

**A "VIRTUAL" SERVICE TO UNITE US IN SPIRIT
FOR SUNDAY NOVEMBER 28, 2021
FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(and a daily prayer)**

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***Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison WI***



The Community Gathers

Lighting of the Candle

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome

Announcements

♪ Prelude

Gathering Prayer

Leader: As we enter the Advent season, how can our church become a house where the Holy will be born anew—offering respite, sustenance and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the onslaught of life?

All: No one church can do it all, but each can do something.

Leader: *As we hear the prophets call us to care for our neighbors and “make room in the inn,”*

All: **the anxious spaces within us are filled with the light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.**

Leader: *Today we remember that Hope waits for us at Advent.*

All: **Hope waits for us to trust.**

Leader: *Hope waits for our commitment to a world that’s kind and just.*

All: **Hope is born in us again!**

The candle of Hope is lit.

Leader: *Today we offer the Light of Hope to illumine the Door of Welcome.*

All: **May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church.**

Leader: *May Hope awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality.*

All: **There is room in this Inn, a House for the Holy!**

♪ Opening Hymn: *Hope Waits for Us*

(Music used with permission)

[Listen to the recording, then we will sing it through.]

Hope waits for us at Advent

Hope waits for us to trust.

Hope waits for our commitment

To a land that’s kind and just.

In this time of preparation

For the work of co-creation,

For the birthing of a world

That heals the ones in pain.

Hope is born in us again!

Sharing Christ’s Hope

Leader: *The hope of Christ be with you!*

All: **The hope of Christ be with you!**

[give a ‘wave’ of peace to the folks around you]

Children's Message

The Community Shares God's Word

Scripture readings:

Jeremiah 33: 14-16 (CEB)

The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land. In those days, Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is what he will be called: The Lord is Our Righteousness.

Psalm 25:4-5 (CEB)

Make your ways known to me, Lord; teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth—teach it to me—because you are the God who saves me.
I put my hope in you all day long.

Sermon *Circumstances and Gratitude*

The Community Responds to God's Word

Hymn of Response No. 133 *O Little Town of Bethlehem (verse 3,4, new)*

3. How silently how silently the wondrous gift is given. So God imparts to human hearts the glorious love of heaven. No one discerns God coming but in this world of sin, where yearning souls long to be whole the dear Christ enters in.

4. 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 Emmanuel.

**New: Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,
Where misery cries out to thee, Son of the mother mild;
Where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.**

Prayers of the People

Let us turn our hearts to God in prayer... in the prayer Jesus taught us to pray to You, saying:

All: 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, for ever. Amen.

♪ Sung Prayer Response *Make of My Heart a Stable*
(Music used with permission)

**Make of my heart a stable, a house for the holy,
A warm and sturdy place for hope to live and grow.**

**Make of my life a stable, a house for the holy,
A warm and sturdy place for hope to live and grow.**

**Make of our church a stable, a house for the holy,
A warm and sturdy place for hope to live and grow.**

Offering

Thank you for your electronic offerings, or for mailing in your offerings for the ministry and mission of this congregation. Through your generosity, we are doing God's work in the world.

Thank you for all you are doing to help keep all in community safe, including getting vaccinated (if safe for you), wearing of face masks, physically distancing, and hand washing.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Pastor: *Our offerings of time, talent, treasure, and heart*

All: help create a space for Emmanuel to dwell.

Pastor: *We offer the best of us*

All: so that we make a home for hope in our world.

Pastor: As we are moved by your hope for us made known in Jesus Christ,

All: help us to communicate that hope in all we do and say.

Pastor: Help us to trust in you,

All: that we may be freed from despair, free to hope, free to bless. Amen.

Sending Hymn No. 104 We Hail You God's Anointed (verses 1-2, 4)

1. We hail you God's anointed the long awaited One. Hail in the time appointed your reign on earth begun. You come to break oppression to set the captive free, to take away transgression and rule in equity.

2. You shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth, and joy and hope like flowers spring in your path to birth. Before you on the mountains shall peace the herald go, and righteousness in the fountains from hill to valley flow.

4. O'er every foe victorious you on your throne shall rest, from age to age more glorious all blessing and all blessed. The tide of time shall never your covenant remove, your name shall stand forever your changeless name of Love.

Benediction and Sending Prayer

Pastor: May God's Door of Welcome

All: swing open in our hearts and in our lives.

Pastor: May Christ's humble first dwelling

All: remind us of the plenty we already know.

Pastor: May God's Spirit lead you into more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,

All: making room in The Inn for all.

Pastor: May it be so for you.

All: May it be so for us, and all people of God.

Pastor: *Our worship has ended, our service begins,*
All: **as we take God's light out into the world with us!**

🎵 Postlude

Pastor: Rev. Leslie Schenk

Accompanist: Lyle Anderson

Ministers: All the people of Plymouth Congregational UCC

Thoughts to ponder for the week:

"You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world's problems at once but don't ever underestimate the importance you can have because history has shown us that courage can be contagious and hope can take on a life of its own." – Michelle Obama

"The very least you can do in your life is figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof." – Barbara Kingsolver

Prayer for the Week

A Prayer for Hope

Lord, help me to hear you saying, "I am your hope"
over all the other voices. I'm running to you with both
hands stretched out and grabbing on to you.

Fill me up with hope and give me a tangible reminder
today that hope is an unbreakable spiritual lifeline.

In Jesus' Name. Amen.