



Artwork by Anthony VanArsdale for the National Black Catholic Congress

Pilgrim Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
December 19, 2021  
The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Music streamed in today's service

Jesus, Lead Thou On - Max Reger  
O Come, O Come Emmanuel  
Lo How A Rose E're Blooming  
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing - NCH#144\*  
Pat a Pan - arr. Robert W. Thygeron

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***Today's service will be recorded.***

Pilgrim Congregational Church  
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Prelude Jesus, Lead Thou On - Max Reger Dot Bowe

Greeting and Announcements Rev. Reebee Girash and Sarah Jane Fuller

Passing of the Peace Duncan Todd

One: Peace be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

Call to Worship Duncan Todd

One: Our souls magnify the Lord,

**All: And our spirits rejoice in God our Saviour.**

One: You have done great things for us.

**All: Holy is your name.**

One: You bring down the powerful and lift up the lowly.

**All: You fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty.**

One: You have helped your people in remembrance of your mercy.

**All: You have remained faithful to your children according to your promise.**

One: Empty us of those things that separate us from you.

**All: May our lives sing your praise.**

One: Open us to seeing your promise fulfilled.

**All: Help us make room to live as faithful followers.**

Lighting the Advent Candles

Robin and Aaron Mailhot

Reader 1: The writer of John's gospel begins the story at the very beginning – when the Word was with God. He writes of mystery and majesty, and of the hope that nothing can extinguish the light that was sent into the world. But, the story did not stop there. God did not send the light from afar and leave us to our own devices. Instead, Love came down. John writes, “The Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14).

Reader 2: Love entered into humanity's struggle, and we are not alone.

Reader 1: In the book of Hebrews we read: "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). On this fourth Sunday of Advent, we remember that we are not alone in whatever we are going through.

Reader 2: Meet us where we are, O God.

Reader 1: Today, we light the candle of love in our Advent wreath. We do this not because we have love figured out or because we have mastered receiving the embrace of God. We light the candle of love in this wreath to remind us God entered into our struggles. There is nothing we have gone through that our God cannot understand. When we are struggling, God sees us and will not leave us alone.

Reader 2: We long for God's redeeming love to embrace our hurts and soothe our aching spirits.

**All: This season of Advent, Lord, we offer our uncertain hearts to you. Mend our broken places, and soothe our reluctant hearts. Even when love seems far away, we reach out to you. Remind us anew that you are here with us, that you see, and that you care. Amen.**

Solo

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Lisa Boehm

Children's Message

Sarah Jane Fuller

*Children depart for Sunday School at this time.*

Scripture Readings

**Luke 1:39-55**

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

46 And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
50 His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
51 He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
54 He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

One: Here end the reading. Hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the church.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Reebee Girash

Prayers of the People

Rev. Reebee Girash

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Reebee Girash

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father (Creator), 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.**

Mission Moment

Mona Roy

Invitation to the Offering

Rev. Reebee Girash

Offertory

Lo How A Rose E're Blooming

Pilgrim Church Choir

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Reebee Girash

**For your steadfast love, we thank you O God. And we offer these gifts as we prepare to offer your love into the world this Christmas. Amen.**

# \*Hymn Hark! The Herald Angels Sing - NCH#144

1 Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the Christ-child bring;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinner reconciled!"  
Joyful, all you saints arise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angel host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*[Refrain:]*

*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the Christ-child bring!"*

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time the Savior comes, offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,  
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. *[Refrain]*

3 Hail the Bearer of God's peace! Hail the Sun of righteousness,  
Light and life our Savior brings, risen with radiant, healing wings.  
Mildly laying glory by, born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us all from earth, born to give us second birth. *[Refrain]*

CHRISTMAS

144

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Luke 2:10-11, 25-32; 24:46-51;  
1 Thess. 4:13-18; Isa. 60:19-20

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.

1 Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the Christ-child bring;  
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored, Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord!  
3 Hail the Bear - er of God's peace! Hail the Sun of righ - teous-ness,

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ner rec - on - ciled!"  
Late in time the Sav - ior comes, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life our Sav - ior brings, risen with ra - diant, heal - ing wings.

Joy - ful, all you saints a - rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh, the God-head see; hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,  
Mild - ly lay - ing glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

With the an - gel host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased on earth with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
Born to raise us all from earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*Refrain*  
Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the Christ-child bring!"



Benediction

Rev. Reebee Girash

Postlude

Pat a Pan arr. Robert W. Thygerson

Dot Bowe

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A special thank you to **Duncan Todd** for being our liturgist today, to **Robin and Aaron Mailhot** for lighting our Advent Candles, and to **Lisa Boehm** for sharing her musical talents with us. We also greatly appreciate **Mona Roy** being with us to share a mission moment, and also would like to thank **Mike Stevens** for hosting our Zoom service.

*Source Notes:* The Call to Worship is an adaptation of Luke 1 by Rev. George Graham. The Advent Candle Lighting is by April Fiet, <https://aprilfiet.com/my-thoughts/advent-for-uncertain-hearts-week-4-love-in-the-struggle>.

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Sunday Worship 10:30 am