

10:30 AM ✦ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020

# ENTER THE MYSTERY

# 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](http://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](mailto:KBrown@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2020  
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

*Worship with Plymouth Church UCC begins with meditation.  
The quiet is meant to encourage and deepen your own inner work.  
Thank you for entering this space, this hour, by honoring the spirit of worship.*

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This Sunday we share together Holy Communion in our online interactive worship. Before the time of the service you will want to prepare some bread, a slice or a small loaf of any kind of bread and juice of some sort. Let it be something you alone or you with others in your house may break and share. Remember this is a meal of grace, so whatever "bread" or "juice" you choose will more than suffice.

Set these elements in the sacred place where you experience worship electronically with our faith community. You are invited to light a candle or place a flower or plant or something meaningful into the circle of faith beside the bread and the cup. Thank you for your preparation.

**PRELUDE**

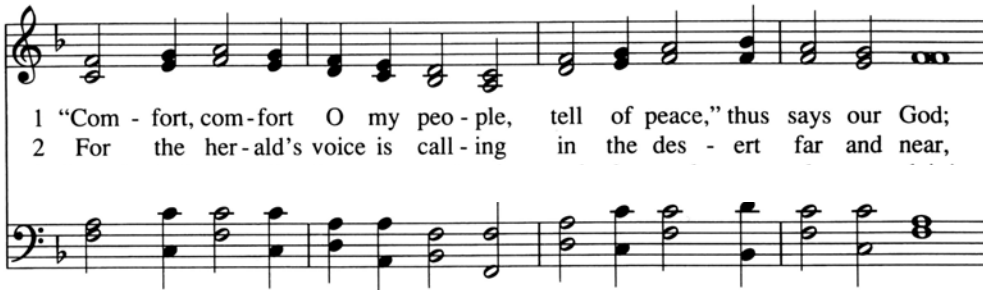
*Lo, How a Rose E're Blooming* . . . . . Setting by Michael Burkhardt  
Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Organ

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

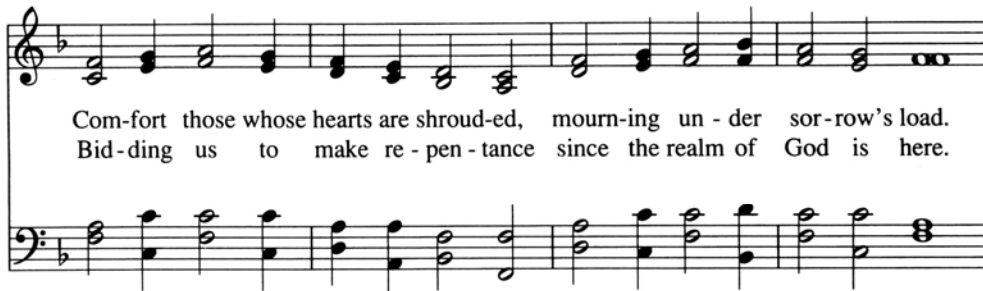
**INVOCATION** . . . . .Deacon David Guthrie

We come to prepare the way;  
The way for Christ –  
the hope of Christ, the peace of Christ –  
to enter our world,  
to enter our hearts.  
We cry out together in the wilderness:  
The kingdom of heaven has come near.  
We come to be part of the light–  
the light that shines in the darkness. Amen

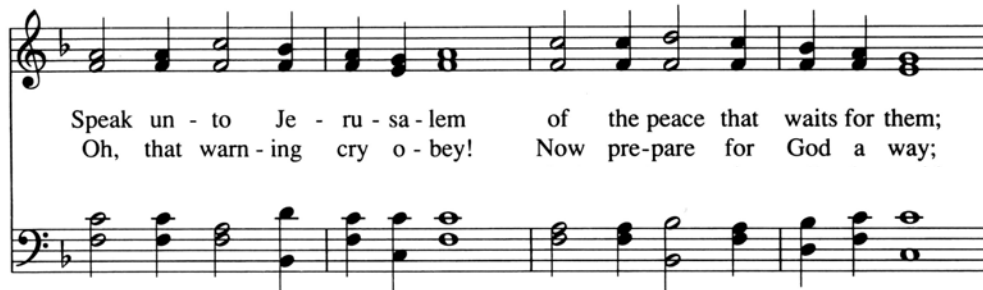
HYMN . . . . . *Comfort, Comfort O My People, vss 1-2* . . . FREU DICH SEHR  
Jennylynn Vidas, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos



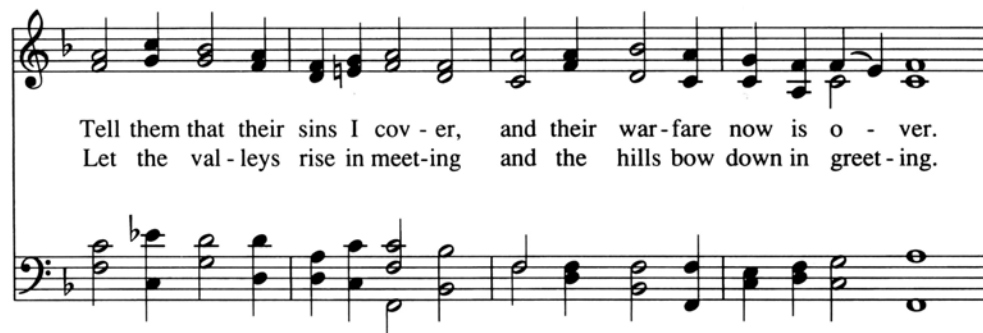
1 "Com - fort, com - fort O my peo - ple, tell of peace," thus says our God;  
2 For the her - ald's voice is call - ing in the des - ert far and near,



Com - fort those whose hearts are shroud - ed, mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.  
Bid - ding us to make re - pen - tance since the realm of God is here.



Speak un - to Je - ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;  
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;



Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver.  
Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.

**LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE** . . . . . Sari Breznau

This is our beginning, a beginning born in the dark. In the womb of time, our vision is dim, but it is the chance for us to learn again how to feel our way to God. The night is long and feels unbearable, making us sure we are alone. The darkness grows, and looms, and breeds fear and insecurity. It stumbles over our best attempts to move. The world leans toward despair, waiting and wanting with deep sighs in their hearts. But in the dark, hope is born.

*(Lighting of the Hope candle)*

In the dark, peace is available. In the midst of much turmoil and violence, peace waits for us to recognize its presence. Day by day, it grows and develops, if we allow, and surprises as it washes over our worst fears. Together, we can live in the kind of peace that settles our spirits, and the sort that inspires us to right action. While we wait, God is waiting and walking with us, as the One of Peace draws near.

*(Lighting of the Peace candle)*

**People: We dare to walk in the light of peace!**

**ADVENT MUSIC** . . . . . *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710

Soul Choir, directed by Sari Breznau; Soloist, Hayden McManus



O Come, O wisdom from on high,  
and order all things far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
and help us in that way to go.

**CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*Everyone is welcome at our table to share the bread and the cup, whether you are a believer, a seeker, a skeptic, doubter or somewhere in between.*

**INVITATION.** . . . . . Rev. Donene Blair

**COMMUNION PRAYER.** . . . . .Jennifer Castle  
 Riley Balcita, Matt Banks, Ken Carter, Pam Dorrance, Rick Eberharter, Maria Eclipse  
 (Grandmother of Rogie Eclipse), Carmen Ramsey Ellington, (friend of Karen Clark), Phil  
 Fredrickson, Jackie Fouts (Mother-in-law of Al Wallace), Keili Geller (Granddaughter of Nancy  
 Geller), Peter Gibbons (Brother of Eileen Gibbons), Sharon, Floyd, and Carrie Gossett, Robert  
 Hardy (Friend of Karen Clark), Joyce Irving (mother of Rev. Louis Mitchell), Virginia Johnson,  
 Michael Kaid, Renee Lang (friend of Glenda Carper), Libonati Family, Sharon Masse (Wife of  
 Gary Magnuson), John Mooney (Brother of Carol Mooney), Georgia Nelson, Dick, Jean and Alex  
 Paul (Parents and Nephew of Beth Paul Russell), Sandra Price (Mother of Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown),  
 Tommy Rivers Puzey (Friend of Karen Clark), Jose Robles, Jim Stultz (Brother of Doug Stultz),  
 Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Mildred Whitehurst (Grandmother of Toni Arthur), Samantha Williams  
 Our hearts are with friends and family of Jacki Meurk on her recent passing.

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

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**Holy One, 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.**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION.** . . . . .Rev. Kevin Bechtold

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING.** . . . . .Rev. Blair

**Loving God, we call to mind the heavenly banquet revealed to us through Jesus, into whose life of communion we have been invited. So as we dine, we give thanks for your invitations and for your gifts each day. Bless the hands that cooked and prepared this meal, remembering also the hands doing the work we cannot; the hands of fishers and farmers; of those who till and harvest the land, of laborers who pack, stack, and deliver; as well as the empty hands of the hungry. While we eat and drink, we count our blessings, as we receive them all in your name. Amen.**

**SHARING PEACE** . . . . .The peace of Christ be with you.

**MOMENT OF LOVE IN ACTION** . . . . .Rev. Louis Mitchell

CONTEMPORARY VOICE . . . *Joy Unspeakable*. . . read by Deacon Guthrie

Joy Unspeakable  
is not silent,  
it moans, hums, and bends  
to the rhythm of a dancing universe.  
It is a fractal of transcendent hope,  
a hologram of God's heart,  
a black hole of unknowing.

For our free African ancestors,  
joy unspeakable is drum talk  
that invites the spirits  
to dance with us,  
and tell tall tales by the fire.

For the desert Mothers and Fathers,  
joy unspeakable is respite  
from the maddening crowds,  
And freedom from  
"church" as usual.

For enslaved Africans during the  
Middle Passage,  
joy unspeakable is the surprise  
of living one more day,  
and the freeing embrace of death  
chosen and imposed.

For Africans in bondage  
in the Americas,  
joy unspeakable is that moment of  
mystical encounter  
when God tiptoes into the hush arbor,  
testifies about Divine suffering,  
and whispers in our ears,  
"Don't forget,  
I taught you how to fly  
on a wing and a prayer,  
when you're ready  
let's go!"

Joy Unspeakable is humming  
"how I got over"  
after swimming safely

to the other shore of a swollen Ohio river  
when you know that you can't swim.  
It is the blessed assurance  
that Canada is far,  
but not that far.

For Africana members of the  
"invisible institution," the  
emerging black church,  
joy unspeakable is  
practicing freedom  
while chains still chafe,  
singing deliverance  
while Jim Crow stalks,  
trusting God's healing  
and home remedies,  
prayers, kerosene,  
and cow patty tea.

For the tap dancing, boogie woogie,  
rap/rock/blues griots  
who also hear God,  
joy unspeakable is  
that space/time/joy continuum thing  
that dares us to play and pray  
in the interstices of life,  
it is the belief that the phrase  
"the art of living"  
means exactly what it says.

Joy Unspeakable  
is  
both FIRE AND CLOUD,  
the unlikely merger of  
trance and high tech lives  
ecstatic songs and a jazz repertoire  
Joy unspeakable is  
a symphony of incongruities  
of faces aglow and hearts  
on fire  
and the wonder of surviving together.

**READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE** . . . . . Isaiah 40:1-11  
(NRSV translation) read by Ms. Castle

*This passage begins with an unexpected message: “Comfort! Comfort!” rings not as command but rather as joyful astonishment. The people have sinned, but God has stayed true. They are fragile, but God is powerful.*

Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord’s hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:  
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

A voice says, “Cry out!”  
And I said, “What shall I cry?”  
All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”



See, the Lord God comes with might,  
and the Divine's arm rules for God;  
the Lord's reward is with God,  
and God's recompense before the Holy One.  
The Divine will feed their flock like a shepherd;  
The Parent will gather the lambs in God's arms,  
and carry them in God's bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

**ANTHEM**

Duet: "*Mary, Did You Know?*"

Words and Music by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene; Setting by Jack Schrader  
Jennifer Palmason Kaiton and Jon Palmason

**MESSAGE**

*Certitude of Compassion*. . . . . Rev. Courtney Stange-Tregear

**HYMN** . . . . . *Comfort, Comfort O My People, vs 3* . . . . FREU DICH SEHR  
Jennylynn Vidas, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos

Straight shall be what long was crooked  
And the rougher places plain  
Let your hearts be true and humble  
For Messiah's holy reign  
For God's glory evermore  
Shall be known o'er all the world  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That God's word is never broken

**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION** . . . . . Rev. Stange-Tregear

**POSTLUDE**

*Lift Up Your Heads*. . . . . Setting by J. Wayne Kerr  
Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Organ

Special thanks to guest preacher Reverend Courtney Stange-Tregear. Rev Stange-Tregear moved to Seattle in 2016 to become Minister for Church Vitality in the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ. Her ministry has been formed by a classical education and community organizing. She brings a vision of vitality that bridges the secular and sacred, church and community.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

***Continue Poinsettia Tradition*** The Community and Care Board supports a long tradition of delivering poinsettias to Plymouth folks who are isolated or have suffered a loss. This year the Board felt it was important to maintain this ministry. It is imperative to do this safely. We are arranging to make deliveries to Horizon House and other senior living facilities, and to some individuals. We need your help! If you can safely deliver a poinsettia, please email June Hayakawa-Fung at [JHayakawafung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:JHayakawafung@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org). We will have a drive through pick up of poinsettias December 13 in the Plymouth garage, 12 pm–2 pm. You can also donate to this ministry. Names of donors and those who are remembered will be listed in the Herald. Please email Robert Turner at [RTurner@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:RTurner@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org) or send a note with your check. You can also donate online. Thank you for helping continue this tradition in a difficult time.

***Help Migrant Families*** this holiday season. Plymouth's Immigration Ministry Team has ways for you to help families seeking asylum. Please visit [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](http://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org) for details on how to contribute to sanctuary families. Gift cards are also needed to help provide holiday cheer to unaccompanied immigrant children and youth served by Kids in Need of Defense (KIND). Learn how to donate cards at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](http://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

***Join Weekly Bible Study*** with friends Wednesdays at 9 am on Zoom. Led by Jennifer Castle, this group studies the biblical texts from the Revised Common Lectionary for the upcoming Sunday's worship service. Attendance ranges from 12–20 people, and the Zoom link is accessible from the Plymouth website. Please contact Jennifer at [JCastle@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](mailto:JCastle@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org) for the Zoom password, or if you would like to be added to the group's weekly email list.

***Your Plymouth Care Team*** is committed to maintaining availability of staff to handle any care concerns that might come our way. There is a new care line phone number to get in touch with the Care Team should anything arise. The phone number is 206.639.7739. Messages are checked at least once a We are also available by e-mail.

***Congregational Conversations Rescheduled*** In order to honor our precious time together during Advent, Congregational Council has decided to push the budget conversation and vote from December 2020 to January 2021, potentially at the same time as Plymouth UCC's Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 31. Please keep reading the Herald and checking the website for updates, and plan to attend these virtual conversations and meetings. Your participation is vital as we move forward. We need to hear from you!

***Keep Standing for Racial Justice*** We as a majority white Christian church created and have benefited from systemic institutional racism, and we must be part of changing it. This is one simple action we can take to show up. Come when you can, stay for any length of time you want. Social distancing and mask-wearing protocols will be observed. Ruth Williamson has been

coordinating and scheduling this effort. Contact her (206.313.5931) for parking and other logistics. Remember to bring your sign and mask.

## GIVING OPTIONS TO SUPPORT PLYMOUTH UCC

Thank you for your faithful support of the mission and ministries of Plymouth United Church of Christ. Listed below are a variety of ways for you to provide offerings and gifts.

**MAIL** Mail your offerings to the church: Plymouth Church, United Church of Christ/  
1217 6th Ave/ Seattle WA 98101

**ONLINE GIVING THROUGH SIMPLE CHURCH** Click on GIVE box at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. Choose to deduct directly from your bank account or credit/debit card to make a one-time offering, or schedule recurring offerings.

**TEXT TO GIVE** Simply text to 206.208.1442 and enter a dollar amount. You will receive prompts to complete the transaction. Once set up, you will be able to text offerings with one step.

**CASH APP** Download the Cash App mobile app from the Apple App Store or Google Play and follow the instructions to set up giving directly from your bank account. Our Cash App ID is \$PlymouthUCCSeattle. Questions? DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org

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.