

Waymarks

Plymouth Church | Helena Montana

May 2022

Moderator's Message

A tinge of green tops our trees, grass is growing, birds are singing, and we're hoping for more spring rains. As planned, the Search Committee met with Pastor Charles and Rev. Marc Stewart for a half-year assessment, where we affirmed a positive beginning—the “greening” of our missions, growth in attendance, and new energy in our music. As we move through spring and summer, the Congregation's participation and input will be vital to the success of Charles' ministry.

Plymouth's committees are busy addressing the details of their charges. Buildings and Grounds is moving forward with the Fire Detection System, soliciting bids for new boilers, and continually fixing leaks and other problems. The Worship Committee asks that you return their survey by June 1.

In our 2022 budget, we decided to invest in improving the online worship experience and to increase our presence on social media. Please visit Plymouth Church on Facebook and direct your friends and family who cannot attend worship services to our YouTube channel. Our thanks go out to Clayton Ryerson (communications) and Luke Michaelson (upgrading sound and video) for this work.

Church Council meets at 9:30 a.m., on a Wednesday in the middle of each month (2nd or 3rd week). Our next meeting is May 11. If you have issues you would like the Council to address, please send them to me or come to our meeting.

~ Jan Clinard

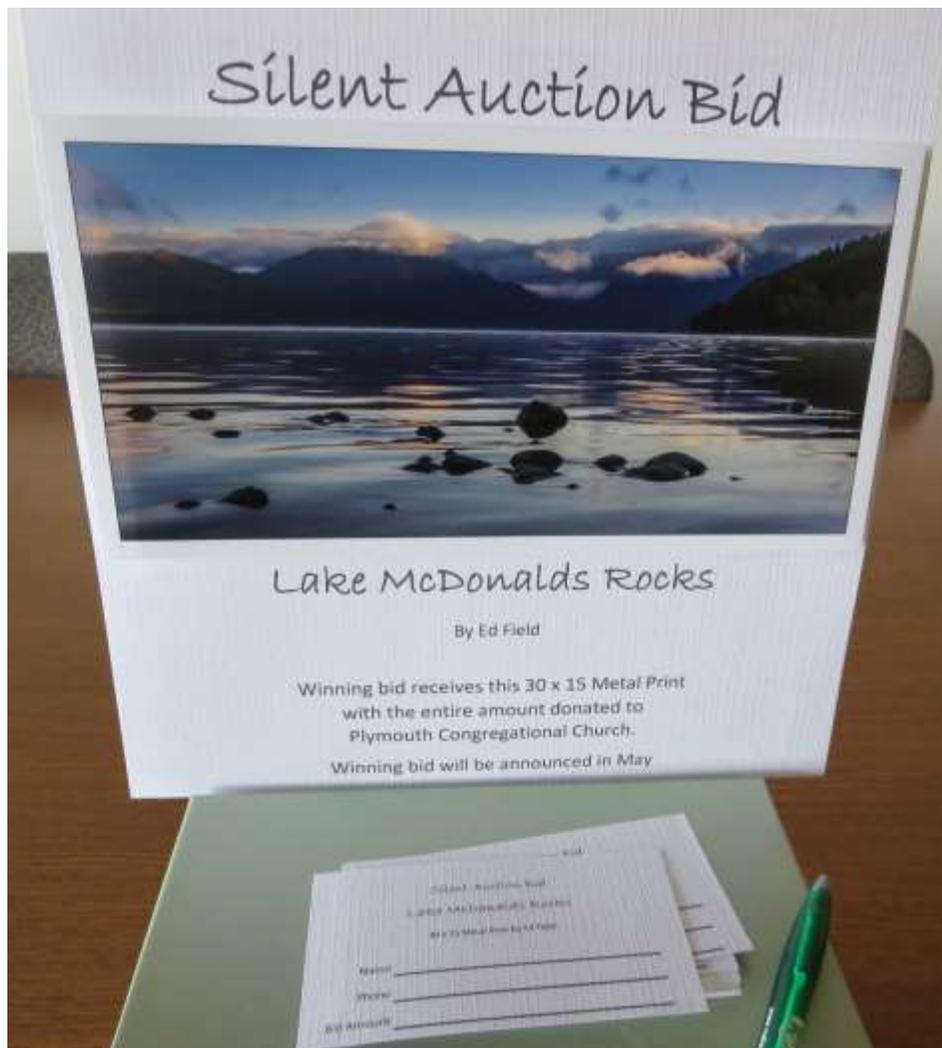
Special Guest (or would he say Prodigal Son) Returning

We are delighted to report that Rev. Ed Stevenson will join us in worship as a liturgist on Sunday May 29. Some of you will remember Ed and his wife, Jane, who worshipped with and led us spiritually for several years before Jane died. Ed now lives in the Kansas City area and is passing through Helena to visit family and friends. Join us in welcoming Rev. Stevenson on Memorial Day weekend.

Church Photo Directory and Silent Auction

Don't forget to enter a silent auction bid to win an original Ed Field photograph. Ed's beautiful work is exhibited in the Fireside Room until the end of the month. He and his wife Kathy have graciously agreed to donate the funds from the silent auction to the church. Thank you, Ed and Kathy, for all that you do for Plymouth.

Ed will also take photos of Plymouth folks for the church directory May 20-22, 2022. For those of you who could not schedule a photo shoot before, refer to the sign-up sheets on the table in the narthex.



Our Cups Runneth Over

Now that all of the activity of Lent and Holy Week are behind us, we can all take a moment to breathe and reflect. It's difficult sometimes for those leading worship to really experience worship for themselves, because we so often have to focus on where we are in the service, and make sure that the service flows from one moment to the next. But, as I've become more comfortable leading worship here, and have learned to trust the liturgists, musicians, and the congregation, I've been able to let go and enter that sacred space of worshipful communion with God during the services here at Plymouth, particularly the services that we had during Lent and Holy Week. It has truly been a blessing, a blessing that I didn't even know was possible, and I am so incredibly grateful for it.



It's been over six months now since I first arrived here in Helena. This has been a time of healing for me, both physically and spiritually. I only have a minimal amount of pain in my shoulder now, and it only really hurts if it's in the wrong position or if I bump into it too hard. I see a physical therapist once a week, and have regular visits with doctors, who all seem to be satisfied with my progress. My range of motion is improving, though not as quickly as I would like, and the moments when I need to stop and catch my breath or rest my shoulder are becoming more infrequent as the days go by. Still, there is a long road of recovery ahead of me, but the congregation has been so gentle with me that I do not worry about it.

I've had an interesting observation during several of my physical therapy visits that fit with this theme of rest and reflection, and that is that it is actually quite difficult to relax, sometimes. One exercise that my physical therapist often does with me is hold my arm while I lie on my back, and basically jiggle it gently while moving it back and forth. While she's doing this, I'm supposed to let my arm go completely limp, which is actually a lot harder to do than it sounds. Our instinct is always to control what our body is doing, especially the parts of our bodies that are moving. It's quite difficult to give up control in that way, and let another person move your body for you, and I often find myself in the ironic position of having to focus and concentrate in order to let go of controlling my arm.

It's the perfect metaphor for life, right? We are so used to being busy, to being in control, that rest and relaxation can be difficult. But, rest and relaxation are so important, not only as a part of healing and recovery, but in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. It's not about being selfish or lazy; it's about refilling our cups so that we can better serve others from what runneth over.

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It's so important, that God dedicated an entire day of the week to it. So, in this Easter season, in this time of resurrection and rebirth, let's take some time to rest, reflect, and relax. It is just as sacred and holy as work, study, and accomplishments. We all need to take time for ourselves. Pouring out from ourselves until nothing is left serves no one. Pouring into ourselves so that we are bountiful overflowing cups is what God wants for us, and ultimately, serves us all.

~ Pastor Charles



Plymouth Women's Fellowship

On Tuesday May 10th at 10 AM, the Women's Fellowship is meeting in the Fireside Room. At this time the group will assemble and present gifts for the Helena Afghan families. We are collecting new items for four newborns, due from May through November. The women's group at St. Mary's learned of our efforts, and donated items to support this effort, thanks to our friend Connie Erickson. Some of the expectant Afghan families have moved to other states since last we reported; their gifts will be sent to them. There is a wish list posted on the table in the Narthex. You are welcome to join the fun whether or not you come with a gift. Join us as we make plans to welcome four Afghan babies born in America and some special guests representing HARRT.

P.S.—From Elinore: I wanted to let you know that Sima has decided to come to the baby shower on May 10! She will be bringing her 3 year old daughter, Maquavas who will steal the show, she's so cute and adorable. Also, coming with me from HARRT will be Ronnie Whitaker who is Sima's case manager at HARRT, and Kay Bills Kazemi who is her English language tutor. We think that will make Sima more comfortable to know several other women at the shower. We are all looking forward to this and will have addresses for the three families who have moved away, two families to Houston, TX, and one family to Mojave, CA.





Dr. Steve and Nancy Michelson

I recently had the opportunity to sit and have a conversation with Steve and Nancy Michelson, the music directors at Plymouth. Aside from bringing beautiful music to our Sunday services, Steve and Nancy have a very extensive and interesting history. Before founding the Helena Chamber Singers in 1999, Steve played college basketball and majored in music. This eventually led him to play basketball for two years in the Navy. Shortly after his time in the Navy, Steve's interest in music led him to become the choir director at a Baptist Church in Hawaii. After spending some time in Hawaii, Steve taught at a high school in California, eventually attending Arizona State University to receive his Doctor of Musical Arts degree. After receiving his doctorate, Steve served as the associate choir director at Michigan State for 6 years, then at a university in Kentucky for two years. After being all over the nation, Steve ended up in Helena as the Helena High, and Helena Chambers Choir Director. During this time, Steve was encouraged to write a book titled 'Getting Started in High School Choir,' which is used in many college choral classes, and is available on Amazon.

While Steve was in College, Nancy had just been married to a pastor, and was serving as the church pianist for all services and gatherings. During her time at the church Nancy picked up the ability to play hymns by ear on the piano. Due to her musical abilities, Nancy was asked to be the director of a youth choir, leading her choir of 40 to perform in many churches and community groups. After many years leading the choir, Nancy moved to a second church where she directed the choir and built a young women's ministry, leading her to eventually become the worship leader of the church. Music became the way Nancy would spread the word of God, and her success at it led her to practically run an entire church beyond the retirement of her husband. By leading worship through the piano, Nancy has been successful in her journey of faith and music, and has the hope of leading Plymouth into true, uplifting musical worship.

While Steve and Nancy have lived different lives, their journey through music and faith allowed them to come together. Steve and Nancy first met over 40 years ago when Nancy accompanied Steve at a church in California. 40 years passed before they spoke again, leading Nancy to join Steve at his farm in Helena. They have been married for almost a year, and have done wonderful things for the music at Plymouth.

~ Interview by Clayton Ryerson

Treasurer's Report

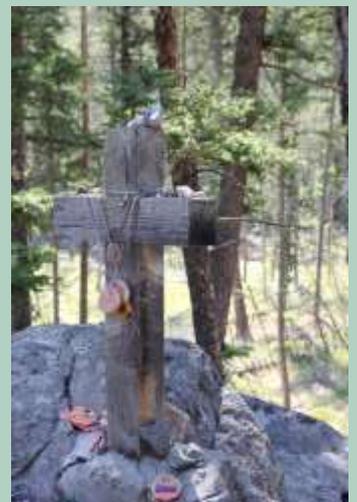
The first quarter of 2022 for Plymouth UCC has come to a close, with the church financial reports showing that we are doing well, with \$44,313 in income from pledges and other donations and our building users, about twenty-three percent of what we budgeted for the entire year – basically, right on target. Our expenses so far total \$41,214. We are paying our conference dues quarterly now, which helps both us and the conference budget more accurately. Upcoming expenses include our property taxes (properly use fees to the city for water, sewer, etc.) and payroll expenses that the UCC Pension Board has not billed us for yet. We have also spent very little on facilities maintenance so far this year. We anticipate paying for the fire suppression system out of our building reserve account, as it is a major capital expenditure. This will bring the building – including the day care and our kitchen – into full compliance, a great relief to the council and all building users. Our investment account at the United Church Funds was \$ 104,428.61 as of March 31. We have more than three months operating expenses in our unrestricted general checking account at Ascent Bank, a good sign of fiscal health.

~ Pat Christian

CAMP MIMANAGISH



For those needing financial assistance to attend summer church camp, scholarship applications are available in the church office and on the website. Applications must be submitted to the church office at least one month before the chosen camp is scheduled to begin. Camperships may be awarded for up to 50% of the registration fee for each camp.



Applicants must be members or friends of Plymouth Church or affiliated with a member.

Montana Northern Wyoming Conference UCC 2022 Outdoor Ministry Adventures

Mimnagish Adventures

July 5-8 You & Me Adventure \$275

Intergeneration family experience – several generations can enjoy outdoor time and space together.

Early Registration Date: May 1/Final Registration Date: June 1
<https://www.mnwcucc.org/youme>

July 10-16 Youth Adventure \$450

All Grade groups will meet during this week.
Grouped according to the grade completed in May 2022.

Early Registration Date: May 1/Final Registration Date: June 1

Grades 3-5
Grades 6-8
Grades 9-12

<https://www.mnwcucc.org/youth>

Sept. 2-5 Bob & Nancy Staigmiller Memorial Family Adventure \$275

A family retreat over the Labor Day Weekend honoring longtime Outdoor Ministry supporters.

Early Registration Date: June 1/Final Registration Date: July 1
<https://www.mnwcucc.org/family>

Christikon Adventures

June 27-29 Bill Hawk Memorial Seasoned Adults Adventure \$225

Seasoned Adults will enjoy a special time of reflection and fellowship in a beautiful handicap accessible Retreat Center with bathrooms next to rooms.

Early Registration Date: May 1/Final Registration Date: June 1
<https://www.mnwcucc.org/hawk>

August 21-27 The Great Escape Adult Adventures Varies

Design your Adventure by the experiences you wish to try.

Fly Fishing, Hiking, Water Ecology Demo,
Yoga, Weaving, Alcohol Ink,

Zentangles, Creative Writing, Games, Fellowship.
(Full description online and in brochure.)

Early Registration Date: June 1/Final Registration Date: July 1

2 nights \$225
3 nights \$275
5 nights \$450

<https://www.mnwcucc.org/adults>

Questions: Trudi Downer (406)669-3114 or (406)647-2924
kdtd48@itstriangle.com

Registration/Scholarship Information:

<https://www.mnwcucc.org/camps>
<https://www.mnwcucc.org/scholarship>



In the Boulder River Valley

Outreach and Social Justice Committee

Last month Plymouth learned that the city approved and voted to fund our request for a public grant. The funds awarded will be used in our efforts to reach out and support the Afghan refugees living in Helena. There were 47 applications for a limited amount of funds; Plymouth was one of 20 to be fully funded, and the only faith community to be awarded.

Among the activities for which we requested assistance was regarding a Helena Community **Garden plot located in Plymouth's north field.** We will use funds to rent a plot, purchase organic mulch, tools, plants, watering systems and gardening toys for the children. At this point we are not certain whether or if the Afghan families will be able to garden themselves because of distance and other limitations. But we are certain they will enjoy the produce that will come from the efforts of volunteers working on their behalf later in the summer. If you are interested in helping with the garden plot, let Jennifer know. We can work out a schedule and a more detailed explanation of what is required.



OSJ Committee will meet on Friday May 13 at 10 AM in the Fireside Room. All who are interested in the missions and service outreach of Plymouth are invited to attend.

Landscape Planters

Soon we will be planting flowers in the pots leading up to the front entrance to the church. If you would like to contribute flowers or funds to purchase flowers for these planters, your efforts are heartily welcomed. Please contact Jennifer or place a well-marked envelope in the offering plate before June 1.

In Our Prayers Today

At Home: Giles Walker, Margy Kohl, Jay Shelden, Greg Bolin, and Nathan Schreder as they go through cancer treatment. Lorraine Hopgood, for continued recovery.

Touchmark: Evelyn Nelson, and Art and Clara Gilreath; **Hunter's Point:** Marlyce Taylor; Edgewood: Ed Canty

Continued prayers for Greg, Ben Sweeney, and the people of Ukraine.

To add someone to the prayer list, please call the church office at 442-9883 or email pccofficemgr@gmail.com.

Bridging Divides: Opportunities to Learn and Share



Volunteers & Supplies Needed for Unsheltered Shower Ministry

Tuesday mornings from 8:30 - 11:30 at St Pauls Methodist Church.

Shower Ministry partners: HUMM, UWLCA, & Our Place.

Supplies needed: Small travel size shampoos, disposable razors & small shave cream.

Contact: jeff@unitedwaylca.org or donate supplies during business hours at UWLCA.

Enliven, Envision, Embody:

A Workshop in Music & Worship with Paul Vasile and Leah Silvieus

Join St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Helena, Montana, for a three-day participatory workshop with Paul Vasile and Leah Silvieus. Paul, a visionary leader in music and worship, and Executive Director of Music that Makes Community, and Leah, an author and poet interested in liturgy and language as a touchstone of worship, bring unique gifts for discovering God's voice through song, word, and movement drawn from many times and traditions. This event is part of the St. Paul's George Harper Expanding Faith Series, enlivening the church of today and envisioning the church of tomorrow.

This workshop will take place Thursday, June 2—Saturday, June 4, 2022. All are welcome to stay for a special worship experience on Pentecost, June 5, at St. Paul's UMC.

Register before May 1 for early bird tuition! <https://forms.gle/baG6ANKJ3PUiwcWA>

Sliding scale tuition is \$60-\$100 per participant before May 1; \$100-\$150 after May 1. Scholarships are also available.



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Faith and Community Based Services Regional Summits

May 16 - May 27, 2022

THEME: FAITH & COMMUNITY LEADERS IN ACTION FOR THE WELLNESS OF MONTANANS

May 26th
10 am—3pm
Helena

More information can be found here: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/faithandcommunity/training>

Creation Care Tips

Taking care of our world can seem like a daunting task, but there are simple things that we can all do to make the world a better place for everyone.

Did you know that real change can be as simple as changing which search engine you use when browsing the Internet? Ecosia dedicates 100% of its profits to climate action, with at least 80% of that going towards planting trees. Since they started in 2009, they have already planted over 144 million trees all over the world!

Ecosia is free and easy to add to your browser. Go to Ecosia.org, and follow the simple instructions to start planting trees with every search that you make!





Maria Rooney on her baptism day.
Sunday, April 17, 2022



Brianna Absher and her daughter
Olivia hunting for Easter eggs.
Sunday, April 17, 2022

Plymouth Church, U.C.C.

400 S. Oakes St.

Helena, MT 59601

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.



Plymouth Church

400 S. Oakes St.

Helena, MT 59601

Office Hours

- Pastor Charles Wei: 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. (Tues. & Thurs.), and by appointment.
- Office Manager Gloria Soja: 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. (Wed.-Thur.)
- Bookkeeper Gail Tronstad by appointment.

Sundays
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
In Person and Online

Contact Us

Church Office: 406.442.9883

Web: www.plymouthmontanaucc.org

Email: pccofficemgr@gmail.com

Also: www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational