

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 24th, 2017

9:30 a.m.

A Just Peace Church
An Open and Affirming Congregation
A God is Still Speaking Congregation



Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

A compassionate community, intentionally inclusive, openly searching, joyfully serving in the way of Christ

Welcome to Worship!

We are grateful for your presence this morning. If you are new to Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, the following information may be helpful.

- We are an Open & Affirming congregation where all people are valued and accepted regardless of sexual identity or orientation.
- We are a Just Peace church that affirms that peace is possible in human history and prays ceaselessly that peace may prevail on Earth.
- We celebrate our Christian heritage and seek to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

A Special Word to our Visitors

- Please fill out the fellowship pads the ushers will hand out at the beginning of the service. We would love to get to know you better and keep you up-to-date on all the programs, events and activities offered throughout the year.
- Families with infants and children are especially welcome to our service. Childcare is available during the worship service in the nursery. Please speak with an usher if you need assistance to find our nursery.
- Children's bulletins, activity bags (to be returned after worship) and toys are available in the Narthex. To find out more about our Sunday school program, we may talk to our Faith Formation Director Cindy Bjerklie or visit our website.
- Our service can be heard in the parlor, library and nursery.
- Our sanctuary is equipped with the Telecoil Loop System for the hard of hearing. For assistance on how to connect to the Telecoil, please speak to one of our ushers.
- Our building is fully accessible to all people. A small parking lot on the south side of the church is available only to persons with limited mobility or physical disability. The entrance to the parking lot is located immediately behind the Post Office, off Highland Street. An elevator connects all three levels.
- Join us for Coffee Hour in the fellowship hall immediately after the service.

Help us to protect the environment by dropping your bulletin in one of the recycling baskets at the two main entrances to the sanctuary. You may also download your bulletin from our website and follow the service on your own mobile device.

Large print bulletins are also available.

Transcripts of our Sunday Sermons and videos of the worship services are available on our website, www.uccplymouth.org.

Our worship service is live-streamed on our Facebook page every Sunday.

GATHERING

Prelude

Away In A Manager

Wilbur Held

*The beginning of the prelude is an invitation to silent,
personal preparation for the worship of God.*

Welcome and Life of the Church

Centering Song

On That Holy Night

David Paxton

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Congregational Response

"Gloria in Excelsis Deo"

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

Based on "Gobsmacked"

One: May God's Spirit kindle the flame of love in our hearts as we pray, saying:

All: God who is as close to us as our own skin, we are here today to sing the hope of Christmas, to embrace the angels' dream of peace on Earth, to celebrate the joy of Christ's birth, and to be changed by your gift of love.

One: We welcome the mystery of this holy day! God could have come as a world leader, ready to overpower and control us. God could have come as a spiritual sage eager to tell us what to believe. Instead God's love came in a tiny vulnerable baby, lungs screaming for life, fingers grasping for something to hold on to, his whole being completely dependent on us to feed him, clothe him, protect him and love him... and we were gobsmacked!

Silent Prayer of Adoration for the Mystery of the Incarnation

One: Christ is born! Alleluia! May this holy moment of worship inspire us to wrap up hope, peace, joy and love and re-gift them to humankind.

All: The Advent candles are burning! These flames are tokens of an even brighter Light that is coming. Come, holy helpless Jesus. Come into our lives and gobsmack us once again! Alleluia!

*Carol

"People, Look East"

**Indicates congregation standing*

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 6/8. The melody consists of 15 measures. The lyrics are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The lyrics are:

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more
3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more
5 An - gels, an-nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who

TEXT: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928, alt.

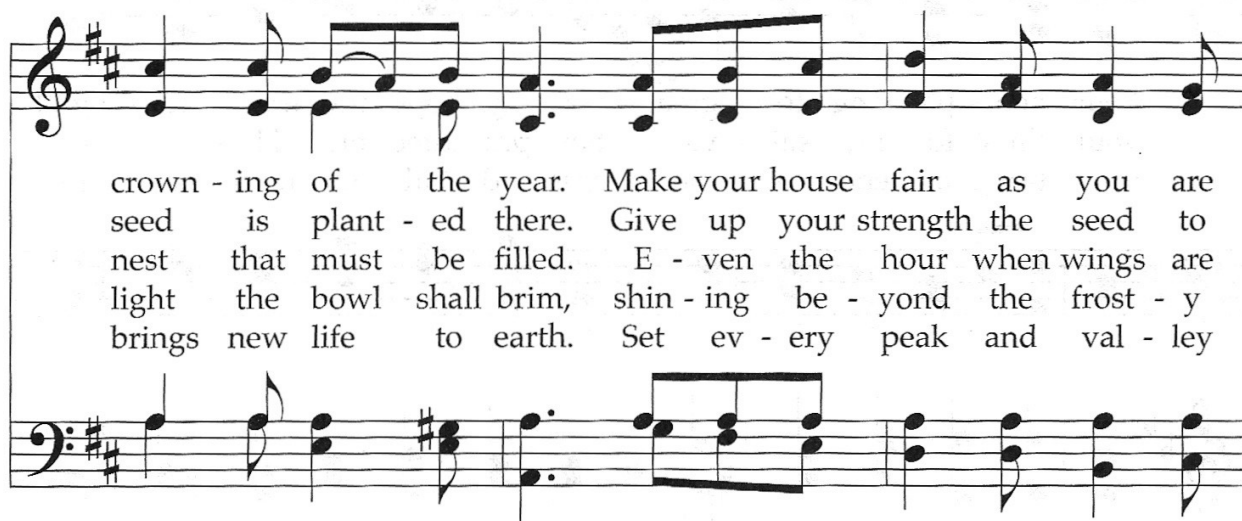
MUSIC: French folk melody; harm. Martin Shaw, 1928

Text © 1960 David Higham Associates, Ltd.

Music Harm. © 1928 Oxford University Press

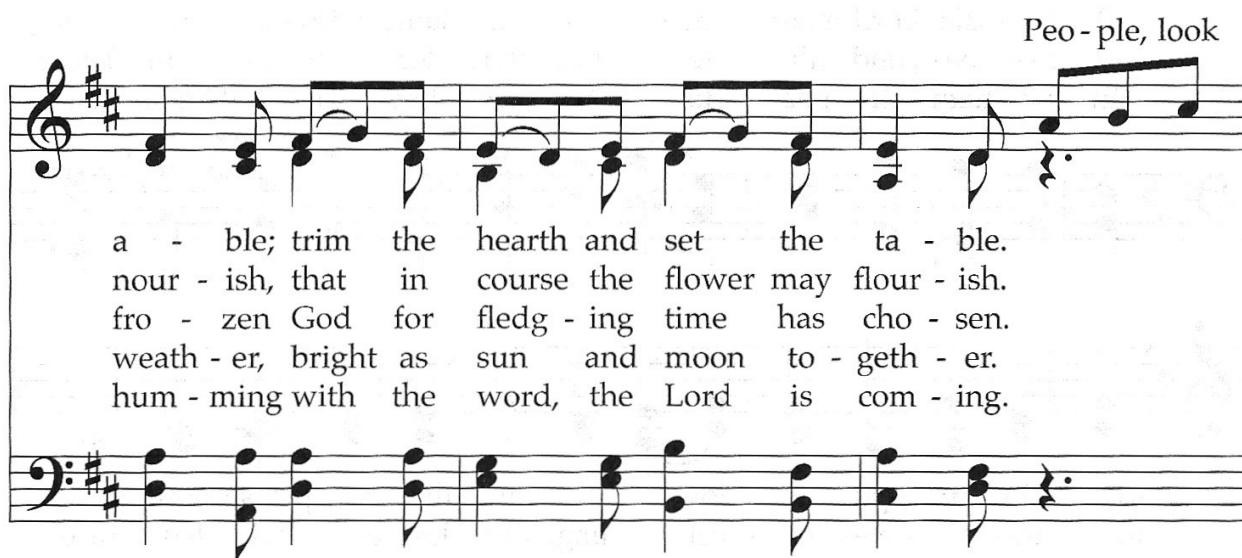
BESANÇON

8.7.9.8.8.7



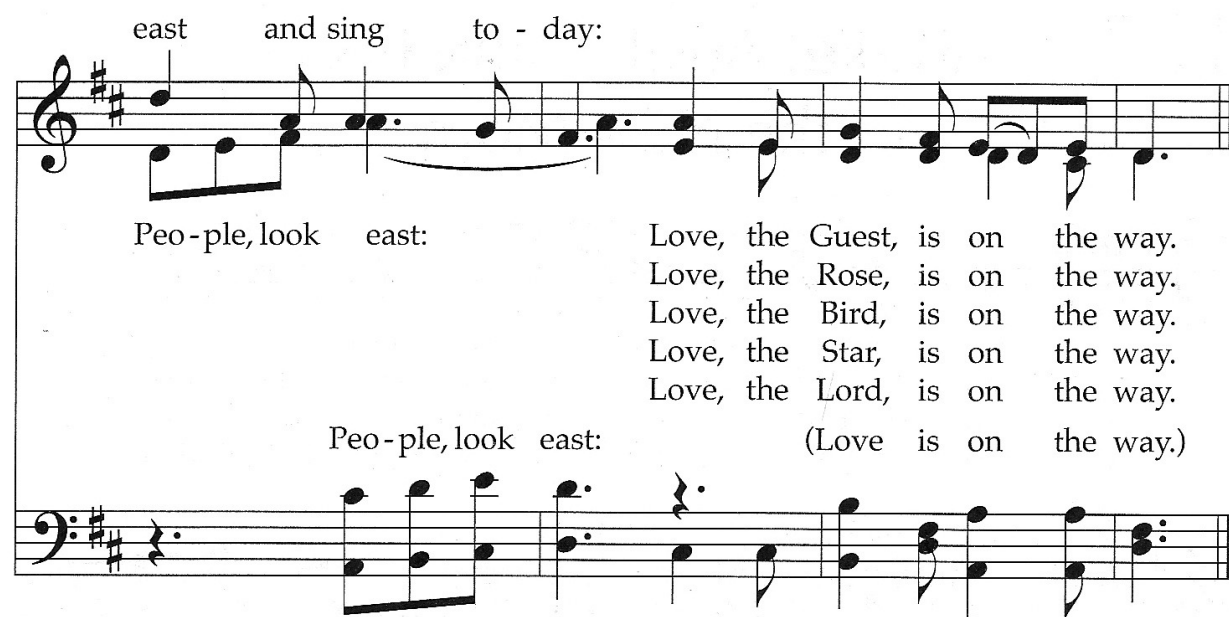
crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

Peo - ple, look



a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er.
 hum - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

east and sing to - day:



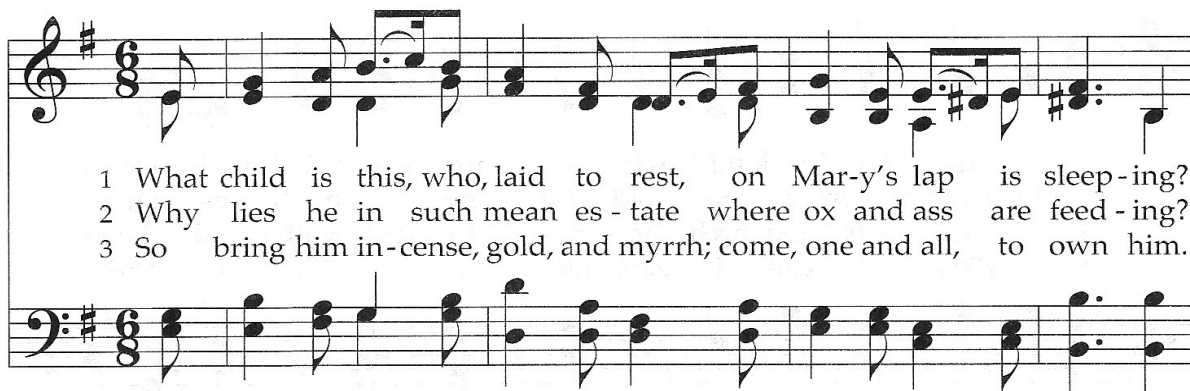
Peo - ple, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 Love, the Bird, is on the way.
 Love, the Star, is on the way.
 Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Peo - ple, look east: (Love is on the way.)

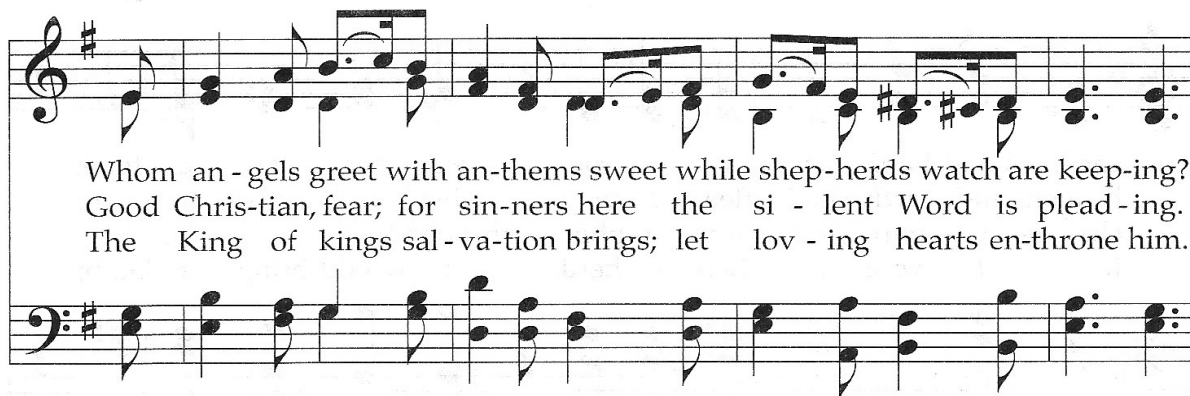
Children's Message

***Carol**

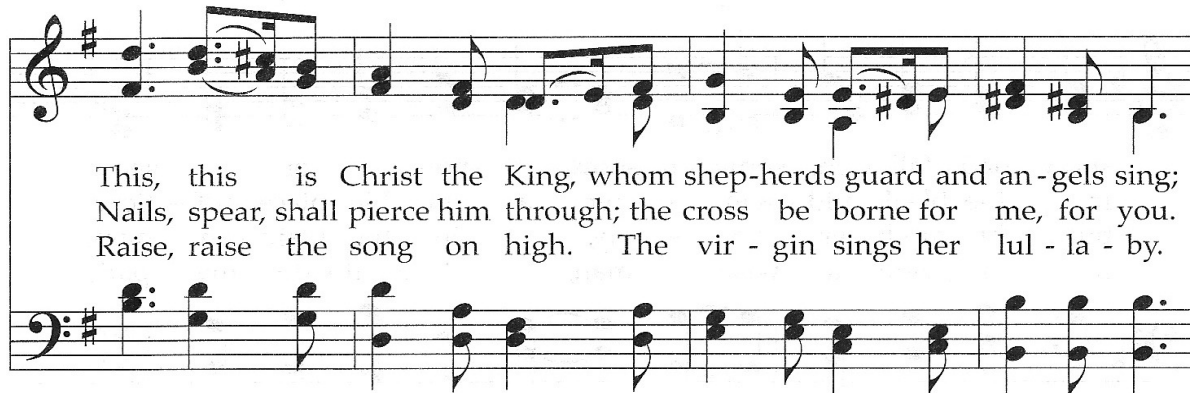
"What Child Is This"



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing;
 Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
 Raise, raise the song on high. The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by.



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

*Sign of Peace

One: May this sacred time of worship open our eyes, our minds and our hearts to the true gift of this season, which is the gift of peace.

All: May the peace of Christ be always within us, between us, over us, and all around us.

One: Stand and greet one another with the sign of peace.

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Lessons

One: Listen for the Word of God

Hebrew Lesson 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Gospel Lesson Luke 1:26-38

One: May God bless our reading, hearing, and doing of God's holy word.

All: Amen

Sermon

"We Can't Live in a Snowglobe"

*Carol

"Once in Royal David's City"

The image displays a musical score for the carol "Once in Royal David's City". It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system contains the first four lines of the carol, and the second system contains the remaining lines.

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
3 Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day like
4 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re -

cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
us he grew; he was lit - tle, weak and help - less; tears and
deem - ing love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and meek and
 smiles like us he knew; and he feels for all our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild; Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

TEXT: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848, alt.

MUSIC: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919

IRBY

8.7.8.7.7.7

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

Offertory

Choir Anthem Jesus, Savior, Lord I Adore You

Joseph M. Martin &
Jimbo Stevens

*Doxology

**"What can I give him, poor as I am.
 If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
 If I were a wise man, I would do my part.
 Yet what can I give him? Give my heart"**

(From Carol 128 – "In the Bleak Midwinter")

*Unison Prayer of Dedication

All: God-with-us, Emmanuel, nudge our hearts toward the promises of Christmas. Bless our offering and let it be hope for the hopeless, peace to our troubled world, joy to those hungry for good news and love to the least, the last and the left out. Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia!

SENDING

*Carol

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

TEXT: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860, alt.
MUSIC: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937
Music © 1937, ren. 1965 H. Augustine Smith Jr.
(admin. Fleming H. Revell Company, a div. of Baker Publishing Group)

GLORIA
7.7.7.7 with refrain

Refrain



Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

***Benediction**

Postlude

Fanfare

Dietrich Buxtehude

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.

Keeping in Prayer

Matthew Howe
Lynn Anderson
Doug Grant
Jesse Armstrong
Russ & Anne Stewart
Emily & Molly Phinney
Peggy Suntum

Jonathon Gellert
Rick Bogin
Bob Chase
Ginny Arsenault
Pat Andrews
Leila Clogston

Greg Friel
Jane
Amy Barber
Jack & Vicky Meyers
Bill Bonnet
Ron Decker

Bob Feeney, our Chicago Seminary Student

If you have any prayer requests, please fill out a prayer card located in the pew rack and drop it in the offering plate.

Save these dates

Church Council Meeting- January 24th at 7PM

ASH WEDNESDAY – February 14, 2018 – services at noon and 7:00 PM

PALM SUNDAY – March 25, 2018 – Rev. Dr. Charles Buck, Intentional Transitional Conference Minister of the NH Conference

MAUNDY THURSDAY – March 29, 2018 – celebration of Holy Communion at 7:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY – March 30, 2018 – Tenebrae Service at 7:00 PM

EASTER SUNDAY – April 1, 2018 – Contemplative Service at 8:00 AM

Announcements

Church Family Ministries

To allow children to attend Sunday morning services on Christmas Eve, we will not have a regular Sunday School sessions today. Children are invited to enjoy the morning and evening services with their families in the main sanctuary.

Poinsettias

Poinsettias: Please pick up your poinsettia(s) after 7:30 p.m. tonight.

Much appreciation to Paulette Brace, Deb McKinnon & Mike Nicholas for the lovely Christmas decorations that grace our church this Christmas season.

Feeding Our Children Together: Please bring those plastic bags you get from the grocery store or the drug store. We are going through them very fast because every bag is doubled and we are feeding lots of children this year! Put them in your car and bring them to church. *Thank you!!*

COFFEE HOUSE

The Coffee House at Plymouth Congregational UCC is a space where music, poetry, social issues, spirituality and faith intersect in a vibrant and informal manner.

SEEING SRI LANKA THROUGH THE EYES OF FAITH – Friday, January 19 at 6:30 PM - Andy and Lindley, who just returned from Sri Lanka where they served as Mission Volunteers for two years, will share their experiences with our mission partners in the Southeast Asian country.

SAVING AMERICAN TREES – Friday, February 23 at 6:30 PM – Douglas McLane will talk about his efforts to plant blight resistant Elms and American chestnut trees in Plymouth.

A STATE INCOME TAX IN NH? – Friday, March 23 at 6:30 PM – State Rep. Steve Rand will spell out the reasons why a state income tax is a commitment to social justice.

JAZZ IT UP – Friday, April 27 at 6:30 PM. Emily Lombardo, a music education major at Plymouth State University will share her love of jazz music with all of us.

SMUGGLING HOPE INTO AMERICA – Friday, May 18 at 6:30 PM – Polish Poet, teacher and translator Ewa Chrusciel will read some of her poems and speak about her journey as a Polish immigrant. Bright, funny and captivating, Ewa Chrusciel uses her love of words and personal experience to speak about the ways immigrants smuggle hope and dreams into America. Ms. Chrusciel is an Associate Professor of Humanities at Colby-Sawyer College.

CONCERT

The Whiffenpoofs of Yale – April 20 at 7:30 PM – The world's oldest and best known collegiate a cappella group is coming to Plymouth! The Whiffenpoofs of Yale will bring their musical excellence to our church in a concert that you can't miss. Arrive early to save a seat in our sanctuary. This concert made possible by the Joan Campbell Lovett Fund.



The Reverend Paulo G. França, Minister
Shannon Wharton, Church Office Administrator
Cindy Bjerklie, Director of Christian Education
Claire McIver, Director of Music
Colin McIver, Organist
Larry Spencer, Church Treasurer
Celia Woolverton, Grace Counseling

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Robert W. Feeny, Seminarian
Rev. Michael Carrier, liturgist
Roger, Deb, Natalie, and Anna Boyer, Advent Candle Lighters

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