

Plymouth
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



Photo by Quang Nguyen Vinh

January 22, 2023

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No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

January 22, 2023 • 3rd Sunday after Epiphany • 10 a.m.

**An asterisk invites you to stand as you are able, in body or spirit.*

Prelude

Mark VanAlstyne

Greeting and Welcome

Pastor Charles

Announcements

- Tuesdays through Feb. 28th, time TBD: Green Jello Class, celebration of life service planning. See Jennifer Thompson.
- Sunday, January 29: Annual Meeting. Lunch will be provided afterwards.
- Sunday, January 29, Judy Fjell of Big Sky UU is inviting us to watch her musical Ordinary Bird, 4:00pm, in the Plymouth sanctuary.

Invitation to Worship

adapted from Psalm 27

Pat Christian

One: God is our light and salvation; whom shall I fear?

All: We seek to live in the house of God all the days of our lives.

One: God will shelter us on the day of trouble, God will conceal us under a tent and set us high on a rock.

All: We shout with joy! We sing and make melodies to God! God is our salvation!

***Gathering Hymn**

"How Firm a Foundation" (verse 1-4)

407 (NCH)

Unison Prayer *(please be seated)*

Pat Christian

God of Creation and Wonder, we come to you as children, vulnerable

and in need of your loving presence. Teach us to be good and kind. Show us how to take care of each other, and help us to be brave, so that we can tell the world of your will for us, so that peace and joy and generosity will become the custom of the land. [We invite you to rest in this brief moment of silence to listen for God's loving message for you this day.] (30 seconds) Amen.

Assurance of Grace

Pastor Charles

People of God, hear the good news! God holds us in strong comforting arms, just as a parent hugs a child. God's goodness provides us with everything that we need. In God's light, we find hope, and we know that we are never alone when we face the challenges of life. God is the Creator of all, and gives all of it to us with love. So, know that God is with you, and that you are loved. Amen.

Congregational Response

124 (Sing!)

"Deep within Our Hearts"

Prayer of Illumination

Pat Christian

Eternal God, you are our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Be with us now as we listen for your word. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Reading from the Prophets

Isaiah 9:1-4

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [God] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time [God] will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at

the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Musical Interlude

Mark VanAlstyne

Gospel Reading

Matthew 4:12-22

Pastor Charles

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Pastoral Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection

Prayers of the People

Pastor Charles

Infinite and Eternal One, we thank you for your renewing spirit. We thank you for your blessings of creation and wonder, thought and imagination. You are so generous with the abundance and diversity of the world; help us to welcome it, to appreciate it, and to grow from it. Let us learn from all you have given to us, from the truth and wisdom spoken through your prophets, to the challenges of our everyday lives. Pull us outside of our comfort zones, so that we might learn to be a more understanding and more open to those who are different from us. And, help us to share the good news of your love for the world. We thank you, Jesus, for the blazing fire of hope that you have kindled within us. We thank you, Holy Spirit, for walking with us and for being the tether that holds us together, to be one family of God.

Mother and Father of us all, we ask that you be with all of those for whom no one ever prays, and move in us, that we might work to heal this world that is our home before it is too late. We offer special prayers for all who are experiencing war or natural disaster. We pray for Ed Canty, Giles Walker, Evelyn Nelson, Marlyce “Marliss” Taylor, Art and Clara Gilreath, and Lorraine Hopgood. We lift up Margy “Marghee” Kohl, Nathan Schreder “Schrader”, Greg Bolin, Gus and Brenda Byrom, and Jay Sheldon as they go through cancer treatment. We pray for Karen Hays, Al, and Dianne Senne, for Dave Weaver, Dianne Zimmerman, Jim Beran, and Anna Demaree.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
On Earth, as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,

And lead us not into temptation,
But, deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.

Tithes and Offerings

***Doxology**

*Praise God, from whom all blessing flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Departing Hymn** *“Jesus Calls Us” (verses 1, 4 & 5)* 172 (NCH)

***Charge & Benediction** Pastor Charles

Texts like today’s gospel reading can be tricky for us in the UCC, as evangelism isn’t something that we spend a lot of time talking about. But, that doesn’t mean that we don’t exemplify a life in Christ with the things that we do, the things that we say, and the way that we treat the people around us. We were created to be in relationship with the Divine Mystery that created the universe. So, let people know that you love them. Let people know, and be the face of God to everyone that you meet.

So now, may our Creator God instill within you a spirit of creativity. May Jesus the Christ live inside of you, and help you to remember to love and forgive others, as well as yourself. And, may the Holy Spirit always be with you as you make your way on this journey that we call life, so that you will never be alone. Go in peace. Amen.

***Congregational Blessing** *“Go Out Now in Peace”*

212 (Sing!)

Postlude



Plymouth's Mission is to nurture our congregation and the wider community with acts of love and a vision of God's image in all things.

— TODAY'S MINISTERS —

*The People of Plymouth Congregational Church, assisted by
Rev. Charles Wei, Pastor
Pat Christian, Liturgist
Mark VanAlstyne, and Dr. Steve and Nancy Michelson, Music
Carol McKerrow, Liturgical Art*

— ANNOUNCEMENTS —

PCC Women's Fellowship monthly lunch will be held on Tuesday, January 24th at 11:30 a.m. at the Overland Express. Please join us for great conversation, fellowship, and a bite to eat.

Charity Knitting and Crochet group is meeting on Thursdays from 2 to 3 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Please talk to Cindy Holcomb for more information.

60th Anniversary! We will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the groundbreaking for Plymouth Congregational Church on Sunday, May 28, 2023. To help us do that, you are invited to share recipes for a church cookbook, as well as stories and memories for a booklet we can hand out. Also, if you have any pictures you would like to share, or if you have any other ideas of how we can celebrate, we welcome all of that! Please send your recipes, stories, and pictures to pccofficemgr@gmail.com.

There's a prayer card in your pew rack, which you can use to let us know of prayer requests. Place your card in the offering plate as they are passed.

Welcome visitors! We are delighted to have you worshipping with us today. You are invited to fill out a Visitor Card, which you will find on the back of the pew next to the hymnals.

YOU'RE INVITED!

Tuesday, January 22nd at 11:30 a.m.—PCC Women's Fellowship—Overland Express

Thursday, January 24th at 2:00 p.m.—Charity Knitting and Crochet—Fireside Room

Sunday, January 29th after service—PCC Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 29th 4:00 p.m.—Judy Fjell's "Ordinary Bird"—Sanctuary

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Office Hours—Monday through Thursday—9am to 1pm

Pastor Charles' e-mail—pastorplymouthmt@gmail.com

Pastor Office Hours—Tuesdays and Thursdays—9am to 4pm