

Plymouth Congregational, United Church of Christ

5th Sunday of Eastertide Communion Sunday



May 2, 2021

9:30 am

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 & Announcements

Prelude Two Preludes on American Hymn Tunes: 1. Amazing Grace, Chester Kingsbury
The prelude is an invitation to personal preparation for worship.

Call to Worship

One: With some courage and hope, we come before You, Spirit of Truth. We long to be filled with love and to offer peace in the world.

All: Let us find meaning for today in ancient words; let us be comforted by Your holy meal today.

One: With trepidation: for we know that Your call may be risky at times. If we are afraid, let us still be compelled to move for and with Your love.

All: We recall that Christ, too, was afraid; we are not alone in our journey of seeking. We come before God with all that we are.

One: As we sing out in this hour, let us hear Your still small voice. Move us this hour, Holy One.

All: We return thanks as we come before You, God; in our worship, let the branches of our lives be removed which do not produce. We want to produce fruit; let us know that You are with us.

Hymn

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

NCH (black) 337

Unison

1 Draw us in the Spir-it's teth - er, for when hum - bly
2 As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of
3 All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -

in your name, two or three are met to - geth - er,
Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the Giv - er,
ments of you, that by car - ing, help-ing, giv - ing,

The musical score is written for unison in a key of three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a bass line. The lyrics are provided below the vocal line.

you are in the midst of them; Al-le-lu-ia!
 break the bread and bless the cup, Al-le-lu-ia!
 we may be dis-ci-ples true. Al-le-lu-ia!

Al-le-lu-ia! Touch we now your gar-ment's hem.
 Al-le-lu-ia! So now bind our friend-ship up.
 Al-le-lu-ia! We may serve with faith a-new.

Passing of the Peace

We invite you to text or email someone a note reminding them that God is by their side; we are not alone! A hand-written note will work too. Peace be with you.

Gathering Prayer

adapted from St. Augustine

One: When I found truth, there I found my God who is the truth. And there since the time I learned You, You abide in my memory.

All: Let us recall the ways that we are with You, each moment.

One: Here we find you. You are also throughout the world. I find You when I can You to remembrance.

All: Let us sing of the ways that Your Spirit is made manifest in our lives.

One: We are grateful, God; we delight in Your presence even in the midst of struggle. Grant that we may be centered this hour and find strength in Your holy meal.

All: Let us listen for Your still small voice; let us proclaim this even with our imperfections.

Silence for Personal Reflection

God's Promise of New Life

One: God of new beginnings, draw us into Your deep reconciliation so that we may be healed and so that we may heal. In song, scripture and holy sustenance let us be assured of the new life that has been promised us, this day and every day.

All: We proclaim that new life is ours, God; we know that You offer us all. For this truth is in keeping with our resurrected Savior. There is nothing – nothing here, nothing anywhere else that will separate us from the love of God in Jesus. It is for this promise and Spirit that we sing.

Response Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence PH (red) #107

Rank on rank the host of heaven, spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish as the shadows clear away.

Hearing the Word

Scripture 1 John 4: 7-21 John 15:1-8

Message “Whatever You Wish” Rev. Sara M. Holland

Hymn O God in Whom All Life Begins NCH (black) #401

1 O God in whom all life be-gins, who births the seed to fruit,
2 U - nite in mu - tual min - is - try our minds and hands and hearts
3 Through tears and laugh - ter, grief and joy, en - large our trust and care;

be - stow your bless-ing on our lives; here let your love find root.
that we may have the grace to seek the power your peace im - parts.
so bind us in com - mu - ni - ty that we may risk and dare.

Bring forth in us the Spir - it's gifts of pa - tience, joy, and peace;
 So let our var - ied gifts com - bine to glo - ri - fy your Name
 Be with us when we gath - er here to wor - ship, sing, and pray,

de - liv - er us from numb - ing fear, and grant our faith in - crease.
 that in all things by word and deed we may your love pro - claim.
 then send us forth in power and faith to live the words we say.

Responding to the Word

Offertory I Know That My Redeemer Liveth William Stickles
 We invite you to remember your support for the ministry of PCUCC.

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. Amen.**

Offertory Prayer

All: Gracious God, whose blessed Son walked the way to Emmaus and showed himself in the breaking of bread, we give thanks that the eyes of our faith have been opened, that we may walk with the stranger, see you in the neighbor, and share the holy food of compassion. Grant that these gifts will bless those most in need – those who are lonely, hungry and hurting. We pray all this, for Love's sake. Amen.

Gathering at the Table

Invitation to Holy Communion

One: We are scattered God: in apartments, houses, condos; on counters, at dinner tables, on our couch and stretching on the floor. As we join in this historic ritual, let us know that this holy meal may strengthen us. Let us find renewal in this great Communion.

All: We are prepared God. Our tables and makeshift tables may be messy, but they are set. These tables are open: There are no prerequisites for God's love. This table is for those who believe a little or a lot. This table is for those who need community, those who need solace and those who need strength. Let us share in this abundance.

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 and the Cup

Closing Prayer

All: Gracious and loving God, You have made us one in the body of Christ, and nourished us at Your table with holy food and drink. Now send us forth to be Your people in the world. Grant us strength to persevere in resisting evil, and to proclaim in all we say and do Your Good News in Christ Jesus our Savior. This we pray through Christ our Lord who taught us to pray:

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.**

Sending

Hymn

We Live by Faith and Not by Sight

NCH (black) # 256

UNISON

1 We live by faith and not by sight;
2 We may not touch Christ's hands and side,
3 Help then, O Christ, our un - be - lief;
4 That, when our life of faith is done,
no gra-cious words we hear From Christ who spoke as
nor fol-low where Christ trod; But in con-fess-ing
and may our faith a - bound To call on you when
in realms of clear - er light We may be - hold you
none e'er spoke, who still we know is near.
we re - joice: our Sav - ior and our God!
you are near and seek where you are found:
as you are, with full and end - less sight.

Benediction

Postlude Two Preludes on American Hymn Tunes: 2. Nettleton, Chester Kingsbury
This ends our worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.

Prepare Communion before Worship if able

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. We invite you to make your preparation intentional and authentic.

Keeping in Prayer

Maryam Pasha and her family
Jamie McDougall and family, friends of Alice O'Conner
Fran Lewis Bob, brother of Georgene Fabian
Sarah Thorne Marjorie Glidden and family
Dick & Paulette Brace Alice & Margaret Avery
Annie Rice, Bev Tedeschi's mother Sue Switaj
Terry Cote & David Cote, close friends of Alice O'Connor
Jean Nilson, Susan Wei's sister Heidi Watts, Fran Lewis' sister
Judy Detzel, friend of Hanna Starck

Prayers for those administering and receiving the first COVID-19 vaccines.

All those who are sick or have family member/s who have passed during the pandemic.

If you have a prayer request, you would like Rev. Sara to include in Sunday Worship,
please email her at plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org.

This Week and More at PCUCC

Sunday	9:30 AM	Worship Service on Facebook Live No Sunday School
	10:45 AM	Coffee hour
	6:30 PM	Worship service airs on PBTv (this week's TV view will be from April 25, 2021)
Monday	10:00 AM	Book Group meets
Wednesday	11:30 AM	Staff meeting
	4:00 PM	Prayer time and devotion via Zoom

**-PLEASE TURN IN YOUR PLEDGE CARD BY MAY 5TH IF YOU ARE ABLE-
Please tune in for pledge Sunday on May 9th**

A message from the Finance Committee: It's stewardship time.

This is the time we look back at all we've accomplished and look forward at the financial support needed to meet the challenges of our next fiscal year.

We've been blessed with exceptional lay and pastoral leadership and your financial support is needed to keep our programs and mission thriving.

Our TOGETHER FOR JOY stewardship information is being mailed out this week. We ask that you prayerfully consider your financial support and return your pledge by May 5th. Mailing and email addresses are listed on our web page, in the bulletin and in the information package.

If you have any questions, please contact the treasurer, Larry Spencer or Linda LaPrad, Finance chair. They'll be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

For all we accomplish TOGETHER FOR JOY, we thank you.

Elva Piehn has turned 104! Elva was a member from 2001-2015. She helped create the cookie walk and was well known for her peanut brittle. Elva now lives in Illinois. She will be celebrating her 104th birthday May 3rd. If anyone is interested in sending her birthday wishes they may send them to: Elva Piehn, 1953 W. Laurel Freeport, IL 61032.

Update re: eventual return to in-person worship: Currently, the NH Conference has asked that we continue to worship online. We hope to come back for in person worship a bit on May 23rd, with restrictions. Registration will be required and in the first week priority will go to those who have been unable to access the web-based services.

Huge thanks to Eileen Torrey for her commitment to our church family during the interim office time. We continue to be blessed by her presence and leadership.

Capital Campaign update: Lisa and Bev are standing by to answer any questions you may have via phone or email. Our campaign is focusing on the ramp on the north side of the building, a modest A/C installation, audio / visual upgrade and an organ console replacement. Email inquiries should be directed to Lisa Lovett at lilylovet@gmail.com and phone inquiries to Bev Newton at 603-254-9991.

We continue to pray for the PSU community as commencement is on May 8th.

Deacon's Corner – The updates in this area are general so as to protect the privacy of families and individuals.

Please offer prayers for peace for Fran Lewis who has upcoming global travels. She appreciates our support and love during this time.

Finance Committee - CHOOSE OUR CHURCH as your favorite charity on AMAZON SMILE and support our ministries and mission. We can be found by entering Plymouth Congregational Church or Plymouth* under Faith and Spiritual list only.

Once on AmazonSmile click on “Accounts and Lists” under your name, scroll down to “AmazonSmile Charity Lists” select “Faith and Spiritual” then either type Plymouth Congregational Church or Ply* to find all listings starting with Ply then select our church.

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 will 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!

HOPE Fund - The HOPE Fund supports families at risk who 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. If you know of someone who is in need, please put them in touch with the church office or Pastor Sara.

Racial Justice Exploration: We are continuing these explorations this spring and summer, on an every other week basis. For now, we will shift to reflections of readings and education. We welcome new attendees and we pray you'll reach out to Pastor Sara if you are considering ways to get involved in these important efforts.

This group encourages examination of any of the following books:

Ibram X. Kendi's *How to be An Antiracist*

Rebecca Carroll's *Surviving the White Gaze*

If you are interested in taking a trip to the Black Heritage Trail (which is in Portsmouth) in June, we hope you will let Peggy Martin know, her email is: pmartin03223@yahoo.com

Book Group - Here is our intended order of Book Group readings so that you can purchase or otherwise obtain them in advance: Our next selections will be:

The Woman Who Smashed Codes by Jason Fagone (discussed on April 26th)

The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate (discussed on May 10th)

Born a Crime by Trevor Noah (discussed on May 24th)

Leading from the Outside by Stacey Abrams (discussed on June 7th)

Consider attending the UCC national gathering this year! General Synod will take place between July 11 & 18 and will explore the theme Rooted in Love. We encourage attendance, especially because it is virtual this year. You are able to attend just a day or two if you like! Visit generalsynod.org for more information.

Our church has moved to digital platforms for all events until further announcement.

The Worship Services will be live streamed on our Facebook page and are available on Sunday nights on PBTv at 6:30 pm. (Local channel 1302.)

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 Sara will be at the church for office hours Monday 10:00 AM-3:00 PM, Tuesday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM, Wednesday 9:00 AM-3:00 PM and Thursday by appointment. Keep in mind all church doors are locked.

Small meetings may be possible in person with masks.

Please feel free to contact her by email at plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org or on her work cell phone number at 336-485-5618 to set up a meeting.

The Rev. Sara M. Holland, Pastor	plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org
David Williams, Director of Music	musicdirector@uccplymouth.org
Ashley Rose, Organist/Pianist	organist@uccplymouth.org
Gale Adams-Davis, Co-Director of Faith Formation	windygla2@yahoo.com
Julie Kelsey, Co-Director of Faith Formation	faithformation@uccplymouth.org
Larry Spencer, Treasurer	treasurer@uccplymouth.org

Liturgist: Carol Stewart

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Celebrating Birthdays in April and May in our Community:

April 1	Wayne Martin
April 5	Sue Switaj
April 12	Benjamin Adams
April 17	Sabrina Tedeschi
April 25	Michael Carrier
April 28	Kurt Maiser Anderson
May 1	Weston Hyde, Kristi Zwald
May 2	Jim Preston
May 4	Jessica Berman
May 5	Richard Caron
May 9	Troy Tedeschi
May 13	Micaela Brand
May 20	Robbin Adams
May 22	Tessa Nicole Kelsey
May 23	Elizabeth Fallon
May 24	Kevan Steiner
May 29	Paul Brand

If you have a birthday or anniversary in either of these two months that you would like listed please email us at office@uccplymouth.org