



Fourth  
Sunday of Advent



**Plymouth United Church of Christ** Rev. David Huber, Pastor  
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PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist

# Plymouth United Church of Christ

December 20, 2020

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## The Family of God Gathers

### Prelude

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” arr. Lorie Line

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

### Advent Candle Lighting—Love ✠ §

Reader 1: It was the night when Love was born and just as now the world was filled with anger, neighbor fighting neighbor, and loveless acts. But just as now, God was present, bringing love into the world, shining the light of lovingkindness into all its dark corners.

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

Reader 1: This season of waiting is almost over. Soon it will be Christmas. Our patience will be rewarded by our incarnate God who comes to us as one of us. By lighting the fourth candle, the candle of Love, we anticipate the light of the star that shone over Bethlehem for all to see.

Reader 2: *We open ourselves to hear your call today to recognize your love all around us, and to see the potential to add to the love all around us—making our lives, our families, our communities, and our world a brighter place.*

Reader 1: Let us pray.

**All: Fill us with your light and a spirit of love to make the world calm and bright. Amen.**

### Music

“Away in a Manger”

### Prayer of Confession †§

**Faithful God, we know you are always here to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you first. Then we discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins, that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. Amen.**

### Assurance of Pardon §

L: God’s love is sufficient to overcome all shame, pain, or guilt. In Jesus’ name, 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

### Magnificat

Luke 1:46–55

- L: And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
- P: Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.**
- L: His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
- P: He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.**
- L: He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;
- P: he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.**
- L: He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
- P: according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”**

### Gospel

John 1:1–18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

### Sermon

### Musical Offering

“Love Has Come”

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

**Love has come—a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.  
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:  
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.**

**Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers; Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.**

**Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.  
Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.  
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!**

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## The Response to the Word

### Prayers of the People

#### 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.**

#### Carol

*Refrain "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"*

#### Benediction †§

**L:** Fear not! God is with you and will strengthen you in your journey through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever!

**P:** **Magnify the Lord and rejoice, for nothing is impossible with God.**

**L:** May the blessing of God, who creates, redeems, and restores, be with you now and always.

**P:** **Amen!**

#### Musical Benediction

*"Adeste Fideles"*

#### Postlude

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† *Feasting on the Word* Worship Companion, Year B, Vol. 1 ©2014 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

‡ <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: Deb Zehms

*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 20**

***OCWM offering***

**Tuesday, December 22**

9:00 A.M. Coffee & Conversation

**Thursday–Friday, December 24–25**

Office closed

**Sunday, December 27**

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

### **We pray for:**

- All UCC missionaries and ordained and licensed ministers; the ministry and mission of the UCC and the Church universal
- These individuals/families: Mary Stygar, Sue Thompson, Len Weisfeld, Jim Welk, Ron & Nancy Wendt, Keith & Deb Zehms
- 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***

Mary's song proclaims that God is lifting up the lowly while scattering the proud, and feeding the hungry while sending the rich away with empty hands. How does this change the way you think about God's coming reign of justice and favor? How does this change the way you live?

### ***Household Prayer: Morning***

Expectant God, Mary sings because she has new life in her, the promise of your salvation. Fill me with hope this day as I lift my life to you and seek to do your will. Look with favor on our world and all who are in need, that your love may be magnified as I follow humbly in your way. Amen.

### ***Household Prayer: Evening***

Lord, as I come to you seeking rest this night, I pray that all may find a home in you, be disturbed by no one, and be free of the afflictions of the evil one, for you, O God, are mighty to save. Amen.

# **God is still speaking,**