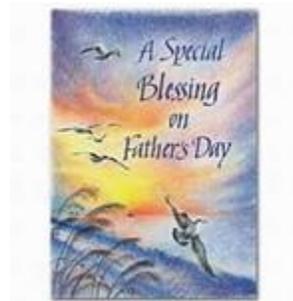


**A SERVICE TO UNITE US IN SPIRIT  
FOR SUNDAY JUNE 19, 2022  
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**

**(and a daily prayer)**

[Click Here](#) for a PDF of this Bulletin

***Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ  
2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison WI***



Pastor: Rev. Leslie Schenk

Accompanist: Darek Hartwig

Ministers: All the people of Plymouth Congregational UCC

Worship Help: Steve Landkamer (reader and greeter), Kathy Gentz (usher), Bill

Mollway (tech and audio support), ? (Social Hour hosts)

**The Community Gathers**

Lighting of the Candles

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome

Announcements

♪Prelude

**Gathering Prayer (based on Psalm 42)**

*Pastor: As a deer longs for flowing streams of water, our souls reach out to seek our God.*

**All: Where is our God? In the cleansing of the rain, in the refreshing of a pool, in the predictability of a faucet.**

Pastor: *With glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, our voices lift in praise and wonder.*

**All: Where is our God? In the harmony of voices joined, in the stillness of silence, in the gladness of noisy praise.**

Pastor: *As deep calls to deep, we come to worship the Living God.*

**All: Where is our God? In the echoes of our prayers, in voices raised in advocacy, in the still small voice of the one seeking help. The Holy One is with us!**

♪ Opening Hymn No. 69 *Come God, Creator, Be Our Shield*

**Come God creator be our shield, the one to whom our cares we yield, and in our worship faith impart, your grace and calm to every heart.**

**Come gracious Jesus be our guest, our morning joy our evening rest, and in our daily lives impart, your love and peace to every heart.**

**Come Holy Spirit be our guide, our strength to risk against the tide, that in God's world we shall impart, your light and hope to every heart.**

### **The Community Shares God's Word**

#### **Scripture Reading: Luke 8:26-33**

Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me"—for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

**Message** Amanda Gennerman, Attorney, Community Immigration Law Center

## **The Community Responds to God's Word**

### **Litany for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers**

Pastor: *O God of the wandering Israelites, refugees in a harsh land, who heard their cries for freedom, comfort, and refuge,*

**All: Forgive us for having hearts as hard as Pharaoh's when we resist your calls for care and mercy for those who have fled or are fleeing violence.**

Pastor: *O God of the Psalmist, who hears the lament of those surrounded by death, destruction, and fear,*

**All: Give us the strength to embody "the land of the living" where refugees and asylum-seekers can safely begin life anew. [from Psalm 27]**

Pastor: *O God of the Christ-Child, whose own earthly parents were forced to flee the state-sanctioned violence of Herod and find safety in a foreign nation,*

**All: Give us hearts like the people of Egypt to offer not only refuge but welcome to those who arrive at our doorstep in need of safety and protection.**

Pastor: *O God who calls us to offer welcome to the stranger, just as we would offer it to Christ,*

**All: Remind us today and every day that we need not fear what we do not know, but are freed by following your Gospel call to welcome.**

Pastor: *O God of all people, of all nations and of all the earth, protect this day those in need of safety, put a salve on the souls of those grieving the loss of home, family, loved ones and memories,*

**All: Give us the conviction to offer welcome, safety, Christian love and a space for new beginnings to refugees and asylum-seekers. Instill in our hearts the courage to love as Jesus taught us, in a world that encourages suspicion, fear and scarcity.**

Pastor: *O God of all sojourners in search of refuge, we ask you to create peace in this world so that none of your children live in places endangered by violence and civil unrest.*

**All: We ask for comfort for all who have been forced to flee their homes, and we ask that those in need of peace and protection find both refuge and welcome. We give you thanks this day for refugees and asylum-seekers in our midst, and for the blessings they bring to our families, churches, communities and nation.**

**Amen.**

♪Hymn of Response No. 576 *For the Healing of the Nations*

**For the healing of the nations God we pray with one accord, for a just and equal sharing of the things that earth affords, to a life of love in action help us rise and pledge our word.**

**Lead us forward into freedom from despair your world release, that redeemed from war and hatred all may come and go in peace, show us how through care and goodness fear will die and hope increase.**

**All that kills abundant living let it from the earth be banned, pride of status, race or schooling, dogmas that obscure your plan, in our common quest for justice may we hallow life's brief span.**

**You creator God have written your great name on humankind, for our growing in your likeness bring the life of Christ to mind, that by our response and service earth its destiny may find.**

### **Joys & Concerns, Prayers of the People**

Pastor: *Let us pray...as Jesus taught us to pray to You, saying*

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

### **Offering**

Thank you for your offerings (in-person, electronic, or mailed in) for the ministry and mission of this congregation. Through your generosity, we are doing God's work in the world.

Thank you for your donations to our two special offerings:

- Jane's Pocket collection for the Community Immigration Law Center (CILC)
- Strengthen the Church (a special offering for the work of the Conference and national setting of the UCC to help with congregational-related programming)

*Offerings can be placed in the basket by the door at the back of the sanctuary, for those attending in person.*

Thank you for all you are doing to help keep all in the community safe, including getting vaccinated and boosted (if safe for you), wearing of face masks, physically distancing, and hand washing.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

Pastor: *The gifts of God come generously and abundantly.*

All: **We hold, nurture, and amplify them as they are entrusted to our care.**

Pastor: *We respond faithfully by sharing them for the good of community and creation.*

All: **In this act of faith and trust, we transform our resources of time, talent, and treasure into the good news in the world. Amen.**

### **The Community Goes Forth**

♪ Sending Hymn No. 76 *Sent Forth by God's Blessing*

**Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing, the people of God from this dwelling take leave. The service is ended, O now be extended, the fruits of our worship in all who believe. The seed of the teaching, receptive hearts reaching, shall blossom in action, for God and for all. God's grace did invite us, and love shall unite us, to work for God's realm and to answer the call.**

**With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living, the tasks of our every day life we shall face. Our faith ever sharing in love ever caring, embracing God's children, of each tribe and race. With your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us, unite us as one, in this life that we share. Then may all the living, with praise and thanksgiving, give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.**

### **Blessing and Sending Prayer**

Pastor: *We go forth with the living Christ.*

All: **We go forth, in faith and hope and joy!**

Pastor: *Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. The blessings of God—Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer—be with you all!*

All: **Our worship has ended, our service begins, as we take God's light out into the world with us!**

## ♪Postlude

*Litany for Refugees and Asylum-Seekers* was written by Amanda K. Sheldon, Program Associate for UCC Refugee Ministries & UCC Disaster Ministries, Humanitarian and Development Ministries of Wider Church Ministries. Copyright © 2018 United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115- 1100. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.

*Elements of our worship service and thoughts to ponder for the week are adapted from resources of the Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ, made possible through our contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM).*

### **Thoughts to ponder for the week:**

*The 33rd General Synod adopted a Resolution to Recognize the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024). As part of its implementation, Sermon and Weekly Seeds offers Reflection from Voices of People of African Descent related to the season or overall theme for additional consideration in sermon preparation and for individual and congregational study.*

As a nine-year-old kid in the Detroit ghetto, I was drawn to the television screen to view the funeral. I was just beginning to understand my blackness, just learning that it existed, that it was essential in a world where whiteness loomed as an unknowable force. I had never gone to school with white kids, had rarely even interacted with white folk outside of the neighborhood business owners for whom my father, and eventually I, worked. I didn't know what they liked or how they thought of the world, how they handled their disappointments or whether they, like us, laughed at misery to keep from crying. I was only starting to sense that white folk may have feared us as much as they didn't like us; it seemed vaguely tied to how we refused to bow in the face of suffering and how, despite their doing the worst they could imagine doing to us, we refused to give in. With King's death, the whiteness that had been shapeless suddenly lunged forward. When King was killed, I felt vulnerable; all that made sense no longer held in place, and it appeared that the cosmos had gotten drunk on its insufficiency, teetered off course, and hurtled madly toward oblivion. How else could it be? Martin Luther King, Jr., was put down like a mangy dog. His breathing and being were seen as such an offense that they had to be stopped at all costs. I was frightened for months. He had been murdered on a balcony, and I could no longer easily wash my hands in our bathroom, which opened onto an upstairs balcony, without fearing that whiteness would kill me too.

Perhaps that was why I paid such close attention to his funeral; I was in search of unspoken solace, of comfort that could only come if I could discern in his services some logic, some possible clue, for why he had to perish, some explanation that might, I felt too guilty to admit, spare me his same fate. My father thought it was all morbid. He eventually sent me outside to play, but not before I eagerly drank in the mournful cadences of the folk gathered at King's public service. They surely grieved for King and his valiant family, and, yes, for themselves. But their grief had become a ritual that was all too familiar when a leader or an ordinary soul had been silenced by white rage; and by then our rituals could barely contain moments like this, moments for which we had no words.

Michael Eric Dyson, *What Truth Sounds Like*

**For further reflection:**

“Usually we think that brave people have no fear. The truth is they are intimate with fear.” — Pema Chondon

“Truth fears no question.” — Unknown

“I would put myself in the attitude to look in the eye an abstract truth, and I cannot. I blench and withdraw on this side and on that. I seem to know what he meant who said, No man can see God face to face and live.” — Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Prayer for the Week, *for transformation and new life***

Holy and Gracious God, fear seeks to be our constant companion. It stifles us with its overwhelming presence and prolific imagination. Fear surrounds us and blocks our vision and your path. Fear keeps us from picking up our cross as much as it suppresses our joy in you. Fear invites us to believe the easy lie rather than confronting the hard truths necessary for your kingdom to come. Too often, we cast off your perfect love in favor of insidious fear. Forgive us for choosing fear when we could have you, your presence, and your way as our companion on our journey. Empower us to reject fear and all that fall complicit in dampening your truth.

Your grace promises the glory of transformation through the acknowledgement of need for it. New life awaits us, this is your promise. Help us to receive grace, embrace transformation, and enter the newness of life in which Christ fashions our struggles into character and hope. Amen.