

3rd Sunday of Advent

December 12, 2021



Third Sunday of Advent



Plymouth United Church of Christ Rev. David Huber, Pastor
2010 Moholt Drive, Eau Claire WI 54703 ☎ 715-835-5475 🌐 pcucc.com



PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist

The Family of God Gathers

Gathering Music

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Arr. Mark Hayes

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

Greetings

Advent Candle Lighting—Joy †

L: Siblings in Christ, be not afraid, God’s joy is at hand!

P: To the Jewish people who were in despair in exile, the prophet Zephaniah said: “Sing aloud and shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home. I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your eyes.”
Zephaniah 3:14–20

L: Joy is not a commodity to be bought or sold, but lives deep in the human spirit; and the human spirit lives deep in God’s spirit.

P: Make of our hearts a stable to hear and trust your truth. Help us to let go of what the agents of deception tell us will bring us joy but bring only more emptiness: money, success, material goods, pursuing the latest fads, the scramble to the top. If we have robbed others of what they need in our fruitless quest to live in excess, forgive us, God of joy, and recenter our hearts.

L: We light a candle this morning, this candle of Joy. We see the shadows of sadness, families who have lost loved ones, people in prison, people who are isolated and feel on their own, we see the shadows of grief, people dreading the holidays because of painful memories, or because they don’t want to spend another Christmas alone.

All: We offer this candle's light as our protest against all that tries to separate us from God's joy. May this joy enter our hearts to dispel despair, cynicism, and ingratitude, making room for God. May this candle's light say to the world that God's joy is present on earth as it is in heaven. As we hope for your arrival, as we pray for peace in your living, as we wait and watch and wonder how you might reveal yourself to us, God, give us joy in your Advent.

Advent Invocation Verses 1 & 3

"Make of My Heart a Stable"

Make of my heart a sta-ble, a house for the Ho-ly, a warm and stur-dy
 Make of my life a sta-ble, a house for the Ho-ly, a warm and stur-dy
 Make of our church a sta-ble, a house for the Ho-ly, a warm and stur-dy
 place for hope/peace/joy/love to live and grow.
 place for hope/peace/joy/love to live and grow.
 place for hope/peace/joy/love to live and grow.

Text and music: Amanda Udis-Kessler

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The Service of the Word

Canticle

Isaiah 12:3–6

L: With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

P: And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.

L: Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

P: Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Hymn Bulletin page 9

"My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise"

Gospel

Luke 1:46–56

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.

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.

His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;

he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn 119 Bulletin page 10

“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”

Offering

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God above ye heavenly host

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self †§

Gracious God, in gratitude for all that you have given us, we bring our tithes, offerings, and labor to help feed a world hungry for a place to belong, where they may know the joy of contentment in you. Amen.

Communion

Hymn 345 Verses 1–2 Bulletin page 11

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

Prayer †§

L: May the God who saves us be with you.

P: May the God of redemption be with you.

L: Let us offer our hearts to our God of grace.

P: We open them that God may fill them with life and hope.

L: Out of the dried up well called chaos, you brought forth creation gushing with living waters that ran through valleys towards oceans, that sprinkled flowers on forest floors, that gave nourishment to birds, animals, and those shaped in your image. We could have lived with you in that garden of wonder and delight, but we listened to the temptations offered to us by the powers of deceitful joy. You then sent us prophets, time and again, shouting in the courtyards and from the rooftops to return to you, but we ignored them to pursue the empty path of temptation. Then, in your love and with your hope, you chose to become one of us, Jesus being born into our lives.

**P: Holy, holy, holy are you, God of Advent hope.
We rejoice with all creation in praising you.
Hosanna in the highest!**

L: God of this season, you chose to be embodied in Jesus. Rejecting power, his weakness raises the fallen to their feet; refusing to be afraid, he whispers to us to trust; unable to exclude the forgotten, he welcomes those we failed to make room for and shoved to the side to be forgotten by us; doing all he could for others, he finally submitted to his executioners so that by his death and resurrection we, too, are raised from the ways of death to live into your hope, peace, joy, and love.

P: His resurrection gives us new hope and life. We bear the fruit of his grace and life.

L: O holy God of the ages, may your Spirit descend upon those of us gathered and on the gifts of your table. May the broken bread feed us and reshape our fragmented lives so we may make greater room in the stables of our hearts for those around us. May we draw compassion from the deep wells of the cup of grace, so we may go forth to serve others, as your agents of joy.

P: And when all time and history has ended and we are brought home at the last, we will sing joyfully with all the saints.

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, forever. Amen.

Distribution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Closing Hymn 144 Verses 1–2 Bulletin page 12 “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Benediction 🍷

L: May God's Door of Welcome swing open in your heart and in your life.
P: May Christ's humble first dwelling remind you of the plenty you already know.
L: And may the Spirit lead you into more possibility and hospitality that you can imagine, making room in The Inn for all.
P: May it be so for you. May it be so for us. May it be so for this church.
All: Amen.

Sung Benediction Verse 6

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

**O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;
Love stir within the womb of night, and death's own shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

Postlude

“Deck the Halls”

Arr. Dan Coates

- † *Feasting on the Word* Worship Companion, Year C, Vol. 1 ©2012 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.
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- † adapted from SaltProject, used by permission, and the Christmas Appeal Candle Light Liturgy, used by permission of Christian Aid, and David Huber
- † <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

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.

Cross illumination for December is sponsored by John & Sandy Moore in honor of their 54th wedding anniversary.

This Week at Plymouth

Sunday, December 12

Commitment Sunday

Prayers for the People

10:00 A.M. Coffee

10:30 A.M. Communion Worship

11:30 A.M. Pot luck

Tuesday, December 14

7:00 P.M. Leadership Team

Dartball

Rock Creek at Plymouth

Sunday, December 19

OCWM offering

10:00 A.M. Coffee

10:30 A.M. Worship

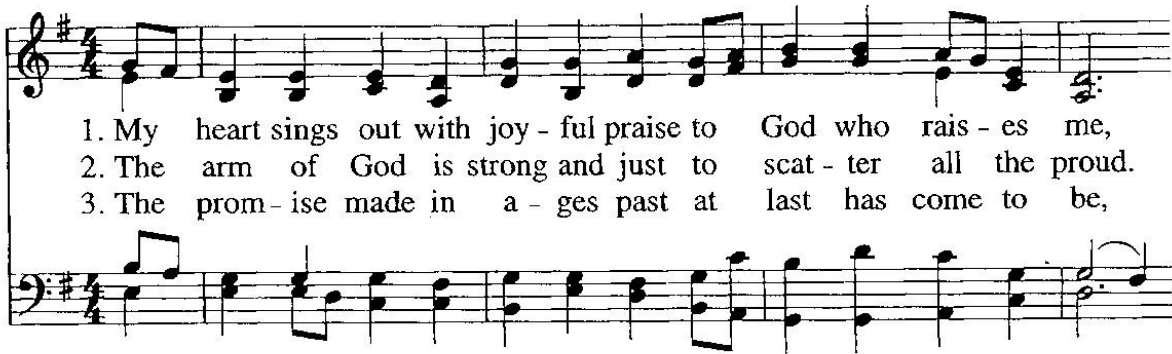
We pray for:

- The General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ Rev. John Dorhauer and Wisconsin Conference Minister Rev. Franz Rigert, along with all UCC staff at the national and Conference level
- These individuals/families: Dana Wachs (Beverly Wickstrom), Len Weisfeld, Adam (Alyssa) Wendt, Ron & Nancy Wendt, Mike Wolfe (Tobey), Keith & Deb Zehms

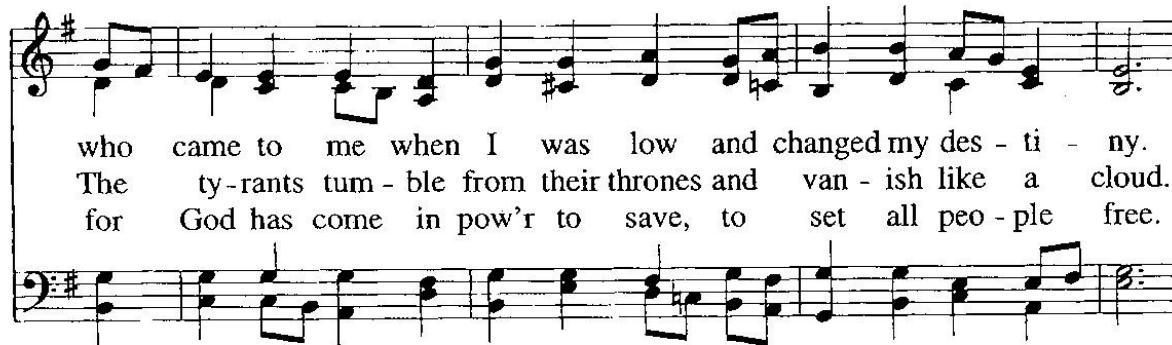
During December we are collecting food through December 19 for St. Francis Food Pantry. They are not putting together holiday meal kits, but traditional holiday foods would be welcome, such as: instant potatoes or stuffing; gravy packets/jars; canned vegetables; cream soups for casseroles; cake mix (or cornbread, muffins, or cupcakes); frosting; sprinkles; hot cocoa; canned fruit cocktail. Your donations need not be limited to these—all food items can be used. Money is also helpful. It allows them to buy more food from Feed My People than we could buy with the same money, but because of shortages and supply issues, they don't always have access to things that they would like, so food donations are helpful, too. Please bring your items to the church, and we will deliver them after December 19.

My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise

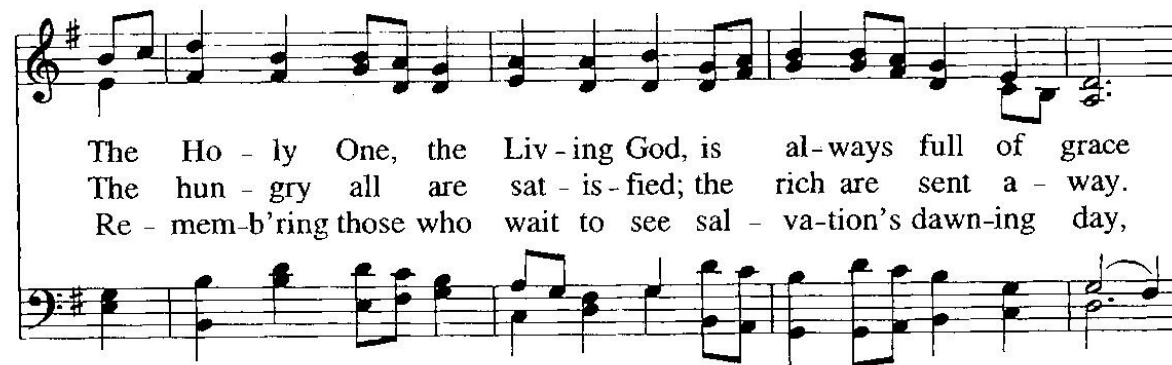
(Song of Mary)



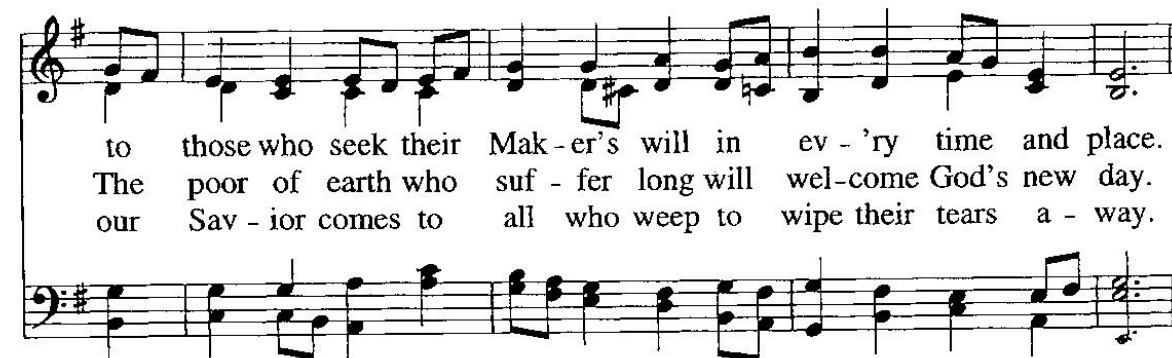
1. My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es me,
2. The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the proud.
3. The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to be,



who came to me when I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.
The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.
for God has come in pow'r to save, to set all peo - ple free.



The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace
The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way.
Re - mem - b'ring those who wait to see sal - va - tion's dawn - ing day,



to those who seek their Mak - er's will in ev - 'ry time and place.
The poor of earth who suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
our Sav - ior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

WORDS: Ruth Duck, 1981, 1985, 1992
MUSIC: Traditional English melody; coll. Lucy Broadwood;
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, *The English Hymnal*, 1906

KINGSFOLD
CMD

As editor of *The English Hymnal*, 1906, Ralph Vaughan Williams introduced a host of traditional English folk tunes he and his contemporaries had rescued from obscurity.

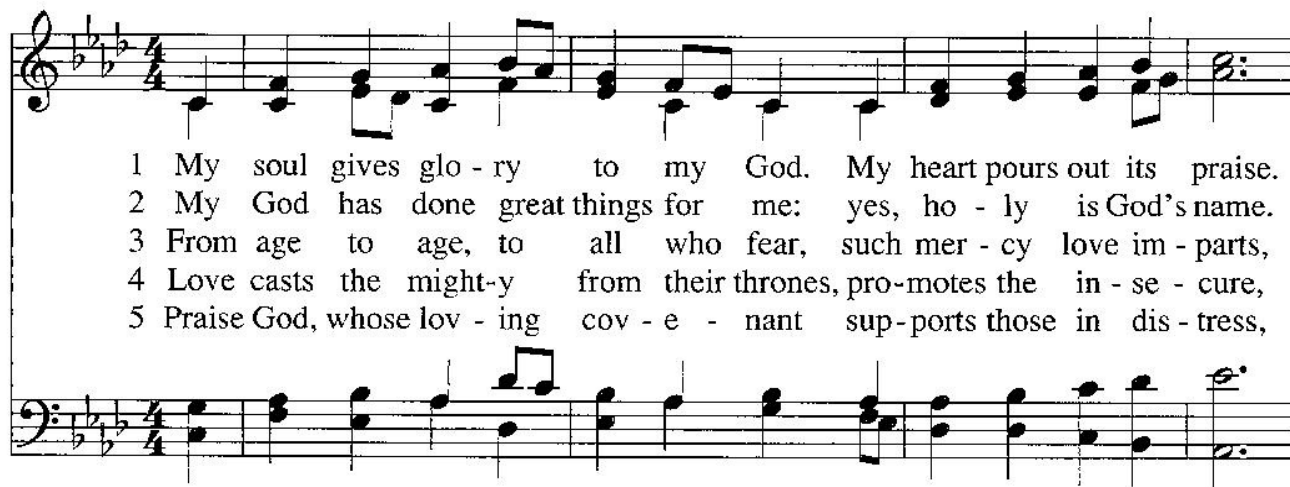
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My Soul Gives Glory to My God

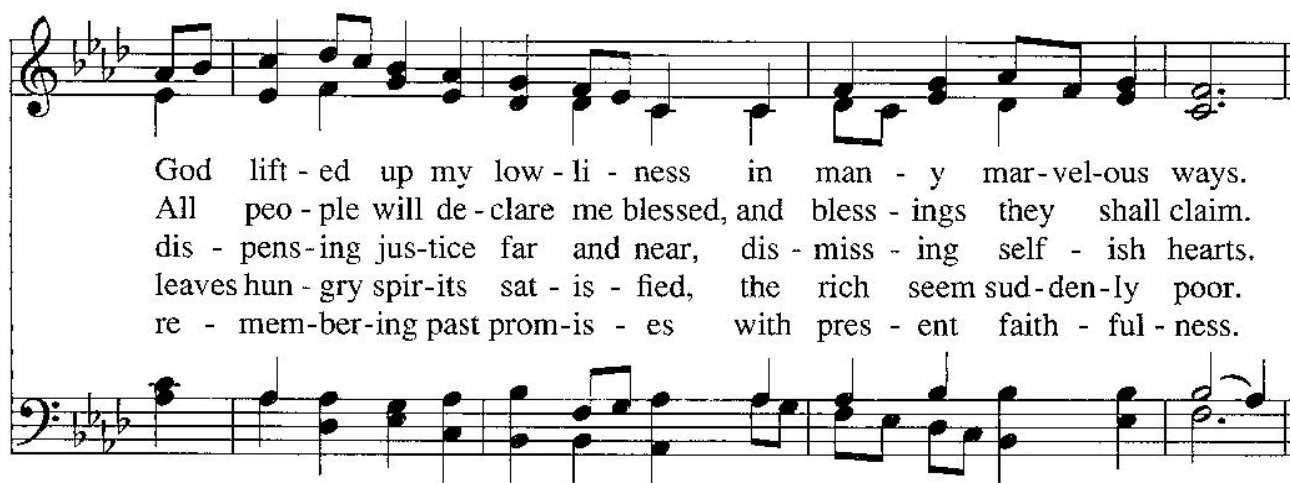
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Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Sam. 2:1-10



1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
2 My God has done great things for me: yes, ho - ly is God's name.
3 From age to age, to all who fear, such mer - cy love im - parts,
4 Love casts the might-y from their thrones, pro-motes the in - se - cure,
5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup-ports those in dis - tress,



God lift - ed up my low - li - ness in man - y mar-vel-ous ways.
All peo - ple will de - clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
dis - pens-ing jus-tice far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts,
leaves hun - gry spir-its sat - is - fied, the rich seem sud-den-ly poor.
re - mem-ber-ing past prom-is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

This New Testament canticle, with its mosaic of liberation motifs that proclaim the justice of God, is known as the "Magnificat," the opening word of its Latin translation.

Tune: MORNING SONG C.M.
Melody from Kentucky Harmony, 1816
Harm. C. Winfred Douglas, 1940

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

*Isa. 6:1-3; 1 Tim. 6:13-15**From the Liturgy of St. James, 4th century
Transl. Gerard Moultrie, 1864; alt.*

1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
 2 Mon-arch great, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van-guard
 4 At Christ's feet the six - winged ser - aphs, cher - u - bim with



trem - bling stand; Pon-der noth-ing earth - ly - mind - ed,
 earth Christ stood, Lord of all, in hu - man ves - ture—
 on the way, As the Light of light de - scend - ing
 sleep - less eye, Veil their fac - es to the Pres - ence,



for with bless - ing in the hand, Christ our God to
 in the bod - y and the blood— Christ will give to
 from the realms of end - less day, That the powers of
 as with cease-less voice they cry, Al - le - lu - ia,



earth de - scend - ing, our full hom-age to de - mand.
 all the faith - ful bread of life for heaven-ly food.
 hell may van - ish as the shad-ows clear a - way.
 al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, God most high!

This Greek hymn comes from the Liturgy of St. James of Jerusalem. It has been paraphrased by Gerard Moultrie, a priest of the Church of England. The French folk melody first appeared with these words in The English Hymnal (1906).

*Tune: PICARDY 8.7.8.7.8.7.
 French carol melody, 17th century
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906*

Harmonization Copyright ©, Oxford University Press. From *The English Hymnal* 1906.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Luke 2:10-11, 25-32; 24:46-51;
1 Thess. 4:13-18; Isa. 60:19-20

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.



1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the Christ-child bring;
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
3 Hail the Bear - er of God's peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous-ness,



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ner rec - on - ciled!"
Late in time the Sav - ior comes, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
Light and life our Sav - ior brings, risen with ra - diant, heal - ing wings.



Joy - ful, all you saints a - rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh, the God-head see; hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,
Mild - ly lay - ing glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



With the an - gel host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
Born to raise us all from earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Refrain



Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the Christ-child bring!"

This hymn by Charles Wesley, one of the founders of Methodism, is firmly wedded to Felix Mendelssohn's music. Composed for the four hundredth anniversary of the invention of printing, the music was adapted to this hymn fifteen years later.

Tune: MENDELSSOHN 7.7.7.7.D. with refrain
From Felix Mendelssohn's "Festgesang," 1840
Arr. William H. Cummings, 1855

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

Imagine that you are in the crowd listening to John the Baptizer. You hear people in the crowd asking him, "What should we do to prepare?" How might John instruct you, or your church, to prepare for the coming of God's reign? Sometimes wealthy people worry that God or the church is requiring them to be poor. What is the difference between being poor and being fair? How do you feel about sharing?

Household Prayer: Morning

God, surely you are my salvation. I begin this day without fear, trusting you, for you are my strength. Help me to meditate all day on the thought that you are rejoicing in me! And keep me keenly aware, as I travel through this day, of ways that I may help others, especially those with special needs. Then bring me home to you at the close of the day. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Thank you, God, for the gift of today and for guarding my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. All that I did and all that I left undone, I now give over to your safekeeping, trusting in your peace that surpasses all understanding. Be my rest as I sleep tonight, and renew me in your love for another day. Amen.

God is still speaking,