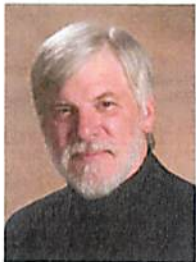


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The Plymouth Men's Retreat: What is it they Do Over There?



As many of you might be aware, the annual Plymouth Men's Retreat and Men's Silent Retreat are happening this coming weekend, March 3-4, over at Pilgrim Firs, our U.C.C. Conference camp and retreat center on the Kitsap Peninsula, near Port Orchard. Year after year, we see between 25 to as many as 65 Plymouth Men gather to ...? To what? Again: "What is it they do over there?"

One way to get after that answer is to start with a bit of history. In the fall of 1985, the Women of Plymouth – being generally more evolved than, and clearly a step ahead of the Plymouth Men – came up with the idea of holding the first Plymouth Women's Retreat, led by our then Associate Pastor Liz Oettinger. They had a fabulous time of it! It worked so well, in their enthusiasm they booked an immediate follow-up retreat for the spring of 1986. It turned out, though, that they were not then able to use that date.

So Jon Palmason, aided and abetted by Chick Gherke (Liz's husband) and Tom Colwell, got to thinkin' "Heck, we can do that!" Jon, in his best Founding Father role, grabbed the reservation at Pilgrim Firs, led what planning there was, and off we went for the first Plymouth Men's Retreat.

Getting now to the question "What is they do over there?" We had no idea!

None of us had ever done anything like this, and we got stuck for a while on the idea that, since we were, after all, Men, off by ourselves, we should probably talk about Women. That didn't hold up real well. We do a lot of that, of course, but as a retreat anchor, it just has no staying power. We got some very able, pivotal help at that time from David Morris (husband of then Plymouth Associate Susan Yarrow-Morris) on the first several go 'rounds, and thankfully moved on into other areas of concern and discovery.

Over the years, we figured it out. Men – again, I'm thinking the Women of Plymouth knew this about

themselves from the get-go – want and need to be in relationship with each other (...but don't say that out loud). The Women were very good at simply going off into the woods and sharing their lives, their hearts, even their souls. Men? Not so skilled.

So the pattern for the Men's retreat became: 1) have a compelling leader, 2) come up with a reasonable program and a hopefully snappy title, 3) get everyone over there, 4) run the program, 5) make sure the program doesn't get in the way, so that 6) we can share our lives, our hearts, even our souls, spending real time together in caring, deep relationship with other Men. For years, it was essential that no matter what else you do: DO NOT let anyone know ahead of time about step #6! Along the way we've had as topics and leaders:

"The Mundane and the Mystical: A Time for the Spirit", with David Morris

"Who (or What) is God ... REALLY?", with Hubert Locke

"Marks of God in the Human Experience", with Dick Kroll

"Relationships: with Fathers, Sons and God", with Tony Robinson

"This Is Our Life", with Lincoln Reed

"With what am I in love ...?" with Tom Stiers

"A Sense of Wonder ..." with Tom Colwell

Some of the questions from our annual retreat letter, framing our explorations and leading us into discovery and into the depth of who we are and how that matters, have included:

Living moment to moment, within the pressure cookers of family, work, responsibility, how do we see the light? How do we live the Good News? How to we live into knowing God? Living at the level of the mundane, how do we approach the mystical?

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Plymouth Forum

Judge J. Robin Hunt



Judge J. Robin Hunt was elected to Division Two of the Court of Appeals in November 1996 and took office in January 1997. She was reelected in 2002 and 2008. Based in Tacoma, Division Two is an error-correcting court hearing appeals from western Washington's county superior courts (except for King County north to the Canadian

border, which counties are in Division One). Judge Hunt has authored more than 1000 majority opinions and dissents. In the past, she frequently arranged to hold court in local schools of Division Two's counties to promote greater public understanding of the appellate process. For many years, she has mentored young lawyers, new judges, and extern law students who receive credit for assisting with the court's growing workload. She has taught numerous Continuing Legal Education courses on Ethics and Appellate Practice. She currently serves on the national Executive Committee of the Council of Chief Judges of intermediate state appellate courts and chairs the newsletter committee.

Before being elected to the court, Judge Hunt served on the school board and as co-chair of a task force to oust a white supremacist group targeting the island as a "laboratory" for eradicating persons of color in the 1980s. For many years she has continued to sing with Kitsap County's MLK Community Choir. When she retires, she hopes to return to music and to learn to play the harp.

In her presentation, Judge Hunt will address:

- 1) the separation of power and how it may constrain one branch's ability to resolve a problem;
- 2) how real life situations evolve so rapidly that the legislature cannot foresee the laws needed in time to regulate, thus, situations involving such things as bio-ethics end up in the courts' hands for resolution; and
- 3) whether and how cultural differences are taken into account in the courtroom.

To read more about Judge Hunt, please visit www.plymouthchurchseattle.org

Closing Our Interim Time with Pastor Lauren

Plymouth and Pastor Lauren Cannon will be lifting thanks over the weeks ahead, as we move toward the expected ending of our intentional interim ministry time together. On March 4, we plan to celebrate and close our covenant with Lauren, who has served for over two years as our Interim Minister for Faith Formation & Service. Lauren joined Plymouth in December, 2009, to serve our church as Associate Minister until a new senior minister was settled, and the search could begin for a permanent associate pastor(s).

We rejoice with Lauren as she has now accepted a call to build a Seattle-based Young Adult Service Community with the United Church of Christ! Lauren will serve as pastor to the community, through Keystone UCC in Wallingford, and the young adults will live at All Pilgrims UCC on Capitol Hill. Each participant will spend 11 months serving at a justice/advocacy organization, engage in a year of study, and share in the congregational life and leadership of a UCC church in Seattle. Get more information about the program at www.ucc.org/volunteer We look forward to celebrating together at Lauren's hopeful ordination! —*Brigitta Remole*

Sunday, February 26, 2012

Genesis 9:8-17, 1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:9-15

New Member Sunday

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

The Reverend Brandon Duran, preaching

9:00 a.m. The Way that is Well for Us, *The Transforming Spirit: Claiming Our Strengths*, Lounge

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

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. *Plymouth Forum*, Judge J. Robin Hunt, Hildebrand Hall

12:15 p.m. Fellowship Hour, Lounge
Celebration of New Members

(continued from page 1)

Spirit – Inspiration – Spirituality: What is all this? What's the difference between Spirit and God? Is there a difference? Does it matter? What is inspiration? How do we get ourselves some? Or is it something we don't actually go out and 'get' but something that somehow 'comes'? And spirituality – what's that about? How do we do that? Or – perhaps – how does it do us? And, what difference might all this make in our daily lives? In actually living with Spirit?

With whom do I walk? Who or what may be calling me into purposeful transformation? Am I a disciple – if so, of what? And where is – or isn't – Jesus in all of this?

Who or what are those people, relationships, things, concepts, values, activities, even toys, that claim us most deeply? For what do we work, are we willing to suffer, to sacrifice? Whose voice do we hear in a crowd? And how does our faith, God, the Spirit show up in all this?

How does "Wonder" play out – appear and move you – in your life? How am I excited and involved in life? What is my anticipation for today? ...for tomorrow? ...for next year? ...for my life? What is that inspires – in me – a life that is worth living?

Over the years we have gotten better at it. Coming into the mix, and becoming very deep parts of the experience, have been our meals together, small group time, the Human Scattergram, walks around Lake Flora, reading by the fire place, naps, softball, soccer, some golf, open fellowship time on Saturday afternoon, cards, chess, the sharing of ourselves through physical symbol, considerable laughter, silence, and some tears, music and singing ... a whole lot of music and singing, and self-generated worship. All of it creating both the container and substance of Men simply being with Men. It's been good.

The Plymouth Men's Retreat: What is it they do over there? They go off into the woods and share their lives, their hearts, even their souls (... but, shh! ... don't tell anybody!).

--Tom Colwell

Play Ball!

Want some camaraderie and good times? Softball season starts in early May. If you are interested please see John or Matt Daniels, or Dan Durland Or call 206-353-1094

What are you "giving up" for Lent?

Your Fellowship Hour will taste a little different for this season of Lent as we will be "giving up" the sweet treats --however there will be more fruit along with the coffee/tea/juice/water —Jane Alley/Ardy Bergman, Coordinators for Fellowship Hour

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Walk The Labyrinth

Thursday, March 1, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Hildebrand Hall



Lent is a season that asks our presence, our careful attention to the events of our lives. We seek awareness of the times and places that Spirit has blessed us and reflect upon how we have been a blessing to others.

We acknowledge the difficult moments, times for which we are least grateful, considering what made those moments most difficult and uncomfortable. We hold them gently without judgment, inviting in the light of God's love and forgiveness.

A labyrinth practice helps us realize that our lives are filled with moments of Grace. It is in the silence that we experience God's presence within. God's peace graces us, steadily leading us through life's twists and turns.

Come walk the labyrinth, a tool of sacred practice that helps us find our center, connect with Spirit and reflect on our lives. —Sharon Brown, Labyrinth Facilitator

Dr. Douglas Cleveland will perform at Benaroya Hall Monday, March 5, 7:30 p.m. For tickets, contact Howard Boyd (crom-howard@usa.net)

The Way That is Well for Us

"The Way That is Well For Us," our spring discernment series, is ongoing and is being enjoyed by many. We are providing additional details about the event online. Handouts of this same information are available from the church office. Also available online now is the ability to reserve your place for the Wednesday Night events in February and March (dinner, worship, speaker and small group discussion). If you are not able to attend on Wednesday nights, the speaker will be videotaped and replayed during our Sunday morning sessions at 9:00. Child-care and youth activities will happen at these events!

Please visit the information page online where you will find the link to reserve your place. Although there is no registration fee, we would like a sense of how many people are coming so we can plan meals, room set-up and other details.

<http://plymouthchurchseattle.org/unlinked/thewaythatismwellforus.html>

YF Shares and Coffee Sales!

The Youth Forum is selling shares and direct trade coffee from the plantation we will be working at in Guatemala. Now you can donate online! Shares will also be available to purchase online while we are in Guatemala by visiting <http://plymouthchurchseattle.org/donate/>. Select from these options on the donate page:

- \$30 Shareholder (Receive a shareholder report and attend lunch hosted by YF.)
- \$45 Backer (Receive an "I supported YF custom t-shirt" in addition to shareholder.)
- \$75 Contributor (Receive a *limited edition button* in addition to Backer.)
- \$100 Investor (Receive *autographed movie of YF's Mission Trip* including before and after interviews of teens and video of our Guatemalan experiences in addition to Contributor.)
- \$300 Angel (Join a few others at a YF home for a *delicious dinner and talk one-on-one with youth who traveled to Guatemala* in addition to Investor.)

Please support Plymouth youth and purchase a share! All shareholders receive a report and are invited to lunch on March 18 with the teens who will describe their adventures and what they have learned. Thank you for your help, without your generous support, we could not offer this once in a lifetime opportunity to our youth. Thank you!

— David and Robin Mallory

Eco-News

It's time to plan activities for Plymouth's "Eco Power" Ministry Team. What shall we do for Earth Day (April 22), which falls on Sunday this year? How can we expand on last year's successful CSA program (Community Supported Agriculture, delivering fresh vegetables from a local farm right to church)? What other ideas are calling you? We are scheduling four meetings in hopes that everyone interested can make at least a couple of them. —Tad Anderson

Sunday, March 11, 10:00-10:50 a.m., Room 323

Sunday, March 11, 12:15-1:15 p.m., Room 323

Tuesday, April 10, 5:15-6:00 p.m., Lounge

Sunday April 15, 12:15-1:15 p.m., Room 323

News from Mary's Place

Mary's Place is a downtown Seattle day shelter for women and children and the recipient of the current Change Grant funding from Ply-



mouth Church. In our efforts to support the activities of the shelter, a "ministry team" has been in place for several years which mainly serves Saturday lunch after the Church of Mary Magdalene services. This month members of Plymouth have an opportunity to help expand the activities of the ministry team as we add more team members for serving lunches, and for the newly created "Holy Haulers." What's a "Holy Hauler??" You can be one... assisting women with packing and moving into transitional or more permanent housing. Can you make a casserole or dessert (recipes provided) or are you willing to be on a call list to assist the Holy Haulers?

We will have more information at the kiosk in the lobby during the month of March so families, women, men and youth, please come by to get more information about the activities of this vital ministry.

And...

WOW!! Over 300 pairs of socks for homeless women and children!! What generosity from all of Plymouth Church! Next: bring new bras and panties to church on March 4, 11, and 18th and leave them at the kiosk (no tree for these).

—Jan Aura, Mary's Place Ministry Team