

**Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ**

**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

*"Good Shepherd Sunday"*

**May 3, 2020**

**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.

# GATHERING

## Welcome

## Prelude

*The beginning of the prelude is an invitation to silent,  
personal preparation for the worship of God.*

## Call to Worship

One: Open the gate! The Shepherd is coming!

**All: We hear his glad voice, calling us by name, leading us to green pastures.**

One: No stranger's voice will we follow. We follow only the One who brings us home.

**All: One door, one flock, one fold, one Shepherd. Open the gate!  
The Good Shepherd comes!**

## Hymn

"God Is Truly with Us"

Blk#68

Verse 1

**God is truly with us;  
sing we and adore now;  
praise the One we come before now.  
Here within this temple,  
here in sound and silence,  
worship God in deepest reverence.  
You alone, God, we own,  
you, our God and Savior;  
praise to you forever.**

Verse 2

**God is truly with us;  
loud our praise resounding!  
Echoes of the saints surrounding!  
"Holy, holy, holy,"  
hear the hymn ascending,  
angels, saints, their voices blending!  
Bow your ear to us here;  
hear, O Christ, the praises  
that your Church now raises.**

## **Gathering Prayer**

One: As God's people, we know that the Bread of life is for us, even as we hunger for hope, life, joy, healing for our brokenness. Let us open our hearts to God as we pray together:

**All: God of Stillness, your grace murmurs in our hearts like a gentle stream; your goodness and mercy are the shadows that tag along with us as we wander the sun-dappled pastures of creation. Lord Jesus, our Shepherd, you would lead us down those paths we find so uncomfortable – engaging in the hard work of reconciliation and peacebuilding, where enemies are welcomed as family, where serving others is our calling. Give us the strength and courage to follow your voice so that our hearts might overflow with the abundance of joy we find in your kingdom. Amen.**

## **Silence for Personal Reflection**

### **God's Promise of New Life**

One: This we know for certain – our lives are held within the gracious embrace of God's love. This good news never ceases to astound us!

**All: This promise is passed on to us, so we may share it with everyone we meet. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **Response**

"I Greet You, Sure Redeemer"

Blk#251

**You have the true and perfect gentleness,  
no harshness have you and no bitterness;  
Grant us the grace that flows in you so free  
that we may dwell in perfect unity.**

# **HEARING THE WORD**

### **Gospel Reading** John 10:1-10

**One: Here ends the reading from our tradition. May God grant us wisdom and courage to live our faith boldly.**

### **Message**

"Listening"

**Hymn**

“Such Perfect Love My Shepherd Shows”

Blk#248

Verse 1

**Such perfect love my Shepherd shows,  
whose goodness fails me never,  
Whose hand all things I need bestows  
and watches me forever.**

Verse 5

**You spread a table in my sight,  
your gifts of grace bestowing;  
And from your chalice I delight  
to taste your mercy flowing.**

## **RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

### **Offertory**

*We invite you to remember your support for the ministry of PCUCC.*

### **Offertory Prayer**

**All: May we follow you, Good Shepherd, not only on the mountains of pleasure, or in the plains of comfort, but also through valleys of difficulty, and in pathways of service. Receive the gifts we offer this coming week as part of that life which we offer up to you, to be transformed into your ministries of grace and goodness in our world. Amen.**

## **CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

### **Invitation to the Table**

One: Christ the Good Shepherd has prepared a feast for us, even in the presence of our enemies. Indeed, it is offered wherever we find ourselves in this moment, that we might know Christ's guiding and loving presence, and might be strengthened to share him with the world around us as he calls us each by name.

**All: Let us come to the feast of the Risen One. Let all who would receive life and life abundant from his hand come to the Table of the Lord with thanksgiving.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

You will be invited to offer your silent prayers for others.

### **Breaking of the Bread and the Pouring of the Cup**

### **Sharing of the Bread & the Cup**

### **Closing Prayer**

**All: Nurturing God, having been nourished at your Table overflowing with love and grace, may we daily listen for your voice guiding us to those we can serve in your name. Hear us as we join our hearts and voices together in the prayer Jesus taught us, saying:**

**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.**

## **SENDING**

### **Hymn**

**"Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us"**

**Blk#252**

**Verse 1**

**Savior, like a shepherd lead us,  
much we need your tender care;  
in your pleasant pastures feed us,  
for our use your folds prepare.**

**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us, yours we are;  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have bought us, yours we are.**

Verse 3

**Let us always seek your favor;  
let us always do your will;  
Jesus Christ, our only Savior,  
with your love our spirits fill.  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still;  
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,  
you have loved us, love us still.**

### **Words of Blessing**

May the freshness of the dawn enliven our spirits  
May the rising of the sun enlighten our minds  
May the noon-tide of the day warm our hearts  
May the sunset clothe us with restfulness.

**All: Amen!**

### **Postlude**

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

### **Keeping in Prayer**

Dick Brace	Jesse Armstrong	Cassie & Kevin
Sheri Stanley	Barbara	Vickie Flener
Mary	P.V. George	June Thomas
John Smathers	Patti Dyszinsky	Maroni Family
Stephanie Herr	Elaine Boniface	Jack Surine

Prayers for Our Nation and for the World!

Bob Feeny as he explores his Call to ordained ministry

Sam Lovett, Member-in-discernment in the Merrimack Association

*If you have a prayer request you'd like Pastor Mike to include in Sunday worship,  
please email him at [pastor@uccplymouth.org](mailto:pastor@uccplymouth.org).*

## **PREPARE COMMUNION BEFORE WORSHIP**

Today's worship service will include the celebration of the Lord's Supper. We encourage you to participate in the sacrament and to prepare bread and cup before the service begins. Here is a suggested preparation.

Before the time of the service, you will want to prepare some bread, a slice or a small loaf of any kind of bread. In some parts of the world tortilla, rice cake or cassava are used as this element which is defined not as a wheat product, but as the most common food of the people. Let it be something you alone or you with others in your house may break and share. Prepare a cup or cups of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol.

Set these elements in the living room or kitchen where you experience worship electronically with our faith community. Perhaps you want to put them on a lovely cloth or fabric that reminds you of a special time or a person deeply connected with you in the communion of saints. Perhaps you will light a candle, place a flower/plant or the photograph of someone you wish to bring into the circle of faith beside the bread and the cup. Thank you for your preparation.

### **Announcement**

**Finance Committee** - CHOOSE OUR CHURCH as your favorite charity on AMAZON SMILE and support our ministries and mission. Yes, HANNAFORD prepaid grocery cards are available during this "stay-at-home" time of practicing safe distancing. Denominations of \$100, \$250 and \$500 are available. Finance orders cards regularly. Please let Linda or Larry know via phone or email what you would like to purchase. We'll let you know when to mail your check to the church. If you shop at HANNAFORD for your essentials, please purchase a prepaid card. The church receives 5% of each card purchased. Thank you for your continued support!

**Stewardship Team** - It's stewardship time and this year, we are asking for \$200,000 in pledges to support the mission and ministry of our congregation. Your contributions are invaluable to the life of this church. We are very much aware that we're going through a period of economic uncertainty that could make pledging challenging, to say the least. In the face of this turbulent time, we ask you to prayerfully consider what you feel you can give to support the life and work of PCUCC. Once we are through this crisis and the future looks clearer, you can always adjust your pledge. If you did not receive a pledge card please contact the church office [office@uccplymouth.org](mailto:office@uccplymouth.org). Please return your pledge with the pledge card by regular mail or e-mail to the Treasurer at: [treasurer@uccplymouth.org](mailto:treasurer@uccplymouth.org) by **May 7th**. We will dedicate and bless all our gifts on Stewardship Sunday, May 10th. Thank you, PCUCC Finance Stewardship Team

**Nominating Committee** - I am interested in any member who would be willing to take on Chair of Missions. Please contact Hanna Stark, Former Chair. Members are also needed for Human Resources and Christian Education. Thank you, FranTaylor, Chair Nominating

**Zoom Fellowship Gatherings** - As one way of trying to keep us all connected during this time of "being apart," the Church Staff is in the process of organizing a series of Fellowship Gatherings utilizing the Zoom platform. In the near future, you will be receiving an email which contains an invitation to join in on a particular Fellowship Gathering. If you would like to participate, all you have to do is click on the link and you will be brought into the "room" with your fellow members and friends at PCUCC. If you have not yet made use of this video conferencing technology, all you need to do beforehand is go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) and download the app to your computer, iPad or phone. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Pastor Mike at 603-960-0196.

**HOPE Fund** - The need for assistance through our HOPE Fund will increase as families at risk need assistance paying for rent, heating, electricity and medications. Please consider giving to the HOPE Fund. You can send your check to PCUCC and write HOPE Fund in the memo. Send to Plymouth Congregational UCC, P.O. Box 86, Plymouth, NH 03264.

**Feeding Our Children Together** - As you may be aware, our Church participates in the Feeding Our Children Together (FOCT) program which provides a bag of food to local families who are food-challenged.

Currently we are packing 40 bags each week. Each bag is double-bagged to safely carry the cans and other food items we pack -- so we need 80 bags each week.

Right now, because we are not holding services at the Church, and because it is locked down, we are running short on the plastic bags we use. The Hannafords and Walmart bags are the right size for what we do.

If you have a collection of these bags that you could donate to this cause, we would appreciate it. I am willing to come to your house to pick them up, as well. You can contact me to arrange a time and place. Or, if you are going to be in the Holderness/Plymouth area, we could agree on a meeting place.

Thank you, Alice O'Connor. [alimaenh@gmail.com](mailto:alimaenh@gmail.com)

**A Message from Susan Wei...** - If anyone is in need of a cloth face mask, please call Susan Wei at 968-7516. Susan will make and deliver masks.



## **Pledges and Contributions**

During this time when we are unable to gather for worship, we ask that you mail in your pledges and contributions to the church office so that we can continue to fund our current mission and ministry here at PCUCC. Thank you.

**Book Group** - The next fiction book of our list is Boston Girl by Anita Diamont. This book will be discussed on **May 4th & 18th**. Stay safe and stay well. Cheers, Peggy

Our church is closed to all events until further announcement.  
The Worship Services will be live-streamed on our Facebook page.  
Please check for Constant Contact and the Facebook page  
for information about upcoming Worship Services.

## **Pastor's Office Hours**

During this time of "physical distancing" and working remotely,  
Pastor Mike will be at the church periodically.  
Please feel free to contact him by email at [pastor@uccplymouth.org](mailto:pastor@uccplymouth.org)  
or his cell phone at 603-960-0196.

The Rev. Michael Carrier, Bridge Pastor	<a href="mailto:pastor@uccplymouth.org">pastor@uccplymouth.org</a>
Deborah Healey, Office Administrator	<a href="mailto:office@uccplymouth.org">office@uccplymouth.org</a>
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Rev. Rebecca Larson, Liturgist

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