



Plymouth United Church of Christ Rev. David Huber, Pastor

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[PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist](https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist)

The Family of God Gathers

Prelude

“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”

Please let the prelude be a signal to prepare for worship.

Advent Candle Lighting—Peace ✠ §

Reader 1: It was the night when Peace was born, and just as now the world was often violent and noisy. But just as now, God was present and working to make all things calm and peaceful.

Reader 2: *We call to people all around the world: let us unite and we will show how Peace can change us, and how Peace can help us grow into faithful disciples of Jesus, whose nativity we await.*

Reader 1: We continue to move through this season of waiting by lighting this second candle, the candle of Peace, anticipating the light of the star that shone over Bethlehem for all to see.

Reader 2: *We open ourselves to hear your call today to become those who not only wait, but also work, for peace in our lives, our families, our communities, and our world.*

Reader 1: Let us pray.

All: Fill us with your light and your spirit of peace, a time of silent holiness, that will make the world calm and bright. Amen.

Music

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Prayer of Confession †§

Faithful God, we confess that we have not led lives of holiness. We suffer from impatience, apathy, and greed; we have not been at peace. We repent of these offenses and turn to you in love. Forgive us when our actions or words do not prepare the way for you, and grant us your mercy, so that we may walk more faithfully in your Way. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon §

L: By the mercy of Christ, the Prince of Peace, you are forgiven!

The Sign of Peace

Now please take a moment and share the peace with those in your household and/or offer a moment to send prayers of peace to those you love who are not with you.

Centering Music

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

The Service of the Word

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13

L: Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

P: You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.

L: Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

P: Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

L: Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

P: Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

L: The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

P: **Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.**

Gospel

Luke 1:1–15

Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Sermon

Musical Offering “O Come to Us, Emmanuel” Words: Joseph M. Martin

*Please mail your offerings and **pledge cards** to the church or drop them off at the office.*

Communion †§

Prayer

L: Now, in this holy season of Advent, God comes to be with you. As we travel on our journey to Bethlehem, let us open our hearts to God.

P: **For God will fill them with strength and courage for the journey.**

L: Let us join our voices in singing praise to God.

P: **We will lift glad songs of joy to the One who is coming to us.**

L: When you were tired of waiting, God-of-the-first-moment, you tore open chaos so creation might flow unimpeded. Fresh and glorious wonders were crafted for those in your image so we might live in your joy forever. But we chose to be doorkeepers for sin, waiting for death to appear. Prophets came so we might hear you and see you at work in our midst, yet we turned a deaf ear to them, refusing to notice you. So you came down to us in Jesus, your Child of life, simply to save us. With the saints of old and the saints of today and those yet to come, we speak your praises:

P: **Holy, holy, holy are you, God who comes to us.**

All creation gives thanks to you, always.

Glory to you in the highest!

Blessed is the One who gathers us to you.

Glory to you in the highest!

L: In your holiness, you could have stood apart from us, God of compassion and hope, but in your love, you came to us to be one of us in Jesus. When we struggle in despair's poverty, he enriches us with your grace. When we are weakened by fear, he strengthens us with your hope. When we think our lives are empty, he fills us with everything we need. When death thought it had lulled him to sleep, he kept alert, waiting for your resurrection love to gather him up and bring him to new life. With those who are always alert, and with those who are drowsy from waiting, we proclaim that mystery which is our faith:

**P: Christ died, giving his life as he called to you;
Christ was raised, resurrection love shining the way;
Christ will come, to gather us from every time and place.**

L: Remembering that we are all your people, you pour out your Spirit upon us and the gifts prepared for this Feast. You came to earth in Jesus and now we find you in the broken bread which gives us the strength to be your hope to those in sadness, to be your light to those in shadows, to be your justice to the oppressed. Your life was poured out for us in Jesus, and now we find your grace in the cup which gives us the spirit to be your healing to the broken, to be your family to the lonely, to be your love to those who are ignored.

P: And when all time is ended, gather us with our sisters and brothers from every time and every place around the table you have prepared for us, as we sing our joyful praises to you, God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

The Story

Lord's Prayer

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, for ever. Amen.

Distribution

Prayer of Thanksgiving §

Thank you, God of hope, for feeding us at your table. May the bread of this meal bind us together as your body, and may the cup of salvation inspire us to be your beloved community. Lead us also to show our thankfulness to you by sharing your hope with our neighbors. May our thankfulness to you lead us to give as generously to others as you have given to us. Amen.

Carol

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (refrain)

Benediction †§

L: The day of the Lord is coming; therefore strive to live in peace, for God's salvation is near.

P: May faithfulness spring up from the ground and righteousness look down from heaven as we walk in the way of peace.

L: May the blessing of God, Eternal Majesty, Living Word, and Holy Comforter, be with you now and always.

All: Amen!

Musical Benediction

“On Come All Ye Faithful”

Postlude

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‡ <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com>

§ Modified/written by Rev. David Huber

Worship Leaders

Pastor: Rev. David Huber • Ministers: All the people of Plymouth • Pianist: Lynn McFadyen • Liturgist: Mimi Pederson

We of Plymouth extend to you our hand of fellowship and an invitation to become a member. If you are interested, or have any questions, please speak with or send a note to Pastor David or our Moderator, Barb Kleist. Our table always has room for more.

This Week at Plymouth

Sunday, December 6

Community Table offering

Tuesday, December 8

9:00 A.M. Coffee & Conversation

Thursday, December 10

3:30 P.M. Coffee & Conversation

Sunday, December 13

Prayers for the People

Cross illumination for December is sponsored by Pete Spitt in loving memory of his wife Sharon and his brother Wallace.

We pray for:

- The leadership and staff of Plymouth United Church of Christ
- Joyce Holmen and her family upon the death of her son Paul Holmen
- Paul Gilbertson dealing with health concerns.

Coffee and Conversation is a virtual gathering via Zoom for folks who miss the Sunday morning coffee time at church. There is no set topic of conversation, and it's a nice way to keep in touch while we have to maintain social distance. Pastor David hosts the gatherings and posts the link on the church Facebook page. Check it out!

<https://tinyurl.com/y2e87nrn>

Who we are...

Plymouth UCC is an Open and Affirming congregation, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of every person, since we are all created in God's image. We welcome into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, ethnic background, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socio-economic background, marital status and background. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, humor, and blessings of participation in our congregation.

Spiritual Care Package

Questions for Reflection

The prophet Isaiah announces good news: God comforts and strengthens a wearied and exiled people in preparation for their homeward journey. Mark's Gospel announces the good news of God in Jesus Christ: God comes to turn the world right side up and baptize us with the Holy Spirit. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Messiah, what is the beginning of God's good news in your life, and how will it change the way you approach this season of expectation and hope?

Household Prayer: Morning

Lord, how I love this season of new beginnings, the opportunity to turn toward you and start again. Empower me to be a messenger of good news, and a leveling influence along the way, as I seek to be one with you in smoothing out the rough places I encounter. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Lord, you have comforted me throughout this day and rescued me from my exile. Where I have flourished, I give you thanks; where I have erred, I ask your forgiveness. Protect me through the night that I may rest in your realm of peace where righteousness makes a home. Amen.

God is still speaking,