

Illumine

10:30 AM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022

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.

The church building is closed for all activities until further notice.

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, DECEMBER 25, 2022

CHRISTMAS DAY

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

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

O Come, O Come Emmanuel Arranged by David Low
Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Organ

PRAYER OF INVOCATION June Hayakawa-Fung

Spirit of Love,
We welcome you.
We celebrate your coming to abide with us.
And we remember the ways you have been faithfully
companioning us since the beginning.
It was you who wove all life together.
Your glory is painted across all of creation.
Throughout history, over and over again, you have taken on flesh,
in the ordinary and the extraordinary,
in the vulnerability of infants,
the fierce proclamations of prophets,
the enduring hope of those who persevere under evil's threats.
Where there is grief, where there is holy rage,
where there is fear or sacred imagination growing,
You abide across the ages.
Bless our time together, as we remember again the still-
unfolding story of your love:
A love that comes to dwell among us.
A love that surprises and disrupts.
A love that reveals the way of liberation.
May it be so among us.
Amen.

CAROL *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, vss 1-3* MENDELSSOHN
Jennylynn Vidas, Miriam Gnagy, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos

**Hark the herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring;”
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled
Joyful, all you saints arise, join the triumph of the skies
With the angel host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”**

**Christ by highest heav’n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time the Savior comes, offspring of the Virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”**

**Hail the bearer of God’s peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life our Savior brings, ris’n with radiant, healing wings.
Mildly laying glory by, born that we no more may die
Born to raise us all from earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the Christ-child bring!”**

LESSON. Isaiah 26:16–19
(NRSV translation) read by Rev. Kevin Bechtold

Holy One, in distress they sought you,
they pressed out a whispered prayer
when your chastening was on them.

Just as an expectant mother
writhes-in-labor and cries out in her pangs
when her birthing time is near;
thus were we because of you, Holy One.

We too were expectant, we writhed-in-labor,
but it was as though we birthed only wind.
No victories have we won on earth,
neither do the inhabitants of the world fall.

Your dead shall live; their corpses shall rise.
Awake and sing for joy you who dwell in the dust!
For your dew is a radiant dew,
and the earth shall release those long dead.

CONTEMPORARY VOICE. read by Rev. Bechtold

Amazing Peace by Maya Angelou

Thunder rumbles in the mountain passes
And lightning rattles the eaves of our houses.
Flood waters await us in our avenues.

Snow falls upon snow, falls upon snow to avalanche
Over unprotected villages.
The sky slips low and grey and threatening.

We question ourselves.
What have we done to so affront nature?
We worry God.
Are you there? Are you there really?
Does the covenant you made with us still hold?

Into this climate of fear and apprehension, Christmas enters,
Streaming lights of joy, ringing bells of hope
And singing carols of forgiveness high up in the bright air.
The world is encouraged to come away from rancor,
Come the way of friendship.

It is the Glad Season.
Thunder ebbs to silence and lightning sleeps quietly in the corner.
Flood waters recede into memory.
Snow becomes a yielding cushion to aid us
As we make our way to higher ground.
Hope is born again in the faces of children
It rides on the shoulders of our aged as they walk into their sunsets.
Hope spreads around the earth. Brightening all things,
Even hate which crouches breeding in dark corridors.

In our joy, we think we hear a whisper.
At first it is too soft. Then only half heard.
We listen carefully as it gathers strength.
We hear a sweetness.
The word is Peace.
It is loud now. It is louder.
Louder than the explosion of bombs.



Maya Angelou was an American poet, singer, memoirist, and civil rights activist during a career that spanned over fifty years.

We tremble at the sound. We are thrilled by its presence.
 It is what we have hungered for.
 Not just the absence of war. But, true Peace.
 A harmony of spirit, a comfort of courtesies.
 Security for our beloveds and their beloveds.
 We clap hands and welcome the Peace of Christmas.
 We beckon this good season to wait a while with us.
 We, Baptist and Buddhist, Methodist and Muslim, say come.
 Peace.
 Come and fill us and our world with your majesty.
 We, the Jew and the Jainist, the Catholic and the Confucian,
 Implore you, to stay a while with us.
 So we may learn by your shimmering light
 How to look beyond complexion and see community.
 It is Christmas time, a halting of hate time.
 On this platform of peace, we can create a language
 To translate ourselves to ourselves and to each other.
 At this Holy Instant, we celebrate the Birth of Jesus Christ

HYMN *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice vs 1-2* **IN DULCI JUBILO**
 Miriam Gnagy, Jennylynn Vidas, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos

The musical score is written for two voices (Soprano and Alto) and two parts (Tenor and Bass). It is in 8/8 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and repetitive, with a strong emphasis on the lyrics. The lyrics are:

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

now give heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now you know of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!

Ox and ass be - fore him bow, a - sleep with - in the
 God has o - pened heav - en's door, and you are blessed for -

man-ger now. Christ is born to - day, Christ is born to - day!
 ev - er-more. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

LESSON. 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18
 (NRSV translation) read by Ms. Hayakawa-Fung

Now we do not want you to be ignorant, sisters and brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you might not grieve as those do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose, even so they who sleep, will God by Jesus, bring with him. For this we declare to you by the word of the Most High God, that we who are alive, who remain until the coming of Jesus, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For Jesus himself, with a command, in the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive who are left, together with them, will be caught up in the clouds to meet Jesus in the air; and so we will be with Jesus forever. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Dr. Brown

Afghan Family (Supported by Plymouth), Toni and Tiffany Arthur, 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), Megan French(niece of Sue Jones) & David Dixon & Family, Mamadou Diakhate, Barbara Miller (Friend of Barb Laski), Montecino Family, Nancy Parker, Jose Robles and Family, Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Charon Washington (Sister of Michael Gordon)

We grieve with Karen Clark and family on the passing of her Aunt Darline Jones.

Our hearts are with Jeanette and Ken Hagen on the passing of their brother-in-law Mark Wilkins



LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

LESSON. Luke 2:1–14
(NRSV translation) read by Rev. Dr. Brown

Now it happened in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered (for taxation). This was the first registration and occurred while Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be registered; each to their own towns. Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth in to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, for he was from the house and heritage of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was betrothed and who was pregnant. So it was, that, while they were there, the time came for her to birth her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and swaddled him, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Shepherds were in that region there staying in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Most High God came upon them, and the glory of the Living God shone around them, and they were greatly terrified. But the angel said to them, “Fear not. Look! For I proclaim to you good news of great joy for all the people: For there is born to you this day a Savior who is the Messiah, the Sovereign God, in the city of David. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby swaddled and lying in a manger.” And immediately there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly array, praising God and saying,

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

CAROL

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow, Trad. Spiritual,
modeled after Twin Bandit's recording
Plymouth Soul Choir, Directed by Sari Breznau, Edited by Doug Arney

MESSAGE *Illumine Me* Dr. Brown

CAROL *Joy to the World, vss 1-3* ANTIOCH
Jennylynn Vidas, Miriam Gnagy, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos

**Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
Let earth its praises bring;
Let every heart prepare Christ 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 all their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**Christ rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of God's righteousness,
And wonders of God's love, and wonders of God's love,
And wonders, wonders of God's love.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION Dr. Brown

POSTLUDE

Fugue and Toccata on "O Come All Ye Faithful" Marcel Dupré
Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Organ



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discussions Continue Plan to attend meetings to further discuss the recommendation from the Exploratory Development Committee regarding redeveloping our site. You are invited to online only discussions at 7 pm: 12/28; & 1/4. Congregational vote after worship on 1/8. See PlymouthChurchSeattle.org for schedule and details.

Give a Warm Welcome to Central American refugees this Christmas season. If you are a knitter, please add your homemade hats and gloves to the box at the entry to the Sanctuary. If you are not a knitter, feel free to contribute store-bought hats and gloves to the box. Thank you! —*Immigration Ministry Team*

Since I Been Down If you missed the December 10 panel discussion of the film, or would like to revisit it, the video recording (along with past services and other special events) is available on our YouTube channel, Plymouth Church UCC.

Dial 988 for Help The holidays can be a joy-filled time, but they can also be stressful and especially challenging for those impacted by mental illness. If you or someone you know is struggling, dial 988 to connect with trained mental health professionals.

Donate Calendars to Prison Ministry Inmates at Monroe Correction Complex appreciate calendars for the coming year. Look for the box in the Lounge. Horizon House folks, contact Sue Jones. Call Christine Hanson 509-679-7430 to arrange pick up. Thank you!

Put Faith in Action Companions learn to develop compassionate awareness for those struggling with mental illness, insecure housing or chemical dependency. Live out your faith and put social justice in action. Contact June Hayakawa-Fung to be a part of this vital ministry of Plymouth: JHayakawaFung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.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.