

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

**March 11, 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**

Menuet Antique

Scheurer

*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**

Bouree from Partita

Faber

### \*Call to Worship

*\*Indicates congregation standing*

One: Let us gather to remember the great hope Christ offers to all who have faith in God.

**All: Make us ready, O Christ, to celebrate this unique day in our lives. May our worship be truly holy and pleasing to God.**

**\*Congregational Response**

“Take, O Take Me As I Am”

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Take, O Take Me As I Am". It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Take, O take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords and some melodic movement in the right hand.

The brevity of this text and tune invite repeated singing, either as a sustained chain of sound or as a sung response in a series of prayers. It offers a more reflective approach to the same theme of self-dedication evident in older hymns such as "Just as I Am" (see no. 442).

**(Sing three times)**

## Prayer of Confession

One: We come together in this time of prayer to bring before God our longings and dreams, our concerns and preoccupations, our secrets and our truths. In the company of friends and strangers, let us pray together, saying:

**All: God who comforts and disturbs us, hear our prayer. We are glad to be in this sacred place where we gather to become more aware of your Presence. Set us free today from all that prevents us from seeking a deeper meaning for our lives. Too often we talk about putting our trust in you, but we struggle to live by faith. Forgive us, O God. Call us again this morning to place our worries and troubles, our guilt and doubts at the feet of the cross. Remind us that your Spirit is still at work, helping us to live more faithfully, bringing new life from things in our lives that looked dried up or even dead. Holy God, forgive us; renew us! Amen.**

## Silence for Personal Reflection

### Prayer Response

### "We Are Forgiven"

The musical score is written on three staves in G major and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: "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." The chords are: G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, Dsus, D, G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, D, G.

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.

## \*Sign of Peace

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

**All: Living Christ, make us ready to share your peace with others.**

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

## Children's Message

# HEARING THE WORD

## Responsive Reading

Psalm 19

<sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

<sup>2</sup> **Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.**

<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;

<sup>4</sup> **yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,**

<sup>5</sup> which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

<sup>6</sup> **Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hidden from its heat.**

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple;

<sup>8</sup> **the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes;**

<sup>9</sup> the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring for ever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

<sup>10</sup> **More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.**

<sup>11</sup> Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

<sup>12</sup> **But who can detect their errors? Clear me from hidden faults.**

<sup>13</sup> Keep back your servant also from the insolent; do not let them have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

<sup>14</sup> **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.**

## Sermon

The past, present and future history of the human species; a review in just twenty minutes.

## \*Hymn

"O Sing a Song Of Bethlehem"

Blk#51

# RESPONDING TO THE WORD

## Offertory

### Gift of Music

Ubi caritas

Audrey Snyder

Where there is charity and love,  
God is there.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Likewise, therefore, when we come together

Let us be united as one.

And from a sincere heart let us love one another.

**\*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 unsettling truth, we bring these simple gifts and ask that our offerings may bring hope to the poor, caution to the powerful, rest to the weary, wisdom to the doubtful, and faith to the skeptical. In Christ and through Christ, we pray. Amen.**

# SENDING

### \*Hymn

"Lift High the Cross"

Blk# 198

### \*Benediction

### Postlude

Arietta

Samuel Wesley

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

#### **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 8:30 – 9:15am

Traditional Easter Service 9:30am

## **Keeping in Prayer**

Greg Friel

Lynn Anderson

Doug Grant

Jesse Armstrong

Pat Andrews

Peggy Suntum

Liz

Bob Chase

Ginny Arsenault

Genevieve Tseng

Eilene Greenwood

Jack & Vicky Meyers

The Jaeubowski Family

Nancy Pirnie

Judi Fomey

Carol Asher

*Prayers of thanksgiving for the birth of Jameson Roderick Dow  
to Eliza McKinnon, daughter of Deb McKinnon*

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**

### **SCRIPTURES & COFFEE or TEA**

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 12:20-36. Please join us!

**Sunday Niters** - After waiting out the last of a dark and icy winter, Sunday Niters is returning on March 25 at the Wixsons (13 Buckland St, Plymouth) at 6pm with meteorologist Eric Kelsey to speak on the challenges of predicting weather in New Hampshire and whether he is allowed to say "global warming." So bring a dish to share. For more information, speak with Tink Taylor.

### **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 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. We need to raise money soon to sponsor a delegate. If you would like to help sponsor a delegate please contact Diane Arsenault.

### **On Our Walls**

March is Youth Art Month. Local art teachers from over 30 local schools select from their students' work, creating a visual presentation that not only displays the imagination and skill of the students, but also the guidance and creativity of the teachers. We are happy to host first and second graders. The exhibit will run March 5 to March 29. We will open our doors to a town-wide reception on March 21, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

## 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.

## Coffee House

Our next Coffee House will be on Friday, March 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our program will be "A State Income Tax in NH?" State representative Steve Rand will discuss the reasons why a State income tax may be a matter of social justice for residents of the Granite State. Refreshments will be served.

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

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Dr. Larry Spencer, Lay Preacher  
Paulette Brace, liturgist  
Jan Bass, Emily Lombardo, and Peggy Martin, Flute Trio

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