



Unclench your fists
Hold out your hands.
Take mine.
Let us hold each other.
Thus is God's Glory
Manifest.

—Madeleine L'Engle

**Pilgrim Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ
January 7, 2024**

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- ❖ PRELUDE: Brightest and Best — Lani Smith
- ❖ OPENING HYMN: Go Tell It On the Mountain*
- ❖ ANTHEM: Jubilate, Servite from Taizé
- ❖ OFFERTORY: Songs of Thankfulness and Praise — Christopher Wordsworth
- ❖ COMMUNION HYMN: Be Known to Us In Breaking Bread
- ❖ CLOSING HYMN: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*
- ❖ POSTLUDE: Harp Etude by Frederic Chopin

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Today's service will be recorded.



PILGRIM
Congregational Church



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



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.

PRELUDE

Brightest and Best — Lani Smith

GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Reebee Girash and Sarah Jane Fuller

PASSING THE PEACE

ONE: Peace be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

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

CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Isaiah 60)

ONE: Arise, shine, for your light has come,

ALL: And the glory of our God has risen upon us!

ONE: God has pity on the weak and the needy,

ALL: God redeems their life from oppression and violence.

ONE: Precious in God's sight are the widows, widowers, and orphans of war.

ALL: Precious in God's sight are the addicted and confused.

ONE: Precious in God's sight are the abused and neglected.

ALL: Precious in God's sight are the poor and desperate.

ONE: Precious in God's sight are all who sit on the margins.

ALL: Precious in God's sight are all who long for justice.

ONE: The glory of our God will rise upon them.

All: The glory of our God will rise upon us all.

*OPENING HYMN

Go Tell It On the Mountain — Black Hymnal 154

African-American spiritual
Arr. John W. Work II, 1907

Luke 2:8-20; Isa. 18:3; 52:7

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hill and ev - ery - where.

Last time, end

Go tell it on the moun - tain, that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

Be - hold through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
Rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
And God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills, and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!

1 While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light. [Refrain]

2 The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo!, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth. [Refrain]

3 Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn. [Refrain]

UNISON PRAYER

**Radiant Morning Star, you are both guidance and mystery,
Visit our rest with disturbing dreams, and our journeys with strange
companions.**

**Grace us with the hospitality to open our hearts and homes to visitors filled
with unfamiliar wisdom bearing profound and unusual gifts. Amen.**

ANTHEM

Jubilate, Servite from Taizé Pick-Up Choir

SCRIPTURE READING

Rev. Reebee Girash

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.'

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel." '

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time

when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.'

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sarah Jane Fuller

STAR WORDS FOR 2024

INTRODUCING MARK'S GOSPEL

Rev. Reebee Girash

SCRIPTURE READING

Mark 1, Selected Verses

1The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God....

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven,

'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Reebee Girash

PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Reebee Girash

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Rev. Reebee Girash

OFFERTORY

Songs of Thankfulness and Praise — Christopher Wordsworth

* 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

**Bright Morning Star, your light has come,
and the birth of Jesus has overwhelmed us with joy.
Like the magi of long ago, may we be drawn to you
and offer you such gifts as we are able. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

*COMMUNION HYMN

Be Known to Us In Breaking Bread — Red Hymnal 280

280 **Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread**

James Montgomery, 1771-1854 *ST. FLAVIAN C.M.
"Day's Psalter," 1562*

1 Be known to us in break-ing bread, But do not then de - part;
2 There sup with us in love di - vine; Thy bod - y and thy blood,

Sav - ior, a - bide with us, and spread Thy ta - ble in our heart.
That liv - ing bread, that heav-en-ly wine, Be our im-mor - tal food. A-men.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It features two systems of music. Each system has a treble and bass staff. The first system includes two verses of lyrics. The second system includes a single line of lyrics. The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

1 Be known to us in breaking bread, But do not then depart;
Savior, abide with us, and spread Thy table in our heart.

2 There sup with us, in love divine, Thy body and thy blood,
That living bread, that heavenly wine Be our immortal food. Amen

THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

*Our service of communion is open to all who wish to participate.
The sacrament is a gift from God, and all are welcome to receive it.*

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy God, in your light we see light.
And so too we see the veils of our ignorance and pride, the ways we treat
ourselves and others without your mercy, love or justice.
Let the brightness of your morning burn through our fog of aimlessness and
sin and put a new song in our hearts.
Teach us to see your world illumined anew, as with the eyes of Jesus.
We pray with his words, saying,**

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.

ASSURANCE

THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

COMMUNION MUSIC

UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

* CLOSING HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Jesus the Light of the World) — Black Hymnal 160

EPIPHANY

160

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing (Jesus, the Light of the World)

John 8:12; 9:5

Charles Wesley, 1739; alt.; adapt. George D. Elderkin; alt.

1 Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing, Je-sus, the light of the world;
2 Joy-ful, all you saints a-rise, Je-sus, the light of the world;
3 Christ, by high-est heaven a-dored, Je-sus, the light of the world;
4 Hail the Bear-er of God's peace! Je-sus, the light of the world;

Glo-ry to the Christ-child bring, Je-sus, the light of the world.
Join the tri-umph of the skies, Je-sus, the light of the world.
Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Word, Je-sus, the light of the world.
Hail the Sun of righ-teous-ness! Je-sus, the light of the world.

Refrain
We will fol-low the light, beau-ti-ful light, come where the
dew-drops of mer-cy are bright, Shine all a-round us by
day and by night, Je-sus, the light of the world.

The original version of Charles Wesley's hymn has received various alterations throughout the years. This adaptation by George Elderkin utilizes a repeated ascription, "Jesus, the light of the world," and a refrain to create a rousing carol of praise.

Tune: ELDERKIN 7.7.7.7. with refrain
George D. Elderkin
Arr. Jeffrey Radford, 1993

1 Hark! the herald angels sing, Jesus, the light of the world;
Glory to the Christ-child bring, Jesus, the light of the world

2 Joyful, all you saints arise, Jesus, the light of the world;
Join the triumph of the skies, Jesus, the light of the world.

2 Christ, by highest heaven adored, Jesus, the light of the world;
Christ, the everlasting Word, Jesus, the light of the world.

3 Hail the bearer of God's peace! Jesus, the light of the world;
Hail the Sun of righteousness! Jesus, the light of the world.

Refrain

We will follow the light, beautiful light,
come where the dew-drops of mercy are bright,
Shine all around us by day and by night,
Jesus, the light of the world.

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

What Child is This? — Stanley Roper

Thank you to our Zoom host, Sydney Stevens.

SOURCE NOTES

The Call to Worship is adapted from Jeffrey Nelson in Before the Amen: Creative Resources for Worship. The Opening Prayer and Prayer of Dedication are from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers. The Prayer of Confession is from First Church in Cambridge, UCC.

