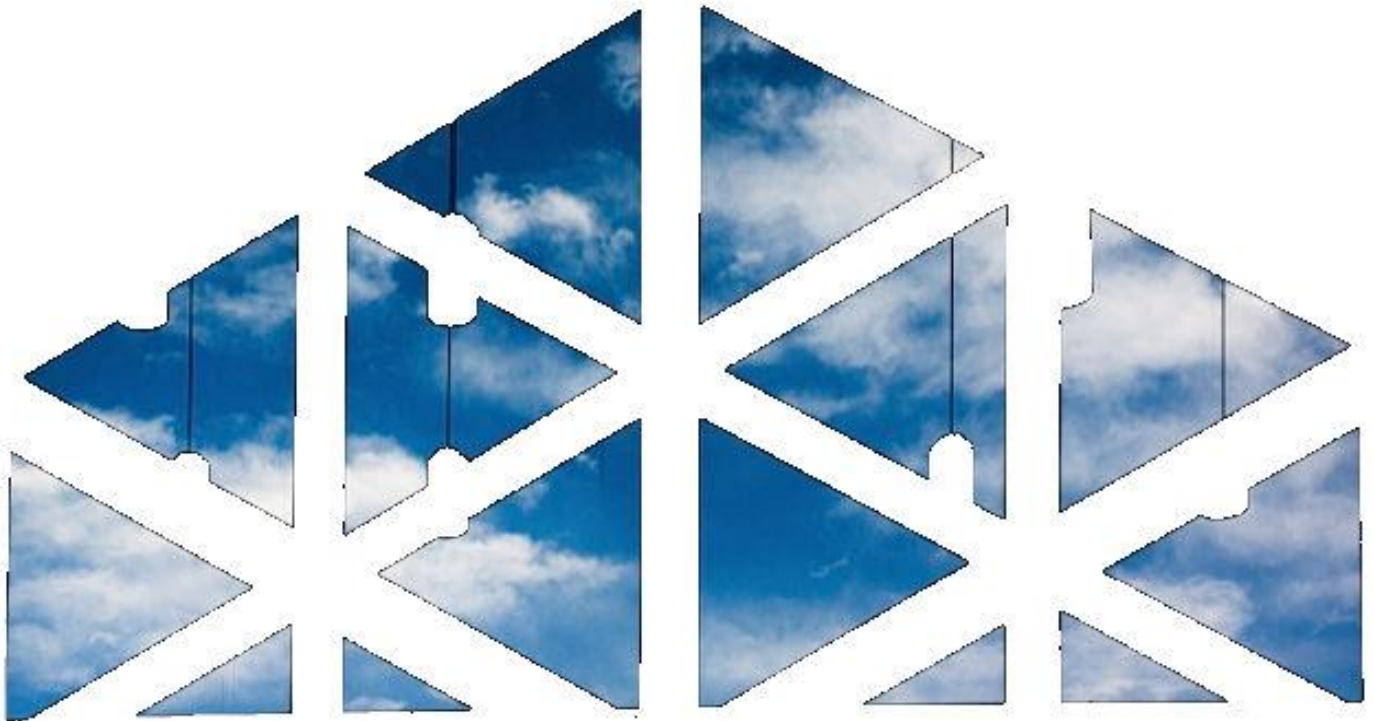


**Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany**

January 28, 2018

9:30 a.m.

A Just Peace Church
An Open and Affirming Congregation
A God is Still Speaking Congregation



Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

Welcome to Worship!

We are grateful for your presence this morning. If you are new to Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, the following information may be helpful.

- We are an Open & Affirming congregation where all people are valued and accepted regardless of sexual identity or orientation.
- We are a Just Peace church that affirms that peace is possible in human history and prays ceaselessly that peace may prevail on Earth.
- We celebrate our Christian heritage and seek to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

A Special Word to our Visitors

- Please fill out the fellowship pads the ushers will hand out at the beginning of the service. We would love to get to know you better and keep you up-to-date on all the programs, events and activities offered throughout the year.
- Families with infants and children are especially welcome to our service. Childcare is available during the worship service in the nursery. Please speak with an usher if you need assistance to find our nursery.
- Children's bulletins, activity bags (to be returned after worship) and toys are available in the Narthex. To find out more about our Sunday school program, we may talk to our Faith Formation Director Cindy Bjerklie or visit our website.
- Our service can be heard in the parlor, library and nursery.
- Our sanctuary is equipped with the Telecoil Loop System for the hard of hearing. For assistance on how to connect to the Telecoil, please speak to one of our ushers.
- Our building is fully accessible to all people. A small parking lot on the south side of the church is available only to persons with limited mobility or physical disability. The entrance to the parking lot is located immediately behind the Post Office, off Highland Street. An elevator connects all three levels.
- Join us for Coffee Hour in the fellowship hall immediately after the service.

Help us to protect the environment by dropping your bulletin in one of the recycling baskets at the two main entrances to the sanctuary. You may also download your bulletin from our website and follow the service on your own mobile device.

Large print bulletins are also available.

Transcripts of our Sunday Sermons and videos of the worship services are available on our website, www.uccplymouth.org.

Our worship service is live-streamed on our Facebook page every Sunday.

GATHERING

Prelude

Pobraise

Mozart

The beginning of the prelude is an invitation to silent, personal preparation for the worship of God.

Welcome and Life of the Church

Centering Song

Bourree of Sonata IV

G.F. Handel

***Call to Worship** (*adapted from Jeremiah 31*)

***Indicates congregation standing**

One: Sing aloud with gladness: God is gathering all people! Those who walk the hard road have found cool grace in the wilderness.

All: From near and far we travel, becoming signposts and friends to those we meet along the way.

One: The Lord has created a new thing on earth, a city place that shall never be uprooted: let us enter in to worship.

All: We'll plant fruit trees with our prayers, climb mountains with our music, and explore every holy street together. Let us enter in to worship.

***Hymn**

"Let Me Enter God's Own Dwelling"

Blk#277

Prayer of the Day

One: May the Spirit of God breathe among us as we pray together, saying:

All: God of the journey, we worship you with every fiber of our being. We join today with all those who worship and confess you as Lord, from generations past and present, and with all your saints and sinners yet to come. Center us now as we feel and live into your holy word. Amen.

Silence for Personal Reflection

God's Promise of New Life

One: In the midst of uncertainty, know that you are made in God's image and God sees you as whole and good.

All: Let us respond to God's love in our lives by answering the call to work for wholeness and justice, living faithfully into God's good creation.

Prayer Response

***Sign of Peace**

One: We are who we are because of other people, and for this we give thanks.

All: May the peace of Christ be always present in the space between us, over us, and all around us.

One: Let us greet one another with the sign of peace.

Children's Message

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Lessons

One: Listen for the Word of God

New Testament Lesson

Revelation 21:9-16

NT p.1086

Gospel lesson

Mark 1:29-39

NT p. 867-868

One: May God bless our reading, hearing, and doing of God's holy word.

All: Amen

Sermon

"Spiritual Dimensions"

***Hymn**

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Blk#277

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Offertory

Gift of Music Lord, I Want to Be a Christian African Spiritual

***Doxology** **Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above you heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

All:

SENDING

***Hymn** "Precious Lord, Take My Hand" Blk#472

***Benediction**

Postlude Bagatelle Op. 126, No.5 Beethoven
The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.

Keeping in Prayer

Greg Friel	Peggy Suntum	Ron Decker
Lynn Anderson	Cindy	Richard Kersten
Doug Grant	Bob Chase	Amy Barber
Jesse Armstrong	Ginny Arsenault	Jack & Vicky Meyers
Pat Andrews	Bill Bonney	Nancy Pirnie

Bob Feeney, our Chicago Seminary Student
*If you have any prayer requests, please fill out a prayer card located in the
pew rack and drop it in the offering plate.*

Announcements

Staff News

Rev. Paulo will be on the mission trip to Cuba from January 18 through February 3. In case of pastoral emergencies, contact Rev. Bill Torrey. Guest Preachers during that time are as follows: Sam Lovett – January 28th, and Bill Torrey – February 4th.

From the Hospitality Committee

Many thanks to all who have brought snacks and drinks for Coffee Hour. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Also, more people have been helping on the Kitchen Crew both in the set-up and then the clean-up in the Kitchen. We continue to have opportunities for more help. Please see Chris or Georgene if you are interested.

Faith Formation

Please join us for our Pajama & Pizza Party on March 17, 2018 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. All children are invited to wear the pajamas to church and enjoy pizza and the movie, "Paddington Bear". Please RSVP to Cindy Bjerklie a.s.a.p. so we'll know how much pizza to have on hand.

Our Sunday School lesson this week will be about the Beatitudes. Mrs. Boyer will be filling in for Mrs. Bjerklie, who has the day off. We need volunteers to help with our children's programs, particularly with teaching Sunday School. If you're interested in working with our great kids, please contact Cindy Bjerklie at faithformation@uccplymouth.org.

Kids with a Mission are getting ready to work on their next project and are continuing to collect donations to redecorate their room. If you have extra games, lamps, rugs, chairs, or other items that might be useful please contact Deb Boyer, Ruth Mosher, or Cindy Bjerklie.

Feeding Our Children

Our program to send bags of food home with some of the children at Plymouth Elementary School and the children enrolled in HeadStart is in need of your help. It is time for all of us to make a contribution to this program. The cost for the food is \$10.00/week/child that amounts to \$40.00/month/child or \$460.00/year/child. Think about what you can afford from your budget to help feeding Our Children. Remember there are many hungry children in this rich country and 47 percent of the students at Plymouth Elementary School are on free or reduced price lunch.

Food donations are also always welcome. Can you add one can of corned beef hash or macaroni and cheese or peanut butter. These are always welcome and we need these items every week. Please make a promise to keep our church following its mission, which Jesus said was to feed the hungry. The children will thrive and grow because you cared enough to help. For more information call the church office or Susan Wei.

RAISE

In November 2017, the PCUCC Mission Committee approved a financial contribution to support the RAISE Children programs. All financial contributions are used to cover the cost of materials, equipment, topic presenters, and staff. In addition, PCUCC has shared with RAISE some classroom tables, chairs, toys and materials that were no longer needed by the Church school.

COMMITMENT TO OPENNESS AND AFFIRMATION

In keeping with the Covenant of our church, we, the members of the Plymouth Congregational Church of the United Church of Christ in Plymouth, New Hampshire, respond to the call of the 15th General Synod of the United Church of Christ and to the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ by making the following commitment:

Blessed by the bountiful care of God and by the support and love of one another, this church seeks to affirm all members of our fellowship and all who live in the greater community. We especially declare our openness and affirmation to all who have been diminished by prejudice, bigotry and oppression. We marvel at the many children of God and their varied talents. Yet we acknowledge that the world's views have often prevailed and that these same brothers and sisters in Christ have at times been neglected or met with silence.

As a result of this Church's experiences, intentional study, prayer and action in dealing with those who may feel alienated from the Church of Jesus Christ, we lift up all people as equal brothers and sisters and resolve that this Church shall continue to seek ways to affirm and to include them.

Recalling the example of our Lord, we resolve to welcome all people regardless of their economic status. We look and work for the day when success will not be measured by material wealth.

Recognizing the enrichment of the Church calls for the involvement of all people, we resolve to welcome both young and old, as well as those of all physical and mental abilities.

Remembering the Good Samaritan, we resolve to welcome all without regard to race or ethnic background. We shall be active in celebrating the rich texture of our cultural differences.

Acknowledging that all are equal recipients of God's grace, we resolve to welcome those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Just as many gifts from God differ from one person to another, we understand sexual orientation to vary.

Knowing that in Christ there is no such thing as male and female, we resolve to welcome both men and women as equals. We welcome all people, in families, couples or as single persons, and hope that together we may work toward justice and peace.

Therefore, we declare that the Plymouth Congregational Church shall be an open and affirming Church for all people in both its membership and leadership. Knowing that this commitment poses a spiritual challenge, we promise to gently encourage each other in our own struggle to understand and accept, to pray for the strength to dispel ignorance, fear and hatred, and to choose to turn toward loving and away from judging, since only God is capable of pure impartiality.

Resting in the guidance and inspiration of Scripture and believing that there are many interpretations of the Word, we acknowledge that God encompasses yet surpasses the written word, and we pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our continuing quest to be open and affirming.

The Reverend Paulo G. França, Minister
Shannon Wharton, Church Office Administrator
Cindy Bjerklie, Director of Christian Education
Director of Music
Colin McIver, Organist
Larry Spencer, Church Treasurer
Celia Woolverton, Grace Counseling

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musicdirector@uccplymouth.org
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treasurer@uccplymouth.org
gracecounseling@uccplymouth.org

Samuel Lovett, Guest Preacher
Wayne Martin, Liturgist
Peggy Martin, Flute

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