



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 8<sup>th</sup> 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 Praise** ..... *Lasst 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, alleluia.

**\*Passing of the Peace**

ONE: The peace of Christ be with you!

**ALL: And also with you!**

*Children in pre-school through 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

### *REFRAIN*

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

**\*Hymn #169 (black hymnal)**

What Ruler Wades through Murky Streams ..... *Water of Baptism*

**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.

**Prayer Response** Christ, Mighty Savior ..... *Innisfree Farm*

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 worshipping 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 100<sup>th</sup>*

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)**

O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free, verses 1 - 3.....*Deo Gracias*

**\*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.*

BAPTISM OF JESUS

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

Matt. 3:13-17; 4:1-2; Mark 1:9-13; Luke 3:21-22;  
Acts 10:34-38; 2:38-42

Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1990

1 Mark how the Lamb of God's self - of - fering our hu - man  
 2 From this as - sur - ance of God's fa - vor Je - sus goes  
 3 Grant us, O God, the strength and cour - age to live the

sin - ful - ness takes on In the birth - wa - ters of the Jor - dan  
 to the wil - der - ness, There to en - dure a time of test - ing  
 faith our lips de - clare; Bless us in our bap - tis - mal call - ing;

as Je - sus is bap - tized by John. Hear how the voice from heav - en  
 that read - ied him to teach and bless. So we, by wa - ter and the  
 Christ's roy - al priest - hood help us share. Turn us from ev - ery false al -

thun - ders, "Lo, this is my be - lov - ed Son." See how in  
 Spir - it bap - tized in - to Christ's min - is - try, Are of - ten  
 le - giance, that we may trust in Christ a - lone: Raise up in

Regarding this hymn for the first Sunday after the Epiphany, hymnwriter Carl P. Daw, Jr., 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

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff at the top and a bass clef staff at the bottom. Both staves are in the key of D major, indicated by two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The lyrics are: "dove-like form the Spir - it de - scends on God's A-noint-ed One. led to paths of ser - vice through maz - es of ad-ver - si - ty. us a cho - sen peo - ple trans - formed by love to be your own." The music ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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us a cho - sen peo - ple trans - formed by love to be your own.



BAPTISM OF JESUS

# 169 What Ruler Wades through Murky Streams

Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22;  
Col. 2:9-12

Thomas H. Troeger, 1984; rev. 1993

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 me!

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

Re - carve the depths your fing-ers traced in sculpt - ing me.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is written in a single treble clef staff with a 7/8 time signature. The lyrics are: "Re - carve the depths your fing-ers traced in sculpt - ing me." The piano accompaniment consists of two staves, a treble and a bass clef, with a brace on the left. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

## O Love, How Vast, How Flowing Free

209

*Latin, 15th century**Transl. The New Century Hymnal, 1994**Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; Phil. 2:5-11;**John 17:1-26; 19:1-3, 16-18*

1 O Love, how vast, how flow - ing free, O Love how  
 2 Not as an an - gel vis - it - ing, nor form ce -  
 3 For us bap - tized, and fast - ing long, for us was  
 4 For us was beat - en, whipped, and tried, and tak - en

filled with ec - sta - sy, That God a hu - man  
 les - tial or - bit - ing, But born in flesh God  
 tempt - ed by the wrong, For us the pangs of  
 to be cru - ci - fied, So Love all this for

form should take, and mor - tal be for mor - tals' sake.  
 chose to be, robed in our own hu - man - i - ty.  
 hun - ger knew; for us the Tempt - er o - ver - threw.  
 us en - dured, and dy - ing, life for us pro - cured.

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.

20<sup>th</sup>-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](http://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](http://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 [lszalay@plymouthchurchucc.org](mailto:lszalay@plymouthchurchucc.org) or Jeannie Clarkson at [jeannie.m.clarkson@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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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