

*Plymouth*  
Congregational Church  
*United Church of Christ*

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Image by Liane Metzler on Unsplash

**April 14, 2024**  
**Third Sunday of Easter**

# ***Plymouth Congregational Church***

## ***United Church of Christ***

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!*

**April 14, 2024 • Third Sunday of Easter • 10 a.m.**

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*\*An asterisk invites you to stand as you are able, in body or spirit.*

### ***Prelude***

#### **Welcome and Announcements**

Pastor Charles

- Bible Study: Tuesday, April 16, 9:00 am, Fireside Room.
- Spiritual Practices Retreat: Friday & Saturday, April 19-20, First Congregational Church, Great Falls—\$25/person. See Pastor Charles for more details.
- Helena Interfaith Climate Advocates (HICA)—Earth Day Vigil, Saturday, April 20, 10:00—11:00 a.m.
- Sandwich Ministry with BSUU: 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month, 9:30 a.m.
- Summer camp dates: You & Me: July 5-8, Youth Adventures: July 9-15, Great Escapes: August 25-30. Registration is now open!

**Poem**      the final paragraph of Mere Christianity—by C.S. Lewis

Keep nothing back.

Nothing that you have not given away will ever be really yours.

Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead.

Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay.

But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him, everything else thrown in.

## Invitation to Worship

*adapted from Psalm 4*

Al Simons

One: Answer me when I call, O God! Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer!

**All: You have set apart the faithful, O God,**

One: You hear when I call!

**All: Let the light of your face shine on us!**

One: You have put gladness on my heart,

**All: For you are our comfort and our strength!**

One: Selah!

**All: Selah!**

## Gathering Hymn

*"Living for Jesus"*

*(insert)*

**Unison Prayer** *(please be seated)*

Pastor Charles

**God of Rebirth and New Life, we pray for renewal. As we emerge from the depths of winter, we look forward to the return of green things. Let us grow, as life emerges from the ground. Let us love and hope, as the days grow longer and the plants begin to bloom. We ask with a spirit of thankfulness and joy that you help us to grow into the people that you want us to be. [We invite you to rest in this brief moment of silence to listen for God's loving message for you this day.] (30 seconds) Amen.**

## Assurance of Grace

Al Simons

People of God, hear the good news! God is like the face of the sun, warm and life-giving. In God's light, there is shelter. In God's light, there is hope. God's love is stronger than evil, stronger than hate, stronger than death. So, know that you are surrounded by God's love, and that no matter how deep the shadows are, God will lift us up above them. Amen.

**Prayer of Illumination**

Patsy Tompkins

Eternal God, you are our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. Be with us now as we listen for your word. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

**New Testament Reading**

Acts 3:12-19

When Peter saw [that the man who could not walk was healed], he addressed the people, “You Israelites, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. But, you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you. “And now, friends, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah would suffer. Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.”

**Musical Interlude**

**Gospel Reading**

Luke 24:36-48

Pastor Charles

While [Jesus’ followers] were talking about [his appearance on the road to Emmaus], Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost.

He said to them, “Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.” And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?” They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” Then, he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”

## **Reflection**

### ***Musical Reflection***

*Steve Michelson*

### **Prayers of the People**

Pastor Charles

Creator of All Things, we thank you for your renewing spirit. We thank you for your blessings of creation and wonder, thought and imagination. We are awed by your generosity, by the abundance and diversity of the world. Help us to appreciate it, to welcome it and grow from it. Let us learn from all that you have given to us, from the truth and light that can be found in our sacred texts, to the prophets who speak difficult truths to us in our present day. Let us not be afraid of challenges, but face them boldly and bravely. We thank you, our Creator, for giving us the strength to do the work that needs to be done.

We thank you, Jesus, Our Lord, Risen and Alive, for the sacrifice that you made, and for the blazing fire of hope that you have kindled within us.

We thank you, Holy Spirit, Breath of Life, for bringing us together, for being the substance of community, for making all of us one family in God. Help us to take care of each other, and to love each other the way that you love us.

Mother and Father of us all, we ask that you be with all of those for whom no one ever prays, and move in us to care for this beautiful world that is our home, this sacred and precious gift that you have given to us out of your goodness and love. We offer special prayers for all those who are in recovery, for all those who are experiencing any kind of hardship or difficulty. We pray for Ed Canty, Jude Sebastian Curtis, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Richard and Carol Penfield, Jim and Doris Powell, Giles Walker, and the people of Israel, Palestine, Russia, and Ukraine. We lift up Greg Bolin, Gus and Brenda Byrom, Jen, Liz Gunderson, Margy Kohl, Nancy Michelson, Karen Mills, Kelly Murphy, Dianne Senne, and Grace Solis, as they continue medical treatment. We pray for us, and the families of Archie McRee, Bill Worcester, and all of victims of war, gun violence, and natural disasters, as we mourn the loss of our loved ones.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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.

## Tithes and Offerings

If you would like to participate in the ritual of offering electronically, you may do with this QR code.



### \*Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessing flow,  
Praise God, all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

### \*Prayer of Dedication

#### \**Departing Hymn*

*“Fairest Lord Jesus”*

*(insert)*

### \*Charge & Benediction

Pastor Charles

Remember that the power and mystery of God is all around you. We are surrounded by miracles every day; we just need to look for them and recognize them. Life is a miracle. Love is a miracle. Every breath that we take, every beautiful sunset, every meal, every laugh, these are all gifts from God. So, know that God is with you, and that God is always, always showering you with love.

And now, may our Creator God instill within you a spirit of creativity. May Jesus the Christ live inside of you, and help you to remember to love and forgive others, as well as yourself. And may the Holy Spirit always be with you, as you make your way on this journey that we call life, so that you will never be alone. Go in peace. Amen.

### \**Congregational Blessing* “Go Out Now in Peace”

212 *(Sing!)*

### *Postlude*

*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.*

— TODAY'S MINISTERS —

*The People of Plymouth Congregational Church, assisted by*

*Rev. Charles Wei—Pastor*

*Al Simons, Patsy Tompkins —Liturgist*

*Dr. Steve and Nancy Michelson—Music*

*Carol McKerrow—Liturgical Art*

—ANNOUNCEMENTS —

**Sign-up sheets for liturgists**—in the narthex.

**Welcome Visitors and Prayer Card** in your pew rack. We are delighted to have you worshipping with us today. Please let us know your prayer requests and anything else you'd like to share. Place your card in the offering plate.

**Just Coffee!** Contact Gus Byrom or Dick Mayer to buy your coffee and help support ministry (\$12/lb).

**May 5 is World Laughter Day**—Do you have any funny photos, short funny stories, and/or clean funny jokes with regards to PCC? How about a “PCC Funnies” page for the May Waymarks. Contact Alane in the office if you have ideas, something to contribute, and

**YOU'RE INVITED!**

**Bible Study:** Tuesday, April 16, 9:00 a.m.—Fireside Room.

**Finance Meeting**—Wednesday, April 17, 9:30 a.m.—Fireside Room

**Seeking God – Spiritual Practices Retreat led by Rev. Charles Wei:** April 19-20, First Congregational Church of Christ, Great Falls -\$25/person.

**Summer Camps:** You & Me: July 5-8; Youth Adventures: July 8-15; Great Escapes: **August 25-30. Registration is now open!**

**Vigil for the Earth:** Saturday, April 20, 10-11:30 a.m.—Plymouth Congregational Church.

**Sandwich Ministry with BSUU:** Second and fourth Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.—meet in the kitchen. Your help is thankfully welcome.

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**Pastor Charles' e-mail—[pastorplymouthmt@gmail.com](mailto:pastorplymouthmt@gmail.com)**

**Pastor Office Hours—Tuesdays and Thursdays—9am to 4pm**