

# The Plymouth Placard



August 2007

## WORSHIP FOR AUGUST

ONE SERVICE ON SUNDAY MORNING AT 9:30

August 5 (*Hopefully in our new sanctuary!*)  
*Colossians 3.1-11*

August 12  
*Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16*

August 19  
*Hebrews 11.29 - 12.2*

August 26  
SERVICE OF SANCTUARY DEDICATION  
Join the celebration!  
*Psalm 96*  
*Luke 12.13-21*

September 2...all-church retreat at La Foret...service at 9:30 at Plymouth.

Two services begin with Jubilee Sunday on September 9 with the NEW, EXPERIMENTAL schedule (See Hal's Desk)



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# FROM HAL'S DESK

*Service Times: The Experiment Is About to Begin!*

Way back in the old days...in 2003 to be exact...Plymouth's Strategic Planning Team surveyed the congregation about how large we'd like to grow and how we would accommodate our increasing number of worshippers. Here's what we discovered from the congregation: We will grow to about 900 members – or 450 in worship on an average Sunday – before spinning off a new UCC congregation in Fort Collins. (Our net growth in five years has been 200 members...roughly by one-third.) We will accommodate **225 people in each of our two services using the current sanctuary** (with any minor size modifications to come in Phase II of our construction).

The issue is that we now typically have 200 people in the 10:45 service and 70 in the 8:15 service. Anticipating the imbalance, the Strategic Plan called for the Church Council to assemble a **Two-Services Task Force** to look at ways to balance the services. The Two-Services Task Force has been meeting for several months, surveyed the congregation (thanks for participating!), and has made a written recommendation to the Church Council. While the Council has not had a chance to discuss the idea yet, I wanted to let you know about the proposal, which we will implement **this September**, pending Council approval.

Representatives of different constituencies in the congregation comprise the Two-Service Task Force: Terri Schulz (youth ed., parent, and 2nd service), Sue Rutherford (teacher, parent, and 1st service), Bob Sturtevant (adult ed. and 1st service), Mary Mosier (deacons and 2nd service), Andrea Koppenhofer (new member, parent, and 2nd service), Julie, Sharon, and Hal (staff).

The findings of the survey were not dramatically skewed in any one direction. We did find that a third service at an alternate time (Wednesday or Sunday evening) would not help much in alleviating crowding issues. Few parents of K-5 students participated in the survey, despite our best efforts to contact and include them. The survey presented two options: A) two services with simultaneous Sunday School with an all-inclusive "coffee hour" in between and B) two services at slightly later times than our current schedule, with Sunday School in between. The results were nearly equally divided between the two options.

*Our conclusion: No matter what we do, we won't make everybody happy!*

We considered what would best accomplish the task of balancing the two services (the original charter from the strategic plan), and we also thought that the beginning of the program year (September) was the best time to introduce our *experiment*. The timeframe of this experiment is September 9 (Jubilee Sunday) through Christmas, and we will evaluate how it seems to be working. So, here is the proposal:

- 9:00 a.m. First Service** (includes chancel choir and communion every Sunday)
- 10:15 a.m. Coffee "Hour"** (fellowship time for everyone – people from both services)
- 10:45 a.m. Second Service with simultaneous youth and adult ed. classes** (communion on the first Sunday of each month)

Our hope is that families (of whatever configuration) who wish to participate in our education offerings will **attend the first service** and then **stay** for education at 10:45 a.m. This provides an option for parents who wish for their children to be in worship and Sunday School. Other parents will want to take advantage of being in worship while their kids are in Sunday School. Again, this is an experiment, and I know that you all will join me in trying it on for size!

Blessings,



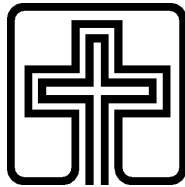
P.S. Many thanks to the congregation for the Jax gift certificate in honor of my fifth anniversary at Plymouth on July 15. (*Trout of Colorado...beware!*)

## PLACARD DEADLINE

THE NEXT PLACARD DEADLINE IS **AUG 20th**. PLEASE RESPECT OUR DEADLINE AND PLEASE KEEP ARTICLES AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE, NO LONGER THAN 300 WORDS. PLEASE SEND ALL ARTICLES TO: shutterbugville@aol.com **AND** plymouth@plymouthucc.org

# FELLOWSHIP

## MIDDLE-THIRD HERD



Join the Middle-Third Herd for End of Summer Events:

Sunday, August 5th 11:00am (right after the service) City Park Pool Party \$4.50 (ages 2-17) \$5.50 (adult) Under 2 yrs. FREE. Bring a picnic lunch.

Friday, August 17th /Happy Feet /at The Promenade Shops at Centerra Movies on the Main. (I-25 and HWY 34 in Loveland) Movie begins at sunset.  
FREE Admission. FREE popcorn and cotton candy (while supplies last).

Monday, August 27th Happy Hour at Old Chicago's (Harmony & Timberline) 4-6pm  
Come for discounted microbrews and appetizers!  
Get there when you can.

For more information on any of these events, please contact Andrea Karapas at 206-4467 or [ajax620@comcast.net](mailto:ajax620@comcast.net). If you haven't added your e-mail to the MTH Listserve, do it now at [www.plymouthucc.org](http://www.plymouthucc.org). Click on What's Happening, then E-mail Lists.

### CONGREGATIONAL LIFE HAS BUT ONE THING TO SAY:

*LAFORET  
LAFORET  
LAFORET*

**We just wanted to say it 3 times  
as a reminder to get your  
registrations in immediately to  
join us on Labor Day Weekend**

## MEN'S FELLOWSHIP TAKES A CONSTRUCTION BREAK

The PMF (Plymouth Men's Fellowship) will not meet in August due to construction in the west wing area. The next meeting will be Saturday, 15 Sep 2007 for breakfast followed by information about the Oct retreat which is scheduled for 26 - 28 Oct. The Nov meeting will actually be held Saturday, 1 Dec 2007 when the PMF will host breakfast followed by the "Hanging of the Greens" in preparation of Advent. We will also meet on Monday afternoon, 24 Dec 2007, to prepare & set out the luminaries for the Christmas Eve services.

Questions or comments? Contact Les Fraley, Phil Hoefer or Allen Norskog, PMF officers.

### Women's Friendship Group

#### One-Day Retreat

Saturday October 6th

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church,  
Estes Park

Rick Riddoch, our former interim minister, will lead us in preparation for a day apart in contemplative meditation. Our time in this beautiful setting will include labyrinth, centering prayer, contemplative readings, a short hike, special music interpretation, and a concluding Taize service.

Watch for information on where to register or call Paula Dille for more information at **207-1977**.

### **Need a "grandparent fix" with some mighty adorable, well- behaved kids???**

I am looking for folks willing and able to volunteer in our nursery on occasional Sunday mornings. Please contact me if this sounds fun and exciting. [Julie@plymouthucc.org](mailto:Julie@plymouthucc.org) or 482-9212

# COMMITTEE UPDATES

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR EYES

Fran Milde, RN, PhD

What have you done lately for your eyes? If you are like most of us, our eyes receive scant attention. We take our vision for granted. For 3.3 million Americans, however, blindness or low vision affects their life according to the National Eye Institute. This figure is projected to reach 5.5 million by the year 2020. While visual impairment is projected to increase, the good news is that the majority of visual impairment is correctable or preventable.

Eight things you can do to protect your vision and help to keep your eyes healthy are:

- Adopt a healthy lifestyle: stop smoking, drink alcohol only in moderation, and maintain a healthy body weight,
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables,
- Protect eyes from UV rays by wearing a hat with a brim and sunglasses,
- Protect eyes from injury by wearing protective safety goggles for sports and when working with tools, metal, and chemicals; taking steps to avoid exposure to projectiles such as pellet guns, bow and arrows,
- Schedule an eye exam to see if you need glasses, or have signs of eye disease,
- Learn family history for eye disease such as age-related macular degeneration, genetic eye disease, or glaucoma,
- Know the consequences of disease conditions on the eyes such as uncontrolled diabetes or hypertension which can cause damage to the retina,

Know and act upon the warning signs of eye disease such as:

\*Decreased vision: difficulty seeing while reading, watching TV, or driving, loss of peripheral or central vision, noting a curtain or veil coming over vision, or difficulty seeing off to the side.

\*Eye pain: sharp or dull, eye hurts when touched, persistent feeling that something is in the eye.

\*Drainage from or redness of the eye.

\*Floaters and flashes: spider webs, dots, or floating matter that move or flashing/flickering light.

\*Seeing halos around lights: may only be present in the morning and improve later in the day.

\*Double vision: seeing two images which may be side-by-side, up-and-down, or sideways which may resolve when one eye is covered.

Health Ministry

### Capital Campaign Giving Update

Every month, we're getting closer to our giving goal. It's exciting to see the changes our church building and grounds are undergoing. Thank you for your generosity!

### Mid-July Construction Update

As I write this update in mid-July, the sanctuary is looking rather bare and the site is messy. But, by the time you read this update, we'll be well on our way to having the sanctuary and the parking lot finished. Thanks for your patience in putting up with the construction mess.

The only sticky construction issue at this point concerns the required fire protection in the sanctuary, i.e., we need to install a sprinkler system. We're negotiating with the city so we won't have unsightly exposed water pipes running along the sanctuary ceiling. We are confident that the outcome of our negotiations will respect the architecture of our space.

Our construction budget is in good shape and, except for the sprinkler issue, "surprises" (and the extra costs we've incurred to cover them) have been minimal. Both RB+B and Heath have been great partners.

So far, we are on schedule and on budget – you can't ask for anything better!

George Theodore  
For the Building Committee

# COMMITTEE UPDATES

## Open and Affirming (ONA) Committee

At the June ONA meeting we tackled the questions, "Since transgender individuals are such a small percent of the population, should we be focusing our resources and energies on the issue? Would we better off dealing with a topic that affects more people?" We came up with a three part answer:

1. The UCC is one of the few mainline Christian denominations that will open its arms to transgender individuals, and therefore it is our responsibility to provide a place where such people can worship in their Christian faith, without fear of being ostracized. Regardless of the number of people it affects, any group that faces discrimination needs to find a welcome at UCC churches.
2. At Plymouth Church, we do well at being accepting and providing education about gay and lesbian issues. That groundwork is laid, so it makes sense to stretch that boundary a bit to plant the seed for tolerance on transgender issues.
3. The skills and processes we use to learn about and cope with transgender issues can be used in any situation where there is an uncomfortable issue that needs to be addressed. What we learn by exploring the transgender world can help us in other aspects of our lives and Christian faith.

SO... yes, exploring transgender issues has a place at Plymouth Church. At the ONA movie night in May, we listened to comments and heard that people would like to meet some transgender individuals and have a chance to talk to them. We have arranged to have a transgender couple come and speak to us at an adult forum this fall! Sunday, September 16, Sheila Mink, a pre-operative transsexual, and Katherine Palmer, who is bi-gendered, will be at Plymouth to share some insights with us (including definitions of those terms, so don't panic!) and answer questions during an adult forum. Watch the Placard for more information.



## AUTUMN SPIRITUAL GATHERING



A Community Multi-Faith Celebration  
"Exploring Essential Spiritual Principles"

Plymouth UCC and the Northern Colorado Multi-faith Coalition invite you to our Autumn Spiritual Gathering September 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm, in the Lincoln Center's Canyon West Room, 417 W. Magnolia, Ft. Collins. This free educational event was begun in 2005 by ToAHS, (Tent of Abraham, Hagar and Sarah), as "God's October Surprise" since Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Ramadan, World Communion Sunday, and the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi all occurred in October. Last year, the celebration was expanded by the Multi-Faith Coalition and included the participation and sacred events of other religions including Religious Science, Vedic Traditions, Buddhism, Sufism, Baha'i, and Native Americans.

This year's event promises to be bigger, better, and more beautiful than ever. The program will feature noted speakers from a sampling of faiths who will share information about and insights into the "Essential Spiritual Principles" of their own traditions. Also included will be music from various spiritual paths. All participants will receive a "Community Multi-Faith Events Handbook" giving brief descriptions of the many participating faith and peace groups, invitations to their services and festivities, and a history of local Interfaith endeavors. More information is available on our website, [www.fortnet.org/sojourn](http://www.fortnet.org/sojourn).

Plymouth is one of the participating and sponsoring churches, and members of the Peace With Justice Ministry Team and Prayerworks For Peace are on the planning committee. We will also be hosting two of the "Sojourn Events" that people from other faiths are invited to attend: World Communion Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>, and the International Day of Prayer For Peace September 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm.

Please join us as we share, learn, pray, and work together for peace, justice, human rights, and the healing of our world.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## IRS Changes Rules on Contributions

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 amended the tax code to require **ALL CASH CONTRIBUTIONS**,











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United Church of Christ  
916 West Prospect Road  
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Non-profit  
organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Ft. Collins, CO 80521  
Permit No. 109

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **NEWS & NOTES**

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### **8. BE PATIENT**

I managed to fix it so in just one lifetime you could have so many diverse experiences. You grow from a child to an adult, have children, change jobs many times, learn many trades, travel to so many places, meet thousands of people, and experience so much. How can you be so impatient then when it takes me a little longer than you expect to handle something on my to-do-list? Trust in my timing, for my timing is perfect. Just because I created the entire universe in only six days, everyone thinks I should always rush, rush, rush.

### **9. BE KIND**

Be kind to others, for I love them just as much as I love you. They may not dress like you, or talk like you, or live the same way you do, but I still love you all. Please try to get along, for my sake. I created each of you different in some way. It would be too boring if you were all identical. Please know I love each of your differences.

### **10. LOVE YOURSELF**

As much as I love you, how can you not love yourself? You were created by me for one reason only - to be loved, and to love in return. I am a God of Love. Love me. Love your neighbors. But also love yourself. It makes my heart ache when I see you so angry with yourself when things go wrong. You are very precious to me. Don't ever forget that!

*With all my heart, I love you,*

**GOD**

I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world.

Mother Teresa