

Plymouth Congregational Church
September 6, 2026 – 15th Sunday after Pentecost

~ We Gather ~

Prelude

Chiming the Trinity

Pastor Charles

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.

- Congregational meeting, Sept 13.
- Choir practice resumes Sun, Sept 13.
- Chime Choir practice resumes Tues, Sept 8.
- We received a grant from Growing Friends of Helena to plant 15 trees on the North 40 on Sat, Sept 12. We need volunteers to help plant; sign-up sheet in the Narthex.
- Conference Annual Meeting (CAM)
 - Thurs, Sept 24 – Sun, Sept 27.

- No registration required for Plymouth members.
- Banquet requires registration, \$40 banquet charge
- CAM schedule available in the narthex
- Need volunteers to bake, 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 119:33-40* Lynn Bolin

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

All: And, also with you!

One: Teach us your ways, O God!

All: Give us understanding, that we may keep your law and observe it with all of our hearts.

One: Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

All: Turn our hearts to your decrees, and not to selfish gain.

One: Turn my eyes from looking at vanities; give me life in your ways.

All: Confirm us to your purpose, for your ordinances are good. Your righteousness gives us life.

Gathering Hymn

No Matter (verses 1,2, & 4)

Sing! 35

~ We Prepare ~

Unison Prayer

Pastor Charles

Holy and Benevolent One, help us to remember that each and every person has been created in your image, to be loved, honored, and cherished. Let us see our differences as something to celebrate, for we are each a reflection of you. Help us to remember that each of us is a revelation of a small part of your infinite and everlasting glory.

[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

Lynn Bolin

People of God, hear the good news! God is alive inside of each and every one of you, and inside of each and every person in the world. We are more similar than we are different, and our differences reflect the fullness of God's creation. With God's help, the beautiful, peaceful, harmonious world that exists in our hearts, minds, and imaginations will one day be a reality. So, trust in God and trust in the work that we do to foster the in-breaking of God's realm into the world. Amen

Congregational Response *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*

NCH 337

~ *We Engage* ~

Prayer of Illumination

Lynn Bolin

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

Reading from the Epistles

Romans 13:8-14

Lynn Bolin

Our reading from the epistles comes from the Book of Romans, chapter 13, verses 8 through 14. Paul's letter to the church in Rome was meant to prepare them for his visit, and explain why he did not visit sooner. Today's reading is an excerpt from the portion of the letter in which Paul how all of God's laws can be summed up in a single sentence: love your neighbor as yourself. Listen for God's word.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the

Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Musical Interlude

Gospel Reading

Matthew 18:15-20

Pastor Charles

Our Gospel reading comes from the Book of Matthew, chapter 18, verses 15 through 20. These instructions about how to resolve conflict are included in a section of Christ's teachings, coming after the Parable of the Lost Sheep and followed by the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. Listen for God's Word.

"If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Reflection

Pastor Charles

Musical Reflection

Invitation to the Table

Pastor Charles

No matter who you are, or what you believe, God invites you to this table. Jesus has prepared the meal, and all are welcome.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: We give you thanks, O God, for the beauty of creation, for the blessings and miracles of everyday life, and for the gift of life. You set us in this world to be truth-tellers and peacemakers, living in harmony with all of creation. We give thanks that when we turn from the ways of peace, you call us back with love.

All: We see the light, we know of love, through you.

One: Jesus shows us the way to a new world community, one in which the last is first, justice prevails, and resources are shared, so that all people may lead lives of dignity and feel valued. The world rebelled against his message, and he was crucified out of fear. But death cannot defeat life. Jesus breathed the Spirit upon his followers and gave birth to the church, Christ's body in the world.

All: Living Christ ever present; we welcome you in our lives.

The Communion Prayer

Pastor Charles

Gracious God, pour out your Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and grapes from the earth. By your Spirit make us one with all who share this feast. Unite us in love, and energize us to work for a world of peace and justice for all.

Mother-Father God, we thank you for making and holding this space and time for us. We thank you for this bread and this cup, through which your grace is revealed, and we ask you to walk with us as we continue our spiritual journeys as we move on from this place.

We thank you for the special relationships in our lives, for our family and friends, colleagues and neighbors, who are all so precious to us, and we ask for your loving care for everyone around us in need of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing.

We thank you for the love you have shown us all of our lives, for giving us strength, and courage, and joy, and we ask for protection, comfort, and peace for all of those in the war-torn and storm-ravaged places in the world.

We thank you, God, for the beauty that surrounds us, the mountains, and the streams, the grand miracle of creation, for all of your blessings, which are too numerous to count, and we ask for the strength and the courage to mend our ways and right the wrongs we have inflicted upon our forests, oceans, and sky.

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.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

God's People Receive the Gifts of God

Bread

On the night that Jesus was arrested, he was celebrating the Passover with his friends, to remember the time that God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The Israelites had to leave so quickly that their bread didn't have time to rise, and so the bread became a symbol of freedom. But, this Passover was different, because Jesus said that he was the bread, because he would free them from sin and from death. And, after he blessed it, he broke it saying, "This is my body, broken for you. Whenever you eat of it, remember me."

Cup

In the same manner after supper, he took the cup. And, after he poured into it, he blessed it saying, “This cup is the new covenant, sealed in my blood. I am the vine, and you are the branches, cut off from me, you can do nothing. Whenever you drink of it, remember me.”

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the saving life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ until he comes again.

Prayer after Communion

May we carry in our hearts the peace embodied in this bread and cup. Strengthen our love for one another and for all creation and let us be peace in the world. 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

Take My Life and Let It Be

NCH 448

Charge & Benediction

Pastor Charles

No one is perfect. Only God is perfect. Everyone makes mistakes; it is an inevitability. What matters is what we do after we make the mistake. We can learn from our mistakes, or we can hold onto them and allow them to destroy us, our relationships, and maybe even the world. So, be forgiving of yourself and of the people around you. Allow the Holy Spirit to bring healing and reconciliation, and the love of God to bind us all together in compassion and joy and generosity.

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, including 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