

The Plymouth Bell

Plymouth Congregational
United Church of Christ



2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison, WI 53704

web site: www.pcucc.org

March 2019

What's Going On?

- Worship
 - Hosting Ash Wednesday noon service (ecumenical Seeds of Peace)
- Events
 - Pancake Brunch 3/17
 - Association/Conference joint Annual meetings 4/5-6, Wisconsin Dells
 - Mission trip presentation 4/13
 - Easter Egg Hunt/breakfast 4/21
- Education
 - Church School each Sunday
 - Confirmation class 3/3 and 3/17 at 5 pm
- Service
- Community
 - Prayers, cards, calls, visits for those in need and shut-ins
- Always
 - Be present to God's Spirit
 - Love of God
 - Love of neighbor
 - Give thanks!

How Can I Help?

- Sundays:
 - Lector
 - Children's message
 - Greeters
 - Ushers
 - Social Hour hosts
 - Join the choir
 - Offer musical anthem
 - One Room Church School
- Community:
 - food pantry collection
 - PEP collection
 - Seeds of Peace
 - MOSES
- Get involved:
 - Participate in a team meeting
 - Bring new ideas to a Team
- Help needed:
 - Pancake brunch
 - Easter Egg decorating
 - Easter breakfast
- Always:
 - Prayers
 - Cards, calls, visits
 - Helping hand
 - Rides to events/Sunday service
- Give thanks!

Note: more information on events and ways to help are included later in this issue.

From the Pastor's Desk

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, on March 6th this year. A traditional scripture reading for the first Sunday in Lent is the story of Jesus in the wilderness, where the devil “tempts” Jesus. One way to look at this wilderness encounter is that Jesus, near the beginning of his ministry, is wrestling with what this ministry is supposed to be all about – is it about his glory and his power, or is it about doing the work of God in the world?

Now there are some who would say our country (or world even) is in wilderness times now, struggling with identity and direction, with some feeling that we have not only lost our moral compass, but feeling leaderless as well. In terms of Plymouth, though, I don't think anyone would say we are in wilderness times. Yes, we struggle with finances and deficit budgets, and yes, we would like there to be more of us worshipping and working and being community together. But we are an active congregation, doing lots of good in the world, caring for one another.

Not long after I began my tenure as pastor with you, we (the Executive Committee and I) began discussion about a review process, not just for me, but for the church as well. Now there are some who might say “if it ain't broke, why fix it.” But such review processes are used more and more in churches and are standard practice in many businesses. We (Plymouth leadership and I) think it will be beneficial for Plymouth to develop a “mutual ministry assessment plan.” Our three-year plan has areas of focus for the pastor each year, setting goals and action items, and a process for review each year, which will include the congregation. It also has focus questions to center a review of the overall ministry and mission of the congregation (hence a mutual ministry assessment: both pastor and congregation). This year, the first year of the plan, will be a year of focus for me on “providing leadership for high-quality, relevant worship experiences,” successfully navigating the world of technology and social media,” and “maintaining personal, professional, and spiritual balance,” all areas that the Executive Committee and I agreed were vital to the ministry and growth of Plymouth. There will be more information forthcoming on this review plan as the year unfolds.

Our Moderator, Marleen Lippert, has shared with Council and other leaders that she wants this to be a year where we focus on strengthening our communications, both in outreach, but just as importantly our internal communications. And so we wanted to share with you that we have begun this review process, as part of this effort to enhance the lines of communication we have, and to further strengthen the mutual ministry we have as Plymouth church. We wanted to share this information with you as well because we think it is a good model for us in our daily lives, to, every once in a while, stop and evaluate: how is it with my life? How is it with my relationships, with my communication with family and friends, with where I am in my physical, mental, and spiritual health? What is going well, what could I be doing better, what do I want to improve, and how can I go about it? I think it was Socrates who said, “the unexamined life is not worth living.” I am sure about one thing: that with a little examination you will find out that there is evidence that God is blessing you, that God loves you, that God cares for you, that God wishes for you peace. And sometimes when it is hard to find evidence of such things, we can get help in our “review” through the blessed community we call Plymouth.

Peace and blessings,



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The Mission of Plymouth Congregational UCC

To joyfully celebrate God’s love and the gospel of Jesus Christ in our worship, our teaching, and our lives;

To create a diverse, accepting faith community that welcomes all and empowers all to accept the grace God freely offers to each of us, no matter who we are or where we are in life’s spiritual journey; and

To develop, demonstrate, and strengthen Christian discipleship by reaching out to all God’s people, caring for those in need, and seeking to lead the world toward love, justice, and peace.

Adopted by Church Council on August 16, 2007

Among Our Friends and Members

Redacted for privacy considerations.

Church School News

March begins the church season of Lent. Our Lenten mission project this year is close to home. During March and April, the church school students will collect money for PEP, the Personal Essentials Pantry. We will also learn more about this great program which shares our building.

March 10th is also Camp Sunday. We will meet together in Fellowship Hall for camp crafts, games and songs. Coffee hour treats will be our own versions of camp favorites (smores, trail mix, ants on a log) and money donated at coffee hour will go toward the camp scholarship fund.

Ash Wednesday, March 6

Plymouth Church is hosting the Eastside Ecumenical Ash Wednesday service on March 6th. You are invited to worship together with our friends and host this service on Wednesday.

Book Club Update

Because Plymouth is hosting the Seeds of Peace Ash Wednesday service at noon on March 6th, Plymouth's Book Club will not hold its usual first Wednesday of the month meeting that day.

We will discuss our March book, Anne LaMott's Almost Everything: Notes on Hope, at the April 3rd meeting. To learn more about the book club, or to be added to the book club email list, please talk to Pastor Leslie, Sally, or Ann Lacy (213-4469, annwilsonlacy@gmail.com).

Pancake Brunch Fundraiser

Congregational Life Team invites you (and your friends and neighbors) to a Pancake Brunch Sunday, March 17th, at 10:30 am. A free will offering will be gladly received for the Goodman Food Pantry.

Easter Garden Sign up

Once again, you have the opportunity to purchase lilies for the Easter Season. You may purchase a plant, which will be delivered to one of our homebound members, and you may also purchase a plant for yourself to take home after the Easter Worship service on April 21st. The deadline for ordering is April 1st and plants will be delivered Friday, April 19th. Please contact Sylvia Adrian with any questions (332-8691 or sradrian@wisc.edu).

Daylight Savings Time Begins March 10

You are reminded to set your clocks ahead Saturday night, March 9th so as not to miss church on March 10th!

Think spring! Garden bed planning session March 10

Even though it seems like winter will never end, Plymouth's Garden Friends (the group of volunteers that tends our garden beds) are ready to plan for the gardening season! We'll gather in Fellowship Hall (look for Ann Lacy and Carol Walker) after the service on Sunday, March 10th to decide what to plant in 2019.

March Pantry Items Cereal, Oatmeal & Pancake Mix for Goodman; Money for PEP

Our featured items for the Goodman Community Center's food pantry in March: cereal, oatmeal and pancake mix. For PEP, we are continuing to ask for money to buy products. Checks made out to "PEP-Atwood" or cash in an envelope clearly labelled "PEP" may be placed in the offering basket.

Office Hours

Pastor's office hours: Tuesday-Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm and by appointment. Monday is the Pastor's day off; emergency contacts only, please.

Office Administrator's hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Deadlines: Articles for the weekly bulletin insert and weekly newsletter are due by Thursday, 8:00 am. Please email articles to Sally at swolf@pcucc.org).

Brief Update from SpaceCom on the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen renewal project

Secure in the knowledge that the money requested to fund the renewal project was approved at the Annual Meeting on February 3rd, SpaceCom members are now able to start nailing down the specifics of the plan with general contractor Rob Corbit. SpaceCom has also begun connecting with the Business, Congregational Life, Education, and Worship Teams, and with our regular user groups, to assess and reorganize storage in the various closets and other areas around Fellowship Hall and in the kitchen. And before the project begins, we will work with Team Leaders to reevaluate the bulletin boards that are currently hanging in Fellowship Hall. Please direct questions and input to Pastor Leslie or to SpaceCom chair Ann Lacy, 213-4469, annwilsonlacy@gmail.com.



March Birthday Blessings

03/02 – John Reinders

03/03 – Meg Shepherd

03/06 – Ginny Rickert

03/07 – Ben Benedetti

03/10 – Sam Rickert

03/11 – Derek Binkley

03/12 – Bonnie Peterson

03/15 – Kathy Hodgkins

03/17 – David Beckett

03/17 – Jim Honnold

03/18 – Shelley Hagan

03/19 – Ron Ohlsen

03/19 – Aiden Welch

03/20 – Virginia Toepfer

03/31 – Cynthia Roskovic

One Great Hour of Sharing

We sometimes think that “imagination” means something escapist or illusory. Yet, imagination is not something unreal or fake. No, it is essential to God’s hope for creation. Hear how the Apostle Paul put it: “Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine....” (Ephesians 3:20-21). God imagines a world where all are safe, all are loved, all are fed. And God imagines us participating in such a world.

You see, when we use our imaginations in the way that God does, we can begin to envision – and work for! – a world where no child goes unfed, un-housed, or unloved; where no one ever fears abuse or violence; where clean water is not a dream but a reality for all; where small farmers do their work with dignity and are paid a fair wage for their labors; where agricultural practices enrich and renew the land rather than deplete it; where survivors of natural disasters have the resources they need, now and for years to come; where vulnerable immigrants are welcomed in Christ’s name.



Can YOU imagine these things? Through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing what we can imagine becomes every more a reality for more and more people. Please give generously! “More Than You Can Imagine...”

**One Great
HOUR**
OF SHARING

We will be participating with others in the UCC and across other faith partners in this spring’s One Great Hour of Sharing special offering, dedicated in our worship service on March 31st. There will be special envelopes available to use for your giving to OGHS or write “OGHS” on your check made out to Plymouth UCC.

Combined Association/Conference Annual Meetings

This year, because the Wisconsin Conference is hosting the General Synod for our national United Church of Christ in June, our Conference Annual Meeting dates have shifted to April and will take on a different flavor. We will be including time for the Annual Meetings of our four geographical Associations as well. ***The dates for our Combined Annual Meeting are April 5-6, 2019, and we will meet at the Glacier Canyon Conference Center at Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells.*** Our theme for this Combined 2019 Annual Meeting is ***"Living the Light."*** For further information, go to the Conference website under the "About" tab, Annual Meeting, or, go to wcucc.org/annualmeeting.

If you would like to represent Plymouth at the meetings (i.e., be a voting delegate, have your costs paid by the church), please let our Moderator Marleen Lippert know ASAP. Plymouth has two voting delegates, in addition to the pastor.

You are Needed and Wanted!

Have you wondered why you've never been invited to join a team? Don't wait on an invitation – the teams are busy with projects and the work of the church, so they tend not to be good at sending out invitation, but the “welcome mat” is always out for you (and you are needed!!!). Anyone (everyone!) can participate in any of the Team meetings, either as an observer/listener, as an “ideas” person, or as someone who helps on a project (projects) done by the Team. You don't even have to be a “member” of the church to participate; all are welcome.

The usual schedule for Team meetings (and Team Leader, in case you have questions about the Team) is:

- First Sunday of the month: Discipleship Team (Ann Lacy) and Immigration Group (Laura Stalder) on alternate months
- Second Sunday: Education Team (Melissa LeBlanc)
- Third Sunday: Congregational Life Team (Dan Rolfs)
- Fourth Sunday: Worship Team (Sylvia Adrian)
- Second Thursday (7:15 pm): Business Team (Daniel Hacker)
- Third Thursday (7:30 pm): Church Council (Marleen Lippert)

Meeting locations are announced in the bulletin or during “announcements” time in the service (Business Team and Council meet in the Lounge).

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Discipleship Team Update

The Discipleship Team and the Immigration Group are planning to meet on alternating first Sundays in 2019. Both groups meet in the Lounge after the service, and both welcome anyone s interested in learning more about immigration justice and outreach and mission to attend a meeting. The next two Discipleship Team meetings will be on Sunday, March 3 and Sunday, May 5. To be added to an email list for updates, please contact Ann Lacy (213-4469, annwilsonlacy@gmail.com)

Some Team highlights from the first part of 2019:

- **“Passing Jane’s Pocket” collections in January:** thanks to everyone who put money into the pockets when they were passed on January 6 and 13: \$532 was collected! This was supplemented with money left from the “Loaves and Fishes” project and shared equally between three organizations (chosen by Plymouth’s mission trip travelers) that are working to help migrants in the Arizona-Mexico borderlands: the Green Valley-Sahuarita Samaritans (<https://www.gvs-samaritans.org/>), No More Deaths – No Mas Muertes (<http://forms.nomoredeaths.org/en/>), and Cruzando Fronteras (<https://fronteras.azdiocese.org/>).
- Students were delighted with the variety of soups and sides prepared by Plymouth volunteers for a **meal at The Crossing** campus ministry the evening of Sunday, February 10. Although coordinator Linda Voit was unable to be there, she had organized everything so beautifully beforehand that the meal practically served itself (with transportation assistance from Kevin Voit and Sally Curran Wolf...) Thanks to the many Plymouth soup and salad makers for providing such a delicious and nutritious meal!
- We are actively seeking signatures on a petition in support of Voces de la Frontera’s **“Driver Licenses for All” campaign.** To sign the petition see Pastor Leslie or Ann Lacy. For more information on the campaign: <https://vdlf.org/drivercards/>
- **Financial update:** at the recommendation of Plymouth Treasurer Rick Reiner—and with the support of Investment Group Coordinator David Mickle—the Discipleship Team has invested most of the money remaining in the team’s share of Ruth Vetter’s generous bequest in a “CD ladder” at Monona State Bank. CDs will earn more than if the money were just in a savings account, but will also keep funds accessible for mission projects. Monies disbursed so far this year from Team funds:
 - \$100 to fulfill the fifth and final year of our pledge to sponsor the Mourning Dove in the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas.
 - \$400 in annual dues to local criminal justice reform organization, MOSES.
 - \$1026 for a Plymouth ad in every issue (six total) of the *Eastside News*.

Looking ahead

- Plymouth’s mission trip travelers are planning a public event, **“Bringing the Border Home: Reflections on Immigration and the Wall”**, for Saturday, April 13 from 3-4:30 at Plymouth.
- Plymouth’s Immigration Group and Lake Edge UCC’s Board of Christian Outreach are looking forward to further **collaboration on immigration justice.**
- **Featured pantry items for March:** cereal, oatmeal & pancake mix for Goodman; for PEP, we continue to encourage donations of money to purchase most-needed items.

Life & Ministry of God's People of Plymouth UCC, March 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					9:30 am MDG 5:30pm OA 6:30pm IA	8am Women's AA B'fast 10am KIS 10:30am ACA
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8:45am Choir 9:30am Worship & Church School 10:30am Coffee Hr. Discipleship Team 12-2 PEP 5pm Confirmation	5:30 pm ACA 6 pm SOTS 6:30pm ACA	3pm Girl Scout 8219 4pm Orion 6:45pm Co- Counsel	Noon Ash Wednesday Service 5:30 pm YFWG 6 pm Depression Group 6:30pm SOTS 7pm Recorders	11:30am PEP	9am Dane Co Coalition 1:00pm SpaceCom 5:30pm OA 6:30pm IA	8am Men's AA B'fast 10am KIS 10:30am ACA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
8:45am Choir 9:30am Worship & Church School Camp Sunday 10:30am Coffee Hr. Education 12-2 PEP & YFWG	5:30 pm ACA 6 pm SOTS 6:30pm ACA	3pm Girl Scout Troop 7026 4pm Orion	6 pm Depression Group 6:30pm SOTS 7pm Recorders	11:30am PEP 7:15 pm Business Team	9:30 am MDG 5:30pm OA 6:30pm IA	10am KIS 10:30am ACA
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
8:45am Choir 9:30am Worship Church School 10:30am Pancake Brunch Congregational Life 12-2 PEP 5pm Confirmation	5:30 pm ACA 6 pm SOTS 6:30pm ACA	2pm Contemporary Reading Group 4pm Orion 6:45 pm Co- Counsel	5:30 pm YFWG 6 pm Depression Group 6:30pm SOTS 7pm Recorders	11:30am- 3pm PEP 7:30 pm Church Council	5:30pm OA 6:30pm IA	10am KIS 10:30am ACA
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
8:45am Choir 9:30am Worship Church School 10:30am Coffee Hr. Worship Team 12-2 PEP& YFWG	5:30 pm ACA 6 pm SOTS 6:30pm ACA	3pm Girl Scout Troop 8267 4pm Orion 6:45pm Co- Counsel	5:30pm SOTS 6 pm Depression Group 7pm Recorders	11:30am- 3pm PEP	5:30pm OA 6:30pm IA	10am KIS 10:30am ACA
31						
8:45am Choir 9:30am Worship Church School 10:30am Coffee Hr 12-2 PEP						

