

*Plymouth*  
Congregational Church  
*United Church of Christ*



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**February 23, 2025**

**Seventh Sunday after Epiphany**

# ***Plymouth Congregational Church***

## *United Church of Christ*

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

**February 23, 2025 • Seventh Sunday after Epiphany • 10 a.m.**

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

**Pre-Service Music:** “Wade in the Water” - arr. Taylor      *Negro Spiritual*

### **Chiming the Trinity**

**Prelude**      “Down in the Valley to Pray” - arr. Althouse  
*Amy Allen & Amy Casne-Fetz (Guest Musicians)*

**Welcome and Announcements**      Pastor Charles

- Sandwich Ministry: Wednesday, February 26 at 9:30 a.m.—Kitchen.
- Worship Committee: Wednesday, February 26 11 a.m.—Founder’s Rm
- Memorial service for Nancy Michelson will be held here at Plymouth on Saturday, June 28 at 1:00 p.m. The reception will be held at the Michelson’s farm at 4:00 p.m. It will be a Memorial Potluck Dinner, and the family asks that you RSVP if you wish to attend.
- Bible Study: Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m.—Fireside Room
- Chime Choir: Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m.—Sanctuary

**Quote for Black History Month:** Wilma Rudolph, African American sprinter who was the first American woman to win three gold medals in track and field during a single Olympic Games.

*“Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us.”*

**Invitation to Worship**      *adapted from Psalm 103:1-14*      Brenda Senne

One: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name!

**All: Bless God's holy name!**

One: God works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed.

**All: God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

One: God does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.

**All: For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is God's steadfast love;**

One: As far as the east is from the west, God love knows no bounds.

**All: As a mother has compassion for her children, so God has compassion for us.**

**\*Gathering Hymn**      *"Oh My Soul, Bless Your Creator"*

NCH 13

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

Pastor Charles

**Creator God, we thank you for all of gifts that you have given to us.**

**When the problems of the world seem like they're too much, we ask for your inspiration, that we might bear your gifts proudly and courageously. Let us be your ambassadors, bringing peace and justice to all people, so that day by day, the world will be filled with more love, joy, and hope. [We invite you to rest in this brief moment of silence to listen for God's loving message for you this day.] Amen.**

**Assurance of Grace**

Brenda Senne

People of God, hear the good news! God has created a world of wonder and joy for us. We can spend each day of our lives experiencing something new, and still not exhaust the infinite creativity of our Creator. We cannot know what God has in store for us, only that it will be incredible. There may be hardships, but God will see us through them. There may be setbacks, but God will get us back up on our feet.

You need not fear what is to come, for God will always be with you.

Amen.

**Congregational Response** “*Kum Ba Yah*” (with responsive reading)      *Insert*

**Prayer of Illumination**

Brenda Senne

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.

**Reading from the Psalms**      *Psalm 103:15-22*

As for mortals, their days are like grass;  
they flourish like a flower of the field;  
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,  
and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of God is from everlasting to everlasting on those  
    who fear him,  
and God’s righteousness to children’s children,  
to those who keep God’s covenant and remember to do God’s  
    commandments.

God has established her throne in the heavens,  
and her realm rules over all.

Bless our God, O you angels,  
you mighty ones who do God’s bidding,  
obedient to God’s spoken word.

Bless our God, all his hosts,  
her ministers that do her will.

Bless our God, all his works,  
in all places of his dominion.

Bless our God, O my soul.

***Musical Interlude***

*Amy Casne-Fetz, Solo*

*Guest musician*

**Gospel Reading**

*Luke 7:36-50*

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and when he went into the Pharisee's house he reclined to dine. And a woman in the city who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair, kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him, that she is a sinner."

Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you."

"Teacher," he replied, "speak."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt."

And, Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment.

Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But, the one to whom little is forgiven loves little.”

Then, he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

But, those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

But, he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

## **Reflection**

***Musical Reflection*** “*Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*” - arr. Taylor *Negro Spiritual*

## **Prayers of the People**

Pastor Charles

God of Goodness and Celebration, God of Infinite Creativity, the love and the joy that you have placed within us cannot be contained. Let us carry the light of your grace to every person in this world, bringing healing and justice to those who need it most. Let us walk these lands of your creation boldly and bravely as ambassadors of your peace and mercy. Let those who encounter us see your face of kindness and generosity. Give us strength to protect the weak, and the patience and compassion we need to be a safe space for the scared and the lonely.

Mother and Father of us all, we ask for your sheltering presence for those who are experiencing the horrors of war. We lift up those who have lost loved ones, and for the victims of gun violence and natural disasters. As we wait for spring in the depths of winter, we ask you to protect those who do not have a home to keep them warm. We pray for those for whom no one ever prays, and we pray for the Earth, this beautiful planet that you gave to us to be our home. Help us to be compassionate towards the plants and animals that share this world with us, as well as all of the

other human beings that live here, no matter which country they reside in. You are the eternal light from which we draw comfort and strength. Thank you for always being with us.

Special Prayers: Ann Chivlicek, Maxine Ferguson, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Doris Powell, Marlyce Taylor, and Giles Walker. The people of Israel, Palestine, Russia, Ukraine, Venezuela and all who are experiencing the horrors of war. The victims of Hurricanes Helene and Milton, and the California wildfires.

Medical Treatment/Healing: Greg Bolin, Lynn Bolin, Gus Byrom, Karen Mills, Kelly Murphy, and Brenda Senne.

Bereavement: The families of Nancy Michelson, Mary Dana White, Richard Penfield III, and the families of the victims of gun violence and natural disasters.

Creator in heaven, holy is your name,  
Your kingdom come, your will be done,  
On Earth, as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
And free us from bondage,  
As we free those whom we have bound,  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But, deliver us from evil,  
For the kingdom, and the power, and the glory are yours forever.  
Amen.

## **Tithes and Offerings**

If you are joining us online and would like to participate in the offering, you may do so by donating at our website, which you can reach with this QR code.



## **\*Doxology**

**Praise God, from who all blessings 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**

*"I've Got Peace Like A River"*

NCH 478 (vs 1-3)

**\*Invitation to Fellowship:** What is the most extravagant thing you've done to show someone you care about them?

## **\*Charge & Benediction**

Pastor Charles

It's easy to focus on the bad things that are happening around us. I guess it's a survival mechanism; we need to pay attention to the things that might hurt us. But, life isn't supposed to be about fear and anxiety. We aren't supposed to be worrying all the time. God is good. God is love. God is comfort and togetherness and joy! So, find God in the midst of the chaos of life, and hold on. And, always remember that God is good.

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"*

*Sing! 212*

## **Postlude**

*"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."*

*~ Corrie Ten Boom*



— TODAY'S MINISTERS —

*The People of Plymouth Congregational Church, assisted by*

*Rev. Charles Wei—Pastor*

*Brenda Senne—Liturgist*

*Dr. Steve Michelson, Amy Casne-Fetz & Amy Allen (Guest musicians)—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).

**Memorial service for Nancy Michelson** will be held here at Plymouth on Saturday, June 28 at 1:00 p.m. The reception will be held at the Michelson's farm at 4:00 p.m. It will be a Memorial Potluck Dinner, and the family asks that you RSVP if you wish to attend.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PLYMOUTH  
YOU'RE INVITED!**

**Bible Study:** Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.—Fireside Room.

**Chime Choir:** Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m.—Sanctuary.

**Women's Fellowship Lunch Meeting:** Tuesday, February 25 at 11:30 a.m.—Overland Express Restaurant.

**BSUU Sandwich Ministry:** Wednesday, February 26 at 9:30 a.m. Meet in the kitchen

**Worship Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, February 26 at 11 a.m.—Founder's Room

**PCC Office Phone—406-442-9883**

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

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