

Plymouth
Congregational Church
United Church of Christ



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May 5, 2024
Sixth Sunday of Easter

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

May 5, 2024 • 6th Sunday of Easter • 10 a.m.

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

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor Charles

- Bible Study: Tuesday, May 7, 9:00 a.m.—Fireside Room.
- Summer camp information is now available in the narthex: You & Me: July 5-8; Youth Adventures: July 8-15; and Great Escapes: August 25-30. Registration is now open!

Invitation to Worship

Psalm 98

Lynn Bolin

One: Sing to God a new song!

All: God has remembered her steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.

One: All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God!

All: Make a joyful noise to the Lord!

One: All the earth, break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

All: Sing praises with the lyre and the sound of melody!

One: All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God!

All: With trumpets and the sound of the horn!

One: Let the sea roar, and all that fills it! The world and those who live in it!

All: Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy!

***Gathering Hymn**

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You"

4 (NCH) vs 1-3

Unison Prayer

Pastor Charles

Ever-Present God, we know that you are with us. Give us strength, as we strive to create heaven here on Earth. Give us compassion, as we seek to understand those who are different from us. Give us courage, as we stand up to institutions and laws that exclude, hinder, and deny. Thank you for your presence, and for your promise to be with us now and forever. [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

Lynn Bolin

People of God, hear the good news! We have been empowered by God to bring justice, healing, and peace into the world. The time for action is not in some uncertain future. It is now! God is here, now! Trust in God, and in the goodness that God has birthed within you. And, know that we are never doing this work alone. The Almighty Creator walks alongside us, bolstering us up, and giving us courage. We are God's children, and we carry the seeds of change in our hearts. Amen.

Congregational Response "Called as Partners in Christ's Service" 495 (NCH)

Tune: Love Divine, All Love's Excelling

Prayer of Illumination

Loving God, open our hearts and our minds to hear your voice in the words written in our scriptures, and to find ways to reflect and respond as your children. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

New Testament Reading

Acts 10:44-48

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God.

Then Peter said, “Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” So, he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Musical Interlude “Let All the People Praise Thee” - Sleeth Plymouth Choir

Gospel Reading

John 15:9-17

Pastor Charles

As the Creator has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept God’s commandments and abide in God’s love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that God will give you whatever you ask in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection

Invitation to the Table

Pastor Charles

No matter who you are, or what you believe, God invites you to this table. Jesus has prepared the meal, and all are welcome.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving *(responsively)*

Sunny Ray Mandelville

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: We give you thanks, O God, for the beauty of creation, for the blessings and miracles of everyday life, and for the gift of life. You set us in this world to be truth-tellers and peacemakers, living in harmony with all of creation. We give thanks that when we turn from the ways of peace, you call us back with love.

All: We see the light, we know of love, through you.

One: Jesus shows us the way to a new world community, one in which the last is first, justice prevails, and resources are shared, so that all people may lead lives of dignity and feel valued. The world rebelled against his message, and he was crucified out of fear. But death cannot defeat life. Jesus breathed the Spirit upon his followers and gave birth to the church, Christ's body in the world.

All: Living Christ ever present; we welcome you in our lives.

Communion Hymn

"I Come with Joy"

349 (NCH)

The Communion Prayer

Pastor Charles

Gracious God, pour out your Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and grapes from the earth. By your Spirit make us one with all who share this feast. Unite us in love, and energize us to work for a world of peace and justice for all.

Mother-Father God, we thank you for making this space and time for us. We thank you for this bread and cup, through which your grace is revealed. And, for our continued spiritual journeys as we move on from this place, we ask you to walk with us.

We thank you for the special relationships in our lives, for our family and friends, colleagues and neighbors, they are all so precious to us. And, for everyone around us in need of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing, we ask for your loving care.

We thank you for the love you have shown us all of our lives, for giving us strength, and courage, and joy. And, for the people of the Middle East, and all of the war-torn places of the world, we ask for justice and peace.

We thank you, God, for the beauty that surrounds us, the mountains, and the streams, the grand miracle of creation. And, for all of your blessings, of which there are as many as there are stars in the sky, we thank you.

In treatment/Healing: Greg Bolin, Gus and Brenda Byrom, Jen, Liz Gundersen, Nancy Michelson, Karen Mills, Kelly Murphy, Dianne Senne, and Grace Solis.

Bereavement: Ken Kohl and Marlyce Taylor. The families of Evelyn Nelson and Bill Worcestor and all the victims of war, gun violence, and natural disasters.

Special prayers: Ed Canty, Chelsey Victoria Curtis, Jude Sebastian Curtis, Maxine Ferguson, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Jim and Doris Powell, Giles Walker., and the people of Israel, Palestine, Russia, and Ukraine.

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 have forgiven 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.

God's People Receive the Gifts of God

Bread

On the night that Jesus was arrested, he was celebrating the Passover with his friends, to remember the time that God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The Israelites had to leave so quickly that their bread didn't have time to rise, and so the bread became a symbol of freedom. But, this Passover was different, because Jesus said that he was the bread, because he would free them from sin and from death. And, after he blessed it, he broke it saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Whenever you eat of it, remember me."

Cup

In the same manner after supper, he took the cup. And, after he poured into it, he blessed it saying, "This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood. I am the vine, and you are the branches, cut off from me, you can do nothing. Whenever you drink of it, remember me."

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the saving life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ until he comes again.

Prayer After Communion

May we carry in our hearts the peace embodied in this bread and cup. Strengthen our love for one another and for all creation and let us be peace in the world. 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

Pastor Charles

****Departing Hymn*** *“Help Us Accept Each Other!”* 388 (NCH)

Tune: The Church’s One Foundation

Invitation to Fellowship:

In what ways could you be more compassionate in your life?

Charge & Benediction

We are all connected in this world, and it’s the Holy Spirit, God, who connects us. We have a responsibility to take care of each other.

Remember what Jesus said, “Whatever you did unto the least of these, you did unto me.” When you take care of each other, you are taking care of Jesus. When you love each other, you show your love for God. So, love Jesus, and love each other.

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

Lynn Bolin, Sunny Ray Mandeville—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 is 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 this ministry (\$12/lb).

YOU'RE INVITED!

Bible Study: Tuesday, May 7 at 9:00– 10:00 a.m.—Fireside Room. Led by Pastor Charles.

BSUU Sandwich Ministry: Wednesday, May 8 at 9:30 a.m.—meet in the kitchen if you would like to help make PB&J sandwiches for Our Place.

SAVE THE DATE: Helena Chamber Singers Present “From the Earth to the Sky” - Concert here at Plymouth—Sunday, May 19 at 4:30pm and Monday, May 20 at 6:00 pm. See the May Waymarks for more information.

Summer Camp—You & Me: July 5-8; Youth Adventures: July 8-15; and Great Escapes: August 25-30.

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