



**Pilgrim Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
December 17, 2023**

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- ❖ PRELUDE: The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came — Robert Lau
- ❖ GATHERING Song: Amen, Amen!*
- ❖ OPENING HYMN: Love Came Down at Christmas *
- ❖ ANTHEM: A Christmas Antiphonal by Hal H. Hopson
- ❖ OFFERTORY: Warm the Time of Winter — Ruth Duck
- ❖ CLOSING HYMN: Joy to the World!
- ❖ POSTLUDE: Pat-A-Pan — Robert W Thygerson

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PILGRIM
Congregational Church



**Welcome to Pilgrim Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
A Welcoming, Open and Affirming Congregation**

Statement of Welcome

We honor the Biblical call to love one another as God first loved us. We welcome into the full life and ministry of the church all people of any race, nationality, religious background, educational background, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, and physical, mental, and emotional abilities.

Mission Statement

*A welcoming home to all spiritual seekers
Making a difference in our world,
By fusing our Christian faith with
everyday life and Serving God by serving others.*

Children at Pilgrim

Children are an important part of our worshipping community. We try to make them feel at home!

All are welcome. Professional childcare for infants and toddlers is available in the nursery from 10:15 to the end of the service.

Please note: The video of this service is posted online. If you prefer not to be filmed, please sit near the rear of the sanctuary.

Visual and Hearing Aids

Hearing devices may be picked up from the table in the narthex.

Large Print bulletins and Sermons texts are available.

Worship Sunday, December 17 2023 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

PRELUDE

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came — Robert Lau

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Reebee Girash and Max Evrard

PASSING THE PEACE

Max Evrard

ONE: Peace be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

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

*GATHERING SONG

Amen, Amen! — Black Hymnal 161

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

Sadhna Vora, Raghu Amaravadi
Neil, Aiden and Deven

ONE: We light these candles as people of Peace.

ONE: Yearning for God's Shalom.

ALL: God's peace which surpasses all understanding.

ONE: We light these candles of hope, peace, joy and love,

ALL: And we invite the Christ-Child to be born among us, that we may live into hope, peace, joy and love.

ONE: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace: Come!

ALL: And may this Reign of Peace have no end.

Amen, Amen

161

African-American spiritual

Mark 3:7-10; Luke 2:7, 46-47; Rom. 6:6-10

Congregation/choir



Solo



1 O	see the lit-tle ba-by	ly - ing in a man-ger
2 See	Je-sus in the tem-ple	talk - ing to the el - ders;
3 See	Je-sus at the sea - shore	preach-ing to the peo-ple,
4 See	Je-sus on the cross . . .	bear - ing all my sins . . .
5 Yes,	Je-sus died to save us,	rose on Eas-ter morn-ing,
6 We're	sing-ing Al-le-lu - ia!	Je - sus is my Sav - ior,

(Congregation/choir)



a - men! A - men,



on Christ - mas morn-ing,	(2 See)
how they all mar - veled!	(3 See)
heal-ing all the sick ones!	(4 See)
in bit - ter ag - o-ny!	(5 Yes,)
and lives for - ev - er!	(6 We're)
who lives for - ev - er!	



a - men, a - men, a - men, a - men!

This is one of the many spirituals that found fame during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Its pattern of call-and-response allowed the lead singer to create new verses while those gathered sang the response of "Amen."

Tune: AMEN Irr.
African-American spiritual
Arr. Nelsie T. Johnson, 1988

Refrain:

Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.

Amen, amen, amen, amen, amen.

1 O see the baby, lying' in the manger
on Christmas morning'. [Refrain]

2 See Jesus in the temple, talking' to the
elders; how they all marveled!

3 See Jesus at the seashore preaching to the
people, healing all the sick ones! [Refrain]

4 See Jesus on the cross, bearing all my sins
in bitter agony! [Refrain]

5 Yes, Jesus died to save us, rose on Easter
morning, and lives forever! [Refrain]

6 We're singing Alleluia! Jesus is my Savior,
who lives forever! [Refrain]

OPENING PRAYER

Emmanuel, we praise you for welcoming us into your presence this morning. Help us in this hour to welcome one another fully and wondrously. And may the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

Love Came Down at Christmas — Black Hymnal 165
see following pages

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

ONE: Here ends the reading. Hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the church.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates — arr. Stan Pethel
John Girash, Nancy Fuller, Dan W. & Em W.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Reebee Girash

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Reebee Girash

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

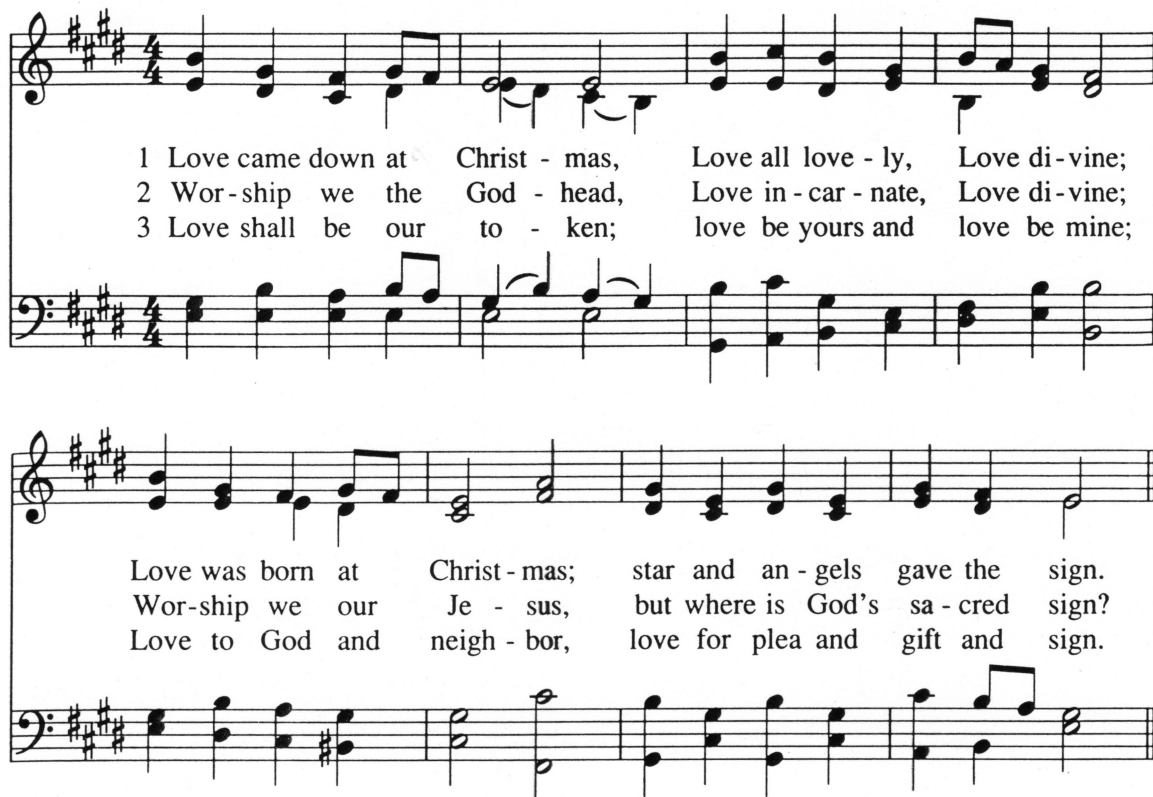
Warm the Time of Winter — Ruth Duck

165

Love Came Down at Christmas

Matt. 2:1-11; Luke 2:8-18

Christina G. Rossetti, 1885; alt.



1 Love came down at Christ - mas, Love all love - ly, Love di - vine;
 2 Wor - ship we the God - head, Love in - car - nate, Love di - vine;
 3 Love shall be our to - ken; love be yours and love be mine;

Love was born at Christ - mas; star and an - gels gave the sign.
 Wor - ship we our Je - sus, but where is God's sa - cred sign?
 Love to God and neigh - bor, love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti, author of the more familiar carol "In the Bleak Midwinter," lived a very quiet life in England. This text has been described by the noted editor Percy Dearmer as a "gem, where so much is said in so little space."

Tune: WHITNEY 6.7.6.7.
 Maurice C. Whitney, 1962

1 Love came down at Christmas,
 Love all lovely, Love divine;
 Love was born at Christmas;
 star and angels gave the sign.

2 Worship we the Godhead,
 Love incarnate, Love divine;
 Worship we our Jesus,
 but where is God's sacred sign?

3 Love shall be our token;
 love be yours and love be mine;
 love to God and neighbor,
 love for plea and gift and sign.

***DOXOLOGY**

Red Hymnal 515

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

Amen *or*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN

Away in a Manger — Red Hymnal 137

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

A PILGRIM CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH



Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be
which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

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!

WHAT CHILD IS THIS



Soloist, Isabella Stevens

What child is this who, laid to rest On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet, While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;

Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

WE THREE KINGS



We three kings of Orient are bearing gifts, we traverse afar.

Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,

Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to Thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem plain, Gold I bring to crown Him again,

King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. [Refrain]

Frankincense to offer have I; Incense owns a Deity nigh:

Prayer and praising, all men raising, worship Him God on high. [Refrain]

Myrrh is mine; it's bitter perfume; Breathes a life of gathering gloom:

Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]

SILENT NIGHT

**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.
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.
Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at thy birth, Jesus Lord, at thy birth.**

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Reebee Girash

*CLOSING HYMN

130 Joy to the World! the Lord Is Come

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

ANTIOCH C.M.
Attr. to Georg F. Handel, 1685-1759
Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns: Let men their
3 He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
na - tions prove The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture
Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

And heaven and na - ture sing, And
Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
And won - ders of his love, And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love. A - men.

heaven and na - ture sing.
peat the sound - ing joy,
won - ders of his love,

Joy to the World! — Red Hymnal 130

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

**Please be in a posture of praise.*

***Please join us in Pilgrim Hall for a Christmas Party after the service.
Lunch will be provided and we will be singing Christmas Carols.
Thanks to the Moffitt Clark family and Dot Bowe.***



PAGEANT CAST

Mary: Mairi

Joseph: Patrick

Innkeepers: Acadia & Luca

Angel Gabriel: Giovanna

Shepherd's Angel: Isabella

Angels: Lily, Juliette, Jennifer, Son-Mey, Nancy & Elena

Sheep: Pastor Reebee


Lead Shepherd: Sydney

Shepherd: Matt


Magi 1: Neil, Aiden, Dan

Narrators: Deven, Em, Dan & Eleanor





A special Thank You to our zoom hosts,
Madeleine Clark and Nick Zorn.



SOURCE NOTES

The Opening Prayer is by Maren Tirabasssi. Cover photo: Valente, Liz. Manger, from *Art in the Christian Tradition*, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57457> [retrieved December 12, 2023]. Original source: Liz Valente, <https://www.instagram.com/donalizvalente/>

Nancy Fuller

Kathleen & Harry Mattimore

Claire & Don Moir

Memorial to John Wooding, my brother-in-law

The Morrison Family

Mary Scott-Morton & Jill Morrison

Chris & Mary K. Reaske

*In memory Mary T. & Robert A. Army;
Alice R. & Herbert E. Reaske*

Bob Beckwith

*In memory of Carolyn Beckwith;
In honor of Pamela & Jane Beckvagni*

Jennifer Snipe

*In memory of Joseph Berthiaume;
Alice & Thaddeus Bodzinski*

Mary & Peter Mackie

In honor of Liz, Miranda, Matt, Chris, Carrie, Tyler & Tobey

Marjorie & David Kelland

Frances Barlow



Kim Bond

In honor of our children, Thompson, Natalie & Jacob; In memorial, Bette Walstad

The Saradjian Family

*In memory of Nerses & Zarouhi Saradjian &
Dr. and Mrs. J.F. Ludloff*

The Girash Family

In memory of Gail Hooper

Duncan Todd & Sarah Carothers

*In memory of Thomas, Virginia, & Dana Todd;
In memory of Charlie & Bootsie Carothers*

Elizabeth Garbarino

In memory of David Garbarino

Susan Moffitt**Susan Fagerstrom & Doug Johnston**

*In memory of Dolores & Frederick Fagerstrom;
In memory of Ellie & Murray Johnston;
In memory of Sarah Pedersen*

Fran Nickerson

In memory of Bruce Nickerson
