

# ***A LONG TIME COMING***

**10:30 AM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024**



**PLYMOUTH**  
United Church of Christ

# 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 is open during limited hours.

Contact [Info@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:Info@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

**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](mailto:KBrown@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

[KBechtold@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:KBechtold@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

[JHayakawaFung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:JHayakawaFung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

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

[DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

[RTurner@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:RTurner@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

[TArthur@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:TArthur@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

10:30 AM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*When you enter Plymouth Church UCC,  
may you feel the peace, intimacy, belonging,  
acceptance and refuge of Sanctuary.*

**PRELUDE *PRELUDIO***

*What Child Is This.* . . . . . arr. Dr. Lee Peterson  
Dr. Lee Peterson, piano

**WELCOME *BIENVENIDA*** . . . . . Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown

**CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES**

***LLAMADO A ADORAR Y ENCENDIDO DE LAS VELAS DE ADVIENTO***

***Reader:*** When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God’s plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, “Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’” (Luke 1:34) And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for the Holy One has been mindful of the humble state of God’s servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name” (Luke 1:46–49).

We, like Mary, hear God’s call to be part of making God’s dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, “How can this be? I am only...” Yet, like Mary, the “onlys” that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God’s love transforms us into bearers of good news.

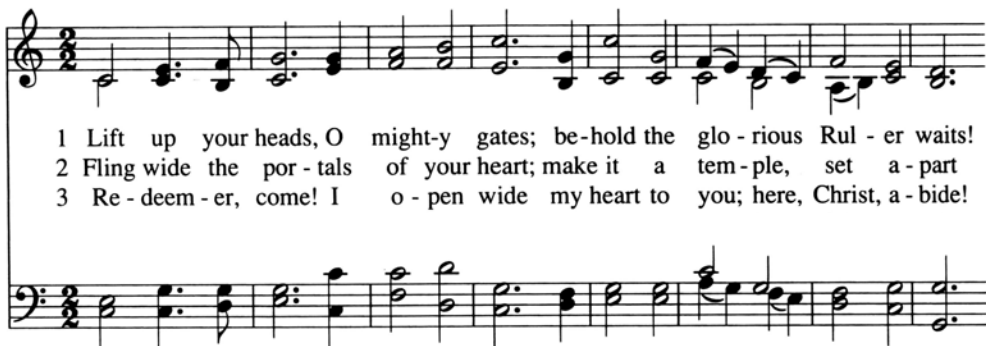
***Congregation:*** We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.

**Reader:** We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives.

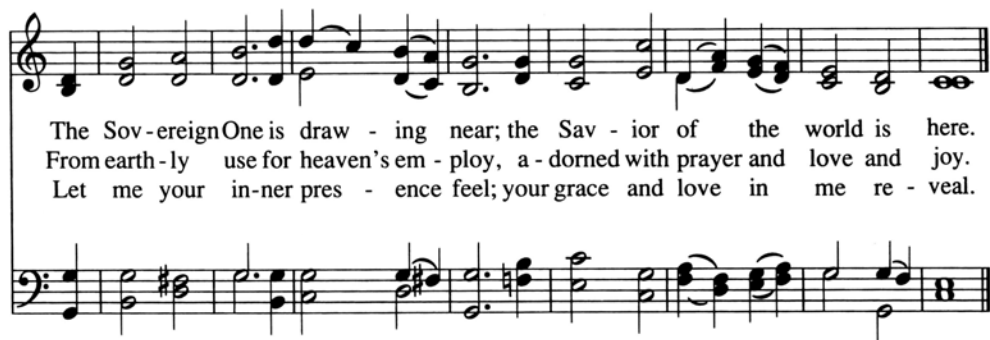
*Light outer candles on the Advent Wreath.*

## OPENING HYMN *HIMNO DE APERTURA*

*Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates* (#117) *vss 1-3* . . . . . TRURO



1 Lift up your heads, O might-y gates; be-hold the glo-rious Rul-er waits!  
2 Fling wide the por-tals of your heart; make it a tem-ple, set a-part  
3 Re-deem-er, come! I o-pen wide my heart to you; here, Christ, a-bide!



The Sov-ereign One is draw-ing near; the Sav-ior of the world is here.  
From earth-ly use for heaven's em-ploy, a-dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
Let me your in-ner pres-ence feel; your grace and love in me re-veal.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION. . . . . June Hayakawa-Fung *ORACIÓN DE CONFESIÓN*

One: Divine Light and Love, We have been weighed down by the heaviness of the season, the sorrows carried from the past, and the expectations of the present and future.

Many: **We hide in shadows instead of the light. We embrace individualism instead of basking in the joy of community love.**

One: Create a new path in our hearts so that we can  
find levity and grace.

**All: Reconnect us with the Body of Christ  
instead of the distressing comfort of  
spiritual solitude.**

**ASSURANCE OF GRACE . . . . . Ms. Hayakawa-Fung**  
**SEGURIDAD DE GRACIA**

The grace of God infinitely streams into our lives, drawing  
us from the shadows into the light, and reconnecting us again  
with our neighbors. May the mercy of our Creator help us  
rediscover the Spirit of Joy in our midst. **Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE . . . . . Dr. Brown**  
**ORACIONES DEL PUEBLO**

*I Will Light Candles This Christmas*, by Howard Thurman

I will light candles this Christmas;  
Candles of joy despite all sadness,  
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,  
Candles of courage for fears ever present,  
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,  
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,  
Candles of love to inspire all my living,  
Candles that will burn all the year long.

*Afghan Family (Siblings of Plymouth), Toni Arthur, Ahmed Black (Nephew of Michael & Elizabeth Gordon), Wendy Carpenter (Friend of Jocelyn Coit-Durland), Diane Folkert (Mother and Mother-in-Law of Alex & Ara Lawrence), Louis Ford (Friend of Karen Clark), Elvis Gordon (Brother of Michael and Elizabeth Gordon), Floyd Gossett, Carrie Gossett (Mother of Floyd Gossett), Kay Heekin (Mother-in-Law of Kate Forrester), Allie James (Friend of Dawn Bennett), Julie (Friend of Karen Clark), William Chapman Nyaho, Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Gevan Woodke (Friend of Karen Clark), Shaniece (Friend of Karen Clark)*

*Our hearts are with Karen Gwilym and family on the passing of her sister, Ruth Oberg.*



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 *ORACIÓN DE JESÚS***

**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 OFFERING & SHARING PEACE . . . . . Ms. Hayakawa-Fung  
*LLAMADO A LA OFERTA Y COMPARTIENDO LA PAZ***

We reconnect in this space and time to seek God's call for our lives and our congregations. As part of our spiritual journeys, we share our treasures, time, and talents, bringing God's light into our world. We do not give to impress God or share offerings because of our shame. Instead, we bring our offerings to celebrate the Body of Christ.

**DOXOLOGY *DOXOLOGÍA***

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

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION . . . . . Ms. Hayakawa-Fung  
*ORACIÓN DE DEDICACIÓN***

**God of All Joy, Holy Hope,  
We delight in living in your ways as we create your Realm  
here on earth. These offerings of talents, treasures, and  
time are not to appease you but to collaborate with you.  
As co-creators, we seek your intentions and celebrate your  
love for us and our neighbors. Amen.**

**OFFERING MUSIC *OFRECIENDO MÚSICA***

*In the Bleak Midwinter*. . . . . arr. Dr. Lee Peterson  
Dr. Lee Peterson, piano

*Mary's Song: A Poem* (adapted for inclusiveness)

by Lisa Sharon Harper

Troubling times  
Regime change.  
“How are we gonna make it?”  
“How are we gonna live?”  
Tomorrow?  
Fear for breakfast  
Trembling for brunch  
Despair for dinner.  
Thick air  
Full of fumes  
Can't breathe.  
Thick over the man on the street  
With feet sticking out of his shoes.  
Shoes wrapped in muslin.  
It does not cover him  
He lay cocked to one side.  
In a fetal position.  
He was a baby once.  
Once — he cried and cuddled and coo-ed  
Now he knows evil of this world.  
His eyes have been baptized in the warped world of war.  
They stare — numb.  
Dead eyes.  
Murdered by drugs and guns and blood  
Murdered by full metal jackets  
Innocent eyes stolen  
Stolen, too, the man's soul.  
Now  
He lays in a fetal position  
Waiting..  
And the woman on the train  
Across the aisle from me.  
Her hand stretches forth  
Rests on the carriage  
Rocking a sleeping baby.  
Innocent in all things.



*Lisa Sharon  
Harper is a prolific  
speaker, writer and  
activist.*

Deserving of nothing  
Deserving of all things  
Baby lay waiting  
In a fetal position  
Baby waits to breathe above 125th street.  
Fumes hover in her neighborhood  
Where bus depots pepper the map.  
Cancer fumes  
Asthma fumes  
Fumes that shape life  
Limit life  
Steal life  
But for now she sleeps  
And her momma rocks her carriage.  
And the GM  
And the Hedgefund  
And the free-market giants  
Three of them  
Jolly and Green  
They lay now  
Tears trickle from baptized eyes  
Dead eyes  
They stare — numb  
Ransacked by green greed and time catching up  
Now ... nothing — or at least it feels like nothing.  
They have what feels like nothing.  
And for fear of feeling fear  
The giants lay feeling nothing.  
Unknowing hovers over the deep  
And we wait.  
We watch with dead eyes  
Eyes that have seen too much.  
Eyes that have known too much evil.  
Redeem! Lord, Redeem!  
Watch for the birth.  
Wait for the birth.  
It pierces all  
And unfurls curled bodies  
It covers twisted limbs.  
It replaces fumes with blankets of breath  
Mixed with love and sacrifice.



Mary watched and waited  
The powerless, harassed young girl — 13.  
Barely a foot in the world  
On the run  
Chased down by power  
Death surrounded her  
Wrapped in the stench of King Herod's dying babies  
But  
Into the darkness Mary sang!  
“My soul doth magnify the Lord!  
My soul doth magnify the Lord!  
The one more mighty than darkness has done great things!”  
For resting in her belly  
Turning in her belly  
Pressing on her belly  
Change was being born  
“God scatters the proud in the thoughts of their hearts,”  
Mary says!  
“God brings down the powerful from their thrones and lifts the lowly,”  
Mary proclaims!  
And the man with feet peeking from his shoes will be lifted up.  
He will stand up!  
And the baby covered in fumes will be lifted up.  
She will stand up! Up!  
And the green giants laying with dead eyes — yes, even they will be  
lifted up!  
They will stand!  
Blessed are they now, for they are ready to be lifted up.  
They will lock hands  
With their sisters and brothers and ...  
Our souls will magnify the Lord.  
Our souls will magnify the Lord.  
Our souls will magnify the Lord ...  
... together!  
And our spirits will rejoice in God our savior!  
Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READING *LECTURA DE LAS ESCRITURAS* . . . . . Luke 1:46-56**  
(Dr. Wilda Gafney Translation) read by Rev. Kevin Bechtold

“My soul magnifies the Holy One,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for God has looked with favor on the lowliness of God’s own womb-slave.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God’s name.  
God’s loving-kindness is for those who fear God  
from generation to generation.  
God has shown the strength of God’s own arm;  
God has scattered the arrogant in the intent of their hearts.  
God has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
God has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
God has helped God’s own child, Israel,  
a memorial to God’s mercy,  
just as God said to our mothers and fathers,  
to [Hagar and] and Sarah and Abraham, to their descendants forever.”  
And Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned to her home.

**ANTHEM *EL HIMNO***

*Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming* Tune: ES IST EIN' ROS  
Plymouth Choir

**SERMON *SERMON* . . . . . Rev. Bechtold**

*(Service continues next page)*

**SPACE STILL OPEN FOR SELMA TRIP**



March 6-14, 2025, Museum Without Walls is organizing a trip to Selma and Montgomery—two cities that are at the heart of the Civil Rights Movement. This journey will take us to the very places where so much of the fight for equality unfolded, and where lives were changed forever. We’re honored to partner with Plymouth Church UCC and Congregational Church on Mercer Island. \$500 deposit required when registering. Link to register in the news article at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](https://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org). **Register with deposit by December 30.**

# HYMN OF COMMITMENT *HIMNO DE COMPROMISO*

*Joy to the World!* (#132) . . . . . ANTIOCH

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its  
 2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,  
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
 and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's

and heaven and na - ture sing, and  
 re - peat the sound-ing joy, re -  
 and won - ders of God's love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

heaven and na - ture sing,  
 peat the sound-ing joy,  
 won - ders of God's love,

**BENEDICTION *BENDICIÓN*** . . . . . Rev. Bechtold

**POSTLUDE *POSTLUDIO***

*Away In A Manger* . . . . . arr. Dr. Lee Peterson

Dr. Lee Peterson, piano



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Please Deliver a Christmas Plant!*** Take a card and plant from the Lounge–Narthex and deliver it when convenient. Visit with someone and help spread Christmas cheer.

***Christmas Is Coming!*** Join Plymouth in celebration Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24, in the Sanctuary and live online at 6:30 pm, with special music in the Lounge at 6 pm. Service features beloved carols, stirring anthems, moving readings, and sharing of the light. Park in Plymouth garage. If Plymouth is full, use 1200 5th garage (formerly IBM) next door and bring your ticket for a validation sticker. Invite friends and family!

***Volunteers Wanted*** to staff a children and youth table in the Lounge during the service. We are looking to provide a space geared towards the youngest in our midst with activities during worship. If you feel called to be a part of this ministry, please email Rev. Kevin Bechtold, [KBechtold@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:KBechtold@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

***Plymouth 2025 Calendars Available*** Pre-order your 2025 Plymouth calendar featuring families of choice. Makes a great gift! \$25 each. Use the link to order in the news article at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](http://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

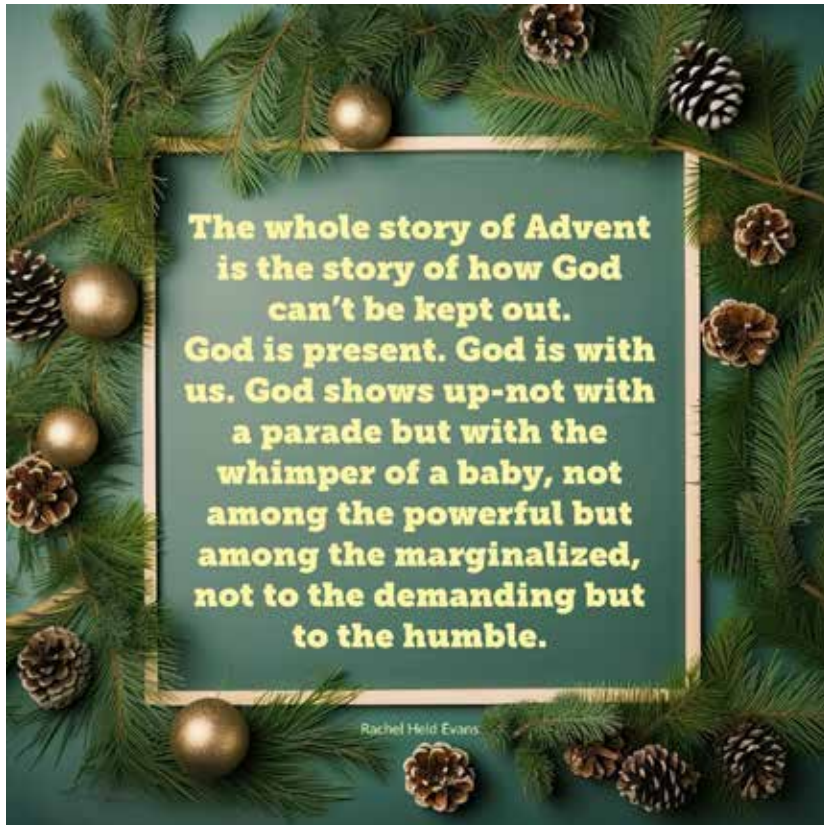
***Please Note:*** On Sunday, December 29, we will have online worship only. The building will be closed. You can access the worship service on Plymouth’s web site or on Plymouth’s YouTube channel at 10:30 am, December 29.

***Help Provide Comfort*** The Community & Care Board requests your help to provide items for comfort bags to be distributed to visitors in need. Please bring gloves, socks, tissues, hand sanitizer and shelf-stable snacks. Items can be left in the bin by the Welcome Table in the Lounge on Sundays.

***2025 Calendars Sought for Inmates*** The inmates at Monroe Correctional Facility appreciate current calendars. If you get free calendars in the mail you won’t use, please drop them in the box at church on Sundays. Questions? Contact Christine Hanson: [HansonChristineAnn@gmail.com](mailto:HansonChristineAnn@gmail.com).

***Born to be Wild*** Conference Men's Retreat at Pilgrim Firs January 31–February 2, 2025, led by Pastor Bill Comfort. All believers, seekers and doubters who identify as male are welcome. Link to register and more info in news article at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](http://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

***Members and Visitors*** can access Plymouth Guest wi-fi network using password: [peaceonearth](http://peaceonearth).



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.