



# The Bell

**PLYMOUTH CHURCH**  
FORT WAYNE + UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PLYMOUTHFW.ORG

## From the Senior Pastor

### Being a Global Mission Church



Plymouth has four covenants we say each week in worship. Compared to some of our other covenants, being a Global Mission Church may feel a bit more nebulous for some. As stated on our website, “Our outreach is ‘intensely local and intentionally global,’ that all people may share in abundant life.”

Chronologically, this was our third covenant, and we became a Global Mission Church in 2012. When looking at the updated covenant statement for this commitment (found [here](#) online), we can see that there are seven elements that constitute this covenant for the United Church of Christ. They are:

1. PRAY regularly for partners, Mission Co-workers, and the world.
2. EDUCATE our members about global issues from preschool age to adult.
3. SEEKS JUSTICE for the “least of these” in the international community.
4. RECEIVE the gifts of the global church.
5. GIVE to the work of global mission.
6. SENDS our members into the world to share the Good News of Jesus.
7. GROW in sharing the story of God’s mission with others.

Some of these items are regularly featured in our life together. I would say that we pray weekly in pastoral prayers about things happening in the world. Through organizations like Growing Hope Globally, we give financially, as well as to groups like Dar-al-Kalima University of Bethlehem from the Peace and Justice Committee. The Benevolence Committee has on occasion received requests or made grants for global service work, too.

Educationally, we talk about global issues in worship and Chapel Class, though we could certainly do more. We speak up for justice for oppressed people around the world in our activism, whether that be the war in Ukraine, the uneven impacts of climate change, or human rights for Palestinians.

One program that was added in recent years to more fully receive the gifts of the global church is our “Las Posadas” program, based upon the tradition of Mexican Christians during the Christmas season. I find the imagery and message powerful, and it’s a good reason to dust off my accordion (our next Las Posadas procession is after church on Sunday, December 3)!

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## Worship at Plymouth

Plymouth Church is currently offering an in-person worship service every **Sunday at 10:00 am**. Before worship, from **8:30 am to 9:45 am**, we offer a time of fellowship, with coffee provided, in the Folsom Room, as well as our weekly Chapel Class education hour at **9:00 am**.

Our services are also livestreamed every **Sunday at 10:00 am**. These will be available on our [YouTube Channel](#). A link to our YouTube Channel will be posted on our [Facebook page](#) every **Sunday morning at 8:00 am** and included in the Weekly Digital Bulletin. Each livestream is uploaded to the Sermon Archive page on [our website](#) on **Mondays**.

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We certainly have room to grow in our intentionality in sending and blessing folks in the work of mission and solidarity outside the United States, as well as in sharing what God's mission with others around the world looks like. But there are efforts to expand upon the solid foundation we've developed over the past decade. Rev. Ofner-Seals' article will share more about a new partnership opportunity we are looking to develop as part of being a Global Mission Church. We have many strong partnerships locally. We are indeed intensely local. But there is more we can do to faithfully live out our call to be intentionally global.

I invite each of you to consider ways you can contribute personally to our Global Mission stance. Maybe you can offer to lead an after-church forum on an international justice issue. Maybe you can include a prayer for a part of the world in a personal evening devotional. Maybe it's something else entirely! Whatever that looks like exactly, being a Global Mission Church is a core value here at Plymouth, and we seek to live it, and expand upon that witness going forward.

Peace,

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

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## **“O Little Town of Bethlehem”**

*Advent Chapel Class Series—December 3, 10, 17*

We sing the carol every year, but how much do we really know about the little town of Bethlehem? For instance, did you know that the city only came into existence about 200 years before the birth of Christ? Or did you know that it is home to the world's largest collection of works by the street artist known as Banksy? Rev. Sara will be teaching this three-week Chapel Class series, delving into the history of the town, what daily life looks like under the occupation of the Israeli military, and taking a deep dive into the city's culture, people, and rich religious traditions.

If you've been wanting to learn more about the context of the current conflict, this is a great opportunity to do so through the stories of a particular place and its people. Session one on December 3 will give an overall timeline of the city, zooming in on both its ancient Judeo-Christian roots and its modern history as an occupied territory. Session two on December 10 will take a detailed look at daily life in occupied Bethlehem. We'll discuss why many human rights organizations have called the situation apartheid and offer examples of the injustices Palestinians face every day. Finally, session three on December 17 will offer “portraits” of Bethlehem—we will learn about specific people and organizations within the city that show how despite the hardships they face, the people of Bethlehem are steadfast and resilient, and have a lot to teach us about the hope, peace, joy, and love that we seek during the Advent season. Join us in Chapel Class at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings, in person or on Zoom!

## From the Associate Pastor

### *Developing Cordial Relationships*



Recently, a group of Plymouth members who have traveled to Palestine on solidarity trips over the years gathered to discuss how we might begin to deepen our relationships there. Specifically, we discussed how we might build partnerships in the region as a way of living into our Global Mission covenant. We discussed what this kind of Global Mission partnership could look like—with Plymouth offering our support to a local, grassroots organization through prayer, financial giving, education, advocacy, and even hands-on volunteer work through the occasional mission trip. We agreed that we wanted to focus our efforts on Bethlehem—an easily accessible area and a hub of Christianity in the West Bank. We looked at several different organizations in and around Bethlehem, all of which work for Palestinian justice in different ways, but all with a strong commitment to non-violence.

Ultimately, we came to a consensus around an organization called the Wi'am Center (the full name of the center is Wi'am: The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center). In Arabic, wi'am means 'cordial relationships,' and building relationships is at the center of their work. They help resolve disputes within the Palestinian community through Arab and Western forms of mediation and conflict transformation. They have programs to empower children, youth, women, and men, addressing the long-term psychological and physiological effects of the occupation. The Wi'am Center offers summer camps for kids, vocational programs, peer mediation, non-violent resistance work, trauma-coping programs for children and more.

Almost every Plymouth member that has traveled to the West Bank on a solidarity tour has visited the Wi'am Center and met its charismatic executive director-- Zoughbi Zoughbi. There also happens to be an Indiana connection with Wi'am, which is that Zoughbi's wife Elaine is from South Bend, and several of their children have gone to college or graduate school in Indiana. A sad reality, which is one that too many Palestinians must endure, is that the family is currently separated. Elaine is currently in the United States, waiting for permission from Israel to be reunited with Zoughbi in Bethlehem. So far, that permission has not been granted, and they have been separated for more than six months. Certainly, the family could use as much support as possible during this time of separation.

We look forward to developing this partnership and feel it will be a great opportunity to deepen our ties to the region and strengthen our commitment to Palestinian solidarity and justice efforts. Stay tuned for more information in the weeks and months to come!



Wi'am's logo was designed to express their unique position within the Bethlehem Palestinian community.

**The star** represents the community of Bethlehem, having been a symbol of the region from the early Christian era, and today acting as the official seal of the Bethlehem municipality.

**The hands, clasped together,** represent the act and spirit of unity and reconciliation, as opposed to separate fists, the instruments of conflict.

**The rays of light** represent both the endeavor of nonviolent reconciliation and the enlightenment that comes with learning peaceful methods of conflict transformation.

To learn more about Wi'am: The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center, visit [www.alaslah.org](http://www.alaslah.org)

## Featured 2023 Grant Recipients



### **Turnstone Center for Children & Adult with Disabilities**

Recipient of the 2023  
Capacity-Building Grant  
\$16,950

To learn more, visit  
[www.turnstone.org](http://www.turnstone.org)



### **Blue Jacket Inc.**

Recipient of a 2023 Benevolence Grant  
\$2,000

To learn more, visit  
[www.bluejacketinc.org](http://www.bluejacketinc.org)



### **Miss Virginia's Food Pantry**

Recipient of a 2023 Benevolence Grant  
\$2,000

To learn more, visit  
[www.missvirginiafoodpantry.com](http://www.missvirginiafoodpantry.com)

## Benevolence Committee Grants Program

As we focus on our covenant of being a Global Mission Church, the work of the Plymouth Benevolence Committee instantly comes to mind. In fact, the process of becoming a Global Mission Church was initiated by the Benevolence Committee. This committee is a subsidiary of the Stewardship and Finance Board and per the Bylaws of the Church, is to, “direct the distribution of benevolence funds, considering local, national, and international missions and other organizations.” What exactly does that mean? The short answer is the committee oversees the Benevolence Grants program, the collection of special offerings, and administers the Emma Feigley Fund and disburses all these funds with the well coined phrase “intensely local, intentionally global” as a guiding criteria.

Did you know Plymouth Church had a grants program? If not, you are not alone. Here is a bit more about the program and how it operates.

Beginning the first of November, the committee sends grant applications to a reviewed and edited list of not-for-profit agencies and organizations. There are two types of grants that can be applied for: a Capacity Building Grant or a Benevolence Grant. The first, a Capacity Building grant, is an up to \$20,000, one-time grant that assists an agency or organization in expanding its “capacity” to provide better services. A good example of this type of grant winner is Miss Virginia’s Food Pantry. They used the funds to purchase a walk in refrigerator which allowed them to increase the volume of food they could safely store and distribute to their client base. Generally, a capacity building grant is used for a one time purchase of a tangible item the agency or organization is in need of.

The second type of grant is a Benevolence Grant. This grant is for up to \$2,000 and can be applied for annually. The Center for Nonviolence, Just Neighbors, and the University of Saint Francis’ Jesters program are all good examples of award winners for this type of grant. Perhaps you are aware of others as the Benevolence Committee has been highlighting some of our newer 2023 award winners on Plymouth’s social media outlets this past year.

The budget for the Benevolence Grants Program comes from two funding sources. It is comprised of 10% of the annual disbursement of endowment earnings utilized by the church for operations and programing and 15% of the amount pledged for giving as determined by the annual stewardship campaign. For the 2023 grants program these two items combined funded the grants program with a \$98,532 budget. In 2023, in addition to supporting the national UCC organization and IN/KY Conference, the Open and Affirming Coalition, and CUE ministries, one \$16,950 capacity building grant and twenty benevolence grants were funded. You will be able to review the complete list in Plymouth’s Annual Report available later this year.

Overseeing the collection of Special Offerings is another way the Benevolence Committee assists Plymouth Church live into its covenant of being a Global Mission Church. Other boards and committees at Plymouth Church can also sponsor various drives and offerings, however, and there are five special offerings collected by the United Church of Christ.

*Continued on page.5 ..*

## Featured 2023 Grant Recipients



**Homebound Meals, Inc.**  
Recipient of a 2023 Benevolence Grant  
\$2,000

To learn more, visit  
[www.homeboundmealsfw.org](http://www.homeboundmealsfw.org)



**Summit Equestrian Center**  
Recipient of a 2023 Benevolence Grant  
\$2,000

To learn more, visit  
[www.summitequestrian.org](http://www.summitequestrian.org)



**CHILL, Inc. (Creating Hope,  
Instilling Life Lessons)**  
Recipient of a 2023 Benevolence Grant  
\$2,000

To learn more, visit  
[www.chillfw.org](http://www.chillfw.org)

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These are the ones that the Benevolence Committee is responsible for. Plymouth Church has elected to participate in all five, earning us the title of being a “five for five” church within the IN/KY Conference. It is through supporting these denominational offerings that Plymouth leans hard into the international focus of being a global mission’s church. Additionally, the Benevolence committee oversees the collection of the Thanksgiving and Christmas offerings. These funds are used locally to assist agencies such as Homebound Meals deliver meals at Thanksgiving and Crossroad Child and Family Services with gifts and festivities for clients at Christmas.

Finally, the Benevolence Committee oversees the administration of the Emma Feigley Fund. This fund was established in 1999 through the generosity of Plymouth member Emma Feigley. While the fund is administered similarly to the Benevolence Grants Program, it is a discretionary funding source that allows a bit more flexibility in the timing and accessibility to funding. The Benevolence Committee has used these funds to support teachers buying supplies for their classroom, fund educational experiences for children and adults, support advocacy work, and most recently to support the Madina Village School in Sierra Leone.

Plymouth Church is a congregation blessed by the foresight of its founding members, dedicated leadership, and continued support of its members over the years through the sharing of their time, talents, and resources. Plymouth was committed to being “intensely local, intentionally global” in its vision and benevolence long before it officially became a Global Mission Church. It is woven into the fabric of who Plymouth is as a body of believers, its people, and they carry that with them far beyond the walls of the Church. Plymouth has been and always will be a Global Mission Church.

## Plymouth Church: A Global Mission Church

Plymouth Church’s four covenants are the foundation for the work we do. The four covenants are:

- Open & Affirming
- Just Peace Congregation
- Global Mission Church
- Earthwise Congregation

This year, the Bell will take on one of our covenants each quarter to showcase the work Plymouth does that aligns with our covenants. This is the fourth and final issue of 2023 and its focus is on the Global Mission Church covenant.

**“We are ... a Global Ministries-certified Global Mission congregation (2012). Our outreach is "intensely local and intentionally global," that all people may share in abundant life. “**

Numerous Plymouth task forces and action teams work to carry out this covenant. A few of these groups are featured in this edition of the Bell. Continue reading to learn more about how Plymouth Church’s outreach locally and globally.

## Indiana Center for Middle East Peace (ICMEP): A Global Effort

*Indiana Center for Middle East Peace is “a voice of conscience for peace, justice, human rights, and intercultural encounter.” It is an independent, not-for-profit, 501c3, tax-exempt organization.*

In October 2004, ICMEP held its first program in Plymouth Church’s Folsom Room, eight people having lunch with Dr. Raed Mualem, Headmaster at Archbishop Elias Chacour’s Mar Elias Educational Institutions (K-12) in Ibillin, Galilee. From those humble beginnings, ICMEP has gained a nationwide, even global presence, with people from around the world attending its many Zoom webinars and interviews. And during those 19 years, Plymouth Church has been an integral partner in ICMEP’s work.

Michael Spath is the founding Executive Director, Patty Pendleton (Secretary) was one of ICMEP founders, and Plymouth members Terry Dougherty (Chair), Ahnee Conner (Treasurer), Linda Kerr, and Pam Etheridge also are board members. David Jolliff is a former board member.



*Phil Weiss, the founder and editor of Mondoweiss, an online news source for US/ Palestine/ Israel info and analysis, speaking at a recent ICMEP event at Plymouth.*

Michael is also Co-Chair of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions Board of Directors and a member of the Global Kairos for Justice Coalition, based in Bethlehem. Michael was also one of the founders of the United Church of Christ Palestine-Israel Network (UCC-PIN). Plymouth Church was one of the original twelve congregational sponsors of UCC-PIN’s 2017 General Synod “No Way To Treat A Child” Resolution regarding Israel’s torture of child detainees and prisoners (passed with almost 80% of the vote).

Over 90% of its 230 programs have been held at Plymouth Church, hosting Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religious, political, and NGO leaders, scholars, activists, journalists, musicians, and others. And almost 20 of Plymouth’s members (along with 250 others) have traveled to Palestine and Israel as part of its “Solidarity Tours” meeting with a host of leaders striving for a just peace and full civil, political, and human rights. John Gardner traveled with us twice, and both Rev. Timothy and Rev. Sara have traveled with us recently.

ICMEP annually hosts TaybehFest (celebrating the first microbrewery in the Middle East in the Palestine village of Taybeh), and commemorates Nakba Day (May 15, the 1948 dispossession of the Palestinian people from their homes in over 500 villages), and the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 10), this year marking its 75th anniversary. ICMEP also created ArabFest, now its own 501c3, and Fort Wayne for Refugees.

In addition to UCC-PIN, ICMEP has a number of other national partners – Jewish Voice for Peace, U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights, Friends of Sabeel North America, American Muslims for Palestine, ICAHD-USA, and Voices From the Holy Land.

ICMEP also financially supports mission partners in Palestine and in the United States – Al-Rowwad Cultural & Theatre Arts Society, Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem (“Beautiful Resistance”); ArabFest, Fort Wayne; Bil’in Resistance Movement, Bil’in, Occupied Palestine; Center for Community Resource Development, Nablus Old City; Palestine Writes; Playgrounds for Palestine; Tent of Nations Peace Farm, Bethlehem (“We Refuse to be Enemies”); and Wi’am Conflict Resolution Center, Bethlehem.

ICMEP thanks Plymouth Church for its unwavering and faithful partnership for its 19 years of solidarity with the people of Palestine.



*Ronnie Malley, a Muslim Palestinian-American musician and storyteller, at one of his numerous ICMEP performances.*



## **Just Neighbors: An “Intensely Local” Outreach Program**

Just Neighbors Interfaith Homeless Network was created in 1999 as a grassroots response to the need for emergency shelter for homeless families in our community. Modeled on national programs promoting family stability and self-sufficiency, Just Neighbors opened its doors to local families in November 2000. Originally, Just Neighbors used available space in local churches to provide night-time shelter for families. Each morning, the families were transported to Just Neighbors’ Day Center, a small house in downtown Fort Wayne. The maximum daily capacity of the program was 14 individuals.

In February of 2009, Just Neighbors moved to a new family center on State Street so that it could increase capacity to 40 clients and provide on-site services. Since 2007, Just Neighbors has more than doubled the number of families served annually. Today, Just Neighbors is the only local shelter in Fort Wayne providing emergency housing for homeless families.

When Just Neighbors was founded by concerned citizens and congregations, including Plymouth Church, other homeless shelters did exist in Fort Wayne, but none had the capacity to provide emergency shelter that would keep the entire family together. Homeless families had been forced to separate with the women and children in one location and men at a separate shelter. Just Neighbors' goal is to work with families to return them to self-sufficiency, keeping the family unit together throughout the process. The dignity and worth of each family are cherished hallmarks of the hospitality of Just Neighbors’ program.

Families have private rooms and share common space in the family center for the duration of their stay at Just Neighbors. While the previous model worked and served families very well, being able to remain in one location has made it easier on the families being served, especially the children. Host congregations still come to the family center to provide evening meals, fellowship, and programming for the Just Neighbors guests.

Plymouth Church hosts evening meals at Just Neighbors several weeks throughout the year. Each evening Sunday through Friday, volunteer organizations provide a full meal which consists of main course, a vegetable, fruit, dessert, and anything else they may want to contribute. This is a great opportunity to pass on the true meaning of “no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here,” by providing part or all of a healthy meal to the families that find themselves in need of shelter at Just Neighbors.

Please consider providing part or all of a meal during Plymouth's next turn to host. Contact volunteer coordinator Ahnee Conner and be “intensely local” in your outreach to neighbors in need!

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

### **Plymouth Church Initiatives and Partner Organizations**

#### **Study Connection**

(260) 484-4430

Program Coordinator: Lucy  
Hess, lrh22@frontier.com

Plymouth members tutor Fort Wayne area students at the church on Wednesday afternoons.

#### **Faith in Place**

[www.faithinplace.org](http://www.faithinplace.org)

Brings Hoosiers of faith together to promote renewable energy, energy conservation, and energy efficiency, as a faith response to climate change. Members of Plymouth’s Environmental Justice Action Team respond to various FIP campaigns and calls for action.

#### **Center for Nonviolence**

(260) 456-4112

[www.centerfornv.org](http://www.centerfornv.org)

Provides education, support and advocacy for victims of violence.

#### **Crossroad Child and Family Services**

(260) 484-4153

[www.crossroad-fwch.org](http://www.crossroad-fwch.org)

Provides therapy, education and family support for troubled youth.

#### **Fort Wayne Habitat for Humanity**

(260) 422-4828

[www.habitatgfw.org](http://www.habitatgfw.org)

Unites volunteers and local investors with qualified families to build safe, stable and affordable homes in Allen County.

#### **Positive Resource Connection**

(260) 744-1144

[www.positiveresourceconnection.org](http://www.positiveresourceconnection.org)

Supports those with HIV/AIDS.

#### **Wellspring Interfaith Social Services**

(260) 422-6618

[www.wellspringinterfaith.org](http://www.wellspringinterfaith.org)

Works to enrich the lives of Fort Wayne central city residents

## Plymouth's Anti-Racism Action Team is Up and Running

**“When we choose to be antiracist, we become actively conscious about race and racism and take actions to end racial inequities in our daily lives. Being antiracist is believing that racism is everyone’s problem, and we all have a role to play in stopping it.”**

**- National Museum of African American History and Culture**

The Anti-Racism Action Team joins the Environmental Action Team and the Reproductive Rights Action Team as the newest justice group at Plymouth. Each team takes on current issues that support our covenants through purposeful and persistent action.

At different times in Plymouth’s history, programs, book studies, and classes have been conducted to build awareness and knowledge about the pervasiveness and legacy of racism. There is always more to learn, and while learning is part of the Anti-Racism Action Team, the emphasis is on making change. Acknowledging the on-going work of dealing with individual and interpersonal racism and recognizing Plymouth’s commitment to equity and justice for all, the Anti-Racism Action Team has decided to address potential institutional racism within our own church as our first priority.

Not surprisingly, church cultures reflect not only the values of their denomination, but also the practices and policies set and perpetuated over time by the congregation and related boards and committees. Institutional racism in predominately White churches typically is not intentional but

mirrors the perspectives of the majority participants who get comfortable with the culture as it is and do not think to question something that seems so natural for them. Over time, that culture becomes simply “the way we do things around here.” It is carried out in multiple ways, for example, what happens in the worship service, preferred music, the artwork in the building (consider pictures or stained-glass images of Jesus as light-skinned with features of a European White male), education of children and youth, financial investments, causes supported, and more. In subtle and not so subtle ways, that culture, despite good intentions, may inadvertently be uncomfortable for or seem to disregard members, friends, staff, and visitors who are not part of the White majority.

The Anti-Racism Action Team is exploring ways racism operates at Plymouth and how they might be dismantled. If the work of this action team interests you, please join us (in person or virtually) at our monthly meetings on the fourth Tuesday at 6:00 pm.

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## Peace and Justice Committee Global Mission Projects

The Peace and Justice Committee has supported two global mission projects over the past several years. One is for the women of Darfur, Sudan who need cooking stoves that do not use wood. Recently they began using LPG stoves because, in Sudan, cooking with charcoal and firewood contributes to thousands of deaths due to smoke inhalation. In addition, surrounding forests are suffering from years of exploitation. The cooking stoves have been life changing for their families by keeping the women and young girls from the danger of bandits while gathering wood far from home. Because the project has proven popular with low-income households, plans are ready to replicate the model elsewhere in the country to bring the benefits of clean energy to many more families.

The second project is Dar-al-Kalima University (DAK) in Bethlehem. It is the first and only institution of higher education in Palestine focused on the performing arts, visual arts, and cultural heritage. In a country with limited natural resources, educating students in employable careers can assist to ensure their future. The university has five colleges:

- College of Fine Arts: Contemporary Art, Film Production, Performing Arts
- College of Architecture & Design: Architecture, Design, Graphic Design, Interior Design
- College of Cultural Management: Arts Management, Cultural and Sustainable Tourism, Sports Management
- College of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research: Visual & Performing Arts, Management of Cultural Institutions
- Technical Community College for two-year diplomas

Since many DAK students rely on financial support to complete their education, the Peace and Justice Committee contributes to the DAK scholarship fund.





*The Evangelism and Marketing Board's October 2021 supply drive, pictured here, worked with Catholic Charities to donate supplies to Afghan refugees in the area.*

## **Plymouth Afghan Refugee Task Force: Putting Our Global Mission Covenant to Work**

After the fall of Kabul and the chaotic evacuation of 120,000 Afghans to the U.S., a group of Plymouth members established a task force to aid Afghan refugees resettled in Fort Wayne. We worked initially with Catholic Charities, the agency in charge of resettling these refugees in Fort Wayne. Since that time, the task force has been intimately involved with several Afghan families. This is the story of one of those families.

Mohammad and Muzlifa Popal, along with their two girls, were processed with about 7,000 other Afghan refugees at Fort Harrison in Indianapolis. They were resettled in Fort Wayne with a small government stipend, but no English, no formal education, no housing and no job. They now live in a modest bungalow in southeast Fort Wayne, and Mohammad works at Master Spas where he puts in about 50 hours a week.

We began our work with the Popals in February, 2022. We have visited them several times a week, helping with a daunting number of challenges, including English tutoring; providing clothing, car seats, furniture and other items; help securing Medicaid coverage, SNAP benefits and free internet service; teaching them about basic financial matters such as maintaining a bank account and paying bills; advocating for better housing conditions with their landlord; transporting Muzlifa and her children—two more girls have been born in the U.S. since their arrival—to medical and dental appointments; getting the two older girls established in school; and recently transporting Muzlifa and her three youngest girls to International House twice a week for English instruction and access to sewing machines and materials (Muzlifa is an incredible seamstress!). This provides a much-needed social outlet for Muzlifa, who is otherwise isolated in her home.

Although our work has been exhausting and frustrating at times, it has also been immensely satisfying. With our help, the family has made great strides in English proficiency, adapting to life in the U.S., and becoming more and more independent.

And we have learned so much along the way. Our experience with this family has been a wonderful example of fulfilling our global mission covenant—intensely local and intentionally global!



## Growing Hope Globally at Plymouth

Plymouth's Global Mission Covenant calls us to support programs such as Growing Hope Globally that impact the lives of our sisters and brothers globally.

Plymouth Church has been an active and contributing member of Growing Hope Globally for nearly 20 years! Last year Growing Hope Globally in total served more than 169,000 people in 46 programs and 30 different countries. Plymouth members along with our local church and famer partners contributed \$15,634 to Growing Hope Globally, which directly helped 284 people find lasting solutions to their hunger in Honduras as well as Burkina Faso in West Africa.

So, what does Growing Hope Globally do? They partner with local farmers and both rural and urban churches like Plymouth to create a growing project that helps international families and communities break the cycle of hunger and poverty to lead healthier, more productive lives. Specifically, Plymouth Church is part of the Ashley, Indiana Growing Project, which includes two other local churches and famers.

Growing Hope Globally supports programs such as building water storage, providing eco stoves, developing water intolerant seeds and improving farming techniques. This in turn increases money available to the family and the potential for an improved quality of life. Participants are committed to pass this information forward to others in their community.

Here is an example of how the program works:

Delma, a Honduran Farmer, used to dry her grains and coffee beans on a tarp on the ground, leaving them vulnerable to pests, unpredictable weather and heavy rains. She often had to sell her coffee beans wet, which brings in a low price. Her coffee business has greatly improved since she built a solar dryer greenhouse that gets the grains and beans up off the ground and protected. GHG provided the training and materials and Delma, and her family built the structure. The new greenhouse speeds up the drying process from five days to three, and her coffee sells for close to twice as much as before.

She also raises animals for protein and income. Two years ago, she received a 6-month-old piglet along with training on how to care for it: it is now producing litters. As part of the project, Delma gives some of its offspring to other community members, so they have the same chance she did. She is going through the same process with a pregnant cow.

Delma's husband received training on building "eco-stoves," which are much more efficient, require less wood, and keep indoor air cleaner than the traditional stoves. He now helps others build them.

Growing Hope Globally makes a lasting impact for generations to come because they provide things that can never be taken away: knowledge, experience and empowerment.

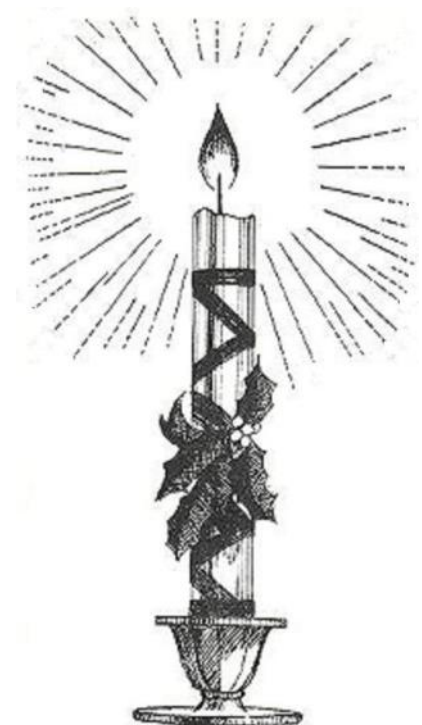
## 47th Annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival

Oh come, all ye faithful, the 47th Annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival will take place **Friday, December 29 and Saturday, December 30** with services at **5:30 pm and 8:00 pm** each day.

If you have any questions regarding ticket distribution or the Boar's Head Festival in general, please call the Boar's Head information line at 260-423-9424 x 325, and leave a message. Our Ticket Coordinator, or a member of the Production Team, will do their best to return your call within 24-48 hours.

This year, our Public Box Office day will be **Thursday, December 14** from **4:30 pm to 6:30 pm**.

Are you interested in being involved with the cast, crew, or choir? Please contact Kara Jaurigue at [kkjaurigue@gmail.com](mailto:kkjaurigue@gmail.com). We are always looking for people to add to the Boars Head family. We look forward to seeing you in December!



## Music Ministry News

'Tis the season when music and the arts at Plymouth Church are especially active and I want to say a heartfelt and hearty thank you to all the many musicians who share their talents with us through these programs. In addition to our weekly work to provide musical enrichment and leadership in worship, several concerts, special services and activities, and ending with the pinnacle of our holidays is our annual Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival Worship Services.

Everyone is welcome to be a part of the music ministry. You can join one of the choirs, or you can sign up to be part of the Boar's Head ensemble. We are currently enrolling singers for the BH Choir. If you are interested, please contact me, Robert Nance, at [robert@maestronance.com](mailto:robert@maestronance.com) or speak to me on Sunday mornings after worship.

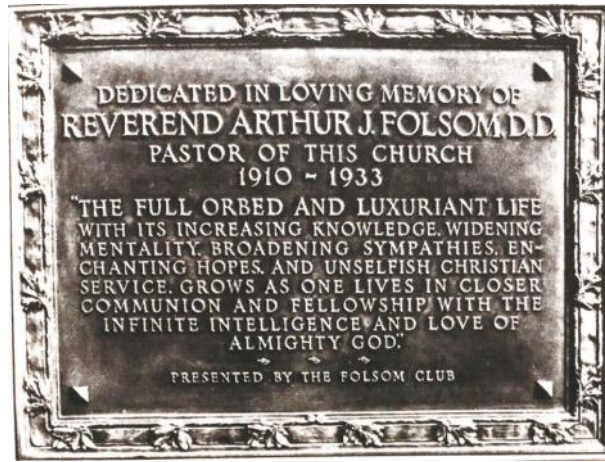
We are also asking singers to join the interfaith choir that will provide some musical leadership for the annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on November 21 at 7:00 pm. Again, contact me if you are able to join us for the community service.

### Upcoming 2023 Plymouth Music Series Program:

#### **FELIZ NAVIDAD | A CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY CANTO DE CORAZÓN**

**Sunday, December 3, 2023 – 4:00 pm**

Collaboratively created by Plymouth Church, Renaissance YMCA and Heartland Sings, this choir sings exclusively in Spanish, providing a unique opportunity for diversity and inclusion in our community. Directed by Dr. Wagner Pastor, their inaugural program will focus on Christmas.



Presented by the Folsom Club of Plymouth Church and formally dedicated in his honor Sunday, June 24, 1934, on the first anniversary of his last service in this church. This beautiful plaque hangs today as a permanent memorial on the west wall of the church to the right of the pulpit

## The History of Arthur J. Folsom

Arthur J. Folsom became Plymouth's minister in August 1910. Born July 27, 1875 in Ontario, Canada, he received his B.A. from Cornell College in 1899 and his Masters from Northwestern University in 1902. In 1925 he received his Doctor of Divinity of Marietta College in Ohio.

In 1903, he married Mary Louise Chamberlin and they had three children: Joseph, Mary, and Charles. On August 10, 1910, they arrived in Fort Wayne, where he served as head minister at Plymouth for the next 23 years. At the time of his arrival, Plymouth was home to about 350 members.

His time at Plymouth saw him organize and bring the Red Cross to Fort Wayne, touring the state to speak on their behalf. He was a member of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Membership Committee at the Chamber of Commerce. In 1918, he was elected president of the Fort Wayne Rotary Club. He was also Chairman of the YMCA building campaign in 1926. He was the fund campaign manager for Methodist Hospital, now known as Parkview. He was elected to the board of directors at University of Chicago Theological Seminary, and in 1925, he represented Indiana at the National Council of Congregational Churches in Washington D.C.

In his 23 years as head minister at Plymouth, Dr. Folsom performed over 2,000 weddings. In 1916, the membership of Plymouth had grown to about 850, and it was decided we needed a new and bigger building to call home. At a cost of \$285,000, our current location was built and dedicated on October 5, 1924. On June 29, 1933, Dr. Folsom suffered a fatal heart attack while working on his farm. His body lay in state at Plymouth for 3 days as many paid their respect. He was buried in Lindenwood Cemetery. At the time of his death, Plymouth Church was home to over 1,800 members.

It is safe to say that Plymouth Congregational Church at 501 W Berry St. is the house that Folsom built.

Monty Millage

## Stay Connected with Plymouth Church

In addition to our public Facebook page, Plymouth has a private Facebook group available to members called [Plymouth Generations](#). Join this Facebook group to communicate easily with other Plymouth people! You must already have a Facebook account to join this group.

Plymouth Church sends out the Weekly Bulletin to keep you up-to-date on things like church events, volunteer opportunities, and other news. The Weekly Bulletin is sent out on **Saturdays at 7:00 pm**. If you are not receiving these messages, please check your spam folder first. If you still are not receiving them, please contact our Communications Specialist Elizabeth at [edp@plymouthfw.org](mailto:edp@plymouthfw.org).

### Financial Report

October 2023

	Month Actual	Month Budget	Month Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
<b>Total Income</b>	\$76,074	\$67,985	\$8,089	\$706,717	\$698,661	\$8,056
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$77,192	\$89,168	(\$11,976)	\$705,580	\$723,999	(\$18,419)
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	(\$1,118)	(\$21,183)	\$20,065	\$1,137	(\$25,338)	\$26,475

### Contact Us

**Senior Pastor and Teacher**

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**Youth Director**

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**Communications Specialist**

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**Building Maintenance Manager**

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**Whoever You Are, Wherever You Are on Life's Journey, You Are Welcome Here!**