

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

Third Sunday in Lent



Sequoia National Forest, Jordan Siemens, Getty Images

March 23, 2025

9:30 am

Our Congregational Values Include:

Seeking peace with justice

Welcoming LGBTQ+ people

Listening for the Still Speaking God

Striving to be an Anti-Racism church

“Our faith is 2000 years old; our thinking is not”

*Please inquire with people before assuming they are okay with physical contact.
Worship Services may be viewed online at the Plymouth UCC Facebook Page*

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Berceuse

Edvard Grieg

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please sign the **red friendship** pad and return it to the center aisle noting your neighbor in the pen.*

You may leave your email if you would like to receive our weekly newsletter.

If you want to know more, email the office at office@uccplymouth.org.

Sunday School for all ages begins after the Message for All Ages. Children are welcome to fill a bag with books and toys (in the narthex), to use during worship.

THRESHOLD to the DARK WOOD

INTROIT

“There’s a Path” (*see insert*)

Chuck Bell/Marcia McFee

The Choir will lead the singing; the congregation is invited to sing each “echo” in response.

*Those who are able may stand.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (*Based on Psalm 29*)

Liturgist - Deb Kershner

One: The voice of the Holy One is over the waters;

ALL: The God of glory thunders over mighty waters.

One: The voice of the Holy One flashes forth flames of fire.

ALL: The voice of God shakes the wilderness;

One: The voice of the Holy One causes oaks to whirl,

ALL: And in God’s sanctuary, all say “Glory!”

One: May God give strength to all peoples!

ALL: May God bless all peoples with peace!

*HYMN

“How Great Thou Art” (*See insert*)

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: May the peace of Christ be with you. **ALL: And also with you.**

UNISON GATHERING PRAYER

**Awesome Love, we open to you and to the gifts residing deep
within the holy darkness of our lives.**

**Form us as your expectant people, who watch for the movement
of your Spirit coming through quiet intuition or thunderous “a-has.”**

Walk with us, speak to us, call out to us today.

In your many names we pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

One: For being too busy to be wonder-struck by your works,

ALL: Forgive and restore us, O God.

One: For filling the holes in our spirit with things that cannot truly feed us,

ALL: Forgive and restore us, O God.

One: For denying the world our best selves,

ALL: Forgive and restore us, O God. (*Silence*)

WORDS OF GRACE

One: Hear these words of assurance: God is already making a wonder of you.

You are a part of this awesome creation. God is with you,

forgiving and restoring you to wholeheartedness.

ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen!

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Sung Response

This Little Light of Mine

NCH (black) #524

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (3x)

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS Job 37:1-5 Luke 7:36-50

One: May these words of Holy Scripture leave us thunderstruck!

All: Amen

MESSAGE

“The Gift of Being Thunderstruck”

Rev. Ruth Martz

*HYMN

“God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale”

NCH(black)#32

Verses 1, 2, 3, 6

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY

“A Right Spirit”

Stephan Casurella

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.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

**O God in Christ, we thank you for the gifts that you give us,
especially the thunder of your voice that reverberates within our hearts
and fills us with awe. Let us walk with you through this season of Lent
with loving hearts, strong faith, and trust in your guidance.
We offer to you our deepest selves, so that we might bring the best
of our energy and wholeheartedness to the world.
Accept, we pray, all our humble offerings. Amen.**

TIME FOR REFLECTION *(with quiet music)*

We invite you to think of a time when you felt “thunderstruck.” Perhaps you felt a big “a-ah!” Perhaps the right decision or next step suddenly became clear. You may have felt transfixed, as if time had momentarily stopped. Or it may have been a time when you were awed by God’s presence through nature, a person, or an event. You experienced overpowering wonder, peace, or joy in that moment. **Please turn to someone seated near you;** share your memory and listen to the other person’s memory, for 1-2 minutes each. (If you prefer simply to reflect or write in silence, you are welcome to do that).

SONG “Come and Rest” *(see insert)* Chuck Bell/Marcia McFee
The Choir will lead the singing; the congregation is invited to sing each “echo” in response.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Response: Hear your people at prayer.

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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.**

If you prefer, please feel free to pray: “Our Creator” or “Our Father and Mother.”

SENDING

*HYMN

“O How Glorious, Full of Wonder”

NCH(black)#558

Verses 1, 2, 4

*PASTORAL BENEDICTION

Eric Elnes

May the Spirit of the Living God,
Made known to us most fully within life's Dark Wood:
Go before you to show you the way; Go above you to watch over you;
Go behind you to push you into places you may not necessarily go yourself;
Go beneath you to uphold and uplift you;
Go beside you to be your strong and constant companion;
And dwell within you to remind you that you are surely not alone,
And that you are loved—loved beyond your wildest imagination.
And may the fire of God's blessing burn brightly upon you, and within you,
Now and always. **Amen.**

SONG

“There’s A Path”

The Choir will lead the singing; the congregation is invited to sing the “echo” in bold.

There's a path (**there's a path**)...and it leads us out together
To the wood (**to the wood**)... where the darkness hovers still
We are sent (**we are sent**)... and the Spirit goes before us
God says, *Go* (**God says, Go**)... *be my presence in the world.*

POSTLUDE

My Lord! What a Morning

Emma Lou Diemer

The Postlude ends our 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.

Thank you to all who help set-up, provide goodies, and clean-up.

WORSHIP NOTES

Liturgy (except Call to Worship) by Marcia McFee (www.worshipdesignstudio.com).

Keeping in Prayer:

Barbara and Tom, family members of Linda Laprad

Joshua Burdick, brother of Sarah Caron

Joan whose son passed away after heart surgery, from Fran Taylor

Peter Starck

The family of Paul Harman, from Larry and Eleanor Spencer

Martha Richards who is undergoing chemotherapy, from Alice O'Connor

Bill Straub who is undergoing tests for cancer, from Alice O'Connor

Mark Fabian who is recovering from brain surgery
Ruth Mosher as she undergoes outpatient dialysis
Sage Pirnie and family, granddaughter of Diane Arsenault and Pete Pirnie
The faithful work of our Pastoral Search Team
The people of Ukraine

Rev. Muchayi, his wife Maria, and our partner church in Zimbabwe

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 office@uccplymouth.org

This Week and More at PCUCC

Monday, March 24	1:00 pm Knitting Group
Tuesday, March 25	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Wednesday, March 26	6:30 pm Council Meeting
Thursday, March 27	7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, March 27	7:00 pm NA Meeting
Friday, March 28	7:00 pm AA Meeting
Monday, April 7	10:00 am Book Group
Thursday, April 17	7:00 pm Maundy Thursday Service

Preaching Schedule

March 30: Rev. Rebecca Larson, "The Gift of Getting Lost"

April 6: Rev. Rebecca Larson, "The Gift of Temptation"

April 13: Rev. Campbell Lovett, "The Gift of Misfits" (**Palm/Passion Sunday**)

Maundy Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 pm: Rev. Ruth Martz

Easter, April 20: Rev. Campbell Lovett

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING— "BE THE LIGHT"

This Lenten Special Mission Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. This Offering will be received on **Sunday, March 30**; you may also mail in a donation to UCC Plymouth church, with "One Great Hour of Sharing" in the memo line. **Warmest thanks** to all of you!

The benefiting month at Hannaford has officially begun for Feeding Our Children Together! Feeding Our Children Together will receive \$1 for every \$2.50 reusable Fight Hunger Bag sold during all of March at Route 25, Hatch Shopping Plaza, Plymouth NH.

Become a Pen Pal and Discover the World Through Letters! Hey there, Are you looking to connect with people from a far corner of the Globe, share stories, and learn about a new culture through the magic of writing? Then let's be pen pals! Jenny and Diane are setting up the Pen Pal program with our amazing Masvingo Zimbabwe church. We are excited to exchange letters with anyone who wants to chat about everything, discover new perspectives, and build a long-distance friendship. Please reach out to Jenny Thibeault or Diane Arsenault.

The Book Group is discussing Boys in the Boat by Daniel J. Brown for the month of April. Join the discussion on April 7th and 21st at 10am in the parlor. Contact Kathy Henning for more information: henkat52@gmail.com.

The 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!

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 Transition Team Member Rev. Ruth Martz at 603-630-7936.

Or you may call Eileen Torrey at 603-252-7513.

If you or a family member is hospitalized, please inform the church office so we can ensure timely pastoral care

Easter Flowers

Beautiful spring flowers to decorate the sanctuary on **Easter Sunday, April 20.**

Please make a donation of \$15 (or more) if you would like to dedicate flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one. A portion of your donation will go to the HOPE Fund. You may take a plant/flowers home or to a loved one after the Easter Sunday Service.

If you have questions, please call the church office at 603-536-2626

Please complete the Easter flower dedication information below for the bulletin

In Loving Memory of:_____

In Thanksgiving for:_____

In Celebration of:_____

Submitted by:_____

Make check payable to Plymouth Congregational UCC and return form to church office or place in offering plate. In order for your dedication to appear in the bulletin, **please place your order before April 16.**

Celebrating Birthdays and Anniversaries in our Community

If you have a birthday or anniversary this month or next, please email to:

office@uccplymouth.org

Margot Swift	March 20	Julie Kelsey	March 30
Caleb Sweedler	March 26	Megan Magrauth	March 30

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: Rev. Ruth Martz

Accompanist: Margot W. Swift

Transition Team: Rebecca Larson, Campbell Lovett, Ruth Martz

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

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