

**Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ  
Third Sunday in Lent**

**March 4, 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.**

A compassionate community, intentionally inclusive, openly searching, joyfully serving in the way of Christ

## **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](http://www.uccplymouth.org).

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

# GATHERING

Prelude

Voluntary

Samuel Jackson

*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

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Edwin Hatch

### \*Call to Worship

*\*Indicates congregation standing*

One: Let us come together in God's holy name so we may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God for our lives.

**All: We gather at the foot of the cross to praise God. We come together to set our minds on all that is true, life-giving, hopeful, just, and peace-making. To the One who has brought us together and welcomes us into this sacred moment, we gather to sing our praises.**

### \*Congregational Response

"God Welcomes All"

God wel - comes all, strang - ers and friends;

The first line of musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff.

God's love is strong and it nev - er ends.

The second line of musical notation continues the melody and bass line from the first line. It also consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are placed below the treble staff.

## Prayer of Confession

One: Friends, believing in God's grace, understanding, and enduring love, let us pray with open hearts, saying:

**All: Holy Creator, Spirit of life, Giver of this new day, hear our prayer. Bless us today with the courage to lay our burdens at your feet. Bring peace to those places in our lives that are filled with anxiety. Forgive us for holding too tightly to our worries, self-doubts, and inner struggles. Fill our hearts with your self-giving love so the moments of our days are not consumed by our own self-interest and the temptation to live only for ourselves. Dispel our spiritual apathy and stir in our souls the yearning for a deeper religious experience in this moment and in this sacred space. Amen.**

## Silence for Personal Reflection

### Prayer Response

### "We Are Forgiven"

We are for-giv-en. We are for-giv-en. Thanks be to  
God. Thanks be to God. We are for-giv-en.  
We are for-giv-en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

To sing, rather than simply say, a response to the Declaration of Forgiveness has the effect of making the moment both more affirmative and more corporate. The musical repetition of the two sentences also strengthens awareness of what it means to be assured of God's pardon.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text  
MUSIC: Hal H. Hopson, 1995  
Music © 1995 Hal H. Hopson

WE ARE FORGIVEN  
10.8.10.8

### \*Sign of Peace

One: This is House of the Lord! This is a place of hope and peace.

**All: Fill us, O Living Christ, with your peace.**

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

# HEARING THE WORD

## Scripture Lessons

One: Listen for the Word of God

Hebrew Lesson

Exodus 20:1-7

OT p.63

Gospel lesson

John 2:13-25

NT p.923-924

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

**All: Amen**

**Sermon**

"More Than Thoughts and Prayers"

**\*Hymn**

"Just as I Am"

Blk#207

# RESPONDING TO THE WORD

**Offertory**

**Gift of Music**

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

African-American Spiritual

Arr. Lloyd Larson

**\*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: God of many names, bless our gifts and let them be used to quench the thirst for hope, for love, for truth, for meaning, and for true life in our society. In Christ and through Christ, we pray. Amen.**

# CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

**Invitation to the Table**

One: Come to this table of grace! Here in bread and cup, we meet the Living Christ.

**All: We come, not because we deserve a place at the table, but because Jesus invites us, just as we are.**

**Communion Song**

**"Eat this Bread"**

Sing Opt. A

G C Am D Bm

Opt. A "Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to me and  
 Opt. B Eat this bread; drink this cup; come to Christ and

Em Dsus D G D

nev - er be hun - gry. Eat this bread;  
 nev - er be hun - gry. Eat this bread;

Em Bm C Dsus D G

drink this cup; trust in me and you will not thirst."  
 drink this cup; trust in Christ and you will not thirst.

This text from the Taizé Community is based on John 6:35, which is paraphrased here in two styles. The more immediate first version maintains the second-person invitation spoken by Jesus, while the alternative version provides a more general statement in the third person.

## The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God, our Maker, be with you.

**All: God's Holy Spirit is among us.**

One: Come, let us open our hearts to God's love.

**All: We gather before God in body, mind and spirit.**

One: Let us rejoice in the Presence of the Holy One.

**All: We praise God for this holy moment on our Lenten journey.**

One: God, we are grateful for the privilege of gathering around this table with friends who are mature and young, tall and small, married and single, male and female. Your love becomes more real when we experience the joy of human company, the gift of friendship, the disarming simplicity of laughter, the intimacy of a reassuring hug, and the strength of our shared faith. We are gathered in this meetinghouse because you, O God of the universe, came to us in Christ. And Jesus, your Child, showed all of us how to overcome our differences so we might be a living Church.

Grateful for the love, hope, and faith that unite us, we join our voices to the voices of other Christians throughout the world who also praise you for the gift of the Church:

### Sanctus

### "Holy, Holy, Holy"

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dores you!  
San - to, san - to, san - to. ¡Mi co - ra - zón te a - do - ra!

My heart knows how to say to you: you are ho - ly, Lord!  
Mi co - ra - zón te sa - be de - cir: ¡San - to e - res, Se - ñor!

One: God who became flesh and lived among us, we give thanks for every good gift in our world. As we taste the bread and drink from the cup on Christ's table, remind us of the blessings we receive each day. Let our remembrance of Jesus' last meal with his friends inspire us to share everything we have with our neighbors in need. As we open our hearts and minds to you, Eternal Lover of humankind, we also name our joys, our concerns, our petitions and our supplications:

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

(You are invited to say your prayer aloud or in the silence of your heart)

One: In this sacred time of prayer, O God, we humbly affirm the mystery at the heart of our faith:

**All: Christ died to open our eyes to God's love.**

**Christ was raised to open our hearts to a new life.**

**Christ will come again to open our souls to the fullness of grace.**

One: As Jesus gave thanks for the bread and the cup, we too give thanks for these gifts that come from the earth. As we eat and drink together, may the Spirit of life and faith fill our lives with a profound awareness of the goodness of creation, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and the hope for life abundant.

**All: Praise be to God for this holy meal.**

## **Breaking of the Bread and the Pouring of the Cup**

### **Sharing of the Bread & the Cup**

### **Prayer of Gratitude after Communion**

**All: In gratitude for the sacredness of this moment, for this gathering of faith, for those around us, and for Christ among us, we give ourselves to God and promise to live as changed people. We make this prayer in the name of the One who taught us to pray for the Kingdom to come, saying...**

### **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.**




# SENDING

\*Hymn


## If We Just Talk of Thoughts and Prayers

O WALY WALY LM ("Though I May Speak")



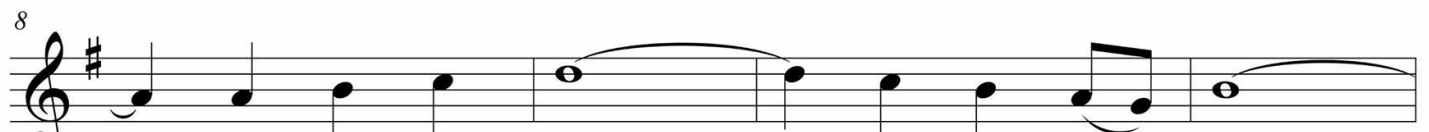
If we just talk \_\_\_\_\_ of thoughts and prayers \_\_\_\_\_  
If we just dream \_\_\_\_\_ of what could be \_\_\_\_\_  
If we just sing \_\_\_\_\_ of do - ing good \_\_\_\_\_  
God, may our prayers \_\_\_\_\_ and dreams and songs \_\_\_\_\_

4




— And don't live out \_\_\_\_\_ a faith that dares, \_\_\_\_\_  
— And do not build \_\_\_\_\_ com - mun - i - ty, \_\_\_\_\_  
— And don't walk through \_\_\_\_\_ our neigh - bor - hood \_\_\_\_\_  
— Lead to a faith \_\_\_\_\_ that takes on \_\_\_\_\_ wrongs -

8



— And don't take on \_\_\_\_\_ the ways of \_\_\_\_\_ death, \_\_\_\_\_  
— And do not seek \_\_\_\_\_ to change our \_\_\_\_\_ ways, \_\_\_\_\_  
— To learn its hope, \_\_\_\_\_ to ease its \_\_\_\_\_ pain, \_\_\_\_\_  
- That works for peace \_\_\_\_\_ and just - ice, \_\_\_\_\_ too, \_\_\_\_\_

12



— Our thoughts and prayers \_\_\_\_\_ are fleet - ing breath. \_\_\_\_\_  
— Our dreams of change \_\_\_\_\_ are false dis - plays. \_\_\_\_\_  
— Our talk of good \_\_\_\_\_ is simp - ly \_\_\_\_\_ vain. \_\_\_\_\_  
— Then will our prayers \_\_\_\_\_ bring joy to \_\_\_\_\_ you. \_\_\_\_\_

Biblical References: Isaiah 58; Matthew 7:21, 24-27; 1 Corinthians 13:1; James 2:14-26; 1 John 3:18-24

Tune: Traditional English melody

Text: Copyright © 2017 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

Email: [bcgillette@comcast.net](mailto:bcgillette@comcast.net) New Hymns: [www.carolynshymns.com](http://www.carolynshymns.com)

## **\*Benediction**

**Postlude** Toccata, and Versets for the Kyrie from the Messa della Domenica

Girolamo Frescobaldi

*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
Hanna Starck	Liz	Judi Fomey
The Jaeubowski Family	Genevieve Tseng	Eilene Greenwood

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.*

### **Save these dates**

March 25<sup>th</sup>- Palm Sunday Service  
March 29<sup>th</sup>- Maundy Thursday Communion 7pm  
March 30<sup>th</sup>- Good Friday Service 7pm  
April 1<sup>st</sup>- Easter Sunday 8am  
Continental Breakfast following at 8:30am  
Traditional Easter Service 9:30am

### **Announcements**

#### **Faith Formation**

Everybody is invited to our Pajama & Pizza Party on March 17, 2018 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Come to church in your pajamas 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.

We are busy gathering and filling Easter Eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt, which will be held on the Plymouth Commons on Easter morning. Mark your calendars so you don't miss the fun! We are actively seeking volunteers to help with our children's programs, particularly with teaching Sunday School and music. If you're interested in working with our great kids, please contact Cindy Bjerklie at [faithformation@uccplymouth.org](mailto:faithformation@uccplymouth.org)

#### **Hospitality Committee**

Coffee Hour needs a few more snacks and other goodies. Be sure to sign up on the Will You Tree poster if you know in advance when you are able to bring something. Some suggestions are crackers (smaller boxes/bags) and blocks of cheese, salsa and scoops, cut-up vegetables with savory/sour cream dip, cut-up fruit with sweet dip, coffee cake, quick bread with cream cheese, mini-muffins, chex mix, mixed nuts, pretzels, or your favorite treat to have with a cup of coffee. Be sure to label gluten-free foods. Also, it is helpful to have a sign for other goodies. Thanks.

## **SCRIPTURES & COFFEE or TEA**

On Ash Wednesday we began our journey of Lent. In the Church, Lent is a period of reflection, soul-searching and prayer. During this Lenten season, Rev. Paulo is inviting you to a time of deeper study of the Scripture lessons that will be assigned for the Sundays in Lent. Rather than giving up something for Lent, we will take on the discipline of meditation on the passages that will shape each Sunday sermon. We will write the Sunday sermon together!

Meetings will happen every Tuesday at 4:00 PM in the church parlor between Feb. 20- Mar. 20. This Tuesday we will go over John 3:14-21.

## **Zimbabwe**

The Ukama Mission Group of the New Hampshire Conference UCC is planning to bring a delegation from the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe to New Hampshire in October 2018. The Ukama Mission Group works to further the commitment of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe and the New Hampshire Conference, UCC to walk together in faith and to serve in ministry among God's people.

This effort is supported by Common Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ. The heart of the relationship is the love of Christ and the call "That they may all be One" John 17:21. Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ will sponsor a member of the Masvingo, Zimbabwe United Church of Christ, our partnered church, in the delegation. Mission Committee has given \$500 towards the cost of bringing our delegate to New Hampshire.

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

[pastor@uccplymouth.org](mailto:pastor@uccplymouth.org)  
[office@uccplymouth.org](mailto:office@uccplymouth.org)  
[faithformation@uccplymouth.org](mailto:faithformation@uccplymouth.org)  
[musicdirector@uccplymouth.org](mailto:musicdirector@uccplymouth.org)  
[organist@uccplymouth.org](mailto:organist@uccplymouth.org)  
[treasurer@uccplymouth.org](mailto:treasurer@uccplymouth.org)  
[gracecounseling@uccplymouth.org](mailto:gracecounseling@uccplymouth.org)

Eileen Torrey, liturgist  
Bev Newton and Micah Delventhal Saffian, duet

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ  
4 Post Office Square, PO Box 86  
Plymouth, NH 03264  
(603)536-2626 ♦ [office@uccplymouth.org](mailto:office@uccplymouth.org) ♦ [www.uccplymouth.org](http://www.uccplymouth.org)

## **THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION AT PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (UCC)**

*"Do this in remembrance of me." Luke 22:19c (NRSV)*

The United Church of Christ (UCC) recognizes two sacraments, which we believe were instituted by Jesus Christ: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Almost all other Christian traditions also celebrate these two sacraments.

The Lord's Supper, also known as "The Eucharist," "Last Supper," and "Holy Communion" is a sign of God's love and grace manifested in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In eating the bread and drinking from the cup, Christians are united with the Living Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The sacrament of Holy Communion is a reminder of what Jesus did in the past, a symbol of our present relationship with him and a promise of what he will do in the future. And so, during the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving we often proclaim the mystery of our faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

During his earthly ministry, Christ shared meals with his followers and sat at dinner tables of sinners and outcasts to show the world the reality of God's unconditional love. On the night before he was crucified, Jesus broke bread and shared the cup with his disciples. He spoke of these elements as his body and blood given for humanity. Just as humans need food and drink for nurture and sustenance, the Holy Meal that Christians share at Communion is spiritual nourishment for those who believe. Those who partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine are renewed and empowered to be the Body of Christ in today's world.

Holy Communion is more than just a memorial celebration. We believe that the elements maintain their substance during communion, but we affirm that the Living Christ is present with us in the breaking of bread and sharing of the cup. In the act of receiving communion, we are united with the Living Christ and with one another.

The invitation to the Table is not just for members of this church; all people of faith, including children, are welcome to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion. It does not matter if you have much faith or if your trust in God is wavering; if you are a strong believer or if you have doubts, you are welcome to experience God's grace, love and extravagant welcome at the Table.

At Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC), we celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month. The elements are either served in the traditional manner with the congregation seated or offered by intinction. When intinction is used, you are invited to come forward, take a piece of bread, dip it into the cup and immediately partake of the elements. Please, use the center aisle to come to the Communion Table and return to your seats by way of the side aisles.

May the peace and grace of Christ be with you.