

The Plymouth Bell

Plymouth Congregational
United Church of Christ
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What's Going On?

Worship

Sundays at 9:30 am
Remembrance Sunday 5/26 at 9:30 am
Immigration Justice 6/2
Children's program and Confirmation and Pentecost 6/9

Events

Emergency Action Plan training after worship 5/12
Just Bakery at 5/19 Coffee Hour
Community worship and street fair at General Synod (Milwaukee June 23, 2:30 pm; buses available)

Education

Church School each Sunday
Confirmation class 5/19 at 5 pm

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

Wider Church

Volunteers needed for General Synod in Milwaukee June 21-25

Community:

food pantry collection
PEP collection
Seeds of Peace
MOSES

Get involved:

Participate in a team meeting or project
Join the Recorders Ensemble

Always:

Prayers
Cards, calls, visits
Helping hand
Rides to events/Sunday service

Give thanks!

From the Pastor's Desk

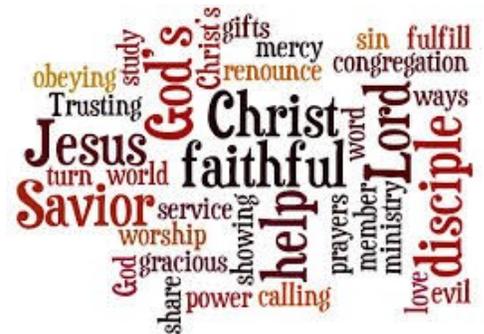
The Confirmation class is currently in the discernment process, each called on to make a decision whether to “be confirmed” at a service on Sunday, June 9th (Pentecost Sunday).

We have taken as our theme for the class “Be The Church,” seen on the UCC banners and bumper stickers, focusing not on memorizing scripture or attesting to what they believe, but rather on how each of us is called to “be” the church, to “be” a person of God, in what we do and say. This is not to say that what we believe isn’t important, and not to say that what we believe doesn’t shape what we say or do, which of course it does. We have been studying what beliefs have shaped this “be the church” call to ministry and mission.



The confirmands have been given a few exercises to do to help them see the many ways one can “be the church,” including helping out in a church school class or social event at church, helping with a service project, and even doing sermon reviews. They have attended class and participated in discussions about issues of faith, the history of the church, and have otherwise shown themselves to be quite the theologians (that is, people who study God).

We also discussed that what we believe develops over time, may even change as we grow and experience more of life, as you have no doubt experienced yourself. I think it is your understanding as well as mine that confirmation is not “graduation” from church – it is the beginning of the next step on one’s spiritual journey, not a final declaration “you have learned all you need to learn.” As such, when our young folks are confirmed in June, we all have an opportunity to “re-confirm” our faith, in God and Jesus Christ, and also to re-confirm our commitment to each other as a congregation of caring people, and to re-confirm to the work of this congregation to show God’s love for all creation.



So let us remember that we too are called, each moment of our lives, to re-confirm to God and to God’s ways, including to love and support one another. Join me in holding our confirmation class in our prayers, as we hope and pray that they will decide to continue to “be the church” with us, to be blessed and be a blessing.

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

Worship News:

Remembrance Sunday 5/26: remembering those we love who have entered eternal life with God, and especially honoring those in our congregation who passed away in the last year.

Immigration Justice Sunday 6/2: praying for humane immigration policies and God’s justice as they seek a fresh start away from poverty, persecution, and despair

Pentecost Sunday/Children’s Day/Confirmation 6/9: yes, all rolled into one – it should be fun!

Sunday Lectionary Readings for May:

May 12: Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30

May 19: Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35

May 26: Acts 16:9-15; Psalm 67; Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5; John 5:1-9

June 2: Acts 16:16-34; Psalm 97; Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21; John 17:20-26

Help needed: Blessings are experienced by all in attendance when they hear many voices, and are greeted, helped, and serviced by many of their friends, so be sure to sign up to help as liturgist, greeter, children’s messenger, and/or coffee hour server. See below for the schedule of worship assistants who have signed up so far for May (lots of opportunities still available, as you can see), and be sure to **sign up to help!**

	Liturgist	Greeter	Children’s Message	Coffee Hour Organizers
May 5				
May 12		<i>Welch Family</i>		
May 19				
May 26				

~Announcements~

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

After a busy few weeks celebrating Palm Sunday, Easter and Earth Day, regular Sunday School classes resume on May 5th and continue through the month. The older elementary and middle school students will be studying the Gospel of John, talking about the experiences of Jesus and his disciples after the resurrection. We will also be preparing for Children's Day on June 9th, as we mark the end of the Church School year and celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the church.

Through the spring, our Sunday school offering money will continue to be earmarked for donation to the Personal Essentials Pantry, along with the money collected by the children during Lent.

Thanks to all for your support of our church school programs.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday, May 19 after worship – Just Bakery Bake Sale

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN REFRESHER SESSION, MAY 12

Have you noticed those documents with a colored cross on the cover mounted on walls throughout the church? Do you know what to do if you hear the fire alarm sounding during worship service? Where to meet outside the church in the event we need to evacuate because of an emergency? How to handle a disruptive visitor? What to do if you smell natural gas in the Kitchen?

The Plymouth Church Emergency Action Plan (EAP) was carefully developed to provide guidance in the event of an emergency. You are invited to grab your coffee and a treat and drop by either one of the brief EAP refresher sessions being held after Worship Service on *Sunday, May 5th* and *Sunday, May 12th* in Fellowship Hall near the former Library area. Bill Mollway, the session leader, promises that the meetings will be brief – lasting 20 minutes or so. While all are invited to attend, it is especially important that people identified with special responsibilities under the EAP -- members of the Crisis Response Team, medical first responders, ushers, and church leaders – attend to become acquainted (or reacquainted) with their roles in an emergency.

Hard copies of the Emergency Action Plan will be available at the sessions. You can also download an electronic version of our current EAP by visiting: <http://bit.ly/2PrxrLj>.

STAFFING CHANGES

Barbara St. John is our new half-time office administrator. Her first day was May 1, 2019. You can contact her at office@pcucc.org and her office hours will be Monday through Friday 1:00-5:00 pm. Barbara currently works part time in the office at Memorial UCC, and is quite familiar with all things UCC and the general workings of a church office. Please offer her our usual warm and respectful Plymouth welcome when you call or come in the office (or otherwise are in contact with her).

Sally will continue on as financial secretary; any issues about contribution records, expense reimbursements, team budgets, and church financials should be addressed to Sally at her current email at swolf@pcucc.org.

~Announcements~

GENERAL SYNOD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED and INVITATION to WORSHIP

General Synod: Every two years the UCC gathers for General Synod, a time to connect, worship, fun, information, and sharing of voices to help shape the UCC's future and the future of our world.

Where and when: Milwaukee (The Wisconsin Center), June 21-25.

Volunteer needs: Greeters, childcare, word-processing and "app"bassadors, etc. See info on sign-up table, or at WCUCC.org/about-wcucc/the-general-synod/

Sunday worship: All are invited, free of charge, to the Sunday afternoon worship service (June 23), followed by a street fair with food trucks and entertainment. Worship is at the Wisconsin Center at 2:30 p.m. with Traci Blackman preaching, followed by the street festival. There will be motor coaches going to the event from Madison. The cost is about \$17 per person. Let Pastor Leslie know ASAP if you would like a ride to this event.

UPDATE on the FELLOWSHIP HALL and KITCHEN RENEWAL PROJECT

The Fellowship Hall and kitchen renewal project is on a slight pause. We are in the process of getting an estimate from Bachmann Construction. This was to be a second estimate, but by mutual agreement Rob Corbit has withdrawn from consideration as a contractor for the project. Rob was not able to serve as a general contractor or project manager, and now that SpaceCom members—with the help of the Business Team—fully understand the scope of the project, it is clear that we need a project manager. It is still our hope that the renewal work will be done this summer, although it is unlikely that work will begin in the middle of May as had been projected earlier. SpaceCom continues to work with the Teams of the church 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. We also welcome input on whether to keep the bulletin boards that are currently hanging in Fellowship Hall. Connect with Pastor Leslie or SpaceCom chair Ann Lacy annwilsonlacy@gmail.com, (608) 213-4469 for more information on the overall project or on storage assessment and reorganization, or to give input on the bulletin boards.

BRING YOUR SWEET TOOTH to CHURCH!

On May 19th, Plymouth Church folks will have two opportunities to indulge their taste for scrumptious bakery sweets. At the coffee hour, sponsored by the Congregational Life Team, we will offer freshly baked goodies made by the bakers of Just Bakery. Additional items for taking home will be sold during coffee hour by the Just Bakery team. Just Bakery is a unique, four month training program designed to prepare formerly-incarcerated men and women to work in commercial bakeries. Students create, bake, market and sell their products with proceeds used to support the program. This is an initiative of Madison-area Urban Ministry (MUM), a non-profit interfaith organization that helps underserved populations. Please come on the 19th, ready to eat and purchase delicious treats. Not only will it satisfy your sweet tooth, but it is also a way for Plymouth Church to show support of the Just Bakery program and to actively help its participants work towards their goals of self-sufficiency. Proceeds from all items purchased will go directly to Just Bakery.

FUNDRAISER for PEP-ATWOOD

Enjoy the 2nd Annual Trivia Challenge, a fun fundraiser event for PEP-Atwood, on Saturday May 18, 4:00-7:00 pm at Lake Edge UCC (4200 Buckeye Rd.) fellowship hall. Join with other folks from the Seeds of Peace churches for brain twists, fun facts, laughter, snacks and fellowship, raising money for PEP and accepting personal care product donations (e.g., shampoo, toilet paper, diapers, etc.). See the full list of accepted donations at <https://www.essentialspantry.org/home/index.php/products/the-essentials>

**Moon Beach Camp Work Weekend
May 17-18-19 (Friday-Saturday-Sunday), 2019**

Moon Beach relies on volunteers throughout the year to keep our sanctuary functional and beautiful! If you love this place, enjoy creating community around shared goals and have wanted to see what happens “behind the scenes” at Moon Beach, this camp is for you!

Everyone who is willing to pitch-in is welcome! We have both skilled and unskilled tasks to be completed – from cabin maintenance, painting, plumbing and carpentry to stacking firewood, basic trail clearing and raking! There is no shortage of tasks to be done. Youth who are ready to learn responsibility, work ethic and good stewardship are welcome to attend with their parents/church leaders.

This Spring Work Camp includes Friday night lodging, Saturday’s breakfast/lunch/dinner and lodging, and ends after Sunday brunch. We invite you to arrive anytime on Friday night to settle in and enjoy free time. After a day of exertion on Saturday, we’ll have some community time and free time on Saturday evening. We’ll send you home feeling accomplished and spiritually refreshed (even if your body’s a little sore) after worship and a delicious brunch on Sunday morning!

(Note: If you do NOT plan to attend for the entire session, please let Moon Beach know when to expect you, what meals you’ll be having with us, and when you plan to leave.)

All Plymouth youth, adults and families are invited to this fun-filled spring weekend of mission and service to our Outdoor Ministry program along with other UCC church members. Invite a friend, relative or neighbor along, too. Sign up on the work camp sheet on the Christian Education bulletin board. We’ll ride share in several vans and leave on Friday morning or right after school and return on Sunday afternoon. Requested donation is \$75 to \$100.

Thank you for your willingness to make Moon Beach come alive for guests throughout the year!

May Birthday Blessings

- 05/11 – Bob Stalder
- 05/16 – Zoe Christofferson
- 05/16 – Cindy Spetz
- 05/17 – Vicki Hall
- 05/19 – Michael Hall
- 05/20 – Sylvia Adrian
- 05/22 – Rita Honnold
- 05/23 – Cory Manier
- 05/26 – Carrie Hinterthuer



Discipleship Team Update

The Discipleship Team and the Immigration Group are holding alternating monthly meetings in 2019. Over the summer, the Discipleship Team will meet on May 5 and July 7, and the Immigration Group will meet on June 2 and August 4. To be added to an email list for Discipleship Team updates, please contact Ann Lacy (213-4469, annwilsonlacy@gmail.com).

Updates from the Discipleship Team and the Immigration Group include:

- As described in more detail elsewhere in this issue of the Bell, “Bringing the Border Home: Reflections on Immigration and the Wall”, the April 13th public event about Plymouth’s mission trip to the Arizona-Mexico borderlands was well-received by attendees.
- Rather than trying to organize another passport fair, the Immigration Group approved using some of the money remaining in its EHC grant to provide passport assistance to families identified by Dane County Immigration Affairs Specialist, Fabiola Hamdan. With this money, Fabiola has established the “Plymouth UCC Passport Initiative” at Centro Hispano; other faith communities are being encouraged to contribute to this fund.
- Almost everyone at Plymouth has signed a petition in support of Voces de la Frontera’s “Driver Licenses for All” campaign; the next step is the “Day Without Latinxs and Immigrants” rally at the Capitol at 11 am on May 1.
- Four people—Leslie Schenk, Ann Lacy, Bill Mollway, and Lynn Welch—are attending an intensive anti-racism training sponsored by the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ at Moon Beach on April 28-30. The Discipleship Team will follow up on this training by exploring the idea of using UCC curriculum to offer anti-racism/white privilege workshops at Plymouth in the coming year.

Featured pantry items for May: canned vegetables for Goodman; for PEP, we continue to encourage donations of money to purchase most-needed items. Many thanks to all who donated in April!

Mark your calendars for these upcoming mission and outreach events at Plymouth:

- **Sunday, June 2, Immigration Sunday at Plymouth:** the service will feature Voces de la Frontera’s Madison organizer, Diana Perez. We will “pass Jane’s pocket” on June 2 (and also on June 9), and Voces will receive the money collected.
- **Friday, June 21, Make Music Madison:** Plymouth will again host live music as part of this annual citywide event.

Eight Plymouth Representatives Travel to Arizona On Mission Trip

In January of this year, eight representatives from Plymouth traveled to Arizona on a church-sponsored mission trip, with the intent of learning first-hand about the culture and issues of the Mexican-American borderlands. On Saturday, April 13th, the group shared their experiences at a public presentation hosted in Plymouth's sanctuary.

At the event, each of the travelers- Laura Stalder, Bill Mollway, Rain Zephyr, Wilder Deitz, Katarina Klafka, Carol Martell, Ann Lacy, and Pastor Leslie Schenk- shared about a particular part of the trip, as well as the effect that their experiences had had on them. The group described a guided walking tour through Nogales, Sonora, where they interacted with or witnessed recent deportees, cartel members and aspiring asylum seekers, and a visit to Operation Streamline, a mass sentencing operation for those accused of border-crossing violations.



Other topics included the 2012 shooting death of José Antonio Rodríguez by American Border Patrol agents, the visual aesthetic of the omnipresent border wall, and the harsh reality of migration on foot through the Arizonan-Sonoran desert. The group also shared information on some of the more notable individuals and groups working in the area to help alleviate the plight of migrants and deportees.

After the mission trip participants had spoken, Dane County Immigration Affairs Specialist Fabiola Hamdan gave an informational presentation on the state of immigration and deportation in Dane County and around the state of Wisconsin. Part of her talk dealt with the wide-reaching impact of a punitive, state-wide immigration raid that took place last fall.

The event brought in approximately 70 attendees, several of whom offered insightful commentary following the presentation. Those interested in learning more took home additional literature provided by the mission trip team and by representatives from several local advocacy groups.

~April Council Meeting Highlights~

Council met on April 25th with Moderator Marleen Lippert presiding (in her return after knee surgery). The main topic of discussion was a request from Rev. Julia Weaver (a UCC minister leading the Backyard Mosaic Women's Project) for Plymouth to be the local church as part of the four-way covenant she would have with the Southwest Association UCC, which is the governing body holding the standing for any UCC clergy serving in this area. Council talked with Weaver about various aspects of the project and asked for further clarification about certain aspects of the covenant sought.

Updates on church finances and various projects were also given.

~The Plymouth Bell~

A Newsletter of

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

An Open & Affirming, Just Peace, Immigrant-Welcoming Congregation

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Pastor's office hours: Tuesday-Friday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm and by appointment. Monday is the Pastor's day off; emergency contacts only, please.

Office Manager's hours: Monday-Friday, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

Deadlines: Articles for the weekly bulletin insert are due by Thursday at Noon. Please email articles to Barbara at officemanager@pcucc.org.