



# Good News

Plymouth United Church of Christ

June 2020

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*Cross illumination for June is sponsored by Jim & Linda Oliver in honor of their family.*

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Dear Friends and Family of Plymouth,

The signs of spring are around us! Birds and frogs, flowers are blooming and trees are growing leaves again. We are also seeing a kind of spring with the Coronavirus: some of our businesses are beginning to re-open, though with the very sensible restrictions that our medical, health, and scientific experts have asked them to follow about limiting the number of people, wearing masks, sanitizing, and so on. Parks are re-opening. Drive-in theaters have opened, and they are finding themselves suddenly more popular than they have been in decades. Who would have thought 2020 would see the resurgence of the drive-in theater?



We can even start gathering with our friends and family, though we are still being asked to keep our circle of contacts small so as to limit the spread. As we've seen, the number of cases of the virus continues to climb, even in Eau Claire County. As more people are out and about, though, an increase in cases is inevitable, and as more and more testing occurs, we will also naturally see more cases.

As your pastor, I urge you continue to be safe. Wear a mask when you are out. We have masks in the office you can have, thanks to our many generous and loving sewists. Wash your hands. Continue physical distancing. Even though things are opening up, the Coronavirus is still very real and present, and it will be many more months before we are fully through this.

This is a time to exercise those Spirit Fruits of *Patience* and *Kindness*.

Worship in person remains on hiatus, but as I and other pastors have said since this began: our church is not closed. Plymouth and churches here and around the world continue to be present on-line for worship and fellowship, we continue to minister to our communities, we continue to provide spiritual guidance and comfort, we continue to feed the hungry and clothe the naked and pray for the sick, we continue to speak out for the poor and hurting, we continue to provide ways for social interaction, and so much more.

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## June Lectionary

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### June 7

#### *Trinity Sunday*

Genesis 1:1–2, 4a; Psalm 8;  
2 Corinthians 13:11–13; Matthew  
28:16–20

### June 14

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

Genesis 18:1–15 or Exodus 19:2–9a;  
Psalm 116:1–2, 12–19 or Psalm 100;  
Romans 5:1–8; Matthew 9:35–10:8  
(9–23)

### *3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

Genesis 21:8–21 or Jeremiah 20:7–13;  
Psalm 86:1–10, 16–17 or Psalm 69:7–10  
(11–15), 16–18; Romans 6:1b–11;  
Matthew 10:24–39

### June 28

#### *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost*

Genesis 22:1–14 or Jeremiah 28:5–9;  
Psalm 13 or Psalm 89:1–4, 15–18;  
Romans 6:12–23; Matthew 10:40–42

\$1085.00. Thanks to everyone who has

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.

## Food for Thought

Hope you have been watching the many videos that Pastor David has been posting, from vespers to Sunday morning worship. He also has been hosting coffee and conversations a couple days a week. Although it's not the same as worshipping together, it does help us put everything in perspective and, for me at least, takes away some of the stress, gives us HOPE. 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 June 7. It is most important we keep up this offering now. There are many people using the Community Table now more than ever before in this time of high unemployment. We got a wonderful "Thank you" note from the Community Table for our generous donation of

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donated this year. Let's keep the offering coming!

Please make sure you keep up to date on your pledges also. We still have bills to pay! We have received the PPP loan through RCU. It has helped with our payroll. We won't be doing any of our fund raisers this year, so it's really important for you to keep your pledges up to date.

Please don't forget our homeless friends and keep them in your prayers. They especially need donations of money now that their drop off centers are closed. The mailing address is Chippewa Valley Street Ministry, PO Box 51, Eau Claire, WI 54702. If you prefer, you can go to the website, [chippewavalleystreetministry.org](http://chippewavalleystreetministry.org), and donate through PayPal.

*Pastor's Pen  
continued*

I hear calls to “open the churches” and I am confused. We are the body of Christ at home as well as the sanctuary, just as we are (or are supposed to be) the body of Christ when we’re out shopping, at work or school, or interacting online. Two thousand years of attempts to make our faith illegal have never worked because churches are the community of followers, so it’s impossible to close. Plymouth has most certainly been open through this pandemic and will continue to be, just as we’ve been open since we first gathered in someone’s home in 1885. We do need to live with some sensible, scientifically-sound restrictions on how we are the church, however, and we will follow these restrictions as an act of faithful love for our neighbors.

In the meantime, we continue our Sunday worship and evening Vespers via video; our Tuesday and Thursday videoconference Coffee and Fellowship; our letter writing and phone calling; our offerings for Community Table and others; the maintenance of our lawn and building; and all the ministries of this otherwise fully operational church.

We may have left the building, but we are most definitely not closed! Thank you all for your ministry in this time, for your love and support of each other, and for your patient endurance until such time as our health experts tell us we are okay to gather again.

Have a blessed June and enjoy the weather and the places that are open, and support your local businesses: they are our neighbors!



## Leadership Musings

In these times of uncertainty and isolation, it is important that we all stay connected. I’m challenging 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.

Remember the Birthday Challenge? Those of you who have June birthdays are challenged to make a donation to the church corresponding to your age or some amount you feel appropriate. The money will go to future capital improvements.

Volunteers are needed 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.

The Leadership Team has been trying to envision what worship will be like once we are able to meet again. Social distancing will certainly be the new normal. There probably won’t be any singing, or communion. Our fundraisers like the Thrift Sale, Bake Sales, Bazaar, Pie & Ice Cream Social are all pretty much off the agenda until 2021. Coffee time will probably change also; we are just not sure how yet. Virtual worship will probably continue, even after we start worshiping in our building. All of this is really just a guess. Once we have a time we can open, and we feel we won’t be endangering any of our church family, we will let everyone know. We may even shout it from the roof tops! Stay tuned!

Members present: Larry Kleist, Barb Kleist, Rob Jaenke, Ben Bechle, Linda Oliver, Lil Savage, Cindy Halfen, Mimi Pederson, and Pastor David

Our Moderator, Barb Kleist called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. via Zoom. Minutes of the April meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Financial Reports:**

As of April 30, 2020

Year to Date Income	\$48,102.77
Year to Date Expenses	\$44,691.19
Ahead (Behind)	\$3,411.58

**Treasurer's Report:**

Income for April was \$13,689.06. Expenses were \$10,187.60. Income for April includes \$8,500 from the government loan to cover our payroll and utilities. As long as it's used for that, we don't have to repay.

**Reserve Fund Balance:** \$11,531.05

**Memorial Fund Balance:** \$6,869.56

A sum of \$150 designated for the General Fund was transferred to the General Fund and the \$200 grant for the Diaper Drive was paid out.

The financial reports were reviewed and accepted.

**Stewardship:**

No Thrift Sale or Pie & Ice Cream Social until at least this fall, and maybe not until next year.

**Worship:**

We continue to do online Sunday worship and Vespers.

**Women of Plymouth:**

No report

**Building and Grounds:**

Larry thought it was probably okay to remove the tubes laying across the lawn from the down-spouts. We also need to apply some weed and feed to the lawn.

**Pastor's Report:**

He has been posting short Vespers messages each evening as well as doing a Sunday morning message. He thought it might be nice to have someone else to read scripture for Sunday's video. Next week (May 18-22) he will be watching the online presentations from the Festival of Homiletics from noon to 5 P.M. each day. The Conference Annual Meeting will be Saturday, June 6 from 9 A.M. to noon via teleconference. It will be just the business portion of the usual Annual Meeting. Plymouth is allowed two delegates, and Pastor David is looking for volunteers. The Pilgrim Center has cancelled all summer camps, however Moon Beach will still hold family camps. The Wisconsin Council of Churches has published a list of steps and best practices for churches to use as a guide about when and how to re-open.



*Continued on page 6*

*Minutes continued*

**Old Business:**

- Rob gave a quote on the cost of workmen’s comp for Lynn if she becomes an employee as opposed to an independent contractor. Still studying the situation and may not need to make a final decision until we start having weekly worship in the church again.
- Barb reminded everyone to stay in touch.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42. Our next meeting will be June 8.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mimi Pederson

**Our 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

This year we celebrate our 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a congregation. Here is a portion of the letter we received from the Historical Committee of the WI Conference:

Dear Friends:

Congratulations on observing a significant anniversary in the life of your congregation. We trust that you have been able to celebrate your years of ministry, be they 25 years or 125 years in your community. The Historical Committee of the Wisconsin Conference, UCC wishes to acknowledge your years of ministry as we join your Association and Conference in recognizing your anniversary.

In past years our committee sponsored a breakfast on the Saturday of Annual Meeting for churches and pastors celebrating special anniversaries. Sadly, because of Covid-19 the Wisconsin

Conference will only be meeting online via Zoom on June 6. However, we still wish you to know that your years of ministry are appreciated and worth celebrating, even if you have had to modify your plans. We certainly would be interested in learning how you have adapted to the current situation and what creative ways you have developed for observing a church anniversary...

May God continue to guide and bless your ministry during this anniversary year and into the future.

Cordially,

James D. Mohr, chair

**Prayer Ministry**

**In June, we are praying for these individuals/families:** Charline Kozlowski, Dorothy Kruschke, Arvilla Kruschke, Cathy Lawler, Faye LaPean

**June Birthdays**

- 2 Jeanne Strassman
- 4 Deb Zehms
- 8 Rob Jaenke
- 10 Carter Jaenke
- 13 Adam Wendt
- 15 Gordy Heimstead
- 19 Morgan Jaenke
- 20 Denny Shepler
- 27 Harlan Hartwich  
Jim Welk

# Photo Gallery



The beautiful trees at the edge of the parking lot.



Our dear friend "Herb Green" as his leaves begin to unfurl.



The lilac topiaries flanking the stairs.



Our "front yard" without the unsightly black tubes from the down spouts.