



The eBell

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

From the Senior Pastor



There are many things about this time apart that I dislike, but there is at least one new thing that I've been doing that makes up for it, at least in part. Since our cancellation of all in-person worship and programming for the foreseeable future, I've started one new program. That is a weekly Joys and Concerns video call.

There, we've been sharing at least one thing we are grateful for over the past week, and one thing that we have a concern about. Afterwards, we pray together, focusing on those things people have named. We also have a chance to chat and catch up with each other;

several people have indicated how much they enjoy being able to see other members, and I fully agree.

It reminds me of two things. The first is when I was a church camp counselor. At the end of the evening, we would have something called "cabin time," where everyone in the cabin would go around and share "highs and lows" for the day before going to bed. The other thing it reminds me of is part of the worship service we did at All Peoples Christian Church in Los Angeles. One advantage of a small church (roughly 20-30 in worship on a typical Sunday) is that there's space to let people verbally share their Joys and Concerns right in worship. It would take 5-10 minutes (or more depending on the Sunday!), but then I would create a Pastoral Prayer right on the spot that incorporated the verbalized concerns for the day. This digital Joys and Concerns essentially replicates that process.

It's one advantage I see in meeting in smaller groups; it would be impractical to do the same thing with 200 people in worship. It would take up the entire service if everyone said something, or we'd have a two-hour service with half of it being Joys and Concerns! But I enjoy praying after hearing specific "highs and lows." I'm grateful that in this time that has so many costs and drawbacks, this is at least one good thing that has come out of it thus far in our collective life together.

I look forward to seeing you sometime at future Joys and Concerns calls on Sundays at 1:00 pm! Instructions on how to join Joys and Concerns via computer or phone are included in our Tuesday and Sunday eBlasts.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Timothy C. Murphy

Stay Connected During Stay-At-Home Order

During this time of social distancing, we want to make sure all Plymouth members know what resources are available to them. Though we cannot be together physically, we are staying connected online through video services, Facebook groups, Zoom meetings, and more frequent eBlasts.

Our online services are posted to our [Facebook page](#) every Sunday morning. These same videos are available on the website's [Sermon Archive page](#) and the [Plymouth YouTube Channel](#). If you are unsure as to how to access our Sermon Archive, [click here](#) for a video walkthrough.

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

Plymouth Church will also be sending out more eBlasts to keep you up-to-date on things like online gatherings, ways to help others while social distancing, and other news. eBlasts are sent out on Tuesdays at 4:00 pm and Sundays at 9:00 am.



Plymouth People In Our Prayers

New this week: Crystal Haynes

Archer Family, Janis Bohnstedt, Trevor Burns, Casey Cade, Carleen Carteaux, Natasha Chemey, Kris Conner, David Cornwell, Brad Crowder, Quinn Hacker, Joan Hartwig, Susan Jarvis, Bob Jensen, Nancy Jordan, Ginny Laudadio, Brian Laurenz, Joan Lipscomb, Sheldon Lockwood, Karen O'Neal, Carol Patterson, Pennock, Mike Popp, Noel Resor, Donna Riethmiller, Kaitlyn Roby, Anne Rowland, Jacqueline Sanders, John Shannon, James Sidell, Charmaine Siekmann, Johanna Smith, Terri Stumpf, Kirby Volz, Camille Wallace, Gordon Walter, Amanda Wray

New Life is welcomed in the births of identical twin daughters Adelaide Carolyn Ruth Bennett and Catherine Loretta Rose Bennett, March 17, to proud parents Brittany Ramsey and Clayton Bennett Evansville. Delighted grandparents are Laura and Tod Ramsey.

New Life is welcomed in the birth of a son, Leonardo Urban, April 14, to proud parents Domini and Andrew Urban, Indianapolis. Delighted great grandmother is Carol Patterson.

New Life is welcomed in the birth of a son, Briggs Peter Kilian-Conklin, April 14, to proud parents Betsy Conklin and Paul Kilian, Seattle, WA. Excited grandparents are Deb and Dick Conklin.

Sympathy is extended to Luanne (Root) Koenig on the death of her husband, Edward "Ed" Koenig, April 13.

**For the month of April,
we pray for Wellspring
Interfaith Social Services,
Just Neighbors
Interfaith Hospitality
Network, and the UCC
Office Support Staff
Network.**

From the Associate Pastor

Dear Friends,

Since we began our "stay-at-home" social distancing, I have experienced the following:

I could balance my cell phone on a coat rack to accomplish selfie video recording of the welcome and invocation for worship for March 15 and 22. I relied on Eric Miller's tutoring in order to send it to him.

I could access Zoom to record my worship parts, which was significantly smoother than with the cell phone! In this I was tutored by both Rev. Timothy and Eric Miller. My first attempt at sending a recording was quite labor intensive and involved multiple phone calls and repeated instructions on the "how to." I am grateful for their patience with my first awkward attempts in this new process for me.

Zoom meetings are an important component of this time apart. I have "zoomed in" for Executive Council, Congregational Life Board, weekly staff meetings, Joys and Concerns, Covenant Class, Good Friday Tenebrae recording, Maundy Thursday live with 35 of you, Wednesday Recess with Katie Watson and Plymouth kids, and now my Thursday Study Group is resuming via Zoom. If you haven't tried it yet, please know that once you overcome the technical intimidation, it can be quite fun!

Vital to our staying connected with one another are phone conversations and emails. I am pleased that we have many individuals who are "branches" on our first Plymouth Phone Tree. Many conversations are about routines and daily at-home activities. We have also shared profound moments of celebration in New Life births, and grief and sorrow in deaths of loved ones. Illnesses, accidents, hospitalizations, rehabilitation, returning home – all are part of what we now share in spiritual and voice closeness while we are physically distant.

Especially on my heart and mind are our children and youth and their parents, and young adults, during this pandemic crisis. Every aspect of their lives is being impacted. What once was normal now seems unimaginably far off. Questions may remain for a lifetime about safety, security, health and wellbeing. It is also reassuring to hear how families are coping: playing games together, gathering for a meal, maintaining household routines.

How are you coping? What concerns or anxieties are you experiencing? Please feel free to connect with either Rev. Timothy or myself in the options we have offered.

Strength for today, Hope for tomorrow,

Rev. Ruth E. Phillips

Fact Check

Information spreads fast and far on the internet - but are you seeing information from reputable sources? For details regarding COVID-19, try checking websites like [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov), [who.int](https://www.who.int), and your local health and human service organization websites!



Beth Walker—Working During COVID-19

This photo is a true representation of how much of my time has been spent. Since Real Estate is an essential service, we still have client needs to meet, which takes us into homes other than our own. I work to protect myself by masking and wearing gloves each time I go into a home. I also use hand sanitizer as soon as I leave and wash my hands upon returning home.

I am staying connected with others through phone calls, text messages and Facetime calls, as well as Zoom meetings like the Plymouth Joys and Concerns Zoom opportunity. The video calls are especially helpful to connect with our extended family, including our Grandson Samuel.

The Plymouth virtual gatherings and services have been great. I find it to be a nice blend of pre-recorded messages with live opportunities to connect with our Plymouth family. We appreciate Plymouth's efforts to help keep us all connected at this unusual time.



Sunday School



Our Sunday school kids have been adapting to meeting remotely. Through online meetings over the past month we have decorated our homes for Lent and Easter, played Simon says, gone on a scavenger hunt, and created our own worship time.

All year we have been learning about parts of worship, and for the last month of the school year we will be learning about Baptism. While some of our activities will look different, this does seem like a good time to focus on the spiritual practice of washing up!

Kids in preschool through 5th grade (and sometimes their family members, too) are gathering twice a week through Zoom. On Wednesdays at 4:00 pm we chat and play silly games. On Sundays at 10:00 am we have Sunday school. For safety reasons, invitations to these Zoom sessions are sent directly to parents and grandparents and no longer posted online. If you know someone who would like access to these gatherings, please give their email address to Katie at kjwatson4@gmail.com. Katie is also mailing activity packets to kids about once a month. If you know a child who would like to receive a packet, please let Katie know their address.



Photo from Kristen Bailey Miller

Steve Hollingsworth—Poetry

Dear friends,

In January, before the corona virus started to take hold and change our lives, Becky and I were fortunate to complete a safari trip to Kenya and Tanzania in Africa. As I worked on photos from that trip, one of them struck my poet strings that resulted in the poem "The Serenity of Being." Then, on the weekend of March 28 and 29 while on a walk, as I approached the Community Center I noticed some of their flower beds of daffodils had exploded with blooms. After I retrieved my camera and started taking photos of the daffodils some thoughts started to flow through my mind....thoughts that no matter how dark, painful or fearful a certain time may be seasons still occur - spring still blooms and beauty is reborn. The result of those thoughts is the poem "Opening Solo." I hope that in this time when fear, pain and grief have a legitimate place in the milieu of our lives, these two works provide some sense of beauty and hope to contrast with those more negative feelings we may be dealing with. If you want any further information on the photos please let me know.

Enjoy on the following page!

The Serenity of Being



The clouds, seeming to be infinity's way of calming my awe-struct soul
Touch the rim of Ngorongoro as zebra graze on the grass of its bountiful bowl.
Without an immediate threat of a stalking lion but a hundred-foot dash away,
Serenity fills the youthful progeny with glee as it readies to run, bound and play.
Time and tomorrows do not exist for them as peaceful moments become all
And the simplicity of their place in this life is like that of the manger's stall.

My mind, filled with all the variables I discern viewing this mystical and idyllic scene
Wonders if our sense of time, space and reason is good or just sets evil's mean?
Are our abilities to do good and bad, to create great beauty and grand ugliness
Controlled by us or pawns of the forces of cosmic desires seeking evenness?
Standing in this place left by one of earth's fiery apocalypses of becoming
I smile through the dust I am and thank my sacred one for the glory of being!



Opening Solo

A daffodil bloom patiently awaits,
As spring moves at a leisurely gait,
Its solo on the stage of summer's play
Of color, frilliness and a sunny day.

Before me a new bloom of spring,
Oh, the beauty her birthing doth bring,
Droplets of the shower now done
Her child waits for the warming sun.



With such grandeur she takes her place
At the forefront of elegance and grace
Reminding us to seek and see the lovely
In a world sometimes given to the ugly.

Not content with being only beautiful
She presents a mystery just as bountiful
Until we can only stand in consummate awe
With the love now ours from what we saw.



Plymouth Donations

If you feel the call to donate to Plymouth during this time of uncertainty, please consider using our online method by using your smart phone's barcode scanner. This QR Code/Scanner tag will take you to the Plymouth page at eservicepayments.com.



To scan this QR code, open the camera on your device and hover over the QR code. Once your camera focuses on the code, an option to follow the link will appear. You can also download a QR scanner app! 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.



April Birthdays



2	Joyce Black	15	Scott Rigdon	21	George Irmscher
3	Sam Lipscomb	15	Sharon Christian	21	Gina Arata
3	Jessamyn Schmidt	16	Jane Meredith	21	Allie Brown
4	Jacqueline Brabbs	16	Monty Millage	22	Mary Ann Sidell
6	Sally Gerard	16	Eric Gilliom	22	Rhys Rudolph
6	John Gardner	16	Beth Price	23	Randal Lawrence
7	Jeffrey Kolkman	16	Collin Ramsey	24	Sandy Moliere
7	Heather Brackeen	17	Steve Ross	24	Robin Ames
8	Jeff Markley	17	Chris Randolph	24	Michael Walter
11	Deb Miller	18	John Donley	25	Diane Lasley
11	Courtney Dienelt	18	Debby Compagnone	25	Claire Roney
12	Linda South	18	Audrey Velagapudi	26	John Hoffman
13	Thomas Baker	19	Maggie Jordan	27	Chris Lasley
13	Melanie Hollingsworth	19	Lenora Lewark	29	Bill Vrabel
14	Isaiah Atienzo-Fisher	20	Joni Sutton		

Tapping Into Faith



A special Zoom meeting for Tapping Into Faith will take place on April 30 from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm! Join Plymouth people and friends for cold brews, conversation, and community!

Instructions including the link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out via eBlast!

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