

SUNDAY AT PLYMOUTH

10:30 am Sunday, December 15, 2024

Worship in the Sanctuary or Online

Third Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:39-45

“Call and Response”

Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown

9 am Choir Rehearsal, Hildebrand Hall

11:30 am Coffee Hour, Lounge

CHRISTMAS EVE AT PLYMOUTH

Join Plymouth in celebration Christmas Eve,

Tuesday, December 24, in the Sanctuary and live online at 6:30 pm. Service features beloved congregational carols, stirring anthems, moving Scripture and contemporary readings, and sharing of the light.

Invite friends and family!

Members and Visitors in the church building can access Plymouth Guest wi-fi network using password: peaceonearth.

Find links to video stream and worship bulletin and participate online at **PlymouthChurchSeattle.org**.



PO Box 21368
Seattle, Washington 98111

Return Service Requested

HELP PROVIDE COMFORT



Bring contributions on Sundays.

The Community and 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, hand warmers, granola bars and other shelf-stable foods that don't require a can opener. Items can be left in the bin by the Welcome Table in the Lounge on Sundays. Keep reading the

Herald and website for dates to help assemble the bags. Thank you for helping us reach out in care and compassion to the most vulnerable in our community. 🌍

BRING A GIFT FOR INMATES

The inmates at Monroe Correctional Facility appreciate calendars for the upcoming year. Drop them in the box at church on Sundays. If you live at Horizon House, please put them in Sue Jones' cubby hole in the mailroom (#1S). If you are unable to make it to church, call or email Christine Hanson to arrange pick up. Thank you for bringing a little joy to our incarcerated friends. this holiday season. 🌍

OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH...

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, Adele Reynolds, Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Gevan Woodke (Friend of Karen Clark), Shaniece (Friend of Karen Clark)



Our hearts are with Toni and Tiffany Arthur on the passing of their relative Mary Ortega.

bold=newly added. Names will remain on list for 6 weeks unless requested.

If you have personal concerns, you may contact a minister or member of the Pastoral Care Team by calling the pastoral care line, **206-639-7739**, checked daily.

PLYMOUTH CHURCH HERALD

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PACK FOOD BOXES DECEMBER 18



Prepare boxes at Plymouth December 18.

We need volunteers to pack Christmas food boxes of fresh produce and poultry for those living in Seattle's food deserts. Noon-2 pm Wednesday, December 18 in Hildebrand Hall. Please contact June Hayakawa-Fung (JHayakawafung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org) if you can help. We

welcome you to contribute financially by mailing a check or contributing on our giving page at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. Choose "Christmas Food Boxes" from the fund menu. 🌍

ORDER PLYMOUTH CALENDARS NOW

A few weeks ago, you posed for pictures for our 2025 calendar featuring families of choice. In just a few days, they will be available! Purchasing the calendars in advance would be helpful so that we have a sense of how many to create. Each calendar is \$25, and will make great Christmas gifts. Pre-order your calendar today using the link on the home page of our website: PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. —Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown 🌍



Each calendar is \$25, and will make great gifts.

PLEASE NOTE

The last print issue of the *Herald* this year will be published December 18. That issue will include worship information for Dec. 22, Dec. 24, and Dec. 29, along with all other pertinent news through the end of the year.

On Sunday, December 29, we will have online worship only. The building will be closed to give staff and clergy an opportunity to spend time with loved ones. You can access the worship service on Plymouth's web site or on Plymouth's YouTube channel at 10:30 am that Sunday. 🌍

BLUE CHRISTMAS

Come to Plymouth at 4 pm on the longest night, Saturday, December 21, for a concert to benefit those struggling through the holidays. Featuring Nelda Swiggett, Clif Swiggett and Michael Glynn, with guest vocalist Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown.

You'll be tapping your toes when you hear this lively trio with its big, warm sound — featuring Nelda Swiggett (piano/vocals), Clif Swiggett (trombone/percussion), and Michael Glynn (acoustic bass). Their *Blue Christmas* Concert will feature holiday favorites and other soulful selections that reflect the season's spirit of giving, gratefulness, and reflection. Invite friends for a special evening of music at Plymouth. 🌍



A CHRISTMAS CAROL AT PLYMOUTH

Choral Arts NW presents a new setting of Charles Dickens's seasonal story of goodwill and change of heart, with music by two-time GRAMMY® Nominee and American Prize-winner Benedict Sheehan at Plymouth 3 pm Sunday, December 15, with gala fundraiser following. Purchase tickets at ChoralArtsNW.org. Narrator and choir interweave together the Christmas Carol tale of generosity with fresh arrangements of cherished carols that bring Dickens's characters alive, from the childlike yet ancient Ghost of Christmas Past (In dulci jubilo) to the jovial Ghost of Christmas Present (The Boar's Head Carol). Scrooge's transformation is seen through new eyes, with Tiny Tim and the Cratchits accompanied by The Coventry Carol. Newly composed music links the spoken text and carols, making a festive holiday treat for the whole family.

All are invited to attend our festive Gala after the performance to enjoy food, drinks and caroling. No cost to attend the gala, but registration required. Register at ChoralArtsNW.org. 🌍



UCC PASTORAL LETTER



Leaders of the United Church of Christ have written an open pastoral letter offering reflection and an invitation on what it means to faithfully be Christ’s church in the present moment. The following are a few excerpts. The full letter can be read at UCC.org, or in the news article at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org, where a link to a pdf download is also available.

During this blessed Advent season, we enter a time of hopeful anticipation. We wait patiently for what God will newly reveal to us, and trust that God is indeed birthing bold possibilities amid our uncertainty and fears, as well as our hopes and joys. It is appropriate in this season for us to reflect on how God might be calling us in fresh ways to be the “united and uniting” church we profess as our identity in the United Church of Christ. We offer this letter to prayerfully consider how we can most faithfully be Christ’s church in this moment, with the joyful confidence God is indeed doing a new thing among us... In the aftermath of the United States presidential election and the days of campaigning leading up to the election of the 47th president of the United States, the political divide in the country was evident...The political divide poses a threat to the unity of the church. While there is value held in identifying that “unity does not mean uniformity,” the political narratives of the day are quite different from those seen in the recent past, particularly given the rise of white Christian nationalism, a religious ideology and political movement that uses Christianity as a foundation for a hate-filled xenophobic, misogynistic, homophobic, and racist rhetoric.

White Christian nationalism itself is not new and is based on white supremacy. “The Christian nationalist movement is largely white, reflecting the long entanglement of nationalism and racism that is our collective inheritance since the earliest days of America’s colonial settlement. In white nationalism this history is sanitized, removing the sins of genocide, slavery, Jim Crow laws, and all the many ways in which racism has saturated and sustained our society, thereby removing any felt need for repentance or repair.”

The ministry of Jesus was one that prioritized those on the margins of society. His ministry was bold and prophetic, speaking to and against the religious norms of his day, which perpetuated injustices and oppressed “the least of these.”

Please read the full letter at UCC.org.

988: HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is a time of year where many are vulnerable to additional stress, anxieties, feeling overwhelmed, loneliness and feelings of sadness. We may turn to coping mechanisms that are harmful to us and others. Some are triggered this time of year as they navigate personal histories of trauma and unresolved grief.



You are not alone: reach out for help.

This time of year can be especially challenging for those impacted by mental illness. Sometimes, because of the stigma and shame associated with mental health challenges, people are hesitant to share when they are struggling or having a hard time. It is important to be present with loved ones, to listen attentively and let them know you care.

It is a stressful time for pastors, too, who are only human and also experience depression, anxiety and feelings of despair. Congregations can be mindful by offering grace and respect for boundaries around days off and vacation time for pastors.

If you or someone you know is struggling, call 988 to connect with trained mental health professionals. Get help for yourself, or be the vital difference for a loved one.

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL OFFERING

All gifts received Sunday, December 22, will be divided evenly between **The UCC Christmas Fund** and **Plymouth UCC Scholarship Fund**.

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

Your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need.

Plymouth UCC Scholarship Fund remains supported by half of the proceeds from this year’s Christmas Special Offering. These funds are dedicated to assisting members and friends facing financial challenges, enabling them to participate in opportunities provided by Plymouth UCC.

Thank you for your generous and faithful support



SHARE THE SPIRIT

Continue our tradition of delivering cheerful Christmas flowers to Plymouth folks who are isolated or have suffered a loss. Please come to church on December 15 and 22, pick up a card(s) and plant(s) to deliver at any time that is convenient.

You can support this ministry by making a donation in the name of loved ones.

Names of donors and those honored will be listed in the *Herald*. Please email names of those to be honored to Robert Turner (RTurner@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org), or include a note with your check to the church. You can also donate online on our giving page. Choose “Flower Fund” from the fund menu. Thank you for keeping our community connected with care.



Thank you for continuing this tradition of care.

BORN TO BE WILD



Men's Retreat at Pilgrim Firs Jan. 31-Feb. 2

Registration is now open for the 2025 Conference Men’s Retreat. We’ll meet at Pilgrim Firs the weekend of January 31 – February 2, 2025. (optional one-day silent retreat begins Thursday evening, January 30). Reverend Bill Comfort will lead this year’s “wild” retreat. Link to register in news article at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org.

Bill will guide us in an interactive exploration of how wildness influences who we are, or can be, as men. All believers, seekers and doubters who identify as male are welcome.

STAY AWARE!

During the holidays, with shopping, charitable giving and other distractions, it’s good to remember best practices for internet security. As we have shared before, *no one* from the Plymouth Church UCC staff will ever send requests for financial or other personal assistance.

Fraudsters use clever schemes to cheat millions of people yearly, using new technology and old tricks to get people to send money or give personal information. If you receive a suspicious text, phone call or email, don’t respond. Report it to the Federal Trade Commission at ReportFraud.ftc.gov. Check current scams by visiting FTC.gov/ExploreData.



HUMAN RIGHTS: CLOSE TO HOME

December is Universal Human Rights Month, and December 10 is Universal Human Rights Day. On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations announced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 30 rights and freedoms that belong to all of us.



Eleanor Roosevelt was heavily involved in championing civil rights and social activism. On the tenth anniversary of the UDHR, Eleanor gave a speech at the United Nations called “Where Do Human Rights Begin?” Part of her speech has become famous for capturing the reason why human rights are for every one of us, in all parts of our daily lives:

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood they live in; the school or college they attend; the factory, farm, or office where they work. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

A WORD ABOUT YEAR-END GIVING

As we near the end of 2024, Plymouth UCC invites you to consider a year-end donation to help sustain vital ministries. Your generosity enables our vital work in the community and beyond to continue. Here are ways you can donate:



We give thanks for your faithful support.

- **By mail:** All contributions must be postmarked by December 31, 2024. Remember to use our new mailing address — PO Box 21368 Seattle, WA 98111.
- **Website:** Visit our website www.plymouthchurchseattle.org and click the “Give” tab before December 31, 2024.
- **Cash App:** Our Cash App ID is \$PlymouthUCCSeattle. Send donations by December 31, 2024

For help with giving options, or to discuss stock donations, please email Diane Jacobsen (DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org). difference — Thank you for sustaining our shared mission.