Plymouth
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



APPROACHING LIGHT

First Week in Advent

NOVEMBER 29, 2026

GATHERING MUSIC OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN *Aurelius Clemens Prudentius*

OPENING HYMN COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS (page 5) *"Hyfrydol"*

WELCOME Birdie Cunningham

SONG OF PREPARATION BORN IN THE NIGHT, MARY'S CHILD (page 6, verses 1 & 2) *Geoffrey Ainger*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH Mary & Jonathan Jordan

One: We begin again the annual journey of faith with Advent.
All: **Amidst darkness, there is approaching Light.**
One: Though the darkness grows, we find hope in approaching Light.
All: **We light the first candle of Advent for Hope.**
One: Let faith open us to the advent of Hope.
All: **In faith, we approach the Light that gives hope to all people and all Creation.**

Sung Response BORN IN THE NIGHT, MARY'S CHILD *Geoffrey Ainger*
(page 6, verses 3 & 4)

Passing of the Peace

Scripture Reading LUKE 1:39-56 Jeanne Witzig

One: These are the words of our ancient tradition.

All: May these words become Living Wisdom within us, among us, and beyond us.

Message APPROACHING HOPE AMIDST DARKNESS Rev. JT Smiedendorf

Invitation to Offering

One: In deep humility and gratitude to God, who shepherds and comforts us, let us bring our offerings to God.

All: **In thanks and gratitude, we offer these gifts to you.**

You may use the QR code on page 8 to give.

Offertory COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS *"Hyfrydol"*

The Sacrament of Communion

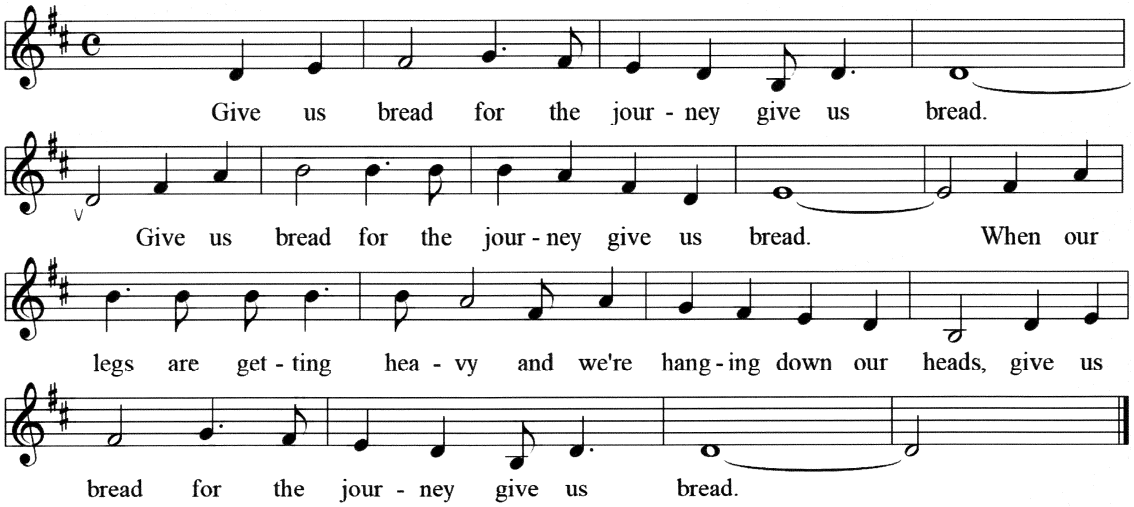
Invitation Birdie Cunningham & Rev. JT Smiedendorf

Blessing of the Elements

Sharing the Elements

Healing prayer and anointing with oil is an ancient practice of the church. We offer it here for those who choose it knowing that while a cure is not always available, healing always is.

COMMUNION HYMN BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY *Bret Hesla*



Guide our way as we travel, guide our way
Guide our way as we travel, guide our way
There's so many roads before us,
Where to go is hard to say
Guide our way as we travel, guide our way.

Make us one with each other, make us one (2x)
All the walls we've built around us,
May we learn to tear them down.
Make us one...

Lead us home to the garden, lead us home (2x)
Where we'll live with all creation, find our place and never roam
Lead us home...

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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God, thank you for the gracious gifts of your loving presence and generous abundance. Through the nourishment of the bread and cup, we go forth inspired by hope, moved to pursue peace, awakened in joy, and surrounded by love. May we reverently approach Your approaching Light. May it shine on Your beloved in every place and time, uniting all in love and peace forever more. Amen.

Closing Hymn PEOPLE LOOK EAST *"Besancon"*
(page 7)

Blessing

As the postlude is played, you are welcome to leave the sanctuary or stay and enjoy the music.

Postlude JOY TO THE WORLD *"Antioch"*



Chancel Flowers On this first Sunday in Advent, chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Shirley and Ray Gores by their daughters, Nancy and Beverly.

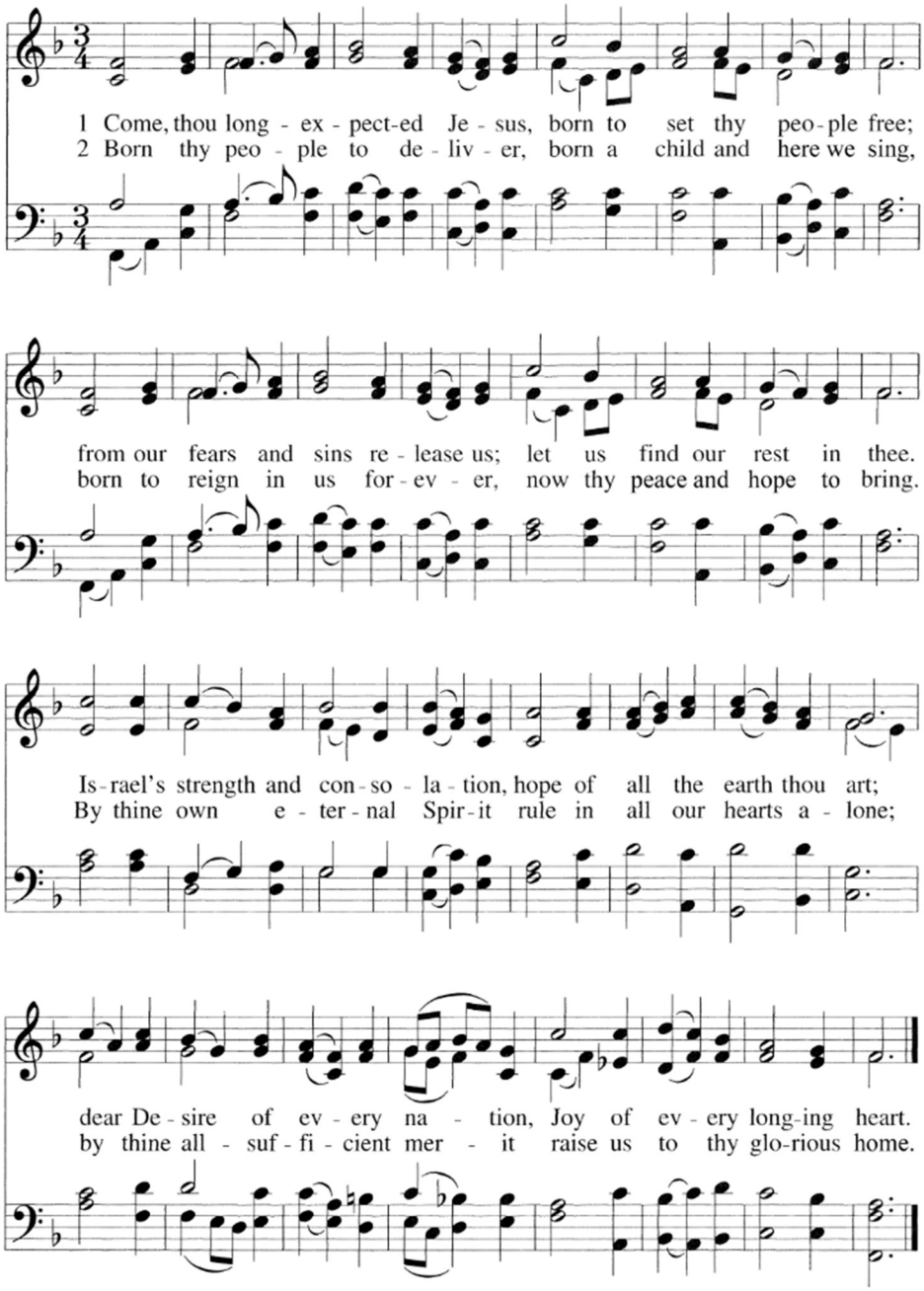
Worship & Program Staff: Rev. JT Smiedendorf, *Acting Lead & Intentional Interim Minister*; Rev. Kate Taber, *Director of Spiritual Formation*, Birdie Cunningham, *Director of Congregational Care;* Nina Jonson, *Director of Children Youth & Families;* Philip Brunelle, *Organist-Choirmaster*; Marie Scholtz, *Associate Music Director*; Laura Caviani, *Chapel Trio Director*; Sonja Thompson, *Assistant Organist;* Cody Bourdot, *Director of Theater Arts & A/V Production*

Chapel Trio: Laura Caviani, *piano*; Chris Bates, *bass*; Daryl Boudreaux, *drums*
Chapel Trio Arrangements: Laura Caviani; **Songleader:** Kathryn Rupp

Plymouth Congregational Church gratefully acknowledges that we are on the sacred traditional territory of the Dakota people. It is an honor to live, pray, seek justice, and create community alongside Dakota, Ojibwe, and other Indigenous people in the Twin Cities.

Many African American spirituals and hymns were never credited to their creators or were claimed by other individuals. When Plymouth Congregational Church uses music or music texts created by people who were kept in chattel slavery, we will donate to a historically Black institution as a reparative action in honor of the creators and their descendants.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



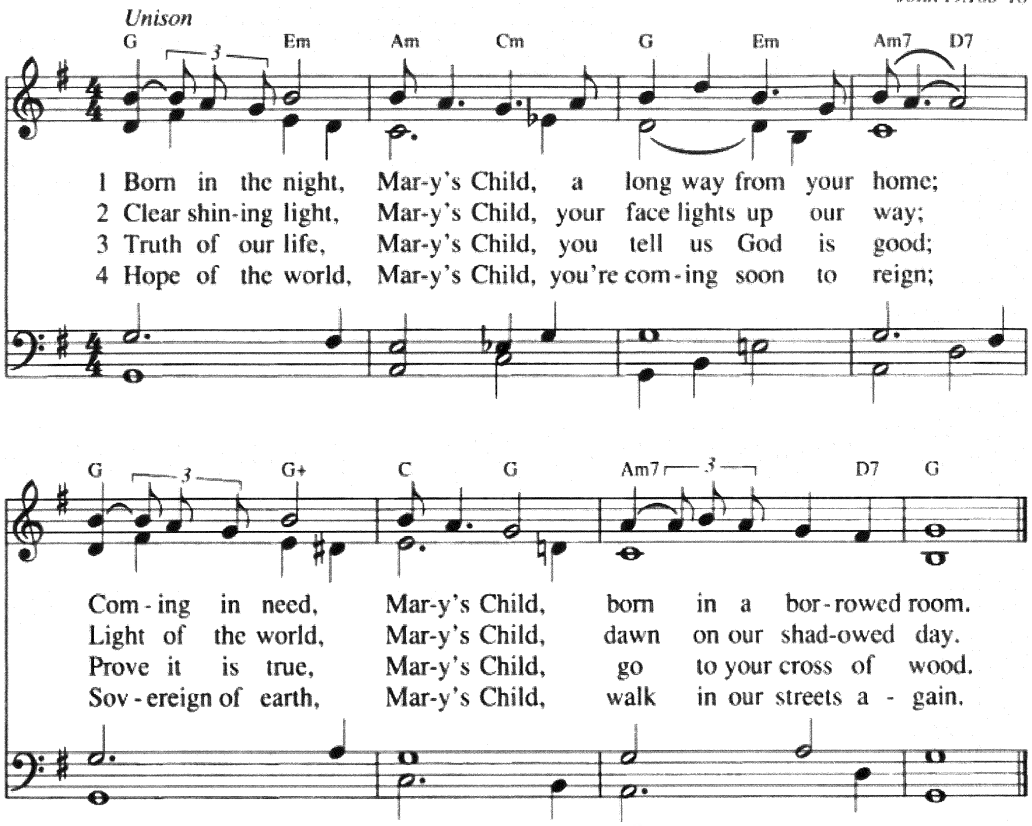
WORDS: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard (1811-1887); arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

HYFRYDOL
8.7.8.7.D.

Born in the Night, Mary's Child

Geoffrey Ainger, 1964; alt.

Luke 2:1–7; Mark 10:18; John 1:1–5, 14; John 19:16b–18



Tune: MARY'S CHILD 7.6.7.6.
Geoffrey Ainger, 1964
Harm. Richard D. Wetzel, 1972

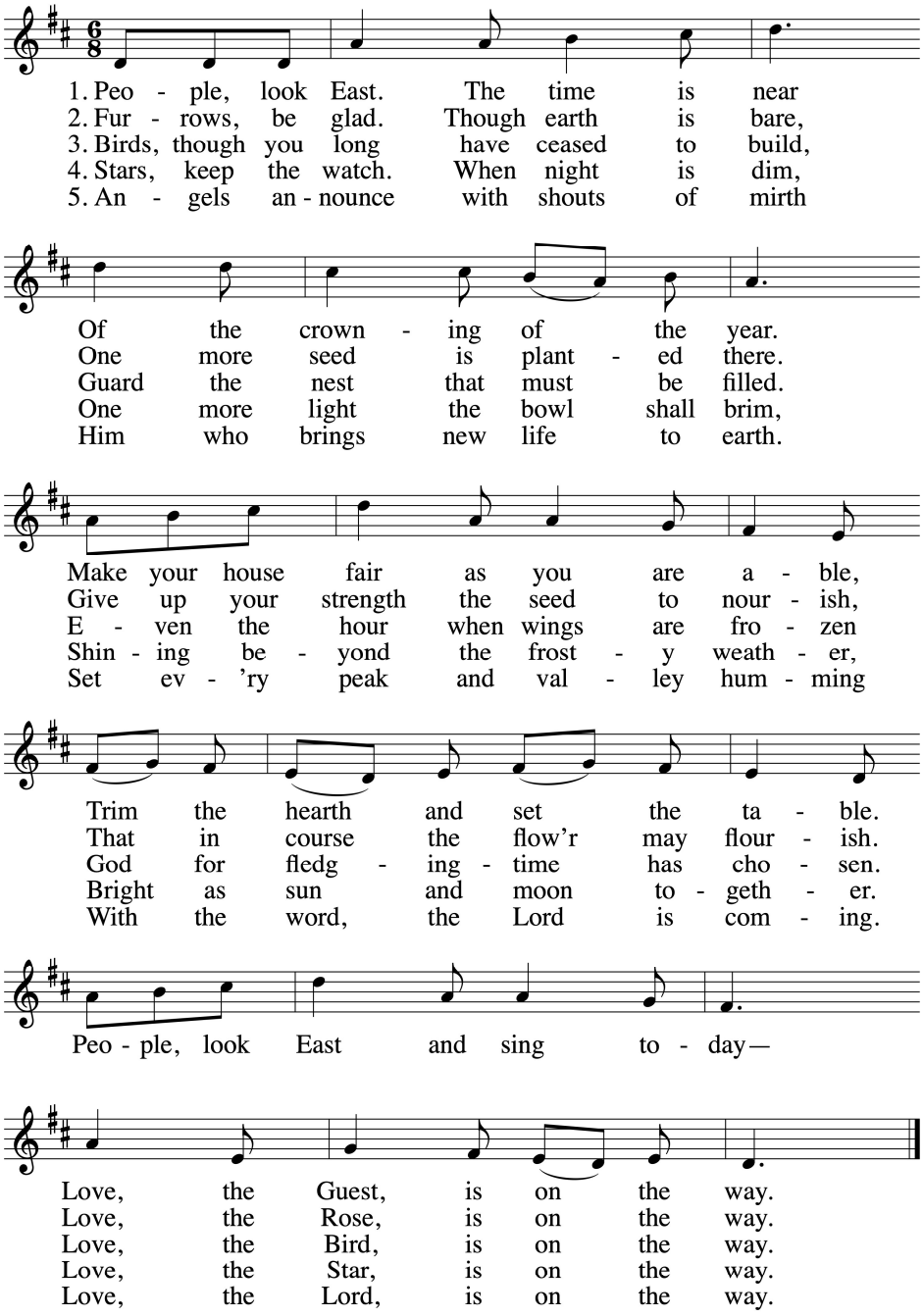
CHURCH REGISTER

HOSPITALIZED
Steve Jones

CONVALESCING
Martha Brown, after knee surgery

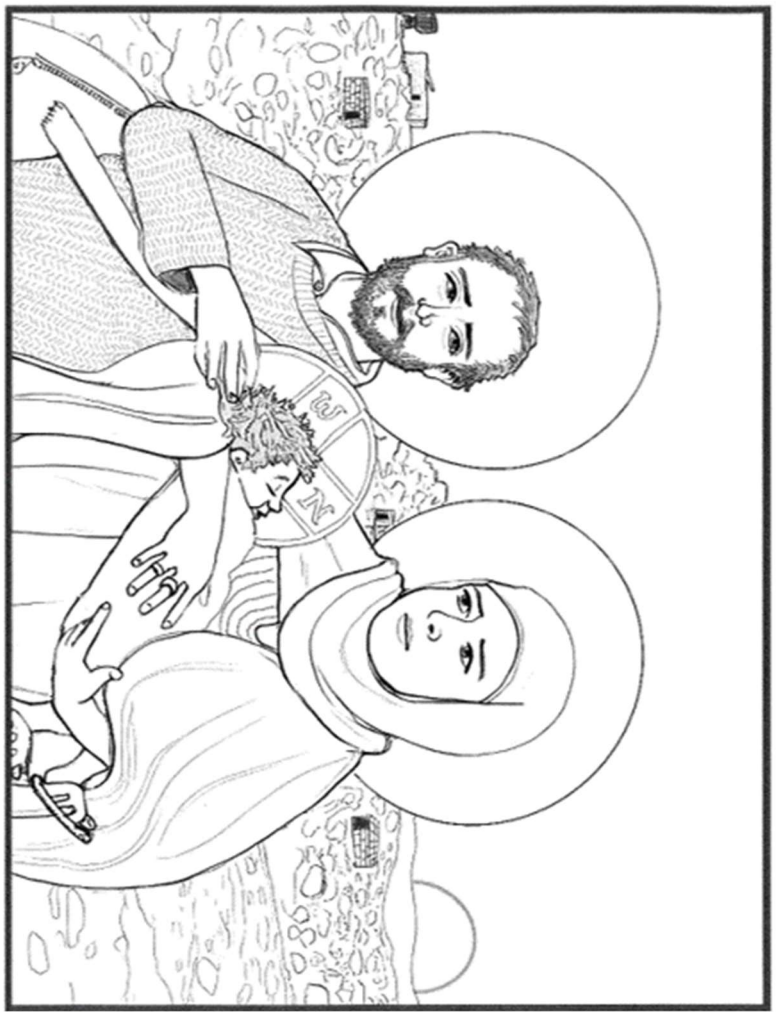
HOME AND HOSPITAL VISITS: Plymouth's ministers and Director of Congregational Care call upon members of the church in their homes, hospitals, or care and rehabilitation centers. If you know of someone who would like a visit, please contact Birdie Cunningham at 612-977-1261.

People, Look East



Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965
Tune: BESANCON, 87 98 87; French carol; harm. by Martin Shaw, 1875–1958

Coloring Page for Every Age



Refugees: The Holy Family

Give, Using Realm Connect

If you would like to donate, please do so by scanning the QR code with your cell phone's camera.

If you have not yet set up your new account, please contact Emily Venell at emilyv@plymouth.org or (612) 791.0753.

If you'd like to share your art with the church,
please drop off this page at the Jones Commons desk after worship!

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