



# Good News

Plymouth United Church of Christ

April 2020

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*Cross Illumination for April  
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memory of Pluma Biesecker.*

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Dear Friends and Family of Plymouth,

We are in the midst of a lockdown, which is a new experience for me and probably for most of you, except maybe some of the older members who remember localized quarantining for measles and smallpox.

It's an odd feeling. We're not even a week into it, and already I'm finding it difficult to keep track of what day of the week it is. It's been strange seeing Al Roker offer the weather from his dining room, and late night hosts doing shows from their basements or backyards.

While our worship in our building is suspended until we get the clearance to meet again, we are worshipping virtually: I'll be posting videos with scripture and a short message on Sunday mornings that will be available on Facebook and our website. We will also be posting a small liturgy that you can read. For our members without computers, we are sending them the worship bulletin with the liturgy and prayers and any other news the week before the Sunday they will be used. For now, the Sunday worship will be the text and video, and not videoconference or other live interaction. This way you can watch at whatever time is convenient on Sunday mornings.

I am continuing to post to Facebook materials for our Wednesday night Soup and Scripture. We will also have prayers and a message for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter.

Plymouth now has a Zoom account for video conferencing. We'll use it for meetings of the leadership team, but I also am going to use it for coffee and fellowship on Tuesday mornings from 9 A.M. to 10 A.M. and Thursday afternoons from 1 P.M. to 2 P.M. starting March 31. Grab a cup of coffee or tea or whatever you wish, and call in and we'll gather around our tables like we would on Sunday mornings. Using your computer, tablet, or smart phone, join us at <https://zoom.us/j/172811136>. [That is a lower-case j between the //]. All days will use the same link (and I'll post the link on Facebook each morning shortly before the meeting).



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## Good News

*Pastor's Pen  
continued*

You can also use your phone to call in. You won't get video, of course, but you can hear and talk. That phone number is (312) 626-6799 and use meeting code 172811136#. Using the computer is free, but the call-in number is a Chicago one, so if you don't have free long distance, you'll have to pay to use the phone option.

I don't think there is any chance that we will be back before Easter, especially since the state mandate to hunker down lasts until April 24. And quite honestly, I would not be surprised if this lasts until mid-May. Since we don't know when this will end, we aren't setting any date for when we will be back together in person.

In this time of quarantine, please also know that in case of a hospitalization, I may or may not be allowed to visit. In case of a death, funerals are also limited to ten people or fewer (including me and any funeral directors). If we face that situation, we will do a graveside service or short service at the funeral home for immediate family, and then we can reschedule a larger funeral gathering later in the year if that is desired. The same holds for weddings - emergency weddings are a pretty rare thing, but if one comes up, I am available. But weddings also are limited to ten people.

Though we are separated physically, we are connected spiritually—and we can be connected by voice or video, too! Please be sure to call each other and check-in with one another. Check-in on your neighbors. Check the church Facebook page or website if you have the capability. We'll continue to share worship by video and by mail. I am available by phone, Facebook, or email.

With the lockdown, in-person visits are not possible, but visits by phone or texts are very do-able and helpful.

Please know that you are all in my prayers and the prayers of our leadership team, and that we will get through this and will see each other again on the other side. To have this happening during Lent has a kind of appropriateness to it. This is a time generally to slow down, to take stock of our mortality, to consider our faith lives and our spiritual journeys. Lent historically is a 6-week season and ends with Easter resurrection. This year, think of it as Lent being maybe 12 weeks, or whatever it ends up being. And when we come back together, we will celebrate the Easter of Jesus' resurrection and the Easter of all of us coming out of the tombs of quarantine to breath fresh air and offer a fearless handshake or hug during the passing of the peace!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor David". The word "Pastor" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "David" is written below it in a similar but slightly smaller script.

## Leadership Musings

In these times of uncertainty and isolation, it is important that we all stay connected. We challenge all our members to contact someone in the congregation at least once during the week. We all need to hear a familiar voice! Let's check on each other.

We are still collecting empty prescription bottles, with the labels removed. We can also take over the counter pain reliever bottles, also without the labels. Save your bottles and bring them in the next time we meet

Remember the Birthday Challenge? We revived the Birthday challenge last year. In your birthday month, we are suggesting you make a donation to the church corresponding to your age or some amount you feel appropriate. The money will go to future capital improvements, such as resurfacing the parking lot. We want to be proactive in raising funds for future needs. So those of you who have April birthdays, we hope you'll make a donation!

Volunteers are needed! We are in need of volunteers to light up the candles, read the liturgy, take the offering, and hand out bulletins on Sunday mornings once we are up and running again. Sign up if this is something you'd like to do.

Also, a sign up sheet will be out for flowers to brighten up the Sanctuary. Please sign up if you are interested.

## From Wisconsin to New South Wales, Australia, with Love

written by Kathy Bartilson

When the Wollongong Modern Quilt Guild put out a request for quilt squares, the quilters at Plymouth Church in Eau Claire responded! The Wollongong Quilters are making quilts to give to families who lost their homes in the massive bushfires across Australia over the past several months. The squares were to be made with tree and leaf themes, to signify new growth and new life. Several squares were completed by the Plymouth quilters; this group includes members from Plymouth, First Congregational, and Truax churches in Eau Claire, and Namekagon Church in Earl. *(See pictures on page 6)* Quilters from other local groups also sewed squares. We will continue our prayers and support for the people, wildlife, and habitat of Australia as fire recovery continues.

## April Birthdays

- 1 Eleanor Robison
- 5 Rose Shepler
- 13 Pat Sexter  
Shawn Barnhardt
- 21 Joanne Miller

## Leadership Team Minutes

March 9, 2020

Members present: Larry Kleist, Barb Kleist, Rob Jaenke, Ben Bechle, Louise Partlow, and Pastor David

Our Moderator, Barb Kleist called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Minutes of the February meeting were reviewed and accepted.

### Financial Reports:

As of February 29, 2020

|                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| Year to Date Income   | \$22,809.21 |
| Year to Date Expenses | \$23,147.70 |
| Ahead (Behind)        | (\$338.49)  |

### Treasurer's Report:

Income for January was \$8,483.00.  
Expenses were \$10,115.70.  
Envelope income was good again at \$7,325.00. Normal monthly expenses except for furnace repair of \$889.00.

**Reserve Fund Balance:** \$517.47 (No change)

**Memorial Fund Balance:** \$7,068.56  
Increase due to Contingency Fund birthday challenge donations of \$141.00.

The financial reports were reviewed and accepted.

### Stewardship:

Thrift Sale coming up March 28.  
Scrip card sales are going very well.  
Nice easy way to produce income.

### Worship:

Holy Week and Easter coming.  
Easter Muffin Breakfast will be planned again. Breakfast at 8:30 A.M. and worship **at 9:30 A.M.**

### Women of Plymouth:

Still working on a water heater and

getting someone to install it. The women will have a short meeting (more info later). We would like to give checking account monies to the church—not dissolve WOP, just close the checking account. Everything we do is **all** for the church, so all monies can be together. Will have a vote before we do this.

### Building and Grounds:

Larry is working on solving the carpeting problem by the sanctuary doors. Will repair carpet with new tiles we have on hand. (Leadership Team approved)

### Pastor's Report:

He heard from the Westridge Neighborhood Association. They would like to have a meeting here on April 15. (Leadership Team okayed) A Facebook ad will be posted for our Thrift Sale. May 7–13 Pastor David will be gone for continuing education. He also plans to take vacation August 24–30. Festival Choir begins rehearsals in our sanctuary March 23.

### Old Business:

- Pill bottle donations are still ongoing.
- The NW Association Annual Meeting will be here April 18. We need to serve and bring bars and cookies.
- Thrift Sale March 28. Set-up March 16, 6:00 P.M. to ?

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, April 13, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,  
Louise Partlow



## April Lectionary

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**April 5**  
*Palm/Passion Sunday*

*Palm service:* Matthew 21:1–11; Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29

*Passion service:* Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 31:9–16; Philippians 2:5–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66 or Matthew 27:11–54

**April 12**  
*Easter Sunday*

Acts 10:34–43; Psalm 118:1–2, 14–24; Colossians 3:1–4; John 20:1–18 or Matthew 28:1–10

**April 19**  
*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter*

Acts 2:14a, 22–32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3–9; John 20:19–31

**April 26**  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter*

Ezekiel 37:1–14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6–11; Mark 14:32–36

Going forward, the church website will have links to the weekly messages and liturgy, and they will be up and online by early Sunday morning. Links to the video and to the liturgy will be posted on our Facebook page early on Sunday morning.

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## Food for Thought

Looks like we will be celebrating Easter via our Facebook page this year. Have a special breakfast celebration while we worship. Watch your emails, newsletter and facebook for updates on our gatherings once the Safer at Home ban is lifted.

Our offering to the Community Table will be taken on April 5. Please make sure you keep up to date on your pledges also. We still have bills to pay!

Please don't forget our homeless friends. Even though Mike and his crew have suspended going out on the street, the homeless are still out there. Please keep them in your prayers.

## Prayer Ministry

**In April, we are praying for these individuals/families:** Paul (Gay) Gilbertson, Jeff & Lesa Green, Michael (Alba) Green, Cindy (Jerry) Halfen, Harlan & Charlene Hartwich



# Photo Gallery

Quilt squares for Australia



Dear Friends at Plymouth Church,

We are so thankful for the amazing donation to APPLE Pregnancy Care Center of diapers and wipes this month. What a huge blessing to the people we serve. We were overwhelmed with the amount collected and wanted you to know that we are using this donation to help our clients during this difficult time.

Because of Covid 19 and trying to keep our clients and our staff safe, we are going to be closing the Center to regular appointments. Instead, we will be having clients in need call us to let us know what they need, and will make an appointment for them to come in and pick up diapers, etc.

We know that the Lord provided all these diapers for such a time as this—that He will use your gifts to bless the families in need in the Chippewa Valley. We are so thankful for you! Please pray that the people in need of our services will find our help.

Many blessings and thanks to all of you.

Serving Him,  
Melinda G. Gardner, APPLE PCC Executive Director



We've had a great response to our pill bottle recycling effort. Keep it up!