
The Plymouth *Placard*



DECEMBER 2003

Worship Opportunities in December
all services are at 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.
unless otherwise noted

December 7

Luke 3.1–6

Prepare the Way

Taizé Service

6:00 p.m., followed by a fellowship meal

December 14

Christmas Cantata: “Journey of Promises”

The choir will sing at both services

Luke 3.7–18

December 21

Luke 1.39–55

Magnificat!

Join us at 9:30 for the Children’s Shadow Theater presentation

December 24 – Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m.– Kid-friendly service of Lessons & Carols

7:00 & 11:00 p.m. – Service of Lessons & Carols with choir & Holy Communion

All will be candlelight services

Bring Christmas cookies to share after the 5 & 7 o’clock services!

December 28

One service only at 10:45

Luke 2.41–52

We’ll sing lots of Christmas carols!

*Mark your calendar now! **Epiphany** potluck on Wednesday, January 6 at 6:30*

TAIZÉ INFO

WHO: YOU! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

WHEN: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 AT 6:00 P.M.
(AND THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH)

WHERE: PLYMOUTH CONG'L UCC

COST: FREE-WILL OFFERING FOR SUPPER

CHILDCARE: YOU BET!

MORE INFO: WWW.TAIZE.FR

Celebrating 100 Years – 1903-2003

Consider Yourself Invited to the Children's Christmas Program

Please plan to attend a very magical presentation of "The Bethlehem Shadow Theatre" in the sanctuary between the two worship services on Dec. 21st. Adult and Youth Education Sunday School classes have been cancelled this date to allow all members of the congregation to attend. The program is from 9:45 – 10:15. You are invited to a reception following the program from 10:15 – 10:45 in the Fellowship Hall.

Children involved in the program need to be at church **promptly at 9:00 a.m.** to prepare and rehearse. Please contact Donna Greene @ 482-9212 as soon as possible if your child is interested in participating and has not yet signed up.

Walk The Talk About Plymouth!

The Evangelism Committee is sponsoring an outreach effort to let people know about our Christmas services. The information and invitation are provided on door hangers that we want to spread around Fort Collins. If you would like to "walk the talk", the hangers were available Nov. 30 and could be distributed any time that week. The final effort will be Saturday, Dec. 6, when we gather at the church at 10:00 a.m. and take a van-full (and more!) to distribute the hangers. We'll go out to lunch when we are finished. You do not have to knock on doors. Walking is a great stress reliever during holiday time. There's a sign-up sheet in the narthex, or you can talk to Karen Smith or Karen Nesler if you have questions. Thanks for your support!

Gingerbread House Auction

Please stay after the second service December 7th for a Gingerbread House auction to benefit Habitat for Humanity. The Junior High Sunday School will auction their own creations, an event you don't want to miss. Contact Sue Rutherford for details.

Volunteer Fair Sunday, December 7th in Fellowship Hall.

From Hal's Desk:*The Antidote*

Have you ever wondered when “the Christmas season” was transformed into “the holiday shopping season?” It seems that an insidiously slow transformation has swept across our nation, which has transformed the Christmas/Epiphany tradition of *giving* to the consumerist tradition of *buying*. Don't get me wrong: I love to give and receive Christmas presents. It's really a wonderful thing, as long as it doesn't become the primary focus of our time or get us into debt. We don't have to buy presents so that we can have time with family. We don't need to spend a dime to get in touch with God and catch that wonderful and sometimes elusive virus called The Christmas Spirit.

One of the wonderful things people who are active in Christian communities have at their disposal is an antidote to the “Christmas machine.” We have a liturgical season that is about delayed gratification, anticipation, and waiting. It's a season that needs no batteries, requires no assembly, and doesn't even wind up. It's a special time of the year that the folks on Madison Avenue haven't yet discovered. *It's Advent!*

We have a period that extends from November 30 to December 24 that begs us to consider the coming of the Messiah and what that means in our lives and in God's world. If we take seriously the notion that Jesus is the light of the world, we open ourselves to the richness of images and metaphors that speak to our innermost needs: for connection, relationship, wisdom, truth, beauty.

We'll be celebrating Advent by singing beautiful Advent hymns, lighting candles, and worshipping with a ever-so-slightly different liturgy. For some of us, it may be difficult not to start singing Christmas carols right away. (We have a “no Händel's *Messiah* until after Thanksgiving” rule in our house!)

Many of you know Nan Sollo, a member at Plymouth who is serving as interim associate minister at First Congregational in Greeley. A couple of years back, when Nan was serving in Wiggins, Colorado, she met a lot of resistance in the congregation about using Advent as a season of anticipation (and holding off on the Christmas carols until Christmas!). The resistance was so sharp that Nan (renowned for her humor) mounted a stuffed Grinch on the pulpit throughout Advent.

This Advent, I invite you into a time when we, as a community of faith, anticipate the coming of Jesus, which we mark every year at Christmas. But, let's stay in the moment together and appreciate Advent for what it is: a glorious season of looking forward.

Advent blessings!



Mark your calendars: Monday, December 8th from 7:00 to 9:00

In the six months since we hosted our first two Church Leadership Meetings, the Strategic Planning Committee has been integrating much of the information gained through them into a strategic plan for our church (also in this plan are the results of the Worship Attendance Growth survey that we conducted in October). As a result of that work, we now have a preliminary version that we presented to the Church Council for review at their November session. Although we will not ask for their vote on the final version of the plan until the January Council Meeting, we presented the preliminary one now so that budgeting and nominating processes could begin to drive implementation in 2004.

Before our final submittal to Church Council in January, we are hosting an additional Church Leadership Meeting on December 8th to allow all interested church members to review the current version of our report and provide feedback and suggestions. It is our goal to gather input from as many church leaders and interested members as possible before making our final edits.

For anyone who would like to review the material ahead of time, both of the documents we will discuss are available via email:

- * The Strategic Planning Preliminary Report to Council (MS Word)
- * The Results of October's Worship Attendance Growth Survey (MS Excel)

Just send a request to knoblock@frii.com if you would like either or both of them.

We are deeply thankful to those of you who were able to participate in our first two meetings last spring and hope that your participation was as rewarding for you as it was for us. Your input into the Mission and Values statements and into our key areas of exploration allowed us to make our proposals much more complete and representative of the beliefs and ideas of our congregation. We sincerely appreciate your participation in this effort,

The Strategic Planning Committee:

Daryl Knoblock (chair), Hal Chorpenning, Sally Gilmore, Linda Mahan, Mary Robinson, and Dave Tenney

Thanksgiving Collections For Larimer County Food Bank . . . Huge Success!

As of December 3, 2003, 344 lbs. of non perishable food items were collected and \$1,590.50 in cash. **Thank you – Thank you – Thank you!!** --Social Concerns Comm.

Thank You!

A very special thank you to everyone who created and donated **health kits** in October. Our 19 Kits were added to several hundred brought by representatives of other Fort Collins churches to the World Community Day meeting of Church Women United in November. Kits have been shipped to Church World Service for distribution to areas around the world. Thank you! --Lorrie Wagner.

Support Plymouth's Senior High Youth

You can support our Senior High Sunday School class by attending the last movie of Plymouth's film series. The Senior High will host *Pleasantville* on Saturday, December 6th at 7:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. A discussion of spiritual themes in the movie will follow Sunday, December 7th at 9:30am in the forum room. Never heard of *Pleasantville*? Here's a synopsis:

"A brother and sister from the 1990s are sucked into their television set and suddenly find themselves trapped in a "Leave it to Beaver" style 1950's television show, complete with loving parents, old fashioned values, and an overwhelming amount of innocence and naivete. Not sure how to get home, they integrate themselves into this "backwards" society and slowly bring some color to this black and white world. But as innocence fades, the two teens begin to wonder if their 90s outlook is really to be preferred."

The Giving Tree

The "Giving Tree" in the Narthex bears ornaments on which are wishes from needy daycare children at the Family Center in Ft. Collins. The Social Concerns committee hopes that you will make a child happy by taking one of the ornaments and choosing one or all of the wishes. Gift wrap the gift, attach the ornament to the gift and place under the tree no later than Sunday, December 14. The feeling of joy in your heart will be your gift in return.

Come caroling with the Chancel Choir and the Middle Third Herd on Sunday, December 21.

We will visit our homebound members, meeting at the church at 2 P. M. and returning around 4 for hot drinks and cookies. Music books will be provided. All that is required is holiday spirit and good will. Contact Mary Sue Rowan at 663-4327, if you have questions, or just come. Hope to see you there!

Plymouth Prayer Tree

The Plymouth Prayer Tree has 22 active members. The congregation's "Joys and Concerns", expressed during the Sunday morning prayer time, are forwarded to these members each week. If you have additional prayer requests, please contact Betty Clark at 229-9944 or e-mail her at bettyclarkfc@juo.com.

The Nominating Committee Needs Your Help!

The Nominating Committee is beginning the selection process for positions that need to be filled for the coming year. This will take place during December. On December 7th

there will be a Volunteer Fair at Church to help identify people who have a passion for doing the work of the church. At the Fair you can learn more about committees.

This year with the addition of a new committee - Congregational Life - we have even more positions to fill. If you have an interest in participating on a committee, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee or express interest at the Volunteer Fair. Thanks!

Summary of Board Positions for Nominating Committee to Replace			
	Board	Total Members	Number to fill
1	Adult Education	8	3
2	Audit	3	1
3	Congregational Life (New)	6	6
4	Council	4	3
5	Deacons	12	6
6	Evangelism	7	3
7	Mission	7	3
8	Nominating (need 6 candidates)	7	3
9	Personnel	3	1
10	Trustees	6	2

11	Open and Affirming	6	3
12	Social Concerns	8	4
13	Stewardship	6	3
14	Youth Education	9	8
	Total	92	49

Nominating Committee:

Bruce Lieurance

Ruth Coberly

Sally Gilmore

Wayne Sheppard

Tobey Yadon

Molly Nortier

Caryl Beaty

* * * * *

Confirmation/Affirmation – What are they up to?

Our Confirmation/Affirmation class is well underway. Seventeen young people in grades 8-11 have begun their journeys. We meet on the first and third Sunday of each month at 9:30 in the Sanctuary.

Once again we are using the Harper Collins Study Bible and, in addition, we have a set of Concordances that will be used to locate passages in the Bible. The year began with the question: “What is faith?” This was followed by the writing of a “Covenant” for the group. We also studied the Psalms and their themes, after which we wrote a Psalm of Thanksgiving as a group. Every member of our group keeps a journal where each can record thoughts and feelings throughout the year.

On Sunday, November 16, we sat together in church during the 10:45 service to hear Hal preach. Liz shared the joy of this “large” Confirmation class and the “concern” that we don’t have a room large enough to hold the entire class comfortably.

Hal and Liz gave these junior and senior “highers” a survey to determine the special interests of the group...interesting results! In our next meeting we will compare the role of women – as defined by the Bible and our times today. Other topics of interest: stories from the Old Testament, Jesus – human or divine?, Creationism, the image of God, the Ten Commandments, and so on. December 21st we will delve into the book of Luke to read the “Christmas story.”

Thanks To All Participants in the Alternative Giving Fair!

Despite bad weather, the Third Annual Alternative Giving Fair was an unqualified success. The senior high youth sold all of their donuts and made money for their summer mission trip. The junior high youth sold all of their spoons, which were hand made in Guatemala, and they took orders for more. \$558.00 was earned by selling fabric gift bags. This money all goes to Doctors Without Borders. Proceeds for the Heifer Project were \$5,000.18, and for Church World Service, \$1,634.50. And to top it all off, Social Concerns sold \$416.00 of coffee, and Ten Thousand Villages sold \$969.82 of merchandise. So, in a little over four hours, you spent \$8,638.50.

WHAT A GREAT WAY TO MAKE CHRISTMAS MEANINGFUL, FOR YOU – FOR YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES WHO WILL RECEIVE THE GIFTS, AND FOR THE PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD WHO WILL BE HELPED.

Again, the Mission Committee says **THANKS!**

Plymouth Church Canoe Adventure IV

Will take place in the summer of '04. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend a preiminary planning meeting in the fellowship hall from 8:55 – 10:05 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 6. For further information, call either Tobey Yadon at 226-1482, or John Henry Peck at 224-2408.

Homeless Prevention Efforts at Plymouth

Each week members of the Homeless Prevention Program at Plymouth spent three hours conducting interviews with persons who are at risk of losing their housing; our twelve (12) members either do interviews or are available by phone to make appointments. Funds are distributed according to guidelines established by the Interfaith Council (of which we are a member). In the past ten months, this Program, conducted at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, and Plymouth, has helped 269 households with an average award of \$217. Recipients have temporary circumstances that prevent them from earning the dollars needed to pay their rent. One father had to use rent money to repair his truck in order to get to his job in Denver; another suddenly found himself jobless after having dependable work for 17 years. A working mother recently became the sole provider of her three children while her husband spent time in the Detention Center; another has lupus and is waiting for disability assistance. Many have never had to ask for financial assistance but circumstances such as: job loss, injury, fewer hours of work, illness, etc. result in challenges for paying current rents. Many of our fellow citizens are forced to live pay check to pay check, most working at minimum wages. Won't you take this opportunity to join other members and those of neighboring Fort Collins churches by contributing to this Homeless Prevention Program? The goal for next year is \$100,000. Envelopes may be found near either the bulletin board by the drinking fountain in the Fellowship Hall or by the one near the north wing glass doors, or call me (Lorrie Wagner, coordinator, 223-2653).

ORGAN UPDATE

The organ committee has been asked to update the congregation on our recent activities. A few months ago, Carrie and Jan wrote an article in the Placard about all of the numerous problems our organ has, along with the fact that we are unable to fix the majority of these. The most problematic one was the issue of the stops, or sounds, working on only ½ of the notes, meaning that if a scale was played, only ½ of those notes would make a sound. Both Carrie and Jan tried to mask this problem by either playing with every stop pressed, or not playing the organ at all. This problem has now been fixed by Bruce Preston, a member here at Plymouth, and Joe McConathy, who was the organist here when this organ was purchased. The problem turned out to be a bad amplifier, and so they took a working amplifier from another part of the organ and replaced it. The good news is that those stops now work on all of the keys, but now several other stops don't work at all because the amplifier was taken out of that section. It was the bandaid we needed, but now the selection of stops is limited. The portion of the organ company in

Germany emailed us and basically said there are no replacement amplifiers, so when this amplifier dies, the organ dies. Bruce Preston believes we have another six months before something major happens to the organ. It is just an educated guess though- the organ could go out tomorrow or in two years. None of the other problems have been fixed. We thank Bruce and Joe for giving the organ an extended life!

Most of you probably heard the Allen organ that was here for a month. It was hard to miss those speakers! Incidentally, those speakers would be completely hidden when installed. The primary reason our first contacts were with the Allen organ company is because they have an excellent reputation for providing service and support for each of their instruments over many decades- some of their organs date back to pre-WWII! After experiencing the very disappointingly short lifespan of our Ahlborn organ, this issue is of keen interest to all of the organ committee members. The American Allen company is the largest organ distributor in the world. They have a store in Denver, with organ technicians on call and nearby- not in Germany like our current organ.

Several congregation members commented on how the Allen organ enhanced congregational singing- people were really singing out during hymns. The speakers in the back helped support those who sat in the back as well. Others noticed the wide variety of sounds, from chimes to a french horn. The organists were delightfully overwhelmed at all the choices. The Allen organ had a much warmer sound than our current organ, but that could be changed quite easily to a brighter sound if wanted. The reverberation could also be changed with a touch of a button. The reverberation is the effect produced by the reflection of sound waves, so that when the organ finishes a song, one can still hear it ringing for a second or two. This can be changed to make the organ sound like it is in the Notre Dame Cathedral, all the way down to sounding like it is in a tiny room. Our current organ has a very small amount of reverberation that is unchangeable. The organ committee met last week to talk about what specifically we need and want in an organ and will be meeting with an Allen organ representative again soon.

Regardless of when we move forward with a new instrument, or what company is chosen, we want to make sure that our investment will last many years into the future. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to contact any of the organ committee members.

Respectfully,

The Organ Committee

*Carrie Hansen, Jan Welch, Sylvia McMahan, Bruce Preston, Steve Freeland,
Mary Sue Rowan, Hal Chorpensing*

Notes from the Plymouth Peace Group

We had such a fun time at lunch in November that we're doing it again. Join us at the Oak Street Café, 147 W. Oak Street on **Thursday, December 11** at 11:45 a.m. We'll talk about the current political situation and support each other in our individual efforts toward peace. We'll also discuss how Plymouth can become a Just Peace church and plan activities for the first part of 2004. Ideas include:

- Announcing the Just Peace campaign at the 2004 annual meeting in January.
- Beginning work on a statement about our congregation's commitment to Just Peace, to be voted on at the 2005 annual meeting.
- Helping with the adult education class on *The Power of Non-Violence* starting in January.
- Hosting several forums, including a panel of people from nearby UCC congregations that are Just Peace churches.
- Watching videos about peace and social justice.
- Having a book party for Hugh Sanborn, when his book comes out in the spring. It is a collection of essays by prominent Christian thinkers, entitled *Celebrating the Prophetic Tradition in the Church for the 21st Century*.
- Inviting guest preachers to speak on peace and justice issues.
- Reading the new edition of *A Just Peace Church* by Susan Thistlethwaite. We might do a study group later in the spring.

Here are some words that Susan Thistlethwaite, President and Professor of Theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, wrote in the days following September 11. They are all the more poignant now, two years and two wars later.

Nothing characterizes Just Peace theology more than a clear recognition of the differences of the way we view the world when we are powerful and when we are powerless. While nothing justifies terrorism, terrorists receive support from people who are so oppressed and marginalized that it seems there is no other way to make their voices heard. The United States must look at itself and its policies to determine how more just policies can be developed toward the whole Arab world and how we can encourage other nations to do the same. This will not cure terrorism, but it will tend to change the climate that harbors them and gives them support. ... Breaking the cycle of violence requires a whole new way of thinking and acting. That way is Just Peace.

For more information about the Plymouth peace group, contact Jane Ellen Combelic at jec@river-rock.org or 970-407-0153.

The Middle-Third Herd

We are a younger adult fellowship group just recently started at Plymouth. If you are too old for youth group but not mature enough for Get-A-Grip then this is where you belong. Get on our e-mail list by sending an e-mail to Andrea Kelly at 4kellyfam@comcast.net. Here are our coming events:

Sunday, December 21st - Caroling followed by fellowship at church. 2pm-4pm If you can bring some cookies or hot chocolate please contact Andrea Kelly, 4kellyfam@comcast.net or call 282-7511

Wednesday, December 31st - First Night Fort Collins and New Year's Eve party at Carrie & Bruce Hansen's house. Watch future bulletins for more info or contact Carrie & Bruce at 377-0674

Saturday, January 10th - Potluck and Game Night at Ben Slocumb and Dianne Stober's house, 5pm. Bring a dish to share and your favorite game. This is a "family friendly" event. Contact Ben and Dianne at 225-6446 or dstober@mindspring.com

Saturday, January 24th - Potluck planning breakfast at David and Donna Greene's house. 9:30am Bring a breakfast dish to share and events calendars for planning. We'll plan through the spring.

**Hilltoppers Christmas Luncheon
at McCoy's Restaurant**

Thursday, December 11 @ 12 noon

1003 W. Horsetooth Rd. (SE corner of Shields/Horsetooth)

Separate billing. Meals cost less than \$10. **We need you to sign up in the Fellowship Hall or call the Church Office, 482-9212, by Tues., Dec. 9,** so that McCoy's will know how many are coming.

If you need transportation, please let us know by calling the church office as well. Don't let lack of transportation cause you not to come!

Do join us for this holiday outing.

Get-A-Grip Annual White Elephant Gift Exchange!

All adults who love fun, fellowship and good food are invited to the Annual White Elephant Gift Exchange on Friday night, December 12. It will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Phil and Marcia Hoefler and co-hosted by Dean and Eva Wallace. The address is: 603 Atwood Ct., Fort Collins. Call 377-1950 if you need directions. Meat and drinks will be provided for the potluck, please bring a salad, vegetables, or a dessert. This is always a fun night. Please join us!

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN ANGEL TO COME TO THE
ANGEL PARTY !**

It's a warm and sparkling holiday event many Plymouth women look forward to each year. We exchange angel-related gifts (\$5-10) such as ornaments or note paper. We share stories of how God has used other beings to shower us with love. And of course we enjoy dainty Christmas sweets. ALL WOMEN are invited. If you're new to Plymouth, it's a great time to get acquainted. This year's party will be Sunday, December 14th, at 6:30 at the home of Karen Smith (292-9015). Maps will be available next to the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

Plymouth Women's Retreat – 2004

When: Friday, January 30th to Sunday, February 1st, 2004

Check-in starts at 3 p.m. Friday; checkout at 12:00 noon Sunday

Where: Highlands Presbyterian Retreat Center

1306 Business Hwy #7, Allenspark, Colorado
(303) 747-2888

Cost: \$100 per person. Includes: Saturday meals--breakfast, lunch, dinner, Sunday breakfast, Two nights lodging in a twin bed (no bunks).

More information to come. Sign up to begin in December.

**Men's Fellowship Breakfast at 8:00 a.m.
Saturday, January 17th at church.**

Handbell And Chancel Choirs

Handbell Choir rehearsals are Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. in the choir room. If you're between the ages of 12 and 112 and have a little bit of musical knowledge...please come and try us out! We will be playing in church at least once a month, if not more!! Chancel Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays from 7-8:30 p.m. If you would like more information on either choir, please feel free to call me @ 221-2970. We'd love to see you there!

– Donna Solverud

EXTRA YEARS OF ZEST!

XYZ is a fun-loving Plymouth Fellowship made up of people aged 50+. We get together on the second Saturday (usually) of each month for some type of activity. Everyone is welcome – couples, singles, men, women – the only requirements are that you like to get better acquainted with people and that you enjoy having a good time. Sometimes we have educational programs and sometimes we just plan something that sounds like fun. We almost always have good food! Some of us come to almost all activities, and some to just a few. If you're 50+, we would love to have you join us.

- The XYZ's will go to a CSU Girl's basketball game on January 17th. After the game we will go to Woody's to indulge in pizza. Please watch the church bulletins for further details. Questions? Call Ginny Gibson at 223-4882.

IF YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED: Your church staff has two requests.

- 1) Please notify the church at 482-9212, or Pastor Dick at 227-5123. If it is not during church hours, call Pastor Dick's number.
- 2) When you go to the hospital, please make sure to register as "Congregational." We are hoping to get "United Church of Christ" in the hospital file book, but as of now it is not there. Your staff regularly checks that book and if you are in the hospital, and you have not notified us or been registered as a Congregationalist, we have no way of finding you. We want to be faithful in providing pastoral care. Also, if you are going to the hospital for a surgery and will be discharged very quickly, let us know ahead of time to schedule a pre-surgical pastoral visit. Thank you!

Prayer from the Children's Sermon of September 21, 2003.

O Lord, grant that each one who has to do with me today may be the happier for it. Let it be given me each hour today what I shall say, and grant me the wisdom of a loving heart, that I may say the right thing rightly.

Help me to enter into the mind of everyone who talks with me, and keep me alive to the feelings of each one present. Give me a quick eye for little kindnesses, that I may be ready in doing them, and gracious in receiving them. Give me a quick perception of the feelings and needs of others, and make me eager hearted in helping them. Amen.

--submitted by Cinda Blessing

Turkeys!!

Every year Albertson's, Safeway, King Soopers, others? Allow card holders to purchase one turkey for either \$4 (small) or \$5 (large), usually prior to Thanksgiving and again prior to Christmas. Watch the ads. Purchase at all stores and deliver to the Larimer County Food Bank in Fort Collins or the House of Neighborly Service in Loveland. For a minimum of \$12, you can furnish a turkey to three families!

Report of Interfaith Council Representative Phil Koster

Interfaith Council hosted a presentation at its November 20 meeting by Kids at Heart and Larimer County Partners Mentoring Youth .

Partners Mentoring Youth has a 24-year history (1,900 partnerships) of meeting the needs of "at risk youth" in the community for adult companionship and mentoring. Could you give 12 hours per month (3 hours per week) for a 12 month commitment to include an "at risk youth" in your life activities? Currently, there are at least 50 young males on the waiting list. Ask Phil Koster or Wes Boulton for more information or call Chris or Mollie at Partners of Larimer County at 484-7123.

Kids at Heart is a community program that was initiated at Heart of the Rockies Christian Church to provide support to foster and adoptive families, without regard to their religious preference. Our Saviour's Lutheran Church recently partnered with Heart of the Rockies Christian Church in the project. Bill Stout told of the inspiration for and the beginnings of the program, its vision and purpose. The families served by Kids At Heart are parenting under some of the most difficult circumstances. Foster children are arguably the most impoverished, invisible, vulnerable and dependent segment of our society. Many children come to their new families with deep wounds and special needs that exhaust parents. These parents are heroes who are doing incredible work for our community in partnership with the government. These kids and their parents deserve our support. During its first year, once each month the program provided a 3-hour "Fundango" event for adopted youth, 2 – 18 years of age. Beginning December 6, 2003, a second monthly "Fundango" evening event will be provided for foster children. "Fundango" is a respite care program for youth in foster and adoptive families, a monthly event that provides food, games, crafts and fun, while giving parents a much needed "night off".

The project has received a grant and is working closely with The Larimer County Department of Family and Children's Services to promote Foster Family Recruitment.

15 adult volunteers are needed to chaperone each "Fundango" event. To volunteer, donate money, goods or gift certificates, to learn more about becoming a foster or adoptive parent or for more information, call Director Rebecca Novicki at 266-0526.

The Food Team reports the following **Gleaning** activities:

October 12, 23 people brought 5,600 #'s of produce to the Food Bank.

October 26th, 25 people brought an additional 6,200 #'s of produce to the Food Bank. This year a total of 21,200 #'s of produce was gleaned.

(Interfaith Council Representatives Report continued)

CROP WALK - Phil Koster and Dottie Mattern, coordinators for Plymouth's participation in CROP WALK, report that Plymouth Walkers raised \$1,838. of the \$17,000 received so far.

The Holiday season is an excellent time to host a "break your fast" observance for "**CITY WIDE FAST**". Invite family, friends or neighbors to fast for one meal and the money for the meal they would have eaten can be placed in an envelope (see the Community/Social Concerns Bulletin Board near the entryway to the Educational wing) and mailed directly to the account for CITY WIDE FAST. All proceeds go directly to the Food Bank of Larimer County. For every \$1. received, they can provide \$10.20 worth of food to the hungry of our community.

The Severe Weather Hospitality Center opened November 3rd at The Mennonite Fellowship, 300 E. Oak St. Volunteers to staff, especially for the afternoon shifts from 12:30p – 3:30p and 3:30p – 6:30p., are needed. Call Bob Kingswood at 231-7095 or Deann Pujol at 223-7313.

The Housing Team reported that:

From January 1, 2003 through September 30, 2003 the Interfaith Rental Assistance Funds have been used to help 269 families pay rent and maintain their housing. The average amount provided has been \$231. Total amount expended has been \$62,341.36.

Negotiation for 2003 - 2004 administrative costs for the Rental Assistance program are under way with Neighbor to Neighbor.

The 2003- 2004 fund drive is underway. The goal is \$100,000. (\$1,000. from Plymouth Church's Social Concerns Committee budget designated for homelessness has been donated to the campaign and a portion of the offering from the Christmas Eve Service will also be designated for the Homeless Prevention/Rental Assistance program). If you wish to make an individual contribution, you can pick up an envelop from the rack next to the Community/Social Concerns Bulletin Board near the entryway for the educational wing. **The Housing Team** recommended and the Executive Board approved a distribution of \$8,000. for The Rental Assistance Program for the month of December.

The **December meeting of Interfaith Council** (Team and General Business meeting) will be at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1709 W. Elizabeth, on December 4, 2003, beginning at 11:00 a. m.

On January 8, 2004, **The Annual Meeting** of Interfaith Council for election of officers, adopting a budget and reports from the Teams will be at Harmony Presbyterian Church, 400 Boardwalk Dr. at 9:00 a.m. Potluck Brunch - bring your favorite.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Northern Colorado Aids Project (NCAP) calls the faith communities of Fort Collins to observe World AIDS Day on December 1.

Messiah Sing-Along to benefit Habitat for Humanity, Sunday, December 7, 4 pm.
Redeemer Lutheran Church, 6630 Brittany Drive (SW corner of Trilby and Lemay)
Join in an inspiring community “sing-in” of Handel's *Messiah*, with guest soloists and chamber orchestra. Bring your own score or borrow one of ours. Come to sing or to just listen. Free will offering to benefit local chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Hour For Peace – 18th Annual. December 31, 2003 at **4:45 AM** at The Lincoln Center.

The Hour for Peace is an international gathering of people to sing, pray and meditate together for individual and global peace around the world at the hour that coincides with noon Greenwich time. This inspirational program brings members of the community together for an hour of art, song, music, poetry & prose as well as a 15-minute time of quiet reflection. You are invited to come. There is no cost. Donations gratefully accepted. For more information or to be a donor or sponsor, call: Cheryl at 493-1495 or go to www.fortnet.org/hr4peace.

SAVE THE DATES FEBRUARY 27 AND 28, 2004 FOR THE ALL CONFERENCE EVENT: SPIRIT ALIVE! ... TO HELP DEEPEN THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY. FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BOULDER

JANE VENNARD, KEYNOTE SPEAKER.

FEATURING WORKSHOPS SUCH AS, WALKING THE LABYRINTH, CENTERING PRAYER, HEALING PRAYER, PRAYING THE PSALMS, DANCING WITH THE SPIRIT, WORSHIPPING IN THE STYLE OF TAIZÉ, NURTURING THE SPIRIT IN TEENS, JOURNALING FOR THE JOURNEY, FINDING THE SPIRIT IN SERVICE, CREATING ART AS MEDITATION, AND MORE . . .

Please Note: Due to the Holiday Schedule the Deadline for information for January 11 through 31st is Monday, December 22; Deadline for February Placard will be Tuesday, January 20th.

Please mark your calendars!

Annual Reports due in church office: Monday, January 5, 2004

Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 18

January 4: Last date for 2003 pledge contributions

New Flower Calendar for 2004: in Fellowship Hall December 7, 2003

PEOPLE IN THE PARISH

Please keep the following members and friends of Plymouth in your prayers.

Recently in the Hospital:

- *Ray Becker*
- *Ray McCulloch*
- *Logan Soraci*
- *Laure Pandy*
- *John Nortier*

Our Sympathy is with:

- *Florence Williams and family on the death of her husband, Blake, whose memorial service was at Plymouth November 15.*
- *Judy Barth and family on the death of her mother.*

Congratulations to:

- *Mary (Rael) and Jeremy Space on the baptism of their daughter, Sophia Catherine Spac.e*

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AN OPEN & AFFIRMING CONGREGATION
GATHERED IN 1903

WWW.PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG
970.482-9212

The Rev.	<i>Senior Minister</i>	hal@plymouthucc.org
The Rev. Dick Einerson	<i>Interim Assoc. Minister</i>	dick@plymouthucc.org
Alice Clark	<i>Parish Assistant</i>	aclark@plymouthucc.org
Donna Greene	<i>Youth Education Director</i>	donna@plymouthucc.org
Donna Solverud	<i>Choir Director</i>	tdsolverud@aol.com
Carrie Hansen & Jan Welch	<i>Organists</i>	
Karin Marsh	<i>Church Secretary</i>	plymouth@plymouthucc.org
Alda Frucci, Tom Marsh, David Rushneck <i>Custodians</i>		

Plymouth Website

<http://www.plymouthucc.org>

Plymouth's updated website is ready for viewing. It's loaded with Plymouth info and even a calendar of events. The site is a work in progress and we appreciate your feedback. Please contact Brian or Andrea Kelly with comments, suggestions, new ideas, etc.

webmaster@plymouthucc.org 282-7511.