



# THE PLYMOUTH PLACARD

December 2018

## WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER

Advent...it's one of those seasons that seem most alive in the church year. It's beautiful to see families of all varieties light the Advent candles, to hear familiar scriptures (this year from Jeremiah's prophecy and Luke's gospel), and to have a place to center ourselves when the whirlwind of the world seems to be getting even faster.

Join us for Sunday services (at 9:00, 11:00, and 6:00 unless otherwise noted), for our Longest Night service on December 16 at 6:00, for Christmas Eve services at 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00. Christmas worship continues with Multicultural Lessons & Carols on December 30 at 10:00 and 6:00.

**December 2 - First Sunday of Advent**  
Jeremiah 33.14-16

**December 9 - Second Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 1.68-79

**December 16 - Third Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 3.7-18

9:00, 11:00 Morning services  
6:00 Contemplative Longest Night service (Communion, healing prayer, harp, flute, hand bells, and Chamber Choir)

**December 23 - Fourth Sunday of Advent**  
Luke 1.39-55

**December 24 - Christmas Eve\***

All services feature brass, communion, and candlelight  
3:00 Family Service with Low-Stress Pageant  
4:40 - Pre-service music: Camille Saint-Saëns' Christmas Oratorio  
5:00 Festival Service of Lessons and Carols  
6:40 - Pre-service music: Camille Saint-Saëns' Christmas Oratorio  
7:00 Festival Service of Lessons and Carols

*\* If you are able-bodied, please park at the Islamic Center or on Lake Street.*

**December 30 - First Sunday of Christmas**  
Luke 2.1-11

10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Multicultural Lessons & Carols  
Come and sing carols from around the world!

### CHRISTMAS EVE NOTES

The **Christmas Eve offering** supports the **UCC Christmas Fund**, which provides grants to low-income retired UCC clergy and lay employees who need help with daily living expenses or medical bills. Our joy at Christmas is a response to God's promise of new life through the birth of Jesus and we can share this joy. **Donations: any time:** "Christmas Fund" on the memo line of a check, *starting 12/9:* choose "Xmas" in text or online giving, or *on 12/24:* in the offering plate. Please consider a generous gift to those who dedicated their lives to spreading the Light through the UCC.

**Pageant help needed.** Calling all Santa's Helpers! And friends of children! We need 3-6 volunteers to help with the children's nativity costumes for the **3 p.m. Christmas Eve service!** You will also be on hand to help children choose their costumes as they come to this interactive Christmas Eve service. Email Jane Anne Ferguson to sign up and ask questions.

### PLYMOUTH RECEIVES ITS LARGEST BEQUEST

During the week of All Saints Day, we learned that Plymouth has received its largest bequest to date, from the estate of Lynn Richards (left in photo), who died last year. Stacy Scott (right), Lynn's wife, is spending part of her time here in Fort Collins and lives primarily in Oregon.



The bequest will become part of Plymouth's Endowment, which was started in 2005. The Planned Giving Committee was careful in setting up the endowment so that the congregation never becomes over-reliant on it, but rather uses its own stewardship for routine funding. In accordance with Plymouth's policy, Lynn's bequest will be divided among the Endowment's five funds: Wider Mission of the UCC, Community Service & Outreach, Infrastructure Improvements, Christian Formation, and Worship, Music & the Arts.

"It was a much-appreciated and unexpected gift," according to Planned Giving Chair Bob Hoel. "Lynn's caring will continue beyond any of our lifetimes," says Senior Minister Hal Chorpensing. "It's a great legacy that will continue to support Plymouth's mission through our endowment."

For more information, contact Bob Hoel at Bob.Hoel@colostate.edu.

## FROM HAL'S DESK: THE GENTLE ART OF SAYING YES

A familiar part of the Christmas story is mysterious visit of the angel Gabriel to Mary, announcing that she will conceive a son under miraculous circumstances. And whether you take this story as parable or historical fact, the message is clear in Mary's response: "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Mary's response is an echo of the prophet Samuel, who also answers God's call with the affirmation, "Here I am."



14th c. Annunciation, Accademia, Florence

One of the most countercultural things we can do as Christians is to say "yes" to God's service. For Mary, being pregnant outside of marriage was more than an inconvenience; it was something in her culture that would cause her deep shame. Samuel violated the conventional wisdom of his day: he was "just a child," presumably too young to hear and answer God's call.

There are many ways to say "yes," and I encourage you, as a spiritual practice, to prayerfully consider saying "yes" to serving on a board or committee at Plymouth: really pray about it before saying "yes" or "no." It is a countercultural thing to do, especially when you have a busy life, confront demands of family and work, and can't imagine how you would possibly fit serving into your schedule.

Discipleship calls us to places that we might find uncomfortable...but when was the last time you had a significant learning or spiritual breakthrough in a time of comfort?

If you sense a call and are interested in serving, please be in touch with Anne Jordan of our Nominating Committee at [annedjordan@gmail.com](mailto:annedjordan@gmail.com)

Happy Advent!

## Calendar Highlights

Go to [PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG](http://PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG) and click CALENDAR to see all events.

**December 1**  
5:00 p.m.  
Interfaith Sleep-out Vigil

**December 2**  
Advent begins!

**December 2-9**  
Faith Family Hospitality Guests at Plymouth

**December 8**  
11:00 a.m.  
Memorial service for Janet McCulloch

**December 16**  
6:00 p.m.  
Contemplative Longest Night Service (see Worship box)

**December 24**  
Christmas Eve Services at 3, 5, and 7 p.m. (see Worship box)

**December 30**  
First Sunday of Christmas  
10 a.m. and 6 p.m. (see Worship box)



### Plymouth Congregational UCC

916 West Prospect Rd Fort Collins, CO 80526

[www.plymouthucc.org](http://www.plymouthucc.org)

gathered in 1903

970-482-9212

Hal Chorpensing, senior minister, [hal@plymouthucc.org](mailto:hal@plymouthucc.org)

Jake Joseph, associate minister, [jake@plymouthucc.org](mailto:jake@plymouthucc.org)

Jane Anne Ferguson, associate minister (Sun., Tues., Thurs.), [janneanne@plymouthucc.org](mailto:janneanne@plymouthucc.org)

Mark Heiskanen, director of music, [music@plymouthucc.org](mailto:music@plymouthucc.org)

Mandy Hall, CF director (children & youth), [mandy@plymouthucc.org](mailto:mandy@plymouthucc.org)

Mark Lee, CF director (adults...Sun., Tues., Thurs.), [mark@plymouthucc.org](mailto:mark@plymouthucc.org)

Anna Broskie, IT/comm. coordinator (mornings), [anna@plymouthucc.org](mailto:anna@plymouthucc.org)

Barb Gregory, office manager, [barbara@plymouthucc.org](mailto:barbara@plymouthucc.org)

Jenn and Johnny Wieda, sextons, [sexton@plymouthucc.org](mailto:sexton@plymouthucc.org)

*Our full-time ministers and program staff work Sunday-Thursday*

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE NEWS

**Deacons' Bench.** "Confessions of a Doubtful Deacon" When I was asked to be a Deacon, I resisted. I travel a lot and I have doubts about the institutional Church. But I said yes. And it has been a blessing! As a Deacon, one discovers how deep and strong and loving the caring is in our Church. If you feel called to this service, pray like Dag Hammarskjold: "For all that has been—Thanks. For all that will be—YES!" - *Kevin Keller*

From the **Stewardship Board:** Thank you to all who have committed to our mission and ministry for 2019! We are grateful that pledges came in this year in such a timely fashion. As of mid-November, we still had about 15% of our goal to achieve. If you have not yet pledged, please help us reach our goal.

**Coffee Hour** needs help. It's easy and we will be happy to train you. Sign up right beside the dirty dish window. Questions? Kathee Houser (928) 600-4610.

14th Annual **Vigil & Sleep Out in the Cold** is back. At 5 p.m. on Saturday, **12/1** there is a community interfaith vigil to support folks who are experiencing homelessness in Fort Collins. Questions? Bob Jeffrey 970-224-2428.

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

Your Leadership Council has been hard at work overseeing governance and strategic objectives for Plymouth. The Financial Review Committee submitted their report, and the Budget & Finance Committee will consider their findings and recommendations and report back to LC. We continue to look at ways to celebrate all the great things happening and recognize volunteers; stay tuned. LC is beginning the process to form a new Strategic Planning Task Force to get underway in 2019. If you're interested in serving, contact one of the members of LC or Hal. - Dianne Stober, Moderator

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Did you know that **church policy documents** are now available on the website? Visit [plymouthucc.org/policies.html](http://plymouthucc.org/policies.html). This includes the Leadership Council Operating Policy,

Planned Giving Policy, Facilities Use Policy, and more.

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**Have you been able to log into the directory (F1Go) successfully?** If not, email [Anna](mailto:Anna) to set up a time to get help over the phone.

**Want to give online?** Visit the Plymouth [website](http://www.plymouthucc.org) and click **GIVE** on the top menu.

### Income

October Income for 2018: \$50,013  
Budgeted Income for October 2018: \$69,184  
Income YTD: \$693,071  
Budgeted Income YTD: \$691,840

### Expenses

Expenses for October 2018: \$62,410  
Budgeted Expenses for October 2018: \$70,798  
Expenses YTD: \$698,742  
Budgeted Expenses YTD: \$707,981

## ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

**Google God.** Each Sunday, we will watch a video and then have a discussion, facilitated by Katrina Starkweather in the Fireside Room. 12/2-16

**Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved**, by Katie Bowler. How we respond and support people with difficult diagnoses. Facilitated by Naomi Hoyer in the North Adult Ed room. 12/2-16

**Forum 12/2 - Images of Mary through the Centuries.** Christmas scene: Mary, Joseph, Christ child—but who is Mary, and what did she look like? Chris Nelson, retired CSU assoc. prof. of art history.

**Forum 12/9 - Animate: Worship.** Worship "worth-ship" is the central act of the church. This video, by Mike Slaughter of Church of the Resurrection in Kansas City, will help us think out of the box.

Forum 12/16 - TBA.

**Finding God's Wisdom Within and Without**, a spiritual small group led by Jane Anne Ferguson. Tues. 7-8:30 p.m., 1/15-3/5/19. Sign up: bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. For women and men, for questions and sharing, using prayer and reflection practices based on the contemplative writings of C.V. Paintner, J. Chitister, and D. Stendl-Rast. Writing and art exercises, ritual, and story.



## MINISTRY TEAMS

The annual **GAG** (potluck group) Christmas extravaganza and White Elephant gift exchange will be on **12/8** at 6 p.m. at Jack and Liz McGrew's. Meat provided -- bring a side dish to share. All White Elephants must leave the premises with their lucky, new owners. (2219 Hiawatha Ct., RSVP: 970-484-1871)

**Hops for Hope** is meeting at 6 p.m. on **12/13**. We will finally meet at the "Mothership of Fort Collins Beer," New Belgium Brewing Company! We will discuss holiday traditions and favorite Christmas Carols. All are welcome! Look for the group inside the main tasting room.

**Ram Fellowship @ Plymouth** (college students) We will take December off for finals and the holidays. Stay tuned for spring 2019 events that will start back up in January. Best of luck on your winter finals, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year! - Nic ([nredavid@gmail.com](mailto:nredavid@gmail.com))

**First Name Club 12/13** at 12 p.m. "Holiday Feast and Sing-Along." Join the Kitchen Angels for a meal, then join Music Dir. Mark Heiskanen for the annual Christmas Sing-Along! Sign up on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall or via [Barb Gregory](mailto:BarbGregory) in the office **by Tues. 12/11**. Suggested donation: \$5/person.

**XYZ** (eXtra Years of Zest -- active retirees) will attend the Loveland Choral Society at the Rialto in Loveland at 3 p.m. on **12/15**. An after-concert gathering is being planned. Tickets (reserved seating is \$18, plus fee) online at [rialtoloveland.ticketforce.com](http://rialtoloveland.ticketforce.com) (be sure to choose the "Buy Tickets" button to the 12/15 matinée). Questions? Jim Poole (970) 472-5061.

**YUCCA** (20s and 30s): our annual Christmas party will be at 5 p.m. on Sat., **12/15**, at Eleni and Kyle Thayer's home, 1551 Edenbridge Dr., Windsor. RSVP to Eleni at [esidiropoulos09@gmail.com](mailto:esidiropoulos09@gmail.com) or 573-694-8633. And keep an eye out for details on our Epiphany brunch on Sunday, 1/6. Hope to see everyone there!

There is a **Giving Tree** for The Family Center and Bennett School in the narthex, with cards with names and wish lists. (Instructions on table beside tree.) For larger families, you may want to share with another church family. Gifts returned TO THE CHURCH **by 12/16**. Thanks for helping make a time of joy for these children. Sara Myers ([myerss@ctsnet.edu](mailto:myerss@ctsnet.edu)), Joyce DeVaney ([JDeVaney6@comcast.net](mailto:JDeVaney6@comcast.net))

Can you whistle a happy tune? Pull a quarter out of someone's ear? Turn a somersault? Limbo low? The 2nd annual **Plymouth Has Talent** invites entertainers of all ages and abilities to light up the night on Fri. 1/25 at 6:30 p.m. Bring a dessert to share. Performers, sign up on the bulletin board **beginning 12/16**. You'll never have a better audience!

**Faith Family Hospitality** weeks for **2019** have been set. Please mark your calendars: Feb. 10-17, Apr. 28-May 5, Aug. 11-18, Nov. 10-17.

**Shop at King Soopers?** If so, consider purchasing a gift card from Linda Dute or Joyce Devaney on Sundays. When empty, "reload" the card using cash or credit -- 5% goes to Plymouth. Neighbor 2 Neighbor gives these cards to clients working through challenging housing issues. A win/win situation for all & costs you nothing over what you would spend on groceries already. Thanks!

Last month, the **Interfaith Council** held a time of mourning/solidarity at a Candlelight Vigil in Old Town Square in response to the shootings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. At the regular meeting, we learned how Trinity Lutheran, St. Paul's, and Mary of Magdala share one campus--offices, parking, worship space. Several members worked on a Habitat Build. - Hermi LaPoint

## YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION

The season of Advent is here, it is a time of spiritual preparation for Christmas. While stores and radio stations keep trying to push Christmas earlier and earlier, we as a church want to slow this season down so we can experience the hope, peace, joy and love of the Gospel.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in this preparation through our "Advent Box" program that we introduced during Thrive. Individuals and families with youth or older children are encouraged to check out the *Mary's Song* devotional book and coloring pages, while families with younger children might prefer "Preparing the Way." There are also three other activities that you can add to your Christmas preparations. Check them all out at the Adult Ed table after worship. - *Grace & Peace, Mandy*

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

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