

First Congregational Church of Pelham
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Church

"Sharing What God's Love Looks Like"

December 1, 2024 - ADVENT 1

~ We Gather in God's Presence ~

+Please rise in body or spirit.

CENTERING MUSIC

WELCOME

THRESHOLD MOMENT

"God Bless Us Everyone"

Ballard, Sylvestri, Purifoy, and Rickets

PRAYER~

Twelve Months of Compassion

From places deeply rooted, **we gather to light our advent candles.**

From places yet undiscovered, **we gather to sing our advent songs.**

From places still hidden in plain sight, **we gather to read our advent texts.**

From places tangled with disappointment, **we gather to share our advent prayers.**

THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT

Kristen Michaud & Suzanne Shawyer

Today we light the candle of peace.

Peace for those terrorized by inner turmoil or outer strife, violence at home, acts of hatred, a ravaged earth, or a scarred psyche.

We light this candle because we believe that peace is possible through God's redeeming presence among us.

A miracle has just begun! God bless us everyone!

*HYMN

"Long Ago, Prophets Knew"

#87

PRAYER

Holy Living God, Blessed Jesus, Guiding Spirit, we open today to this journey of past, present and future knowing that you hold all of it in your hands...you hold all of us in your hands. Open us to your miracle just begun and in this season transform us into those whose giving brings peace in a turbulent world. Open us to you, to each other, and to the voices no one hears so that your reign of mercy, justice, and love can be made known to all. Amen.

***God rest you merry, gentlemen, Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Savior, Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r When we were gone astray.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.***

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION <http://worshipdesignstudio.com> adapted CHS

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

All are welcome as God's family at this table. It is a feast laid for us in the birth, life, and resurrection of Jesus. At this table we remember—but we also dream—of a time when the vision brought into the world by this Child of Peace, Hope, Love, and Joy will come true.

We are welcome and invited to come. May this table inspire in us the desire for and affirmation of our own Scrooge-like transformation.

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

Liberating God, we give you thanks for the tolling bells of wake-up calls in our lives. Make this another one, O God. Wake us up to the wonder and awe of your possibilities for our lives. Wake us up to those things in our lives that we must let go of in order to keep Christmas well. In this silence we bring our whole selves to be transformed, redeemed.

Silence

Beloved, know that a miracle has already begun in us. Open your eyes and your hearts to the freedom of what is already happening in and for us. No matter how small a step or how awe-some our awakening, we are being transformed!

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Glory to God! Amen!

GREAT THANKSGIVING

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, on this special night and always and everywhere, to give thanks to you, God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

You, who breathed into us the same breath as the infant Jesus, You, who crafted our every fiber just as you did your own Son, You, who formed us in your own image—that same newborn image of the One Who Walked Among Us, Thanks and praise be to You!

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.

With awe we remember his life baptized first in the water of a womb—formed into a proclamation of your love.

With awe we accept your invitation of new birth offered to us at any moment.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection,

you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from the chains that bind us to death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,

we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here and on these gifts of bread and cup.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, so that we may be for the world the body of Christ, keeping Christmas well for the well-being of your world. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen

COMMUNION AND LAYING OUR BURDENS DOWN

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:46-47, 52-55

CHORAL ANTHEM

“My Soul Cries Out” Rory Cooney and Mark Hayes

SERMON

“Bah Humbug! Making Change”

Rev. Carlos

*HYMN

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

#89

~ **We Respond to God with our Prayers and Offerings** ~

Prayers of God's People

Sung Call to Prayer "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" #104 vs 1

Silence

Sharing our Prayer Requests

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (*sung*) #412

Offering Our Gifts to God

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

*Sung Response

Tune: *OLD 100th*

Praise God who blesses everyone! Praise Jesus Christ, who is to come!

Praise Spirit, making Three-in-One! All praise the miracle begun!

*Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, we give you thanks for all you have given us and we offer our gifts for the sake of being your hands and feet as the Body of Christ. Open us to even more ways to give so that we might make change and BE change for the sake of the world. Amen.

+HYMN "Angels We Have Heard On High" #121

*BENEDICTION

SUNG BENEDICTION "Long Ago, Prophets Knew" #87 refrain

"Ring bells ring, ring, ring. Sing choirs sing, sing, sing.
When he comes, when he comes, we will make him welcome."

Ministers: All the Members of the Church

Pastor: Rev. Carlos Jauhola-Straight

Director of Music: Tom Seniow

Organist: Carolyn (Sue) Howard

Bell Choir Director: Sharon Hone

Administrator: Stephanie Noel

Sexton: Lupe Nova

Deacons: Dan Murphy, Joe Calabro & Paula Fowlie

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