

1st Sunday after Christmas

December 26, 2021



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

“What Child Is This”

Arr. John Stecher

Carol

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light,
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.**

Call to Worship †

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

P: Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

L: The light shines in the darkness.

P: And the darkness did not overcome it.

L: For Christ is born in Bethlehem.

P: Come, let us adore him.

Carol

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

**Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him Born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

**The highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

Confession †§

Almighty God, we confess our hearts have not been open to all whom you have revealed to us in the Nativity of your Son. You sent Christ to be born as a helpless Child, and yet we have not attended to suffering children. You chose humble Mary to be Jesus' mother, and yet we have not attended to the struggles of women. The holy family could find no room, and yet we have not attended to the cry of the homeless. Forgive our lack of attention, and free us for joyful compassion, that we may know Christ in serving others. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon §

L: The Christmas Good News is that Jesus offers peace and forgiveness! In his name, you are forgiven!

P: You are forgiven!

L: May the peace of Jesus be with you!

P: And also with you!

Carol

“Away in a Manger”

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

Reading the Christmas Story

Luke 1:26–56; Luke 2:1–20

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

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.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Carol

“Silent Night”

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child, Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love’s pure light,
Radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace;
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.**

Prayers †§

- L: Your messenger announces peace in shouts of breathless joy; drive out the warring ways of our world and protect all who face danger this day.
- P: O God of Love, draw us together in peace.**
- L: Your Word comes with justice to rule the earth with fairness; inspire the leaders of all nations and citizens of the world to promote dignity and equality for all.
- P: O God of Love, draw us together in peace.**
- L: Mountains and rivers clap and sing as your Word makes all things new; awaken us to the damage we do to your world and mend our ways, that all creation might freely breathe again.
- P: O God of Love, draw us together in peace.**
- L: When shepherds met your newborn Christ they eagerly ran to tell the news.
- P: O God of Love, draw us together in peace.**
- L: From the lowliness of the stable your Word has power to sustain; comfort those who are hungry, sick, or suffering.
- P: O God of Love, draw us together in peace.**
- L: Unto us a child is born this day! Let us say together the Lord's Prayer:

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.

Carol

“Joy to the World”

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come; let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

Benediction †§

L: May the song of the angels, the joy of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ child be with you this day and always.

All: Amen.

Postlude

“On Christmas Night All Christians Sing”

Arr. Lorie Line

† *Feasting on the Word* Worship Companion, Year C, Vol. 1 ©2012 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

§ 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 26

10:30 A.M. Worship

Online only

Friday, December 31

Office closed

Sunday, January 2

Community Table offering

10:00 A.M. Coffee

10:30 A.M. Communion Worship

We pray for:

- All houses of worship—churches, temples, and mosques in the Chippewa Valley who provide ecumenical and interfaith combined fellowship and service to our community.

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

Consider Jesus as an adolescent, causing his parents to worry about him. Jesus asks his parents, "Why were you searching for me?" If you were a parent of Jesus, how would you answer that question? How do you answer that question for yourself?

Household Prayer: Morning

Lord Jesus, as you listened to your teachers, may I also, this day, listen to others with care and grace, and receive whatever wisdom they may offer. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Loving God, you know every struggle I have faced this day: let me sleep in peace, confident in your great love in Jesus Christ. Amen.

God is still speaking,