Tamir Rasheed Recipient of 2013 Amistad Award

On March 3, the 2013 Amistad Peace and Justice Award was given to J. Tamir Rasheed, the Imam of the Islamic Center of Fort Wayne. Rasheed has been the major leader in spreading the word of the peace of Islam, the Islamic faith, and the rich history of Islam to the wider Fort Wayne and Allen County community.

After September 11, 2001, this need to understand Islam and respect the people who follow that faith become of utmost importance to the maintenance of justice and peace in our community.

Before and since September 11, Imam Rasheed’s commitment has been tireless in speaking at forty or more churches, to community groups, and at schools and universities, to help people understand the Muslim people and their faith of Islam. In 2001, Mayor Graham Richard invited Rasheed to the first Mayor's Commission for Interfaith Understanding. Rasheed participated in joint Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogues and bilateral dialogues about faith.

Rasheed was featured, along with Rev. Terry Anderson, Rabbi Marla Spanjer, and Dr. Michael Spath, on the two-year long, cable-access show, “Faith to Faith,” that dealt with issues of concern to the three Abrahamic faith traditions. He has preached at the Interfaith Thanksgiving service, participated in Martin Luther King, Jr. services, was integral in planning each of the four Interfaith Prayer for Human Rights services, and is a regular participant and leader in CONFLUENCE: Northeast Indiana Interfaith Alliance. In addition to interpreting the faith of Islam to the wider Fort Wayne community, Tamir has been an unflagging partner in interpreting American Christianity and culture to many immigrants within his own Islamic congregation and the wider Allen County immigrant community. Currently, along with other leaders, he is in conversation with Mayor Henry in planning an interfaith "Prayer for the City" this Spring.

Imam Rasheed’s leadership and persistent, continued effort to assist people living in the greater Fort Wayne area to understand Islam, to find tolerance in religious and cultural differences, and to realize and respect that peace and justice work is found in all faith communities, makes him an outstanding recipient of the second Amistad Peace and Justice Award.

To see how this event made international news, check out: http://www.onislam.net/english/news/americas/461597-indiana-church-honors-muslim-imam.html
In Our Prayers

Plymouth people in our prayers:

New Life is welcomed in the birth of Kimberly Ann Dunahue, February 22, in Fairfax, Virginia. She joins her parents Ryan and Susan, and big sister Katelyn. Proud grandma is Judy Dunahue.

Sympathy is extended to Mark Friskney and A.J. Calkins on the death of Mark’s mother, Margery Friskney, February 29.

Sympathy is extended to Rev. Marv Wiseman on the death of his wife, Shirley Wiseman, on March 10. Marv is pastor of Temple Congregational Church, UCC, Marion, Indiana.

Sympathy is extended to Mark Glassley and Carl Hasty on the death of Mark’s father, Phil Glassley, March 15, in Columbia City.

Good Friday Prayer Vigil

One person is needed for each of the 15-minute intervals to form the continuous link of prayer from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside the chapel. You need your phone to receive a call when your prayer time begins and to place a call at the conclusion of your prayer time. A deacon will call you with the name of the person calling you and the name and phone number of the person you are to call.

April Chapel Classes

April 7: Terry Springer: Subject to be announced
April 21: Laura Kinner and Christine Leggett: Environmental Stewardship Committee's update of Plymouth’s "Mission 4/1 Earth: 50 Great Days"
April 28: Laura Kinner: "Heart to Heart: Don't be ruled by your present mood, instead let your heart be ruled by Scripture"

Annual Hygiene Kits Project

Deadline for donating completed Church World Service Hygiene Kits is Sunday, April 14. If you wish, monetary donations also are accepted as the Deacons Worship Board needs to cover shipping each kit to its destination at $2.00 per kit. The value of each hygiene kit is approximately $11.

Each completed kit contains all new items:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 16x28" (no fingertip or bath towels)
- One washcloth
- One nail clipper
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- Six standard size Band-Aids®
- *One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- One wide-tooth comb

Please place all items in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure, remove excess air from bag, and seal. Last year, Plymouth completed 97 Hygiene Kits and collected $85.00 in donations.

*Please do not add toothpaste to the Hygiene Kit. Cartons of toothpaste that have an extended expiration date are added to kits by CWS just prior to shipment.

Plymouth Recognized As A Global Mission Church

In the summer of 2009, the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) passed resolutions at our Disciples General Assembly and UCC General Synod affirming our two denominations’ commitment to be a Global Mission Church. Just recently, notice was received of official recognition that Plymouth is now a Global Mission Church. As such, Plymouth has over 270 partner churches and organizations in about 70 countries around the world.

A Global Mission Church is one that understands itself to be inter-related with the whole of God’s creation across all physical and human-made barriers, and seeks to timely and appropriately meet God’s people and creation at the point of deepest need. Mission, as defined by Carlos Cardoza-Orlandi in his book, “Mission: An Essential Guide,” is the participation of the people of God in God’s action in the world."
Friends,

On Sunday, March 3, the Plymouth Church’s 2013 Amistad Peace and Justice Award was presented to J. Tamir Rasheed, Imam of the Islamic Center of Fort Wayne. The award, presented by Lucy Hess on behalf of Plymouth’s Peace and Justice Committee, was given in recognition of Tamir’s involvement and dedication in helping Fort Wayne area residents understand the teaching and practice of Islam. In receiving the award, Tamir expressed deep appreciation.

“It has touched the innermost portion of my heart,” he said.

Kevin Kilbane, a journalist with Fort Wayne’s News-Sentinel, wrote an excellent article on the Amistad Award under the headline: Plymouth Church Honors Local Muslim Leader with Peace and Justice Award. Within a day, Kevin’s article was picked by a website in Cairo, Egypt. There the headline read: Indiana Church Honors Muslim Imam. Cairo is said to have a population exceeding 17 million people. Egypt, the third most populous nation in Africa, has over 80 million inhabitants. Chances are good that more Egyptians read about our Amistad award than people in Allen County, Indiana, population 360,000.

News of the Amistad award later reached Cleveland, Ohio, where the United Church of Christ is headquartered, and during the week of March 12, a report was included in the UCC’s weekly email alert. A parishioner from First Congregational Church, UCC, Riverside, California, read about us and took the time to write us a note, saying: “Thank you for the fine ecumenical work you are doing…”

Honestly, it never occurred to me that our local action would merit wide attention. Yet, our goodwill gesture has rippled from Cairo, to Cleveland, to California! It is a reminder: every action, every faith practice, can have unexpected and far-reaching impact. God can always make more of what we make available.

In worship this Lent, we’ve been singing the hymn, “We Plant a Grain of Mustard Seed” (NCH, No. 540). A verse proclaims: “Our actions, more than words, define, how love’s example feeds, a greater love, for love divine bursts forth from smallest seeds.” The smallest of seeds, I’m learning, have great variety. They are planted within a kind word, a gentle touch, a good deed, a listening ear, an urgent prayer. They are planted whenever we affirm the Jesus pursuit of justice and peace. What glory resides in simple deed and greater love!

I’m grateful to the Peace and Justice Committee members of Plymouth Church: Betty and Bill Deans, Ned Edington, Jan Evard, Lucy Hess, Tony Kell, Laura Kinner, Mary Anne Roach, Carol Patterson, Laura Shoun, Rick Stoerker, and Erin Williams, for the effort they have poured forth on our behalf. The Amistad Award is a small seed in the large scheme of gospel ministry we share. Lo and behold, this year it blossomed in an unforeseen way, illustrating the good that comes by way of interfaith understanding and respect.

May God be praised! May God be pleased!

Sincerely,
John P. Gardner

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From the Senior Pastor

Dear Pastor John and Plymouth Congregational Church,

Our sincere thanks for providing us such a welcoming space, custodial help, and your affirming presence for our March 10th Journey of Hope event.

We felt the message heard, at this event, was very moving and meaningful for those of us attending.

May God bless your continuing ministry in our community and beyond.

Peace and blessings,

Ann Frellick, For the Peace and Justice Commission of Allen County

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Thank You to Plymouth
Women’s Breakfast

The Women’s Breakfast Club meets the first Wednesday of the month. The next meeting is April 3, 8:30 am. Join us for breakfast and conversation at the Atz Ice Cream Shop on North Anthony.

Volunteer Opportunities Available with IHN

The Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) signup sheet is up and ready for people to select their day and way to contribute in supporting homeless families in Fort Wayne during the week of April 7-13.

Sign up to bring part of a meal, read books to children, or help serve dinner and meet the guests at IHN. Questions can be directed to Laura Rudolph, (485-2285), rudymw@yahoo.com; or to Diana Swayze, (744-3023) or d.swayze@hotmail.com.

Knit & Kibitz

Knit and Kibitz will meet on Thursday, April 4, 6:30 pm, at Laura Rudolph’s home. Please bring your finished products, if you have any, and show us what you are working on, as it may give other people some idea of what is being produced for our sale at the end of the year.

New people are always welcome! If you don't know how to knit or crochet, or need help with either skill, there are always people present who can either teach you or help you with something that's giving you trouble. No matter where you are on life's spinning wheel, you are welcome at Knit & Kibitz!

Remember that Reed Road, North of Stellhorn, is closed now, and may still be closed April 4. The best way to reach Laura's house is to go South on Reed Road from St. Joe Center road. If you have questions about the road closing, contact Riet Zwiep, (485-1676) or janandrietzwiep@frontier.com.

April Amazing Grays

The Amazing Grays announce a presentation by the Northeast Indiana Friends of Public Education (NEIFPE), at their meeting, Sunday, April 14.

Are you interested in learning more about what is happening to public education in Indiana? Would you like to know why issues such as charters, vouchers, and high-stakes testing have become so contentious?

If you would like an explanation of these and other topics facing our schools, our teachers, our children, and our grandchildren, please plan to come to this informative presentation, immediately following the luncheon prepared by Rhonda Eitsert.

Please sign up for the luncheon/presentation on the church bulletin board or call the church office by April 12.
Mothers of Young Children (MOYC) Schedule

Welcoming Group
For those of you who want to explore membership in Plymouth Church, you are invited to a Welcoming Group, Sunday, April 21, 11:30 am to 2:30 pm, in the Amistad Room.

A light lunch will be provided, as we share our individual stories of faith journeys, families, and life experiences. Welcoming Group is led by Rev. Ruth E. Phillips. Call 423-9424 ext. 322, or email rep@plymouthfw.org to confirm that you plan to participate in this gathering. New members from this group will be received during worship April 28.

Save the Date for Café Plymouth
Save the date for a delightful meal at Café Plymouth 2013, Saturday, April 27, 6:00 pm.

The meal will be prepared by Chef Rhonda Eitsert and our Senior High Youth! For your dining pleasure, you will be able to choose from a large table with friends in the Folsom Room, or an intimate table-for-two in our romantic, lighted Atrium on the second floor.

All proceeds will benefit the Youth Fund to help cover costs for this summer’s mission trip. Watch for more details soon!

Elevator In Need of Financial Lift
Although it is working now, the elevator/lift is not practical to repair again. We must install a new one. We are working with an engineering firm to draw plans and get bids for the project. We need a working elevator because we are a church that is open and welcoming to all people, including those who can't navigate stairs. It is also necessary to help move Boar’s Head paraphernalia and other items between floors.

The cost for a new elevator is about $125,000. We have a generous donor who has pledged $40,000, and the Property Board has committed $45,000 from their funds. We still need $40,000 from the rest of our congregation. Please help in any way you can. Please send your donation or pledge to our Financial Administrator Kenneth Athon (financial@plymouthfw.org).

Spring Cleaning — For Plymouth’s Archives
Cleaning out closets and drawers during the dreary winter days? If you find any records pertaining to Plymouth Church, which are no longer of use to you, please attach a note explaining their significance and drop them off at the church office. Clerk Barbara Bugg and Archivist Dave Cornwell will gladly review them to make sure they are included in existing church documents.

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<td>Saturday</td>
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A Tribute to Jewish Composers from Tin Pan Alley to Broadway
On Sunday, April 28, 2:00 pm, in the Sanctuary, world-renowned, veteran operatic-tenor Steven Haas will be the guest artist in a special concert that pays tribute to the great Jewish composers from Tin Pan Alley to Broadway. This concert is part of a weekend-long collaboration between Plymouth Congregational Church’s Music Series, Temple Achduth Vesholom, and the Dr. Harry W. Salon Foundation.

Steven Haas will be joined by singers, Richelle Bock and Betsy Hart, two dynamic performers from Northeast Indiana. Narrator Janice Furtner, and pianists Robert Nance and Alexander Klepach, round out the team of performers for this fantastic journey through the music of composers such as Berlin, Gershwin, Hamlish, Hammerstein II, Harris, Hart, Herman, Rodgers, Sondheim, and Von Tilzer.

Come to enjoy the music that has become an integral part of the American musical experience!

Note: Steven Haas is the Cantor at Temple Beth Sholom in Miami, Florida. He is related to Robert Nance, whose second cousin, Nina, is Steven’s wife. Steven’s last performance in Fort Wayne was in 1990, with Robert Nance at the piano.

The Tin Pan Alley Era
NYC: Broadway and 28th St. – named for the tiny sounding pianos that were always playing
ESC Spotlights
Plymouth Boards

Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) talked with members of each Plymouth Board to identify ways in which they were able to incorporate environmental stewardship into their work.

What a great response we received! Across the board (yes, that was an intended pun), most boards are now communicating electronically; several boards make efforts to reduce the number copies made, and others print on both sides of the paper.

For anyone active on Plymouth boards or committees ten years ago, you will appreciate that this is indeed a paper savings! Each board described efforts they have made that were specific to their work.

ESC will be spotlighting a different board in future Bells to share these environmental accomplishments. Hopefully, this information will inspire us to seek other ways we can keep Plymouth an environmentally friendly (eco-friendly) church.

Food Containers Needed

A large storage bin has been placed in the pantry in the church kitchen to store reusable food-storage containers. It is clearly labeled with a sign that reads:

**TAKE HOME CONTAINERS:**
**BORROW ONE,**
**RETURN IT,**
**DONATE ONE.**

So please do just that when you need a take home container. It is asked that any donated storage containers be clean, in serviceable condition, and have lids that seal well.

This effort to help Plymouth be good stewards of our environment is sponsored by the Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC).

Friends of the Environment Needed

Do you consider yourself an environmentalist, tree hugger, or earth lover? Do you see yourself as “green,” or ecologically sound? Do you have a little time, a few good ideas, and a big interest in helping Plymouth’s Environmental Stewardship Committee? If the answer is yes to any of the above, we need you! The Environmental Stewardship Committee is looking for new members to join us as we work to care for God’s creation. Regular meetings are **4:30 pm, the third Tuesdays** of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Please contact Sandy Moliere (485-98620), or Laura Rudolph (485-2285), if you want more information or are ready to join our group.

As our earth returns to the green of springtime, the Environmental Stewardship Committee invites you to turn “green” as well! You can do this by participating in UCC’s *Mission 4/1 Earth: 50 Great Days.*

If you miss the March 24 lunch and orientation, you can still learn all about *Mission 4/1 Earth* by visiting [ucc.org/earth](http://ucc.org/earth), by viewing our bulletin board in the Folsom Room, or by attending one of the fun and informative sessions held at **7:00 pm each Wednesday in April.**

Beginning **April 1,** remember to record your hours on the time cards in the pews and place in the offering plate each week. Join us, as we green up, power down, and shout out for the environment!
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<td>Office Closed</td>
<td>10:30a Staff Meeting</td>
<td>NO WNL</td>
<td>6:30p Knit &amp; Kibitz at Rudolph home</td>
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<td></td>
<td>50 Great Days begins</td>
<td>11:45a Women's Book Study</td>
<td>No Study Connection</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5:45p Yoga</td>
<td>6:00p Executive Council</td>
<td>8:30a Retired Men's Breakfast</td>
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<td>6:00p Sophie's Café</td>
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<td>Share Your Shopping</td>
<td>Office Closed</td>
<td>Staff Meeting</td>
<td>WNL Bell deadline</td>
<td>Mothers of Young Children (MOYC)</td>
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<td>8:00a Chapel Communion</td>
<td>5:45p Yoga</td>
<td>11:30a Staff Meeting</td>
<td>2:15p Moderators</td>
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<td>Boar's Head Costume Work</td>
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<td>8:30a Hospitality</td>
<td>6:00p Sophie's Café</td>
<td>10:45p Benevolence</td>
<td>3:30p Study Connection</td>
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<td>9:00a Christian Education</td>
<td>4:45p PFLAG</td>
<td>5:15p Bible Study</td>
<td>5:30p Child. Choir Dinner</td>
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<td>10:00a Worship &amp; Communion</td>
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<td>6:00p Board meetings</td>
<td>5:30p Child. Choir</td>
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<td>11:30a Youth Group</td>
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<td>6:30p Child. Choir Bell Choir</td>
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<td>7:00p We the Living</td>
<td>7:15p Sanc. Singers</td>
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<td>Integrity of Creation Sunday</td>
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<td>WNL Bell deadline</td>
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<td>EARTH DAY</td>
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<td>11:30a Knife &amp; Fork @ Sara’s</td>
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<td>Hess Scholarship</td>
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<td>Applications due</td>
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GREEN TIPS

If you use a dishwasher, **turn off the dry cycle**. Doing this saves lots of energy, and all you have to do is give items a quick dry with a washable dish-towel as you put them away.

Looking for our email addresses?

- **Church General Office and Newsletter**
  office@plymouthfw.org
- **Senior Pastor and Teacher**
  jpg@plymouthfw.org
- **Associate Pastor**
  rep@plymouthfw.org
- **Associate in Pastoral Care**
  c2cfwayne@gmail.com
- **Music Director**
  robert@maestronance.com
- **Youth Director**
  kkjaurigue@frontier.com
- **Office Manager**
  lme@plymouthfw.org
- **Church Secretary**
  sls@plymouthfw.org
- **Financial Administrator**
  financial@plymouthfw.org
- **Custodian**
  maintenance@plymouthfw.org

**Vision Statement**

*Adopted October 2011*

Praying for guidance for the journey
… Honoring the mystery of God
… Responding with spirits renewed
… Moving courageously toward wholeness.

**Mission Statement**

*Adopted October 2011*

Plymouth Church is an inclusive Christian Community welcoming you as you are, supporting you in your own Journey with God, and challenging you to live out the teachings of Jesus, individually, collectively, globally.