



# Plymouth Congregational Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

Service of the Word  
November 28, 2021  
First Sunday of Advent  
10:00 am

RINGING OF THE BELL

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

Alice Dunne

PRELUDE

“Chorale Prelude on ‘*Sleepers Wake!*’”

J. S. Bach

\*OPENING HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

No. 116

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.**

*Refrain (sung after each verse):*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**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.**

**O come, O come, O Adonai, who came to all on Sinai high,  
And from its peak a single law proclaimed in majesty and awe.**

**O come, O shoot of Jesse, free your own from Satan’s tyranny,  
From depths of hell your people save, and give them victory o’er the grave.**

**O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide your heavenly home;  
Make safe the path to endless day, to hell’s destruction close the way.**

**O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by your advent here;  
Love stir within the womb of night, and death’s own shadows put to flight.**

**O come, Desire of Nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
Make envy, strife, and quarrels cease; fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Doreen Todorov

One: Emmanuel! God with us!

**All: Incarnate one! Embodied one!**

One: Hear our plea!

**All: Come! Be here now.**

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (*unison*)

**God of us all, keep us strong for this season of waiting, for this season of waiting that calls  
on us to be courageous in the face of adversity, to be hopeful in the face of deep concern,  
and to be faithful even as the world around us challenges us to distraction. Amen.**

WORDS OF WELCOME

Eric Jackson

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Peace be with you.

All: **And, also with you.**

*Please share a physically distanced sign of peace with those around you.*

\*SONG OF PRAISE

**There are angels hov'ring round. There are angels hov'ring round.  
There are angels hov'ring round.**

**THE GIFT OF HOPE**

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Gert Danzy

**THE GIFT OF THE WORD**

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Sarah Cowles

*(Children return to their seats following the story)*

SCRIPTURE

Luke 21:25-36

One: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

The Word of God for the People of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

SOLO

*Michael Chellis, Bass*

G.F. Handel

But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?  
For he is like a refiner's fire.

SERMON

\*HYMN

"Keep Awake, Be Always Ready"

No. 112

**Keep awake, be always ready, God's time approaches sure and steady,  
God's strength will keep your heart from blame.**

**Clouds, the Spirit's light concealing, disperse, God's purest light revealing;  
Creation will its Sovereign name.**

**Dry branches burst forth green, God's advent signs are seen: Hallelujah! Christ's  
judgment won, God's will be done; God's new dominion thus begun.**

Rise and shine for One is coming whose love will quench all nature's thirsting  
 To be made whole forever more.  
 On that day to end all weeping, death's swords transformed to tools of reaping,  
 The God of might will mercy pour.  
 Incarnate, God appears embracing all our tears: Hallelujah!  
 God's majesty eternally revealed to set the cosmos free.

## THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER

CALL TO PRAYER

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*In an effort to pray in unison while respecting the different versions that many of us have prayed since childhood, we will cycle through different versions over the course of a year. On the last Sunday of the month we pray the following, which is adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book and uses contemporary, inclusive language. It is a paraphrase – not a translation – of the original Greek in the New Testament.*

**Eternal Spirit,  
 Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver  
 Source of all that is and all that shall be,  
 Father and Mother of us all,  
 Loving God, in whom is heaven:  
 The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!  
 The way of your justice be followed by people of the world!  
 Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
 Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hopes and come on earth.  
 With bread we need for today, feed us.  
 In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
 In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
 From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
 From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
 For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.  
 May it be so. Amen.**  
 earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we  
 forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE

No. 769

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; in -  
 cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

## OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

TWO YEARS LATER

Mack Richardson

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Now Let Us Rejoice”

Anon. 1889, arr. J. Downing

\*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below!  
Praise God for all that love has done!  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*CLOSING HYMN

“Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning”

No. 369

**Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, keep your lamps trimmed and burning,  
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for this work’s almost done.**

*Refrain (sung after each verse):*

**Sisters, don’t grow weary, brothers, don’t grow weary,  
Children, don’t grow weary, for this work’s almost done.**

**It’s our faith makes us happy, it’s our faith makes us happy,  
It’s our faith makes us happy, for this work’s almost done.**

**We are climbing Jacob’s ladder, we are climbing Jacob’s ladder,  
We are climbing Jacob’s ladder, for this work’s almost done.**

**Every round goes higher, higher, every round goes higher, higher,  
Every round goes higher, higher, for this work’s almost done.**

\*BENEDICTION

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE

“Von Himmel Hoch”

Johann Pachelbel



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## ✧ Plymouth Runs On YOU ✧

**USHER:** Frank Leonard **ACOLYTE:** Alice Dunne

**LITURGIST:** Doreen Todorov **DEACON ON DUTY:** David Palladino-Cowdery

**FLOWERS** given by the People of Plymouth in celebration of two years of Eric's pastorate. We thank God for his optimistic, creative, calm, and informed leadership.

**COUNTERS:** Patty Brannan and Susan Hawks

**WORSHIP ZOOM COORDINATOR:** Tom Zorn

Rev. Eric Jackson, Pastor, [ejackson@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:ejackson@plymouthsyr.org)  
Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music  
Kim Looney, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries  
Kathy Ferro, Church Administrator  
Mark Johnson, Sexton  
[plymouthsyr.org](http://plymouthsyr.org) ✧ [office@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org)

## ✧ Some Things You Ought to Know ✧

**We continue to worship both in person and streamed live on Facebook:** We ask that you wear a mask when inside Plymouth and to practice physical distancing with those who do not live in your household since there are those 11 years of age and younger as well as other individuals who are not able to be vaccinated. The worship service can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/plymouthUCCsyracuse/>.

**Stewardship Effort Reaches \$135,750:** We have received 44 stewardship pledges for \$135,750 toward Plymouth Church's 2022 budget. Your pledge commitments will make the difference in how much Plymouth can accomplish next year. Prayerfully consider the gifts of time, talent, and money you can give to Plymouth. Pledge cards may be placed in the offering plate Sunday, mailed to the church office or submitted via email to George Bain at [georgesbain@gmail.com](mailto:georgesbain@gmail.com).

**Share your family's crèche (aka Nativity scene) and its story:** All are invited and encouraged to share your family's crèche and its story on December 12 in Memorial Hall. You can set up your crèche (or as many as you wish to bring – serious or silly!) Saturday, December 11 between 2:30pm and 3:30pm or Sunday morning between 9am and 9:30am. Please provide signage that includes your family name and the story/meaning behind your crèche. Following worship the entire Plymouth community is invited to stroll through the display and share the joy of the season.

**Advent Devotionals are on their way:** The publisher of the annual UCC Advent daily devotional booklet has run into supply chain and shipping issues! Copies will be available at the back of the sanctuary and through the Church Office for \$4 each as soon as they arrive. In the meantime, photocopies of the first week's devotionals are on the table by the door of the sanctuary. Thanks for your patience.

**Help beautify our sanctuary for Christmas - order your Christmas poinsettia today!** Complete the order form in the bulletin and put it in the offering plate or [order online HERE](#). You can pick up your flowers at either of the Christmas Eve services or stop by the church Mon. - Thurs. December 27-30 between 8:30am and 4:30pm. Deadline to order is Sunday, December 12.

**The Food Pantry needs gifts of WARM GARMENTS** - hats, gloves/mittens, scarves and socks - for our clients now that the bitter cold has set in. Please bring in new or gently-used garments to the collection basket in the back of the church or you can call or text Christine Herb for pick up from your home: 315-877-4512. We so appreciate your care and compassion. Thank you. We will be collecting throughout the month of December.

**Plymouth likes to share its story!** Photos are often taken during worship and at Plymouth events and are shared on the website, in social media and by partnering organizations. If you **DO NOT** wish your photo to be used, please contact the church office.

**Stained Glass Window restoration:** Thanks to the generosity of members of the Plymouth community, the beautiful stained glass windows on the western wall in the right balcony will be removed, restored and receive protective glazing over the next couple months. The structure you see in the balcony is the scaffolding allowing access to the windows and surrounding woodwork.

**Ushers and Greeters are needed every Sunday AND AT THE 5:30pm and 11:00pm CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES so that we can continue our mission of “Welcoming all.”**

Volunteer today by:

- 1) Signing up online (Visit our website: [www.plymouthsyr.org](http://www.plymouthsyr.org); click on GET INVOLVED at the top of the screen, scroll down to GREETERS, USHERS and HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS, click on SIGN UP and follow the prompts OR
- 2) Contacting the church office

### THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Mon. November 29 Food Pantry, 2pm – 4pm
- Tues. November 30 Bell Choir Rehearsal, 10am, Kirtland Hall
- Wed. December 1 Pastoral Relations Team, 5:30pm, Memorial Hall  
Safe Church Working Group, 7pm, via Zoom
- Thurs. December 2 Bell Choir Rehearsal, 6pm, Kirtland Hall  
Choir Rehearsal, 7pm, Memorial Hall
- Fri. December 3 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED, staff vacation
- Sun. December 5 Worship and Communion, 10am, in-person in the sanctuary and livestreamed on Facebook

### 🎵 **Music Notes for November 28, 2021** 🎵

Advent! Our thoughts focus on Jesus’ coming to earth, both the first time, and his yet-to-happen second coming.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) wrote over three hundred cantatas – multi-movement works for choir and orchestra intended as about one third of the weekly 2-3 hour worship service. Cantata 140 was written for the first Sunday in Advent, and uses the tune *Wachet Auf* associated with the text about being prepared for the coming Lord. (Our middle hymn, #112.) Bach was so fond of the middle movement that he arranged it as a solo organ chorale prelude, and that is how we begin our Advent worship today.

Georg Frideric Handel (1685-1757) was a committed composer of Italian opera who often composed on a deadline. His oratorio, *Messiah*, was “written” - or perhaps better, “assembled” because much of the music came from earlier pieces he and others had written – in a period of 24 days. (His next opera, *Samson*, was also written in less than a month.) Our solo today comes from the first section of the oratorio, using a passage from Isaiah as text.

Many of the American sects which originated in the nineteenth century were very focused on millennial expectations of Jesus’ return. Our anthem comes from these religious traditions:

*Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation; no longer as strangers on earth need we roam.  
Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation, and shortly the hour of redemption will come  
When all that was promised the church will be given, and none will molest them from morn  
until ev’n,*

*And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden, and Jesus will say to all Israel, “Come home.”*

*We’ll love one another and never dissemble, but cease to do evil and ever be one.*

*And when the ungodly are fearing and tremble, we’ll watch for the day when the Saviour will come.*

*In faith we'll rely on the arm of Jehovah to guide through these last days of trouble and gloom,  
And after the scourges and harvest are over, we'll rise with the just when the Saviour doth come.  
Then all that was promised the church will be given and they will be crowned with the angels of  
heaven,*

*And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden, and Christ and his people will ever be one.*

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706) wrote many chorale preludes based on tunes that would have been familiar to congregations in Germany. It is believed that Martin Luther himself wrote the tune and words for Vom Himmel Hoch (*From heaven above, I come to earth...*) In his usual charming way, Pachelbel has the tune played by the pedal, while the two voices in the manuals dance around it.

## **☞ Welcome to Plymouth ☞**

**232 E. Onondaga Street | Syracuse, NY 13202 | 315-474-4836**

***We are an Open and Affirming, Just Peace, Immigrant Welcoming,  
Progressive Christian, and Sanctuary Congregation.***

Plymouth was founded in 1853 by a group of Syracusans who wanted to create a Christian abolitionist bulwark fighting slavery. Since then, we continue to live our faith by standing against racism, white supremacy culture, poverty, and war; standing up for the rights of immigrants, indigenous people, workers, women, and LGBTQ folk; and seeking to be agents of mercy in a hurting world. We believe in beauty, laughter, the struggle for peace with justice, taking risks for building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Beloved Community in God, and the Way of Jesus Christ which is love and compassion for ourselves and our neighbors.

***Our faith is over 2,000 years old; our thinking is not!***

- **Resources for Children:** Worship Activity Kits are available for children ages 3 - 5th grade on the shelves in the back of the sanctuary. We ask that your children put their names on the blank label on the box the first time they use a kit, take that kit each week, and return it at the end of worship.
- **Visiting for the First Time?** We are so glad to meet another member of our extended global family. To add your name to our mailing list so we can know how to best serve you, please fill out the card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate or email [office@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org).
- **Giving:** Part of worshipping God is through giving. We can only live into our mission to impact the world TOGETHER with the generosity of all! You can share your gifts during the morning offering, or by mailing a check to Plymouth Church at the address above or via PayPal to [giving@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:giving@plymouthsyr.org).
- **Prayer Requests:** We are excited to be worshipping together both with members of Plymouth Church and the wider world. To add a name to our Prayer List, fill out the card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate or contact [office@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org).