

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Second Sunday in Lent



Hagar, by Jacqueline Gad

February 25, 2024

9:30 am

We Practice Just Peace: doing justice, seeking peace
We are Open and Affirming: welcoming LGBTQ+ people
) We Listen for the Still Speaking God
We are striving to be an Anti-Racism church
Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

Please inquire with people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.

GATHERING

Prelude

Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Paul Manz

Welcome & Announcements

Please sign the red friendship pad as it is passed to you and return it to the center aisle noting your neighbor in the pew. You may leave your email if you would like to receive our weekly newsletter.

If you want to know more, email the office at office@uccplymouth.org.

Sunday School for all ages begins after the Message for All Ages on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays.

Children are welcome to fill a bag with books and toys, which are in the narthex, to use during worship.

Introit

When in the Hour of Deepest Need

Henry V. Gerike

*Those who are able may stand.

***Call to Worship** *based on Psalm 22*

Liturgist – Alison Thatcher

Call: You who stand in awe of God, shout praises!

Response: Praise God!

Call: For God does not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted;
God does not hide from us, but hears us when we cry out.

Response: Praise God!

Those who are hungry will eat and be satisfied;

Those who are rejected will find new homes.

Those who are suffering will know the healing power of love.

Call: Remember-- and turn to God in worship and in service.

Response: Praise God!

Future generations will be told about the Holy Spirit

who empowers human hearts;

and about Jesus the Christ – Teacher, Healer, Savior –

who is always with us.

***Hymn**

“We Worship You, God”

NCH(black) #26

Verses 1,3,4,5

***Passing of the Peace**

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Unison Gathering Prayer

O God, we still our hearts, so that we may hear you speaking to us today.
Free our hearts and our minds from distractions, worries, and burdens.
We open ourselves to your Spirit, for we yearn to know you more deeply,
to feel your love stirring within us and filling us with a renewed vision.
Our songs, our words, our actions are for you and your Creation.
Guide us, gracious God, as we worship you this morning. Amen.

Prayer of Reconciliation, with moments for personal confession

God's Promise of New Life

One: God of grace, guide us to speak and behave in ways that model
your boldness and your love.

All: **Temper our anger and envy, our grudges and rash judgments;
remind us to think carefully before speaking;
deepen our understanding of our own actions and the actions of
others.**

Inspire us, we pray, that we might deal peaceably
with those from whom we are divided.

May we embody your bold and tender love. Amen.

Sung Response What Wondrous Love Is This NCH(black) #223

What wondrous love is this, O my soul! O my soul!

What wondrous love is this, O my soul!

**What wondrous love is this! That Christ should come in bliss
to bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the heavy cross for my soul!**

Word for All Ages

Congregational Response Go, My Children, with My Blessing NCH (black) #82

**Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone; Waking, sleeping, I am
with you, you are my own; In my love's baptismal river I have made you
mine forever, Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.**

HEARING THE WORD

Scripture Readings Mark 8:31-36
Genesis 21:8-21
Romans 5:1-5

One: May God bless to our understanding these words of Holy Scripture.

All: Amen

Message "The Dilemma of Division" Rev. Ruth Martz

***Hymn** "Be Still My Soul" NCH(black) #488

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Invitation to Offering

Offertory Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart Mark Bender

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.**

***Unison Offertory Prayer**

Ever-watching God, we offer our gratitude for your gifts,
the daily gifts of life and breath and loving relationships.
All we have comes from you; your abundant grace astounds us!
With these offerings, we say "yes" to your never-ending compassion;
we offer ourselves to your service by caring for those who are ill or
grieving,
reaching out to those who are in need of resources and friendship.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Pastor: O God, in your grace and mercy . . .

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer of Our Savior (debts)

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.

**We believe that God is revealed in persons of all genders and sorts; we also honor tradition.

Sung Response: “Amen” NCH (black) #161
Congregational/choir line only

SENDING

***Hymn** “For the Healing of the Nations” NCH (black) #576

*Pastoral Benediction

Choral Benediction Out of the Depths I Cry Linda Cable Shute

Postlude Epilogue Raymond Haan

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.
Feel free to let the music lead you out, or stay to listen, however the Spirit moves you.

Please join us downstairs after worship for coffee, food, and fellowship.
Coffee Hour today is hosted by the Finance and Building & Grounds Committees.

***Hagar*, by Jacqueline Gad, an Egyptian artist**

Most of the pictures of Hagar in Western art tend to emphasize Hagar as victim. This picture is inspired partly by an 1875 sculpture by Edmonia Lewis. Ms. Gad portrays Hagar as a woman of courage and resolve who is looking forward... Is this where Hagar is encountering God, in front of her? Or is she emboldened by her encounter with God, and now ready to go on, knowing that she and God have seen each other? God is not only the God of Abraham and Sarah, but also the God who notices and cares for Hagar, a slave who names God: “The God Who Sees Me!” (Genesis 16:13)

Another picture by an Australian indigenous artist, Joanne Baker, shows Hagar and Jesus sitting by the well of water that God has provided. In desert cultures, water holes are a source of life, and also a meeting place. Before the biblical theme of men meeting brides at a water well, Hagar tells us of an older story, of God encountering a woman in need and

offering life-giving water, a story which is re-enacted by millions of Muslims every year in the Hajj; and a story which stretches forward to John 4, with Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

Keeping in Prayer:

Prayers for the family and friends of William Yeats, close friend of Rob and Carol Stewart, who left this life on February 18th, 2024. Bill was the Music Director of Swarthmore Presbyterian Church for over 40 years.

Prayers for Georgene Fabian as she recovers from a fall

Prayers for the people of Ukraine

Prayers for Eleanor Spencer's brother, Ron Ury

Prayers for Rebecca Herr

Prayers for Sarah Dreshaj as she recovers from a skiing accident

Prayers for Ruth Mosher as she awaits a kidney transplant

Prayers for Hanna and Peter Starck

Prayers for Alice Carey, friend of Alice O'Connor, who will be undergoing radiation therapy

Prayers for Kristin, friend of Alice O'Connor, who has recently been diagnosed with cancer

Prayers for Paulette Brace's son, Shawn Cassington, for ongoing medical issues

Prayers for Sage Pirnie and her family, granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie

Prayers for Ellen who struggles with cancer, family member of Ruth & Dale Mosher

Prayers of healing for Sue Switaj

Prayers for our partner church in Zimbabwe, Masvingo UCCZ

If you have a prayer request, please write on the yellow card in the pews and place it in the offering tray, or send an email to plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org

This Week and More at PCUCC

Monday, February 26	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Tuesday, February 27	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Wednesday, February 28	11:00 am Lectio Divina (Lenten Book Study)
Thursday, February 29	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, March 1	8:00 pm AA Meeting
Sunday, March 3	11:30 am Potluck and Presentation from the Immigration & Refugee Support Group (IRSG)
Monday, March 4	10:00 am Book Group
Sunday, March 10	Coffee Hour Board Games! Following worship

CHURCH LIFE

Preaching Schedule:

February 25	Rev. Ruth Martz	March 24	Rev. Rebecca Larson
March 3	Marcia Morris	March 31 (Easter)	Rev. Ruth Martz
March 10	Alison Thatcher	April 7	Rev. Gordon Rankin
March 17	Rev. Ruth Martz		

Deliver a meal to Georgene! As Georgene Fabian recovers from her fall, we have the opportunity to bring her some yummy meals. Please contact the office (office@uccplymouth.org or 603-536-2626) to schedule delivering a WHEAT-FREE meal on Feb 26, Feb 28, March 1, or March 3.

Lenten Book Study Wednesdays at 11am: The Wednesday Morning Bible study group will be reading “The Last Week: What the gospels Really Teach About Jesus’s Final Days in Jerusalem” by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. We’ll read a chapter a week during Lent beginning Feb. 14th. All are welcome to join in, or you might consider reading this book as your own Lenten devotional.

Book Group is reading The Chancellor: The Remarkable Odyssey of Angela Merkel by Kati Marton. Join the discussion on March 4 and March 18 at 10am in the parlor. Contact Kathy Henning for more information: henkat52@gmail.com.

Potluck and Presentation from the IRSG Sunday, March 3: Please bring a dish to share and join us for a presentation by members from the IRSG of the NH Conference UCC. They will tell us about how they help folks here in New Hampshire and we can help their efforts.

Coffee Hour and Board Games, Sunday, March 10 Faith Formation is hosting a coffee hour and board game event during coffee hour on Sunday March 10th. During the next few weeks, please sign up to bring a board game for March 10th. We hope this will be a fun-filled intergenerational event. Please join us!

Spring Plant Sale Upcoming in May: Calling all green thumbs! We're looking for donations of a variety of indoor and outdoor plants AND veggies plus pots to use for the sale. More information coming soon! Please reach out to Jenny Thibeault at ThibeaultJennyR@gmail.com or 603-254-7824 if you have any questions.

UCC New Hampshire Women! Please save the date of Sat. April 20, when our church will serve as host for the NHCUCC Women’s Fellowship Spring Meeting. Ruth Martz will lead Opening Worship, Becky Field will be the morning speaker about NH Immigrants, our Kitchen Team will generously provide abundant food (breakfast/lunch)—and the afternoon program is still in the works. Stay tuned for more details and registration. If anyone is willing to serve as greeter at 9:30 a.m., read Scripture and/or help with Communion, please contact Ruth.

FROM MISSION & OUTREACH

Habitat Lunch Update: PLEASE SIGN UP on the sheet in Fellowship Hall to bring a hot lunch to the 6-10 workers at the Habitat for Humanity House at 61 Pleasant St. in Plymouth. These workers, along with Dale Mosher, REALLY appreciate the home-made food! Warmest thanks to the church members who have brought lunches. Suggestions: pasta, chili, chicken pot pie, stews, soups. Additions such as bread/fruit/ dessert are optional. Some paper goods and plastic ware are on site; please check in with Ruth for details: ruthm.joy@gmail.com or 603-630-7936.

FROM FINANCE

Support PCUCC with no cost to you! Purchase a **Hannaford Gift Card** in the amount of \$100, \$250, or \$500 by contacting Linda LaPrad or Ann Thurston. For every card purchased from the Finance Committee, the church receives 5% with no additional cost to you.

We will offer the option of meeting digitally indefinitely. You may also catch our services (one week delayed) on Sunday nights on PBTv at 7:00 pm. (Local channel 1302.) Please check Constant Contact and the Facebook page for ongoing updates.

Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00-2:00

If you have a family emergency and want to talk with a pastor, please call Rev. Ruth Martz at 603-630-7936 or you may call Eileen Torrey at 603-252-7513.

Alison Thatcher, Office Administrator

office@uccplymouth.org

David A. Williams, Director of Music

musicdirector@uccplymouth.org

Jennifer Byam, Director of Faith Formation

faithformation@uccplymouth.org

Ann Thurston, Treasurer

treasurer@uccplymouth.org

Guest Preacher: Rev. Ruth Martz

Guest Accompanist: Dan Perkins

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
4 Post Office Square, P.O. Box 86 Plymouth, NH 03264

(603) 536-2626 - office@uccplymouth.org - www.uccplymouth.org

Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in February in our Community

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to: office@uccplymouth.org

Janet Taylor	February 2	Maris Thatcher-Forgues	February 11
Ken Howe	February 11	Beverly Tedeschi	February 26
Chris Pollock	February 11	Robert Pollock Jr.	February 28

