

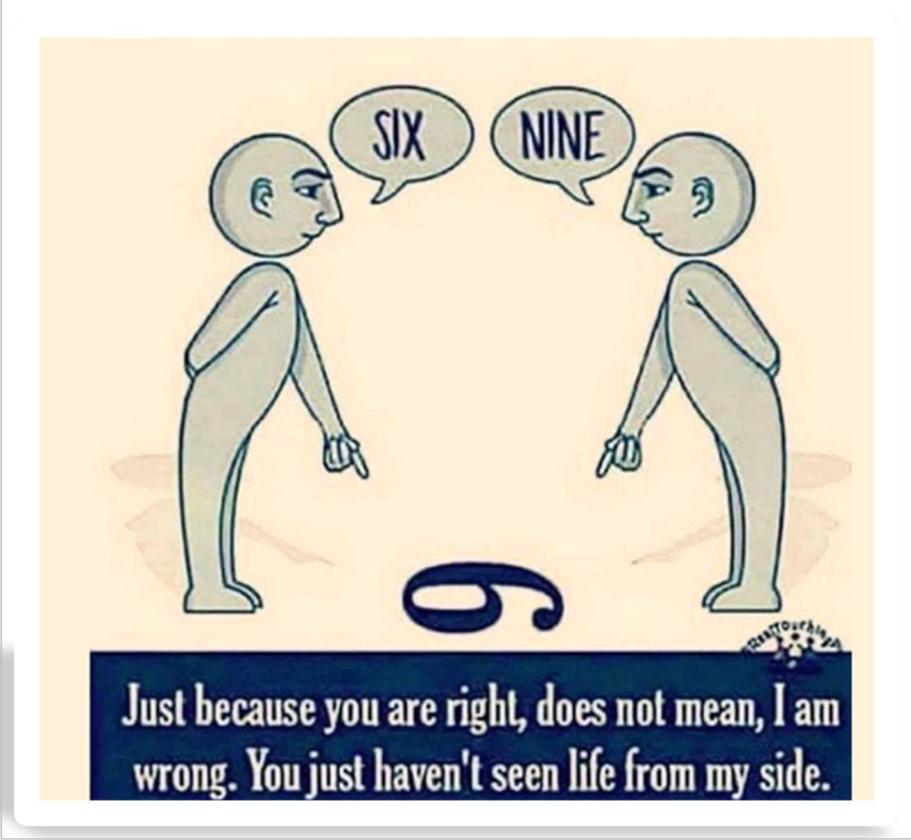
The Herald

PLYMOUTH UCC DODGEVILLE

OCTOBER
2021



Plymouth Congregational
United Church of Christ



OUR VISION "To be a welcoming and thriving Christian Community, living our faith through reflection and action, while remaining grounded in God's love."

OUR MISSION "To grow and share our faith, worship God, and follow Jesus Christ in the ways of love, peace, compassion, justice and the nurturing of God's creation."

Church Office:

Pastor Availability Hours:

Tuesday & Thursday
10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Wednesday

2:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Office Administrator Hours

Tuesday-Thursday
8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Pastor:

Joylynn Graham
Cell 553-0149

pastorjoylynn@gmail.com

Office Administrator:

Mary Haag
935-5727

plymouth@mhtc.net

Maintenance:

Organist:

Marilyn Dunn

Choir Director:

Joan Bettner-Steele

Let all of us speak the truth to our neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger. Ephesians 4:25-26

Dear Friends,

In this, like many of Paul's letters, he advises the new Christian community on how they should communicate with one another during times of difficulty and stress.

Which makes me wonder, what might Paul advise the church today?

Last spring, with the availability of effective vaccines, we thought the COVID crisis was finally behind us, and we could return to the "before times." We were back in the sanctuary for worship and reuniting with our community of faith. But then COVID infection rates began rising and we are once again having to make difficult decisions that cause the community stress.

We want to sing together, share Communion, and reunite with our family of faith, but how do we do it safely?

We want to bring in new members, work for justice in our community, and resume Sunday School and



confirmation, but where should we start? What comes first?

How would Paul guide us to be faithful to God and to our relationships with one another today?

These stressful times can lead to disagreements about how to proceed, different ideas about masks, anger over priorities, and — most importantly — misunderstanding about our mutual purpose as a Christian community.

In Ephesians, the early church is called to speak truth in love (4:15), to put away all bitterness, wrath, anger, wrangling and slander, together with all malice. And to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as Christ has forgiven us (4:31-32).

How do we speak the truth in love: truth about how we are feeling, truth about what we want, truth about where we believe God is leading us as a community of faith?

Speaking the truth -- sharing thoughts and ideas openly and honestly -- requires courage, vulnerability and safety. Speaking the truth in our church community as we seek to build up the body of Christ requires a safe space where people can speak without fear.

Sometimes, in a crucial conversation, opinions vary, stakes are high, and emotions run strong. So the question becomes, how do we talk openly? How do we work through high stakes and controversial issues honestly and respectfully and still remain together as a community of faith?

I think the first condition for safety is mutual purpose, which means that others perceive that we are working toward a common outcome, that we care about their goals, interests and values, and vice versa. Finding mutual purpose means that we really must care about the interests of others – not just our own.

And, while it's true that there's no reason to enter a crucial conversation if you don't have Mutual Purpose, it's equally true that you can't stay in conversation if you don't maintain Mutual Respect.

To be able to speak our truth and for others to speak theirs, there must be Mutual Purpose and Mutual Respect -- truth spoken in love. In the letter to the Ephesians (5:1-2a) that means we are called to "be imitators of God, as beloved children, and to live in love as Christ loved us."

As we continue to learn how to BE CHURCH in new circumstances, may we build safety for crucial conversations seeking mutual purpose while respecting each other, learning to love as Christ loved us.

Pastor Joy

What does the pastor do with her time?

Many of you have been wondering, "what exactly does our pastor do all day"? This has always been a rather sticky question because the truth is, no two days look alike! There are certain things that take place every month; there are certain things that occur every week, and there are certain things that happen once, or maybe just occasionally. And then there is everything that happens in between.

Before the pandemic I kept regular office hours Tuesday through Thursday from 10 – 2. But these hours were not the only hours that I kept. Many evenings and late afternoons I attended meetings that were outside of my regular office hours. I visited people in the evenings. I worked with Feeding Friends. I preached at Bloomfield and Stonefield. And I did whatever else needed to be done as it came up.

During the pandemic, like most people, I worked from home. And I still attended the same number of regular meetings, but there were also many, many other meetings for all sorts of things from figuring out how to do worship online to how to keep us together as we waited for the signal that it was safe for us to go back to using our building.

Now that we are back in our building, I am once again in my office Tuesdays through Thursdays, and, like before, these are not the only hours that I keep. On a monthly basis I meet with:

The Association
My Community of Practice
My Spiritual Director
The Church Council
The Diaconate Team
The Task Force
And our ACM

On a weekly basis I meet with:

The other pastors in town
Our moderator
And Faith Explorers (whenever time permits)

Intermittently, I meet with all kinds of other people for all kinds of other reasons, with probably half of these meetings occurring outside of regular office hours

And what do I do during my office hours? I make phone calls to members; I spend at least a couple of hours a week answering emails; I plan and organize things like Sunday School and worship for the week; I write articles for the newsletter, and I handle stuff. Lots and lots of stuff that is hard to quantify, and you maybe cannot see, but does take time.

Outside of my regular office hours, either on Friday or Saturday (or sometimes both), I write my sermon. And lastly, on Mondays, I take a day off.

Lately I have noticed that some things I do are important to some people while, other things I do are important to other people, but in prioritizing my time, I try to keep in mind the things that are most important to this church community as a whole.

Currently, the Plymouth Task Force is in the process of discerning the direction of our church as we move into this new age of technology, social distancing, and the limited number of hours people have available to be a part of a church community. All of us want to see our church thrive and all of us want to see our church grow. But as the world changes around us, the only way for that to happen is if we are willing to change with it. Yes, we want to remain firmly rooted in our past, but we also want our branches to be strong and healthy as they extend into an ever-changing world. And this requires compromise along with a willingness to consider first the things that are most important to this church community as a whole.

Almost 7 years ago you called me to serve this church as your spiritual leader and your partner in ministry. I have tried my best to honor that call with dedication and commitment. It might not always be clear what I do with my time, and it might not always seem as though some things on our wish list are being fulfilled but rest assured that I am always working toward our mutual purpose to the very best of my ability.

Yours in Christ's Love,

Pastor Joy



October 7 – On this date our newly formed **“Plymouth Pathfinders”** class will meet for the first time!

What is Plymouth Pathfinders?

It is our newly organized Sunday School class, that will meet every Thursday evening at 6:30 pm.

There are two reasons for meeting during the week; first, our kids are still not vaccinated, and second, meeting on Sunday mornings is often challenging for families trying to meet the demands of daily life. In a meeting with the parents, it was determined that it would be much easier to gather during the week, and Judy Campbell has graciously agreed to assume the role of heading our Christian Education team.

Please join me in a hearty thanks to Judy AND to our parents and children for making this happen!



Every weekend is a good time to bring a guest with you to Sunday Worship.

Happy Birthday:

October 28

Shirley Barnes

JOYFUL NOISE

Thanks to your generosity in September

Wacky Wednesday
Family Resource Ctr
Multicultural
Outreach Program

October Joyful Noise Offering is designated for:

Neighbors in Need
Hodan Center

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

October 19 @ 8 am

Yoga Sessions For Plymouth UCC

The Haven On High

234 High Street in Mineral Point

Classes are free. If anyone would like to contribute, those donations will go to the Community Connections Free Clinic in Dodgeville. Sign up for classes can be done via Schedulicity using this link <https://www.schedulicity.com/scheduling/TTM2CL>

Once there, folks can click on "classes" to sign up for the "Yoga Friends" evening they are interested in joining us for. There, they'll also find a complete description of what to expect from our group sessions.

It is meant to be very casual and I will have all of the equipment we'll use, including mats, if they don't have one of their own.

Classes begin the 1st week of October and will normally be held on Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 6:30pm. Wednesday evenings meditation, before our yoga practice begins, will be led by **Pastor Joylynn**.

If anyone is having trouble signing up online, they are welcome to text or call Melody Thompson directly at 608-341-8876.





IN THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH...

Greetings to our Plymouth family. As part of our revised newsletter each month I will be using this format to keep the membership informed of what's happening at Plymouth instead of individual letters as I have done in the past.

We are glad to have Pastor Joy back with us. After the task force survey was sent out there indeed will be changes coming once we have had a Congregational meeting. There were some good ideas that came from this survey. We will work on those ideas; however, please be patient as we work on the changes needed to keep our church viable and do God's work. I will be contacting the pastor relations committee to work on the ministerial duties that are important to this congregation. Your council has worked very hard at meeting the needs of the church as a whole, as well as the task force working on the direction of the church. I sincerely thank each member involved for your dedication and hard work.

I'd also like to address where our members go with concerns or suggestions. It seems that our members are going to the wrong places with their concerns or suggestions. Following is a list of where to go. I hope this will help.

Christian Education Questions or Concerns – Christian Education Chairperson

Office Administrator Concerns – Council

Custodian Concerns – Council

General Church Concerns – Council

Pastor Concerns – Pastor Relations Committee or Council

So everyone knows who they can contact, I will post a list of committee members in the fellowship hall. Please note, spiritual needs always go to the pastor. However, other issues, suggestions, or concerns need to go to council or pastor relations. Many changes are coming down the road that we are working on, and we need our pastor to lead us in our spiritual needs. The business of spirituality comes from our pastor; the business of the church goes to the council. It takes more than one person to run a church, and we have people in place to do this.

Pending a couple of meetings yet, I hope to hold a congregational conversation on November 7. I will use Phone-vite to announce when it will take place. All concerns and comments will be heard. Please come prepared to speak and listen with respect and a positive attitude.

We've gone through some tough times in the last year and a half, and it's time to take a positive outlook on where we are going as a church. I strongly believe with the changes we need to make Plymouth's future will be a positive part of the community as a whole for a long time to come. We are a team and as such each and everyone one of us is important to the future of this church.

May God Bless,

Harry Zelhofer

Moderator

Sunday October 17
Following Worship
Church Potluck
Brats and Hot Dogs provided
 Hope to see you there!
Bring a dish to pass



Circle of Care

Earl and Shirley Barnes
 Liz Bothfeld
 Harry and Gary McHone
 Dave and Gretchen Pearson
 Rod and Mary Lukes
 Lisa Pepelea
 Chuck Roethe
 Nancy Schmidt
 Ross Vivian

Pastor Relations Committee

Jill Roethe
 Lisa Pepelea
 Gary McHone
 Earl Barnes
 Harry Zelhofer



There will be a church-wide meeting following worship on October 24.

Coming up...

October 3 - World Communion Sunday

October 7 - Plymouth Pathfinders officially starts

October 14 - Trustees 7 pm

October 17 - Potluck following worship. Bring a dish to pass

October 19 - Diaconate 6 pm
 Council 7 pm

November 7 - Congregational Conversation on direction of the church following worship

Schedules

Usher

October 3 - Maureen Teubert
 October 10 - Gary and Harry McHone
 October 17 - Melody and Randy Thompson
 October 24 - Earl and Shirley Barnes
 October 31 - Gary and Harry McHone

Reader

October 3 - Judy Campbell
 October 10 - Dave Pearson
 October 17 - Randy Thompson
 October 24 - Shirley Barnes
 October 31—Melody Thompson

Communion

October 3 - Judy Campbell
 October 10 - Dave Pearson
 October 17 - Melody Thompson
 October 24 - Jan Helmich
 October 31 - Gary McHone

Joyful Noise

3 - Neighbors in Need
 10 - 31 - Hodan Center

Fellowship

October 3 - Earl and Shirley Barnes
 October 10 - Jean Brown
 October 17 - Potluck
 October 24 -
 October 31 - Jan Helmich

Mission

Would you like to get involved? Volunteer for one of our missions.

Little Free Pantry - Serves the members of the community by providing food for anyone in need. The Pantry is found outside in the front of the church. Items of use would include canned goods, peanut butter, dried beans, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce – anything that is non-perishable and nutritious.

Pasty - Pasty season is here. Pasties are on the minds of members of the community and even those outside of the community who have heard about Plymouth's pasties. Workers are needed to make this successful each month. Please sign up to work one or more Saturdays through the entire season. Call into the office or contact Denise Whitish. Please let us know how you can help. Let's keep the best pasties in town available. Pasty dates - October 9, November 13, December 11, January 8, February 12, March 12, and April 9.

Wacky Wednesday - Wacky Wednesday is not in session this semester. While Wacky Wednesday after-school program is not happening this time, they are always in need of volunteers. If you have a special talent you would like to share with the after school participants or you would just like to help where needed, please contact the office or Judy Campbell.

Coat Collection - For the next several months Plymouth will be accepting winter-wear donations to help the Afghan refugees who are now living in Wisconsin. Most of these folks were forced to abandon their homes and their lives, and to flee their country with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. And as we well know, Wisconsin winters can be quite brutal which makes winter wear a top priority. Donation centers in Madison are requesting new or like new coats, scarves and hats, size medium and below, gloves and boots, and they request that the garments be solid dark colors. A table has been set up on the fellowship hall for donations, and another hearty thanks goes to Liz Bothfeld who has volunteered to periodically gather and drop off the donations at the collection site in Madison.

Be a part of the Church

Faith Explorers - Wednesdays, 10:30 am via Zoom. If you have questions or doubts, you are in the right place. If you want to meet with others who have questions and doubts, then this group is for you.

Plymouth Pathfinders - What is Plymouth Pathfinders? It is our newly organized Sunday School class, that will meet every Thursday evening at 6:30 pm. There are two reasons for meeting during the week; first, our kids are still not vaccinated, and second, meeting on Sunday mornings is often challenging for families trying to meet the demands of daily life. In a meeting with the parents, it was determined that it would be much easier to gather during the week, and Judy Campbell has graciously

CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator

Harry Zelhofer-McHone

Vice Moderator

Gary McHone

Trustees

Mark Pepelea

Diaconate

Gary McHone

Mission

Lisa Pepelea

Clerk

Denise Whitish

Christian Education

Judy Campbell

Treasurer

Dave Pearson

Financial Secretary

Earl Barnes

If your address, phone/ cell number, or email have changed, please contact the office so that we may update our records. You may call the office at 935-5727, or email the office at plymouth@mhtc.net.



agreed to assume the role of heading our Christian Education team. Please join me in a hearty thanks to Judy AND to our parents and children for making this happen!

Plymouth Circle - Fourth Thursday of the month, noon, at Country Kitchen. "Plymouth Circle (or as we call ourselves sometimes "The Out For Lunch Bunch") this is the week! Open to all, men, women, couples, singles, everyone. We always have fun and good conversation.

Plymouth Circle of Care - This is a group of volunteers who are ready to help you if you need help. Whether it's a ride or a hot meal that is needed please contact a member of this group.

Care Team - We are in the early stages of forming a Plymouth Care Team for the purpose visiting those members who are no longer able to get out and about. The Care Team, along with the Pastor will visit on a monthly basis and offer communion as well. If you are interested in joining the Care Team, we need you! If you are interested in joining the Care Team please see Pastor Joy.

There have been requests for birthdays, anniversary, and member contact information during covid. It has been awhile and I thought this would be a good time to update our records with your information. Please fill out the enclosed form and drop off to the church office or after worship on Sunday. Thank you! Mary



The Little Food Pantry is in need of donations! Please drop off donations to the church during business hours . You may also bring donations to Sunday Worship. There is a shelf located outside of Pastor Joylynn's office for donations.

Usher, reader, and communion volunteers are needed. They will be getting a new schedule ready for next year. Please indicate if you would be interested in any or all positions. Return forms to Gary McHone.

Usher

Read

Communion

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Plymouth Congregational UCC Dodgeville

Contact information

Please fill in with current information so that we may keep our contact records up-to-date. We need this information to keep you informed and for our Phonevite program.

1. Name/date of birth: _____

2. If married, anniversary date: _____

3. Family Members/relationship/date of birth: _____

4. Address

5. Name/Phone Number/cell and/or landline

6. Email

7. Have you been an officer or served on a committee? Please include dates if you know them:

8. Are you and/or family members current members of Plymouth UCC? If so, please include your initial membership date:



Plymouth UCC Dodgeville
115 West Merrimac Street
Dodgeville Wisconsin 53533