



**Worship Service for December 24, 2023  
Christmas Eve Service of Communion  
and Candle Lighting**

**Prelude**

Marshall Davies

**Chiming of the Hour**

Aimee Broadhurst

**Welcome**

Pastor Felix

**\*Praise and Worship Song**

Congregation

**“We Light A Candle”**

We light a candle for hope

and our world that's longing for hope

We light a candle for hope

and our world that's longing for hope Holy One,

shine with the fire our lives oh

We light a candle for hope

and our world that's longing for hope

We light a candle for love  
and our world that's longing for love

We light a candle for love  
and our world that's longing for love Holy One,  
shine with the fire our lives oh

We light a candle for love  
and our world that's longing for love

We light a candle for joy  
and our world that's longing for joy

We light a candle for joy  
and our world that's longing for joy Holy One,  
shine with the fire our lives oh

We light a candle for joy  
and our world that's longing for joy

We light a candle for peace  
and our world that's longing for peace

We light a candle for peace  
and our world that's longing for peace Holy One,  
shine with the fire our lives oh

We light a candle for peace  
and our world that's longing for peace

## **Lighting of the Advent Candles**

Jessica Garcia & Melanie Hallier

LEADER: It is the season of short days and long nights. We light these candles to remember that even in natural darkness, our lights shine.

**ALL: The Christ Child we celebrate this evening reminds us who we are – anointed with hope, peace, joy and love.**

LEADER: With these flames we signify that Holy Light surrounds and fills us with love. There is no greater power than love. It is stronger than rulers and empires; stronger than despair; stronger even than death.

**ALL: Together we are walking the path of divine light, choosing love so the captives may be free.**

LEADER: So the homeless may be sheltered; so the hungry may be fed and the broken-hearted healed.

**ALL: Holy One, we open ourselves to you this  
Christmas Eve. May the truth of hope, peace, joy,  
and love transform our hearts so we may be bearers  
of Jesus' light in our world.**

**\*Carol**

Congregation

TNCH #144 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

vs. 1 & 3

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the Christ-child bring;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and seeker reconciled!"  
Joyful, all you saints arise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angel host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the Christ-child bring!"

Hail the Bearer of God's peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness,

Light and life our Jesus brings,  
Come with radiant, healing wings.  
Mildly laying glory by,  
Born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us all from earth,  
Born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the Christ-child bring!”

**\*Gathering Prayer**

Congregation

**ALL: Creator of both the light and the darkness,  
send your Holy Spirit upon us today. We who have  
so much to do, seek quiet spaces to hear your voice  
each day. We who are blessed in so many ways, long  
for the complete joy of your kingdom. We are one  
spiritual community abiding in your light. We open  
our hearts to be a home for Jesus.**

**Amen.**

## **Biblical Witness**

Pastor Felix

### Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

## **Special Music**

Plymouth Choir

“A Light of Hope, A Song of Peace”

We light a candle, and we remember there is hope in the world.

There is hope.

We sing our heartsong, and we remember there is peace in the world.

There is peace.

The days are getting colder, the nights are growing long, but there is warmth and wonder, a candle and a song.

And so we shine till doubt and sorrow cease.

A light of hope, a song of peace.

A single candle will light another, spreading hope through this world, spreading hope.

We'll share our heartsong with one another, singing peace to this world, singing peace.

The days are getting colder, the nights are growing longer, but there is warmth and wonder, a candle and a song.

And so we shine till doubt and sorrow cease.

A light of hope, a song of peace.

And so we shine till doubt and sorrow cease.

A light of hope, a song of peace.

A song of peace.

## **Contemporary Witness**

Aimee Broadhurst

### The Gift Is In the Giving: True Christmas Stories That Will Thrill and Inspire You by Bill Arienti

Although the act of exchanging gifts has overshadowed the sense of family and togetherness, there are still those who maintain the importance of love, sharing and togetherness as the cornerstone of the holiday. There are still those who realize that great riches can be amassed by selflessly giving of themselves to others than could ever be achieved by receiving. The knowledge that your actions have made an actual difference in some less fortunate person's life is a gift to you that cannot be wrapped, cannot be bought, but most certainly can be used the whole year through. It is a feeling that can make the darkest day bright and offer you warmth on the coldest day.

**Reflection**

Pastor Felix

“The Gift, The Gifts”



## **Special Music**

Plymouth Choir

### **“Love Be Yours, Love Be Mine”**

Love came down at Christmas,

Love was born at Christmas, stars and angels gave the sign.

Love shall be our token, Love be yours, and Love be mine.

Love came down at Christmas, Love incarnate, Love divine.

When blossoms flowered ‘mid the snows, upon a winter

night, was born the Child, the Christmas Rose, the King of  
love and light.

(Love came down)

angel sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced,

the grateful earth rejoiced; and at His blessed birth the stars

their exaltation voiced, their exaltation voiced. O come, let us  
adore Him;

(Love came down, Love came down, down to the manger at  
Christmas time).

O come, let us adore Him,

(Love came down, Love came down, down to the manger at  
Christmas).

O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Love came down, (Love came down), Love came down  
(Love came down) love came down.

All of earth and heaven sing (All of earth and heaven sing),  
to celebrate the holy birth.

Love and light, life joy He brings; and peace to all the earth.

Love came down at Christmas, Love amazing, love divine;

Love came down at Christmas, Love be yours, and Love be  
mine.

Love be mine.

Love be mine.

**Pastoral Prayer**

Pastor Felix

**Jesus' Prayer**

Congregation

The New Zealand Book of Prayer

**ALL: Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer,  
Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is  
heaven: The hallowing of your name echoes through**

**the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustains our hope and comes on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

**Invitation to Offering**

Aimee Broadhurst

Plymouth's General Fund &  
"UCC Christmas Fund" - Loose Offering

**Special Music**

Plymouth Choir

"The First Noel/Pachelbel's Canon"

The first Noel, the angels did say,  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay.  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,

On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel.

Born is the King of Israel.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,

For all to see there was a star shining in the east beyond  
them far.

And to the earth it gave great light, and it continued day and  
night.

The first Noel, the angel did say, Was to certain poor  
shepherds in fields as they lay.

(in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, On a cold  
winter's night that was so deep).

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel

Born is the King of Israel.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel

**\*Doxology**

Congregation

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God for all that Love has done

Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.

**\*Offertory Prayer**

Aimee Broadhurst

**ALL: Holy One, we open our hearts and spirits to new birth and transformation. We commit what we have gathered to help us sow seeds of love into the world. May this offering bring forth a new beginning and bring hope and peace wherever it is needed. We bless these gifts with joy and love to bring the beloved kingdom to all.**

**Amen.**

**Communion**

Pastor Felix

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Pastor Felix

**ALL: Loving One, in remembrance of the holy gift of Jesus, and of this bread and cup, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a living act of love, in union with your divine will for all the world.**

**Amen.**

**The Service Of Candle Lighting**

Pastor Felix

**\*Carol**

Congregation

TNCH # 134 "Silent Night, Holy Night"

Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon Mary  
Mother and child.  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,  
Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream  
From heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing 'Alleluia';  
Christ the Savior is born,  
Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night,  
Child of God, love's pure light,  
Radiant beams  
From your holy face  
Bring the dawn of redeeming grace;  
Jesus Christ at your birth,  
Jesus Christ at your birth.

**\*Benediction**

Pastor Felix

**\*Carol**

Congregation

TNCH #132 "Joy to the World" vs. 1 & 3

Joy to the world!  
The Lord is come;  
Let earth its praises bring;  
Let every heart  
Prepare Christ room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven  
And nature sing.

Christ rules the world  
With truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of  
God's righteousness  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders of God's love,  
And wonders, wonders,  
Of God's love.

**Postlude**

Marshall Davies

### **Today's Worship Participants**

Worship Leader: Aimee Broadhurst

Video: Mark Vines

Sound: Mary Davis

Projector: Amie & Shelby-Mak Friday

Lighting Technician: Jeff Mechler

Advent Candle Lighters: Jessica Garcia & Melanie Hallier

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