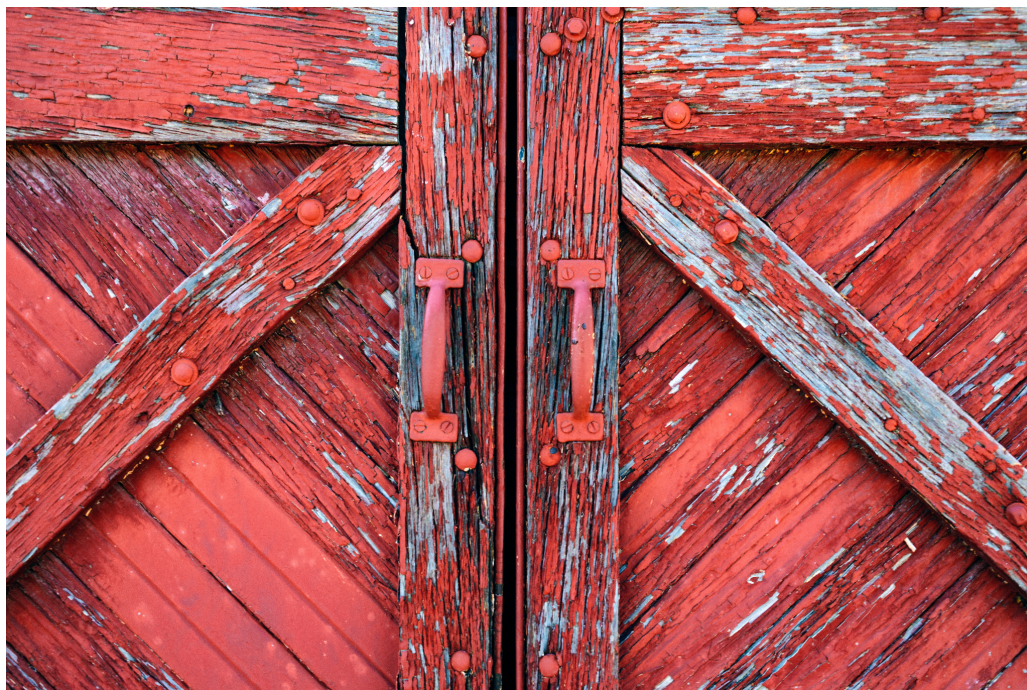


# Pilgrim Congregational Church

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## Christmas Eve 2023



Remembering that it happened once,  
We cannot turn away the thought,  
As we go out, cold, to our barns  
Toward the long night's end, that we  
Ourselves are living in the world  
It happened in when it first happened,  
That we ourselves, opening a stall  
(A latch thrown open countless times  
Before), might find them breathing there,  
Foreknown: the Child bedded in straw,  
The mother kneeling over Him,  
The husband standing in belief  
He scarcely can believe, in light  
That lights them from no source we see,  
An April morning's light, the air  
Around them joyful as a choir.  
We stand with one hand on the door,  
Looking into another world  
That is this world, the pale daylight  
Coming just as before, our chores  
To do, the cattle all awake,  
Our own white frozen breath hanging  
In front of us; and we are here  
As we have never been before,  
Sighted as not before, our place  
Holy, although we knew it not.

— Wendell Berry

## A Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

### Prelude

*The First Noel*

arr. Joan Hutchinson

### \*Entrance of the Light

*Once in Royal David's City*

*Stanza 1 Choir Only*

2. He came down to earth from heaven  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
And His cradle was a stall  
With the poor and mean and low  
Lived our Savior long ago.

*Stanza 3 Choir Only*

4. Not in that poor lowly stable  
With the oxen standing by  
Shall we see Him, but in heaven,  
Set at God's right hand on high.  
Then like stars his children, crowned,  
All in white, His praise will sound!

### \*Opening Prayer

Rev. Henrietta Brown

### Greeting

Jenny Burney

### First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

### Carol

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels:  
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God, all glory in the highest:  
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him,  
O come let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!  
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

**Second Lesson**

Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

**Anthem**

*Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming*

**Third Lesson**

Micah 5:2-5

**Carol**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

1. O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.

*Stanza 2 Choir Only*

3. O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
Descend to us, we pray.  
Cast out our sin, and enter in;  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell.  
O, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel!

**Fourth Lesson**

Luke 1:26-35, 38

**Anthem**

*O How Joyfully*

**Fifth Lesson**

Luke 2:1-7

**Anthem**

*Away in a Manger*

**Sixth Lesson**

Luke 2:8-14

**Anthem**

*On Christmas Night All Christians Sing*

Carol

*Angels We Have Heard On High*

1. Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heavenly song?  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
3. Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Eighth Lesson

Carol

*As With Gladness those of Old*

1. As with gladness those of old  
Did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright;  
So most gracious Lord, may we  
Evermore be led by thee.

*Stanza 2 Choir Only*

3. In the heavily country bright  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
Thou its sun which goes not down;  
There forever may we sing



Alleluias to our King.

**Children's Message**

Maureen Deahl

**Christmas Meditation**

Rev. Colin Knapp

**Anthem**

*Only Begotten, Word of God Eternal*

**Ninth Lesson**

John 1

***Sharing the Light of Christ***

**\*Carol**

*Silent Night*

1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.
3. Silent night, holy night!  
Child of God, love's pure light,  
Radiant beams from your holy face  
Bring the dawn of redeeming grace;  
Jesus Christ at your birth, Jesus Christ at your birth.

**\*Christmas Blessing**

Jenny Burney

**\*Carol**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

1. Hark! The herald angel sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn King!

*Stanza 2 Choir Only*

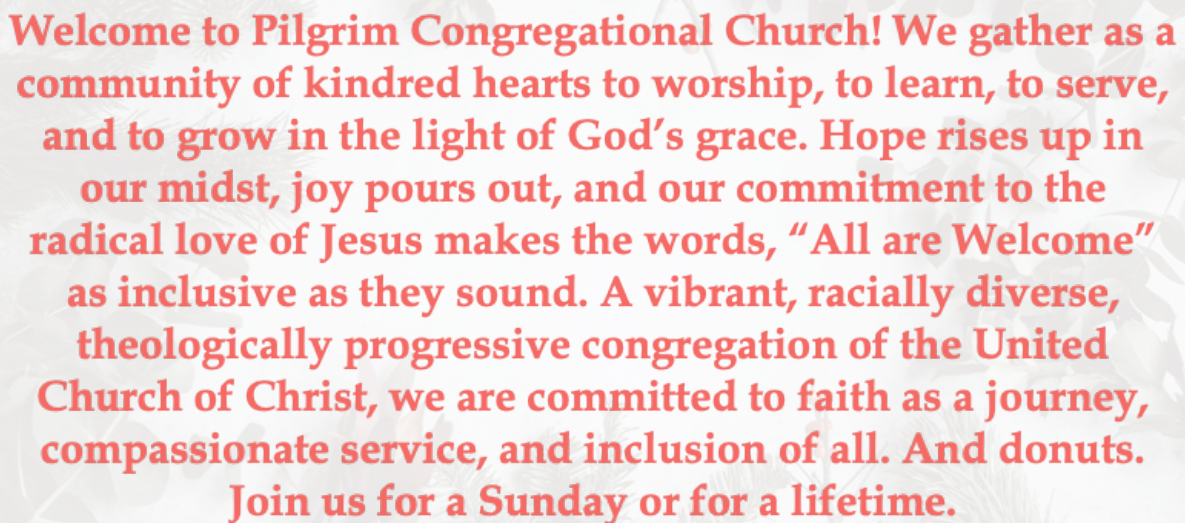
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all hHe brings,  
Ris'n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise each child on earth,  
Born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!".

**Postlude**

*Joy to the World*

Craig Phillips

*To all, a Merry Christmas!*



**Welcome to Pilgrim Congregational Church! We gather as a community of kindred hearts to worship, to learn, to serve, and to grow in the light of God's grace. Hope rises up in our midst, joy pours out, and our commitment to the radical love of Jesus makes the words, "All are Welcome" as inclusive as they sound. A vibrant, racially diverse, theologically progressive congregation of the United Church of Christ, we are committed to faith as a journey, compassionate service, and inclusion of all. And donuts. Join us for a Sunday or for a lifetime.**



# PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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