



THE PLYMOUTH PLACARD

February 2019

WORSHIP FOR FEBRUARY

Walking through the season of Epiphany, we continue to be guided by the light of the Star of the East. Though the days are short and nights are long, we look for the light.

Please be on the lookout for our guests at Plymouth, and offer them a warm welcome! One approach, if you are unsure whether they are guests, is this sentence I once heard in a church in Connecticut: "Hi! I'm Sue (but please use your own name!). You may have been a member here for years, but I don't think we've met yet, and I wanted to introduce myself." That puts a guest at ease as they feel welcomed... and, of course, look out for blue mugs at coffee hour!

Worship times (unless otherwise noted) are:

9:00 Communion service

11:00 Choral service (Communion on first Sunday)

6:00 Eclectic service with Communion

February 3

1 Corinthians 13.1-13
It's All about Love

Looking Ahead

February 10

Isaiah 6:1-13
"Here I am! Send me!"

March 3

Mountaintop Experiences
NEW: Dinner Church at 6:00
Join us and bring a friend!

February 17

Luke 6.17-26
The Earliest Beatitudes

March 6

Ash Wednesday
Simple Soup Supper at 6:15
Worship at 7:00

February 24

Luke 6.27-38
Loving the Loveless

FROM HAL'S DESK: FOOD FOR THE SOUL



Agape meal fresco from the Catacombs of Domitilla in Rome.

There is an old joke that potluck suppers are the third sacrament in Protestant churches. Though if you look at early Christian imagery, whether 2nd c. catacomb frescoes in Rome or 5th c. mosaics in Ravenna, the theme of the agape meal is shown as a central part of Christian worship and fellowship. Indeed, one of our two sacraments is a remembrance of a meal (and the other has echoes of bathing). In the early church, Communion was integrated into a communal meal: an agape meal that reflected the self-giving love in sharing life-sustaining food. The Eucharist eventually became a separate sacrament, probably in the second century.

Earlier this year, Mark Heiskanen and I were invited to create a proposal for the Church Music Institute and the Lilly Endowment to enhance our worship, and we were selected as participants in this new pilot program. We have proposed an exploration of "Dinner Church," which is a new spin on an old theme: an agape meal integrated into the service itself. So, with \$2,500 in funding from the Lilly Endowment, we will be launching an experiment in Dinner Church at Plymouth on Sunday, March 3 at our 6:00 service. The plan at this point is to do a trial run of Dinner Church as a monthly, integral part of our evening service.

Last week, Mark, Eleni Thayer, Sara Mullarkey, Jane Anne Ferguson, and I attended a Dinner Church event at First Congregational UCC in Boulder, and we think it will be a great fit for Plymouth! And last Sunday, Mark, Eleni, Sara, Anna Olsen, and I met for our first ministry team meeting to work on this innovation.

ready for something fun, distinctive, and meaningful! Communion will also be incorporated into the service, as it was in the early church, and we will share Communion around the table.

Mark and I attended a weekend workshop and class at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth this summer with our CMI/Lilly cohort group and returned and made some adjustments in our evening service as a result of rethinking parts of the liturgical and musical flow. We begin the service with lowered lights and invite people to enter in silence, and then to come forward and light a candle and offer a prayer or intention for the service. That simple liturgical action grounds us in the sacred. We also have streamlined the instrumentation for the service, so on some Sundays Bobby Brannock plays piano with a cantor, and we also sometimes include another instrumentalist or two (and last Sunday two new members, Abigail and Scott Steadly, played Celtic fiddle and guitar!). Dinner church will be an opportunity for us to engage CSU students and others who need a new entry-point into church. (Believe it or not, if you've never been to church, black robed clergy, white-robed choirs, and organ music can be intimidating.)

I'd like to thank Mark and our new Ministry Team for their engagement, and I look forward to sharing this experience with you! And it's a great time to bring a friend to Plymouth for dinner! Join us to celebrate this meal and Christ's presence among us! All are welcome.

In the spirit of agape,

Our service will be held around tables in the Fellowship Hall, so get

Calendar Highlights

Go to PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG and click NEWS & EVENTS to see all events.

February 9

Special One-Morning New Members Class

Join us from 8:30-11:30 Saturday to explore becoming a member!

February 10-16

Faith Family Hospitality (now "Family Housing Network of Fort Collins")
Guests at Plymouth

February 18

Office closed for President's Day

February 21

Staff first aid and CPR training (all day)

February 24

New Members welcomed at 11:00 and 6:00 services

March 3

6:00 p.m.

Dinner Church Launches!

Everyone welcome! See Hal's article at right for details.



Plymouth Congregational UCC

916 West Prospect Rd Fort Collins, CO 80526

www.plymouthucc.org

gathered in 1903

970-482-9212

Hal Chorpenning, senior minister, hal@plymouthucc.org

Jake Joseph, associate minister, jake@plymouthucc.org

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

Mark Heiskanen, director of music, music@plymouthucc.org

Mandy Hall, CF director (children & youth), mandy@plymouthucc.org

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

Anna Broskie, IT/comm. coordinator (mornings), anna@plymouthucc.org

Barb Gregory, office manager, barbara@plymouthucc.org

Jenn and Johnny Wieda, sextons, sexton@plymouthucc.org

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

PASTORAL CONTACTS

Our ministers' normal work days are Sunday-Thursday, but if you have a pastoral emergency (in the hospital, urgent need for a pastoral support conversation, etc.), please do call us on our mobile phones...that's what we're here for! Unlike all other professions, we still make house calls by appointment!

Hal Chorpenning, 970-481-2928 for emergencies

Jake Joseph, 970-412-6114 for emergencies

Jane Anne Ferguson, 303-257-4933 for emergencies



LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

Leadership Council has been busy in the run-up to the Annual Meeting on 1/27. At January's LC meeting, we approved the proposed 2019 Budget. 2018 proved to be a challenging year for our giving, and we will diligently work with Budget & Finance to understand the factors involved. We will also be closely monitoring the budget and giving throughout 2019. While these are difficult challenges, we also found bright spots in our work. We are launching an "Ordinary Miracles" bulletin board to celebrate the everyday ways Plymouth contributes to God's realm on earth. All will be able to recognize people and achievements to bring positivity to light. LC also approved Personnel's recommended policy revisions, which can be found on our website (Members → Constitution & Policies), along with other governance documents. Stay tuned for updates from our newly formed Adaptive

Challenge Task Force, which is tasked with analyzing and recommending responses to the changing demographics and opportunities facing Plymouth.

I have appreciated the opportunity to serve as your Moderator this past year. David Petersen is going to be a fantastic Moderator, and I urge you to support his leadership through prayers, friendship, and communication.

Dianne Stober, Moderator

Income

Income for Dec. 2018: \$79,813
Budgeted Income for Dec. 2018: \$69,184
Income YTD: \$828,849
Budgeted Income YTD: \$830,208

Expenses

Expenses for Dec. 2018: \$77,739
Budgeted Expenses for Dec. 2018: \$70,798
Expenses YTD: \$830,559
Budgeted Expenses YTD: \$849,577

Jim Medlock, Asst. Treasurer

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Sunday Study Groups (*Books on the Adult Ed table and at the classes.*)

Grateful: The Transforming Power of Giving Thanks, by Diana Butler Bass.

Embrace a practice of gratitude--the virtue that heals us and helps us to thrive, even in the midst of personal and political challenges. With Irene Wherritt, Fireside Rm, through 3/3.

The U. S. Immigration Crisis: Toward an

Ethics of Place, by Iliff professor Miguel De La Torre. Book discussion with short video clips or an invited speaker. Immigration Ministry Team, location TBD. 2/10 - 3/3 (4 weeks).



Sunday Experimental Spiritual Experiences West [Forum/Choir] Rm

2/3 - **BorderLinks: Report from Our Trip**. In November, several Plymouth members traveled with BorderLinks to the US-Mexico border. They will share their experiences and insights on the current issues.

Contribute to the Empathy Tree (2/3): What are the questions keeping you up at night? If you knew God would answer, what would you ask? What do you want our community to know about your life, your struggle, or the questions you have in your faith? Hang questions on the Empa-

thy Tree to jump start the conversation during February's Forums to discuss how we accompany one another on our faith journeys:

2/10-24 - **I care; I'm listening**. We will explore Brené Brown's teachings on empathy. How do we walk sincerely with someone in their pain? How do we stay focused on them and not grab the spotlight? How do we communicate our love, care and support even when we can't "fix" the situation? Short film, group discussion, and hands-on art projects will help us grow in our capacity for empathy.

During the Week

Finding God's Wisdom Within and Without, a spiritual small group experience led by the Rev. Jane Anne Ferguson. **Tuesdays 7-8:30 p.m.**, 1/15 - 3/5. Sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. This is a group for questions and sharing, using prayer and reflection practices along with ritual and story.

Bible Basics Slots Open! Join Hal Chorpensing and other Plymouth members and friends in an introductory exploration of the Bible. (This is aimed at beginners and not intended for folks who can already find their way around the Old and New Testaments.) Fireside Room, **Mondays 4-5:15 p.m.** We're still exploring the narratives in Genesis, so join us! Info: hal@plymouthucc.org

MINISTRY TEAMS

Self-Compassion through Contemplative Neuroscience. Dr. Christine O'Brien. Centering Prayer **2/9**, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Sign up on bulletin board. Contemplative neuroscience investigates the effects of meditation and mindfulness on the brain. We will explore contemplative practices of self-compassion that are scientifically proven to enhance brain integration, developing our brain's left prefrontal cortex.

Annual **Valentine's Brunch, 2/9** at 10 a.m. Delicious catered brunch sponsored by XYZ and Plymouth Men's Fellowship. All are welcome - singles, couples, widowed, etc. \$18/person, payable by check to Plymouth with "Valentine Brunch" on memo line, due by 2/3. Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

YUCCA (20s and 30s fellowship group): What: Discovery Distilled: Wine and Chocolate. Where: Fort Collins Museum of Discovery. When: Sat. **2/9**, 6-9 pm. Tickets: tinyurl.com/YUCCAwine-choc Please RSVP to Jackie at jaclynmwrap@gmail.com so I know who is going. That night, text me at (510) 292-8101 when you arrive so we can find each other =)

Family Housing Network of Fort Collins (formerly "Faith Family Hospitality") hosting weeks for 2019: **Feb. 10-17**, Apr. 28-May 5, Aug. 11-18, Nov. 10-17.

Hops for Hope is canceled since 2/14 is Valentine's Day. We will meet again in March.

The **Celtic Spirituality** class meets Tuesdays in the Conference Room from 9-10:15 a.m. We are studying the new book by Ian Bradley, *Following the Celtic Way*. All are welcome. Questions? Contact Les Fraley, 970.221.1624, lest@friei.com.

The programs of the **Interfaith Council** are currently promoting interfaith literacy in our Community. January's meeting was at Foothills Unitarian. Members of the church spoke to the diverse beliefs within the congregation. Discussion concluded that, in our diverse beliefs, we still need each other to become our best selves and for Fort Collins to be the best it can be. Next up: Quaker traditions. - Hermina Lapoint

Comfort Food & Bingo. Congregational Life invites you to a soul satisfying evening of fine companionship, delicious food and enthusiastic bingo on Fri., **3/8** at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The theme of the meal is comfort food and last year featured some amazing mashed potatoes. CL provides dessert. Bring a main or side dish and consider re-purposing your "clutter" as bingo prizes.

In the deep midwinter, on these dry winter days, let's not forget the opportunity right outside our building to find "living water" by walking our beautiful **labyrinth**. Try a *Gratitude* Walk to remember your blessings. If you feel frustrated, stressed or confused, try doing a *Help Me* or *Letting Go* Walk. Feel like dancing? Whatever calls you to walk the labyrinth is reason enough to walk it.

Help Plymouth's following grow and reach new people by following us on **Instagram** (@plymouthuccftc)! - Rev. Jake

YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Our teachers and mentors have a great month of activities planned for Sprouts, Kids Club and Club 45. **Kids Club** will continue to learn about the Bible, and if any Kids Club members can list all the books of the Bible in order by Easter, they will win a prize! **Club 45** members have a special treat on 2/3: our ministers will join the class to answer all your burning questions about worship. This month, **Middle School Youth Group** will meet on 7th & 21st. **High School Youth Group** will only meet on the 17th & 24th.

Attention **Middle and High School Youth!** On **2/10** we will have an interfaith experience with FRYE! Join us for lunch, Stupa tour, and learning more about the Tibetan Buddhist faith. We will leave Plymouth at 11 a.m., so be sure to attend the 9 a.m. worship service that day. We expect to be home no later than 5pm. Register **by 2/6** on the website (plymouthucc.org/youth.html).

Spring Youth Retreat (3/15-17) registration is open and scholarships available. Check out the Plymouth website for more information and to register.

Registration is open for the summer **8th-12th grade mission trip to Rosebud Episcopal Mission** on the Rosebud Reservation in SD. We'll be going with the youth from 1st Cong. Greeley for this transformative experience 6/13-19. Check the website for more info and to register (**by 2/15**). \$50 deposit.

- Grace & Peace, Mandy

Plymouth Congregational UCC
916 West Prospect Road
Fort Collins, Colorado 80526



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