

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

March 18, 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

Reflection

Colin McIver

*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

God Is in This Holy Place
Habakkuk 2:20

Brahms, arr: H.Hopson

***Call to Worship**

**Indicates congregation standing*

One: Let us gather to worship the One who blesses, inspires, comforts, and gives us holy discomfort.

All: We come before God who loves us and makes us restless with visions of hope and peace.

***Hymn**

"Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness"

Blk#286

Prayer of Confession

One: For almost 254 years people of faith have gathered in this church to lift their prayers before God; today we too bring our own concerns and our joys to the Living God, saying:

All: Constant Friend who is always present through the ups and downs of our lives, hear our prayer. Open our hearts and our minds to truths that make for our healing. We confess that too often our personal convictions have blinded us to the ways we have wounded our lives, hurt others, and endangered life on Earth. Forgive us, O world-loving Creator! Mend our brokenness. Show us how we should live. Give us your Holy Spirit that we may work tirelessly for the good of the Earth and all our neighbors. With-us-God, hear our prayer! Forgive us! Renew us!

Silence for Personal Reflection

Prayer Response

"We Are Forgiven"

G Am D7 Gsus G C
We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to
G Am7 Dsus D G Am
God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.
D7 Gsus G C G Am7 D G
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: In this gathering of faith, we are no longer strangers, but sisters and brothers in Christ.

All: In Christ, we are one! In his gift of peace, we find our peace.

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

Psalter Psalm 51:1-12

OT p.492

Gospel lesson John 12:20-36

NT p.936

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

All: Amen

Sermon

“Decide If It Is a Kiss or a Bullet”

***Hymn**

“For the Healing of the Nations”

Blk#576

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

Offertory
Micah 6:6-8

John Ness Beck

***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: Generous God, show us how to use these gifts to bring healing to our nation. In places where hope has been shattered by violence, help us to be peacemakers. In communities where friendship has succumbed to hostility, teach us to be bridge-builders. In churches where indifference has replaced faith, remind us of the joy of your salvation. Amen.

SENDING

*Hymn

"I, The Lord of Sea and Sky"

G Am D G C G D
Leader or All

1 I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
 2 I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
 3 I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

G Em C Am7 D G

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save. I, who
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way. I will
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Fin - est

Am D G C G D

made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
 break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
 bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

G Em C Am7 C/G D D7

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain All G C G D G C G D G

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you

Am7 G Am7 D G C G C

call - ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you

G C G D G Am7 D7 G Am7 G

lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

The stanzas here need to be understood as representing the voice of God, while the refrain (based on Isaiah 6:8) is the faithful human response to God's call. This becomes clearer if a leader or small group sings the stanzas, with the congregation joining on the refrain.

*Benediction

Postlude

"Deerhurst" O'er the Lea

Tune by James Jangran
arr. by Robert F. Swift

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

The Flowers on the communion table are in celebration of Rick's life given by his wife Georgene Fabian.

Keeping in Prayer

Jack & Vicky Meyers
Lynn Anderson
Nancy Pirnie

Eilene Greenwood
Ron Brace & Bonnie Hill
Ginny Arsenault

The Jaeubowski Family
Carol Asher
Pat Andrews

Bob Feeney, our Chicago Seminary Student

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

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 20, Scriptures & Coffee with Rev. Paulo, Mark 11:1-11, 4pm

March 23, Coffee House, 6:30pm

March 25th- Palm Sunday Service, 9:30am

March 29th- Maundy Thursday Communion 7:00pm

March 30th- Good Friday Service 7:00pm

April 1st- Easter Sunday Communion Service 8:00am

Continental Breakfast 8:30 – 9:15am

Children's Easter Egg Hunt on the Plymouth Common – 9:00am

Traditional Easter Service 9:30am

Announcements

Easter Flowers - March 20th is the last day to sign-up for Easter Flowers. Please sign up today! We need more flowers!

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.

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.

Sunday Niters - 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.

Groceries and raising money for PC-UCC - Everyone has to eat and many of you shop at Hannaford's. Have you thought about using a Hannaford gift shopping card. For the next couple of months the Finance Committee will be offering Hannaford Gift Shopping cards in a variety of denominations to see how this program works as a fund raising effort. The cards will be available in a variety of denominations (\$50, \$100 and \$200). For every one hundred dollars you spend on the card at Hannaford's, we will get back five dollars. The cards will be available in early December. See either Linda LaPrad, Chair of Finance, or Larry Spencer, Treasurer. You can either supply us with cash or a check made out to PC-UCC with Hannaford Gift card in the memo line.

Faith Formation - We are busy gathering and filling Easter Eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt, which will be held on the Plymouth Common on Easter morning April 1st at 9:00 a.m. Mark your calendars so you don't miss the fun! All kids are invited to participate. Bad weather doesn't cancel the fun, but it will move us inside.

We are 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.

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.

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

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Wayne Martin, Liturgist

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