

Graceful Giving: An Alternative Gift Fair

Graceful Giving, our annual Alternative Gift Fair, will take place on December 11 in Hildebrand Hall, both before and after the 11:00 a.m. service. Do you want to give holiday gifts to your friends and family and feel good about your purchases? Do you yearn for an alternative to the holiday commercialism that surrounds us? Would you consider making a donation in honor or memory of a special person, or as a gift to a friend or family member who doesn't want more "stuff?" If so, this Gift Fair is for you! Fair-trade and non-profit organizations will be present to sell unique gift items and to offer information and opportunities for you to make donations! Please save the date and plan to come! Help us to support these organizations and celebrate the twelfth anniversary of this event! —Ardy Bergman



Interfaith Panel Discussion Saturday, December 3, 10:00 a.m.-noon at Plymouth

You are invited to this opportunity to meet with Occupy Seattle Organizers and learn about the movement. Talk with those on the ground, and explore how this movement informs our faith. Saturday, December 3, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon at Plymouth. Questions? Contact the Reverend Brigitta Remole: info@plymouthchurchseattle.org, or download the flyer on the homepage of our website: www.plymouthseattle.org

Release, Receive, Return: Wintertide Series Wednesdays, 5:30-6:00 p.m.

Leave the Wednesday evening commute behind and enter into a sacred space of meditative music and Labyrinth walks. Walk the Labyrinth on these Wednesdays, from 3:00-5:15 p.m. and 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Release: Wednesday, December 7
Meditative music for violin and piano with Judith Cohen and Jo Nardolillo

Receive: Wednesday, December 14
Advent-themed music for harp with John Carrington

Return: Wednesday, December 21
Sacred jazz with Susan Pascal and the Plymouth Trio

Longest Night: A Service of Remembrance, will be held in the Chapel at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 21. The Labyrinth will be available to walk on December 21 from 3:00-9:00 p.m.

Service of Installation Sunday, December 11

With great excitement we invite you to the Service of Installation for the Reverend Brigitta Remole at Plymouth on December 11, 5:00 p.m. The congregation and special guests will celebrate, with a reception following.

Fun Crafts at Fellowship

While you are at Fellowship Hour on December 4, take some time to have fun making crafts for the children's booth at the Alternative Gift Fair on December 11. Proceeds will go to Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti.

Musings



Here we are again. It's Advent, the time of waiting, anticipation, preparation. A time when so many of us become overwhelmed with all the things on our "to do" list. A time when we wish we could recapture the excitement we felt as children. It seems as though the Christmas season lasted so much longer back

then even though the stores didn't put up their decorations until after Thanksgiving. Now we are inundated with ads and commercials starting around Halloween, and before you know it, we are sitting by a rather bedraggled tree with the floor littered with empty boxes and crumpled wrapping paper. And yet again, we have this vague (or maybe not so vague) sense of disappointment. Christmas didn't live up to our expectations. Somehow, we thought that Uncle Tom would refrain from making his politically incorrect pronouncements, that Great Aunt Mabel wouldn't hit anyone with her cane, and that little Lucy wouldn't have one of her epic tantrums. But yet again, our perfect Christmas didn't materialize. Instead of bringing the salad of mixed greens with pears and caramelized hazelnuts we asked for, Aunt Sophy made lime Jello with canned cherries, Grandpa fainted and the paramedics were called, and we didn't get the presents we had been wanting.

Maybe the problem is with our expectations — and where we are focusing our energy. Is Christmas just about food and family and presents? Doesn't the birth of Jesus come into it? Maybe this year, we can have a simpler Christmas. Prepare for it by reading a book such as Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas by Jan Richardson (242.33 RIC in Plymouth Library). Look at The Christmas Story from the King James Version beautifully illuminated by Isabelle Brent (J 232.92 BRE). Listen to music like John Tesh's Christmas Worship (CD TES) or O Holy Night: Christmas with the Boy Choir of Harlem (CD with book illustrated by Faith Ringgold - J782.28 RIN). Watch the DVD, 'Twas the Night, which mixes animation with recordings of holiday favorites by such artists as Nat King Cole, Macy Gray and Doris Day. Gather the family around and read stories from Angels and Other Strangers by Katherine Paterson (F PAT) or The Gift of the Magi by O Henry (F OHE) or Christmas in the Trenches by John McCutcheon (a moving story

from World War I which you can find in the picture book section, although it is meaningful for all ages).

For me, I can recapture the excitement of Advent and Christmas by turning to some favorite books. In Take Joy, Tasha Tudor shared classic Christmas stories, carols, legends, and her family's Christmas customs (J 394). As a child, I loved Babar and Father Christmas by Jean de Brunhoff (E BRU) and Madeline's Christmas by Ludwig Bemelmans (E BEM). If you look through the Christmas books at Plymouth Library, maybe you will find some that take you back to your childhood. You will surely find many that can become a part of your Christmases to come.

Realize that you may not have a perfect Christmas. I know that I won't be surrounded by all my loved ones, I won't get cards back from all the people I send them to, and dinner won't be on time. But I can focus on the real meaning of Christmas, on developing new traditions, and on delighting in the little things that so often go unnoticed in our busy world.

My best Christmas wishes to you.
—*Suzanne Sanderson, Librarian*

Music Notes

The Advent season of waiting and listening is upon us, and this year we are focusing on the themes of *Release*, *Receive*, and *Return*. These three spiritual practices can be exercised in many ways, one of which is by attending our Wintertide series of meditative music, followed by walking the Labyrinth. The



labyrinth will be set up in the Sanctuary and will be open from 3:00 to 5:15 p.m., and then following the concerts each Wednesday, 6:00 to 7:00 pm. A variety of well-known Seattle artists have agreed to share their music including Judith Cohen, piano, and Jo Nardillilo, violin, on December 7; John Carrington, harp, on December 14; we welcome back Susan Pascal and the Plymouth Trio performing many styles of jazz on December 21. On December 18 at the 11:00 a.m. worship service, the Plymouth Choir and chamber orchestra will lead worship by singing excerpts from the Christmas portion of the Messiah of G. F. Handel. Christmas Eve at 10:30 p.m. will feature a 30-minute prelude of Italian baroque music for brass and organ, followed by carol arrangements for organ, brass and choir. The Bell Choir has learned several new works that will be included.

—*Douglas Cleveland, Director of Music and Organist*

Scripture Reading Ministry

"The longer you read the Bible, the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter; and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ." —*The Reverend William Romaine (1714-1795)*

Scripture reading as a Spiritual Practice is encouraged at Plymouth. Reading the scripture lesson aloud is a vital element of worship. Plymouth provides training, support and encouragement for anyone interested in participating in this ministry.

There will be three opportunities to participate in Scripture Reader's Training sessions in December. Each two-hour class will cover the basics of preparation and presentation of a public reading, specific requirements for reading at Plymouth Church and scripture reading as a spiritual practice.

Sessions will be held in the Sanctuary on Saturday December 3, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. and Tuesday December 6, 6:30–8:30 p.m. An additional session will be held at Mary's Place on Wednesday December 7, 8:00–10:00 a.m. Drop-ins are welcome, but if you know you will be attending a session, please respond to Worship, Arts and Music Board liaison J Howard Boyd at crom-howard@usa.net, or 206/324-7792.

"Until I come, spend your time reading Scripture out loud to one another. Spend your time preaching and teaching." (1 Timothy 4:13)
—*J Howard Boyd, Worship, Arts and Music Board*

Sunday, December 4, 2011

Isaiah 40:1-11, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

Second Sunday of Advent

Sacrament of Communion

(Communion bread baked by the 5th/6th grade class)

**Services at 8:30 a.m. in the Chapel
and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary**

Lauren Cannon, preaching

9:50 a.m. Sunday School Gathering, Lounge

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Plymouth Forum, *Community Service and Social Action*, Hildebrand Hall

12:15 p.m. Fellowship Hour, Lounge, featuring craft-making for all ages

12:15 p.m. Film, *Teach These Souls to Fly*, Room 323

Spread the Holiday Spirit

You can warm hearts and souls with your donation of hats, gloves, scarves and socks! The items collected will be given as gifts to Plymouth Housing Group residents at their annual Holiday party on December 8. Bring your donations to church and drop them in the barrel marked "Plymouth Housing Group" on or before December 4. Thank you in advance for your generosity! —*Jennifer Castle*

Advent Labyrinth Walk

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

Hildebrand Hall 3-5:30 pm, 6-7 pm

During this Advent season of Traveling Light, of hope and expectation, look gently on winter's darkness. For it is in darkness that seeds germinate and spring roots form. So too, through a nourishing practice of silence and release, do we grow. By walking the labyrinth, quieting our thoughts, letting go of anxieties and fear, we make time for surrendering to the power and presence of the Divine within. It is through releasing that we open.



REMEMBER: We are each individually called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's grace to others. (Isaiah 42:6)

RELEASE: To set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. (Romans 8:6)

Come, Walk.

—*Sharon Brown, Labyrinth Facilitator*

Crossing Borders: You are Invited

You are invited to join the Crossing Borders Ministry Team to begin a discussion and discernment of the future of Plymouth's relationship with Iglesia Morava in Managua, Nicaragua. Both churches have changed substantially since we began our 25+ year relationship. It is appropriate that we review where we are and what the future might hold. A special invitation goes to those of you who have been on one of the many delegations that have visited Iglesia Morava over the years. This discernment meeting will be held at the church on Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m.

—*Don Bell and Marcia Almquist*

Plymouth Forum

Community Service and Social Action Board



The history of Plymouth Church testifies to its sustained commitment to the Biblical mandate to “do justice” and aid the most vulnerable people in the community. In support of that historic effort, for the last 25+ years Plymouth has committed 25% of its pledge income to the work of “mission

and ministry.” The Community Service and Social Action Board is the body within the church that is mandated to use the mission and ministry funds to support and participate with external organizations that are involved in direct service to and social action on behalf of the neediest and most marginalized people in our community.

Please join me and the other members of the Community Service and Social Action Board on Sunday, December 4, 10:00 a.m. in Hildebrand Hall, as we present our annual report to you. In addition to providing you with information about how your pledged funds have been spent in this cause, we will also seek your feedback to help inform our future decisions.

—Don Bell, Chair

Community Service and Social Action Board

A Sacred Space to Travel Light

Scripture calls us to worship with all of our senses, with our minds, hearts, and hands. The images that accompany our worship can be significant communication tools. Purple ribbons cascade behind the cross, eight silk banners depicting Mary and Joseph’s travels as they seek the light. Plymouth’s Art Ministry Team has taken time to create a sacred space for us to Travel Light through the liturgical Season of Advent. Here’s hoping these visual art pieces will expand your ability to respond to the spoken word of God, as we Travel Light.

FAN’s First Annual Fundraising Dinner

Faith Action Network (formerly the Washington Association of Churches & Lutheran Public Policy Office of Washington) is holding its first fundraising dinner Saturday, December 3, 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at Bloedel Hall, Saint Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E. in Seattle. Rick Steves is the keynote speaker. More information at fan@fanwa.org.

Plymouth Forum Addendum *Teach These Souls to Fly*, a DVD lecture by Professor Sheldon Solomon will be shown in its entirety (one hour and fifteen minutes) on December 4 in Room 323 after the 11:00 a.m. service.

Congratulations to Craig Rennebohm, honored by Operation Nightwatch as this year’s Hero of the Homeless. In recognition of his good work, he was presented with a red cape at a luncheon on November 22. Congratulations, Craig, and thank you!

DVD Player Wanted Plymouth Healing Communities is seeking a used DVD player for our movie social nights at the Argonaut apartments. If you have a DVD player and would like to donate it, please contact Anne Mathieson at 206/851-8847 or a.m.mathieson@gmail.com. Thank you!

Walk the Labyrinth
Friday, December 2,
10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.