

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR CHARLES

### Such a time as This

I was told that it would be nice to include my sermon from June 28, 2026 in this issue of the Waymarks for those who may have missed it. If you were there, it was a lively service, with 8 out-of-town visitors, dramatic readings, and a moment when we all cheered for the heroes, and booed the villain! This is a pared down version of what I preached that day:

God is not mentioned anywhere in the Book of Esther, but Esther contains what might be my favorite line in the whole Bible: "Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this," which I think is about how God works in mysterious ways. But the thing I want to look at is the villain of the story.

Haman tried to orchestrate the destruction of the Jews because of his pride. Mordecai refused to bow down to him, because Mordecai was a Jew, and he believed he should only bow down to God. Haman was so angry he convinced the King to issue a decree to kill all of the Jews, along with a bribe of 10,000 silver talents.

I can't help but think about the Hamans of our day, using their money to control and manipulate people, and letting their pride destroy everything around them. The world just got to see the rise of its first trillionaire. I've talked about billionaires before; I never thought I would have to talk about trillionaires. Our brains can't even comprehend these numbers. To put it in terms we can understand, 1 million seconds is about eleven days. 1 billion seconds is 32 years! And, 1 trillion seconds is roughly 32,000 years! One person could eliminate world hunger, make sure that every child in the world has access to education, erase the student debt of half the students in the United States, but instead, he hoards his wealth.

We should be striving for world peace, a healthy and livable environment, healthcare for all, an end to homelessness. Instead, we have someone who thinks being a trillionaire is a good thing, and a cheering crowd that seems to agree. We have to ask; how much underpaid labor went into this accumulation of wealth? How much pollution was pumped into our waters and our air so that he could achieve his goal? How much injustice was done in the name of being the man with the most toys?

We are trapped in a system designed to accumulate wealth at the top, with no regard for how that affects the poor and the needy, but these

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Lynn Bolin

A new AED (cardiac defibrillator) has a permanent home beside the fire alarm system at the main entrance of the Church. The AED that was shared with Camp Miminagish is obsolete. The Council decided to purchase two new AEDs, with the help of Singing Waters, one to be shared with Camp and the other permanently installed at the Church. The shared AED will be installed in the Church basement during the winter months. If you would like to learn more about the AED and how it works contact Lynn Bolin.



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FROM KATHE SIMONS:

### **Handchime choir**

A special thanks to all of our wonderful Plymouth Handchimers! I greatly appreciate each and every one of you; thanks for your commitment and hard work to enhance our worship services throughout the year. See you in the fall!

### **Plymouth UCC is Spic 'n Span!!**

What an amazing cleaning crew we have! It's such an important ministry to maintain cleanliness throughout our church. We will continue to clean through the summer. It would be helpful to know when you might be away. A special THANK YOU to Lucinda Shelden for her generous donation of a brand new upholstery cleaning machine!



New Zoom events  
from the UCC:

July 16 3:30-4:30 -  
Faith, Leadership  
and Organizing for  
This Moment

August 13 3:30-4:45  
—Economic Justice:  
Love Our Laborers  
as Yourself

And many more!

Find them at [ucc.org/  
events/category/  
nurture-the-soul/](https://ucc.org/events/category/nurture-the-soul/)

Our Plymouth Outreach and Social Justice Committee continues to be involved in the community-wide search for a "low barrier" shelter for Helena's homeless community. As part of this effort we are especially engaged with the staff of United Way, the Helena Area Community Foundation, St. Peter's Hospital, representatives of St. John's Lutheran and St. Paul's Methodist churches, Good Samaritan and Family Promise, as well as with City of Helena and Lewis and Clark County staff.

In addition, thanks to your contributions to our church budget, in June we were able to help a family with a small Walmart gift card as well as to assist a gentleman who was in serious need of overnight lodging.

Any questions or comments, please give me a call! Your support is vital for our ministry and is very much appreciated!



**Any concerns or suggestions for ongoing needs, please call Gus at (406) 202-8768**

### Connecting Montana History with Contemporary Topics

For those of you who received your summer read packets and are well on your way to learning more about Montana history, I hope you are enjoying the readings. There are a few extra-copies available; let Jennifer know if you would like one.

Discussions with authors and topic experts begin on Wednesday, August 26th and continue each Wednesday for the next three weeks. The first three discussions will be held in the Fellowship Hall at Plymouth, beginning at 12 noon and concluding by 1:00. The last discussion on Wednesday, September 16th will be at the Lewis & Clark Library, large meeting room, beginning at 1:00 and concluding at 2:00 PM. You won't want to miss out on these four presentations whether or not you have read the essays. They are:

August 26th , noon at Plymouth, Mark T. Johnson, author of "The Patient Chinese Gardener", Associate Professor with the University of Notre Dame, speaking on early Montana's Chinese population and immigration now.

September 2, noon at Plymouth, Drenda Niemann, Public Health Officer for Lewis & Clark County, addressing the essay "Montanans and 'the Most Peculiar Disease'; The influenza Epidemic and Public Health, 1918-1919" with the perspective of COVID and the possibilities of future epidemics.

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**Save the date! Church Worship at the Lake.  
Breakfast at 9 am, and then worship at 10 am,  
Sunday, August 16.**



### **In Our Prayers**

Special Prayers: Sophia Brown, Chelsey Curtis, 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, Karen Senne Hayes, Lynda Hayes, Frank Kromkowski's daughter Anna, Kelly Murphy, Maureen Nordahl, Suzanne Nybo, Donna Randolph, Phyllis Weaver,.

*To add someone to the prayer list, please fill out the prayer card in the pew backs, call the church office at 442-9883 or email [pccofficemgr@gmail.com](mailto:pccofficemgr@gmail.com).*

### **Happy late July Birthdays to:**

19 Donna Hathy  
20 Donna Downs

### **And Happy Early August Birthdays to:**

2 Frank Kromkowski  
10 Kat Curtis



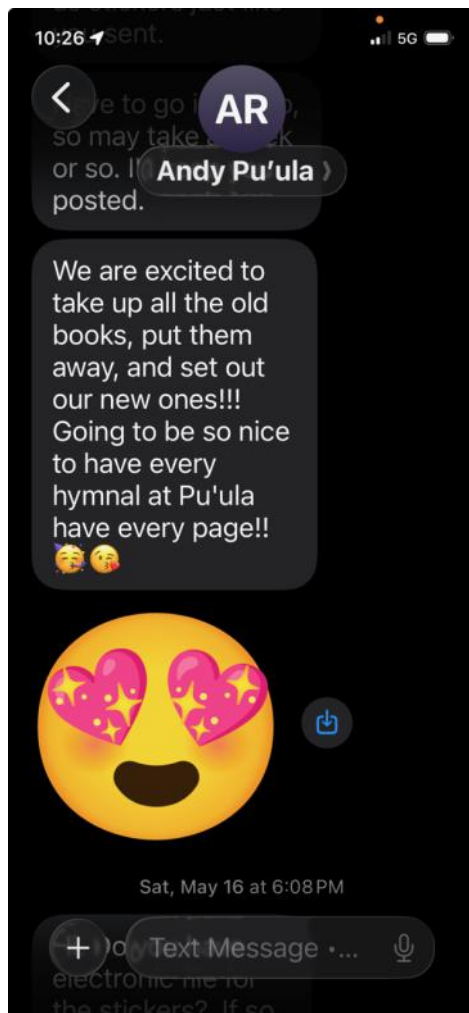
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September 9, noon at Plymouth, Valerie Hellermann, Executive Director of Hands on Global, addressing “From Havana to Montana: Cuban Refugee Children, Operation Pedro Pan and the Cold War Catholic Church” and the refugee story today in Helena.

September 16, 1:00 at Lewis & Clark Library, featuring Jordan Evertz, Executive Director of Helena Food Share, speaking on the essay “Hunger: A Memoir of Growing Up in Northeastern Montana” and its connection with food insecurities in Helena today.

All sessions are free and open to the public. You are encouraged to invite friends and to bring a sack lunch if you like. Watch for August’s Waymarks for updates. Until then have a great summer and enjoy your reading.

Jennifer Jeffries Thompson



Text message from Andrea Rosanoff, the main piano player at Pu'ula UCC in Pahoa, Hawai'i, when I notified her that their new hymnals were on their way.

## The United Church of Christ Daily Devotional:

Created by the Still Speaking Writer's Group by The Pilgrim Press, the Daily Devotional grounds our daily faith.

To subscribe: <https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>

There is also a box on that webpage to search previous devotional messages.

From 7/5/26:

*Then Jacob continued on his journey and came to the land of the eastern peoples. There he saw a well in the open country. - Genesis 29:1-2a (NIV)*

People today are still trying to make it through arid conditions with no spiritual hydration. People today are still moving but never arriving at a spot that is not plagued by guilt. People today are still searching desperately for acts of compassion and redemption. **Prayer:** Lord, help my faith community be the river of life in Death Valley, and may all who come find a true welcome. Amen.

## CAMP MIMANAGISH—Cathy Barker

Mimanagish, the former UCC Camp south of Big Timber, now offers growth experiences for everyone! The road is smoother and the path is open for all ages to unplug and enjoy the forest, the mountains, and the pristine, blue-ribbon Boulder River.

The **Wilderness Retreat** August 5-9, ideal for adults or kids with an adult, offers fishing, hiking, birding, stargazing, and more. Gus Byrom will offer insect study! Registration closes July 21. **High Schoolers** still have time to register for their youth camp August 9-15. The complementary themes of Earth Care, Art, and Resiliency make for a rich outdoor experience - fraught with crazy fun! Thoughtful adults will love a **Circle of Trust Retreat** where safe space offers the opportunity to journal, reflect, and invite personal insights. Choose either **Geography of Grace** or **The Soul of Aging**, and discover what wisdom your Inner Teacher can offer. (These two are led by former Plymouth Co-Pastor Cathy Barker, who reserves the best lodging for her participants!)

Explore the website, [www.mimanagish.org](http://www.mimanagish.org) and see what adventures August and September might hold!

### CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BAGS - Kendall Larson



This basket is in the back of the Sanctuary on the shelves to the right of the doors as you come in. There are four (so far!) bags for families to use during worship.



This is what is inside the bags for children to play with.



### Camp Mimanagish:

**Geography of Grace**  
8/26-8/30

**The Soul of Aging** 9/14  
-9/18





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systems are so large, so old, so ingrained in our culture, it seems impossible to change them. But, God has put us here to do exactly that. "Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." We may not be royal, but we all have some kind of power: the power granted to us by being citizens of this country, our education and social standing, our relationships with family and friends, neighbors and colleagues. We may not be billionaires, but compared to most of the world, we are incredibly wealthy.

And, we have God on our side, who has given us the creativity to find inventive and holistic ways to solve our problems. Jesus is alive inside of us, so that the work we do is done with intention, consideration, and love. And, the Holy Spirit is with us through it all, reminding us that we are all family: the neighbor you never talk to, the old man on the highway, the young woman in Nigeria, the non-binary teenager in Russia, all of these people are our family. When anyone is threatened anywhere in the world, that is our family that is being threatened.

Esther had to deal with Haman 2500 years ago, and we have to deal with our own Hamans, today. That is why God put us here...so that the Hamans of the world would not go unchallenged, and their power would not go unchecked. We are God's people, and we have been put here for just such a time as this.

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**Friday July 31: *Helena-Area-Players-Only Table Tennis Tournament***  
Starting at 5 pm

**Saturday August 1: *13th "Forrest Gump Memorial" Table Tennis Tournament***  
Starting at 9 am

Downstairs in the Fellowship Hall



## You're Invited!

### **Bible Study:**

Every Tuesday  
9:00 a.m.  
Fireside Room

### **Sandwich Ministry:**

Second & Fourth  
Wednesday of the  
month. 9:30 a.m.  
Kitchen

### **Chime Choir:**

Will resume in  
September

### **Women's Fellowship**

Will resume in the fall.

### **Cleaning Crew**

Saturday mornings  
Contact Kathe to  
volunteer:

603-860-4539 or  
kathe@simonshome.  
org



United Church of Christ  
400 S. Oakes St. Helena, MT 59601

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**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.**



### Office Hours

Pastor Charles Wei:  
9:00 am—1:00 pm Tues—Thurs  
and by appointment

Administrative Assistant  
Kendall Larson:  
9:00 am—1:00 pm Mon –Fri

### Contact Us

Church Office: 406.442.9883

Web:  
[www.plymouthmontanaucc.org](http://www.plymouthmontanaucc.org)

Email: [pccofficemgr@gmail.com](mailto:pccofficemgr@gmail.com)

Also: [www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational](https://www.facebook.com/plymouthcongregational)



**Sundays** 10:00 am Worship Service in person and on  
You Tube through our website