



PLYMOUTH CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

10:30 AM ✨ SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2020

WELCOME!

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*“Whether you are a seeker, skeptic, believer
or somewhere in between on life’s journey, you are welcome here.
We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate
in worship and service of Plymouth Church.*

Plymouth UCC Purpose

Growing people of faith who participate in God’s work in the world.

PLYMOUTH UCC VISION

Plymouth Church UCC is a Christian Community open to the transforming Spirit of God.



Thank you for worshipping online with us today. Please like and send us a greeting on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



The church office will be closed during concerns about the coronavirus.

The church building is closed for all activities until further notice.

Check PlymouthChurchSeattle.org for updates.

All pastoral care will be via telephone or other electronic means.

If you have personal concerns, you may contact a minister or member of the Pastoral Care Team via e-mails below, or call the pastoral voice mail (206.622.4865 *833), checked daily.

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For administrative needs, or other non-pastoral care questions, please email:

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SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2020

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST/WORLD REFUGEE SUNDAY

Worship with Plymouth Church UCC begins with meditation.

The quiet of this place is meant to encourage and deepen your own inner work.

Thank you for entering this place, this hour, by honoring the spirit of worship.

WELCOMERev. Dr. Kelle Brown

Ways to Give You can contribute to the mission and ministries of Plymouth UCC anytime, anywhere! Go to PlymouthChurchSeattle.org and click on the “Give” box, *or* text to give: Simply text the amount you’d like to give (i.e. 10.00) to Plymouth UCC’s mobile giving number (206.208.1442), hit send. Questions? Contact Diane, DJacobsen@PlymouthChurchSeattle.org. Through the end of June, gifts earmarked *Pentecost Special Offering* will be divided evenly between Strengthen the Church and Plymouth UCC Scholarship Fund. Thank you.

SHARING PEACE Dr. Brown

PRELUDE

Humbly We Adore You (Adoro te devote). Setting by Michael Larkin

Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Piano

CALL TO WORSHIP. Rev. Kevin Bechtold

One: Our relationships with our fathers are complicated.

Many: For some of us, our father’s love is like God’s love: too deep, too long, too wide, too strong to measure.

One: For others, we long for a father’s love, proving one can miss what one never had.

Many: For some of us, God’s love fills in the empty spaces our fathers left behind.

One: All of us are shaped by the relationship or lack of relationship with our fathers, fathers of every identity.

All: On this day when we remember what it means to have a father and be a father, we recognize the importance of fathers in our communities. We pledge as a congregation to love and nurture the fathers among us as they will manifest the love of God in all that they do.

INVOCATION Ruth Williamson

God, you know our inmost thoughts and fears.

We ask you to be with us today.

We feel your presence in every heartbeat, in every breath we take, in every eye flutter and blink.

We ask you to lift the hesitation from our hearts and to sharpen our vision and hearing.

Open our eyes to our habit of judging strangers based on the color of their skin.

Open our hearts to our habit of judging people based on who they vote for or who they love.

Open our ears to our habit of judging people based on where they're from and how long they've lived here.

We want to wake each day to see your image in every person, including those who don't look or act like us.

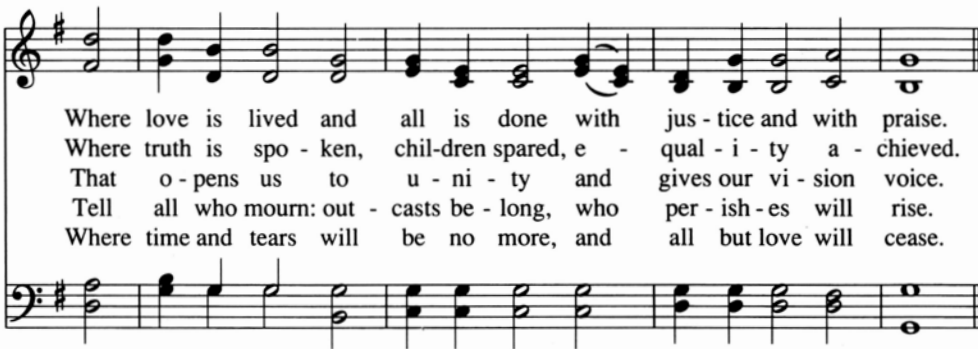
We want to live each day recognizing the worth of every living being, including the more than 25 million refugees fleeing persecution and poverty in the world today.

We are grateful to be together in your presence today to be steeped in your all-knowing love and light, to prepare ourselves to walk this road together.

HYMN *O For a World* AZMON

Miriam Gnagy, Emily Kurlinski, Tim Keller, Michael Delos

1 O for a world where ev - ery-one re - spects each oth - er's ways,
 2 O for a world where goods are shared and mis - er - y re - lieved,
 3 We wel - come one world fam - i - ly and strug - gle with each choice
 4 The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the fool - ish ones are wise.
 5 O for a world pre - par - ing for God's glo - rious reign of peace,



Where love is lived and all is done with jus - tice and with praise.
 Where truth is spo - ken, chil-dren spared, e - qual - i - ty a - chieved.
 That o - pens us to u - ni - ty and gives our vi - sion voice.
 Tell all who mourn: out - casts be - long, who per - ish - es will rise.
 Where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

PRAYERS OF THE GATHERED Samantha Williams

A Prayer For the Refugee

Hear us, Lord, as we raise our voices;

in you we take refuge.

Preserve those whose life is threatened by enemies
 and who are the target of bitter words or evil schemes.

Remember those who are vulnerable and exposed,
 those who are victims of natural disaster, war, and
 persecution, those suffering anguish and sorrow.

Bring them to safety;

in you we take refuge.

Give shelter to those seeking a hiding place, to those torn
 from their homes,
 those who are separated from loved ones, those who are lost
 or have run away.

Bring them to safety;

in you we take refuge.

You look with mercy and love on all refugees.

Help us to welcome the stranger, befriend the lonely, and
 show compassion.

Allow your Spirit to move in us and teach us to seek justice,
 to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you, telling of all
 your works.

Let us rejoice and give praise;

in you we take refuge.

WE HOLD IN PRAYER

Riley Balcita, Matt Banks, Ernie Boyer, Anna Colwell, Steve Davis, Pam Dorrance, Ellie Edelweiss, Mark Edwards, Phil Fredrickson, Jackie Fouts (Mother-in-law of Al Wallace), Peter Gibbons (Brother of Eileen Gibbons), Don Gwilym, Michael Kaid, Libonati Family, Maclay Family, Sharon Masse (Wife of Gary Magnuson), Jo Mitchell, Georgia Nelson, Dick, Jean and Alex Paul (Parents and Nephew of Beth Paul Russell), Jose Robles, Mary Ryan, Rod Shutt, Jim Stultz (brother of Doug Stultz), Jaime Rubio Sulficio, Jim Tsuchiya (Brother-in-law of Bill Castello)

Our hearts are with Ann Sandstrom and family on the passing of Wayne Sandstrom.

A variety of faithful addresses for God (Creator, Mother, Holy One, Father) are welcome at Plymouth UCC, including in the Lord's Prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Parent, who is among us, blessed be your Creation.
May your loving presence be a reality here on earth.
May we become more interested in building your kin-dom here and now than in waiting for it to come down from above.
Let us share our bread with those who hunger.
Let us learn to forgive as well as to receive forgiveness.
Help us through the time of temptation, delivering us from all evil.
For ours are the eternal blessings that you pour upon the earth. Amen.**

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READING FROM HEBREW SCRIPTURE Isaiah 56:1-5 read by Morgan Gwilym-Tso

(The Voice translation) This prophetic word is directed to God's discouraged people. They see no reason to repent as long as things look down. God shakes them out of this by calling them to keep justice, and do righteousness in anticipation of what God will do.

Eternal One: Take care that you do what is right and fair,
because before you know it, I will come to save you;
Soon you will see how I rescue.

God's favor rests on those who attend to justice,
who devote themselves to doing what is right,
Who keep the Sabbath and don't disregard or belittle it,
who keep from doing what is wrong: destructive, deceitful, or violent.

No stranger who has put trust in the Eternal should ever say,

“I don’t count. I’m not part of Eternal’s chosen people.”
And no eunuch should ever say,
“I am all dried up, worthless and empty.”
For this is what the Eternal has to say:

Eternal One: The eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths,
make good choices, and follow the terms of My covenant
will blossom with My blessing.

I will give them, within My house, an enduring memorial
and a name better than if they had sons and daughters—
A name that will never be forgotten and will continue to inspire
and encourage forever.

CONTEMPORARY VOICE JJ Bola

imagine how it feels to be chased out of home. to have your grip ripped.
loosened from your fingertips something you so dearly held on to. like a
lovers hand that slips when pulled away you are always reaching.
my father would speak of home. reaching. speaking of familiar faces. girl
next door
who would eventually grow up to be my mother. the fruit seller at the
market. the lonely man at the top of the road who nobody spoke to. and
our house at the bottom of the street
lit up by a single flickering lamp
where beyond was only darkness. there
they would sit and tell stories
of monsters that lurked and came only at night to catch the children who sat and listened to
stories of monsters that lurked.
this is how they lived. each memory buried.
an artifact left to be discovered by archaeologists. the last words on a dying
family member’s lips. this was sacred.
not even monsters could taint it.
but there were monsters that came during the day. monsters that tore families apart
with their giant hands. and fingers that slept on triggers. the sound of gunshots ripping through
the sky became familiar like the tapping of rain fall on a window sill.
monster that would kill and hide behind speeches, suits and ties. monsters that would chase
families away forcing them to leave everything behind.
i remember when we first stepped off the plane. everything was foreign. unfamiliar. uninviting.
even the air in my lungs left me short of breath.
we came here to find refuge. they called us refugees so we hid ourselves in their language until



JJ Bola is a Kinshasa-born, British writer and poet, based in London.

we sounded just like them. changed the way we dressed to look just like them.
made this our home until we lived just like them and began to speak of familiar faces. girl next
door who would grow up to be a
mother. the fruit seller at the market.
the lonely man at the top of the road
who nobody spoke to. and our house at the bottom of the street lit up by a single flickering
lamp to keep away the darkness.
there we would sit and watch police that lurked and came only at night to arrest the youths
who sat and watched police that lurked and came only at night. this is how we lived.
i remember one day i heard them say to me
they come here to take our jobs
they need to go back to where they came from
not knowing that i was one of the ones who came. i told them that a refugee is simply
someone who is trying to make a home.
so next time when you go home, tuck your children in and kiss your families goodnight be
glad that the monsters
never came for you.
in their suits and ties.
never came for you.
in the newspapers with the media lies.
never came for you.
that you are not despised.
and know that deep inside the hearts of each and every one of us
we are all always reaching for a place that we can call home.

READING FROM CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE Acts 8:26–39

read by Morgan Gwilym-Tso

(The Voice translation) God is actively fulfilling God’s purposes for the scope of the church’s mission. The conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch graphically demonstrates the inclusiveness of the gospel. No apparent obstacle can place a person beyond the saving call of the good news.

A heavenly messenger brought this short message from the Lord to Philip during his time preaching in Samaria:

Messenger of the Lord: *Leave Samaria. Go south to the Jerusalem-Gaza road.*

The message was especially unusual because this road runs through the middle of uninhabited desert. But Philip got up, left the excitement of Samaria, and did as he was told

to do. Along this road, Philip saw a chariot in the distance. In the chariot was a dignitary from Ethiopia (the treasurer for Queen Candace), an African person who had been castrated. They had gone north to Jerusalem to worship at the Jewish temple, and they were now heading southwest on their way home. They were seated in the chariot and were reading aloud from a scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

Philip received another prompting from the Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit: *Go over to the chariot and climb on board.*

So he started running until he was even with the chariot. Philip heard the Ethiopian reading aloud and recognized the words from the prophet Isaiah.

Philip: Do you understand the meaning of what you're reading?

The Ethiopian: How can I understand it unless I have a mentor?

Then he invited Philip to sit in the chariot. Here's the passage he was reading from the Hebrew Scriptures:

Like a sheep, He was led to be slaughtered.

Like a lamb about to be shorn of its wool,

He was completely silent.

He was humiliated, and He received no justice.

Who can describe His peers? Who would treat Him this way?

For they snuffed out His life.

The Ethiopian: Here's my first question. Is the prophet describing his own situation, or is he describing someone else's calamity?

That began a conversation in which Philip used the passage to explain the good news of Jesus. Eventually the chariot passed a body of water beside the road.

The Ethiopian: Since there is water here, is there anything that might prevent me from being ceremonially washed through baptism and identified as a disciple of Jesus?

Philip: If you believe in your heart that Jesus the Anointed is God's Child, then nothing can stop you.

The Ethiopian said that they believed.

He commanded the charioteer to stop the horses. Then Philip and the Ethiopian official walked together into the water. There Philip baptized them, initiating them as a fellow disciple. When they came out of the water, Philip was immediately caught up by the Holy Spirit and taken from the sight of the Ethiopian, who climbed back into their chariot and continued on their journey, overflowing with joy.

CONTEMPORARY VOICEread by Dr. Brown



“I have a duty to speak the truth as I see it and share not just my triumphs, not just the things that felt good, but the pain. The intense, often unmitigated pain. It is important to share how I know survival is survival and not just a walk through the rain.”

—Audre Lorde, *The Transformation of Silence into Language & Action*

Audre Lorde was an American writer, and civil rights activist.

SOLO*People Get Ready*by Curtis Mayfield
performed by Stephanie Anne Johnson and Dan Tyack

MESSAGE*‘Father’ of a Movement!*Rev. Louis Mitchell

HYMN *Angels* Richard Smallwood
Dr. Brown

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION Rev. Mitchell

POSTLUDE

Rejoice, Give Thanks and Sing (DARWALL’S 148TH) . . . *Setting by Mark Patterson*
Dr. Wanda Griffiths, Piano

Special Thanks to guest preacher Rev. Louis Mitchell. Rev. Mitchell is a pioneering “intentional man,” elder, and advocate, who serves as the Executive Director for Transfaith. Louis has been involved in the fight for health, respect and self-determination since the late 1980s, with deep engagement in political, mental health, recovery, and black church contexts. Read more about Transfaith at TransFaith.info.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING TODAY AFTER SERVICE

You are invited and encouraged to join the Called Congregational Meeting following the morning worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a proposed financial gift to the Pacific Northwest Conference from the Plymouth Endowment. Click link at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org to participate via Zoom.

FROM PLYMOUTH IMMIGRATION MINISTRY TEAM



Today we join people around the world to celebrate World Refugee Day and the 40th Anniversary of the United States Refugee Act of 1980. This Act formalized the U.S. resettlement program and asylum system and since then over 3 million refugees have been resettled in the US.*

The United Nation Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in 2020 announced an average of 37,000 people, per day, are forced to flee their homes from danger. That's 5,000 more people than Seattle's Capitol Hill population. Take a moment to process that.

We lift up the courage and resilience of refugees in facing hardship to survive in foreign lands. COVID19 has given us a glimpse of the number of essential workers who were born in other countries and continue to survive through the pandemic and contribute to our communities by working in fields like food production, transportation, childcare, eldercare, cleaning, social services and medicine.

Could we in Seattle survive without them? Would we want a life without such valuable members of our community with incredible cultures, languages and traditions?

We urge Congress to restore our national refugee resettlement program and create just policies allowing refugees to rebuild their lives and thrive in the United States. At the same time, we reaffirm our commitment to making the world a more welcoming and equitable place for all.

* Source: LawFareblog.com

PLYMOUTH IS PROUD!

Seattle's LGBTQIA+ Pride Month is going virtual with three days (June 26-28) of solidarity featuring speakers, performances and activities courtesy of Gender Justice League, PrideFest, and Seattle Pride. The three organizations, producers of Seattle's largest Pride Month events have joined forces to bring together elements from their respective events, plus new interactive offerings, in a virtual format. Register at TogetherForPride.org.

- Friday, June 26, 5 pm to 10 pm
- Saturday, June 27, noon – midnight
- Sunday, June 28, noon – 6 pm



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Masks Needed The Immigration Ministry team requests your immediate help in providing washable cloth face masks for these kids who are represented by K.I.N.D. (Kids in Need of Defense). Ideally, each kid would have 2 masks, allowing for one to be washed and dried while the other is being worn, but even one mask per kid would allow them to meet health guidelines in public places. The masks can be any style that meets the CDC guidelines. Since most of the kids are teenagers, the adult size face mask is best. Choose the drop off location that is easiest for you: downtown to Mary Margaret Pruitt at Horizon House; Janet Gwilym's house on Beacon Hill, or Ruth Williamson in Shoreline. Their contact information can be found in Simple Church.

Anti-Racist Giving Webinar Discuss race, reparations, and the concept of fund-shifting. This cross-class online workshop is open to all but has been designed specifically for folks who have benefited from the history of white wealth accumulation. Zoom workshop on June 23 from 5:30 to 8:30 pm. Use the link in the news article at PlymouthChurchSeattle.org to RSVP. The workshop is free, but we will raise money for community members impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Call to Action On March 3 in Tacoma, Manny Ellis died while being arrested by Tacoma Police. We are in a complex and volatile time and the investigation into the death needs to be credible and transparent. State law gives the Governor authority to ask the State AG to do a criminal investigation and this is the time to use that extraordinary step. Call the Governor's office and demand action: 360.902.4111.

Believing that God's love transcends all human distinctions,
Plymouth welcomes people of all races and cultures,
of varied social and economic conditions
and regardless of sexual orientation.
We are open and affirming of all people,
and we call all people to the cost and joy of Christian discipleship.