

# Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

## Fifth Sunday of Easter



Herbert Boeckl, *Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch*, Angel's Chapel, Seckau Abbey, Styria, Austria, 1952-60.

**April 28, 2024**

**9:30 am**

We Practice Just Peace: doing justice, seeking peace  
We are Open and Affirming: welcoming LGBTQ+ people  
We Listen for the Still Speaking God  
We are striving to be an Anti-Racism church  
Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking isn't.

*Please inquire with people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.*



## God's Promise of New Life

One: God hears our confessions – those released in spoken words, and those held silently in our hearts.

**All: The call to look beyond our single stories can be hard to answer. Fear of the unknown, fear of losing ground, and pure stubbornness prevent us from fully welcoming the stranger.**

One: God's love is stubborn too, and it lives within us as surely as air fills our lungs. Breathe in God's love, exhale false comforts, and your feet will turn back to the path of reconciliation.

## Sung Response

NCH(black) #17

To you, O God, all creatures sing, and all creation, everything,  
Sings your praises, Alleluia!

As savory fruit and fragrant flower show forth your glory and your power,  
Singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

## Word for All Ages

## Sung Response

NCH(black) #524

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, this little light of mine,  
I'm gonna let it shine, This little light of mine, I'm gonna let shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

## HEARING THE WORD

**Scripture Readings** Acts 8:26-40

1 John 4:7-12, 19-21 adapted

One: May God bless to our understanding these words of Holy Scripture.

**All: Amen**

## Message

“Eight Billion Sacred Stories”

Alison Thatcher

## \*Hymn

Blessed Assurance

NCH (black) #473

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

## Offertory

O Praise God in His Holiness

John Weldon

*We invite you to remember your support for the ministry of PCUCC.*

**\*Doxology** Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise God, all creatures here below  
Praise God above, you heavenly host:  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Unison Offertory Prayer**

God of beauty and wonder, we marvel at your diverse creation and steadfast love. Our individual, varied gifts cannot all be contained within an offering plate. May each gift we give and part we play throughout this week further your kin-dom of extravagant welcome and open affirmation. Amen.

**Prayers of the People**

Pastor: O God, in your grace and mercy . . .

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Prayer of Our Savior**

All: Our Father\*\*, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
forever. Amen.

\*\*We believe that God is revealed in persons of all genders and sorts; we also honor tradition.

**SENDING**

**\*Hymn** I Love to Tell the Story PH (red) #317

**\*Pastoral Benediction**

**Choral Benediction** The Lord Is My Hope Aaron David Miller

**Postlude** Gavotte Samuel Wesley

The Postlude ends our gathered worship and sends us into the world where our true service begins.  
Feel free to let the music lead you out, or stay to listen, however the Spirit moves you.

Please join us downstairs after worship for coffee, food, and fellowship.

### **Keeping in Prayer:**

Prayers for Georgene Fabian who is recovering at Genesis Rehab Center. She would appreciate visits and cards sent to 175 Blueberry Ln, Laconia, NH 03246

Prayers for Ken Morris, very good friend of Butch & Donna Castor, who has metastatic cancer

Prayers for the Rev. Judy Downing, friend of Eileen Torrey, who is critically ill with an aortic aneurysm

Love and condolences to the family of Carl Getty, Eileen's brother-in-law, who passed away in Michigan on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>

Prayers for Ruth Mosher as she undergoes outpatient dialysis.

Prayers for Rebecca Herr, as she undergoes chemotherapy

Prayers for the people of Ukraine

Prayers for Eleanor Spencer's brother, Ron Ury

Prayers for Alice Carey, friend of Alice O'Connor, who will be undergoing radiation therapy

Prayers for Kristin, friend of Alice O'Connor, who has recently been diagnosed with cancer

Prayers for Paulette Brace's son, Shawn Cassington, for ongoing medical issues

Prayers for Sage Pirnie and her family, granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie

Prayers of healing for Sue Switaj

Prayers for our partner church in Zimbabwe, Masvingo UCCZ

*If you have a prayer request, please write on the yellow card in the pews and place it in the offering tray, or send an email to [plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org](mailto:plymouthpastor@uccplymouth.org)*

### **This Week and More at PCUCC**

Tuesday, April 30	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Wednesday, May 1	10:00-3:30 Red Cross Blood Drive
Wednesday, May 1	11:00 am Lectio Divina
Thursday, May 2	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Friday, May 3	8:00 pm AA Meeting
Monday, May 6	10:00 am Book Group
Monday, May 13	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Tuesday, May 14	7:00 pm Concert: Claire McCahan

### **CHURCH LIFE**

#### **Preaching Schedule:**

April 28: Alison Thatcher

May 12: Alison Thatcher

May 5: Rev. Rebecca Larson

**Concert: Claire McCahan:** An evening of art song with Claire McCahan and Allan DiBiase. Tuesday May 14, 2024 at 7:00 pm sponsored by the Joan Campbell Lovett music fund. Also featuring Molly McCahan. Free, donations taken at the door.

**Attention church members and friends.** Nominating Committee is looking for interested individuals to join our church committee teams. If you have a passion and willingness to share your time and talents to contribute to the life of our church please consider joining one of the wonderful groups of dedicated committee members. Please reach out to Megan Magrauth after church or by emailing [meganmagrauth@gmail.com](mailto:meganmagrauth@gmail.com).

**Learn about Mission & Social Outreach:** The M&O Committee chooses a “Monthly Mission Focus” for our congregation, a focus based on current needs, requests, and interests. Examples include: a collection of packaged food for our 2 Food Pantries and of items for the local non-profit Voices against Violence; a congregational donation to national Medical Debt Relief; UCC “5 for 5” Special Mission Offerings; and writing letters to our Ukama church in Masvingo, Zimbabwe. At its monthly meetings, this committee discusses previous and upcoming monthly Mission initiatives, brainstorms new ideas and local volunteer opportunities, and plans on donations to local organizations from our budget. Contact Ruth Martz at [ruthm.joy@gmail.com](mailto:ruthm.joy@gmail.com) for more information.

**Interested in becoming a member of PCUCC?** We will be receiving new members soon. If you would like to become a member of PCUCC or know of someone who would like to become a member, please contact Ruth Martz or Eileen Torrey.

**Our Food Pantry shelves are almost bare!** Please help your fellow community members in need by buying a few extra items for our food pantry on your next shopping trip. Suggested items are tuna in packets, canned goods with flip tops, and single serve applesauce, granola bars, and trail mix. You can leave items outside the church office or place them in our Little Free Food Pantry in front of our church building. Your donation has a huge impact on this essential ministry!

**Lectio Divina:** All are invited to gather Wednesday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon for a Bible study modeled on Lectio Divina, the sacred reading of scripture. Please join us. Rebecca Larson will lead us.

**Book Group** is reading [Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future](#) by Patty Krawec. Join the discussion on May 6 and 20 at 10am in the parlor. Contact Kathy Henning for more information: [henkat52@gmail.com](mailto:henkat52@gmail.com).

**Knitting Group** meets every second and fourth Monday of the month at 1:00 pm. Join us with your fiber art of choice, trouble-shooting questions, or just for fellowship!

**Smores Time! Sign up for an UCC Outdoor Ministries Camp!** Kids & Adults are Welcome! Horton Center is currently accepting registrations for sessions this summer. Come enjoy a transformative week on top of Pine Mountain celebrating the beauty of God’s natural wonders and be a part of this incredibly supportive and positive community. Catalogs are available and can also be found online at [www.hortoncenter.org](http://www.hortoncenter.org). Conference scholarships are available. Counselors are also needed- enjoy great food and fun and a week of camp for free! Contact Tivvi Pare at [tpare@nhcucc.org](mailto:tpare@nhcucc.org) or Megan Magrauth at [meganmagrauth@gmail.com](mailto:meganmagrauth@gmail.com) with any questions. Hope to see you on the mountain this summer!

**Spring Plant Sale Upcoming June 1:** Calling all green thumbs! We're looking for donations of a variety of indoor and outdoor plants AND veggies plus pots to use for the sale. More information coming soon! Please reach out to Jenny Thibeault at ThibeaultJennyR@gmail.com or 603-254-7824 if you have any questions.

### FROM MISSION & OUTREACH

**Soft Plastics Collection April and May:** All soft plastic MUST be cleaned of food, dried, and stick-on labels cut out. Soft plastics include items such as: plastic bags, frozen food bags, plastic wrappings, bubble wrap, mulch/dirt bags, plastic nut bags, etc. Please place items in the large box in the Narthex and the bag in Fellowship Hall, where there are also samples. All soft plastic will be brought to the UU Church in Laconia, where it is trucked to Maine and repurposed into composite Trex decks and furniture. Thank you! Please pick up excellent resources for limiting your use of PLASTIC: “Real Faith in a Synthetic World: Plastic Jesus.”

### FROM FINANCE

Imagine together what we can do *The spiritual practice of generosity arises from imagining all that God calls us to do as a community. Our donations to our congregation make it possible to turn what we imagine into a reality. Through our annual commitments to our congregation, we imagine together all that we can do.*

Our current fiscal year closes on June 30. As we look back at all we've accomplished we look at the financial support needed to keep the flexibility, creativity and faithfulness of our church alive and thriving. The budget, of course, is the biggest driver in determining our mission and ministry focus for next fiscal year, 2024-25. Council and Finance will meet later this month to review church finances and priorities and determine next year's budget which will be presented to the congregation. Although the church has several sources of income, your pledge is most important in influencing the mission and ministry focus in the next fiscal year. You will soon be receiving information regarding our 2024-25 stewardship drive. With your financial support, we will be able to continue supporting the mission and ministry of our congregation. Please contact Linda LaPrad or Ann Thurston if you have any questions. Imagine together what we can do

**Support PCUCC with no cost to you!** Purchase a **Hannaford Gift Card** in the amount of \$100, \$250, or \$500 by contacting Linda LaPrad or Ann Thurston. For every card purchased from the Finance Committee, the church receives 5% with no additional cost to you.

## Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday 9:00-2:00

If you have a family emergency and want to talk with a pastor, please call Rev. Ruth Martz at 603-630-7936 or you may call Eileen Torrey at 603-252-7513.

Alison Thatcher, Office Administrator	office@uccplymouth.org
David A. Williams, Director of Music	musicdirector@uccplymouth.org
Jennifer Byam, Director of Faith Formation	faithformation@uccplymouth.org
Ann Thurston, Treasurer	treasurer@uccplymouth.org

Preaching: Alison Thatcher

Accompanist: Dan Perkins

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### Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in April and May in our Community

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to: office@uccplymouth.org

Wayne Martin	April 1	Troy Tedeschi	May 9
Sue Switaj	April 5	Eric Kelsey	May 12
Sabrina Tedeschi	April 17	Robbin Adams	May 20
Michael Carrier	April 25	Tessa Nicole Kelsey	May 22
Jim Preston	May 2	Jenny Thibeault	May 23
Alison Thatcher	May 8	Kathy Henning	May 24

