



November 27, 2011
First Sunday in Advent

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

It's Our Home—Progressive Faith Healing the World

Plymouth Church is abuzz throughout the week, with various community group meetings, theater productions, children's programs, choir practices, board and committee meetings, spirituality group gatherings and even yoga. The church's walls almost vibrate with the voices and footsteps of friendship, commitment and creativity. But the church building has its quiet spaces, too. The library with its shelves of books for young and old, the parlor with its elegance, the chapel with its serenity, the balcony sitting room with its coziness—all welcome members and guests who seek a space for a private conversation or a respite from the week's busyness. When we pledge at Plymouth, we provide a home that is both active and contemplative, nourishing our souls so that we can be a healing voice of progressive faith in our wider world.

During Today's Worship

PLEASE TURN OFF all cell phones and other electronic devices when in the Sanctuary.

LARGE-PRINT BULLETINS AND HEARING DEVICES are available from the ushers. Ushers remain in the narthex throughout the service to assist you with any needs.

PARENTS/NURSING MOTHERS: The Parsons Room (next to the Library) is available as a respite space for babies and children. You can hear the service from there.

CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN AGE FIVE AND YOUNGER is provided in the Nursery (Room 209) in the education wing. See an usher for directions.

PLEASE WEAR A NAME BADGE, found in the Friendship Pads at the end of the pews, so that others might greet you before and after worship.

If You Are New to Plymouth Church

PARKING IS AVAILABLE in several lots adjacent to Plymouth Church. On Sunday mornings in our main lot, as well as the Groveland and Loring-Nicollet lots, parking is permitted in all spaces. If you need a handicap parking space but do not have an official sticker, please come by the Church Office to get a special "Plymouth Church Handicap Parking" card for use in our parking lot.

INFORMATIONAL CLASSES FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS: Contact Emily Venell at 612/977-1281 or emilyv@plymouth.org if you are interested in or have questions about membership at Plymouth Church, or if you are interested in attending a future interactive seminar. Plymouth is eager to welcome those who wish to share their faith on our congregation's journey. We look forward to seeing you at Plymouth again.

***For information on this week's events at Plymouth Church,
please visit our website at www.plymouth.org.***

PLYMOUTH CHURCH WARMLY WELCOMES ALL PEOPLE.

We welcome into full membership and participation in all aspects of our church life persons of every race, language, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, economic or marital status, and faith background, and we affirm and celebrate all loving and committed relationships.

All are welcome.

PRELUDE

SICILIANA *Johann Sebastian Bach*
 (from Flute Sonata in E-flat Major) *(BWV 1031)*
 Diane Hallberg, *flute*
 Sonja Thompson, *assistant organist-director*

VARIATIONS ON “FREU DICH SEHR, O MEINE SEELE” *Johann Pachelbel*
 (Hymn 104) *(1653–1706)*

PROCESSIONAL HYMN #103 COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS “*Stuttgart*”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jeffrey Sartain

Minister: Rejoice in our God always; again, I will say: Rejoice.

***Congregation:* Let your gentleness be known to everyone.**

Minister: Surely God is near.

INTROIT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

Robert Wetzler

Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; O my God, I trust in *(1964)*
 Thee; let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph
 over me; yea, let none that wait on Thee be ashamed.
 Show me Thy ways, O Lord; teach me Thy paths.

UNISON PRAYER

Come to us, God of our hope.
 Come to us now, even in barren places,
 that we might be touched by your presence, we pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (“...and forgive us our debts...”)

Pilgrim Hymnal, p. 513, prayer 57

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE

THEME: Sabbath

Jon Hallberg

*As we light the Advent candles each week and prepare for Christmas,
 members of our congregation will speak to four spiritual disciplines
 that relate to our observance of the season.*

ANTHEM

ANGELUS AD VIRGINEM

Irish carol

Maria Jette, *soprano*; Dan Dressen, *tenor*; and Chorus *arr. Christopher Stokes*

—*a poem in Latin telling of the visit of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary—*

The Angel Gabriel came to Mary and said, “Hail, thou that
 art highly favored, the Lord is with thee. You shall conceive and
 bear the Lord of heaven and shall call his name Jesus.”

(continued)

To this Mary replied, “I am the lowly handmaiden of Almighty God and will yield myself to God’s design.”

The Angel departed, and Mary conceived a Son who redeemed us for His own, bringing us out of pain.

—*Philip the Chancellor, d. 1236*

SCRIPTURE READINGS

ISAIAH 64:1–9

MARK 13:24–37

HYMN AH! THINK NOT, ‘THE LORD DELAYETH’ “*Alles ist an Gottes seggen*”
(see next page)

VERSICLES #533

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation (sung): And with thy spirit.

Leader: Let us pray. O Lord, show thy mercy upon us,

Congregation: And grant us thy salvation.

Leader: O God, make clean our hearts within us,

Congregation: And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Catherine Crooks

OFFERTORY

ZACHARIAS WAR GANZ VERSTUMMT *Johannes Eccard*
(a song of praise on the Day of John the Baptist) (1553–1611)

Zacharias was mute until his wife bore a son, who was promised to precede the Lord. Then his speech returned to him and with joy he began singing:

Praised be the Lord who has visited his people.

Believe this and be comforted.

The child, called John the Baptist, honored the will of God by preparing a way for Jesus, calling sinners to repentance and telling them of the One who pleases God and bears the sins of the world.

John the Baptist preached in strong words to all. Herod, not wishing to hear his words, had him beheaded. But this death did not hinder those who believe in eternal life.

—*German text of Ludwig Helmbold, 1575*

English translation by Amy Hallberg, 2011

Johannes Eccard was one of the principal Protestant composers of chorale motets at the turn of the 17th century. In the 19th century Eccard’s music was regarded as the epitome of the a cappella ideal. This year marks the 400th anniversary of his death.

AH! THINK NOT, 'THE LORD DELAYETH'

Percy Dearmer, 1931

ALLES IST AN GOTTES SEGEN 8.8.7.D.

Johann Löhner, 1691

Adapt. J. S. Bach, 1685–1750

1 Ah! think not, 'The Lord de-lay-eth'; 'I am with you,' still He say-eth,
2 For e'en now the reign of heav-en Spreads through-out the world like leav-en,
3 Not for us to find the rea-sons, Or to know the times and sea-sons,

'Do you yct not un-der-stand?' Look not back, the past re-gret-ting;
Un-ob-served, and ver-y near; Like the seen when no one know-eth,
Comes the Lord when strikes the hour; Ours to bear the faith-ful wit-ness

On the dawn your hearts be set-ting: Rise, and join the Lord's com-mand.
Like the shel-t'ring tree that grow-eth, Comes the Life E-ter-nal here.
Which can shape the world to fit-ness; Thine, O God, to give the pow'r.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND DOXOLOGY #464

Praise to God, immortal praise, for the love that crowns our days!
Bounteous source of every joy, let thy praise our tongues employ;
Singing thus through all our days: Praise to God, immortal praise! Amen.

MEDITATION BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR James Gertmenian

COMMUNION HYMN #107 LET ALL MORTAL FLESH KEEP SILENCE "Picardy"

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

(No matter to what faith tradition you belong, you are invited to join us at the table. We use grape juice for communion services at Plymouth Church.)

UNISON READING OF SCRIPTURE PSALM 100

Acclaim the Holy One with joy, all the earth!
Serve the Holy One with gladness! Enter into God's presence with a joyful song!
Know that the Holy One is God, who made us, and we belong to the Creator;
we are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.
Enter God's gates with thanksgiving and the courts with praise!
Give thanks to God! Bless God's name!
For the Holy One is good; God's steadfast love endures forever,
and God's faithfulness to all generations.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Minister: May God be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them up to God.

Minister: Let us give thanks,

Congregation: It is right to give thanks and praise.

Minister: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, O God. We give thanks for the goodness and love that you have made known to us in creation, in the calling of Israel to be your people, in your word spoken through the prophets, and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your child. Joining with the prophets and apostles, with the faithful in every place and time, we praise with joy your holy name:

All: Holy, holy, holy, God of love and majesty, heaven and earth are full of your glory, O God most high.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

During the distribution of the elements music for flute and organ by Charles Callahan will be heard.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of wonder and light, thank you for the bread broken to open our eyes and for the cup poured out to awaken our love. Send us forth with renewed faith, a deeper joy and a shared commitment to embody more fully your hope for the world through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

GOD, WE DO THANK THEE
WHO HAS PLANTED
(see next page)

"Rendez à Dieu"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

TOCCATA IN G MINOR AND
MAGNIFICAT FUGUE ON THE SECOND TONE

Johann Pachelbel





CHURCH REGISTER *as of November 21, 2011*

MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WHO ARE RECENTLY BEREAVED:

Helen and Alan Anderson, *death of Helen's brother, John Raynolds*

Jinny Humphrey, *death of brother, John Raynolds*

John and Carole Humphrey, *death of uncle(-in-law)*

Gingie Ward, *death of uncle*

Nina and Jasper Jonson, *death of great-uncle(-in-law)*

Zinnia and Adella Jonson, *death of great-great-uncle*

RECENT BIRTHS:

Eleanor Grace Loe (11/2/2011), *daughter of Eric and Kate Loe*

RECENTLY BAPTIZED:

Caden Ray Piehowski (11/20/2011), *son of Justin Matthew Piehowski and Susan Lee Piehowski*

CONVALESCING:

Karen Campbell, *Walker Methodist Health Center*

Susan Carstens, *at home*

Elaine Mitchell, *Episcopal Homes of Minnesota, Saint Paul*

IN HOSPICE CARE:

Wyland Tarrant, *father of Barbara Tarrant*

CARINGBRIDGE WEBSITES help people stay connected in times of illness:

Jud Reaney, www.caringbridge.org/visit/judreaney

HOME AND HOSPITAL VISITS: All Plymouth's ministers call upon members of the church in their homes, in hospitals or care and rehabilitation centers. If you know of someone who'd like a visit from a minister, please contact Catherine Crooks, Minister for Member Care (cathiec@plymouth.org or 612/977-1286).

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS are given in loving memory of Pastor Joel D. Albers by his parents, Bob and Sonia Albers.

TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR is sponsored by Janice Phelan in memory of her daughter, Christine Phelan.

NEXT SUNDAY: Jeffrey Sartain will lead the 9:50 a.m. First Service, and James Gertmenian will preach at the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service.

PLYMOUTH WORSHIP STAFF

James Gertmenian, *Senior Minister*

Vivian Jones, *Minister Emeritus*

Jeffrey Sartain, *Executive Minister*

Catherine Crooks, *Minister for Member Care*

Paula Northwood, *Minister for Education*

Tara Bauer, *Pastoral Resident*

Philip Brunelle, *Organist and Choirmaster*

Sonja Thompson, *Assistant Music Director*

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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