

Plymouth Congregational Church
March 15, 2026 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

~ We Gather ~

Prelude

Katie Beckman, cello

Chiming the Trinity

Moment of Reflection

Welcome and Announcements

Pastor Charles

Good morning! This is the day that God has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. If you are a guest with us today, thank you so much for being here! If you are joining us online, we see you and we welcome you. Thank you for being with us. As we always say in the United Church of Christ, no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

- Good Friday Tenebrae Service, Friday, April 3, 7:00 pm.
- Saturday, April 4, 11:00-1:00, Sanctuary, Pam Rolfes will accept flower donations for Easter Sunday.
- Bible Study: Tuesdays, 9:00 am, Fireside Room.
- Chime Choir: Tuesdays, 1:30 pm, Sanctuary, starting January 13
- Sandwich Ministry, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month
- Liturgist sign-up sheets in the narthex.
- If you would like a nametag, please add your name to the list in the narthex.

One: The Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All: And, also with you.

One: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

All: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

One: He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

All: Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

One: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

~ *We Prepare* ~

Unison Prayer

Pastor Charles

God of Redemption and Revelation, help us to live into your truth. We ask that you give us the patience and the attentiveness to hear you amidst the noise in our lives. Help us to have faith in your goodness, and to trust in your wisdom. Let us be receptive to the ways that you move in our hearts, so that we might share your love with the world.

[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

Al Simons

People of God, hear the good news! God's truth is all around us, we only need to look to find it. It is in the warm greeting of an old friend, in the love of a parent's eyes as they watch their children. It's the warm bite of food shared in hospitality, and the steadying arm helping you to rise. God is always speaking to us, in a myriad of ways. God will always reveal truth to us, if we only but look. Amen.

Congregational Response *Father Almighty, Bless Us* NCH 518

~ *We Engage* ~

Prayer of Illumination

Al Simons

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.

Gospel Reading

John 18:28-32

Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover.

So, Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?"

They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you."

Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law."

The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

Musical Interlude*The Old Rugged Cross*

NCH 195

*(verse 1: Plymouth Choir; verses 2 & 3: Choir & Congregation)***Second Gospel Reading**

John 18:33-40

Pastor Charles

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?"

Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?"

Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?"

Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here."

Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?"

Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" They shouted in reply, "Not this man but Barabbas!"

Now Barabbas was a rebel.

Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection

Katie Beckman, cello

Baptism of Cameron Jo Lindsay

daughter of Michael Lindsay & Breanna Wodnik

Invitation to Baptism

One: They were bringing children to Jesus, that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But, when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant, and said to them,

All: "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belong the realm of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the realm of God like a child shall not enter it."

One: And, Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

When Jesus went to John to be baptized, John tried to change his mind, saying, "I ought to be baptized by you, yet you have come to me!"

All: Jesus said, "Let it be so for now. For in this way, we shall do all that God requires."

One: As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and alighting on him.

All: Then a voice said from heaven, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am well pleased."

One: The sacrament of baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. The promise of the gospel is not only to us, but also to our children. Baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark of their acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of their participation in God's forgiveness, and the beginning of their growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

Questions of the Parents

Pastor: Do you desire your daughter, Cameron Jo Lindsay, to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: Will you encourage this child to renounce the powers of evil and to receive the freedom of new life in Christ?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show justice and love, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Parents: We promise, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow with this child in the Christian faith, to help this child to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, by celebrating Christ's presence in the world and by furthering Christ's mission of love, justice, and peace to all people, so that she may affirm her baptism?

Parents: We promise, with the help of God.

Congregational Assent

Pastor: Jesus calls us to make disciples of all people and to offer them the gift of baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to Cameron, as she lives and grows in Christ?

All: We promise our love, support, and care.

Pastor: Let us pray. Christ be with you.

All: And, also with you.

Pastor: Bless by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water. By your Holy Spirit save those who confess the name of Jesus Christ that sin may have no power over them. Create new life in Cameron this day, that she may rise in Christ. Glory to you eternal God, the one who was, and is, and shall always be, world without end. Amen.

Baptism

Pastor: Cameron Jo Lindsay, you are baptized in the name of the Creator, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer for the Baptized

Pastor: We give you thanks, O Holy One, Mother and Father of all, for this your child and for the grace acknowledged here today in water and the Holy Spirit. Embrace us all as children of the one household of your love.

Give Cameron strength for life's journey, courage in time of suffering, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the hope of new life; through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen. Go in peace.

All: Thanks be to God!

Pastor: Michael Lindsay and Breanna Wodnik, your daughter, Cameron Jo Lindsay, has been baptized, as witnessed by the people of Plymouth Congregational Church. We welcome her into God's family, as a child of God and a disciple of the church. May God's blessings be upon her, all the days of her life.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Charles

God of Truth and Light, we thank you for your steadfast presence. We are sorry for the times that we did not hear you, and we promise to do better. As we grow and learn about all the ways in which you reach out to us, we pray that you give us guidance and wisdom. Thank you, Jesus, for the blazing fire of hope that you have kindled within us. Thank

you, Holy Spirit, for walking with us and for drawing us ever closer together, to be one family of God.

Creator 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 and nurture this world that is our home, this beautiful gift that you have given to us out of your goodness and love. Be with us as a mother with her child, comforting and teaching, sheltering and loving, helping us to become better versions of ourselves, and helping us to become the people that you hope for us to be.

For those in recovery, give them strength. For those who are experiencing war, give them courage. For those who are experiencing hunger and cold, the unsheltered, everyone who has been displaced from their homes, let them feel your presence and be comforted. For those suffering from domestic abuse, and those who are lonely or scared, send your angels of mercy to care for them. For everyone who is experiencing hardship of any kind, we ask you to ease their burdens. For all of our loved ones in medical treatment or recovery, we ask for healing. For all of us who mourn, grant us peace.

Special Prayers: Maxine Ferguson, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Doris Powell, Marlyce Taylor, and Giles Walker. All those who are experiencing the horrors of war and natural disasters.

Medical Treatment: Michael Blanchard, Greg Bolin, Gus Byrom, Brian Coplin, Kat Curtis, Kathy Field, Karen Senne Hayes, Susan Hemion, Kathryn Kern, Frank Kromkowski, Kelly Murphy, Donna Randolph, Rebecca Stanfell, Phyllis Weaver.

Bereavement: Linda Burns, Rev. Dr. Tony Clark

The Lord's Prayer

Pastor Charles

Our Creator, 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.

~ We Respond ~

Tithes and Offerings

Pastor Charles

We recognize that there are many ways to give. If you give in ways other than monetarily during the worship service, we invite you to press your thumb into the bowl of the offering plate, so that you may participate in the ritual of offering with the rest of the congregation.

Donations can be made at our website, which you can reach with this QR code:



Offertory

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

Creator God, we humbly offer these gifts to you. We pray that you take them and multiply them, turning them into blessings for those who need them most. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

~ We Go out in Peace ~

Departing Hymn*Before Your Cross, O Jesus*

NCH 191

Charge & Benediction

Pastor Charles

Sometimes, the truth is revealed to us, and we don't want to accept it. Sometimes, the truth is revealed to us, and we cannot understand it. Sometimes, the truth is revealed to us, and we don't think that it has anything to do with us, or that it might be something too big for us to handle. Whatever our reaction to the truth is, that doesn't stop it from being the truth, and the God that we worship is a God of Truth. So, be attentive to what is true and how you respond to it, and let the light of truth be your guide.

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