



10:30 AM SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2023

WELCOME!

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*“Whether you are a seeker, skeptic, believer
or somewhere in between on life’s journey, you are welcome here.
We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate
in worship and service of Plymouth Church.*

PLYMOUTH UCC PURPOSE

Growing people of faith who participate in God’s work in the world.

PLYMOUTH UCC VISION

Plymouth Church UCC is a Christian Community open to the transforming Spirit of God.



Thank you for worshipping online with us today. Please like and send us a greeting on
Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



The church office will be closed during concerns about the coronavirus.
Check PlymouthChurchSeattle.org for updates.

All pastoral care will be via telephone or other electronic means.

If you have personal concerns, you may contact a minister or member of the Pastoral Care Team
via e-mails below, or call the pastoral care line, **206.639.7739**, checked daily.

KBrown@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org

KBechtold@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org

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For administrative needs, or other non-pastoral care questions, please email:

DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org

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10:30 AM SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2023

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Worship with Plymouth Church UCC begins with meditation.

The quiet of this place is meant to encourage and deepen your own inner work.

Thank you for entering this place, this hour, by honoring the spirit of worship.

PRELUDE

Battle of Manassas Thomas “Blind Tom” Wiggins
Joe Williams, piano

OPENING STATEMENT Michael Gordon

“We have all been thrown down so low that nobody thought
we'd ever get up again; but we have been long enough
trodden now; we will come up again, and now I am here.”

—*Sojourner Truth*

CALL TO WORSHIP Mr. Gordon

by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

One: Let your word be “Yes, yes,” or “No, no.” (Matthew 5:37)
God, give me grace that my “Yes” be Yes,
my “No” be No,
that I be clear.

**Many: May I stand for what I stand for,
that my Yes or No be true,
even when it upsets people,
when they want me to waffle.**

One: Save me from their fear of being disagreed with.
Save me from my fear that I’m not worthy of my opinion.

**Many: To what is yes, I bow deeply with my yes.
To what is no, I bow deeply with my no.**

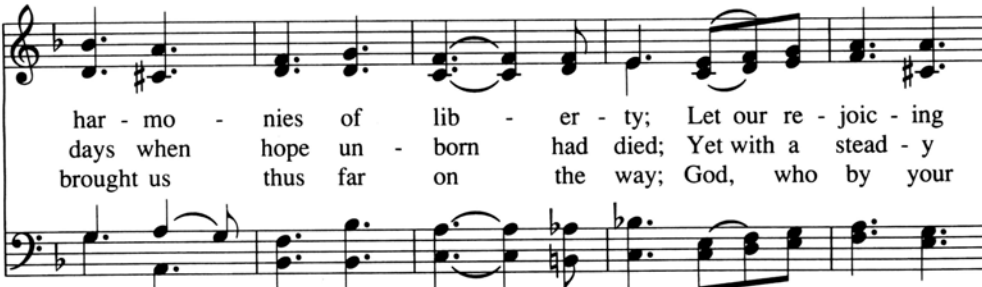
One: I pray that I may discern clearly,
and be at peace,

**All: hearing always your Word,
your “Yes, Yes, Yes.”**

HYMN *Lift Every Voice and Sing* LIFT EVERY VOICE



1 Lift ev-ery voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring, ring with the
 2 Ston-y the road we trod, bit-ter the chas-tening rod, felt in the
 3 God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears, God who has



har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty; Let our re - joic - ing
 days when hope un - born had died; Yet with a stead - y
 brought us thus far on the way; God, who by your



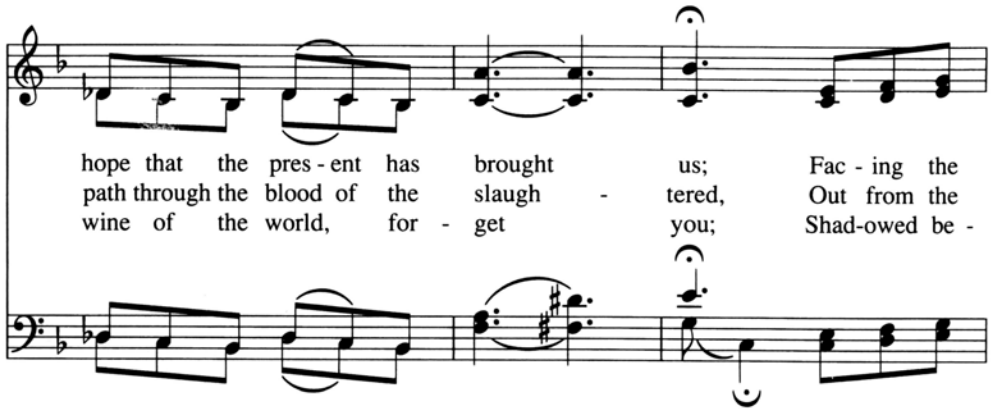
rise, high as the lis - tening skies, let it re - sound loud as the
 beat, have not our wea - ry feet, come to the place for which our
 might, led us in - to the light, keep us for - ev - er in the



roll - ing sea. Sing a song full of the
 peo - ple sighed? We have come o - ver a
 path, we pray. Lest our feet stray from the



faith that the harsh past has taught us, Sing a song full of the
 way that with tears has been wa - tered, We have come, tread - ing our
 plac - es, our God, where we met you, Lest our hearts, drunk with the



hope that the pres - ent has brought us; Fac - ing the
 path through the blood of the slaugh - tered, Out from the
 wine of the world, for - get you; Shad - owed be -



ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun, let us march
 gloom - y past, till now we stand at last where the white
 neath your hand, may we for - ev - er stand, true to our



on till vic - to - ry is won.
 gleam of our bright star is cast.
 God, true to our na - tive land.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION. Rev. Kevin Bechtold

God of Justice,

God of Compassion,

God of Sacred and Scandalous ways,

We have so much still to learn.

By your grace, we have come to know love more deeply than
once before –

its mess, its complexity, its stubborn and tender truths
transform us more each day.

Through fires that refine and valleys of death, you have
guided us.

You draw us into the heart of Wisdom,

Saving us from the lies of destruction.

Turning us towards hope that liberates.

But still, O God, we struggle to trust in you..

And so, when we are afraid. Or hurt. Or weary...

We betray the very One who brought us thus far.

We confess, we still shame Jesus, when he turns over tables.

We confess, we still condemn Jesus, when he breaks the rules
to which we are loyal.

We confess, while Jesus is torn from the arms of his mother by ICE,
[while someone is afraid to call for help that may turn into death],
and sitting lonely on the street with no family to welcome them home,
our loyalties are often elsewhere.

Our priorities are not your own.

Search our hearts, O God, and see if there is any fear within us.

Meet us there with your good news that sets the captives free.

Forgive us from the harm we have done as we seek to harm no more.

(time for silent personal reflection)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE Rev. Bechtold

Beloveds, God does not abandon us to the systems that destroy.
God does not bind us to our regrets.
Or forever hold us to what we once believed.
God says, come and follow!
Know forgiveness and sin no more.
Love abounds. And Justice shall be manifest!
Wherever new life is desired,
may the peace of Christ be welcomed among us.
Thanks be to God who leads us on paths of resurrection.

SHARING OF PEACE Rev. Bechtold

Those online are invited to put greetings in the chat on the website or on YouTube.

WELCOME Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Afghan Family (Supported by Plymouth), Emily Blaine-Davis, Sue Ellen Daniel (Friend of Barb Laski), John Daniels, Lauren Davis, Mark and JT Edwards, Susan Emerson (Mother of Kate Forrester), Diane Folkert & Family (Mother-in-law of Ara Lawrence), Marni Good (Friend of Ricky Powell), Megan French(niece of Sue Jones) & David Dixon & Family, Michelle J. Bennett, Allie James (Friend of Dawn Bennett), Shirley K. Shelley (Aunt of Ricky Powell), Concetta Lewis (Sister of Jo-Ann Guthrie), Mamadou Diakhate (Friend of Floyd Gossett), Montecino Family, Jose Robles and Family, Doug Ryan (Brother of Mary Ryan), Abby Scott (Friend of Anne Mohundro), Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Beta Utu Malae (Sister of Robert Malae), Charon Washington (Sister of Michael Gordon)



A variety of faithful addresses for God (Creator, Mother, Holy One, Father)
are welcome at Plymouth UCC, including in the Lord's Prayer.



PRAYER OF JESUS

**Our parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation.
May your loving presence be a reality here on earth.
May we become more interested in building your kingdom
here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above.
Let us share our bread with those who hunger.
Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness.
Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil.
For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth. Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERINGRev. Donene Blair

We live in an “already-but-not-yet” time. We look around and see the healthy green crops of justice and peace struggling to grow, mixed in with the weeds of violence and suffering and war. We wait like the farmer for the bountiful harvest of God’s reign, and in the meantime, we’re working hard to nurture every little green shoot of hope. These gifts today are one way we tend the garden, this beautiful green garden of God, staking our hope on the future yield promised by God. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in gratitude and praise.

*To set up a one time or recurring donation to Plymouth Church
click on the “Give” link on PlymouthChurchSeattle.org or
CashApp your donation to \$PlymouthUCCSeattle.
We give thanks for your generosity.*

OFFERING MUSIC

Claire de LuneGabriel Faure
Ellaina Lewis, soprano

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost
Amen! Amen! Amen!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION Rev. Blair

**Each of us is a fragile miracle,
evidence of God’s creative hands,
and amazing grace.**

**We are each unique,
unrepeatable gifts to the world.**

We are proof of God’s love.

**And so we who are the gifts of creation
now give gifts to our Creator.**

Gifts brought in love.

Amen

CONTEMPORARY VOICE. M Jade Kaiser

from Enfleshed

I recoil before spiritual intentions
aiming for peace
that is unaffected, untroubled, unchanged
by another white supremacist manifesto,
cascades of anti-trans bills,
or the cruel politics of war.
What comfort is untainted tranquility
that never has its own
sleepless nights
restless with grief,
talking with ghosts
of children and elders,
and a god that is tired.
I rest only in the company
of an honest and confused faith, broken
open and angry with no tidy answers,
but love that is willing to fight.
I don’t know exactly what it looks like
in a body,
in a prayer,
in a daily life

to refuse to be resolved
while also refusing to wear out.
Pressed in either direction,
I find only dead ends.
So I feel downward.
Like roots.
Like lineages.
Like the dark, quiet soils
where time doesn’t exist.
Burrowing beneath the fragile, careful surface,
I seek the spiritual underground
where the unkempt and unruly
groan in those dense, wordless depths
and worms are busy
shifting the earth.



Rev. M Jade Kaiser is co-founder and co-director of enfleshed, a nonprofit creating and facilitating resources of spiritual nourishment for collective liberation.

READING FROM CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE Acts 16:16-24

(Dr. Wilda Gafney Translation)

read by Dr. Brown

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met an enslaved girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her masters a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed after Paul and us, she cried out, "These persons are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." This she did for many days. But it bothered Paul, who turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that hour.

Now when her masters saw that their hope of financial gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and into the marketplace they dragged them before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These persons are disturbing our city; they are Judeans and are preaching traditions that are not right for us to follow as Romans." The crowd joined against them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with batons. After they had laid many blows on them, they threw them into prison and commanded the jailer to keep them securely. Receiving these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and their feet he fastened in the stocks.

ANTHEM

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me arr. by Jasmine Barnes

Ellaina Lewis, soprano

MESSAGE

The Costly Nature of Enslavement. Rev. Robert Wright Lee IV

HYMN OF COMMITMENT

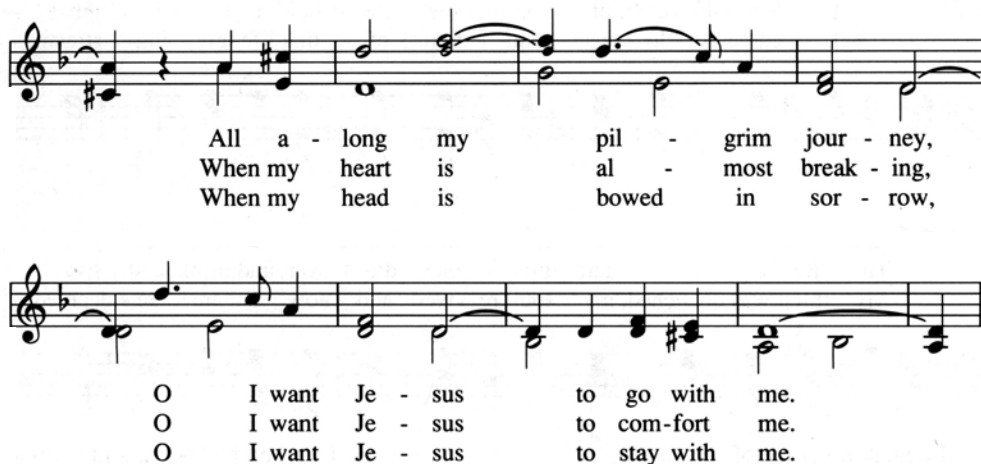
I Want Jesus to Go with Me African-American Spiritual

Unison



1 I want Je - sus to go with me;
2 In my tri - als, O com - fort me;
3 When I'm in trou - ble, O stay with me;

I want Je - sus to go with me;
In my tri - als, O com - fort me;
When I'm in trou - ble, O stay with me;



All a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
 When my heart is al - most break - ing,
 When my head is bowed in sor - row,
 O I want Je - sus to go with me.
 O I want Je - sus to com - fort me.
 O I want Je - sus to stay with me.

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION Rev. Lee

POSTLUDE

Before I'd Be A Slave. Undine Smith Moore

Joe Williams, piano



SPECIAL THANKS



Special thanks to our guest preacher today, The Reverend Robert Wright Lee, IV. He is an author, activist, public theologian, and preacher. His work has been covered by *MTV*, *the View*, *The New Yorker*, *CNN*, *the New York Times*, *NPR*, and countless others. Rob is often found just telling stories with friends in his hometown of Statesville, North Carolina. He is a graduate of Duke University Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina.

Rob is a collateral descendant of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and has been engaged as an activist in the field of racial reconciliation. Rob still lives in his hometown with his wife Stephanie, his poodle Frank and goldendoodle Maggie. His life has been forever enriched by his two adopted daughters, Athena and Phoenix.

You are invited to a reception following the service in Hildebrand Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Multifaith Coalition for Restorative Justice is a grass roots group that through advocacy and education seeks to make our incarceration system more transformative and less punitive. Join Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown on Advocacy Day, February 15. Read how in the this week's *Herald* or the news article at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org.

Call to Conscience This February, the Columbia City Theater (4916 Rainier Ave S, Seattle) is transformed into the Call to Conscience Black History Month Museum to celebrate the achievements and the achievers of the Pacific Northwest. Read more at CallToConscience.world.

Connect with Congregational Council Members of the Plymouth community are invited to meet with Council members to ask questions, make suggestions, and express their hopes for Plymouth. Council members are available online via Zoom 7-8 pm the **second Wednesday of each month**. Email Diane Jacobsen by 5 pm the day of the meeting for the Zoom link.

Help Wanted If you can provide purchased, pre-packaged food and arrange it on a platter in the kitchen before worship for coffee hour following worship, please contact Toni Arthur: TArthur@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. Your help with this ministry of hospitality is greatly appreciated!

Be The Church You are invited to volunteer at Plymouth Church! Remember that covenant giving also includes your time and using your gifts. There are many tasks that you can do. Training provided if needed. See this week's *Herald* or PlymouthChurchSeattle.org for some opportunities.

Undoing Institutional Racism Workshops are designed to educate, challenge and empower people to “undo” the racist structures that hinder effective social change. Next workshop is February 16-18. See full schedule and details PinwSeattle.org.

Did You Know... You can view past services on our website, PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. Under the “Worship” tab, click “Recent Services.” You can also view past services, musical performances and special events on our YouTube channel, Plymouth Church UCC.

**Believing that God's love transcends all human distinctions,
Plymouth welcomes people of all races and cultures,
of varied social and economic conditions
and regardless of sexual orientation.**

**We are open and affirming of all people,
and we call all people to the cost and joy of Christian discipleship.**