

The Plymouth *Placard*



JANUARY 2004

TAIZÉ INFO

WHO: YOU! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
WHEN: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 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

Christmas Eve Offering

“Each year the Social Concerns Committee sponsors a special offering on Christmas Eve targeted towards agencies that serve the local community or the broader UCC mission in the United States. The Committee studies the immediate needs and usually chooses two or three agencies to share the offering. This year three particularly worthy recipients were identified for the Christmas Eve offering:

1. BASE Camp, Inc. BASE Camp (Before and After School Enrichment) is a private, non-profit program that provides supervised activities before and after school, primarily for kindergarten through sixth grade children. It offers an alternative for latch-key children and operates in 23 locations in the Ft. Collins area. Plymouth Church member Linda Preston is the Executive Director of BASE Camp.
2. Homeless Prevention Program. Plymouth Church has traditionally supported efforts to ease the plight of the homeless in Ft. Collins. About a year ago the Social Concerns Committee became involved with the Homeless Prevention Program in Ft. Collins. Volunteers from our congregation answer the Homeless Prevention phone and interview applicants for assistance each week. The number of homeless individuals and families in Ft. Collins is growing rapidly, and the Homeless Prevention Program budget is falling behind the demand.
3. The UCC Pension Fund. Currently over 8,000 retired UCC ministers and their spouses are supported by the UCC Pension Fund; over 400 new retirees joined this group last year. Christmas gifts to the UCC Pension fund go to support emergency and disability grants, pension supplementation, and health care supplementation for these selfless individuals who served the church with their lives.

The Christmas season is a joyous time, and Christmas Eve is a good time to remember those in our community who struggle to obtain basic care and shelter and those who have served the United Church of Christ across the country and around the world. Last year we raised over \$2,600 in our Christmas Eve offering. This year our total was **\$3,003.68**. This will be shared evenly with the above agencies. Thank you for your generosity!

From Hal's Desk:**Looking Beyond and Above**

As I write this column, it's the week before Christmas. There are budgets to balance, committee nominations to make, sermons to write, gifts to buy, houses to clean, and columns to write. And now the church email and internet access are down. So, I'm taking advantage of this rare offline moment; there is a brief stillness amidst all the activity of the season.

It's an opportunity to reflect for a few minutes that even if our budget still isn't balanced, even if we still need more deacons and trustees, even if I have no idea what I'm going to preach about on Sunday, even if our house is a mess, and I still haven't bought my brother a Christmas gift...even in spite or because of all these things, life is still good. I am breathing, I have a family, I have a church community, I have a relationship with God. None of them is perfect, but they're *real*.

Like the magi, sometimes, we need to look beyond the urgent in order to see what is truly important. Some mornings I arise at an irrationally early hour and have a few moments of quiet reflection, as I see the red sky in the east. And I remember what's truly important.

At the moment, I'm thinking of why we are here: why Plymouth Congregational Church is here and what we're called to do. It isn't to balance budgets or populate committees. Our Strategic Planning Team distilled the wisdom of our members into a statement of mission: "to worship God and help make God's realm visible in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as it is set forth in the life, teachings, death and living presence of Jesus Christ."

That's why we're here. It's not always urgent, but it is important.

In this moment of calm (before the storm of the Christmas season) I am left with a profound sense of the reality of our calling as a congregation. Each of us is called to minister – to serve – others. And we at Plymouth will do an even better job of helping our members in the coming year: to get in touch with your passion for one of the myriad ways of serving in the church, by connecting with others in this congregation through fellowship or small groups. And we'll continue to rely on the guidance of the Spirit to do this. And a new team, recommended by our Strategic Planning Team, will assist in this. The Congregational Life Board will begin work in January to help our members connect with one another and with the vital lay ministries of our congregation.

And as we begin a new year, let us do as the magi did. Let us follow our star and be a people who are committed to making God's realm visible here and now.

Peace,



Jerusalem Marketplace comes to Plymouth February 1st!

Start saving your spare change for Super Bowl Sunday! The Fellowship Hall will be transformed into an Israeli marketplace complete with Money Changers and Roman guards. The Trailblazers will be working hard the entire month of January, creating stationary, beaded bookmarks, microwaveable rice bags that will cure all your aches & pains, cookies, brownies, and our famous Super Bowl Trail Mix. The funds raised from the sale of these goods will be given to our Mission Committee to help with Plymouth's sponsorship of two Palestinian children attending Rawdat El Zuhur - an elementary school in east Jerusalem that emphasizes character development and resolving conflicts in peaceful ways.

In addition to the gift of sponsorship, the children will be making some personal gifts for the children at Rawdat El Zuhur. One gift will be a book titled, "Shalom! Salaam! Our Prayers for Peace" and will contain their art work and prayers for peace in the world. They will also be working with Donna Solverud and David Greene to make a recording of the song, "From a Distance"

Holy Land Tour— On **Feb 15th and 22nd** we will be taking the Trailblazer Sunday school children on a tour of Palestine as it would have been when Jesus was a child. **We need your help** to create this experience. Have you ever traveled to Israel? Do you have slides, photos, video footage, or souvenirs from your trip? If so, here's your opportunity to relive your adventure as you take us back with you.

Are you interested in history, geography, archaeology cartography, or model-building? Then we need your help for the activities the children will be engaged in after they have "traveled" to Judea and Galilee. After the introduction to the region, the children will be making maps and small-scale models of an Israeli home, or even Jerusalem if we have enough volunteers. **If you can help with this lesson in any way, please contact Donna Greene as soon as possible!**

Galilean Career Fair - Did Jesus ever wonder, "What do I want to be when I grow up?" On **Feb 29th** the Trailblazer children will attend a "career fair" where they can explore what the options for Jesus would have been. We need volunteers who can help teach the children about being carpenters, shepherds, farmers, fisherpersons, potters and weavers. We are also looking for simple carpentry tools, an olive press, and a large mortar & pestle to grind wheat. Even if you don't know much about these topics, but are intrigued by the idea, call Donna Greene and let her

Plan to Attend Plymouth's Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 25**Potluck following 10:45 worship service---then the Annual Meeting will be held.**

we need your input!

The Strategic Planning Team invites your input on its Preliminary Report to the church council. You can obtain a copy (as well as the full results of the Worship Survey) either online at <http://www.plymouthucc.org>, or in the narthex. Please take time to read and comment on the recommendations for the direction of your congregation. The church council will be voting on the recommendation January 13.

Pledge Results for 2004

The Stewardship Committee is happy to announce that we have over \$323,000 in pledges for 2004. That is the first time we have broken the \$300,000 mark. That also means we have increased our pledges 10% over last year.

Your commitment through pledging to our church makes it possible for Plymouth to initiate new ministries, expand Christian education opportunities, and grow our mission in Christ's name.

We also thank you for taking time to fill out the Time and Talent Survey so we know the special talents that you are willing to share. The Nominating Committee has already put those surveys to use in creating a slate of nominations for 2004.

Your Stewardship Committee,

Leslie Mowers, Larry McCulloch, Verley Boulton, Don Bundy, Betty Weber and Porter Woods

The Nominating Committee Needs Your Help!

The Nominating Committee is in the selection process for positions that need to be filled for 2004. 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!

Thank You!

To Wil and Geri Stutheit, Sally Gilmore, Maggie Boardman and Jane Repert for beautifying our church for the holidays. Jane's Advent wreaths on our front doors welcomed us as we entered the building each week. Wil and Geri found, purchased and set up for us, the perfect sanctuary Christmas tree. Sally's evergreen swags in the sanctuary gave us both visual and fragrant reminders of Advent as we worshiped. Maggie and Jane artfully arranged the poinsettias in the chancel. Thank you, all of you!

To Caryl and Barry Beaty for providing us with an LCD projector to use for each of the showings of our films for the fall film series.

To Mike Byrne for alerting the Coloradoan to the need for more financial donations to the Homeless Prevention Fund. In response, a reporter wrote an article that prompted more giving, which in turn has already helped more families.

For your generous donations of items for the gift bags that were handed out to foster children at the Lutheran Family Services Foster Care Christmas party on December 13. The Goodness Gorillas made the gift bags and each child at the party received one.

To the congregation for supporting the Junior High Sunday School class in their annual Gingerbread House for Habitat for Humanity. Their total this year was \$107.

CALLING/CARING TRAINING TO RESUME JANUARY 19

The Calling/Caring training will resume on January 19 and conclude after three sessions on February 2. Meetings are on three Mondays at 7:00 p.m. Even if you have missed some of the earlier sessions you are welcome if you have an interest in being a visitor. Schedule is as follows.

January 19:

- 1) Some Aging Issues (tape by Dr. Joseph Sittler)
- 2) Reporting and Documentation
- 3) Consultation Possibilities
- 4) Referral to Pastors

January 26:

- 1) Visitation in Hospitals, Rehabilitation Centers, Long-term Care Homes
- 2) The context of such centers
- 3) Guidelines for visits
- 4) Poudre Valley Hospital issues

February 2

- 1) Dynamics of Crisis
- 2) Use of Scripture and other resources (Care Notes)
- 3) Using yourself in this kind of ministry
- 4) Other components of Calling/Caring Ministry
 - a) Parish Nursing (Marietta Zimmerman)
 - b) Other kinds of needs: (food, etc.)

PLYMOUTH TO HOST ROCKY MTN. CONF. ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 10-13th

As the calendar turns to 2004, one of the big events for the year at Plymouth will be hosting the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC Annual Meeting on June 10-13th. We can expect approximately 300 meeting delegates from Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado; conference and national UCC staff; visitors; and guests to attend. A Plymouth planning committee has already been working with the Conference staff in planning and coordinating the meeting's theme, program events and schedule. As the host church, we will have lots of logistics work and supporting roles to make it all happen. We will need many volunteers to work a wide variety of tasks. More meeting details and volunteer opportunities will be forthcoming through the winter and spring. For now, please mark the dates on your calendar. We will need your help to make this meeting a success. Plymouth's RMC Annual Meeting Planning Committee is Jim Taylor, Brian Kelly, Sally Gilmore, Paula Dille, Betty Clark, Karen and John Smith, Doug Robinson & Molly Nortier.

Volunteers for Student Achievement

Last year five Fort Collins faith communities were involved in a pilot program with "high need" elementary schools to provide volunteers to assist with student achievement. This fall the Social Concerns Committee discussed and endorsed the program and would like to ask Plymouth members to consider participation. Training is provided by the school and volunteer interests and skills are matched with student needs. No prior experience is required, just a desire to make a contribution to student achievement. Congregations appoint a coordinator of volunteers who will support our members and work with the elementary school coordinator.

As the principal at Bennett for the past twelve years, Sue Reid has been committed to building an inclusive learning community with the residents and businesses in the neighborhood. She is very excited about the possibility of a partnership with Plymouth and will be speaking about it at the Adult Forum on January 25. The strong value Plymouth places on education and community outreach coupled with the many talents and skills among our members make this program a good fit for our congregation. We encourage you to attend the January Forum to learn how you can become involved. For questions or further information contact Vicki Bohlmann of the Social Concerns Committee (206-0813)

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

Pro-Choice Lobby Day . . .

will be Thursday, January 22, in Denver. Join pro-choice supporters from across Colorado for a continental breakfast, presentations regarding how the legislature works, lobbying, current issues, etc., followed by a visit with your representative and/or senator. The day usually concludes with a news conference at noon. We will carpool, have lunch out in Denver, arrive back in Fort Collins by mid afternoon. If you are interested in participating or just have questions, call Betty Weber at 613-1789. Do NOT send an e-mail as we do not have service at this time.

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.

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

Plymouth's Senior High Youth

Sun., Jan. 11, 5-7pm: youth Sunday Planning at the church.

Fri., Jan. 16-18: Leadership Retreat

Sun., Feb. 1, 5-7 p.m. More Youth Sunday planning at the church.

Sat., Feb. 14, 10am – 12 noon – Youth Sunday Rehearsal at the church.

Sunday, Feb. 15 Youth Sunday! Please be at the church at 7:00 a.m.

Having a Super Bowl Party?

Order a party sub, or two, or three...from the Senior High Youth SS class for your Super Bowl Party. We'll make the subs and you can pick them up on Super Bowl Sunday! Watch the Fellowship hall in the next few weeks for your chance to order your party subs. This fundraiser will benefit the next Senior High mission trip.

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.

Join us for the following **Upcoming Events**:

Potluck and Game Night-

Ben Slocumb and Dianne Stober will host a potluck and game night at their house, 703 Dearborn St., on Saturday, January 10th at 5pm. Bring a dish to share and your favorite game. This is a "family friendly" event. Contact Ben and Dianne at 225-6446 or [dstoer@mindspring.com](mailto:dstober@mindspring.com)

Potluck Planning Breakfast-

Saturday, January 24th will be our potluck planning breakfast at David and Donna Greene's house, 914 W. Oak St. @ 9:30am Bring a breakfast dish to share and events calendars for planning. We'll plan through the spring.

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 in fellowship hall.

February Women's Friendship Meeting: We will meet at Paula Dille's home, 814 Ashford Lane, Monday, February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to read Life of Pi by Yann Martell for an interesting discussion. The book is presently \$11.20 in paperback at Barnes and Noble as it is a Bestseller. The price will go up 20% if it loses that classification. Could be a good book for Retreat free time.

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.

- Please join us for the CSU Girl's Basketball game vs Utah on January 17th at noon followed by a trip to Woody's on Laurel for pizza. See the sign-up sheet for both on the fellowship hall bulletin board. Sign up with a **"G"** for the game, with a **"P"** for pizza, and **"GP"** for both. 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!

Notes from the Peace and Justice Ministry

First of all, you may notice our name change. We decided to call ourselves the “Peace and Justice Ministry” – rather than the “peace group.” We are still, however, a subcommittee of the Social Concerns committee.

At the annual church meeting on January 25, we will be making an announcement about our plans to spend 2004 working with the congregation to see whether we want to become a Just Peace church. Throughout the year, there will be lots of opportunities for you to learn more, study the issues, dialogue about your own experiences, and prayerfully investigate issues of peace and justice.

To begin with, join us for a forum on January 18 on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). This is the expansion of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to every country in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, except Cuba. According to Global Exchange, “The proposed agreement is essentially NAFTA on steroids. But NAFTA has proven a nightmare for working families and the environment.” In November 2003, several thousand people went to Miami to voice their opposition to the FTAA, including 22 from Fort Collins. The brutality with which the protestors were met was like nothing ever seen in this country. A few of them will come to Plymouth with photos and stories to educate us about the FTAA and what it’s like to face a militarized police force, right here in the United States.

On January 25 we will begin a six-week study of the book *The Power of Nonviolence: Writings by Advocates of Peace* with an introduction by Howard Zinn. For more information see the adult education page. Sign up in the fellowship hall. Here are some words from the Buddha, from the first essay in the book:

For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule.

As the echo belongs to the sound, and the shadow to the substance, so misery will overtake the evildoer without fail.... A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person. The slanderer is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary; the dust does but return on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt, and the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself.

Our next meeting will be **Thursday, January 22 at 11:45 at the Oak Street Café**, 147 West Oak Street. Join us!

**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 ...
Registrations available on table in sanctuary.**

PLEASE NOTE

**Deadline for February Placard articles is Tuesday, January 20th.
Please mark your calendars!**

Get Ready For LaForet 2004

PEOPLE IN THE PARISH

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

Recently in the Hospital:

- *Dotty Mattern*
- *Jan Welch (call Molly Nortier, 493-2522, if you wish to help with meals and/or transportation when Jan returns to Fort Collins).*

Our Sympathy is with:

- *Margaret Stockover and family on the death of her father, Carl Reichhardt, whose memorial service was held at First Congregational UCC in Greeley on December 31st with Nan Sollo officiating. Carl crafted the stained glass windows on either side of the main entrance into our sanctuary.*
- *Zach Campaign and family on the death of his grandfather, Hollis Campaign.*

Congratulations to:

- *Chris Koziol upon receiving his PhD from CU's School of Public Affairs on Dec. 3.*

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

WWW.PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG
970.482-9212

The Rev. Hal Chorpenning	<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.

GREAT NEWS!**PLYMOUTH WILL BE HOSTING THE 2004 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE (UCC)**

Our church council voted unanimously to accept the honor of hosting the next Annual Meeting next June. We'll need **lots** of volunteer help as we provide a welcome for delegates and clergy from the 81 churches of the conference. It's a great way to welcome our fellow UCC members from Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.

*Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
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Fort Collins, CO 80526*

Non-profit organization
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