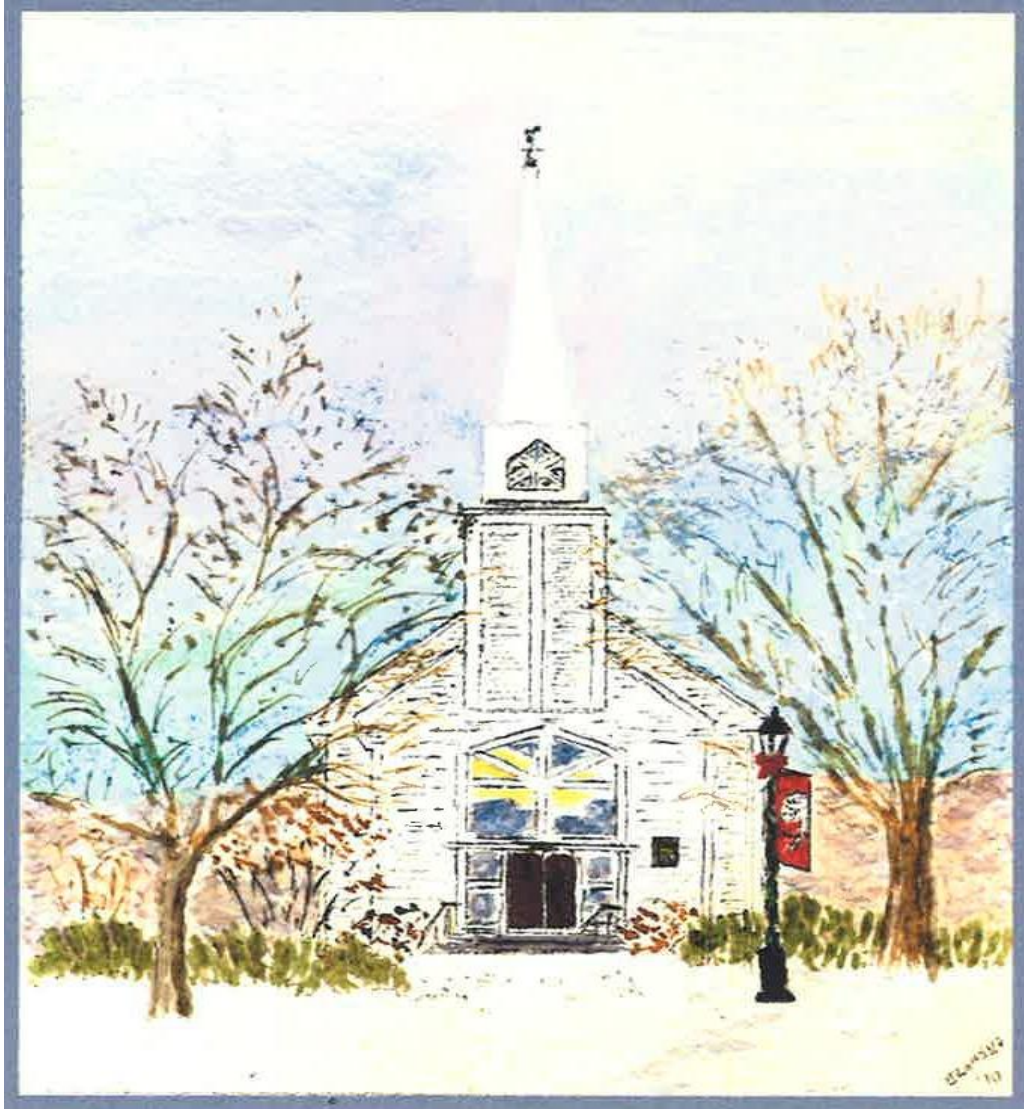


Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
The Second Sunday after Epiphany
Affirming the Life of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
January 19, 2020 **9:30 AM**



courtesy of Eleanor Lonske

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

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

A Just Peace, Open & Affirming, & God Is Still Speaking Congregation

"An inclusive spiritual family shaping a better you for creating a better world.
A place to make a difference."

The Second Sunday after Epiphany **Affirming the Life of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

January 19, 2020

Sacred Fellowship 9:30 AM

We are delighted that you are here today! We hope you will find us an affirming, uplifting, and committed family of faith. Here we work to make everyone, without any exceptions, to feel accepted, inspired, and encouraged in their spiritual journey. In dialogue, we seek to understand. In encouragement, we seek to heal. In all things we yearn to live by love, for peace, with joy. This is a place where your intellect will be challenged, your heart will be nurtured, and your spirit refreshed. Varying beliefs are expressed openly and freely, and your doubts will not be suppressed. We trust that we are all, every person and part of creation, continuing to be blessed by God's grace; and that in community we can help each other to see this grace alive in our lives and relationships. We hope to share our gifts with you, even as we pray that you will want to share your gifts with us. Whoever you are and wherever you may be in your life's journey, we invite you to be a part of our lives and our spiritual home. Welcome!

CALLED TOGETHER AS SPIRITUAL FAMILY

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Please sign the registration pads when they are handed out
by the ushers and pass to your neighbor in the pew.

We ask that you please shut off cell phones and practice quietness during the service.
Please join us for fellowship and refreshments after the worship in the Fellowship Hall.

* = You are invited to stand as you are able.

Prelude

Welcoming the Light of Love in Our Midst

Acolyte lights altar candles.

We prepare ourselves for communing with the sacred as love's light is brought into our awareness. The light of love burns within and among each of us, and we carry that light into our sanctuary; visually reminding us of the image of the divine that lives in our hearts, minds, and souls – and that we nourish through our faith-filled fellowship.

Choral Introit

Come, Let us Praise the Lord

William Boyd (1542-1623)

Affirming God's Presence in Us All

"You Matter!"

Sharing Christ's Peace

As a sign of our reconciliation with God and one another, greet and welcome those around you and share "the peace of Christ."

***Hymn for Peace with Justice**

"Lead Us from Death to Life"

#581

***Centering Our Souls**

“Prophetic Politics: Selected Quotes of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”

L1: Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

P: **History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.**

L1: He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.

P: **In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.**

L2: Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

P: **Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.**

L2: The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood.

L1: Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time; the need for (humanity) to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. (We) must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.

P: **Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.**

L2: Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction....The chain reaction of evil--hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars--must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.

Men: **Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. You not only refuse to shoot a man, but you refuse to hate him.**

Women: **Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennobles the (one) who wields it. It is a sword that heals.**

Men: **We must learn to live together as (family) or perish together as fools.**

Women: **An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.**

L1: Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'

L2: The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But the Good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"

P: **The good neighbor looks beyond the external accidents and discerns those inner qualities that make all (people) human and, therefore, brothers (and sisters).**

L1: Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.

P: **Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**

L2: Every (person) must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.

L1: I submit to you that if a (person) hasn't discovered something (she) will die for, (she) isn't fit to live.

P: **The ultimate measure of (any of us) is not where (we) stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where (we) stand at times of challenge and controversy.**

L2: The church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society.

L1: The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.

Women: **A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.**

Men: **It is not enough to say we must not wage war. It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.**

L2: We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war but the positive affirmation of peace.

L1: I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

Women: **We must build dikes of courage to hold back the flood of fear.**

Men: **We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.**

L2: I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.

WE DEDICATE OURSELVES TO GOD'S SERVICE THROUGH FAITHFULNESS

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

"Generosity arises from gratitude like heat arises from fire. Like fire, gratitude is lovely to see; but when it warms others with generosity, that is when it becomes a true blessing."

Gift of Music: Choral Anthem

The Name to Which All Knees Shall Bow
F. Bland Tucker, George Brandon
Tune: Old Hundredth; p. 7

***Song of Dedication**

**The light of love does shine most bright
when all are siblings in our sight;
We are one fam'ly on this earth;
We are God's children from our birth.**

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

O God of Prophets and Peacemakers: We are thankful for your blessings of encouragement as we seek to correct injustices and come to the defense of those without voice. May these tithes and offerings be instrumental in nurturing equality, promoting peace, and establishing harmony between all your peoples and all your creation. Help us to be generous not only with our monetary-giving, but also with our truth-giving, life-giving and soul-giving – for the betterment of your world. May it be so, now and always.

***Choral Benediction**

Let Us Go Forth Gladly

Postlude

The Light of Love Goes into the World

Love's light is not extinguished from our worship, but is transferred from the flame of the candles to the passion in our hearts that we may go forth to let the light of love shine through us as we go to serve in the world.

WE GO FORTH AS PEACEMAKERS TO CREATE JUSTICE FOR ALL

Our worship is fulfilled, and our purpose is confirmed,
through our service as God's stewards to the world and all creation.
Use the blessings God has given you as you share
the joy in your heart, the wisdom in your mind,
the love in your spirit, and the peace in your soul.

Thank you for sharing sacred fellowship with us.

Plymouth Congregational UCC is an open and affirming church, embracing diversity in our congregation and community, and affirming the dignity and worth of every person. We are an inclusive community of faith that celebrates God's presence through shared stories and experiences of sacred meaning on Sundays, and through the nurturing of divine values and virtues manifested in active practices in our daily lives. We welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of the church, regardless of race, ethnic background, gender/sexual identity, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive capabilities, nationality/citizenship, or circumstance of life. We are also a Just Peace church, emphasizing peace and nonviolence in all our relationships, personally and collectively, because we see the sacred worth of every person throughout this good earth. We are a Progressive Christian family of faith. We invite you to hear our experiences of the divine even as we are curious in learning about your own spiritual journey. We hope our values may intersect as together we strive to make our corner of the world a better place. Get to know us! We'd like to get to know you!

Keeping in Prayer

Ralph Reynolds	Mike & Michele Ettelston	Dick Brace
Jesse Armstrong	P.V. George	Marilyn Mason
Cassie & Kevin	Sheri Stanley	Barbara
Helen Robinson		Rob Stewart

Wayne Myers, uncle of Rev. Myers,
who is in the hospital and will be undergoing surgery in early February.

Bob Feeny and Sam Lovett,
members-in-discernment in the Merrimack Association

*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

January 31st – Coffee House at 6:15 PM
February 26th – Ash Wednesday
March 9th – New Hampshire Master Chorale Concert
April 15th – New Hampshire Chamber Singers at 7:30 PM

Announcements

Coffee Hour – Today, everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Service for a beverage, snack and conversation. Bringing in a special treat or snack is always appreciated. Please plan to join us every Sunday. Also, the following Sunday, January 26th is our monthly "Reduced Sugar Day".

There are many opportunities to help in the kitchen by setting up prior to the service, cleaning up afterwards or bringing in snacks or other foods to share. There is a sign-up page on the bulletin board next to the pass-through window. You may use one of the dated tags on the Will-U poster at the entrance to Fellowship Hall if you are bringing a snack. Please contact Chris Pollock at 603-674-8590 or e-mail at rpollack@metrocast.net to sign up or if you have any questions.

Thank you from the Hospitality Committee.

Sunday Niters - ...is Sunday, January 26th at the Wei's house, 24 River Street in Ashland opposite the dam. Bring a dish and park along the driveway facing out.

Book Group - Happy New Year, Happy readers! Just a reminder that our first meeting will be Monday, **January 27th**. Our book will be River of Doubt by Candice Millard. Hope to see you all then.

Coffee House - Our guest speaker will be Susan Fuller from Interfaith Power and Light Chapter in NH dedicated to good stewardship of our environment. Please join us on Friday, January 31st at 6:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Bring finger food to share if you can.

Liturgist: If you would like to serve as liturgist (lay reader) for worship on Sunday morning, please sign up on the bulletin board in hallway near parlor or see Eileen Torrey.

Usher/Greeter: If you would like to serve as usher or greeter for worship on Sunday, please see Marilyn Wixson or Eleanor Spencer.

Flowers Coordinator: We need someone who would be willing to secure folks to sign up to bring flowers for the communion table for worship. We need a coordinator from now through May. If you are willing to do this short term project, please contact Eileen Torrey.

Many thanks to all the folks who helped take down the Christmas décor and flowers in the sanctuary and the narthex Christmas tree: David Williams, Donna and Butch Castor, Peggy Martin, Fran Taylor, Paulette Brace, Debbie Healey and Mike Nicholas. An extra big thank you to Donna and Butch for cleaning out the Christmas closet and organizing all the Christmas décor!!

Faith Formation - We are pleased to have Julie Kelsey and Gale Adams-Davis join us as Directors of Christian Education. They will share this role through June, and have already started working on some wonderful projects. Julie has been a major force in running Church School since September. She is also a local Girl Scout troop leader. Gale is a Principal at Waterville Valley Elementary School, and has been a teacher and principal for many years. We are blessed to have two talented people running our children's programs!

The Rev. Bret S. Myers, Interim Pastor
Deborah Healey, Church Office Administrator
David Williams, Director of Music
Ashley Paine, Organist/Accompanist
Gale Adams-Davis, Co-Director of Faith Formation
Julie Kelsey, Co-Director of Faith Formation
Larry Spencer, Church Treasurer
Celia Woolverton, Grace Counseling

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Liturgist, Bill Heron

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Please make an appointment with Rev. Myers if you would like to meet with the pastor.

You may call the church office at 603-536-2626,

email him at revbmyers@yahoo.com, or call/text his cell at 608-370-9472.

*Bret's office hours are Sunday 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM, Tuesday 1:00-7:00 PM,
Wednesday 1:00 – 8:00 PM, Thursday 2:00-5:00 PM and other hours by appointment.*