

Plymouth Congregational Church
March 8, 2026 – Third Sunday in Lent

~ We Gather ~

Prelude *Christians, We have Met to Worship - arr. Adams*

Shaun Deola, trumpet

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.

- Baked Potato Luncheon, Sunday, March 15,
- New Members Class/Refresher Course – Sunday, March 15, after the service, Founder's Room
- 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.

Poem Sonnet 9 by Madeleine L'Engle

Resurrection's not resuscitation.
What, in heaven's name, do we expect?
I'm satisfied with no one's explanation
Which seem to me more fancy than correct.
I know that hour beloved body's gone
And heaven's no pie in some ethereal sky.
It's you I want, familiar flesh and bone.
But my flesh, too, is mortal. I will die.
So what, then, so I hope form resurrection?
I hope beyond my wildest hope unseen
That there will still be some aware connection
'Twixt what we will be and 'twixt what we've been,
And you and I and all we love will meet
When Love has wone, and we're at last complete.

Invitation to Worship adapted from Psalm 95 Gail Tronstad

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

All: And, also with you.

One: Come, let us sing to God; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

All: Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!

One: For God is great and above all gods!

All: In God's hand are the depths of the earth and the heights of the mountains.

One: God made the sea and the land;

All: Let us worship and bow down before our Maker!

Gathering Hymn *This is the Day - screen* *screen*
call & response with Plymouth Choir

~ We Prepare ~

Unison Prayer Pastor Charles

Loving God, Nurturer, Caregiver, help us to be more like you. Let our hearts swell with compassion when we see need in the world. Let our spirits grow with empathy when we see the results of war and oppression. Let our minds fill with creative thoughts and ideas as we come alongside those who are hurting, to bolster them up, and help them through difficult times. Bless us with strength and with courage, so that we can see your will be done in 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 Gail Tronstad

People of God, hear the good news! Jesus is alive in us, helping us to be compassionate helpers and loving caregivers. Where there is need

in the world, God has empowered us to meet it. Where there is sadness and despair, the Holy Spirit moves in us to be light and joy. As the family of God, it is our responsibility to respond when people are hungry or hurting, and we are able to do it, because God is with us. Amen

Congregational Response *I Would Be True* NCH 492

~ *We Engage* ~

Prayer of Illumination Gail Tronstad

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 18:12-18 Gail Tronstad

So, the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. First, they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So, the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in.

The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?"

He said, "I am not."

Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

Musical Interlude *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing - arr. Carter*
Shaun Deola, trumpet

Second Gospel Reading John 18:19-27 Pastor Charles

Then, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said."

When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?"

Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But, if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

Then, Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now, Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?"

He denied it and said, "I am not."

One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

Again, Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection *Create in Me A Clean Heart - Sherman*

Plymouth Choir

Prayers of the People

Pastor Charles

Infinite and Eternal One, we thank you for always being with us. We thank you for creation and everything that you have blessed us with, and for the beautiful diversity of the people of the world. We have been truly blessed by the multitude of voices you have sent to teach us about the truth and the light, to help us learn and grow, so that we might be a more loving and supportive community. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for giving us empathy, and charity, and for continually drawing us closer together, to be one family of 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, that we might work to heal this world that is our home before it is too late.

Let us always remember that we can take shelter in your loving embrace. Let us remember that we are not alone when we do the work that you call us to do, for you are with us, working alongside us, to bring justice and equality into the world. Help us be your instruments of peace, so that the in-breaking of your realm will come into its fullness, and everything around us will be a reflection of your goodness and your love.

We lift up special prayers for Maxine Ferguson, Art Gilreath, Loraine Hopgood, Doris Powell, Marlyce Taylor, and Giles Walker. We pray for Michael Blanchard, Greg Bolin, Gus Byrom, Brian Coplin, Kat Curtis, Karen Senne Hayes, Susan Hemion, Kathryn Kern, Frank

Kromkowski, Kelly Murphy, Rebecca Stanfell, Phyllis Weaver, and all who are in medical treatment or recovery.

We pray for your mercy and peace and joy to fall upon us all and to lift us up. And, we pray for hope, and for love, and for community and belonging for all of the people of the world.

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

O Jesus Christ, May Grateful Hymns

NCH 212

Charge & Benediction

Pastor Charles

Friends, remember that the need in the world is great, but that we, as the children of God, are not only up to the challenge, but have been empowered by the Almighty Creator to meet that challenge. So go, be the brave, creative, and inspiring people that God created you to be, and be the helping hands that the world needs.

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