

Plymouth Congregational Church
September 20, 2026 – 17th Sunday after Pentecost

~ We Gather ~

Prelude

Chiming the Trinity

Pastor Charles

Moment of Reflection

Steve Michelson

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.

- Wednesday, September 22, 6:00 pm, Lewis & Clark Library,
“Renewable Energy is Winning...Slowly” with Dr. Steve Running.
- Conference Annual Meeting: Thurs, Sept 24 – Sun, Sept 27.
 - Great opportunity to meet other people in the conference and hear from the national office.
 - No registration required.
 - Banquet requires registration, \$40 banquet charge
 - Schedule available in the narthex

- Need people who are willing to host for homestays, sign-up sheet in narthex.
- Bible Study: Tuesdays, 9:00 am, Fireside Room.
- Sandwich Ministry, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month, 9:30 am, Kitchen
- Liturgist sign-up sheets in the narthex.
- If you would like a nametag, please add your name to the list in the narthex.

Invitation to Worship *adapted from Psalm 145:1-8* Tommy Williams

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

All: And, also with you!

One: We extol you, our God and King, and bless your name forever and ever!

All: Forever and ever!

One: Great is our God, and greatly to be praised!

All: All shall laud your works, and declare your mighty name!

One: The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed, and we will declare your greatness!

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

Gathering Hymn *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* Screen

~ We Prepare ~

Unison Prayer

Pastor Charles

Holy One, God of Truth and Understanding, help us to be our authentic selves. As the world presses down on us to conform in ways that we know are not right, help us to push back, and to be the people you created us to be. Let us be brave and compassionate, wise and vulnerable. Let empathy be our touchstone, as Jesus taught us. You have shown us the true way to live, and we place our trust in you.

[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

Tommy Williams

People of God, hear the good news! God is the great leader who shows us the way out of misery and hopelessness. God's grace protects us from that which seeks to destroy us. We are never alone when we face the challenges of life. God parts the sea, settles the lions, and calms the storm. We can trust that God will be with us in our time of need. God is with us always, now and forever. Amen.

Congregational Response

NCH 460

God Will Take Care of You - (verses 1, 2 & 4)

~ We Engage ~

Prayer of Illumination

Tommy Williams

Creator of all things, we come to you seeking understanding. Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, our rock and our redeemer. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Gospel Reading

Matthew 20:1-16

Tommy Williams

Our gospel reading comes from the Book of Matthew, chapter 20, verses 1 through 16. This parable about a landowner and the laborers he hires is a portion of Jesus' teachings from his time in Judea, after leaving Galilee, as he attempts to prepare his followers for his death. Listen for God's word.

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

"When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.'

"So, they went.

"When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And, about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?'

"They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.'

"He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'

“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’

“When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.

And, when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’

But, he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’

So, the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Musical Interlude

Hebrew Bible Reading Genesis 12:1-9 Pastor Charles

Our Hebrew Bible reading comes from the Book of Genesis, chapter 12, verses 1 through 9. This story of Abram leaving Haran for the land God had promised to him comes after a centuries-long genealogy, going all the way back to the tower of Babel. Listen for God’s Word.

Now God said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who

curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So, Abram went, as God had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot and all the possessions that they had gathered and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran, and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land.

Then, God appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.”

So, he built there an altar to God, who had appeared to him. From there, he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he built an altar to God and invoked the name of God. And, Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

Reflection

Musical Reflection

Steve Michelson

Prayers of the People

Pastor Charles

Great Leader-of-all, Caregiver, Nurturing Mother, we place our trust in you. We know that you are always with us, even when we didn’t know it...even when we didn’t want it. As the storms of difficulty and conflict swirl around us, we ask you to be the boat that keeps us above the water. We ask for your calm and gentle hand to sooth our aches and

pains, the hurt feelings and the discord. We ask for your grand and comforting presence to be like a blanket wrapped around us, keeping us warm and sheltered.

Help us be peacemakers and truth-tellers, bringing your light to everyone that we meet. Let us be your ambassadors and storytellers, to share the tales of your grand deeds and your quiet miracles with the people in our community and beyond, so that everyone will know of your power and your care. Help us to understand and accept your great love for us, and know that you are good and trustworthy, and deserving of our admiration and thanks.

Mother and Father of us all, we ask that you be with all of those for whom no one ever prays, and to help us be good stewards of our home, this world that provides us with everything that we need to survive...the only place where we know we can live. Help us to think of those who will come after us, to preserve this gift that you have given not only to us, but to them. Help us to truly see everyone around us and understand their needs. Help us to discern the difference between what we want and what we truly need, and open our hearts to compassion for those in difficult or dangerous situations. We pray for those in recovery or medical treatment. We pray for our unsheltered neighbors and for those looking for work. We pray for those who are experiencing domestic abuse or conflicts with family or friends. We pray for those who are trying to survive war or natural disasters. Move in us to help those who need help, and to comfort those who need comfort, and help us to be compassionate, generous, and kind.

*Special Prayers: Chelsey & Jude 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: John Breisnes, Jean Goetz, Karen Senne Hayes,
Lynda Hayes, Marcia Lauer, Betty Louise, Kelly Murphy, Maureen
Nordahl, Suzanne Nybo, Phyllis Weaver.*

Bereavement: The family and friends of Carl Carlson.

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

Center of My Joy

Sing! 72

Charge & Benediction

Pastor Charles

Now go, and remember that the word of God is written on your heart, that Jesus is alive inside of you, and that the Holy Spirit is always whispering in your ear. We instinctively know the truth, and we know when something is wrong. Seek the wisdom of God, and turn away from the so-called wisdom of the world. God is love. God is mercy. God is forgiveness. And, God is hope.

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 *Let There Be Peace on Earth* screen
Postlude

“Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”

~ Corrie ten Boom