

# Waymarks

Plymouth Church | Helena Montana

February 2022

## Black History Month

It's the start of a new year, and we've just had our annual meeting. Part of that meeting was the vote on the budget for 2022. There were some questions about the money that we had raised and how we should steward that money. This is not an uncommon discussion in churches; I would hazard to guess that these types of discussions take up a disproportionate amount of the time and effort of the life of the church, no matter which church you're talking about. But, the congregation came to a decision, and we were all able to move on.

February is a new month, and with it comes an invitation to re-focus our discussion on the work of the church. February is Black History Month, and in our services, we will be doing our best to honor Black History Month with our choices of songs, sermons, scripture, and other readings. I'm also excited that the mayor of Helena, Wilmot Collins, will be joining us as a guest speaker on Sunday, February 20.

Black History Month can be a tricky time for a congregation, especially one that does not currently have any Black members in it. How do we know that we are saying and doing the right things? How do we make sure that in honoring Black History Month, we are doing more than simply paying lip-service to the existence and hardship of Black people in the world? What can we do to make sure that justice is a part of our lives all year long, and not just a seasonal observance?

While I don't have the answers to these questions, I think it is important that we ask them so that we can start to do the work of reparation and start tearing down the systems of oppression that are built into the very foundations of society. This work is hard, and it forces us to confront the prejudices that we all carry inside of us. Change won't happen overnight, but it won't happen at all if we don't start somewhere. So, let's ask the questions.

Grace and peace,  
Rev. Charles Wei



## News from Global Ministries

On Sunday, February 6, Andrew Larsen, a Helena native and Global Ministries missionary to the Philippines, appeared at Plymouth for a delightful and well-attended Fireside Chat following worship. Those attending appreciated hearing about his work, his personal road to missions, and about the politics and culture of the Philippines. The Outreach and Social Justice Committee is working to provide other Fireside Chats in the coming months. If you have an idea or suggestion of individuals you would like to hear from, be sure to let one of the Committee members know.



## New Art Exhibit in the Fireside Room

You undoubtedly know Pat Buell as our past treasurer, or as a gracious and hospitable greeter some Sunday mornings. Maybe you sit next to her in church or enjoy her way of making everyone at ease with her warm and sincere smile. But do you know Pat Buell, the artist? Though she showed a very early knack for drawing in elementary school, the twists and turns of life led her to jobs that could support her family. So art was put on the **back burner until the 1980's** when she took art lessons in Richland, Washington. Fast forward to COVID 19 and the many days most of us spent isolating and honing skills we had delayed exploring, Pat painted and painted. You will enjoy seeing some of the work she has produced recently, exhibited **in Plymouth's Fireside Room from now until mid March** .



## Disciple Group for February

“Hope” is the Disciple Group responsible for ushering, greeting, and the fellowship hour during February. We don’t want to imply that food motivates your attendance, but you may be interested in knowing that following Jay Sheldon’s delicious upside down pineapple cake on the 6th (a culinary act hard to follow), there are a few others you may want to add to your calendar.

Sunday the 13th, Super Bowl Sunday, features a sheet cake, one side decorated in support of the LA Rams, while the other half cheers on the Bengals. Let’s see which side disappears the fastest. On the 20th, President’s Day Weekend, we may be reminded of George Washington as his favorite, cherries, makes an appearance in a baked delicacy. And finally on the last Sunday of February and the week before Ash Wednesday, our treat table will look like Mardi Gras. We “hope” you will plan to stay after worship and enjoy one another’s company.




## Thanks from Nathan

Marcia Warner reports that Nathan is doing better, that his hair is growing back, and that he is overwhelmed with gratitude for your generous support during the Empty Stocking campaign this past December.

## Outreach and Social Justice Meets

The OSJ Committee meets on Friday, February 11th at 10 AM in the Fireside Room. At this meeting the group will hear from Valerie Hellerman, Executive Director of Hands On Global, about the Afghan refugees in Helena. Through Ms. Hellerman’s guidance the Committee will suggest ways in which Plymouth can respond to the needs of our new neighbors. The Committee will also continue discussion about a “Let’s Talk About It” imperative focusing on mental health, and will consider the future of and funding for the Gas Voucher program. You are welcome to join the discussion.



## Moderator's Message

We held our Annual Meeting on January 30, with 34 people in attendance. If you have not yet read the Annual Report, with each committee's report celebrating the year's accomplishments, please take the time to read it. Copies are still available in the Narthex. If you have suggestions for initiatives that should be undertaken in 2022, please communicate your ideas to the appropriate Council member.

At the meeting, I announced that Plymouth's Church Council is revising bylaws to reflect more accurately a committee structure that should help the church conduct its business more efficiently in the coming years. Please study these draft bylaws, since your input will be helpful as we continue to tweak them in preparation for congregational approval.

At the Annual Meeting, we also handed out "Prioritizing Budget Requests" to solicit your preferences regarding requests for programmatic, personnel, and capital expenditures. These requests must be funded from bequests or other large gifts (that were deposited into savings accounts), because the budgeted annual income from donations, facility use, and investment income barely covers ongoing personnel, worship, and facility expenses. If every request were fulfilled, we would deplete all of our reserves, which could jeopardize the ability to budget for basic operating costs. Please provide your feedback by February 14 by turning in the form at the church, mailing it, or clicking on the "Prioritization Survey" on the Plymouth website.

After fourteen years of steady, but slow growth and a recent significant contribution, our United Church Fund Endowment can finally begin to pay its promised dividends to Plymouth, adding income to the budget. The congregation voted to begin drawing this income at \$1,000 per quarter; but to suspend withdrawals if the fund value falls below \$100,000. Members are encouraged to donate to this fund, increasing potential annual income.

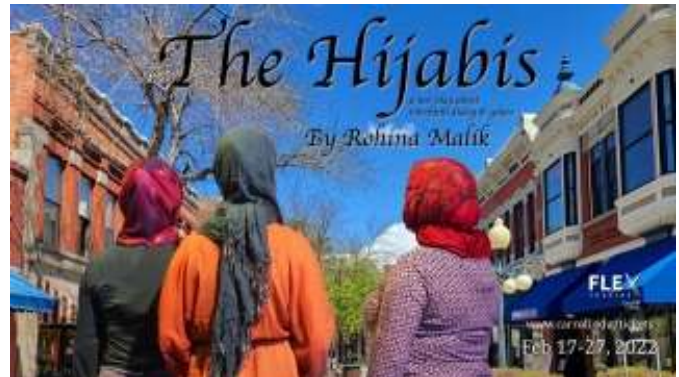
As the Moderator, my primary role is to represent the congregation to the Council. Please call or email me if you have ideas or concerns about the management or missions of Plymouth.

~ Jan Clinard

## Treasurer's Report

I want to thank the congregation for their attention and questions about the budget and the church's finances at the annual meeting held January 30. It is important that you understand and are engaged in the budget process. If there is anything you wish I would address in one of these reports, please do not hesitate to ask me or any council member.

~ Pat Christian



In the spirit of the successful Menorah Project, I believe these events would be of interest to members of Plymouth. Carroll College's Theater Department's upcoming performances of the play "The Hijabis" about three young Muslim American friends in a small town. The play is running from Feb 17-17 in the Flex Theater in the student center at Carroll beginning at 7:30. It will also be streamed live. The author, Rohina Malik, will be available after the performances Feb 25, 26, and 27 for "talk backs." She will be performing her one-woman show "Unveiled" Monday night February 28 at 7pm in the Flex Theater. Tickets - including for streaming - are \$15 and masks are required for in-person attendance. For more information, please see the Your Time in the Independent Record February 10th for a complete description and photographs or visit <https://www.carroll.edu/event/theatre-hijabis>

This production is part of a series of plays commissioned by Big Bridge Theatre Consortium on the topic of interfaith dialogue.

## In Our Prayers Today

At Home: Giles Walker, Margy Kohl, Jay Shelden, and Nathan Schreder as they go through cancer treatment. Lorraine Hopgood, for continued recovery.

Touchmark: Evelyn Nelson, and Art and Clara Gilreath; **Hunter's Point:** Marlyce Taylor; Edgewood: Ed Canty

Continued prayers for Kevin and his family.

*To add someone to the prayer list, please call the church office at 442-9883 or email [pccofficemgr@gmail.com](mailto:pccofficemgr@gmail.com).*

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## **Plymouth Church, U.C.C.**

400 S. Oakes St.

Helena, MT 59601

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**Plymouth's Mission is to nurture our congregation and the wider community with acts of love and a vision of God's image in all things.**



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Helena, MT 59601

### **Office Hours**

- Pastor Charles Wei: 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. (Tues. & Thurs.), and by appointment.
- Office Manager Gloria Soja: 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. (Wed.-Thur.)
- Bookkeeper Gail Tronstad by appointment.

**Sundays**  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service  
In Person and Online

### **Contact Us**

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**Also:** [www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational](http://www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational)