

Waymarks

Plymouth Church | Helena Montana

March 2023

Moderator's Message

Sermons, music, fellowship, funeral services, prayer, and missions are uplifting, comforting, satisfying--spiritual aspects of church. But the Council and I have been dealing with the not-so-spiritual. I'll share some examples.

Liz Gunderson brought to my attention House Bill 391, "An act requiring cities and counties to collect a user fee on certain exempt properties...based on square footage." Estimating this could cost Plymouth an additional \$5,000 per year. I contacted the bill's sponsor to point out that my church "already pays Lewis and Clark County \$10,000 per year for roads, water, and other community services. We pay the portion on everyone's Real Estate Statement of Taxes Payable labeled Special Assessments." I also informed Rev. Marc Stewart of this bill and he notified all Montana UCC churches. Perhaps our lobbying helped, because the bill was amended, then tabled in committee. However, other bills being heard by the Legislature may impact churches and/or our missions, such as creation care. On Saturday, the IR published an article by Executive Director of the Montana Catholic Conference, Matt Brower, who discussed the "space where religion and politics intersect." He wrote that Christians should "advocate for what is true, good, and beautiful, giving voice to the voiceless" in the law-making process. You can look up bills on <https://leg.mt.gov/bill-info/> and send your support or opposition to legislators.



Dick, Hal, and I have attempted to secure titles to two vans, abandoned by the previous daycare owner, parked at the church for the past three years. After an attorney's failed attempt, I've been to the DMV and the Sheriff's office. The process is complicated. If we simply wanted them towed and junked, it would be easy. However, one of those vans has value.

Building and Grounds Coordinator Terry Tatchell is working to resolve a new, more expensive requirement imposed on our unfinished fire alarm system by the Fire Marshall.

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I appreciate Terry's cool head, as I could ignite the building with my hair after all the twists and turns from this project.

We hope that by May 28, we will have the basement meeting room, re-christened the Founders' Room, cleaned and redecorated with the modular table and chairs, as well as framed tributes to Founders, pastors, and benefactors. Please help by verifying names and tidying up the room.

In the meantime, we have members exploring roofing and solar panels, improving signage and landscaping, and polishing floors. With our power bill skyrocketing, solar panels begin to look more enticing. Addressing the day-to-day expenditures, business and upkeep of the church helps provide a safe and welcoming environment to continue our mission of nurturing the congregation now and in the future. Perhaps there is something spiritual about that!

Blessings,

~ Jan Clinard

Please contact members of the Council if you have suggestions or questions:

Jan Clinard:	Moderator
Lynn Bolin:	Vice Moderator (Personnel Committee)
Jill VanAlstyne:	Secretary
Terry Tatchell:	Building and Grounds Coordinator
Pat Christian:	Treasurer/Financial Affairs Coordinator
Jennifer Jeffries-Thompson:	Outreach and Social Justice Coordinator
<i>and</i>	
Pastor Charles Wei	Worship Committee Coordinator

The next Council meeting will be March 23rd at 4:00 p.m.



Has anyone, by any chance,
seen the Christmas Eve
Banner that we hang outside
on our sign?

???





Dr. Richard Buswell and Dr. Liz Gundersen discussing Liz's presentation for the Montana Historical Society on the Holter Heart Monitor and the major contributions (yet under-reported) by Bill Glasscock



Mardi Gras



Lenten Reminders in the Sanctuary



Dave Hunter—special guest at the Outreach and Social Justice Committee meeting



Nancy Michelson at choir practice



Green Jello Class

Outreach and Social Justice: Creating Partnerships

- Clergy Advocates: In our efforts to be part of the local housing discussion, the Outreach and Social Justice Committee and Rev. Wei, invite the participation of other faith communities. Slightly different from the ministerial association, this advocacy group meets to learn more about housing challenges and to be in a position to contribute to solutions. In the coming months you will have the occasion to read in Waymarks short interviews with a variety of community leaders who are making a difference with regard to homelessness, the unsheltered, and the cost of housing. These articles in turn will be distributed to other faith communities inviting them to include the interviews in each of their own newsletters. We hope this will lead to a more invested corps of faith leaders who understand and speak to the issues facing our community. Frank Kromkowski interviewed Shannon Dinsdale of Good Samaritan for the first of the series, printed below.

The next meeting of the clergy advocates will be Thursday March 30 at 11:30 AM, when OSJ Committee members will provide a free lunch for those attending. If you would like to help prepare, serve, or clean-up, Jennifer will be glad to hear from you.

- **God's Love:** The first delivery of meat to God's Love took place in late February. With funds provided in memory of Sava Mathou and in honor of Dave Donaldson, we purchased beef, chicken and pork to help feed those in need of assistance. We will schedule at least two other deliveries in the months ahead.
- Carroll College and Refugee Students: At our last meeting, Dave Hunter provided some interesting background regarding two refugee groups currently attending Carroll. Seven Ukraine and Ethiopian students have escaped violence in their own countries, one of course by war, the other victims of civil discord. All leave behind families, friends and home. They need foster families and the support and encouragement of the Helena community. We will learn more from Dave and discern how Plymouth can be helpful in this outreach possibility.
- Tamarack House: Thank you to Lynn Bolin for providing fruit in February to the residents of Tamarack House, our neighbors to the west of the church. Liz Gundersen will deliver fruit during the month of March. We have heard that the seven adults living in the home are very pleased to meet new friends and are eager to show off their lovely home.
- Green Jello: The last class of the four-week series discussing end of life celebrations, called "**Hold the Green Jello: A Fun Approach to the Life Hereafter**", concluded on February 28. If you missed the class and are interested in learning more for future participation, connect with Charles.

~ Jennifer Jeffries Thompson, Outreach and Social Justice Chair

From our friend, Rev. Ed Stevenson, now residing near Kansas City:

Through Darkness to Light
" . . . he set his face to go to Jerusalem . . ." Luke 9:51

Lent,
length,
lengthen;
the days,
the daily period of light
lengthens.

In the north
the sun grows,
winter is two-thirds over.

So for centuries the church has asked
that we use this Lenten (lengthening) time,
this time from late winter to early spring,
this time from Ash Wednesday to Easter
to allow the light
of God's Christ
to grow in our lives.

Thus on Sundays in Lent
we read and hear
of Jesus' ministry,
his compassion, teaching,
miracles, fellowship:
we walk with him
and his followers
as they journey
to Jerusalem,
to crucifixion,
to death,
to resurrection.

In the same way,
during the days
of the weeks of Lent,
in prayers,
in fasting,
in scriptures,
in meditations, such as this,
in a hundred other ways
Jesus walks with us
through darkness to light.

*Helping our Sisters and Brothers Navigate the Housing Emergency in the Helena Area:
The Work of Good Samaritan Ministries' Housing Navigation Program*

by Shannon Dinsdale, Housing Navigator at Good Samaritan Ministries.



Shannon is a member of both the Vulnerable Populations Action Team in Helena's "MOVING THE DIAL" project on achieving affordable housing for all and of the *Clergy Advocates for Housing in Helena* group started by Plymouth Pastor Charles Wei in December.

To the members of the Plymouth Congregational Church,

As I stressed to Frank Kromkowski of Plymouth's Outreach and Social Justice Committee when he asked me to write about Good Samaritan Ministries' work in Good Samaritan's Housing Navigation program, *the situation concerning affordable housing in the Helena area is not merely a crisis – it is an emergency.*

I work as the Housing Navigator in the Housing Navigation Program, which is contracted with the City of Helena and Lewis and Clark County, and is currently located at the Good Samaritan Ministries (GSM). It has been an essential program to help combat the local housing emergency being experienced on a local and statewide level. The Housing Navigation Program has helped to bridge the gap between housing insecurity and homelessness for over 100 individuals and families in Lewis and Clark County.

Housing Navigation has helped assist vulnerable clients needing support with housing application paperwork, monetary assistance for application fees, advocacy with landlords/ property managers and to help maintain a safe place for ongoing support with day-to-day housing challenges for the working-class population. The Housing Navigation Program has helped to bridge the gap between housing insecurity and homelessness for over 100 individuals and families in Lewis and Clark County.

As the Housing Navigator, I stay with our clients, our sisters and brothers, until they have found affordable permanent housing solutions. This attribute sets this program apart from the other organizations in the Helena area that are helping with housing stability. Many programs will give clients HUD and income-based housing applications but then do not follow-up with the client to ensure that they have found housing.

Many community partners make referrals to the GSM Housing Navigation Program to help individuals and families find and secure suitable housing for their needs. Some community partners that have been referring clients to the Housing Navigation Program include Family Promise, God's Love, Our Place, Rocky Mountain Development Council, St. Peter's Health, Florence Crittenton, and local faith leadership.

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These types of community partnerships help citizens of the community to create and maintain sustainable and fulfilling lives for everyone in the Helena community.

The Housing Navigator collaborates with the local landlords, property management companies, and housing providers in Lewis and Clark County. The Housing Navigation Program was able to secure a professional partnership with a major local property management company in Helena, MT as well as three private landlords in Lewis and Clark County between November 2022 to February 2023.

Currently, the Housing Navigation program updates available rental listings each week, on the Good Samaritan website, www.goodsamhelena.org. The current rental listings are located on the Housing Navigation page of the GSM website, <https://www.goodsamhelena.org/housing-navigation/>.

It is important to build lasting strong real estate and property management partnerships as it allows the Housing Navigator the ability to advocate for clients on an individual basis to help humanize the application process.

The current rental market is extremely competitive as affordable housing is very, very limited in the Helena area. There are very few affordable housing options available in Helena due to an increased population of people already homeless and many who are one major financial crisis away from homelessness.

For more information about Housing Navigation and what the program can do to help you and/or the Helena community, please contact me, Shannon Dinsdale at 406-442-0780 ext. 104.

Blessings. ~ Shannon Dinsdale

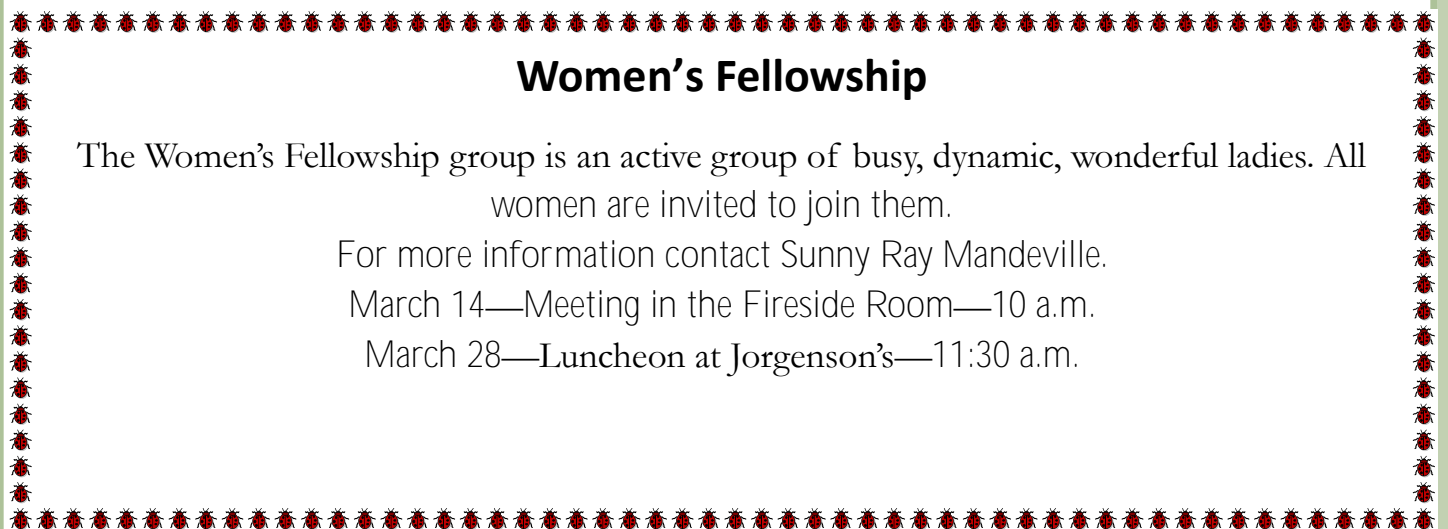
Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship group is an active group of busy, dynamic, wonderful ladies. All women are invited to join them.

For more information contact Sunny Ray Mandeville.

March 14—Meeting in the Fireside Room—10 a.m.

March 28—Luncheon at Jorgenson's—11:30 a.m.



**Congratulations
Rev. Dr. Marc Stewart
on your
retirement and
thank you for your
40 years' in Ministry!**



Words of gratitude and/or remembrance of Marc's ministry as well as questions can be sent to: jpenfield@mnwcucc.org



In Our Prayers Today

At Home: Giles Walker, Margy Kohl, Gus and Brenda Byrom, Greg Bolin, and Nathan Schreder as they go through cancer treatment. Loraine Hopgood, for continued recovery.

Touchmark: Evelyn Nelson, and Art and Clara Gilreath;

Hunter's Point: Marlyce Taylor; Jim and Doris Powell.

Edgewood: Ed Canty

Prayers for us and the families of Jay Shelden and Kay Burkhardt, as we mourn the loss of our loved ones. Continued prayers for Missie Nicole Pope, Jim Beran, and Anna Demaree.

To add someone to the prayer list, please call the church office at 442-9883 or email pccofficemgr@gmail.com.

Coming Up: 60th Anniversary

Sunday, May 28, 2023

We will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the groundbreaking for Plymouth Congregational Church on Sunday, May 28, 2023. To help us do that, you are invited to share recipes for a church cookbook, as well as stories and memories for a booklet we can hand out. Also, if you have any pictures you would like to share, or if you have any other ideas of how we can celebrate, we welcome all of that! Please send your recipes, stories, and pictures to pccofficemgr@gmail.com.



Photo by [NIPYATA!](#) on [Unsplash](#)



IN LOVING MEMORY

Jay B. Sheldon



Upcoming events at Plymouth

Sunday, March 12 at 11:30 a.m. after worship—Baked Potato Bar—Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, March 14 at 5:30 p.m.—New Members Class—Fellowship Hall

Sunday, March 19—One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering

Maundy Thursday, April 6, 6:00 pm—joint service and dinner with

First Christian Church

Saturday, April 8, 1:30 p.m.—Easter Egg Decorating—Michelsons' home

Tai Chi meets every Tuesday and Thursday at 5:30 p.m.—Fireside Room

Charity Knitting and Crocheting meets every Thursday at 2:00 p.m.—Fireside Room

Change of Pace AA Group meets Mon thru Sat at 12 p.m.—Fireside Room

Kathleen L. McLaughlin
1930 - 2023

Kay was the only child of Eva and Willard McLaughlin, of Indiana and New York States respectively. She lived her seventeen childhood years with her educator parents in India, until the 1947 Partition when India and Pakistan became separate sovereign countries. Many religions and cultures enriched her Himalayan boarding-school life despite the hard, invasive years of World War II. She graduated from Western Maryland College and is listed in the 1952 Who's Who of American Colleges and Universities. She holds a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School and a Commercial Art degree from the Colorado Institute of Art.

Kay married William A. Burkhardt, a minister in the United Church of Christ. Their ministries followed in New Canaan, Ct., in Hardin and in Helena, the capital of Montana. Bill served 22 years as the minister of Helena's Plymouth Congregational Church, as an elected delegate to the Montana State Constitutional Convention, and as Chaplain for four state legislative sessions. He preceded Kay in death in 2009.

Kay considered her family to be her greatest treasure: Daughter Kerry - an Educator in Special Education and English as a Second Language; Lindy - a university Dance Teacher, Theatre Choreographer, and member of the Young Americans National Tour Company; Cynthia - a social worker, Hospice Certified Nursing Assistant, and a Nevada Peace Place Caretaker; granddaughters Sarah - a Social Worker; Taylor - a Speech Therapist and mother to great-granddaughters, Gannon and Reeva. Two generations of sons-in-law: Jim, Chick, Evandro, Erik and Kyle, each highly regarded in their respective fields - Theatre, Education, Music and Construction.

Kay worked ten years for the Montana Department of Education, three of which as Consultant for the Arts: music, art, theatre, drama, and dance. She gave her energies to her church, played her oboe for 35 years, took lead theatre roles in college and summer stock musicals and directed Hardin's Community Theatre. She helped support her parent's long-term illnesses with commercial display work; and helped to build her rustic mountain home in Helena.

Published as Kay Mack, her poems are found in Pine Pitch Press Publications. Her nuclear weaponry and waste storage activism is the subject of Learning to Glow, published by the University of Arizona Press. Kay's colorful storytelling recounted her early life in India, and four adventurous high seas voyages, which entertained many high-country Montana backpackers sitting round their campfires.

Throughout her life she honored the beliefs and life journeys of all she met. And she passed joyfully attended by her family. Donations may be made to the Nature Conservancy, which is active in 39 countries and all fifty states.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Plymouth Church, U.C.C.

400 S. Oakes St.

Helena, MT 59601

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.



Plymouth Church

400 S. Oakes St.

Helena, MT 59601

Office Hours

- Pastor Charles Wei: 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. (Tues. & Thurs.), and by appointment.
- Office Manager Alane Dallas: 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. (Tues.-Thurs.)

Contact Us

Church Office: 406.442.9883

Web: www.plymouthmontanaucc.org

Email: pccofficemgr@gmail.com

Also: www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational

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