

Plymouth Congregational Church
 PO Box 1901
 Fargo, ND 58107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

We leave judging to God.



We welcome guests any & every Sunday of the year! Worship is central to our life together and our worship facilities are accessible. We seek to come together to experience God's Spirit every week as we pray, sing, cry, & laugh.

Come as you are! Following the example of our teacher & guide, Jesus, we welcome you no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey. You are welcome here.

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Special points of interest:

- **Pastoral Ponderings**
- **Stain Glass Windows**
- **Women's Fellowship**
- **Stewardship**

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The Chronicle

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
 Volume 12 Issue 1
 January 2012

Greetings of Blessing to all!
 The New Year is here once again and I've hardly even worn my winter coat!?!?!? Even if we aren't looking, seasons pass and years do, too. Time given to us by God is precious beyond belief, but with all our "busy-ness", we often take it for granted. In the



Hebrew Scriptures Ecclesiastes Chapter 3, we hear familiar words. "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven." Often left out of this familiar quote are the beautiful words of verse 14a: "I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this."

...What a gift from our Creator.....These words display the writer's absolute faith in God's creation and our task given by God to maintain it to the best of our

ability. Humans always think they are in control and that their era or civilization will last forever like the Persians and Rome. Ironies of ironies is that the Roman Army enlisted the help of the Goths (East Germans of Scandinavian origin) to defeat the Persians and then it was the Goths who played a major role in the fall of the Roman Empire. And then don't even ask the Goths about the Huns....and on and on.....

Our job is not to conquer the world but to make the best use of however much time we have upon the earth. A simple, but not always easy example is how we interact with others-even if the interaction is short and limited like neighbors-over-the-fence, at the pharmacy/grocery store, or as we receive our mail. Often, I think these interactions are so meaningful, because they are limited and short. It is easier to engage with one another in moments rather than time we fear may grow to be too long. Over the years in all the different churches and

non-profits in which I have worked, I have noticed what a difference the few moments of daily interaction with the postal carrier can make-for positive or negative in the life of a hard working office atmosphere. Those seemingly innocent few moments can make or break a day. Rob, Plymouth's current postal carrier is a positive influence daily.

Whether we realize it, we all make a major difference in each other's lives-for blessing or struggle. It is up to us to use our time for blessing as much as possible. It does not mean that we are falsely cheery, but even in our short interactions we need to be caring. Often, we share a funny story or the fact that someone we cared deeply about has died or moved away from us. Sometimes we are more likely to share deeply meaningful things with our postal carrier, barber/hairdresser, or a dear friend than with our family, a pastor/priest/rabbi or even our doctor.

Years ago in a church office, I read a cherished newspaper clipping that was a poem. It was yellowed, so it had obviously been there a long time. It was just the poem, so I didn't know where it came from or who had written it. Over lunch the other day, in the Dear Abby column I saw a request for a republishing of a person's favorite poem entitled "The Cold Within" which had been printed long ago by the originator of the column. Serendipity-It was the one I had seen on that church bulletin board so long ago and it sums up for us how not to use our time upon the earth.

Six humans trapped in happenstance
In dark and bitter cold,
Each one possessed a stick of wood,
Or so the story's told.
Their dying fire in need of logs
The first woman held hers back,
For of the faces around the fire,
She noticed one was black.
The next man looking across the way
Saw not one of his church,
And couldn't bring himself to give
The fire his stick of birch.
The third one sat in tattered clothes
He gave his coat a hitch,
Why should his log be put to use,
To warm the idle rich?
The rich man just sat back and thought
Of the wealth he had in store,
And how to keep what he had earned,
From the lazy, shiftless poor.
The black man's face bespoke revenge
As the fire passed from sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood
Was a chance to spite the white.
The last man of this forlorn group
Did naught except for gain,
Giving only to those who gave,
Was how he played the game.
The logs held tight in death's still hands
Was proof of human sin,
They didn't die from the cold without,
They died from the cold within.



Whether a log on the fire, fuel for a furnace, or a candle, let us share the warmth of The Christ Light not only on Christmas Eve, but throughout all God's Holy Time given to each of us upon the earth. When we feel discouraged, let us remember that we don't have to live each moment alone because help is always there for us if we are open to it- Immanuel means God With Us.

The Christ Light is there for us every moment of God's Holy Time throughout this and every New Year. May the grace that is this Holy Christmastide bless you and yours now and forevermore.
Shalom, Pastor JoBeth

At the beginning of the year the members of the Stewardship Team met to develop the areas of responsibilities for the team.

The following was approved by members of the team and also the Church Council.

Financial

Pledge Drive

Determine program will use

Speakers

Mailings

Chronicle Articles

Bulletin board

Follow-up and prepare Income budget

Endowments

Information presentations

Resource people

Legal connection

Fundraising Activities- coordinate and assist

Church auction

Dinners

Breakfast with Santa

New ideas

Promotion and Education of Stewardship

Bulletin boards

Chronicle articles

Forum notices and articles

Time & Talents-coordinate and assist

Auction

Food Activities

Churches United

Sandwich Ministry

United Campus Ministry Meal- with Women's Fellowship

Food pantry

YWCA

Charles Hall

Building and Nurturing Relationships

Children

Youth

Adults

Social Functions

Bible Studies

Health

Community

Body as a temple of God/Environmental

The stewardship committee at this time consists of Walt Meidinger, Marlo Lutt and Judy Maxson. As you can see the Stewardship team is a facilitator for many of the activities. If you have any ideas for activities or dates for some listed please talk to the team and they can help to set things in motion.

Pledge Drive Update

We currently have received 37 pledges for 2012 totaling \$67,154. Last year at this time we had 44 pledges totaling \$76,569.

Women's Fellowship held its annual Christmas Luncheon December 13. Members of both circles attended as well as many of the men that help with the rummage sale. Our guest speaker was Beth Zitzow, daughter of Joann and Ray Andres. She is a member of a group call "Hellfighters". This organization was founded in 2000 in Laurel, Mississippi to encourage complacent church members to get off the church pew and into the streets and start telling people about Jesus. You don't have to ride a bike (motorcycle) to be a Hellfighter, but since many of the members do that is where they direct their energy. They are especially active during bike week in Sturgis, SD keeping intoxicated but respectful people from going to jail by providing a place for them to stay. This winter they will be volunteering at First United Methodist Church with their Emergency Shelter to help keep homeless off the streets and in a warm place to sleep for the night. Currently Hellfighters are in 15 states and 5 international countries: Belize, Madagascar, Puerto Rico, United Kingdom and Germany. Hellfighters believe in righteousness as well as justice, not just in and from other people but within and from themselves. They are courteous, even to their enemies and rise above the masses of people who are afraid to act. Beth's presentation was well received and certainly fits the credo of the UCC. If you have any questions please call Jim Zitzow @701-866-4108.

Mission 1

Results of our efforts to participate in the United Church of Christ offerings of healthy food items to our local food pantry, money to Neighbors in Need and letters to our congressional delegations we:

- donated 47 food items to the Great Plains Food Bank valued at \$80
 - donated \$99 to Neighbors in Need
 - sent over 30 letters to U.S. senators and representatives.

Thanks to all who participated! The United Church of Christ is alive and well and has made an important statement. Let us pray that our efforts will indeed alleviate hunger while confronting economic injustices that breed poverty and hunger.

A big thank you to the families who adopted a child from Nokomis and purchased gifts for fifteen children. Your generosity is appreciated so very much by the staff as well as the parents. There are over 160 children at Nokomis and we are one of the many churches who try to make their Christmas a happier one. Thank you again and God's Blessings to all. Betty Bauder

Pastor Search Team

In January we will be submitting our church profile to the Northern Palins Conference office. They will begin circulating it. This process tend to take several months before suitable candidates are found to interview etc.... Please be patient as we want to find the best possible fit for Plymouth. We will keep you posted as we progress through the search. Thank you for your patience.

Plymouth Open House

Thank all of you that participated and helped at the open house Sunday December 18th. We did not have the number of visitors that we had hoped would attend but it is the first annual and there are many changes to be made for next time. The music was terrific, the food outstanding and the company beyond compare. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

January 2012

1 10:30am Worship Service & Sandwich Ministry	2 6:30 pm Trustees Meeting	3 8 pm Council Meeting Annual Reports due	4 6:30 pm Communion Worship 7 pm Bells 8 pm Choir	5	6	7
8 10:30am Epiphany/ Communion Worship Service	9	10	11 6:30 pm Communion Worship 7 pm Bells 8 pm Choir	12 9 am Men's Retirees meet at Fry'n Pan	13	14
15 10:30am Worship Service & Sandwich Ministry	16 Office Closed MLK Jr. Day	17 9:30 am Mayflower Circle	18 6:30 pm Communion Worship 7 pm Bells 8 pm Choir	19	20 Deadline for February Chronicle	21
22 10:30am Worship Service ANNUAL MEETING	23	24 1 pm Margaret Sherwood Circle	25 6:30 pm Communion Worship 7 pm Bells 8 pm Choir	26	27	28 4-7 pm Serve at Churches United
29 10:30am Worship Service	30	31	1 6:30 pm Communion Worship 7 pm Bells 8 pm Choir	2	3	4



- January
 4-Dick Maetzold
 13-Henrietta Fiechtner
 14-Chris Le
 15-Cynthia Lura
 18-Victor Leeby
 26-Matthew Mohr
 29-Wayne Saar
 30-Kenneth Ruby

If you want your birthday in The Chronicle, please contact the office.

Serving Groups

January
CO-CHAIR:
 Dick & Ilean Maetzold
CO-CHAIR:
 Rosella Jangula

Susanne Driscoll
 Yvette Lederer
 Krista & Chris Le
 Jim & Jodie Anderson
 Michael & Kailee Adeshina

“Today is the day the Lord has made, rejoice, and I say rejoice, and be glad in it.”

With joy and glad tidings in my heart, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas. The time has come once again to remember the reason for the season, our Blessed Savior’s birth. Remember it is okay to say “Merry Christmas.”

Thank you to all who participated in our “1st Annual” open house, decorated our church, provided the lawn decoration, goodies, made cookies, helped with serving our goodies and provided music for our guests. Our open house was a great success. We have a whole year to re-write the script and practice with faith, hope and charity. Our next attempt will only be strengthened and better. Our building was filled with grace, kindness and beauty. When all is said and done, we had a great day!

This past month has been a very busy one. The council has been preparing for the annual meeting, finalizing the annual budget, collecting pledges along with filling vacancies on teams and the normal rush of the Christmas Season. All this has taken time and energy. Our annual meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2012 right after our regular worship service. I invite all members to be in attendance. Bring your ideas, your wisdom, concerns and solutions. We do need everyone’s input to help with this next church year.

The budget, as many of you know, is not in balance. We are short on meeting the current expenses. We need to think “outside the box” and find ways to make up the difference. Any and all suggestions are welcome and will be discussed at the annual meeting and/or at any up-coming council meeting.

We have heard the past few months that “Jesus has left the building”. Yes, he has, but he has not abandoned us. He has left, left with his spirit in our hearts to spread the good news. Evangelism is how Jesus gathered his followers, one by one. We need to be His messengers once more. Only 5% of the Christian population discusses their faith, church and religion with friends, acquaintances, co-workers, etc. Our world is and has changed so fast and so much with the availability of instant reporting, cell phones, web streaming, and the way we focus on what is important. People sometimes forget nothing has really changed but technology and the way we now communicate with one another. We all have a tent that needs the reassurance we are able to satisfy our spiritual needs on a one on one personal basis. We must seek more one on one contact so we can see each other when we talk about the good news. It is more important and personal to be able to talk face to face than on a cell phone, through Skype, Face book, or e-mails. Evangelism is not going from door to door, two by two, but just developing a relationship with people we meet on an individual basis. This may mean taking the “RISK” (Running Into Someone Kind). Let’s all attempt to be more personal. Take the “RISK” “Evangelize”!

I personally want to take this time to say the past few months as Moderator has given me the opportunity to grow in faith, hope and charity. I pass the “Note from the Moderator” to Judy Maxson who agreed to fill this position for the coming year. I know she is the right choice to lead us. Judy has the energy; foresight and organizational ability that we will see are very valuable. Judy, we all want to say “Thank You” for accepting this challenge and give you the support needed for a successful, enjoyable year.

Have a Merry Christmas along with a very prosperous New Year. May God bless all of you! and I say Amen.

Tom Payne, Moderator

Submitted by Howard Etson

When one goes to a church one of the first things they notice is the windows. So here’s what I see from my point of view.

When you walk up to the front doors (on the corner of 9th Ave. & North Broadway) you will see three large stained glass windows. They say “Faith,” “Hope,” and “Charity.”

Faith: In Jesus Christ our Savior, and this teaching given within this building.

Hope: To many the hope of forgiveness for all our ways is like that of a seed once planted to bear fruit.

Charity: That which Jesus has asked of us. From Matthew 25:31-46.

Than as you enter the door there are what look like two angels welcoming you in.

Once inside the sanctuary there are long narrow windows in the nave, to me they represent the idea of the Congregational Church. The center window shows the Sermon on the Mount. On the left you see Jesus a the Jordan River and on the right is the Lord’s Supper.

As you look around the church there are five sets of windows, three in each set. As you will see they tell the story of Jesus.

Starting with the first set (front left or south side), the angel Gabriel telling Mary that she will give birth to a son and his name will be Jesus. In the middle is the shepherds and the star over Bethlehem. The final window is Jesus, Joseph and Mary.

The last set on the south wall is Jesus, Joseph and Mary going up to Jerusalem. While there Jesus, at a very young age, went to the temple. The middle window shows Jesus talking with the priest and elders of the temple. The last window is Jesus walking with Joseph, “was this man not son of a carpenter.”

As you turn to the north side of the sanctuary starting at the back, you see Mary and Martha, sisters of Lazarus. As Mary sits and listens to Jesus, Martha is sitting at the table. The middle window is the story of the rich man asking how he can get to heaven and Jesus says, Give all you have to the poor and follow me. The last is this group is “Suffer the little children to come up to me.”

The middle set on the north wall shows Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. On the right Jesus is crucified and in the center shows Jesus before Pilate.

The last set on the north wall shows Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene. In the center Jesus commissions his disciples to go forth unto the world. Last is the Last Supper.

Two windows in the very back show Jesus, Joseph and Mary going into Egypt and the three Wise Men at Bethlehem. To the side of the stairs going up there is a window on the south side with three crowns, the Holy Trinity, Father, Son & Holy Spirit.

Treasurer’s Report

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Operating Income and Expenses for 2011

January –Dec. 27	YTD
Operating Income \$	\$157831
Operating Expenses \$	\$157871
Extra Income Taken out of Accounts	
Money Market	\$3000
UC C Foundation Stocks	\$10000

