



THE PLYMOUTH PLACARD

September 2018

WORSHIP FOR SEPTEMBER

One of the interesting aspects of being a progressive mainline church is that we are part of the church universal (everyone from Orthodox to fundamentalist to Catholic to evangelical)...and yet we have a distinctive way of apprehending and interpreting scripture and theology. That may leave us with occasional disconnects when we hear theological terms and automatically assume we know what they mean. So, your pastors, along with Old Testament scholar and Plymouth member David Petersen, will be offering a sermon series this month on **Thorny Theological Themes**.*

We are back to our regular three services each Sunday, so join us:
9:00 a.m. Communion Service (large)
11:00 a.m. Choral Service (medium)
6:00 p.m. Evening Service with Communion (intimate)

September 2

*GRACE

The Rev. Hal Chorpenning preaching at all three services
Communion at all services

September 9

*SURRENDER & EMPTYING

The Rev. Jane Anne Ferguson preaching at all three services

September 16

*LIVING IN EXILE

The Rev. Dr. David Petersen preaching at all three services

September 23

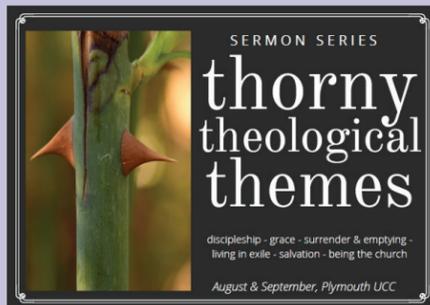
*SALVATION

The Rev. Jake Joseph preaching at all three services

September 30

*ECCLESIOLOGY: BEING THE CHURCH

The Rev. Hal Chorpenning preaching at all three services
New Members received at 11:00 & 6:00.



FROM HAL'S DESK:

KEEPING CHURCHES SAFE

You may have heard the same NPR story I did today about clergy sexual abuse in the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Pennsylvania. *The New York Times* today is reporting that Catholic priests in Pennsylvania may have abused more than 1,000 children. Those are more than 1,000 human futures changed, faith eradicated, and potentially lives ruined. And you may have asked the same question that I did today: "How long, O Lord, how long?"

and will go to our Leadership Council for approval next month. It is important to have good policy in place. But that is just the start of creating a safe church.



I wish I could tell you that clergy sexual abuse is limited to the Roman Catholic Church, but it is not. Part of my ministry when I was associate conference minister with the Connecticut Conference of the UCC was media relations, and literally on my first day in the office, I got a call from *The New York Times* asking for a comment on a case involving a UCC minister who had a pattern of having extramarital sexual relationships with women parishioners, and to comment on his suicide in the parsonage on the grounds of the church when he was found out.

We do background checks on all staff and childcare workers, as well as those who teach and lead our kids' classes and youth groups. Background checks reveal past behavior, but good policy and background checks are not a water-tight guarantee either of past or future behavior. So, we incorporate other practices like having two adults present at all times with our kids, and we mandate that all UCC clergy must go through boundary training on a regular basis. Beyond any legal ramifications, clergy are also accountable to the Association, which evaluates clergy fitness for ministry as required, and can revoke ministerial standing.

We know that it can destroy individual lives, but clergy sexual misconduct sucks the life out of churches, and it can take them generations to recover. The best practice is prevention.

One of the best preventive measures we at Plymouth can take is to be assiduous about open communication. Developing a culture of openness, where people are willing to speak honestly and directly, helps get thorny issues out of the shadows and into the light of day. We need to be willing to "speak the truth to our neighbor," and if you see something that seems a little off, please come and tell a staff member immediately, and if it involves a staff member, please tell me.

We have a zero-tolerance policy in the UCC. Of course, we have zero tolerance for illegal activity that would involve minors, but we also have stringent boundary guidelines about what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior for clergy, lay workers, and volunteers. The violation of sacred trust is a serious matter, even when misconduct involves what the law considers consensual sexual contact.

Thank you for joining me and my colleagues in helping to make Plymouth a safe place to worship, to learn, and to be community.

I have been working with Plymouth's Personnel Committee for several months on a new Safe Church Policy that is being reviewed by staff

Blessings,

Looking for a photo directory of the church? Tired of directories being out of date by the time they are printed? *Our new directory is online — or right on your phone!* Visit plymouthucc.org and click on **F1Go** in the top menu for the QuickStart Guide. Or stop by the F1Go table **after Sunday services 9/9 - 9/30**. Leadership Council would love for you to make sure your info is up to date this month, including a photo (selfies work fine).

Calendar Highlights

Go to PLYMOUTHUCC.ORG and click on NEWS to see our full calendar

September 8 - CSU Home Football Game
Plymouth parking lot unavailable

September 9

8 a.m. - 2 p.m. **Youth car wash** to raise mission trip funds

A Taste of Plymouth mega-potluck. Join us at 5:00 for a potluck supper to welcome students and at 6:00 for worship!

September 10 - Bible for Beginners

Please contact hal@plymouthucc.org if you are interested.

September 12, 19, 26

New Members Classes

We'd love to have you join us! RSVP Barb Gregory (barbara@plymouthucc.org). New members join on September 30.

September 14-16 - All-Church Retreat at LaForet

September 22 - CSU Home Football Game

Plymouth parking lot unavailable



PASTORAL CONTACTS

Our ministers' normal work days are Sunday-Thursday, but if you have a pastoral emergency (in the hospital, urgent need for a pastoral support conversation, etc.), please do call us on our mobile phones...that's what we're here for! Unlike all other professions, we still make house calls by appointment!

Hal Chorpenning, 970-481-2928 for emergencies

Jake Joseph, 970-412-6114 for emergencies

Jane Anne Ferguson, 303-257-4933 for emergencies



Plymouth Congregational UCC

916 West Prospect Rd Fort Collins, CO 80526

www.plymouthucc.org

gathered in 1903

970-482-9212

Hal Chorpenning, senior minister, hal@plymouthucc.org

Jake Joseph, associate minister, jake@plymouthucc.org

Jane Anne Ferguson, associate minister (Sun., Tues., Thurs.), janneanne@plymouthucc.org

Mark Heiskanen, director of music, music@plymouthucc.org

Mandy Hall, CF director (children & youth), mandy@plymouthucc.org

Mark Lee, CF director (adults...Sun., Tues., Thurs.), mark@plymouthucc.org

Anna Broskie, IT/comm. coordinator (mornings), anna@plymouthucc.org

Barb Gregory, office manager, barbara@plymouthucc.org

Jenn and Johnny Wieda, sextons, sexton@plymouthucc.org

Our full-time ministers and program staff work Sunday-Thursday

BOARD AND COMMITTEE NEWS

Deacon's Bench - Although I have attended church all my life, I had not accepted the opportunity to serve as a deacon until this year. And I have been surprised by how much I love it! The deacons are charged with "enhancing the worship and spiritual life of our congregation." The Sacrament of Communion and the sharing of the Prayers of the People are central to this responsibility. During each service, your deacons record each spoken prayer request. After each service, they collect the prayer request cards placed in the offering plate, left on the Deacon's Table, or handed to a deacon. On Sunday evening, the Lead Deacon for that week curates each prayer request in an email to our Associate Minister, Jake Joseph, who shares them with the Plymouth Prayer Tree Ministry Team. This is an important responsibility entrusted to your deacons. And, for me, it is one of the most important ways I can serve. - Nancy Sturtevant

In a recent stewardship-sponsored session, **Generosity and the New Tax Law**, CPA Dean Rodahl presented areas where we can be generous even with the \$12,000 standard deduction: • Straddle 2 years of charity--give on 12/28 and again on 1/2. • Contribute a large amount to a Donor Advised Fund in one year and then allocate the funds to charities for the next several years. • For those over 70 ½ years, give a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), which counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution and reduces taxation on your IRA.

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

At our Aug. meeting, LC approved a **Database Policy** drafted by our Task Force (Daryl Knoblock, Bill Tucker, Sara Parmenter, Keith Schulz, Anna Broskie and Jake Joseph). Huge thanks to them for a transparent and explicit policy. Read a copy on the Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall. The **sign mini-campaign** has been a great success (kudos to the team!) and we look forward to being more visible in our community. We have been revising LC **job descriptions** to reflect our work as Church Officers and Members At Large; these will be available at the website this fall and will assist in onboarding and assignments. Ever wondered how you could serve on Sundays? We have **open slots for**

deacons--be a vital part of our worship life! As we move into the fall, we are revisiting our Strategic Plan and continuing to refine and develop needed policies in addition to our regular governance tasks. If you have questions or feedback for the Leadership Council, we are all ears! - Dianne Stober, Moderator

Income

July Income for 2018: \$62,977
Budgeted Income for July 2018: \$69,184
Income YTD: \$530,340
Budgeted Income YTD: \$484,291

Expenses

Expenses for July 2018: \$48,023
Budgeted Expenses for July 2018: \$70,798
Expenses YTD: \$479,395
Budgeted Expenses YTD: \$500,621

YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION

We have an exciting year of ministry planned for our Children and Youth!

During the **10 a.m. Sunday "Education For All" Hour: Nursery** (0-2yrs) child care is available, with stories and play time. **Sprouts** (Preschool) will explore the stories of the Bible through play and sacred circle time. **Kids' Club** (K-3rd) "Celebrate" their faith through Bible stories, music, art, and yoga! **Club 45** (4th-5th) kids are going to take charge of their class and participate in projects and active learning to explore Bible heroes, spiritual practices and social justice. **Middle School Sunday School** (6th-8th) will learn about "The Basics" of our progressive Christian tradition. **High School Youth and Adults**, do you feel inspired to become a Leader (teacher) or Mentor (classroom helper)? Email mandy@plymouthucc.org.

In addition, **Middle School Youth Group** meets on the first and third Thurs. (9/6, 9/20) from 6:30-8 p.m. and includes dinner. **High School Youth Group** meets on Sun. nights from 7-8:30 p.m. and includes dinner, hanging out, and spiritual practices. We start on 9/2, skip 9/9 (for car wash and the "Taste of Plymouth" dinner) and return to our regularly scheduled program 9/16.

Also: **9/2** Youth who attended the Western Regional Youth Event will share stories at the 10 a.m. Forum. **9/9** Bring your dirty car to church for the Youth Missions Car Wash Fundraiser from 8:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. - *Grace & Peace, Mandy :-)*

MINISTRY TEAMS

YUCCA (20s and 30s group) will tour New Belgium Brewery, then eat at Beau Jo's in Old Town on **9/8**. Tour space is limited to 20 people, so RSVP to nredavid@gmail.com ASAP. Meet at New Belgium at 2:30 p.m.; tour begins at 3; dinner at Beau Jo's at 5:30 p.m. (includes options for dietary restrictions). The October event (with Ram Fellowship @ Plymouth) is a Ghost & Goodies Tour on **10/13** at 6 p.m. in Old Town sponsored by the Congregational Life Board.

Please join us for the second annual **Taste of Plymouth** college student and community dinner on Sun., **9/9**, at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. ALL ARE WELCOME. Plymouth members are asked to bring a dish to share, pot-luck style. Congregational Life will provide dessert. Dinner at 5:00 p.m. will be followed by special music at our evening service at 6 p.m. CSU or college apparel is encouraged. Join us for dinner, service, or both!

Welcome back CSU and FRCC students! Ram Fellowship @ Plymouth is looking forward to a fun fall semester. On **9/9**, students, friends, and our neighbors in the community are invited to the Taste of Plymouth (see above). On **10/13**, join our young adults group for a Ghost and Goodies Tour in Old Town (see above). More events coming! Email (nredavid@gmail.com) to be added to the email list. Or find "Ram Fellowship at Plymouth" on Facebook!

The **Wholeness Prayer Group** meets the 2nd and 4th Mon. in the adult ed. room, through the school year.. Next mtg: **9/10** 10-11:30 a.m. We share our prayer concerns for ourselves, family, church and the world, discuss an assigned reading, and end with prayer. We will be using the book *Occasions for Alleluia* by David Adam. Jean Preslan, JDPreslan@comcast.net, 970-484-2595.

Fall New Members Class: 7 p.m. on Wed. **9/12, 19 & 26**. Explore what Plymouth can mean for you and your life. RSVP to barbara@plymouthucc.org. For general questions about class content, email jake@plymouthucc.org.

Hops for Hope commits to one mtg./year in Loveland, Windsor, and Wellington/Waverly. Next mtg.: **9/13** at Loveland Aleworks at 6 p.m. (topic TBD).

From the **Calling and Caring Ministry:** There are now grief resources located near both church doors. Also, **9/15 - 21** Calling and Caring will check in with every household in our church. "We want to know how you are, and if there are pastoral care needs you might have. Look for an email or a phone call!"

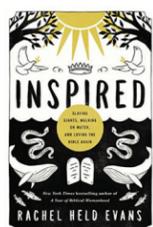
All are welcome to **Get a Grip** potluck fellowship, Sat. **9/22**, 6 p.m. at Linda and Bruce Preston's (2718 Trenton Way). Bring a dish to share. RSVP 970.223.3927 or prestonlinda8@gmail.com.

El Otro Lado. What is it like on *the other side* of the border or *the other side* of the narrative about those seeking asylum in the US? Experience the answers in a mission trip **11/12 - 16** in Tucson. \$610 -- Program, housing, food. Participants arrange their travel to arrive 11/12 and return 11/16. Questions: Arpi Miller 970-214-8008, Alan McLarty 724-493-4664, or bordertripnov@gmail.com.

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Adult Christian Formation 10 a.m. Sunday Forums return in September! **9/2:** Summer Youth Missions and Camps; **9/9:** Church Council Update on State of the Church, and **9/16, 23 & 30:** Candidate Forums for the fall elections.

Every Sunday at 10 a.m. starting 9/2:



• **Inspired: Slaying Dragons, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again**, by Rachel Held Evans. Not a science text or instruction manual, learn to read the Bible as a breathing, captivating and confounding book that illuminates God's loving, redemptive work in our world. Led by Sarah Parmenter. North Adult Ed Rm., through 10/28.

• **"Expanding Our Welcome to Immigrants in our Midst"** Immigration issues fill the headlines; what can we do to make a difference? Facilitated by the Immigration Ministry Team in the Fireside Room, through 9/30.

And on Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m., **9/25-10/30** (6 weeks), Fireside Room. **"History of Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years,"** a BBC Production featuring Oxford University church historian Diarmaid MacCulloch. Fasten your seatbelts and join Mark Lee (Dir. of Adult Christian Formation) to watch and discuss. How did Christianity go from being a small Jewish sect to the largest world religion, and where does our own tradition fall in the grand sweep of history?

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