

Plymouth Congregational Church
 PO Box 1901
 Fargo, ND 58107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Summer



Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ

We leave judging to God.

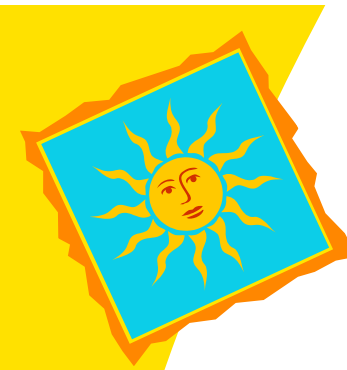


We welcome guests any & every Sunday of the year! Worship is central to our life together and our worship facilities are accessible. We seek to come together to experience God's Spirit every week as we pray, sing, cry, & laugh.

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.

Plymouth Congregational Church
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 Fargo, ND 58102
 Phone: 701-235-9226
 E-mail: info@plymouthfargo.org
www.plymouthfargo.org

Amelia's office hours: Monday – Friday; 10 a.m.– 1 p.m.



Special points of interest:

- **Pastoral Ponderings**
- **Missing camera**
- **Rummage Sale**
- **Congregational Meeting on May 15**

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The Chronicle

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ
 Volume 11 Issue 6
 Summer 2011

The best interplay between earth-bound humans and God is displayed at the close of Act I of the play "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder in a marvelous conversation between young George and Rebecca Gibbs. It goes like this: **Rebecca:** I never told you about that letter Jane Crofut got from her minister when she was sick. He wrote Jane a letter and on the envelope the address was like this: It said: Jane Crofut; The Crofut Farm; Grover's Corners; Sutton County; New Hampshire; United States of America. **George:** What's funny about that? **Rebecca:** But listen, it's not finished: the United States of America; Continent of North America; Western Hemisphere; the Earth; the Solar System; the Universe; the Mind of God—that's what it said on the envelope. **George:** What do you know! **Rebecca:** And the postman brought it just the same. This short conversation shares at the same split second the juxtaposition of everyday ordinariness and yet the mind-boggling wonder of our lives here on earth. Why would a God who has made all of creation have created us...for lives with expectations upon this planet...one of many in our

solar system...at this time in the history of all time? The answer is everywhere in the Bible, yet most succinctly in Ecclesiastes 3:11a and 14 which say, "God has made everything beautiful in its time" and "Whatever God does endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has made it so." What does this have to do with my life in the 21st Century? If we yield to fear, then we add not only to our own pain but also to God's. Stephen R. Covey clarifies how we can deal with our human lives filled with very real human mistakes: "Not to acknowledge a mistake, not to correct it and learn from it, is a mistake of a different order. It usually puts a person on a self-deceiving, self-justifying path, often involving rationalization (rational lies) to self and others. This second mistake, this cover-up, empowers the first, giving it disproportionate importance and causes far deeper injury to self." Again you may ask: "What does this have to do with my everyday life?" Simply that God is in charge no matter what happens and with humans anything is possible. Luckily Jesus taught us of a loving, forgiving God but one who also has high expectations

of us. God's love and hope for us are indeed mind-boggling, but they are also there for our asking. When Jesus lived among us, he taught us about life through the Great Commandment: "You shall love God with your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus' teachings went beyond the awe and wonder of praising God to tell us exactly what is expected of us. We are not on earth to just take air, water, space and time for no purpose. We were created by a God who loves us and expects us to make life better for everyone. Each of us has been given the tools to do exactly this in our individual space and time upon the planet. The ultimate accountability comes only when we cross over into God's loving arms...So here in the 21st Century as Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, the President and Minister of the United Church of Christ said in his sermon to the worshipping community at the Northern Plains Conference of the UCC on Sunday in Fargo, ND, "What are we waiting for? Let's GET GOING!" We need each other and God to guide us. "We are the church together." Blessings of God's Bounty to each of you. Shalom Pastor JoBeth

Upcoming Events:

June 20-July 4	Pastor JoBeth is on vacation, please call Margaret Kloster or Howard Etson for emergencies
June 24	Wedding at Plymouth
July 4	Independence Day—Office Closed
July 10	Church picnic after worship
July 12-15	Amelia is on vacation
July 24-28	Northern Plains Conference Summer Camp
August 17	Potluck Hootenanny Fun Night
August 27	Wedding at Plymouth

Birthdays

June

- 6-Andre Trindade
- 7-Bryan Larson
- 13-Jim Skaarer
- 18-Clara Kiefert
- 19-Gordon Kartenson
- 25-Allen Johnson
- 26-Tom Thoreson
- 29-Jan Thoreson

July

- 2-Dylan Murray
- 3-Rosella Jangula
- 6-Vi Taylor
- 9-Linda Murrey
- 15-Kristopher Hummel
- 16-Joanne Andres
- 16-Gail Saar
- 19-Bob Kiefert
- 20-Nancy Scheiring
- 21-Ruth Hoerauf
- 22-Beatice Kartenson
- 24-James Fiechtner
- 27-Joel Cummings
- 30-Kaitlyn Anderson

August

- 3-Marie Martin
- 4-Jeff Hess
- 7-Erika Schur
- 8-Claudia Murray
- 10-Ellen Scheiring
- 26-Rob Scheiring
- 27-Marion Ruppert
- 30-Berea Mohr

Serving Groups

June

CO-CHAIR:

Clarence & Henrietta Fiechtner

CO-CHAIR:

Connie Laite

Joel & Kris Cummings
 Tamme & James Fiechtner
 Barbara & Joel Fiechtner
 Julie Laite

July

CO-CHAIR:

Nancy Weiser

CO-CHAIR:

Carol Pearson Martinson

Rita Kind
 Roxane Meidinger
 Howard Etson
 Tacye Pearson

August

CO-CHAIR:

Al & Betty Bauder

CO-CHAIR:

Denver & Irene Saylor

Helen Goodfellow
 Clara & Bob Kiefert
 Beth Begg
 Alma Levi

Rummage Sale



Plymouth Women's Fellowship's Annual Rummage Sale has been scheduled for September 9th and 10th. Good quality items are needed, so if you feel the urge to clean the basement, kitchen, garage, attic, or any other part of your home, keep us in mind. Clean, gently used items are welcome and may be brought to the church for storage in the Women's Fellowship rummage room in the basement at any time.

The Brainstorm Group met recently and came up with a few ways our treasury could be supplemented. Your additional donation can change Plymouth's world for the better!

- Help us keep the lights on – For \$12.00 per day you could be a light bulb.
- Help us keep the heat on – For \$17.00 per day you could be an ember of coal
- Help us communicate by phone – For \$5.00 per day you could be an ear phone
- For \$25.00 per week you could help keep our Web Site up to date. (The current most popular way into church)
- Discussion to cook burgers and hot dogs on the front lawn during the summer once a month and sell them to the general public was a topic. Another topic was to have our church members sponsor the Sunday worship bulletin, which cost \$80/week.
- Carol Pearson will be calling to ask for your help on Sunday mornings to be a Greeter, Scripture Reader or Acolyte. We would really like to see everyone participate in the activities of our services and help make our worship memorable. We are looking to a Wednesday night option in the fall. We will meet again in July to see how things are progressing and see if more ideas have come up. Watch for more details.

Faith Community Report

In the past when St. Luke's hospital was our next door neighbor, Plymouth Church was invited to send a delegate to their Annual Meeting. At this meeting reports were given on what was happening at the hospital. This all changed in June of 2005 when Faith Community Advisory Group was chartered. This group was chartered to provide a channel of communication and information between faith communities and MeritCare and to provide continuity of the historic relationship between the faith communities and MeritCare (now Sanford Health).

Members of the Faith Community were the pastor and one lay person from the congregation. Parish nurses are also included in the membership. There are no dues, but members are encouraged to attend the quarterly meetings. Originally the group was centered in Cass and Clay counties, but because of the widespread interest, the boundaries have been extended to include outlying communities. At the first meeting ten churches were represented, but as of May 2011 there are 61 churches on record.

A variety of subjects are discussed at the quarterly meeting with qualified speakers making presentations — homelessness, transportation in rural areas, disasters, pandemics, palliative care, medical services, spiritual care, and food distribution are a few of the subjects.

I have been attending these meetings for two years and since Pastor JoBeth joined our congregation as Interim Minister she has also been attending. I find the meetings very interesting and I hope to make reports in the Chronicle in the future.

Tammy Breuer

I would like to thank all who helped make bars and serve for the Northern Plains UCC Conference hosted at First Church with great help from Plymouth. All comments were very positive about the help from Plymouth.

Thanks very much,
Henrietta Fiechtner

The next big activity that is sponsored by the fellowship is the all church rummage sale set for September 9th and 10th. We need lots of stuff and if you could help set up, take down or sell please contact Marsha Lutt. If you are bringing items make sure they work, do not smell of smoke and if you needed you might buy it. This is a big all church fundraiser and we need everyone's help.

If there are women in the church that would like to be a part of a circle but because of work or childcare can't attend or morning or afternoon groups, please let Judy Maxson know of your interest and together we will explore other options.

Thank you to all that contributed to the flower fund after church a few Sundays ago. This was not a scheduled fellowship activity but we were asked for funds and like everywhere else the treasury is a little short. Enough money was raised to pay for the outdoor flowers and we even have a little left. Sounds like the loaves and fishes story.

Plymouth UCC member Beth Begg was chosen as Outstanding Lay Person of the Year for the Northern Plains Conference. She and her daughter will be traveling to Tampa, FL July 1-4 where she will be recognized at General Synod.



Nokomis News



The "Friends of Nokomis" annual geranium sale is over and thirteen Churches, the staff at Nokomis and the Village sold a total of 2,634 flowers. Our total was a little less than previous years but maybe the cold spring kept sales down a little. We will still have over \$5000.00 to give to the Center for much needed supplies and upkeep. I want to thank all you loyal people who purchased flowers again and those who made a donation. Nokomis is one of Plymouth's missions and it's so great to have your support.

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Kloster, Delegate

The Northern Plains Conference Annual Meeting was held June 3-5 at First Congregational UCC in Fargo. Plymouth Congregational had many people there serving in many areas. Youth were involved in meetings and childcare. Many of Plymouth's women helped to serve, bake bars, and clean up meals. There were several people who attended the Saturday evening meal as well. We had delegates present in all of the meetings and presentations.

Workshops were held regarding General Synod, the future of the church, Native American experiences within the church, and health. There were workshop leaders and keynote speakers from the national setting, including the national president and General Minister of the United Church of Christ, Geoffrey Black.

The atmosphere of the meeting was different than that of years past. We gave the Friday night worship experience over to remembering and celebrating the lives of Rev. RJ Stohler and Pastor Karl Limvere, who served Zion UCC in Medina for a number of years. Rev. Stohler passed away last August and Karl passed away last month. Both had given countless hours and dedicated devotion to the conference and their loss was obvious.

As always, it was a great time of fellowship and renewing of friendships that for some only happen each year at the meeting. There were many people for whom this was their first conference experience. Everyone seemed to enjoy the experience and learned a great deal from it. I know that new friendships were forged and old friendships bonded more tightly.

There were two main items of business. First, was the financial picture facing the conference. There is little left in reserve, with a budget that is sure to be in the red. The Mission and Outreach committee, which is charged with financial decisions, is looking at ways to rectify this. Within this discussion was the fact that Our Churches Wider Mission is down, with some congregations giving nothing. It is important to remember that OCWM is the conference's main source of support. When OCWM money is given to the conference, only a small percentage is sent on to the national setting, with the bulk remaining within the conference. All in the conference have benefitted in some way from the conference office. This was made clear when people who had benefitted in certain ways (help in searching for a new pastor, served on a conference committee, etc.) were identified and asked to leave the room. There was no one left in the room at the conclusion. It did drive home the point.

Second, was continuing to move forward with the discussions regarding banding together the the SD conference. This was passed during one of the Saturday business sessions. SD had taken a vote during their annual (but very abbreviated meeting due to flooding concerns) meeting on Friday, June 3. The first outcome of this will be that next year's annual conference will be held in Aberdeen, SD. The Northern Plains and SD will hold this a joint venture, with portions of the meeting being exclusive to the delegates of each conference and other portions being combined. This is just the first of many possibilities for the combining of things to come.

The women's luncheon (open to all) had a special speaker, Barbara Baylor, from the national office. She spoke on women's health and the differences that are important to women's health. She was a great speaker with a very informative and vital message.

The meeting wrapped up on Sunday morning with the regular worship service of First Church. We worshiped with a choir of all who wanted to sing. We shared communion and had the rare opportunity for so many to hear the speaking of Geoffrey Black, General Minister. At the crux of his sermon was the admonishment to "Get Going" on all fronts.

As always it is an honor for me to be a part of the Annual Conference of the Northern Plains. I urge you on behalf of myself and all who attended to see where you can "Get Going" and be part of the larger church.

*Thank you, Ladies of Plymouth Congregational
Thank you for furnishing the yummy bars and the wonderful workers. We enjoyed getting to know you and working with you. We received many compliments regarding the serving of food. Your assistance was greatly appreciated. We could not have done it without you.*

*Blessings to All of You,
Women's Fellowship
First Congregational Church
Arlyce Widmer*

Summer has arrived! Warm (hot) days and of course the wind. We experienced a bit of a wind storm the other day and we came through it okay. There was a lot of debris in the yard from the trees but everyone came together and cleaned it up. The yard looks great. Thanks to everyone who helps out. Our beautiful yard and gardens are a representation for all of us. It show great pride in our beliefs and our property.

With a sad note I report that John and Jannine Whartnaby have resigned from membership of our church. The life style of a nurse has taken the ability for Jannine to worship on Sunday. We wish them well and hope they will visit us when they can.

We are now in need of more Trustees. Who can step up and cover the vacancies? Let Pastor JoBeth or Henrietta know if you have questions or would be interested to get involved. We are in desperate need at this point because we do not have enough members on the Board of Trustees Team to hold meetings and make decisions according to the by-laws and constitution of our church. Help!!!!

The Church Leadership Council also wants to thank everyone who participated in the Northern Plains Conference Annual Meeting at First Church June 3-5 in Fargo. Our church was very well represented on all accounts, from delegates, kitchen workers, confirmands, and worship attendance. We are proud of all you.

The Council will be meeting during the summer months in the library on the first Wednesday of July and August at 7:30 PM. We will meet the first Tuesday at the regular time in September. We encourage anyone who is interested to attend our meeting.

Take care in God's love and keep a smile on your face and laughter in your heart.

Tom Payne, Moderator

We are very fortunate at Plymouth Church to have some very generous people among us. Recently we received a gift of \$3,500 as an additional contribution from a member to help reduce our budget deficit. Earlier in the year we received an additional \$500 from another member asking that it go towards our deficit. In addition, others have either accelerated their pledge or have paid over and above what they had already pledged. We wanted to publicly acknowledge these gifts and thank those who have so graciously given of their resources to support the congregation that is Plymouth Church and its mission to help those in need.

Submitted by Walt Meidinger

Several of the members of our Stewardship Team attended a meeting on May 10 at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Moorhead on homelessness. The meeting was presented by the FM Coalition for the Homeless and was led by the Executive Director, Laurie J. Baker.

Here are some highlights of that meeting:

- One of the key tenets is that a home is a basic human right.
- The homeless are victims of poverty, physical and mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions, social prejudices and sometimes just plain bad luck. Until the time the homeless have a place to live, they are basically too traumatized to be productive citizens.
- Here are some statistics about people who are homeless in Fargo-Moorhead.
- 34 % are veterans and single mothers with children.
- Children out of foster homes is the fastest area of growing homelessness.
- Transportation and physical health issues are the greatest barriers to employment.
- 82% of homeless have a high school diploma or GED.
- Between January 2009 and December 2010, more than 40 people in our community died from causes directly or indirectly related to their homeless status. Every year on December 21, the longest night of the year and the first day of winter, a national memorial honors those who died while homeless.
- This year the Coalition sponsored a fire lighting vigil next to the Fargo Public Library to remember those who died. Local artists created a snow sculpture memorial. Visit www.fmhomeless.org for photographs and more information.
- Ongoing research and assessment help the community mark progress toward our shared goal of ending long term homelessness. Individual stories may move and change people but research moves and changes bureaucracies.

Treasurer's Report

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Operating Income and Expenses for 2011

April 2011		YTD
Operating Income	\$15,391	\$53,322.01
Operating Expenses	\$9,045	\$50,880.06
Special Donations January 1, 2011-April 30,2011		
Churches United for Homeless		\$250.00
Food Pantry		\$250.00
Loan Reduction		\$1000.00
Deficit Reduction		\$500.00

