



www.plymouthfw.org



BELL

From the Senior Pastor

Back in May, we had our first Gender Identity workshop. We talked about definitions around gender identity, like what it means to be transgender, queer, or cisgender. We watched videos, asked questions, and took a quiz.

A second workshop was scheduled for August, but some scheduling conflicts arose. That, and we did not yet have running water and fully functioning bathrooms at that point. We figured that if we are asking people to stay for a workshop, the least we can do is have working bathrooms and an open kitchen! And so the workshop was pushed back until October 20.

While the first workshop was more of an introduction, this one will concentrate on how we can best live out being open and affirming in regards to the “T” and “Q” of LGBTQ persons. We’ll hear some stories from members, review some definitions, and go through various scenarios that may come up from time to time here at Plymouth. There will also be time for questions.

Anyone who did not attend the first workshop is welcome to attend this one. One thing we will do is review what’s called “The Gender Unicorn.” It’s a chart that breaks out the different parts of our identities in terms of sexuality and gender. It is worth looking at this ahead of time if these ideas are new to you. There is our orientation to whom we are attracted (either sexually or emotionally), how we were identified at birth, how we express our gender, and what gender we feel we are on the inside. Each is an independent trait from the other; many people conflate these uncritically. Give it a look; we will have time for questions on it or anything you may have.

This workshop is scheduled for Sunday, October 20 after worship. Being open and affirming means in part that we continue to grow in our understanding and competence when it comes to LGBTQ concerns. Churches have done, and many continue to do, great damage. It is our responsibility to ensure that the affirmation we say every Sunday is backed up in our inclusion of persons who are seeking a safe place to find a spiritual home. I look forward to seeing you there on October 20!

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Murphy
Senior Pastor and Teacher

The Gender Unicorn

Graphic by: **TSER**
Trans Student Educational Resources

The diagram features a purple unicorn with a rainbow horn and a thought bubble containing a rainbow. It has two hearts on its chest (one red, one orange) and a DNA helix on its side. To the right of the unicorn are six categories, each with colored arrows pointing to specific options:

- Gender Identity** (Rainbow icon): Female/Woman/Girl, Male/Man/Boy, Other Gender(s)
- Gender Expression** (Green icon): Feminine, Masculine, Other
- Sex Assigned at Birth** (Pencil icon): Female (orange dot), Male (teal dot), Other/Intersex (purple dot)
- Physically Attracted to** (Heart icon): Women, Men, Other Gender(s)
- Emotionally Attracted to** (Red heart icon): Women, Men, Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS:

Elizabeth Bayle, Roberta Braunlin, Casey Cade, Katie Carboneau, Kris Conner, David Cornwell, Brad Crowder, Paul Furtner, Heather Gamble, Doris Grandos, Norm Grandos, Bill Hambrick, Joan Hartwig, Ray Hoverman, Dwight James, Susan Jarvis, Nancy Jordan, Brian Laurenz, Joan Lipscomb, Sheldon Lockwood, Karen O'Neal, Bonnie Pennock, Noel Resor, Donna Riethmiller, Anne Rowland, Jacqueline Sanders, John Shannon, Shirley Slater, Dee Smith, Johanna Smith, Dick Stumpf, Camille Wallace and Ervin Walter.

Sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Mel Lehrman; September 16.

Sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Shawn Fowler; September 21.

Clocks Fall Back Sunday, November 3



Put a reminder on your calendar to set all your clocks back an hour before you go to bed on Saturday, November 2, so they'll be accurate when you awake on Sunday, November 3!

All Saints Day To Be Celebrated November 3

Plymouth will celebrate All Saints Day on Sunday, November 3, during worship at 10:00 am.

The service will include a Dedication of Memorial Gifts and Remembering the Saints, during which the name of each member who has died since November 1, 2018, will be read aloud, and the bell tolled.

Faith in Indiana: Treatment Not Incarceration

For those of you who participated in the Faith in Indiana Town Hall Meeting on September 21, I want to thank you. Not only were you part of the team of 20 people from Plymouth Church, you were part of the whole of 140 black, brown and white folks who were also there. That is powerful!



We heard personal stories of pain, visions of what we would like to see, and asked officials for what we wanted. For those who are not familiar with community organizing, this tension created by reversing the power structure may have been uncomfortable. However, it is used repeatedly and effectively in our work and is important for folks to experience so that they can finally become part of a political community that reflects their power and right to act.

So what did we really accomplish at this meeting? First of all, we secured commitments from Sheriff Gladioux and County Council President Tom Harris to make a recommendation in their budgets to include funds to pilot jail diversion. We secured commitments for County Council and the mayor's office to work with Faith in Indiana to come up with a plan for treatment expansion. Lastly, the Sheriff agreed to meet with his attorney about the legality of his ICE detention policy by October 21.

However, this is just the first step, as we need to continue our conversations, research, and work together to get what we want for a healthier community. Don't accept that those in position of power or the professionals who work in the fields of addiction, mental health, and incarceration know what is best for us and always make decisions that will improve our lives. In many cases they do, but if that were truly the case, we would not have a jail overcrowded with mentally ill and addicted individuals, and a lack of diversion and treatment options. We need to continue to work together to create a powerful voice that demands to be heard, because if we don't do this, things will remain the same.

Please contact Jan Evrard at jevrard52@gmail.com if you are interested in being a leader with Faith in Indiana. Remember, we are all leaders – we just have to believe it!

Wellspring Older Adult Holiday Gifts

Plymouth people will soon have the opportunity to brighten the holiday season for someone in need by purchasing a \$25 gift certificate for one of the 46 Older Adult Program (OAP) participants at Wellspring. You may purchase the suggested gift certificate alone, or you may want to partner with one or two other Plymouth folks to share the cost of the \$25 certificate. Wellspring program staff will provide two options for the type of certificate a particular person may want. The Wellspring OAP party will be held on December 9.

Contact Rev. Ruth E. Philips with any questions at rep@plymouthfw.org.

Growing Hope Globally Harvest Celebration

Come and see the horses, take a wagon ride to the field, try husking some corn! Plymouth joins with our growing partners at Pleasant Chapel Church of the Brethren and Peace UCC on October 26 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm for the Growing Hope Globally Harvest Celebration! Join us for the harvesting of the crop and invigorating fall fun on the farm. This event will be held at Pleasant Chapel Church of the Brethren, located at 1993 Co. Rd. 8, Ashely, IN 46705. Directions are available at Plymouth!



At 10:00 am young and old alike may ride the wagon to the field, or drive your car there to watch the harvesting of the crop. At 12:00 pm a delicious lunch of soup, sandwiches, sides, and desserts will be served inside the lovely Pleasant Chapel Church. After lunch the children may “Trunk or Treat!” We need adults to come prepared to share some Halloween goodies from your vehicle trunk.

The signup sheet is posted on an easel in the Folsom Room. We want **at least 20** people representing Plymouth. Carpooling is encouraged. Make it a family and friends fun day to meet our growing partners and show appreciation to the farmer who donates and farms the field for this project!

Growing Hope Committee

Making Your Voice Heard

Have you ever wondered if you can make a difference in the decisions being made by our officials and those in power? If the answer is YES! then join the Peace & Justice Committee as we will be sharing just one method by which you can accomplish this.

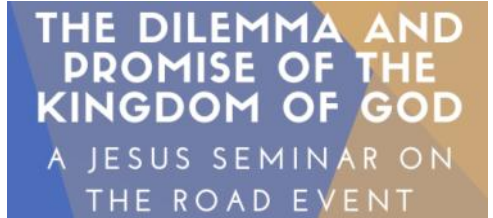


Please join us directly after the service on Sunday, November 3, in the Folsom Room for a discussion on Effective Letter Writing. Come prepared with topics that you are concerned or passionate about, and you will leave the session with all you need to know to send a letter to a public official, the editor of the newspaper, and others.

We recognize that there are already many in our congregation who know these skills and regularly use them, and we ask that you be there as well. We'd love to have you share your wisdom.

We hope that this session develops a habit in many of us who routinely voice our frustration with what is happening in our communities, but can't devote a huge amount of time or physical energy to more demanding activism. Remember, your voice does make a difference!

For the month of October, we pray for the Open & Affirming Coalition of the UCC



JSOR at Plymouth

Don't miss Plymouth's annual Jesus Seminar on the Road event to be held October 25-26. This year's topic is Jesus and the Kingdom of God. Westar scholars Nina E. Livesey and Arthur J. Dewey will present sessions Friday evening and all day Saturday. They summarize the scope of their program in this way:

“For most Christians the Kingdom of God evokes hope in a troubled world. But how is it that Christians understand this rather poignant phrase? Are there problems with using it? Does it carry with it some unnoticed but damaging baggage? These sessions explore the biblical expression ‘Kingdom of God’ from two different perspectives. We will look at the ways in which Luke’s gospel employs the term, and then work to discover a root meaning of the expression, which will take us to a sense of the term before it reached the Gospel of Luke.”

Read a comprehensive description of the individual sessions and register online at <https://www.westarinstitute.org/upcoming-events-calendar/jesus-and-the-kingdom-of-god/> or contact Pam Etheridge at pametheridge@gmail.com for a hard copy handout and registration form. Don't miss this thought-provoking annual event!

Communion in Sunday School

In October, our Sunday school kids are learning about Communion. We are remembering the story of Jesus' Last Supper in the Bible, familiarizing ourselves with how the sacrament of Communion is practiced in worship, and pondering all the ways the symbol of bread reminds us of Jesus throughout the week.

You can help us bring this worship practice out into our community! While the Lord's Supper is a special meal that we share in worship, we also can remember Jesus and celebrate community every time we break bread with our friends and family. On October 20, the kids will be passing out Friendship Bread "starters" that you can grow in your own kitchen and use to bake bread. Make sure to pick one up, and let us know when you bake and share your bread!

Parenting Forward

Last month, experts in the areas of child development, faith formation, and justice work gathered to share their knowledge at the online conference called Parenting Forward. Their talks are now online – and if you are a parent, grandparent, teacher, youth worker or have an interest in how our community raises our kids, then you are welcome to join in watching the sessions.

Please join our watch party on Wednesdays, beginning October 23 from 6:45 pm to 7:30 pm in the Conference Room upstairs.

November Adult Education

This year, we are expanding our adult education options during the Sunday morning 9:00 am Education Hour. Each week we aim to have one class that explores timely topics through a more traditional lecture and discussion format, and another that gives us a chance to learn through active experiences. In the Chapel, Linda Kerr will be leading a discussion of the documentary "Slavery By Another Name." Based on Douglas Blackmon's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, this film challenges the cherished assumption that slavery ended with the Emancipation Proclamation. In the Amistad Room, Katie Watson will provide supplies to facilitate prayer through simple art activities – such as mandalas, beads and doodles.

Details about each weeks' sessions will be announced in the bulletin and on Facebook.

Fall Stewardship Campaign

Plymouth's annual stewardship campaign began this month. Expect to hear from our weekly witnessing stewards about what Plymouth means to them. A letter about the campaign has been sent out recently.

Giving
Faithfully
into the
FUTURE

Fairfield Elementary Opportunities

Once again we have been asked to collect the following for the children who attend Fairfield Elementary School, our Associated Churches Rising Star partner. We will collect these items through the middle of October. Please put these items in the bins in the Folsom Room marked Fairfield. They need:

Paper towels, Kleenex and wipes of any type.

Underpants for both boys and girls: sizes 4, 5, and 6

Plymouth may also assist at Fairfield Elementary by reading to and with children, greeting them at school and family events, and writing encouraging notes. What a great way to share our commitment to this community as part of our covenant to be an "intensely local" mission. If you are interested in helping Fairfield Elementary students and teachers please contact: Jennifer Hayes, Jennifer.hayes@fwcs.k12.in.us or 467-5900.

Plymouth Generations on Facebook

Are you seeing all of Plymouth's Facebook posts? Plymouth Generations is our community Facebook page. It's a bit less formal than our public page, and it's where you'll see Sunday school updates, sesqui-bits, book recommendations, and photos of Plymouth's events. Search for the group "Plymouth Generations," and click on the join button!



Plymouth Music Series

Below is the Plymouth Music Series schedule for the remainder of 2019 through spring of 2020. All concerts, luncheons and receptions are free and open to the public. All are welcome. Though not required, we would appreciate if you would take a few moments to make a reservation via our Facebook Event Page so we can be well prepared for your visit. Go to [@plymouthfw](http://www.facebook.com). Click on our events and locate the concert and make your free reservation. If you need assistance, please call the church at 260-423-9424 and ask for Mackenzie. Thank you for helping us serve you well!

The Alicia Pyle Quartet

Sunday, October 27, 2019 – Noon luncheon; 12:30 pm concert
Featuring Alicia Pyle on piano, Brad Kuhns on bass, Derek Reeves on violin, and Jose Morales on percussion, you'll experience a nice meal and a variety of standards in the Classical, Jazz, Latin, Funk, Pop and Rock genres.

Plymouth Wind Ensemble

Sunday, November 17, 2019 – 2:00 pm
The Plymouth Wind Ensemble features professionals Janet MacKay Galbraith, Flute; Gavin Arnold, Clarinet; Jonathan Snyder, Oboe; Michael Galbraith, Horn; and Alex McCrory, Bassoon.

The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sunday, January 19, 2020 – 4:00 pm
This presentation is an annual tradition at Plymouth Church when the community gathers to commemorate and pay homage to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Uniting his inspiring words with the music of the civil rights movement, this dramatic musical program features the Rev. Bill McGill portraying Dr. King, guest speakers, the Vocal Artists of Heartland Sings, and Plymouth's own Thee Combo.

Unclouded Day

Sunday, February 16, 2020 – 2:00 pm
Led by music director James Zanker, Unclouded Day is a ten-member vocal and instrumental ensemble specializing in performing contemporary settings of traditional and gospel songs and hymns.

Easter Vigil Concert

Saturday, April 11, 2020 – 4:00 pm
We present our second special Easter Vigil Concert featuring music for reflection on the eve of Easter. This hour long, inspirational concert is open to all, and a light supper will follow.

Andrew Nesler, Pianist

Sunday, May 3, 2020 – Noon luncheon; 12:30 pm concert
Andrew Nesler has performed regularly throughout the region since coming to Fort Wayne. Currently serving as a teaching artist and staff pianist for Heartland Sings, Andrew combines great skill and sensitivity in his playing.

UCC News: Region Leaders in D.C.

Recently, 22 ministers from the UCC traveled to Washington, D.C. to speak in favor of justice for immigrants. Below is a reflection of their time in D.C. from the Rev. Shana Johnson, Illinois South Conference UCC:

"This trip to Washington, D.C., has been absolutely transforming. Too often in the church, we stay away from having difficult conversations for fear of offending some, upsetting some or creating a divide in our faith communities. Yet, the fear of such things can cause us to become silent, complacent and ineffective in taking seriously what it means to follow Jesus. Instead of considering the ethical, moral and spiritual implications of situations which have a claim on our hearts, minds and spirits and are crying out to us as believers, we stake our claim in legalistic views and arguments, camping out in our political affiliations. For many in the Illinois South Conference of the UCC, immigration in our country is one of those situations.

I invited our churches to write letters that I would deliver to Congress. I received typed letters and handwritten letters, letters from pastors and lay people, letters from children and adults (ages 7 to 98), and letters from entire congregations. The messages are thoughtful and profound as well as direct and pragmatic.

They wanted to make sure those in leadership clearly understand the way in which we are treating immigrants, refugees and families who should not be a political issue or a bargaining chip in election cycles. It is a moral, ethical, Christ-imperative issue. We are NOT loving our neighbor in the ways Christ calls us to love. We can do better. We must do better. Christ demands this of us."

More information and a video can be found at https://www.ucc.org/news_conference_ministers_transformed_by_d_c_mission_experience_10012019

Annual Election Meeting

We will have our Annual Election Meeting to elect officers and board members for the coming year on Sunday, October 27. This meeting will take place in the sanctuary immediately after worship concludes. Please be in attendance as we ratify and celebrate the lay leadership of Plymouth Church!

REPORT OF THE NOMINEES FOR OCTOBER ELECTION

Terms end December of the year indicated unless otherwise stated. () indicates 2nd or 3rd consecutive term; * indicates ineligible for additional consecutive term.

OFFICERS (2020):

Moderators	Rick Schilb	Assistant Treasurer	Laura Coon
Assistant Moderator	Ahnee Conner	Clerk	Joan Lipscomb
Treasurer	Anne Boyko	Recorder	Sara Sprunger

OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS (2020):

At-Large Member of Executive Council.....
Youth Member of Executive Council

Conference Delegate	Allen Haynes
.....	Rick Schilb

BOARDS (2020)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jane Meredith
Cher Jackson
Kirby Volz

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Suzanne Nell (1)
Rod Kuhn (1)
Robin Grimm (1)

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE BOARD

Charlene Holly (2)
Bill Lambert (1)

DEACONS' WORSHIP BOARD

David Bayle (1)
Lucy Hess (2)
Carol Tyndall (1)
Carol Patterson (1)

EVANGELISM & MARKETING BOARD

Molly Jordan (2)
Kyle Miller (2)
January Simpson (2)

HUMAN RESOURCES

John Hoffman (1)
Jan Modesitt (1)
Brian Army (1)

PROPERTY BOARD

Jim Eitsert (2)
Steve Hollingsworth (2)

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

Ann Boyko (Ex-Officio)
Laura Coon (Ex-Officio)
Rick Stoerker (1)
Laura Rudolph (1)
Katherine Caldwell (1)

2019 Nominating Committee Members: *Katherine Caldwell, Mark Glassley, Allen Haynes, Kathy Kolb, Bill Lambert, Michal Miller, and Vicki Vander Braun*

Staff Advisors: Rev. Timothy C. Murphy and Rev. Ruth E. Phillips

NOTE: Nominations from the floor must be pre-arranged with the committee or one of the Officers (Moderators, Asst. Moderator or Clerk) at least 48 hours prior to election meeting



November Birthdays



11/1	Isabelle Shockney	11/12	Laura Kinner	11/23	Matt Brown
11/2	Katherine Caldwell	11/12	Danielle South	11/23	Kirstin Springer
11/2	Louise Misegades	11/13	Kate Hollingsworth	11/23	Ruth Anne Sprunger
11/2	Jan Younger	11/14	Carol Miller	11/24	Loren Dove
11/3	Scott Avery	11/15	Ty Ratajczak	11/24	Kathleen Simunek
11/4	Whitney Chambers	11/16	Pam Etheridge	11/25	Doug Dormire Powers
11/6	Mary Ellen Argus	11/16	Jacob Key	11/25	Jessie Throop-Voors
11/6	Timothy Cunningham	11/17	Kathryn Carboneau	11/25	Christine Week
11/7	Al Bohnstedt	11/17	Alex Cooper	11/26	Chris Randolph
11/7	William Spindler	11/20	Lowell Beineke	11/27	Nancy Kilduski
11/8	Miles Nicholson	11/20	Joanne Brooks-Weber	11/28	Eric Congdon
11/9	Rose Pyle	11/20	Amber Key	11/29	Ed Gomez
11/10	Mary Ann Cree	11/20	Valerie Pelz	11/29	Jean Ross
11/10	Terry Green	11/21	Joyce Briner	11/30	Brent Blalock
11/10	Michael McCoy	11/22	Darlene Smith	11/30	Stan Holdeman
11/10	Cindy Ottinger	11/22	Ross Sunday	11/30	Rachel Tuttle
11/11	Julie Creek	11/22	Deb Tuttle		
11/12	Brian Army	11/23	Mary Bir		

Art of Hope Exhibit

Mental Health America of Northeast Indiana (MHANI) is pleased to announce a three-month exhibit called the Art of Hope, which highlights local artists and shares inspiring stories about recovery, healing, and hope. Featuring artwork from artists who have experienced mental health challenges, Art of Hope will encourage candid conversations around mental illness and wellness. This exhibit will be hosted at Manchester University's Gallery 101 from October 24, 2019 to January 24, 2020.

The Art of Hope Grand Opening is October 24 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at Gallery 101 at Manchester University's Fort Wayne Campus. The address is 10627 Diebold Rd., Fort Wayne, IN, 46845. Be one of the first to check out the exhibit and the artwork of talented local artists. RSVP is requested, but not required, and can be made at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/art-of-hope-grand-opening-tickets-68852982123>.

Film & Faith Over Forty

On November 17 from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm, Plymouth will be hosting its second Film & Faith Over Forty event in the Amistad Room! We will be showing the 2017 film *Marjorie Prime*, which is based on Jordan Harrison's Pulitzer-nominated play of the same name. This film is rated PG and features Lois Smith, Jon Hamm, Geena Davis, and Tim Robbins.

"In the near future and a time of artificial intelligence, 86-year-old Marjorie — a jumble of disparate, fading memories — has a handsome new companion who looks like her deceased husband and is programmed to feed the story of her life back to her. What would we remember, and what would we forget, if given the chance?"

Please sign up on the Folsom Room easel or email rep@plymouthfw.org so we can plan for space and snacks.

Thank You From Property Board

No more porta potties! Yippee. The Property Board would like to thank everyone for their patience and flexibility through the months of the sewer project. The old pipes had been in the ground for close to 100 years and the record May rains brought our plumbing issues to light. Our new system is up and running and will hopefully be around for more than another 100 years. It was a team effort to bring this project to completion. Thanks to all, whether it was bringing your own dishes and utensils to Wednesday Night Live, stepping outside to use the portable toilets, or just smiling through the inconvenience, we applaud you. Thanks again.

Diana Bauer
Chairperson, Property Board

Taste of Faith Outing



A few members of the Peace & Justice Committee dined at Seoul Garden Korean Restaurant located at 1820 W. Coliseum. What it lacked in atmosphere and location, it made up for in service, taste and presentation of the food. We ordered the various soups that consisted of Kimchi, hot and sour, and egg drop, that were all delicious. Our entrees included shrimp fried noodles, beef bulgogi, pork bulgogi, kimchi chicken bulgogi, and kimchi bokkumbap. It was all delicious with various levels of hot and spicy flavors that kept our noses running. The side dishes that everyone shared included bean sprouts, kimchi, cucumbers, sweet and salty seaweed, and spicy fish cakes.

We all enjoyed the food and company, and would recommend this small, family owned restaurant to anyone who enjoys good and healthy Korean dining.

Photo: beef bulgogi, Seoul Garden FB Page

Thanksgiving Day at Plymouth

Bring your family and friends or just yourself. Everyone is welcome! There will be a brief service of worship to lift hearts and minds in praise and gratitude at 11:00 am in the chapel. Turkey, stuffing, and all the side dishes brought to share will be enjoyed by all in the Folsom Room at 12:00 pm. We are pleased and grateful that A.J. Calkins has volunteered again to be the “turkey chef” assisted by Mark Friskney.

A signup sheet will be posted on an easel in the Folsom Room. Please put your name, number of people attending with you, and what type of dish you will bring to share: vegetable, salad, dessert.

Volunteers for either setup or cleanup will also be needed and can sign up in advance.

Thanksgiving Special Offering

On November 24, the Benevolence Committee invites you to participate in a special offering to celebrate Thanksgiving. This year’s beneficiary will be Homebound Meals, Inc. of Fort Wayne. When Homebound Meals started in 1971, they delivered only four meals each day. Now, volunteers for Homebound Meals travel along 20 different routes every weekday, delivering freshly prepared and medically tailored meals throughout Fort Wayne to individuals who are not able to prepare their own food.

While many folks are able to pay the \$5.20/meal Homebound Meals must charge to cover expenses, many others cannot. For those who require it, financial assistance is offered as available. This is where our special offering comes in! Through your generosity, we can help extend the service of Homebound Meals to those who need it most.

Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate the abundant blessings we enjoy. What better way to celebrate abundance than by giving abundantly, or to celebrate blessings than to be a blessing? We hope you will give as generously as you are able.

Tis the Season!

Boars Head season that is! We are currently working on casting, and if you haven’t spoken to Kara Jaurigue and Jim Schmidt about how you’d like to be involved with the 45th annual Boars Head and Yule Log Festival, it’s time!

Would you like a part in the cast or crew? Do you enjoy sewing and are able to help with costumes? There is something for everyone! Please contact Kara at kkjaurigue@gmail.com if you have not yet been cast or to get any information you may need.

The All Cast Meeting is Sunday November 3 at 1:00 pm in the Folsom Room. This meeting is important, and provides you the opportunity to turn in your ticket requests, get fitted for your costume and get all the information you will need for the upcoming Festival. We look forward to seeing you then!

From the Moderator

Congregational churches in the United States are Protestant churches in the “Reformed” tradition. We are distinctive from other Protestant churches by our form of governance; the congregation is the ultimate source of power and authority. We Congregationalists trace our origins back to Puritan New England. Our churches in other parts of the world are there primarily due to missionary activities.

Congregationalism has had a huge impact on not only religious development of the U.S. , but on our cultural and political history as well. Its governance practices influenced the early development of democratic institutions in New England and also impacted institutions of higher learning such as Harvard and Yale.

After the War for Independence, the U.S. rapidly increased its rate of westward expansion. The first area where this occurred is today’s Midwest, then called the Northwest Territory. As people moved West, they brought their institutions with them. One of these was of course their churches. The first church established there was the First Congregational Church of Marietta, in the Ohio country, in 1796. This church occupies the same site today as it did then, but has been rebuilt at least three times. The church today is based on a New England type of architecture, complete with balconies on either side of the sanctuary.

The first college established in the territory was Ohio University, which was structured at that time on what was being taught at Harvard and Yale. Ministerial preparation was a significant part of the curriculum.

Now you are probably asking, what does this have to do with the establishment of Plymouth in 1870, when we broke from the Presbyterian Church? Let me try to connect the dots by explaining how Congregationalists and Presbyterians joined forces.

The movement of larger and larger numbers of settlers into the Territory created major problems for churches. Two of the biggest were how to build new churches and staff them with trained pastors given the limited funds available for such things. To raise money, some denominations began to merge. A natural fit for Congregationalists were the Presbyterians. The theologies of both were based on Calvinist doctrines as enunciated by John Calvin, and in most cases, the modes of worship were practically indistinguishable. The major difference between them was in governance; for Congregationalists, the congregations exercise final authority over all matters, whereas for Presbyterians, their final authority rested with local “Presbyters.” A formal merger of the two came with the establishment of what was called the “Plan of Union” in 1801. For a brief time period this worked very well in meeting the needs of both denominations.

However, it does not take long for problems to develop. First, the merger led to a growth in the number of Presbyterian churches and a shrinkage in the number of Congregationalist churches. Then came the second “Great Awakening,” which in 1837 led to a split within the Presbyterian ranks into what are referred to as “Old” and “New Light” churches. This further weakens the Congregationalists. Last, but not least, were rising tensions over conflicting views with regard to slavery. These differences are never resolved, which led in 1852 to the formal ending of the “Union” between the Calvinist sects. In Fort Wayne, an informal union was maintained until September 20, 1870, when Plymouth Congregational Church was officially created.

Plymouth Congregational Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, was established on September 20, 1870. The founding was triggered by the departure of the Rev. George Little, a pastor much liked and respected by both Presbyterians and Congregationalists who made up the congregation of the existing church. With the leaving of Rev. Little and the establishment of Plymouth as an independent Congregational Church, the union of the denominations was ended in Fort Wayne. What follows is a brief history of how and why the two had been joined in the first place.

Rick Schilb
Moderator





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

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Looking for our email addresses?

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Building Maintenance Manager
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Sunday School Director
kjwatson4@gmail.com

Receptionist
mfe@plymouthfw.org



Using your smart phone's barcode scanner, this QR Code/Scanner tag will take you to the Plymouth page at eservicepayments.com. Use this secure and confidential link to support Plymouth Church's ministry and mission! Your gift helps advance the local and global outreach of Plymouth benevolence. Please be generous!

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.