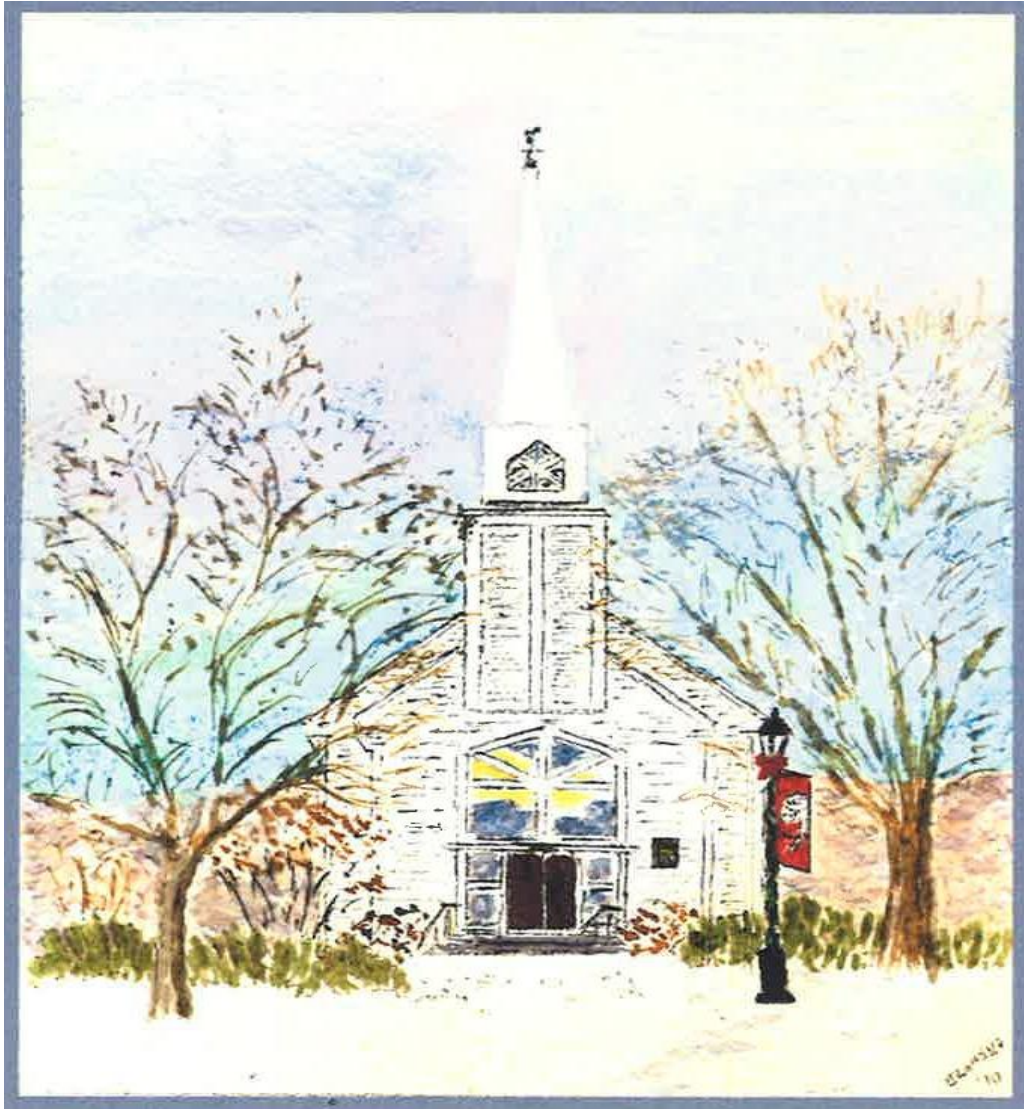


Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
The Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 26, 2020 **9:30 AM**



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 Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 26, 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

Lift Your Voice In Praise

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."

***Centering Our Souls**

You, O God, have been a light to the nations.

You have shone brightest among those in darkness.

Those once rejected and despised, you have accepted and affirmed.

Those once beaten down and broken, you have lifted up and made whole.

The rule of the oppressor will come to an end, and the people will live as brothers and sisters in harmony.

When we turn from our own ways to your ways, great things will happen.

You call on us to follow in your ways of love, peace, and justice. You ask us to be light to a world clouded by hatred, war, and corruption.

We know we are able to follow; but are we willing?

You remind us that you will bring us comfort, even though we will not always be comfortable. You promise to be present with us, even when we feel anguished and alone.

May your Spirit live in us that we may be radiant. Let us bring illumination to our lives and world by putting your values before our own.

We are the beacons of your beneficence.

We are the lights of your love. May it be so.

WE LISTEN FOR THE SACRED IN THE MIDST OF OUR LIVES

A Time for All God's Children

Prayers

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns, and Acts of Compassion or Kindness

Silent Meditation: The Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer Jesus Taught

Please feel free to do the version you know, or the one below.

"Our heavenly Creator, sacred be your name: your kin-dom* come, your will be done, on earth as if in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen"

*"Kin-dom" is an inclusive, non-authoritarian, and egalitarian term that reminds us that we are all "kin" as the children of God.

***Hymn of Illumination** "Arise, Your Light Is Come" #164

Scripture Lesson Isaiah 9.1-7

Message "Is It the Light We See, or the Light We Create?"

***Hymn for Being the Light** "Guide My Poor Vision"
Tune: Slane
Music: Traditional Irish melody; harm. Carlton R. Young, 1963;
Words: Rev. Bret S. Myers, 3/2/2008

**Guide my poor vision when fog lingers near
Dispel the clouds that my eyes may see clear
Blow through the valleys of blinding despair
Till on the hillsides your light shines most fair.**

**Guide my poor vision when darkness I dread
Injustice lurking, the needy unfed
When my hope wavers amidst all earth's pains
Make me a lighthouse that pierces all rains.**

**Guide my poor vision when problems arise
Finding no answer seems like my demise
When I'm frustrated and bound to give in
Turn my gaze upwards, let starlight stream in.**

**Grant me the vision to love and forgive
Seeing that peace is the way I should live
It's not the outcome I need to control
It's the compassion that makes my life whole.**

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

Christ Is the World's True Light
Walter Kendall Stanton (1891-1978)

***Song of Dedication**

Tune: Old Hundredth; p. 7

**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 Spirit of Enlightenment and Understanding: Let our Epiphany be a light that not only illumines our minds, but warms our hearts. May we realize the blessing of giving as a source of light and life; not only to those who receive, but to we who give. Let us not curtail the breadth of our generosity, but may we, like Christ, treat others as we would want to be treated – seeing in others ourselves, and seeking their welfare as we would our own. Let justice, peace, and love light our way in all we think, do, and say. Now and always.

***Choral Benediction**

Go In Peace

***Encouragement for the Journey**

When life brings you loss, sadness, or suffering, may the hope within you rise like a cool, refreshing stream. When circumstances are disillusioning, painful, or despairing, may the faith by which you sail be persevering and bring you back safely to the harbor of peace. In all your life, remember that you are born to give wings to love. Be thankful for the love you have received, and be generous in the love that you give. May your life be laced with grace.

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
Rob Stewart		Vickie Flener

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

Sunday Niter's – Tonight, January 26th, The Sunday Niter's has been **CANCELLED**.

Coffee Hour – Today, is our monthly "Reduced Sugar Day". Everyone is invited to Coffee Hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Service for a beverage, snack and conversation. Let's enjoy a variety of food without a heavy dose of sugars.

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 rpollock@metrocast.net to sign up or if you have any questions.

Thank you from the Hospitality Committee.

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.

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.

Flower Donations – Please sign-up on the bulletin board next to the kitchen window.

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, Wayne Martin

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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.