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***Celebration of Worship***  
**December 31, 2023**

# Celebration of Worship

December 31, 2023

10:30 am

## First Sunday After Christmas

*Enter in Prayer, Worship with Gratitude, Go Forth to Serve*

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### Opening Voluntary

*Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*  
Christopher Shaw, organ

arr. David Cherwien

### Welcome and Announcements

### Introit

### Call to Worship

### \*Opening Hymn

*Love Has Come*

(page 8)

### \*Responsive Reading

One: Let us come together to behold!

**All: Into the heart of struggle, a new hope is born.**

One: This miracle of love is threatened by violence.

**All: Turned away by the arrogant.**

One: Made vulnerable to hunger and despair.

**All: Let all the earth be a shelter.**

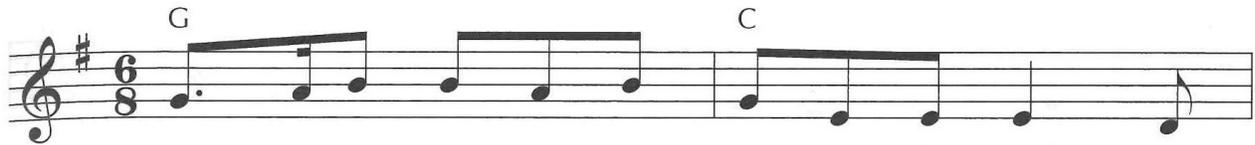
One: Let solidarity be our praise.

**All: Blessed are those who perceive, who protect, who nurture Christ  
among us.**

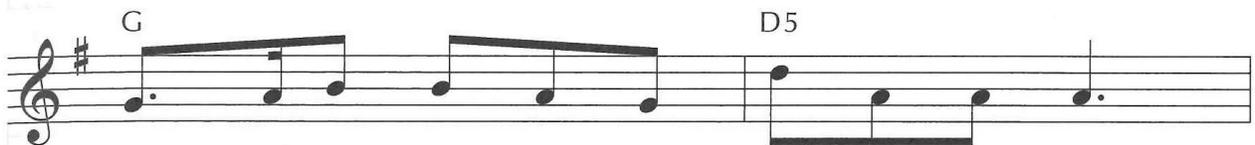
From: *Enfleshed.com*

# \*Response of Praise

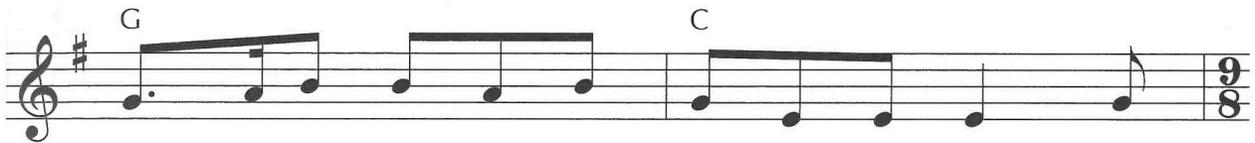
## Hope is a Candle



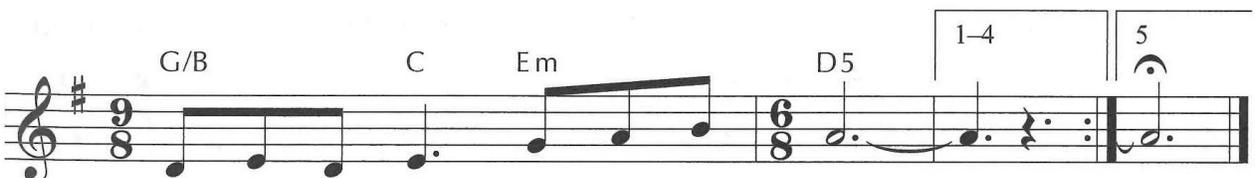
1 Hope is a can - dle, once lit by the proph - ets,  
2 Peace is a can - dle to show us a path - way,  
3 Love is a can - dle whose light makes a cir - cle,  
4 Joy is a can - dle of mys - tery and laugh - ter,  
5 Christ is the light that the proph - ets a - wait - ed,



nev - er con - sumed, though it burns through the years;  
threat - ened by gusts from our rage and our greed.  
where ev - 'ry face is the face of a friend.  
mys - tery of light that is born in the dark;  
Christ is the li - on, the lamb, and the child.



dim in the day - light of pow - er and priv' - lege—  
Friend, feel no en - vy for those in the shad - ows—  
Wid - en the cir - cle by shar - ing and giv - ing—  
laugh - ter at hear - ing the voice of an an - gel,  
Christ is the love and the mys - tery and laugh - ter—



when they are gone, hope will shine on.  
vio - lence and force their dead - end course.  
God's ho - ly dare: love ev - 'ry - where.  
ev - er so near, cast - ing out fear.  
cand - les, make way! Christ is the day.

## \*Invocation and Lord's Prayer

Long-Awaited One, we have prayed, we have kept watch, we have longed for your presence. And you, faithful one, have come bearing the flesh of the earth. Teach us to perceive. Do not let us pass you by. May our attention be turned from all that keeps us from recognizing and blessing the sources of salvation dwelling among us. All this we ask as we pray the prayer you taught ... *Our Father, 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.*

Invocation adapted from Enfleshed.com

## Welcoming Song

*Holy Child Within the Manger*

JOYOUS LIGHT

(Let the children come forward.)



Ho-ly Child with - in the man - ger, lead us ev - er in your way, so we see in ev-'ry  
stran - ger how you come to us to - day. In our lives and in our liv - ing give us  
strength to live as you, that our hearts might be for - giv - ing and our spir - its strong and true.

Words: Marty Haugen © 1987, GIA Publications, Inc.; Music: JOYOUS LIGHT, Marty Haugen © 1987, GIA Publications, Inc. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-722558. All rights reserved.

## A Moment with Our Children

Lindsay Miller

**Solo**

*My Lord has Come*  
Emily Son

Will Todd

Shepherds, called by angels,  
called by love and angels;  
no place for them but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

Sages, searching for stars,  
searching for love in heaven;  
no place but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

His love will hold me,  
his love will cherish me,  
love will cradle me.

Lead me, lead me to see him,  
sages and shepherds and angels;  
no place for me but a stable.  
My Lord has come.

**Prayer Concerns**

**Pastoral Prayer**

From [Enfleshed.com](http://enfleshed.com)

**Organ Response**

**Invitation to Offering**

## **Anthem**

"What Shall We Sing for the Child?"  
from *Sing We Now of Christmas*

arr. Howard Helvey

What shall we sing for the Child in the stable?  
What shall we sing for the Infant so fair?  
Singing, we offer our humble devotion;  
gently a song will make sweeter the air.

We shall sing freely the song of the Virgin;  
joining with Mary our voices are one.  
All generations will count her as blessed.  
All generations delight in her Son.

Softly we sing for the Child.  
Softly we sing for the beautiful son.

## **Scripture Reading**

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

<b>Hymn of Preparation</b>	<i>In the Bleak Midwinter</i>	(page 9)
<b>Sermon</b>	“You Are a Miracle”	Dr. Robu
<b>*Hymn of Departure</b>	<i>It Came Upon a Midnight Clear</i>	(page 10)
<b>*Benediction</b>		
<b>Closing Voluntary</b>	<i>Joy to the World</i> Christopher Shaw, organ	arr. David Cherwien

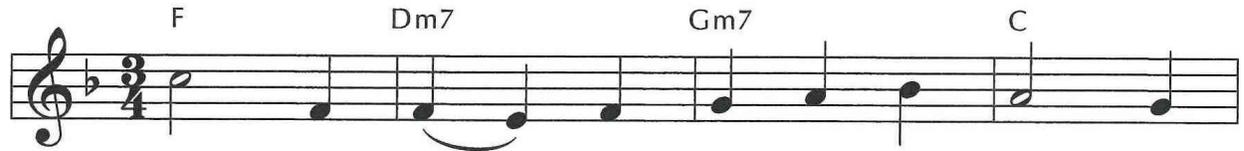
**\*Let everyone stand in body or in spirit.**

**North Entry Greeter** Shelley Closson

**Communion Table Flowers** Shelley Closson

**Cover Attribution** “Scar of Bethlehem” by Banksy. Photo taken at the Walled-Off hotel in Bethlehem in January of 2020.

# Love Has Come



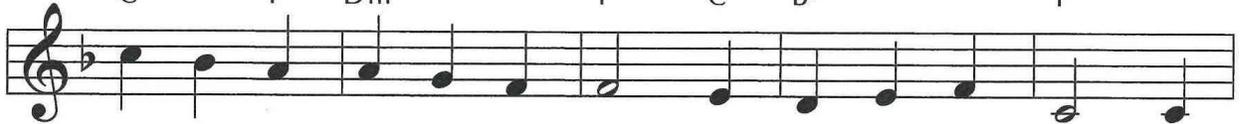
1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)  
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F



Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all  
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the  
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)  
 C F Dm F C B<sup>b</sup> F



heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of  
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her  
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F#7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)  
 Gm7 A7 B<sup>b</sup> C Dm C7



joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a  
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she  
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)  
 F C B<sup>b</sup> C F C C7 Fsus F



Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.  
 Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

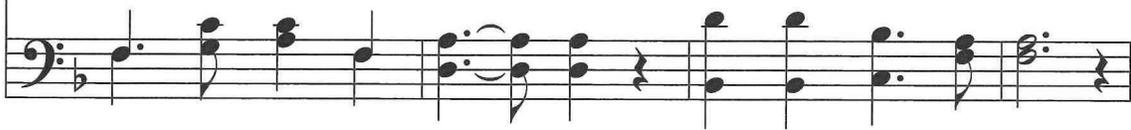
## In the Bleak Midwinter



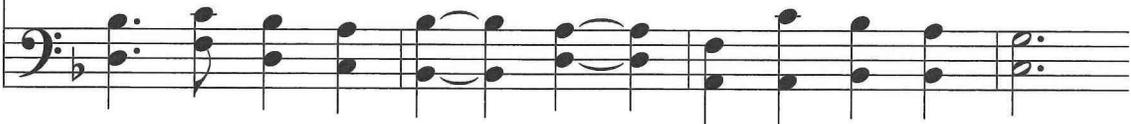
1 In the bleak mid-winter, frost-y wind made moan;  
2 Our God, heaven can-not hold him, nor earth sus-tain;  
3 An-gels and arch-an-gels may have gath-ered there;  
4 What can I give him, poor as I am?



earth stood hard as i-ron, wa-ter like a stone;  
heaven and earth shall flee a-way when he comes to reign:  
cher-u-bim and ser-a-phim thronged the air;  
If I were a shep-herd, I would bring a lamb;



snow had fall-en, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak mid-win-ter a sta-ble place suf-ficed  
but his moth-er on-ly, in her maid-en bliss,  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

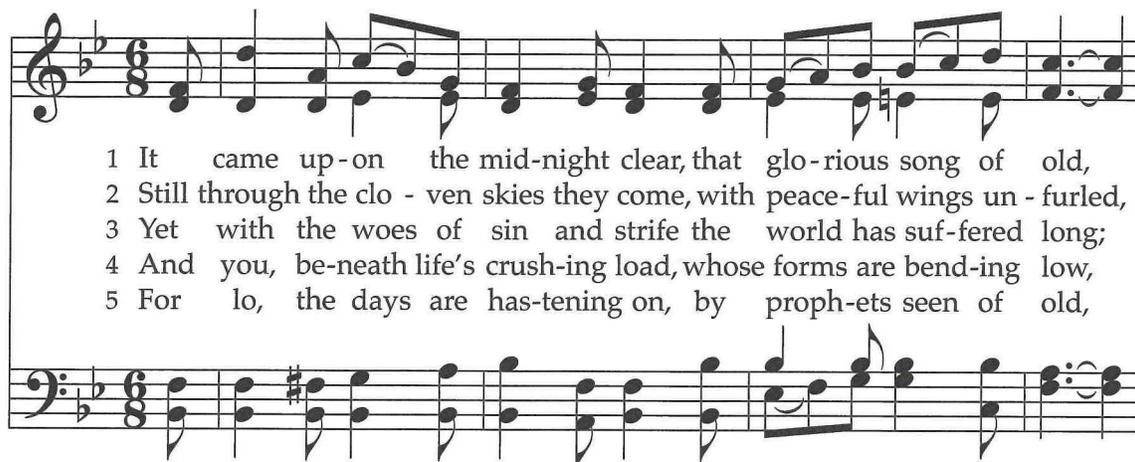


∫ in the bleak mid-winter, long a-go.  
the Lord God in-car-nate, Je-sus Christ.  
∫ wor-shiped the be-lov-ed with a kiss.  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

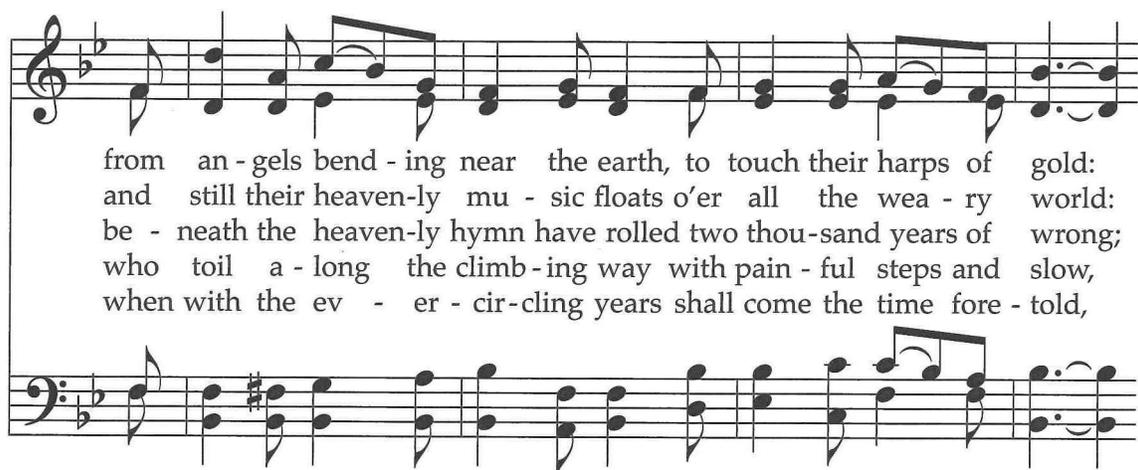


Words: Christina Georgina Rossetti, c. 1872, public domain; Music: CRANHAM, Gustav Holst, 1906, public domain.

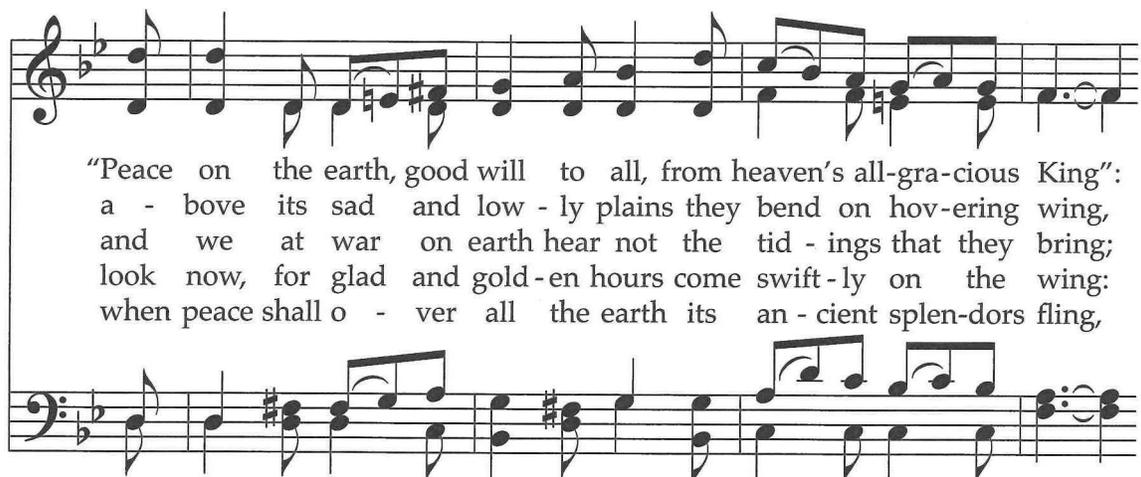
## It Came Upon a Midnight Clear



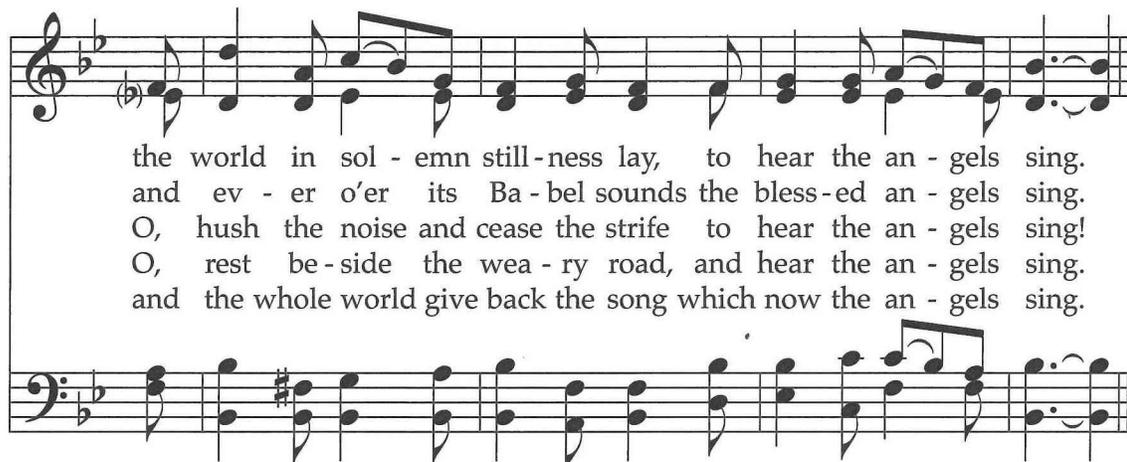
1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
when with the ev - er - cir-ling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King":  
a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,  
and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing:  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



the world in sol - emn still - ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.  
and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.  
O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!  
O, rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.  
and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Words: Edmund H. Sears, 1849, public domain; Music: CAROL, Richard Storrs Willis, 1850, public domain.

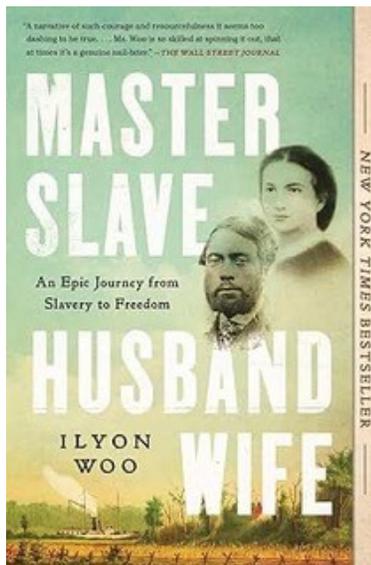
## Progressive Pilgrims Book Club gathering

Our next gathering of the Progressive Pilgrims Book Club will be Sunday, January 7th at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Jane Gilchrist. We will be discussing the book *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride. Watermark Books and Barnes and Noble have copies in their store.

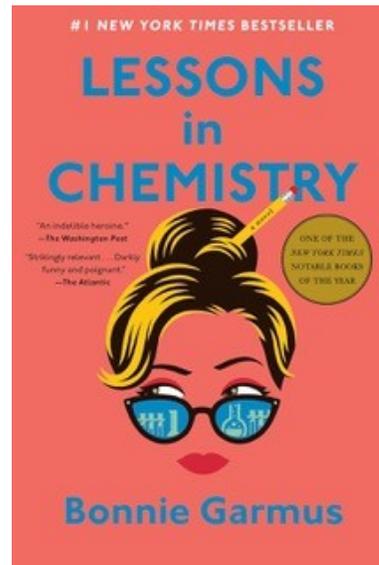
## Progressive Pilgrims Book Club

Have you considered joining the PP Book club, but it takes you more than one month to make it through a book? Or, are you someone who likes to read ahead? Or, maybe you'd like to share the book with others. For all those reasons we are announcing the next three month's books! Specific date and meeting location coming soon.

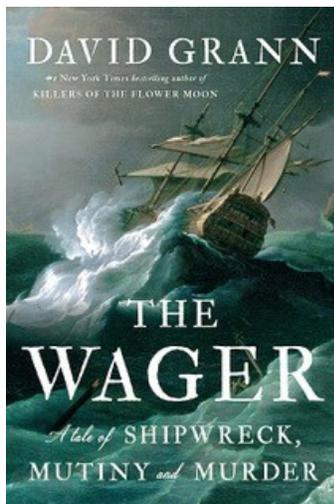
### February



### March



### April



## Upcoming Events at Plymouth

Plan to join us for a ***Winter Wine & Cheese*** event on **Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 5:00-7:00pm**. This event will include a wine tasting with remarks by a guest wine specialist, gourmet charcuterie boards, silent auction, music and FUN. Tickets are \$25. Tickets may be purchased online or through the church office. Proceeds will be used to promote Plymouth Congregational Church in the community. All auction items will be donated by the congregation. If you would like to donate an item for the silent auction, please contact Holly Yager at [holly.yager@gmail.com](mailto:holly.yager@gmail.com).



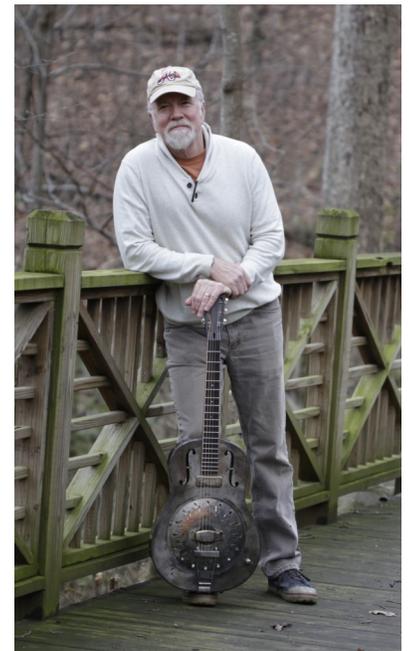
### ***An Evening with John McCutcheon***

February 24th at 7pm.

General admission \$30

Student tickets available at the door with current student ID \$10

Find out more about John McCutcheon at <https://mikegreenassociates.com/roster/john-mccutcheon-bio/>



### **Plymouth Staff**

Rev. Dr. Donald P. Olsen, Senior Minister

Rev. Dr. Karen Robu, Associate Minister

Dr. Henry Waters, Director of Music

Christopher Shaw, Organist

KD Keim, Administrative Assistant

Lindsay Miller, Sunday School Teacher

Tim Robu, Maintenance Engineer

Erik Breckenridge, Video Tech

John Palmer, Video Tech Assistant

## **Fine Arts Display Case**

**Joshua Larson** has been creating pottery for over ten years. He specializes in wheel thrown pieces with a concentration on colorful, creative, and functional pieces. Joshua loves to travel, and each season gets inspired with new techniques to help his artistry evolve. Joshua especially loves visiting Mexico and gets inspired with all the color and patterns used in that part of the world. When not at pottery class Joshua can be found heading up the education program at Music Theatre Wichita or selling real estate with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty.

Thank you for your support of the Fine Arts at Plymouth!



## **Plymouth Gallery Dec 2023 and Jan 2024 - Kayann Ausherman -- Artist Statement**

Kayann Ausherman is a self-taught mixed media artist from Haven, a small town near Wichita. She has always had a creative take on life even though her art career didn't start until her children were grown. She grew up in rural Kansas with parents who were scientists, and with whom she did a fair bit of traveling. A degree in anthropology was followed by working for a free lance graphic designer. Her next occupation was laying out computer schematics, first as a draftsman and then as a cad operator. A large family of adopted and biological children kept her busy for the next couple of decades until she returned to her childhood love of art in 2013.

This diverse lifetime of experiences and influences now finds its way into her current art. Rather than focus on realistic replication of her subject matter, she prefers a more whimsical, and intriguing representation. She feels the creative process is about experimentation and exploration of new ways to express the familiar, hopefully evoking an emotional connection. She often uses repurposed and unusual materials in her artwork like wrappers, envelopes, postage stamps, and "found" papers.

Kayann has illustrated two children's books, and her work has been published in over 25 national mixed media magazines including Somerset Studio, Cloth Paper Scissors, and more. Since 2013 she has taught numerous workshops on such varied topics as Citra Solv, art journaling, collage, and many other mixed media related topics, both in Kansas and elsewhere. Citra Solv-sponsored art contests have awarded her recognition a number of times, and she is one of the Citra Artists listed on their website ([citasolv.com](http://citasolv.com)).

When not making art, Kayann enjoys time with her husband and ever-growing family. They enjoy camping in the mountains of Colorado and are currently busy building a studio and tiny home to downsize into. She and her husband spend summers traveling to art fairs.

# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> <b>New Years Eve</b>  10:30am Sunday Worship	<b>1</b> <b>New Years Day</b>  Office Closed	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  5:30pm Wednesday Night Dinner  No Choir Rehearsal	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9am Adult Sunday School  10:30am Sunday Worship  2pm HumanKind Winter Shelter  6:30pm Progressive Pilgrims Book Club	<b>8</b>  5:30pm Cabinet	<b>9</b>  5:30pm Growth Steering	<b>10</b>  5:30pm Wednesday Night Dinner  6:15pm Facilitator Training  7pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>  9am Adult Sunday School  10:30am Sunday Worship	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  5:30pm Investment Club	<b>17</b>  5:30pm Wednesday Night Dinner  6:15pm Facilitator Training  7pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>18</b>  5:30 pm CE	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>

**Please join us for worship next Sunday, January 7th.  
Dr. Olsen will be Preaching.**

## The Plymouth Covenant

Believing in Jesus Christ, the Interpreter of God to humankind, we accept His teachings as the guiding principles of our lives and consecrate ourselves and our church to their fulfillment. We therefore join in covenant, one with another, to worship, work, and serve together that we may express through our Church and our individual lives the love and faith taught by Jesus Christ.