace for a new time of release and restoration.

One: In this Advent week, we have observed Human Rights Day (December 10) and we celebrate the 76th Anniversary of the U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We join with people of goodwill everywhere to affirm Article 1: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of unity.”

All: Today, we light the Candle of Love in witness to the call to love God and neighbor, and our work of helping create a just world for all.

(People are invited to speak aloud the names of countries where human rights and/ or peace are needed)

One: Gracious God, we thank you that you have given us the gift of your love in Jesus Christ. Help us to experience your love in our lives, and to share that love with those who need it the most. Amen.

*HYMN Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates NCH(black) #117

PRAYER SEEKING GOD'S PRESENCE – in unison

O Holy One, our Creator and Sustainer, we thank you for our breath and being, and for the many blessings that undergird our lives at home, at church, and in the community. We thank you for your grace that redeems every person, and makes us whole and good. Then why is it, O God, that we so often are overwhelmed by feelings that life is not fair, that there is only scarcity, that there is too much needless suffering, and that the way we think the world should be is not the way that it is?! Help us to always turn toward you, gracious God, and to appreciate each new day as a gift, a gift that is full of abundance, love and hope. Guide us as we journey together to form your beloved community. Bless us in our time of worship and going forth. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us about love, service and joy. Amen.

A PAGEANT PREQUEL

Setting the Stage – Alastair, Piano

At the Temple

Gabriel Visits Zechariah

The Restless Crowd

Zechariah and Elizabeth

Gabriel visits Mary

Mary and Elizabeth

Mary's Response: *My Soul Gives Glory to My God* Alison Mitchell

The Crowd Praises God

- One: Glory to God! **All: Glory to God in the Highest!**

(People are invited to greet one another with this ascription of praise in the same manner as Passing the Peace)

Leaving for Bethlehem

Closing Music – Tessa, Piano

(Many thanks to all our young people for this performance)

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

INVITATION TO OFFER OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY Creator of the Stars of Night arr. Henrietta Atkin

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

***DOXOLOGY**

**To God, all glorious heavenly Light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.**

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

While we are waiting and preparing for Christ to appear, we are seeking, O God, to be faithful followers. May our offerings extend the promise of redemption to people whose lives are broken by neglect, abuse, bad choices, and evil ways. May these gifts offer hope to all whose suffering and loss seem too heavy to bear. May our church be a listening, caring presence for all its members, and through us for all those we meet in our times of labor and leisure. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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 It Came upon the Midnight Clear NCH(black) #131**

***PASTORAL BENEDICTION**

CHORAL BENEDICTION Part in Peace Charlestown, So. Harmony 1835

POSTLUDE Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus arr. Mark Hayes

The Postlude ends our 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 coffee, food, and fellowship.

Keeping in Prayer:

Prayers for Alice O'Connor's friend Martha Richards who is undergoing chemotherapy

Prayers for Alice O'Connor's friend Bill Straub who is undergoing tests for cancer

Prayers for Rob Stewart as he recovers from surgery

Prayers for the faithful work of our Pastoral Search Team: Roger Boyer, Melanie Dixon, Ken Howe, Christina LaRue, Lynn Morrison, Walker Magrauth, Steve Majeski, and alternates, Jan

Bass and Tim Kershner

Prayers for Rebecca Herr following her recent surgery

Prayers for Mark Fabian who is receiving treatment for a brain tumor

Prayers for the victims of war and famine everywhere

Prayers for Ruth Mosher as she undergoes outpatient dialysis.

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

Prayers for the people of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel

Prayers for the people of Ukraine

Prayers for Rev. Muchayi, his wife Maria, and 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 office@uccplymouth.org

This Week and More at PCUCC

Sunday, December 15	5:00 pm Sunday Nitters Yankee Swap at Arline Bownes'
Monday, December 16	10:00 am Advent Book Group
Tuesday, December 17	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Thursday, December 19	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, December 19	7:00 pm NA Meeting
Friday, December 20	8:00 pm AA Meeting
Friday, December 20	11:00 am to 4:00 pm Red Cross Blood Drive
Monday, December 23	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Tuesday, December 24	7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service

Preaching Schedule:

Dec. 22: Rev. Rebecca Larson	January 5: Rev. Rebecca Larson
Christmas Eve: Rev. Ruth Martz	January 12: Rev. Campbell Lovett
Dec. 29: Rev. Campbell Lovett	January 19: Rev. Ruth Martz
	January 26: Horton Center Sunday

Sunday Nighters Yankee Swap is today at 5pm at the home of Arline Bownes, 36 Parker St. in Plymouth. Come with a dish to share and a gift if you'd like to participate in the Yankee Swap.

Red Cross Blood Drive: Scan the QR code to reserve your appointment now for PCUCC's December blood drive on Friday, December 20 from 11:00 to 4:00 before all the spots are filled! Your donation will make a huge difference in someone's life.



We are looking for volunteers to greet and welcome donors, and to hand out snacks after they've donated. If you're available to volunteer to hang out with this awesome Red Cross team for a couple hours, email office@uccplymouth.org.

Everyone is invited to an Advent Book Discussion:

"In the Bleak Midwinter, 40 Meditations and Prayers for Advent and Christmas"

by Herbert Brokering, inspired by the poem by Christina Rossetti (1872).

10 a.m. on Monday mornings: December 16 and 23.

Facilitators: Rebecca Larson and Ruth Martz, in the Parlor & Chapel

Please read 10 daily devotions each week, and come to as many meetings as possible.

Questions? Contact: ruthm.joy@gmail.com) or revralarson@gmail.com.

Fundraiser Announcement: Holiday Shopping Made Easy! Scented Soaps made especially for PCUCC by Plymouth Soapworks are available for sale Sundays in Fellowship Hall throughout the holiday season. All proceeds will go towards the general operating budget promoting the Mission and Ministries of the church. Lavender, Floral Rainbow, Mint and Lemon Blueberry are available plus a limited quantity of unscented soap. Each bar is \$8, and

you may add a soap dish for an additional \$4. Ease your holiday shopping while raising funds for PCUCC's operating budget! Any questions, please contact Linda LaPrad.

A Big Thanks to Santa's Helpers! The Star Child stars are all out! Please be sure to bring your unwrapped gifts back by Sunday, Dec. 15th along with the star gift tag and list. **And don't forget our Gift Card program serving students in need at PRHS.** We are seeking cash/check donations only. Look for the donation box in the Narthex. Be sure to put Gift Card in the check memo line. Help us reach our goal of 20 each \$50 gift cards.

The Knitting Group meets every second and fourth Monday of the month at 1:00 pm. Join us with your fiber art of choice, trouble-shooting questions, or just for fellowship!

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.

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00-2:00

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

Alison Thatcher, Office Administrator

office@uccplymouth.org

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Liturgist: Kathy Henning

Music: Melanie Dixon

Transition Team: Rebecca Larson, Campbell Lovett, Ruth Martz

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

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Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in our Community

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to:

office@uccplymouth.org

Tucker Magrauth

December 9

Natalie Boyer

December 26

Eileen Torrey

December 15

Robert Stewart

December 27

Eileen Lovett

December 28

