

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Fifth Sunday in Lent



March 17, 2024

9:30 am

We Practice Just Peace: doing justice, seeking peace
We are Open and Affirming: welcoming LGBTQ+ people
 🌀 We Listen for the Still Speaking God
We are striving to be an Anti-Racism church
Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

Please inquire with people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.

GATHERING

Prelude

Landscape

Jean Sibelius

Welcome & Announcements

Please sign the red friendship pad as it is passed to you and return it to the center aisle noting your neighbor in the pew. You may leave your email if you would like to receive our weekly newsletter.

If you want to know more, email the office at office@uccplymouth.org.

Sunday School for all ages begins after the Message for All Ages on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays.

Children are welcome to fill a bag with books and toys, which are in the narthex, to use during worship.

Introit

I Trust, O Christ, in You Alone

Mark Bender

*Those who are able may stand.

***Call to Worship** (Based on Jeremiah 31:33)

Liturgist – Steve Majeski

One: God, we gather here in your Spirit, with hearts hungry for your Word.

ALL: “I will put my law within you, and I will write it on your hearts;”

One: In the midst of this Lenten season, we yearn for holy refreshment.

ALL: I will be your God, and you shall be my people.”

One: We long to experience you in fresh, abundant ways.

ALL: “I will put my law within you, and I will write it on your hearts;”

One: Prepare us now for this time of worship.

ALL: “I will be your God, and you shall be my people.”

***Hymn**

“Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation”

NCH(black) #400

***Passing of the Peace**

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

(In this season of colds and Covid, please bump elbows or share the peace sign.)

Unison Gathering Prayer

You will be our God, and we will be your people.

**In times of weakness, in moments of temptation,
the covenant holds.**

**When the journey is rough, when friends let us down,
the covenant holds.**

In our struggle to be a faithful community, in the uncertainty of transitions,
the covenant holds.

In our work for justice, in our response of worship,
the covenant is proved.

You will be our God, and we will be your people. Amen.

Prayer of Reconciliation, with moments for personal confession

God's Promise of New Life

One: On the cross, Jesus prays: "Abba, forgive them,
for they do not know what they are doing."

**ALL: We are ready to make amends. We are ready for a fresh start.
We are ready to look at our lives and our church life,
in the light of Christ. Nothing can stop us now;
we will live by the Word of God! Amen.**

Sung Response What Wondrous Love Is This NCH (black) #223

**What wondrous love is this, O my soul! O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this! That Christ should come in bliss
to bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the heavy cross for my soul!**

Word for All Ages

Sung Response Go, My Children, with My Blessing NCH (black) #82

**Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone;
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own;
In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever,
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.**

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Readings Jeremiah 31: 31-34 John 12: 20-33

One: The Word of God for the people of God.

May God bless to our understanding these words of Holy Scripture.

All: Amen.

Message

"Pray Your Way In"

Rev. Ruth Martz

Prayers of the People

Pastor: O God, in your grace and mercy . . .

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of Our Savior

All: 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.**

**We believe that God is revealed in persons of all genders and sorts; we also honor tradition.

SENDING

***Hymn** “May the Sending One Defend You” NCH (black) #79

***Pastoral Benediction**

Choral Benediction God So Loved the World Mark Bender

Postlude Prelude in G minor Johann Sebastian Bach

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.

Feel free to let the music lead you out, or stay to listen, however the Spirit moves you.

Please join us downstairs after worship for coffee, food, and fellowship.

Today’s coffee hour is sponsored by the Choir.

Photograph on Bulletin Cover: “Meu Coracao/My Heart”

Sao Paulo, Brazil (2007); Psalm 51 (Lent)

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Sometimes we must muster the courage to take an honest look at our own hearts.

Much like the tree, our hearts are misshapen, rough, and sometimes hollow.

Yet like our hearts, the misshapeness of the tree yields to openness.

There is still beauty in the rough edges; in the hollow shadows God’s light

penetrates and shines through. The light that resides within us reminds us

of God’s faithfulness, kindness, mercy, forgiveness, and unfailing love.

It is when we have cleaned up and cleaned out our hearts that we are able

to connect with the light of God that dwells within us. --Olusola Tribble

Keeping in Prayer:

Prayers for Ruth Mosher as she undergoes dialysis at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon. Ruth would appreciate visits and phone calls! She is in room #243 and can be reached by phone at 603-315-3368.

Prayers for Bill Heron as he recovers from illness

Prayers for Rebecca Herr, as she undergoes chemotherapy

Prayers for Edie Doherty

Prayers for Georgene Fabian as she recovers from a fall

Prayers for the people of Ukraine

Prayers for Eleanor Spencer's brother, Ron Ury

Prayers for Alice Carey, friend of Alice O'Connor, who will be undergoing radiation therapy

Prayers for Kristin, friend of Alice O'Connor, who has recently been diagnosed with cancer

Prayers for Paulette Brace's son, Shawn Cassington, for ongoing medical issues

Prayers for Sage Pirnie and her family, granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie

Prayers for Ellen who struggles with cancer, family member of Ruth & Dale Mosher

Prayers of healing for Sue Switaj

Prayers for our partner church in Zimbabwe, Masvingo UCCZ

If you have a prayer request, please write on the yellow card in the pews and place it in the offering tray, or send an email to plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org

This Week and More at PCUCC

Monday, March 18	10:00 am Book Group
Tuesday, March 19	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Wednesday, March 20	11:00 am Lectio Divina (Lenten Book Study)
Thursday, March 21	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, March 22	8:00 pm AA Meeting
Sunday, March 24	One Great Hour of Sharing UCC Special Mission Offering
Monday, March 25	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Thursday, March 28	7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service
Sunday, April 7	Speaker: Rev. Gordon Rankin, following worship
Sunday, April 14	4:00 pm Concert: Baker Valley Band

CHURCH LIFE

Preaching Schedule:

March 17	Rev. Ruth Martz	March 28 (Maundy Thursday)	Rev. Ruth Martz
March 24	Rev. Rebecca Larson	March 31 (Easter)	Rev. Ruth Martz
		April 7	Rev. Gordon Rankin (NHCUCC Minister)

Lenten Book Study Wednesdays at 11am: The Wednesday Morning Bible study group will be reading “The Last Week: What the gospels Really Teach About Jesus’s Final Days in Jerusalem” by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. We’ll read a chapter a week during Lent beginning Feb. 14th. All are welcome to join in, or you might consider reading this book as your own Lenten devotional.

Book Group is reading The Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel by Kati Marton. Join the discussion on March 18 at 10am in the parlor. Contact Kathy Henning for more information: henkat52@gmail.com.

Join us on April 7th when the Rev. Gordon Rankin, our NH Conference Minister, will be with us to lead the service and facilitate a congregational discussion about its role in selecting an interim pastor to move us forward to finding a settled pastor.

Get your solar eclipse glasses: The total solar eclipse will be visible from NH on Monday, April 8. See Sally Jensen to get a pair of solar eclipse glasses.

Spring Plant Sale Upcoming in May: Calling all green thumbs! We're looking for donations of a variety of indoor and outdoor plants AND veggies plus pots to use for the sale. More information coming soon! Please reach out to Jenny Thibeault at ThibeaultJennyR@gmail.com or 603-254-7824 if you have any questions.

UCC New Hampshire Women!

On Sat. April 20, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., our church will serve as host for the NHCUCC Women’s Fellowship Spring Meeting. **Please pick up a Registration Form and flyer with details about the day’s program, outside the church office.**

Would you be willing to serve as greeter at 9:30 a.m., read Scripture, and/or help with Communion? Please contact Ruth Martz (603-630-7936).

FROM MISSION & OUTREACH

“One Great Hour of Sharing;” UCC Special Mission Offering: It’s Time to “Share the Light!” –*You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world* (Matthew 5:14 MSG)
This UCC Offering supports sustainable development and refugee needs internationally and provides disaster relief and immigration assistance in the United States. We also support direct mission efforts through partnerships with Global Ministries and Church World Service. Please give generously! Checks may be made out to PCCUCC with “OGHS” in the memo line.

Habitat Lunch Update: PLEASE SIGN UP on the sheet in Fellowship Hall to bring a hot lunch to the 6-10 workers at the Habitat for Humanity House at 61 Pleasant St. in Plymouth. Warmest thanks to the church members who have brought lunches.

Suggestions: pasta, chili, chicken pot pie, stews, soups. Additions such as bread/fruit/dessert are optional. Some paper goods and plastic ware are on site; for more details, please contact Ruth Martz: ruthm.joy@gmail.com.

FROM FINANCE

Support PCUCC with no cost to you! Purchase a **Hannaford Gift Card** in the amount of \$100, \$250, or \$500 by contacting Linda LaPrad or Ann Thurston. For every card purchased from the Finance Committee, the church receives 5% with no additional cost to you.

We will offer the option of meeting digitally indefinitely. You may also catch our services (one week delayed) on Sunday nights on PBTv at 7:00 pm. (Local channel 1302.) Please check Constant Contact and the Facebook page for ongoing updates.

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00-2:00

If you have a family emergency and want to talk with a pastor, please call Rev. Ruth Martz at 603-630-7936 or you may call Eileen Torrey at 603-252-7513.

Alison Thatcher, Office Administrator

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Guest Preacher: Rev. Ruth Martz

Guest Accompanist: Dan Perkins

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Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in March in our Community

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to: office@uccplymouth.org

Jean Swindell March 8
Caleb Sweedler March 26

Julie Kelsey March 30
Megan Magrauth March 30

