



Heaven Was Opened | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster

Baptism of the Lord January 12, 2025

"My house is a house of prayer for all people." (Isaiah 56:7)

Plymouth is A Just Peace Church and An Open and Affirming Congregation

WELCOME!

Here we believe that God is love; and that love is for everyone.

God's extravagant love changes the world and moves us to respond in gratitude.

Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here, and you are invited to shape this community with your God-given gifts.

Open and Affirming Statement

Plymouth Church is an Open and Affirming congregation. We celebrate and find strength in our diversity and view it as a way to understand the inclusiveness of God. We welcome people of any age, color, ability, sexual orientation or gender expression. We embrace those of varying theological and political beliefs, and differing ethnic, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds. Our congregation joyfully welcomes all to join in worship, ministry, fellowship, leadership, sacraments and blessings. With God's guidance, Jesus' example and the Spirit's inspiration, we commit ourselves to ongoing study, prayer, conversation and action, so that it may truly be said of Plymouth Church, "My house is a house of prayer for ALL people." (Isaiah 56:7)

Families with Children

Children of all ages are always welcome at Plymouth! We offer many programs and events throughout the year to foster faith development in children and fellowship among our families. We strive to make worship family-friendly and to provide support to families while attending church by offering Busy Bags, Children's Worship Bulletins, a comfort room with toys and a changing table, and a Children's Worship Space with quiet activities. Professionally-staffed childcare for kids 4 and under is available every Sunday from 9am-12pm on the second floor. Sunday School for kids Pre-K to 8th grade takes place during worship, except for on the first Sunday of the month when there is no Sunday School to encourage families to worship together and receive communion.

Large print bulletins and hearing enhancement devices are available. Please ask an usher.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Our Approach to God

Music calls us to worship so we may listen for God speaking to us. When the service begins with preparation music, please silence your voices and devices.

*All are invited to rise in body or spirit

Preparation Music

To Jordan Came the Christ, our Lord, BuxWV 180 Dietrich Buxtehude George A. Sargeant, organ

Welcome

*Call to Worship:

One: God, who called the worlds into being, calls forth new life today.

All: Glory be to God, in whose creative purpose we are claimed and empowered.

One: God, whose Spirit unites all people in a common language of love,

confirms the gift of divine love in each person.

All: Glory be to God! Heaven has opened, and God's Spirit leads us in confident expectation.

*Hymn #167 (black hymnal)

Mark How the Lamb of God's Self-Offering Rendez à Dieu

Prayer of Confession

Creator of all worlds, we confess that we are unreliable reflections of your love. In the hustle of life, we lose sight of what has lasting importance. In the face of the tragedy, we lose confidence to fear. Reclaim us, O God, when we stumble and wander aimlessly. Lift us to the surface, where we may breathe, and your light may shine upon us. Amen.

Silent Reflection

Words of Assurance

ONE: Lift up your hearts!

ALL: We lift them up to God!

*Hymn of PraiseLasst uns erfreuen

Now we who are of tender heart, forgiving others, take our part, Sing your praises, alleluia! To you we lift our pain and care, Receive the burdens that we bear, singing praises, alleluia, Alleluia, alleluia.

*Passing of the Peace

ONE: The peace of Christ be with you!

ALL: And also with you!

Children in pre-school through 8th grade are invited to depart for Sunday School.

The Proclamation of God's Word

Choral Anthem Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day John Gardner Plymouth Choir

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day, I would my true love did so chance To see the legend of my play, to call my true love to my dance.

RFFRAIN

Sing, oh, my love, oh, my love, my love, my love, This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure, of her I took fleshly substance. Thus was I knit to human nature, to call my true love to my dance. (refrain)

In a manger laid, and wrapped I was so very poor, this was my chance, Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass, to call my true love to my dance. (refrain)

Then afterwards baptized I was, the Holy Ghost on me did glance, My Father's voice heard from above, to call my true love to my dance. (refrain)

Scripture Reading Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Sermon Heaven Was Opened Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

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.

Christ, mighty Savior, Light of all creation, You make the daytime radiant with the sunlight And to the night give glittering adornment, stars in the heavens.

Give heed, we pray you, to our supplication,
That you may grant us pardon for offenses,
Strength for our weak hearts, rest for aching bodies, soothing the weary.

Though bodies slumber, hearts shall keep their vigil,
Forever resting in the peace of Jesus,
In light or darkness worshiping our Savior now and forever.

Living Out the Word of God

Announcements of Church Life

Commissioning and Blessing of Pilgrims to the Southern Border

Call to Offering

Offertory

To Jordan Came the Christ, our Lord, P. 61......Johann Pachelbel George A. Sargeant, organ

*Doxology......Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, you heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

O God, in light of your mercies, we offer to you our gifts for the work of your Spirit, and we offer the service of our lives to be your hands at work in the world. Amen.

*Hymn # 209 (black hymnal)

*Commission and Benediction

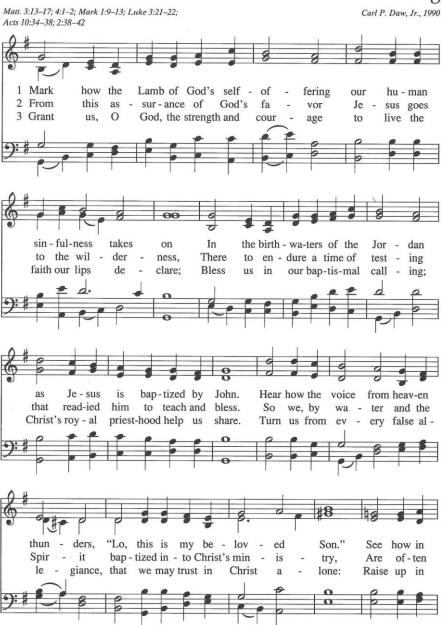
*Congregational Response Jesus, the Light of the World Elderkin

Hark! the herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world.
Glory to the newborn King, Jesus, the light of the world.
We'll walk in the light, beautiful light.
Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright.
Shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus, the light of the world.

Voluntary Selections from "Carnaval," op. 9 Robert Schumann Lynna Bao, piano

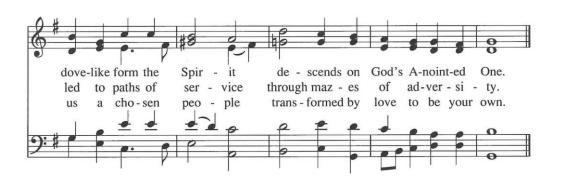
Many in the congregation wish to remain seated for the Voluntary. If you choose to leave, please be aware of those still participating in this part of the service. The Voluntary is music for worship and we ask that all be respectful of one another's worship practices, including those participating via livestream. Following the Voluntary, you may greet the ministers.

167 Mark How the Lamb of God's Self-Offering



Regarding this hymn for the first Sunday after the Epiphany, hymnwriter Carl P. Daw, Ir., writes that "the Baptism of Christ is one of the regular occasions for baptisms and for the making and renewing of baptismal vows."

Tune: RENDEZ À DIEU 9.8.9.8.D. Louis Bourgeois (c. 1510-c. 1561) Trente quatre Pseaumes, Geneva, 1551

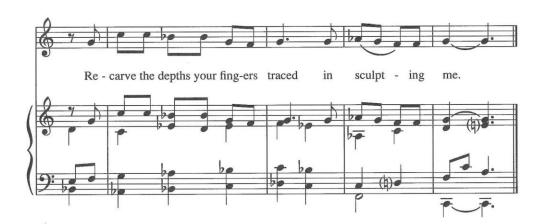


169 What Ruler Wades through Murky Streams

Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; Thomas H. Troeger, 1984; rev. 1993 Col. 2:9-12 1 What rul - er wades through murk - y streams and bows be-neath the wave. 2 Christ gleams with wa - ter brown with clay from land the proph-ets trod. 3 Come bow be-neath the flow - ing wave. Christ stands here at your side Ig - nor - ing how the world es-teems the pow - er - ful and brave? A - bove while heav-en's clouds give way de-scends the dove of God. and rais - es you as from the grave God raised the cru-ci-fied. Refrain Wa-ter, Riv-er, Spir-it, Grace, sweep o - ver me, sweep o - ver

Thomas H. Troeger commented that this text "was inspired by seeing a picture of a muddy Jordan River and realizing the materiality of Christ's experience at baptism." The new musical setting was provided by David Hurd at the invitation of The New Century Hymnal.

Tune: WATER OF BAPTISM C.M. with refrain David Hurd, 1994



O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free

209



- 5 A-ris-ing from the dead a-gain, our Sov-ereign goes on high to reign; And sends the Spir-it to a-bide for strength and sol-ace at our side.
- 6 Then for God's bound-less love sing praise through end-less a-ges, count-less days; By Love we have been rec-on-ciled: sal-va-tion gained through God's own Child.

Recounting the life of Christ, this hymn comes from an anonymous fifteenth-century Latin hymn of twenty-three stanzas. It has been described as a precursor of Christmas and Epiphany carols. Tune: DEO GRACIAS L.M. "The Agincourt Song," England, c. 1415 For another harmonization, see 184, 259

MUSIC NOTES

Today's prelude and offertory are settings of *Christ, unser Herr, zum Jordan kam (To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord),* a Lutheran chorale commemorating the baptism of Jesus, by composers of the Baroque era, Dietrich Buxtehude and Johann Pachelbel.

Buxtehude spent his most productive years at the Marienkirche (Mary's Church) in the North German city of Lübeck. In addition to serving as music director he organized a series of evening concerts that attracted attendees from far and wide. In his setting of the chorale, each phrase of the melody is presented in a coloratura style and is preceded by a brief fughetta in the accompanying voices. This manner of writing hymn-based music for the organ was pioneered by Buxtehude and later perfected by Bach.

Nearly half of Pachelbel's organ works are chorale preludes. Few of them have pedal parts, largely because the organs available to him in the southern part of Germany were not as large or versatile as their North German counterparts. Chorale melodies were as a rule presented without elaboration either in the soprano or bass. Most often he employed a three-part cantus firmus style, with phrases treated one at a time. Fragments of the melody form the basis of imitative counterpoint in the accompanying voices and anticipate each entrance. In this instance a pedal part is present with the melody assigned to it.

20th-century English composer John Gardner was born in Manchester and educated at Exeter College in Oxford, where he had a scholarship to study organ. While there, he also started to compose. Though fond of jazz in its early days, he focused on classical music. His first professional posting was at Repton, but this was interrupted by World War II. He joined the Royal Air Force and directed its band, during which time he was able to further explore his interest in jazz. After the war he held positions at the Royal Opera House, the Royal School of Music, and St. Paul's School for Girls in London.

His total compositional output numbers around 300 pieces. *Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day*, with its lively rhythms and rapidly-shifting meters, is particularly famous. The text, like the more familiar *Lord of the Dance*, tells the story of Jesus' life through the lens of a dancer. Gardner sets the first four verses, including the obscure one about Jesus' baptism, to an original tune rather than the better-known original.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today

Ushers: Team 1

Greeter: Mendle and Charlene Adams

Youth Group - Youth Group is this evening from 5:00-7:00pm in the Krumbine Room! We'll begin to prepare for C&Y Sunday. All youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to join us every time we gather for food, fun, and discussion.

This Week at Plymouth

Lunch Club – Join us this Wednesday, January 15 at 12:30pm in Fellowship Hall for a homemade lunch and fellowship, as well as a presentation and time of discussion with Laura Bartchak, executive director of the Harriet Tubman Movement. This organization serves people who have been subjected to sex trafficking, prostitution, or other forms of exploitation. Please sign-up by TODAY for food planning purposes.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Community Events

Many Voices, One CommUnity – The city, school district, and library of Shaker Heights invites residents to events celebrating the life & legacy of Martin Luther King Jr.

Arts-Inspired Celebration - Thursday, Jan. 16, 7:00pm; Shaker Middle School auditorium, 20600 Shaker Blvd. Photographer Donald Black and spoken word poet Ali Black perform a commissioned work; live music by Dave Gulley and the Cleveland Chorale; dance by the Shaker High School group, Sankofa. Join us for this uplifting evening!

Community Conversation and Catered Meal - Sunday, Jan. 19, 1:30-3:30pm Saint Dominic School cafeteria, 3455 Norwood Road. In the spirit of Dr. King's "beloved community," residents are invited to share a catered meal and discuss with neighbors what we can do to make Shaker Heights a beloved community. Registration required at shakerheightsoh.gov/community-meal.

Shabbat Prayer Service invitation – Friday, January 17, 6:00 pm at Congregation Mishkan Or, 26000 Shaker Blvd in Beachwood. Plymouth & neighboring congregations are invited to join the Shabbat Service for a commemoration of the life and legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Civil Rights Activist Maya Wiley will be the special guest. Congregation Mishkan Or is the new synagogue community of Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple and The Temple-Tifereth Israel.

Upcoming Events

Lead with Humility – On Saturday, February 1, Plymouth ARE has invited Dr. James Knight to speak in Fellowship Hall from 10am-12pm. He is a speaker/teacher, equity and inclusion strategist, and coach/mentor. His primary goal is to assist others in building safe environments where everyone can thrive and bring their best selves. You can learn more about him on his site: leadwithhumility.org. Mark your calendars!

OWL Parent Meeting – We will be offering an OWL (Our Whole Lives) program for students in kindergarten & first grade this year. OWL is a positive and age-appropriate educational program that promotes sexual health and safety. Each class will be 1 hour on Sundays after church, beginning February 23 and running for seven weeks through April 13, with one week off for spring break. We invite you to a brief informational family meeting on Sunday, January 19 at 12 pm in the Parlor. Children are welcome to come. We would like to answer questions, give more information, and get a sense of how many children will be participating. If you are unavailable January 19, or for questions or more information contact Leslie Szalay at Iszalay@plymouthchurchucc.org or Jeannie Clarkson at jeannie.m.clarkson@gmail.com

Community Life

Pledge Update – 130 pledges have been received for a total of \$612,023.90, with \$12,976.10 remaining to meet our goal of \$625,000. \$140,347.40 has already been donated in advance for 2025. Thank you for your generosity as we imagine together!

Pastoral Care - If you have a Pastoral Care need or have an emergency, please contact Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster at 330-714-9471.

Little Free Pantry - Shelf stable food is available 24/7 from our Little Free Pantry, located in the north end of the parking lot, near the Children's Garden.

Financial Assistance - Do you need help paying a bill, rent, or buying food and other essentials? Through the loving support of this community, funds are available. If you are in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to email Rev. Matt Wooster at mwooster@plymouthchurchucc.org (this is confidential) with your needs.

Plymouth Family

Happy Birthday to: Abigail Garr, Lauren Molyneaux, Kristin Sweeney, Catherine Cleminshaw, and Steve Kaufman

This Week's Calendar

Sunday, January 12

10:30 am Worship @ Sanct 11:00 am HCC Worship @ Chapel 5:00 pm Youth Group @ KR

Monday, January 13

Pilgrimage to the Border Departs 5:30 pm Bible Study @ Zoom

Tuesday, January 14

6:00 pm Cleveland Food Bank Volunteering 6:30 pm B&G Meeting @ Library

Wednesday, January 15

12:30 pm Lunch Club @ FH 6:00 pm Cleveland Food Bank Volunteering

Thursday, January 16

6:30 pm Plymouth Ringers @ Bell Room 7:00 pm Boy Scouts Meeting @ FH 7:30 pm Plymouth Choir @ Choir Room

Friday, January 17

1:00 pm Women's AA Meeting @ Parlor

Saturday, January 18

No Events Scheduled

Sunday, January 19

10:30 am Worship @ Sanct 11:00 am HCC Worship @ Chapel 11:30 am Coffee Hour @ FH 12:00 pm K/1 OWL Parent Meeting @ Parlor 5:00 pm High School OWL @ KR



Give Online

Use this QR Code to give online. If you would like to make recurring online gifts, please use your REALM login. If you don't have an account, please email kkundrat@plymouthchurchucc.org to request access.

PILGRIMAGE PARTICIPANTS

Lisa Bowersock - Dublin Community UCC, Dublin, Ohio

Ella Davis - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Brenda Grauer - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Donald Grauer - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Cristina Green - Fairport Harbor Congregational Church, Fairport Harbor, Ohio

Diane Gressley - Brecksville, UCC, Brecksville, Ohio

Isaac Hammond - Neely United Methodist Church, Baton Rouge, LA

Lucas Hershberger - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Nancy Hildebrand - St Paul's Episcopal Church of Cleveland Heights

Peter Hildebrand - St Paul's Episcopal Church of Cleveland Heights

David Long-Higgins - Zion United Church of Christ, Delaware, Ohio

Keith McDevitt - Grace UCC of Lancaster, Ohio

Jacqueline McMillen - Trinity UCC, Wadsworth, Ohio

Darlene Nichols - Federated Church Chagrin Falls, UCC

Gabrielle Quintin - Federated Church of Chagrin Falls, UCC

Michael Quintin - Federated Church of Chagrin Falls, UCC

Connie Ray - David's UCC, Dayton, Ohio

Harriett Rogers - Federated Church of Chagrin Falls, UCC

Dillon Shipman - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Henry Stonerook - Westerville Community UCC, Westerville, Ohio

David Turner - Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, UCC

Robert Tussing - Dublin Community Church, Dublin, Ohio

Ministers of Plymouth Church

The Congregation of Plymouth Church
Senior Minister, Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster

Designated Associate Minister, Pastor Dillon Shipman
Director of Music & the Arts, George Sargeant
Director of Christian Education, Leslie Szalay
Facility Manager, Paul Holter

Office & Communications Administrator, Brenna Threatt
Finance Administrator, Kathryn Kundrat
Church Sexton, Derrick Williams
Organ Scholar, Lynna Bao



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