



# The eBell

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

## From the Senior Pastor

### Now Is the Time to Dismantle Racism



Our country is in a *kairos* moment. This is a way to think about time that means basically “an opportune time for action.” As Mark 1:15 says, “the *kairos* has been fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near.” This is in contrast to *chronos* time, which is linear time as we might measure with our watches. But as it concerns our country’s collective attention on racial justice and state violence, it feels like we are in a decisive moment, a *kairos* moment.

I’ve heard the phrase *kairos* used before: in calls to ending hunger, in efforts to end the Iraq War in the 2000s, and in others. Often it feels forced, like the speaker is saying, “What we need is a *kairos* moment,” and by declaring it, is almost wishing it into existence. But this feels different. We are seeing people in cities around the country protesting against state violence against Black bodies and for racial justice. And it’s not just the usual places like New York City or Los Angeles: we’re seeing it in nearly all-white small towns; we’re seeing people of every race and age come out; we’re seeing people do a 180 and finally, belatedly acknowledge that yes, “Black Lives Matter,” after dismissing or denigrating the phrase for years. I’ve not seen this in my lifetime (full disclosure: I was born in 1982!).

Over the past few weeks, a number of things have been intersecting in my ministry that seem to be saying, “Now is the time.” As protests began in Fort Wayne and around the country (now world) for racial justice and ending state-sponsored violence against Black people, I was teaching an online class planned for months focused on “Theological Activism.” Yesterday (I write this on June 11), I participated in an online anti-racism training with the Disciples of Christ, which is required of all Indiana clergy. By comparison, when I went to my first Black Lives Matter event in Fort Wayne in October of 2018, there were maybe 75-100 people there. It was mainly ignored; now hundreds and thousands are out every single day and it’s impossible to ignore them.

Over the past two weeks, I’ve stood with black clergy in Fort Wayne on the need for racial justice and the importance of nonviolence, walked with about 300 people from Imani Baptist Temple to Lutheran Park for a prayer vigil, and marched in a gathering downtown from the courthouse to the MLK bridge; at the latter I wore my clergy collar (and mask!) and had my go-to racial justice sign saying “Jesus Ain’t White.” In those gatherings, I’ve seen numerous Plymouth people showing up out of our deeply held faith commitments.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Worship and Plymouth

Even as our state continues to reopen, the daily average infection rate for COVID-19 has doubled in Allen County from where it was in early May. Plymouth leadership remains cautious, and we are planning on transitioning to a live streamed service on Sunday mornings starting in mid-July. This will begin with severely restricted in-person numbers with permitted numbers being adjusted over time based on public health recommendations and contextual prudence. Please watch for an update in the coming weeks for details.

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 communicate easily with other Plymouth people! You must already have a Facebook account to join this group.

Plymouth Church continues to send out 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 on Tuesdays at 4:00 pm and Sundays at 9:00 am. If you are not receiving these eBlasts, please check your spam folder. If you still are not receiving them, please contact Mackenzie at [mmg@plymouthfw.org](mailto:mmg@plymouthfw.org).

## Plymouth People In Our Prayers

Archer Family, Mariellen Beitman, Trevor Burns, Casey Cade, Carleen Carteaux, Natasha Chemey, Wayne Clouse, Kris Conner, David Cornwell, Brad Crowder, Jan Gibson, Quinn Hacker, Joan Hartwig, Susan Jarvis, Bob Jensen, Nancy Jordan, Ginny Laudadio, Brian Laurenz, Joan Lipscomb, Sheldon Lockwood, Eric Miller, Bill Morgan, Karen O'Neal, Carol Patterson, Bonnie Pennock, Mike Popp, Noel Resor, Donna Riethmiller, Anne Rowland, Rick Schilb, Patrizia Saladini-Stark, Jacqueline Sanders, Barbara Senn, John Shannon, Isabelle Shockney, Johanna Smith, Gordon Walter, Chris Week, Amanda Wray

Sympathy is extended to family and friends on the death of George Irmscher, May 21.

## Quilt Raffle for the Fort Wayne Downtown Optimists

The Optimists were hoping to have a quilt raffle this fall. We are looking for someone who is willing to donate a quilt or sell us one at a generous discounted price for the raffle. The club's purpose is to support kids projects like the Boy and Girls clubs of Fort Wayne, Fairfield school, Oxford community children's programs and other projects that help out kids. If you can help, please contact Bill Balasia at [wbalasia@gmail.com](mailto:wbalasia@gmail.com) or by phone at 608-897-6134.



**For the month of June we pray for:  
SCAN Inc. and the Center for Non-Violence,  
whose work is supported in part through  
Plymouth Benevolence**

*Continued from Page 1*

As allies and partners with other people of faith and conscience, we are seeking to embody our covenantal commitment to a "Just Peace." You could make an argument that this is also part of what it means to be "intensely local" in promoting "Global Mission."

For the past twenty years, a central part of my sense of call has been to ministries of social justice. Over time, that's clarified to issues of racism, classism, ecological devastation, and nonviolent direct action as a means to force social change. I've been supportive and advocated for other areas, but the center of my call has been especially focused on combating racism and dismantling privilege as spiritual practices and what it means to be a white Christian living in the United States. And right now seems to be a time when things might actually change for the better. It could be a time where the forces of creative transformation will be strong enough that they cannot be ignored. But it will not be easy or simple.

Racism is insidious. It infects practically every institution in the United States. Police departments are not the source of this disease; they merely reflect patterns that were established over centuries of the United States' being fundamentally a place that was designed to keep white people in control and subjugate people of color. In that way, it is our original sin, a condition that we live with, less of a choice and more of the air we breathe. Because of this, such deep systemic sin cannot be overcome simply through individual repentance and contrition. There is a role for individuals, but our commitment to end racism is not enough. We must confront the systems that benefit white people while oppressing people of color. I think we can do that best when we ground ourselves in the conviction that ending systemic racism is good for all of us, even those like me who it is ostensibly designed to benefit.

So I see a two-fold task: we must work for changes in our society and culture, including policy changes that disproportionately hurt people of color, and we must look at ourselves, including our congregation. For just as we are to witness to what we want to see in our world, that witness will have more integrity if we have also done our own work to dismantle racist patterns even here at Plymouth Church.

The point is not to feel ashamed or guilt. In his entire ministry, I cannot think of a single time that Jesus used shame as a motivating factor for transformation. As Mark 2:17 attests, Jesus said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners." All of us are unwell with racism, either in how we have internalized its lies devaluing us or its lies that justify controlling others. Those who say they are well will not seek out a physician. But Jesus is ready to help us if we recognize our collective sickness and pray in our spirits and with our actions that the demon of racism may once and for all be cast out of our lives, our church, our society, and our nation.

I'm ready to do that laborious but life-giving work; I look forward to seeing you on the frontlines.

Peace,

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



## From the Associate Pastor

Dear Friends,

June 3 you received my letter of retirement in one year with my final Sunday being June 6, 2021. I treasure opportunities to connect with you. Whether by phone, email, or perhaps in person with at least six feet of social distance and wearing our masks, it will be my joy to visit and talk with you as we are able.

COVID-19 has put us in digital mode now for three months and continuing. If you are experiencing thoughts and feelings similar to mine, it is to begin comprehending how extensively this pandemic affects all aspects of our lives for the long term, until a vaccine or a cure is discovered by scientists.

“Social Distancing, Not Social Isolation” is a webinar I took on June 16, by the Lombard (IL) Mennonite Peace Center. It is my intention to share with you in upcoming communications the insights from this brief seminar based on the Family Systems approach to relationships. As we continue our Phone Tree, we are considering changes that may come as we enter our “second wind” of connecting while distancing.

Prior to the “stay-at-home” mandate, I had scheduled with Parkview Regional Medical Center’s Advance Care Planning (ACP) team to give a seminar after worship, April 26. Since that plan was cancelled, I have scheduled with ACP to give a virtual seminar as a webinar on Sunday, August 9, 11:00 am. You will receive details about how to sign up for this by the August 2 deadline. An emphasis will be placed on conversations that must happen with ones family or friends.

Stay safe and Be well,

Rev. Ruth E. Phillips



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## Plymouth Week at Just Neighbors: July 19—July 24

Plymouth is the host for evening meals at Just Neighbors for the week of July 19 through July 24, 2020. Many members of our congregation have provided food for this worthwhile program for many years, but we always welcome new participants. Just Neighbors’ mission is to serve homeless families by uniting religious congregations, community volunteers, and local agencies in a cooperative effort to provide shelter, meals, and compassionate professional support. Each evening, Sunday through Friday, we provide a full meal which consists of main course, a vegetable, fruit, dessert, and anything else you may want to contribute. Dinner is served between 5:15 pm and 5:30 pm. We ask that you prepare food for 24 hungry adults. There are children and adults staying at Just Neighbors and the number of individuals changes from week to week, so this is the guideline we use. The staff at Just Neighbors often tells me that they look forward to the Plymouth weeks because we bring a wide variety of meals. We know everyone is busy so if you can provide part of a meal, like a vegetable, or some fruit, that is great. Please do not shy away from contributing because you do not have time to cook up a whole meal. Some evenings we end up with three or four church members making and contributing portions of the meal.



Due to additional measures being taken because of COVID-19, Just Neighbors has made some changes to the procedures for dinner. They are asking volunteers to drop off their dinner contributions during the day to the administration building. The staff will then take dinner over to the family center in the evening. If something needs to be heated up, please include written instructions so the families can warm up your contributions.

If you would like to be added to the group mailing list for Just Neighbors, please provide your email address and contact information to Diana Bauer, [dcb1120@gmail.com](mailto:dcb1120@gmail.com). I currently use Sign Up Genius to send out group emails, but if anyone has suggestions on other formats, those would be appreciated. Questions always welcome. You can contact Diana Bauer at 260-414-5582.

## Positive Resource Connection Supply Drive

The Evangelism & Marketing Board wants to give a delighted “Thank you!” to everyone who participated in our supply drive to benefit the Positive Resource Connection. It is important to include as well folks outside of Plymouth who participated, including a number of people from First Congregational UCC in Angola and at least two people who saw the drive information on Facebook and decided to donate money directly to PRC online. This outpouring of generosity manifested good news for the PRC and their clients.



While the PRC receives some grant money to help keep their food pantry stocked, they do not have dedicated funding for personal hygiene and household cleaning supplies. We all can agree that access to these items is essential, regardless of one’s financial resources - particularly for those who are immunocompromised, and especially during a pandemic. It is safe to say that, thanks to you, the PRC currently is well-stocked to assist anyone in need of assistance.

We are awaiting an “official” count from the PRC as they get our donations sorted and put away. What we know already is that we crammed two vehicles full, stacked to the brim with laundry detergent, dish soap, toilet paper, menstrual supplies, toothpaste (so much toothpaste!) and toothbrushes and mouthwash, lotion, shaving supplies, deodorant, shampoo, shower gel and bar soap, hand sanitizer and hand soap, and yes, even some food. It was remarkable!



The PRC’s Executive Director, Jeff Markley, met us at the building on Saturday so we could deliver our donations. As we were unloading the bags and boxes, he said, more than once, “This is amazing!” He said that these sorts of donations through drives are great because of the volume of items received, of course, but just as important is the message it sends. It lets people know that they are seen, their needs are taken seriously by the community, and their neighbors care about them. The psychological impact, he said, is just as good and necessary as the actual toothpaste or shampoo.

This is good churching, friends, and it’s our goal to have monthly drives to benefit various organizations in our community - we are here for good. So keep your eye out for information about our drive for July. We don’t have to be in the building to keep being the church!



January Simpson  
Evangelism & Marketing Board



### Plymouth Office

Staff returns July 6; however, due to social distancing requirements, the building will remain locked and staff will not be regularly attending the front desk. If you need to gain access to the building, please make arrangements with our Office Manager Tina Puitz by emailing her at [office@plymouthfw.org](mailto:office@plymouthfw.org). There are safety protocols in place to help maintain safety for all. The building is looking bright and shiny and regular cleaning continues throughout the day.

## Supreme Court: Civil Rights Law Protects LGBTQ Workers

Even as Plymouth works to dismantle persistent injustices happening in our world, it's worth celebrating victories wherever we find them. The Supreme Court ruled on Monday, June 15, 2020, that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which makes it illegal for employers to discriminate because of a person's sex, extends to all LGBTQ workers and covers sexual orientation and transgender status. More information can be found [here](#).



## Christmas in July Special Collection: July 19, 2020



The Benevolence Committee invites you to celebrate Christmas in July by donating to the UCC's Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and Emergency Fund. That's a long name for a simple, and necessary, resource for retired UCC clergy and their surviving spouses. For many clergy, particularly those serving small congregations, robust savings and pensions that keep pace with increasing costs of living just aren't possible. Upon retirement, they, and their surviving spouses, struggle to make ends meet after a lifetime of service. Donations to the Christmas Fund allow the UCC's Pension Boards to offer assistance when it is needed most.

In 2018, donations from congregations across the UCC provided \$2,000,000 in assistance, including: monthly pension supplements for 379 retirees, health benefits supplementation for 174 retirees, Christmas "thank you" gift checks for 401 retirees, and emergency grants to 49 active and retired UCC clergy and lay employees in urgent need.

To donate to the Christmas Fund, you can send a check to Plymouth Church with "Christmas Fund" in the memo line or [click here](#) to donate online. When donating online, type the amount into the line titled "Other Special Fund" with "Christmas Fund" on next line.

Let us give generously and with gratitude to God for the good work of these faithful servants.

**Poor People's Campaign**  
A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL

**MASS POOR PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY  
& MORAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON  
IS GOING DIGITAL**

On **June 20th**, we will hold the largest **digital and social media gathering** of poor and low wealth people, moral and religious leaders, advocates, and people of conscience in this nation's history. A global pandemic is exposing even more the already existing crisis of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. **On June 20, the 140 million poor and low-wealth people across this nation will be heard!**

**IN THE MIDST OF CHANGING TIMES,  
OUR MOVEMENT CONTINUES...**

*... because we won't be silent anymore.*  
*... because everybody has a right to live.*  
*... because poor and low wealth people will suffer most in this crisis.*  
*... because our demands must remain front and center in this critical election year.*

**REPAIRERS OF THE BREACH** **KAİROS**

Twitter: @UniteThePoor | Facebook: @anewppc | Website: poorpeoplescampaign.org

In the midst of more and more folks being awakened to the reality of systemic racism, police violence, mass incarceration, health inequality and poverty, the Poor People's Campaign is more important than ever. There were several of us at Plymouth who were going to the gathering in Washington, D.C. on June 20, but COVID-19 changed that plan. Instead of marching, we will now gather online.

You can still become involved by tuning in and listening on this day with millions of folks to hear poor and low wealth people speak along with clergy and other advocates. This is a time to listen and then decide how you can take action, because we all can in some way. But listening and becoming informed is the first step.

[Poor People's Campaign website](#) does an amazing job of giving you the tools to share the message which is good for someone like me. I hope to "see" you all on June 20, because as the flyer states "we won't be silent anymore".

Jan Evrard

## 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 donation page, or you can click [here](#). 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.



# Congratulations to the 2020 High School Graduates!

Plymouth recently celebrated Graduate Sunday! We asked our high school graduates the following questions:

1. What were your thoughts on online learning? Were some aspects of education easier or harder because they were not in person?
  2. How have you stayed connected with friends and family during social distancing?
  3. What are your goals now that you have graduated?
  4. How has Plymouth helped shape who you are today? How has your time at Plymouth shifted your perspective on certain topics or the world?
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## Riley Grim

1. I didn't really like online learning, especially since Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) never had a set platform for online learning. We had to use something that only mostly resembled the online learning platforms that other school systems had. However, that being said, since FWCS did not have a good platform for online learning, when FWCS grades were frozen, the only classes that students had to worry about were the college classes, as college grades were not frozen. This allowed me to only worry about my one college credit class.
2. My family (not including me) has gone out to my grandparents' house occasionally but stayed at least 6 feet away from the house, as per CDC guidelines. I never got a chance to go out there because I've been working. To keep in touch with all my friends, we have a group chat that we all message from time to time about what we're doing or any issues with schoolwork that we have.
3. My first goal is to move out. I'm done living in a small room and I'm ready to have my own living space. I have too much stuff for the room that I'm in right now. After that, I plan on going to Purdue Fort Wayne for Mathematics as well as a minor or even double major in Music Theory. I'm not sure exactly what I want to do with those, but I know that these subjects are two things that I really enjoy.
4. Plymouth has really helped me with accepting other's thoughts and ideas, regardless if I agree with them or not. I've learned that acceptance isn't about agreeing, but rather respecting another's ideas and giving some thought into why they think that way. It's not about who's right and who's wrong, but instead all the different perspectives of concepts and how things work.



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## Kathleen Simunek



1. Online learning wasn't ideal, as most of my classes were AP and discussion based, or hands on (like dark room photography). But my teachers did a good job using zoom and adapting to make the classes still worthwhile.
  2. I have made a lot of new Indiana University (IU) friends already, and I've kept in touch with them as well as my other friends via FaceTime, Zoom, Snapchat and Instagram.
  3. I am so excited to be going to the Jacobs School of Music at IU and all the incredible experiences that I will gain through that! I really hope I will make connections that will set me up for a successful career.
  4. I love how open Plymouth is. The views of acceptance towards anyone is something that is not super common in our community and I like that.
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## Kennon Nicholson

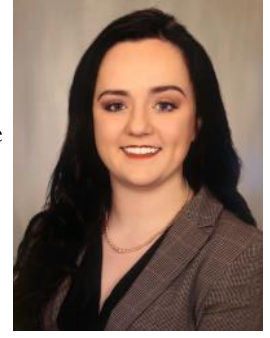
Kennon Nicholson is graduating from Classical Conversations, a Home School Program. Kennon is looking at Ball State or IU for future college possibilities, with the thoughts of going for a Technology Degree. During these COVID-19 times he has stayed connected with family and friends through social media. Kennon says "Plymouth has been a great place to learn and grow. I wouldn't say it has changed my views but I would say that it has opened my eyes more."



# Congratulations to the 2020 College Graduates!

## Emma Walker

Emma Walker graduated from the University of Saint Francis with a Bachelors degree in Social Work. She graduated with high honors and as a member of Phi Alpha Honors Society for Social Workers. She also received the distinguished Social Justice Award which is given to one senior every year who fights for the rights of those who are oppressed, marginalized, and gives a voice to those who otherwise would often go unheard. Emma is beginning her career as a social worker helping advocate for those who have been impacted by sexual assault, and domestic violence.



## Elena Dupen



Elena Dupen is graduating with a Bachelors of Science in Botany and a minor in Education from Oregon State University. She is currently involved in a small scale Willamette prairie restoration in Corvallis, OR, and looking for jobs in environmental education and ecological restoration. She hopes to apply to graduate school in a couple years once she narrows down a field of interest. While at OSU, Elena was involved in treble choir for all four years and ballroom dancing for three. She was the vice president of the undergraduate Botany Department for one year, and the co-president for another year. She received a leadership cord from the College of Agricultural Sciences and is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. She also studied abroad in Edinburgh last fall.

Elena would like to mention her education was also partially funded by the Richard Nelson Kent Memorial Fund through Plymouth Church. “I am tremendously grateful for that fund and the people behind it.”

## Camp Plymouth

Camp Plymouth is underway! In our first week, Explorer Week, we played with a tinfoil river in our backyards, practiced our observational skills on walks and hikes, and gathered on Friday for a Zoom scavenger hunt. All week long, kids had access to videos of stories and activities created by Plymouth’s youth and adults.

Camp Plymouth is 8 weeks of free online activities for kids in preschool-5th grade. We want to get this resource out to any families who could use this support. Families are welcome to participate in any way that is useful to them — this might mean attending some weeks or picking and choosing the activities they would enjoy. If you or a family you know would like to participate, please contact Katie Watson (email below).

A big part of this camp effort is helping our kids and families remember they are not alone through this time of separation. Volunteers are needed to record short video lessons—to share a skill, show a magic trick, demonstrate a science project, or read a story. If you are interested in serving our camp, please contact Katie (email below).

Finally, Camp Plymouth needs counselors—middle and high school aged youth ready to help come up with activities for the younger kids and to share their activities online. We meet on Zoom, Tuesdays at 7pm, to plan the upcoming week. Contact Katie at [kjwatson4@gmail.com](mailto:kjwatson4@gmail.com) or Kara at [kkjaurigue@gmail.com](mailto:kkjaurigue@gmail.com) if a youth in your home would like the Zoom links.





# June Birthdays



1	John Silcox	10	Dick Stumpf	23	Steven Price
3	Amanda Minchski	11	Kris Conner	23	Cammy Sutter
4	Sally Felger	11	Lois Teders-Horn	24	Laura Ramsey
4	Susan Jarvis	12	Dwight James	25	Diane Bauer
4	Roger Meneely	12	David Meriwether	25	Ranelle Melton
4	Curt Smith	13	Mariellen Beitman	25	Gordon Walter
5	Cassidy Bradley	14	Spencer Jordan	26	Jan Modesitt
5	Bryce Western	14	Pamela Pfrang	27	Harriet Siples
6	Caleb Hollingsworth	15	Chris Colclessor	28	Millie Dove
7	Julie Davidson	15	Laura Filler	28	Beth Lauer
7	Trevor Harkenrider	15	Karen Holdeman	28	Kyra Mendenhall
8	Rick Schilb	15	Melody Sutter	30	Jon Allmandinger
8	Jonah Silcox	18	A'Qwaun Graff	30	James Arata
9	Tim Chronister	19	David Weber	30	Roberta Braunlin
10	Elizabeth Carter	20	Kirby Volz	30	Joann McDonald
10	Marty Kabisch	22	Michele Dollarhite		

## Financial Report

May 2020

	Month Actual	Month Budget	Month Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 62,296	\$ 64,499	\$ (2,203)	\$ 328,818	\$ 329,149	\$ (331)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$ 76,845	\$ 93,586	\$ (16,741)	\$ 341,882	\$ 358,363	\$ (16,481)
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	\$ (14,549)	\$ (29,087)	\$ 14,538	\$ (13,064)	\$ (29,214)	\$ 16,150

## Contact Us

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