

**Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost**

October 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 worship 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 worship 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, you may talk to our Faith Formation Director Cindy Bjerklie or visit our website.
- Our worship service can be heard in the parlor, chapel 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 downstairs immediately after the worship 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

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

*Call to Worship

**Indicates congregation standing*

One: Holy God, Giver of faith, we gather to praise you
for the love that you awaken among us.

**All: In this gathering, we make known your love
through the love we have for each other!**

One: Living Christ, Love in human flesh, we gather to give thanks
for the commandment you gave us to love one another.

**All: In this gathering, we make known your love
in the friendship we share with one another!**

One: Gracious Spirit, Instigator of hope, we gather to worship you
for the blessing of God's love that binds us together.

**All: In this gathering of friends, God's Presence is made known
by the weaving of the sacred threads of faith, hope, and love.**

*Hymn

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Blk#43

Prayer of the Day

One: May God's comforting and healing love surround us all as we pray together,
saying:

**All: God of our past and God of our future, be with us now as we
teeter on the edge of inevitable endings. On this day of
thanksgiving and goodbyes, give us the strength to accept all the
endings in our lives: children growing, spouses aging, parents
dying, friends leaving, and leaves being released into the wind of
autumn. Help us to make peace with this time of letting go. Just
like nature is settling into another winter's cold until new life
breaks out again in the spring, remind us that today is also a
starting place. Today's endings will bring tomorrow's new
beginnings! Teach us the lessons of letting go and saying goodbye
while we faithfully look for the signs of new growth. Amen.**

Silence for Personal Reflection

God's Promise of New Life

One: Our God is the God of all the seasons of our lives. In moments of laughter and in times of sadness, on the day of the calling of a new pastor and on the Sunday of a minister's leave-taking, God gifts us with peace and empowers us to discern God's will for our lives. Friends, believe and live the Good News!

All: Through the life of Jesus Christ, the Spirit inspires us to use our individual gifts to untangle the threads of the past and weave a future that reveals a pattern of faithful Christian living. Alleluia!

Prayer Response

"Bring Your Peace, Lord"

(sing twice)

First system of musical notation for "Bring Your Peace, Lord". It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. Chords G, D/F#, A, D, and G are indicated above the staff.

Second system of musical notation. The melody continues with the lyrics "Bring your peace, Lord." and "Bring your". The bass line has a long note under "peace, Lord." and "Bring your". A chord D is indicated above the staff.

Third system of musical notation. The melody continues with the lyrics "peace, Lord." and "Bring your peace, O". The bass line has a long note under "peace, Lord." and "Bring your". Chords A, D/F#, G, and A are indicated above the staff.

Fourth system of musical notation. The melody continues with the lyrics "Lord, peace a - gain." and "Peace in the". The bass line has a long note under "Lord, peace a - gain." and "Peace in the". Chords D/F#, Dmaj7, Em7, D, and D/F# are indicated above the staff. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a "3" above the staff.

hard times, peace in the pain.

Bring your peace, O Lord, peace a -

- gain.

*Sign of Peace

One: Friends, the peace of Christ be with you!

All: Brothers and sisters,

the deep peace of the White Mountains,

the deep peace of the flowing waters of the Pemigewasset River,

the deep peace of the fresh air of central New Hampshire,

the deep peace of the quiet autumn leaves,

the deep peace of the loon's call,

the deep peace of the Creator and

the deep peace of the Risen Christ be with all of us.

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

Children's Message

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Lessons

One: Listen for the Word of God

Gospel lesson

Mark 10:46-52 NT p.

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

All: Amen

Sermon

***Hymn**

"This Is a Day of New Beginnings"

Blk#417

LITURGY OF PASTORAL LEAVE-TAKING

Chair of the Church Council:

We are part of a larger tapestry of faith – a vast colorful, vibrant and diverse patchwork of love, friendship, and discipleship we call the Church. Sometimes the strands in the fabric of the church come apart and God, the Eternal Weaver, invites us to reweave hope and joy, wonder and new songs, bold dreams and new relationships into our mission and ministries.

Congregation:

The Church of Jesus Christ is always changing. Our church is changing as well. Babies are born. Children go off to college. Couples get married. Loved ones die. Newcomers join our church. Others leave, moving on to new opportunities. It is important that we recognize these times of change.

Vice-Chair of the Church Council:

Today we are gathered to say farewell to Rev. Paulo França who is leaving our fellowship. On November 17th, 2013, this congregation joyfully voted to call Paulo to serve with us as our Pastor and Teacher. Today that call comes to an end.

Congregation:

Rev. Paulo, our time together has been a blessing but this morning we acknowledge that you have a new ministry in another place and in a different community. We are grateful for your love and energy, your preaching and your teaching, your leadership and your vision, your listening and for your words of comfort, encouragement, compassion and challenge.

Pastor:

I thank all of you, members and friends of the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ. Your brave faith and courageous Christian witness, your hospitality and mission, your commitment to being Open and Affirming, your willingness to discern God's presence in the church and in the world, your nurturing and loving care have sustained me and I shall remember you with gratitude to God. Now it is time for me to be released from ministry among you and, as I go, I ask your blessing.

Choral Response "May The Love of the Lord"

Representative of the Merrimack Association:

Let us pray together in one voice, saying –

God of endings, what we thought would not end has ended. And we find ourselves at this place, wondering where to go from here. Be with us at the end. Help us to see our ministry not through yesterday's stories but in the strands of faith, hope and love that intertwine our mission with Christ's calling to follow him and build up his Church.

Vice-Chair of the Church Council:

Let us give thanks for our journey together in this church –

One: For friendships made, for joys celebrated, and for times of nurture and growth,

All: Thanks be to God.

One: For wounds healed, expectations met, gifts given and promises kept.

All: Thanks be to God.

One: For our fellowship in Jesus Christ, and for the love of God which has brought us this far on our journey together,

All: Thanks be to God.

Dissolution of Pastoral Ministry

Representative of the Merrimack Association:

One: Do you, the members and friends of the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, release Rev. Paulo França from service as your Pastor and Teacher?

All: We do with thanks to God.

One: Do you, Rev. Paulo França, recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with this congregation?

One: I do with thanks to God.

Chair of the Church Council:

I invite you to pray with me –

Loving God, Alpha and Omega, you are both beginning and end. Our endings and our beginnings are rooted in your love. Whether near or far, we are held close by your love and kept safe from any lasting loss. Let our time together end with your blessing. Help us to let go graciously of what used to be and rejoice in the new possibilities ahead of us. Touch our memories with your grace and peace. In the days before us, may we offer you our highest and our best. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen!

Representative of the Merrimack Association:

Representing the Merrimack Association, I witness these words of thanksgiving and release. Our Association rejoices with you in the ministry you have shared, and we pledge to you continued support and prayer. With thanks to God for the ministry of this congregation and the ministry of God's servant the Rev. Paulo França, and with hope for God's abiding grace in the years to come, this pastoral relationship is now dissolved.

Congregation:

Weaver-God, we place our lives and our church in your hands, weave on – in and out, over and through, and create a whole new tapestry out of the untangled threads of this day. Amen.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Offertory

Gift of Music

***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 our tomorrow, may our giving affirm our commitment to carry on the mission and ministries of our church. Amen.

SENDING

***Hymn** "You Shall Go Out With Joy" (sing twice)

***Benediction**

***Choral Benediction**

Postlude

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

Keeping in Prayer

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

Announcements

The Reverend Paulo G. França, Minister
Deborah Healey, Church Office Administrator
Cindy Bjerklie, Director of Faith Formation
David Williams, Director of Music

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