

Plymouth Congregational Church
 PO Box 1901
 Fargo, ND 58107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

We leave judging to God.

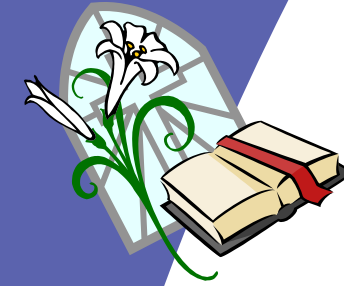


Plymouth Congregational Church
 901 North Broadway
 Fargo, ND 58102
 Phone: 701-235-9226
 E-mail: info@plymouthfargo.org
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Amelia's office hours: Monday – Friday; 10 a.m.– 1 p.m.

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.



Special points of interest:

- **Pastoral Ponderings**
- **Easter Egg Hunt**
- **Michelle Strang's Fruit Dip Recipe**

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The Chronicle

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
 Volume 11 Issue 4 April 2011

Pastoral Ponderings

In Biblical times average human life expectancy was 20. In 1776 it was still just 23. In 1900 most Americans died by age 47. Retirement age to receive Social Security was set at 65 because it was an age beyond which no one could humanly imagine. In 1997 data said life expectancy in the U.S. was 76.5 years. -Facts, Homiletics, 1/2011

Short-sightedness has marked human thinking and planning since the beginning of time, exemplified by the following story:

"A reporter was interviewing a 104-year-old woman: 'And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?' the reporter asked. Her simple reply: 'No peer pressure.'" -Ibid.

People who live to be 100 are not unusual anymore. Many are active like the 100-year-old Florida woman who actively delivers Meals-On-Wheels to people 40 years younger. Some often say to her, "Well, Irene when you get as old as I am, then..." She enjoys the moment and gives thanks for her good physical health, mental alertness, and sharp memory, which allow her to actively serve her community, do her own housework, and celebrate

life each Saturday night with pizza and a beer.

In 2011, "To not only survive but thrive, the skill you need to master is resilience."

- Learn from experience
 - Accept setbacks and losses
 - Recognize emotions
 - Keep time in perspective
 - Think creatively and flexibly
 - Ask for help
 - Take care of yourself
- Harvey Mackay

We often don't do so well at the last two. We try to take care of others and ignore the needs we have and never ask for any help. We are like balloons. Yes, a perfect fit in a perfect container...for air. -H. Glasser and J. Easy

But if we fill our balloons with water or other heavy burdens of life, they get unpredictable, more fragile and when they touch anything burst easily.

Humans were meant to be filled with light, air, and love. It is how God made us. It is what Jesus can still teach us today...if we will listen and learn.

"A teacher is one who makes themselves progressively unnecessary." -Thomas Carruthers

Jesus was just such a teacher. He made himself as a human being unnecessary, but as the Christ pointed us to God's love and our love for one another as essential for quality life on earth.

As we journey together during this Lenten Season after slogging through a tough winter, let us remember what Jesus taught.

Short-sightedness is a human construct, so let us place our faith in God who created us. Let us love and serve one another and let God lead us beyond what we humans think is all that we are able to do. Even when death seems to have swallowed up life...we can place our trust in God's holy view. NEW life is always growing in our lives through the Christ whether we live to be 23 or 104 or beyond.

May the blessing of God's love be in your heart through Lent and God's new life fill you with Easter joy. Christ is Risen, Indeed!

Shalom,
 Pastor JoBeth

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

The CE Team is planning the Annual Easter Egg Hunt for Saturday, April 16th from 10:30 to noon. We could use your help! Does anyone have any ideas on how to showcase to visitors attending the event all our church has to offer? Maybe a booth with our literature? Is anyone interested in assisting the CE team with welcoming visitors? Providing refreshments? If so, please contact Roxane Meidinger at 237-9197 or rmeidinger@cablone.net.



What's Happening at United Campus Ministry

It's April which means we are close to the end of the year. Just a few more weeks of classes. We have already started talking about and planning for next fall in our student Leadership Team meetings. Every semester is different and we have to adjust to new students, new schedules and new ideas. We are excited to implement new programs and ideas next year and we'll spend the summer honing those ideas. Changes are already being made in the staff. Ashley and myself have been given new job titles, we are now Associate Campus Ministers. This change was made to reflect what we do at UCM and to convey that we are staff apart from the students. The vision for UCM is to have a director/campus minister and to have a group of associates to support and work with the director and each other as a team.

Looking forward to May we have our end of the year Pig Roast/Free Meal, which is always a big event. We need your help for this! Anyone who would be willing to make a dish for this or help at the event, please contact me in the office. Watch the bulletins for more information to come as it gets closer to the event.
-Amelia Shoptaugh, UCM Associate Campus Minister

**April
Serving
Group**

CO-CHAIR:

Deb & Don Sizemore

CO-CHAIR:

Melisa Toepke-Peterson &
Scott Peterson

Tammy Breuer
Richard & Brooke Brandvold
Rick & Cindy Cameron
Marjorie & Walt Meidinger
Barb Brecke



8-Barbara Carriker
9-Trish Floyd
10-Nicole Trautman
11-Rick Cameron
17-Jon Regula
17-Callie Larson

17-Adair Hartzel
20-JJ Regula
23-Glenio Trindade
25-Marilyn Rich
26-Cynthia Mohr
27-Kalli Cummings



THE JOB OF THE CHURCH ORGANIST

The church organist has several different duties. First and foremost, the organist must choose music that enhances the church service and the theme or message of each Sunday's service. I try to choose lighter music for the preludes (music played before the service begins) as the reason for prelude music is to prepare a setting where the congregants can pray, meditate, and prepare themselves to receive God's word when the service begins. The music played while the offering is received is a quiet, meditative piece that allows the members of the congregation time to meditate on the message that was just presented by the pastor. The postlude (music played while the congregants are leaving the sanctuary) is usually up-beat and reflective of the church service just ended. This helps the members of the congregation to leave prepared to joyously spread the Gospel of the Lord throughout the next week(s).

When asked, it is the duty of the organist to help the pastor and others on the Worship Committee choose music for the upcoming services. This is not an easy task as many things must be considered before choosing each hymn for every service. The members of this committee must choose hymns that are relative to each Sunday (or Wednesday night) service, its theme, and its message.

Another duty of the church organist is to be prepared for funerals, sometimes with a two day notice. When playing for a funeral service, I try to choose music that will add a sense of peace and comfort to the grieving. I also make sure that any requested music by the deceased and his/her family is played. This music is usually very low-key and soft to honor the memory of the person whose life is being celebrated during the funeral or memorial service.

Weddings are another one of my responsibilities. Almost always the bridal couple will request certain pieces of music to be played for the processional of the bridesmaids and the bride and the recessional at the end of the church service when the bridal couple leaves the sanctuary. Sometimes the couple will request that I play for the soloist(s) during the ceremony. I do my best to accommodate the bridal couple on all of these requests.

Besides the weekly church services, funerals, and weddings at Plymouth, I also have been asked to play for the World Day of Prayer service held in March, to play a couple of Christmas tunes for the ladies' luncheon in December, and other miscellaneous services held during the church year. I am happy when I am able to accommodate those requests.

Being able to play for services that praise our Lord is indeed an honor, and being the organist at Plymouth United Church of Christ is a privilege that I take very seriously. I thank our Lord for giving me the ability to lead the music in our church, and I thank the people of our congregation for allowing me to do so.

Tom Thoreson

Building & Grounds

The Building and Grounds Team is looking for "a few good men and women." We know spring and, ultimately, summer are coming and that means green grass and, unfortunately, green weeds will also be here soon. If you would like to be a member of our team to help with the mowing and other maintenance of the grounds, please contact me at church or by phone at 237-4016 or by email at parm2m@aol.com.

Team Leader
Walt Meidinger



Called to Care

It doesn't take an expert. "Called to Care" starts with friendly people. Our purpose in "Called to Care" is to regularly visit and befriend the people in our community. We come together monthly to enhance our growth in faith and service. A few of the skills we want to build upon include our listening skills, our empathy skills, and our communication skills. If you are interested in knowing more about us, we meet the third Sunday of most months at 9:30 am in the library at Plymouth. You may also contact Howard Etson at 701-361-3261 or hretson6@msn.com.

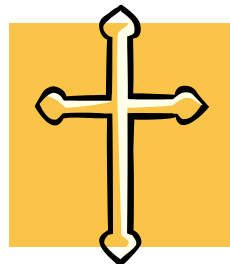
A month has passed and again we are approaching a time of reference and reflection. Easter will soon be here and springtime will bring warmer weather along with the beauty of God's creations in our flower gardens.



The council meeting was very well attended last month and I personally want to thank all of the members who attended. A lot of work has been accomplished. Our Stewardship team is taking shape and functioning again. Thanks to all who volunteered to be part of that team. I know there will be great things happening in the near future and we look forward to being part of the action. All other teams are working together too and represent our church family as needed. It is awesome to see the involvement from everyone. If you want to be part of any team please attend the next council meeting or a team meeting to find out what is happening.

We are in need of two volunteers to fill vacancies on the Board of Trustee's. The board has been working hard to keep our church operating within its budget, long range planning, increasing our endowment funds, and planning for future growth. If you have an interest in helping out, please come forward and volunteer for one of the open positions. Thanks again for all your efforts.

Tom Payne
Moderator



Conference Council at Work

Northern Plains Conference met February 26th. Committee reports brought us up to date on their activities. Faith and Nurture – Plans are made for summer camping at Camp of the Cross, using the "Got Spirit?" curriculum from our National Church. The Fall Youth Rally will be in Bismarck with a program uplifting our Native Churches. Women's Fellowship retreat in September will be at the Richardton Abbey. Church and Ministry had nothing to report to us. Mission and Outreach – a grant was approved for a second printing of Our Churches, Our Story by Juanita Helphrey She will be invited to our Annual Meeting as a speaker and for a book signing. Profits from the sale of the books will go to Fort Berthold Council of Congregational Churches. A grant was approved for Memorial Church in Parshall for materials to be used in an after school program. A request for funds will be sent to our National Church to be used for the Devils Lake Basin for preparedness, immediate relief and ongoing relief in the anticipated spring flooding. This summer an "alternate" church will be started in Williston to be served by area pastors at the start. A Lenten retreat for clergy is scheduled for April 3 – 5 with the Rev. Jennifer Kottler as leader. At Our Conference Annual Meeting at First Church, Fargo our General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ Geoffrey Black will be a featured speaker and he will also be preaching Sunday morning.

These are highlights of some of the programs and activities the committees and council along with the Conference Minister have been planning and executing on behalf of all our churches in the Conference.

Elizabeth Begg

Last month's article from the Stewardship team listed the importance of honoring God with our time, relationships and money. This month's article is relating to activities that involve time, talents, and developing new relationships.

February 26th was Plymouth's evening to prepare a meal for people staying at Churches United for the Homeless. Six women and a teen gave of their time for this activity and what an array of talents came forth. Rita Kind created beautiful salads with her cutting, chopping and just doing her thing. Suzanne Driscoll used onions and other seasonings to create a delicious chicken dish. All of it went and lots asked for seconds. She really was a trooper gamely battling the oven's peculiarities. Michelle Strang took her creative juices and prepared a fruit dip that everyone loved and was used not only on the fresh fruit but also the cookies served for dessert. Cynthia and Berea Mohr (the most experienced working at Churches United) took on serving the green beans, finding bread and desserts and encouraging the rest of us. Pastor JoBeth was in charge of hostessing and retrieval of labels from the soup cans and recycling. Judy Maxson cooked the rice. It wasn't as colorful as rice cooker extraordinaire Steve Larson, but everyone ate it and some asked for seconds. Berea was wonderful with her enthusiasm and knowledge of the steam table. Oh, for the fearlessness of the young. It was a wonderful evening working with people that might not have been a part of each others lives and also having such a variety of ages and experiences. If you would like to help with Churches United sometime contact Shauna Larson.



Michelle's Fruit Dip

- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup yogurt any flavor
- 1 package instant pudding mix—Michelle likes the cheesecake flavor (sugar-free works)

Mix together and refrigerate. Serve with apples, pears, berries, and even cookies.

Stewardship Team Members:

- Steve Larson
- Jerry Jernberg
- Walt Meidinger
- Judy Maxson

Treasurer's Report

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Operating Income and Expenses for 2011

	February 2011	YTD
Operating Income	\$9,113.61	\$26,760.90
Operating Expenses	\$12,925.75	\$26,676.37

