

# Waymarks

Plymouth Church | Helena Montana

March 2024

## A CHANGING WORLD

The world is changing, and all of us are wondering what it's going to change into. There are political changes afoot, and we are becoming more and more polarized, every day. For a country that was founded on the principle of the separation of church and state, we are increasingly being given religious reasons for the things that are happening in the halls of justice, and those buildings where laws are made. And, this is even before we move beyond our own borders. We are all watching the events in the Middle East, wondering how it's all going to end. It seems like we are only a hairsbreadth away from war erupting somewhere on the planet.



Technological change is happening. We are told about a new invention or scientific discovery every other day. It's estimated that computer speed and power doubles every one or two years. This week, as I write this, Intuitive Machines will be attempting a controlled landing on the moon. If successful, they will be the first private company to ever achieve such a feat. There is no way to know what the technological landscape is going to look like in ten or twenty years, and when I think back to what things were like as a child, I would have never been able to imagine the world of today.

There are, of course, the environmental changes that we are all so worried about. I learned very recently that concern about climate change began before I was even born. Scientists have been warning us about this for decades, and yet we have been unable to stop our trajectory into this perilous experiment that we are performing on ourselves. It's no wonder that so many people would rather stick their heads in the sand.



When I look at my one-year-old niece, I can't help but wonder what kind of world she'll be inheriting. I can't imagine what it's going to look like, and the pessimistic side of me is worried. I, like all of you, was born into a beautiful world, full of potential and possibilities.

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I would have been hard pressed to imagine anything that could threaten that. But now, I worry **that my niece won't have the same opportunities that I've had, and that her life will be much more complicated, dangerous, and uncertain than mine was.**

We all have opinions about these things, but we are often afraid to speak up, for fear of how we will be perceived. But, the world needs our voices now, now more than ever. God put us **here for a reason, and we have a responsibility to help bring God's wisdom, generosity, and love into the world. We need to live out the teachings of Jesus. We can't be afraid.**

The fate of the planet is not set in stone; there is still much we can do make sure that our world continues to be a world filled with potential and possibilities for the next generation. But, we need to act, now. We need to speak, now. We can no longer remain in the shadows. Our children are depending on us. ~ Rev. Charles Wei

## CLEANING COMMITTEE NEEDS YOUR HELP

It's time for us to find new ways to serve God and extend God's hospitality to others who visit Plymouth Church for worship and for many other activities and gatherings. In an effort to help balance our church's budget, I have volunteered to help put together an in-house cleaning crew that will help us keep our building spic and span. God needs your help and enthusiasm!

I've reviewed the cleaning requirements throughout the building and with your help, we can certainly maintain a clean, welcoming space! Several of you have already spoken to me about your willingness to give an hour or two once a month (or more often)—Thank you! If we can pull together rotating teams of 3-5 people who could help once or twice a month for an hour or two, we will achieve our goal!

Over the next few weeks, I'll have a sign-up sheet in the entry way and during coffee hour so that you can indicate how you can help. We need help with vacuuming, dusting, mopping, maintaining clean kitchen spaces and bathrooms, and more. I know we can do it together.

**How will you help to extend God's hospitality?**

~ Kathe Simons (603-860-4539)



## Moderator's Message

On February 25, the congregation unanimously adopted a revised budget for 2024, agreeing to increase their contributions and help with the upkeep of our church home and its grounds in order to close a budget deficit.

As I researched Plymouth's history in preparation for our 60th Anniversary, I was impressed by how much "sweat equity" our Founders invested in this property. Recently, Don Harriott, Terry Tatchell and others repaired the ceiling and insulated the north side of the sanctuary. Examples of members investing their time and talent into this church abound. The value of these "in-kind" contributions has been immeasurable.



In addition, our members have made significant monetary contributions over the years. An Endowment Fund was established in 2003; Elizabeth Feaver's 1990 gift to the Montana Community Foundation for Plymouth generates income of over \$5,000 annually to the church; and in recent memory, Betty Purvis, Ken Davenport, and others left legacies to the church. Many of us contribute to the Memorial Fund as gifts in memory of beloved members. Current members made sizeable gifts that allowed us to install new boilers. We now have about \$20,000 in contributions toward the \$35,000 goal for roofing and solar panels. These gifts, primarily set aside for capital expenditures, are critical to Plymouth's fiscal health. Your willingness to increase donations in support of the general operating budget and to volunteer your time reflects the generous history of Plymouth. I'm confident that we will "close the gap" and in doing so, enjoy our time together in service and in worship.

~Jan Clinard

### 2024 Council Members

Jan Clinard—Moderator  
Lynn Bolin—Vice Moderator  
Gail Tronstad—Treasurer  
Jill Van Alstyne—Secretary  
Terry Tronstad—Building and Grounds  
Gus Byrom—Outreach and Social Justice

We extend our deepest and heartfelt gratitude to Pat Christian (outgoing Treasurer) and Jennifer Jeffries Thompson (outgoing Outreach and Social Justice) for your joyful and steadfast service to Plymouth.

## LEAVE SPACE IN YOUR BUDGET FOR A MIRACLE

Treasurer—Gail Tronstad

Recently while scrolling through the web I noticed an image with the above saying in it. I **immediately thought of Plymouth's budget and wondered what kind of miracle we might experience.** Very quickly, I realized we are already experiencing miracles in our 2024 budget.

- Miracle 1 – Within days of the first budget approval (1/28) we realized there was an error in calculating the expenses causing a deficit. This is vastly easier to correct early in the year.
- Miracle 2 – The Finance Committee met and with thoughtful, amiable questions and discussion developed a revised budget that was accepted by the membership at our Special Congregational meeting this past Sunday, February 25.
- Miracle 3 – Kathe Simons stepped forward and is organizing volunteers to take care of weekly cleaning of the church, a savings of \$6,100.
- Miracle 4 – Several people have already increased their pledges.

How many more miracles are yet to come? Let us have open minds and open hearts to recognize and receive them. The Finance Committee will keep you updated throughout the year on the status of the budget – and the miracles!

If you are interested in:

- Being a part of the Clean Team, contact Kathe Simons. (see article on page 2)
- Increasing your pledge, notify Alane, office manager, of the change. She will update your record.
- Another way to help is to pay Plymouth \$20 to cover the cost we are assessed by the UCC conference for each member. Simply make your payment payable to Plymouth and note that it is for conference dues.
- Bring a container of coffee for Fellowship Hour.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your treasurer. I am grateful for committee members Lynn Bolin, Don Harriott, Al Simons, Terry Tatchell, Jan Clinard, Alane Dallas, and Pat Christian. During the coming year we will be tracking the budget, preparing quarterly reports to the Council, evaluating the best ways some of the special pockets of money can grow **and/or actively support Plymouth's mission and providing** regular updates in Waymarks.

If you have suggestions or questions, please contact any member of the committee or me. If you have an interest in attending a committee meeting please watch the Sunday bulletin for times and dates.



## THANK YOU Building and Grounds Committee

What a busy winter it has been around Plymouth!

In January, Don Harriot and Terry Tatchell and their many helpers worked on the north ceiling. Now that the north roof has been replaced, the sheetrock needed to be replaced from the water leakage we had last spring and summer. They also plugged the air gaps with insulation. It looks GREAT!



We also had our new fire alarm system tested (and approved) and a complete fire and safety inspection of our building in January. After a few suggestions made by the fire marshal, Terry installed a Knox Box, hung the AED in a prominent location, put up another EXIT sign for more visibility, had our fire extinguishers inspected and replaced where needed, purchased a new extinguisher for the kitchen area and ensured the large stove/oven and hood were cleaned, cleared and inspected. We still have one more little task to complete and we will be in full compliance. What an effort!

Thank you Terry! We are so very grateful for you and your team for everything you do to keep our building and grounds safe, well-maintained, and always looking beautiful.



## OUTREACH AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

### With Deep Gratitude

With deep thanks for Jennifer Thompson's great leadership, Outreach and Social Justice hopes to continue supporting the activities and projects previously begun. We hope to continue to support Helena's ongoing discourse about our responsibilities toward our neighbors who have no housing; initiating a crockpot ministry for Our Place once a month; supporting Family Promise; and many more.



Coffee sales are going fine. Quarters placed in the offering plate will be deposited in the Just Coffee account and used to purchase more coffee.

All are welcome to attend our monthly meetings—right now scheduled for the third Sunday right after church. Please call anytime with suggestion or email me.

~ Gus Byrom  
(406) 202-8768 / gbyromiii@gmail.com

**"What we see in Christ is sacrificial love. Merciful love. Love that values the well-being of others above itself. Love that will generously and fully pour itself out, whatever the cost, in order that the beloved might benefit, flourish, and thrive." — Krish Kandiah**

### **In Our Prayers Today**

In treatment/healing: Greg Bolin, Gus and Brenda Byrom, Maria Fabian, Jen, Margy Kohl, Nancy Michelson, Karen Mills, Kelly Murphy, Dianne Senne, Grace Solis, and Ralph Szymanski.

Bereavement: Evelyn Nelson's family.

Special Prayers: Ed Canty, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Richard and Carol Penfield, Jim and Doris Powell, Giles Walker, Chelsey, Jude, Gregory and the rest of Kat Curtis' family. The people of Israel and Palestine, Russia and Ukraine.

Prayers for us and the families of the victims of war and gun violence, around the world as we mourn the loss of our loved ones.

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



HAVE YOU SEEN THE BEAUTIFUL QUILT  
DISPLAY  
IN THE FIRESIDE ROOM?

**It's a wonderful display; full of color and creative design. Below are brief descriptions of each quilt. If you get a chance, stop by and visit this amazing art exhibit.**



**Goose Tracks—Marcia Lauer**

“I had just started using my embroidery machine and wanted to do something special and this was it! I thoroughly enjoyed making this quilt. Pattern designed by the Hoop Sisters.”

**Batik Coverlet—Kathe Simons**

“We left Maine in 2018 and traveled the United States for two years prior to moving to East Helena. Unfortunately, leaving our home in Maine meant that I had to part with all of my craft supplies. I was lucky enough to find a quilting club in Quartzsite, Arizona where we settled for the winter. Surrounded by new friends and lots of fabric, I was eager to create something colorful for our RV—a batik throw fit the bill!



### **Sunflower Quilt—Marcia Lauer**

“The Sunflower quilt was made because I had a good friend who had a child that was killed in an auto accident. I had just started quilting and saw this quilt in a magazine (Australian Quilters Companion—pattern designed by Susan Mathews) and decided it would be good for us to work on something like that. It has been over 20 years and we are still quilting together. My dear friend has said many times that quilting saved her.”



### **Seeing Double—Kathe Simons**

“We have some very high ceilings in our home. The wall space over our kitchen stove was calling for something special. I signed up for a class at the Sewing Palace to make a “staircase quilt” but decided that I needed to make it twice the size to fit that tall kitchen wall. I chose to use batik fabrics. Batik is an Indonesian

technique (originating from the island Java, Indonesia) of wax-resistant dyeing applied to the whole cloth and is now one of the most popular kinds of fabric used in quilting.”

### **Tulip Quilt—Patsy Tompkins**

“This fabric was purchased during my time working in the fabric department of Gibson’s here in Helena over 40 years ago. Raising four daughters, as well as working outside the home, I faced a time and energy crisis so the quilt fabric and pattern ended up in a drawer. It came out of the drawer when my daughter (Kathy Fields) found it, put it together, and quilted it by hand. .





# Creation Care Tips

## RECYCLING

Rev. Charles Wei

As we strive to be better stewards of the planet, figuring out what to do with some of the things we wish to dispose of can be confusing. Here is some information that might help:

### Electronics

406 Recycling collects electronics for recycling at the Good Samaritan Thrift Store parking lot, the last Friday of every month.

### Fluorescent light bulbs

Unbroken used fluorescent bulbs can be brought to Home Dept or Lowes to be recycled for free.

### Pharmaceuticals

Leftover medications should never be thrown away or flushed down the drain. There is a prescription drug drop take-back box at the Law Enforcement Center at 221 Breckenridge.

### Batteries

Used batteries can be recycled at Batteries Plus, at 3091 N. Sanders.

## HANDS ON GLOBAL PRESENTS:

### “Why Should I Care”

March 7, at 7:00 p.m.—**St. Paul’s Methodist Church**

Jeannie Warden and Hands On Global presents “Why Should I Care,” a documentary film addressing the unsheltered population in Helena, Montana. The film is a compilation of interviews with unsheltered folks, the non-profits that serve them, the faith community and citizens of Helena who are involved.



Following the film, there will be opportunity for discussion led by Sam Forstag, Director of the Montana Coalition to Solve Homelessness and will include non-profits and city representatives. Plymouth’s exhibit “Faces of Our Unsheltered Neighbors” will also be featured.

Attendees are encouraged to think outside the box and to discuss the issue in a different way. This event is free. If you have any questions, contact Valerie Hellermann (406-439-3580).

### “Faces of Our Unsheltered Neighbors” Photo Exhibit

#### Upcoming Schedule

- ◆ March 6, 7, and 8th at St. Paul’s Methodist Church—HGTV documentary “Why Should I Care”
- ◆ March 8th through March 12th—Rocky Mountain Development Council spring fundraiser
- ◆ April—First Christian Church—Disciples of Christ
- ◆ May—Montana Legal Service
- ◆ June or July—University Congregational Church, Missoula, Montana



Charlie and Serenity.



## Women's Fellowship Group

The Women's Fellowship Group prepared Valentine's gift bags filled with heart-shaped cookies, chocolates, and other sweet treats and delivered them to our members who are unable to physically come to church. Thank you ladies for your loving devotion to the members of this congregation!  
~Sunny Ray Mandeville

### March meeting schedule:

Tuesday, March 12th at 10:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room  
Tuesday, March 26th at 11:30 a.m. at the Overland Express Restaurant

Soup-er Bowl Sunday (February 11th) was a great success. Thank you everyone for your food donations given to Helena Food Share! Always a fun and worthwhile event.



THANK YOU Boy Scout Troop 218 under the leadership of Charter Organization Partner Tom Mazanec.

Troop Members: Jayson, Aaron, and Chaze.

They presented the flags and the Pledge of Allegiance before worship service on February 11th and retired the flags at the end of the service.

This was very special for the boys and for us.

AND—thank you Carol McKerrow and the worship committee for arranging this event.

## YOU'RE INVITED!

Palm Sunday Brunch: March 24th after the worship service (Fellowship Hall). Women's Fellowship Group will be serving soup, salad, and a dessert. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Summer Camp: SAVE THE DATES! You & Me, July 5-8; Youth Adventures, July 8-15; and Great Escapes: August 25-30.

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## Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC

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.**



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](http://www.plymouthmontanaucc.org)

**Email:** [pccofficemgr@gmail.com](mailto:pccofficemgr@gmail.com)

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

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