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BELL

Dear Plymouth,

It was in May of 2014 that I was invited to Boston to attend a “Day of Dialogue” on Pastoral Transitions sponsored by the UCC Pension Boards. The featured speaker for the occasion was Susan Beaumont, a well respected church consultant, formerly of the Alban Institute, who presented a paper on “Senior Minister Transitions.” I recall Susan saying that some churches definitely need a traditional interim period between ministers, but not all churches do. She further noted that for some congregations, an extended interim period can be counterproductive, deflating of church momentum.

A second presenter was Bill McKinney, a UCC minister (and former seminary president) who offered two case studies of large church transitions that had occurred in the UCC. The first church cited by McKinney was First-Plymouth Church in Lincoln, Nebraska; the second was Plymouth Church, UCC, in Des Moines, Iowa. McKinney’s case studies quickly signaled that the transitions modeled by the Lincoln and Des Moines congregations were not going to be helpful to Plymouth Church, Fort Wayne!

I mention this simply to observe that the leadership of Plymouth Church – from the Moderators to the Pastoral Search Task Force, to the Personnel Board to the Stewardship & Finance Board - has adeptly managed a process for pastoral change in a responsible and effective manner, minimizing any disruption to the church’s ministry. This is a huge accomplishment, especially given that transition times are fraught with perils. As a church, we have been most fortunate. I can’t help but say, **“Thank God!”**

When I submitted my resignation to the church last summer, my departure date seemed a long way off. It doesn’t seem like that any longer. I confess, at times I find myself a little overwhelmed at the thought of the transition we are experiencing together. There’s a formidable list of things to do between now and August. I find some comfort in the old adage, “take one day at a time.” And I find yet more comfort in the verse of a hymn I favor:

**I was there to hear your borning cry,
I’ll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
To see your life unfold.
When the evening gently closes in
And you shut your weary eyes.
I’ll be there as I have always been
With just one more surprise.
(“I Was There,” NCH, No. 351)**

We worship and serve a God full of surprise, a God who supplies all we need for gospel adventure that embodies the love of Jesus Christ. As we continue our transition time over the coming weeks, I expect more surprises will be in store for Plymouth Church. In my estimate, the years we have shared together have been good. But faith never works in the past; faith always calls us forward. We live in hope that lies in God’s unfolding surprise; in trust the best is yet to be.

Sincerely,
John P. Gardner

SUMMER PREACHING SCHEDULE!

June 3 - Rev. Ruth E. Phillips
 June 10 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 June 17 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 June 24 - Eric Black, Licensed Minister

July 1 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 July 8 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 July 15 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 July 22 - Rev. Ruth E. Phillips
 July 29 - Allen Haynes, Licensed Minister

August 5 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 August 12 - Rev. John P. Gardner
 August 19 - Rev. Timothy C. Murphy
 August 26 - Rev. Timothy C. Murphy

SMILE for the NEW Pictorial Directory of 2018!

“Sign-Up Sundays” are May 20 and 27 in the Folsom Room, before and after worship.

Photo sitting appointments of ten minutes each will be offered Sundays on June 3, 10, 17, 24, and July 1, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Some selected Tuesday and Thursday times, late afternoon, may be available.

Plymouth’s own professional photographer John Escosa, is offering his time and talent to take photos of Plymouth members and friends. Congregational Life Board, Monty Millage, chair, is sponsoring the pictorial directory project. A \$10.00 donation is requested at time of scheduling your photo session. This will be used to offset the cost of printing. Volunteer David Childs will do all formatting and preparing of the directory to go to printing. Finished product will be available for distribution the week of October 21–28.

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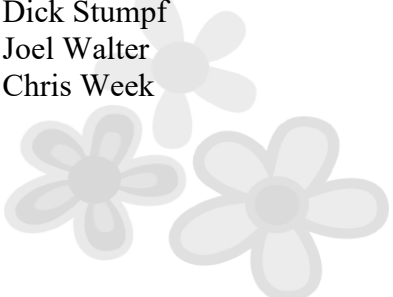
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John Silcox	06/01
Amanda Minchski	06/03
Nathan Siples	06/03
Sally Felger	06/04
Joanne Huber	06/04
Susan Jarvis	06/04
Curt Smith	06/04
Cassidy Bradley	06/05
Bryce Western	06/05
Caleb Hollingsworth	06/06
Julie Davidson	06/07
Rick Schilb	06/08
Jonah Silcox	06/08
Tim Chronister	06/09
Elizabeth Carter	06/10
Marty Kabisch	06/10
Dick Stumpf	06/10
Kris Conner	06/11
Lois Teders-Horn	06/11
Dwight James	06/12
Mariellen Beitman	06/13
Spencer Jordan	06/14
Evan Alan Miller	06/14
Pamela Pfrang	06/14
Donna Riethmiller	06/14
Chris Colclessner	06/15
Laura Filler	06/15
Karen Holdeman	06/15
Melody Sutter	06/15
A’Qaun Graff	06/18
Megan Degitz	06/19
Jim Gilliom	06/19
David Weber	06/19
Kirby Volz	06/20
Chance Hackett	06/21
Courtney Davies	06/22
Michele Dollarhite	06/22
Steven Price	06/23
Cammy Sutter	06/23
Laura Ramsey	06/24
Diana Bauer	06/25
Edward Eberhardt	06/25
Ranelle Melton	06/25
Gordon Walter	06/25
Jan Modesitt	06/26
Phil Slane	06/26
Virginia Nance	06/27
Harriet Siples	06/27
Millie Dove	06/28
Jeannette Kent	06/28
Beth Lauer	06/28
Kyra Mendenhall	06/28
Jon Allmandinger	06/30
James Arata	06/30
Roberta Braunlin	06/30
Joann McDonald	06/30

During the month of June, we pray for SCAN, Inc., the Center for Non-Violence, whose work is supported, in part, through Plymouth benevolence.

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

A.J.Calkins,
Audrea Carter
David Cornwell
Marge Cornwell
Brad Crowder
Elaine Drummond
Gail Escosa
Marcia Federspiel
Paul Furtner
Heather Gamble
Joan Hartwig
Susan Jarvis
Jeannette Kent
Bernice Koutcher
Cheryl Leugring
Joan Lipscomb
Gerald Lockwood
Sheldon Lockwood
Mary McCoy
Kerry Mills
Jan Modesitt
Carol Patterson
Noel Resor
Jody (Meredith) Roemer
Jacqueline Sanders
John Shannon
Sheryl Stallman
Jim Stedman
Dick Stumpf
Joel Walter
Chris Week



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SAYING GOODBYE, FACING CHANGE

Recently we called the Reverend Dr. Timothy C. Murphy to serve as our Senior Pastor and Teacher. He accepted, so he and his wife Candace will spend the next few months relocating to Fort Wayne. They will be dealing with the sadness of goodbyes and the anxiety of beginning anew as Reverend Murphy begins his ministry here.

We also will be dealing with the sadness of goodbyes as the Reverend Dr. John P. Gardner moves closer to his last Sunday in our pulpit on August 12, and then the anxiety of beginning anew with Reverend Dr. Murphy in our pulpit on Sunday August 19.

The leadership of Plymouth Church has asked Betty Barry and Steve Hollingsworth to lead several gatherings where you will have the opportunity to voice your feelings of sadness and anxiousness as well as feelings of celebration and anticipation. The sessions will be held on Sunday June 3 (right after worship), Saturday June 16 at 10 AM and Wednesday evening June 20 at 6 PM. Please feel free to come to whichever one of these that fits your schedule. You do not have to sign up for a particular session, so you can make a last minute decision if that is what works out for you. The sessions will last as long as necessary to allow participants the opportunity to have their voice heard, we assume within a range of 60-90 minutes.

Reverend Ruth E. Phillips provided Betty and Steve two lists to use as material to format these sessions. The first list, which is titled "Say Goodbye to your Current Pastor in a Healthy Way," has 8 things for the congregation to do. Number 2 on this list says: "Acknowledge the change in public ways. Especially in the case of a much-beloved pastor, this allows the congregation better to let go and prepare to receive the new pastor wholeheartedly." The second list has 10 items and is titled: "Change? No Thanks, You Keep It!" Number 4 on this list is: "Change means loss. We leave behind old ways of thinking, doing reacting. Normally, people don't like loss!" Number 9 on this list is: "Talking through change helps us bounce our ideas around and hear how others have progressed through change."

There are many gifts Reverend Dr. Gardner will leave with us, one of which is a stable and dynamic congregation that practices a progressive ministry of love in the Fort Wayne community. Please do not harbor any feelings of sadness, anger, grief or anxiety you might be experiencing because of this change in our senior pastor and teacher; rather, come to one of these sessions to voice and share these feelings with fellow congregants. We will all benefit from the sharing.

...from YOUR MODERTOR



Sunday, April 29th was an exciting and historic day in the life of Plymouth Church. Our beautiful sanctuary was filled with members and friends participating in worship. We were led in worship by Rev. Ruth Phillips and our new senior minister candidate Rev. Timothy Murphy. The service included Rev. Dr. Murphy's candidating sermon and worship was followed by a Special Congregational Meeting. A vote was taken at this meeting regarding extending a call to Rev. Dr. Murphy. Of the 199 members who voted, 95% voted "YES" to extend a call to Timothy to serve as Plymouth's next Senior Pastor and Teacher. Timothy accepted our call and a covenant agreement was signed on that day. I believe most of us present in worship and the reception that followed the meeting were able to feel the excitement in the air on this day.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our Search Task Force for their dedicated service and excellent work since last fall. We would not be this far in the search and call process were it not for their efforts. We all owe them all a hearty Thank You!:

Linda Hite, Chair
Karen Goss, Recorder/Scribe
Tim Cunningham, Chaplain
Scott Avery
Allie Brown
Barbara Duch
Steve Etheridge
David Jolliff
Rhys Rudolph

It has been determined that Sunday, August 12th will be Rev. John Gardner's last Sunday to preach and lead worship at Plymouth. Rev. Chad Abbott, Designated Conference Minister from the Indiana/Kentucky Conference will join us on this special day. Please hold this date on your calendar. We will keep you informed as plans unfold for our celebration of John's ministry at Plymouth Church.

In the days/weeks/months ahead we will be preparing to say our goodbyes to Rev. John Gardner while at the same time preparing for Rev. Timothy Murphy's arrival and the beginning of his work with our Plymouth family. Please let Rick Schilb, Assistant Moderator, or me know if you have any questions or concerns we can help you address. Meanwhile, I would ask you all to hold Rev. John Gardner, Rev. Timothy Murphy and the entire Plymouth family in your prayers and meditations as we continue to work through this transitional time.

— Beth Walker

Please note:

The Youth Advisory Committee has moved the last Youth Gathering to Sunday, June 10. The end of the year party will be at the Grim's River Side Estates. More details to come!

Plymouth Green Team Task of the Month:

Each month, the Plymouth Green Team is suggesting a task to help you be a more Faithful steward of the Creation, while saving energy and money. Here's the task for May ...

Conserve Energy, Money, and Clothing

Wash clothes in cold water. Air dry your laundry in warm seasons.

Note: Of all major appliances, the electric clothes dryer uses the most electricity.

(Learn about the costs of washers, dryers, and other appliances at: <http://michaelbluejay.com/electricity/howmuch.html>)

Advanced: If you already air dry clothes in summer, do so year-round! Indoor drying spaces help add humidity to your home in winter months.

Tips for doing without a dryer:

- * Install a clothesline. One retractable line (less than \$30) can be enough.
- * Do laundry on sunny, breezy days. Hang clothes in the morning.
- * Using the dryer for a few minutes can help "fluff them up" so they dry without wrinkles. This is especially helpful with front-loader washers, which spin so fast that clothing is often pressed tightly together.
- * Hang shirts on plastic hangers, hung on your clothesline outside, on a shower bar, or on a closet rod installed in your laundry room.
- * Use folding racks to dry things indoors.
- * A retractable clothesline installed in the basement adds drying space when needed, but is easily moved out of sight when not in use.
- * Clothes last longer when not subjected to dryer heat.
- * Hang your laundry as soon as the wash cycle is done to keep them fresh. Also try adding a small amount of vinegar to the rinse cycle.
- * Some home owners' associations have rules against outdoor clotheslines. However, in many places these rules are not enforced.

What else you can do:

- * Reduce laundry volume by wearing some clothing more than once.
- * If you are in the market for a new washing machine, consider a front-loading model. They use far less water than top-loading models, and since they spin faster they extract more water, and your clothes dry more quickly, whether they are on the clothesline or in the dryer.

PLYMOUTH GENEROSITY SHINES!!!

\$638 was given by you, the congregation, on April 29 in response to the urgent appeal for adult diapers for the homebound elderly man and his adult son who live in the Wellspring Interfaith Social Services neighborhood. At least ten packages of the diapers were also donated! Thank you!

...from the Front Office...

Getting to know you has been such a highlight for me. Thank you all so much for the patience and kindness you are extending as I'm putting your delightful faces with your names. That grace is much appreciated and this moment would be amiss if I failed to mention it.

Here are some reminders from my desk to yours:

June and July are eBell months. The deadlines for those are:

June 13

June 27

July 11

July 25

You can email me your articles, tid-bits, and overall info for the good of the cause at EASenter@Plymouthfw.org.

If you want to be added to the eBell distribution list, please let me know! I'd love to do that for you!

Thanks again and again,
Erica



Indiana Center for Middle East Peace

Upcoming Programs at Plymouth!

THE BIBLE, JUSTICE, AND THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT

Rev. Naim Ateek

Plymouth Congregational Church UCC

Tuesday evening, May 22, 6:30pm

Indiana Center for Middle East Peace hosts Rev. Naim Ateek, Tuesday, May 22, 6:30pm, in the Folsom Room, 6:30pm. The topic of his presentation is the title of his new book, "*Palestinian Theology of Liberation: The Bible, Justice, and Israel-Palestine Conflict*." Naim Ateek is Palestine's foremost Christian theologian, former Canon of St. George's Anglican Cathedral, Jerusalem, and founder of *Sabeel Palestinian Liberation Theology Center*, Jerusalem. Naim is a survivor of the 1948 Nakba, the dispossession of 750,000 Palestinians from their homes and land. The event is free, open to the public, and funded, in part, with a grant by the Benevolence Committee of Plymouth Congregational Church.

US CHURCH SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN CALL FOR JUSTICE

Tarek Abuata

Plymouth Congregational Church UCC – Chapel

Tuesday morning, 9:45-11:15am

Tarek Abuata joins Dr. Michael Spath's Tuesday morning class in Plymouth's Chapel (9:45-11:15am) to discuss how to act in solidarity with Palestinian calls for justice in the United States. Tarek was born in Bethlehem, received a law degree from University of Texas, trained Palestinian youth in nonviolence (following the principles of Rev. Bernard LaFayette, a protégé of Martin Luther King, Jr.), led the *Christian Peacemaker Team*, Hebron, and is currently the Executive Director of *Friends of Sabeel North America*. (Funded, in part, with a grant by the Benevolence Committee of Plymouth Congregational Church. Everyone welcome. Free, open to the public.)

ALI PARIS

A Concert to Benefit the Children of Palestine

A fusion of jazz and Arabic music

Plymouth Congregational Church UCC – sanctuary

Friday evening, June 1, 6:30pm

TICKETS: \$20 (\$15 in advance); \$5/student; 12 and under free

indianacmep.org or Joan Coslow (260.424.2430, joancoslow@gmail.com)

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

Palestinian qanunist, international recording star, Ali Paris, returns to Fort Wayne to perform his unique blend of western classical, traditional Arab, and world-wide genres, including from India and the Middle East. He has performed with Quincy Jones, Alicia Keys and Bobby McFerrin. Funded, in part, with a grant from the *Indiana Arts Commission* grant from *Arts United*.

Every dollar raised will benefit Indiana Center for Middle East Peace partner ministries in Palestine (especially Bethlehem and Nablus), including art camps, peace camps, a kindergarten and family health clinic. Dr. Spath and other Plymouth members will deliver the support to these ministries during their September tour.

Richard C. Hess

Peace Studies Scholarship

The Peace and Justice Committee is happy to announce the recipient of the 2018-19 Peace Studies Scholarship.

David Grim, one of our licensed lay ministers, is the fourteenth recipient of a scholarship. This fall David continues work toward a Master's of Divinity from the Chicago Theological Seminary.

The committee is pleased to support David as he seeks to enhance justice and peace through his studies from the Seminary. As David has demonstrated, peace and justice work are his passion particularly as he explores with us the commitment to extravagant welcome to all. David challenges himself and us to consider how we confront "the status quo with Christ-like grace and love."

The PJs are delighted to provide continued support for David as we are confident that David's studies will guide him to lifelong work in promoting justice and peace.

Your Benevolence Committee has awarded 25 grants totaling \$106,490 for 2018

There were 39 total applications received for grants this year. It is only through the extreme generosity of the Plymouth Congregation that these grants are possible. Written grant proposals, which includes detailed financial information, auditor reports, current budgets, and a list of the Board of Directors, are required from the various agencies in order to be considered for an award. In addition, applicants are expected to indicate how the purposes of the organization they represent support Plymouth's four basic covenants.

If you have any questions, you may contact any of the members of your Benevolence Committee. Laura Ramsey and Laura Rudolph serve as co-chairs. Other members include Julie Creek, Margie Dougherty, Steve Etheridge, Roger Eversole, and January Simpson. Rev. John Gardner serves as advisor to the group.

Sympathy, Congratulations, & New Life



New Life is celebrated with the birth of Josephine Julie Stotts to Rev. Elizabeth Walden-Stotts and Eric Stotts and big brother, Jay, on April 9 in Lakeville, MA. Proud grandparents are Kay Wheeler and John Lybarger.

Sympathy is extended to Jeff Markley and family on the death of his mother, Janet Markley on March 22.

Sympathy is extended to Mariellen Beitman, on the death of her sister-in-law, Margaret Pittsford, April 22 in Middleton, IN.

Sympathy is extended to Ann Filler and Steve and Laura Filler on the death of sister and aunt, Deb Cochran Mulherin, May 10, Jackson, TN.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Darleen Schmidt who died May 15 in Indianapolis, IN.



The Thaw

by Ryan Schnurr

You can smell the thaw coming before it does—
a long time, too, before the meadow is green
and the wildflowers emerge
yellow and shine in the green meadow.
When it is still grey and ice,
and seeds hold being unexpressed.

This is part of it too.
The growing, that is, and believing
that it means something.
That everything is sacrament. Even time,
which moves loosely and runs
according to the spirit—
that silent, grassy, generous spirit—as
through the window the bare earth
sloughs the winter from its shoulders.
Right on schedule.

(The Christian Century, April 25, 2018, Vol 135, No. 9)

Ft. Wayne Poet



**Plymouth Congregational
Church of Fort Wayne**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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USE LESS WATER!

Collect and use rain-
water for watering your
garden with a **rain
barrel** or direct down-
spouts or gutters toward
shrubs or trees.

(<http://www.earthshare.org>)



Looking for our email addresses?

Senior Pastor and Teacher

jpg@plymouthfw.org

Associate Pastor

rep@plymouthfw.org

Associate in Pastoral Care

c2cftwayne@gmail.com

Music Director

robert@maestronance.com

Youth Director

kkjaurigue@gmail.com

Sunday School Director

kjwatson4@gmail.com

Child Care Director

davidandmichellegrim@gmail.com

Office Manager

lme@plymouthfw.org

Secretary/Communications Associate (Bell)

EASenter@plymouthfw.org

Financial Administrator

financial@plymouthfw.org

Building Maintenance Manager

david@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.

No Matter Who You Are, or Where You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here.