

Plymouth
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



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March 19, 2023

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

March 19, 2023 • Fourth Sunday in Lent • 10 a.m.

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

Prelude

Greeting and Welcome

Pastor Charles

If you are a guest joining us for worship today, welcome! We are so glad that you're here, and we hope that this is a spirit-filled time for you.

Announcements

- Woke - Compiled from definitions found on Urban Dictionary:
A state of enlightened understanding, particularly related to issues of race and social justice. Someone who is aware of issues of injustice and inequality. Commonly used as an insult for people with progressive ideals, someone who pretends to be open-minded, or someone who attempts to show positive depictions of women and minorities in the media.
- Sign-up sheet for liturgist and readers for Maundy Thursday in the Narthex.

Invitation to Worship

Psalm 23

Pat Christian

One: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

All: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

One: He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

All: *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

One: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

All: *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

***Gathering Hymn**

"We Gather Together"

421 (NCH)

Unison Prayer *(please be seated)*

Pat Christian

God of Redemption and Revelation, help us to live into your truth. We ask that you give us the patience and the attentiveness to hear you amidst the noise in our lives. Help us to have faith in your goodness, and to trust in your wisdom. Let us be receptive to the ways that you move in our hearts, so that we might share your love with the world. [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's truth is all around us, we only need to look to find it. It's in the warm greeting of an old friend, and in parents' eyes as they watch their children. It's the sweet bite of a cookie shared in hospitality, and the steadying arm helping you to rise. God is always speaking to us, in a myriad of ways. And, God will always reveal truth to us, if we only but look. Amen.

Congregational Response

“Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart”

290 (NCH)

Prayer of Illumination

Jennifer Jeffries Thompson

Creator of all things, we come to you seeking understanding. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, our rock and our redeemer. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Reading from the Epistles

Ephesians 5:8-14

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

Musical Interlude

Gospel Reading

John 9:1-11

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of the one who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent).

Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight."

Pastoral Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection

Prayers of the People

God of Truth and Light, we thank you for your steadfast presence. We are sorry for the times that we did not hear you, and we promise to strive to do better. As we grow and learn about all the ways in which you reach out to us, we pray that you give us guidance and hope. Be with us, as a mother with her child, comforting and teaching, sheltering and loving, helping us to become better versions of ourselves, and helping us to become the people that you hope for us to be.

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 Taylor, Art and Clara Gilreath, Jim and Doris Powell, and Loraine Hopgood. We lift up Margy Kohl, Nathan Schreder, Greg Bolin, Gus and Brenda Byrom as they go through cancer treatment.

We pray for us, and the families of Jay Sheldon and Kay Burkhardt, as we mourn the loss of our loved ones.

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 — One Great Hour of Sharing

***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** *"Just As I am" (verses 1, 3, & 4)* 207 (NCH)

***Charge & Benediction** Pastor Charles

Sometimes, the truth is revealed to us, and we don't want to accept it.
Sometimes, the truth is revealed to us, and we can't understand it. Some-
times, the truth is revealed to us, and we don't think that it has anything

to do with us, or it might be something too big for us to handle. Whatever our reaction to the truth is, that doesn't stop it from being the truth, and the God that we worship is a God of Truth. So, be attentive to what is true and how you respond to it, and let the light of truth be your guide.

And 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 and Jennifer Jeffries Thompson, Liturgists

Dr. Steve and Nancy Michelson, Music

Carol McKerrow, Liturgical Art

— ANNOUNCEMENTS —

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. **Deadline is April 14th.**

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!

Friday, March 24 at 10:00 am—Outreach & Social Justice Committee Meeting—Fireside Rm

Tuesday, March 28 at 11:30 am—Women's Fellowship Luncheon at Jorgenson's

Tai Chi meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 5:30 pm—Fireside Room

Sunday, April 2 at 4pm—Dances of Universal Peace—Fireside Room

Thursday, April 6 at 2:00 pm—Charity Knitting and Crocheting—Fireside Room

Thursday, April 6 at 6:00 pm—Maundy Thursday—Joint worship and dinner

at First Christian Church

PCC Office Phone—406-442-9883

Office Manager Alane's e-mail—pccofficemgr@gmail.com

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

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

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