

Good News

Plymouth United Church of Christ

December 2020

Published monthly by
Plymouth UCC
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*Cross illumination for
December is sponsored by
Pete Spitt in loving memory
of his wife Sharon and his
brother Wallace.*

*This issue of the newsletter
is sponsored by an
anonymous donor.*

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Christmas in a Box

The Community Table is putting together "Christmas in a Box" kits to give to people this year, and are asking for the following:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Hot chocolate mix | Frozen buns |
| Apple Cider Mix | Cookie Dough |
| Canned vegetables | Frosting |
| Instant mashed potatoes | Cookie Cutters |
| Instant stuffing | \$15 Festival gift card |
| Gravy packets/jars | Festive plates and napkins (biodegradable) |



Items can be taken to the Community Table or brought to Plymouth and we will take them over. The deadline for delivery at Community Table is December 12, the deadline for delivery to Plymouth is December 11 (so that we can then deliver on December 12).

Please note that due to health reasons, the Community Table cannot accept baked goods or any home-made food items from us.

Covid Update

According to the Eau Claire County Health Department, the state of Wisconsin and Eau Claire County are now listed as being at a Critically High level with the number of cases. Among Eau Claire County residents, more than 55% of confirmed cases, 50% of hospitalizations, and 73% of Covid-19 deaths have occurred in the past 30 days. It is extremely important to follow these health department guidelines:

- Stay at home as much as possible
- If you must be out and about, wear a cloth face covering and limit close contact
- Avoid gatherings of *any* size between individuals who are not members of your immediate family or household
- Stay home when sick with symptoms consistent with Covid and get tested.

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December Worship Calendar

December 6

2nd Sunday of Advent

Community Table offering

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13;

Luke 1:1–15

December 13

3rd Sunday of Advent

Prayers for the People

Psalm 126; Matthew 1:1–24

December 20

4th Sunday of Advent

OCWM offering

John 1:1–18; Luke 1:46–55

December 24

Christmas Eve

December 27

1st Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10–62:3; Psalm 148;

Galatians 4:4–7; Luke 2:22–40

Prayer Ministry

In December, we are praying for these

individuals/families: Mary Stygar, Sue

Thompson, Len Weisfeld, Jim Welk,

Ron & Nancy Wendt, Keith & Deb

Zehms

Going forward, the church website, Facebook, and YouTube will have links to the weekly messages and liturgy, and they will be up and online by early Sunday morning.

Food for Thought

Our offering to the Community Table will be taken on December 6. Please make sure to either drop off your offerings at the church office or mail them to us. The office hours are 9-11 A.M., Monday through Friday.

Don't forget our homeless friends. Please keep them in your prayers. They especially need donations of money at this time. Their drop off centers are

closed, so they need to purchase some things for the homeless. 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, and donate through PayPal.

Leadership Musings

With a heavy heart, the Leadership team has decided to cancel our in-person worship until further notice due to the tremendous upsurge of COVID-19 cases in the Eau Claire area. Continue worshipping with us Sunday mornings virtually at 10:30 or whenever you are able to. Once the service is posted, it can be watched anytime. Advent starts November 29. Although things will be different, we will still be preparing for the birth of Jesus!

We have a new member! Please welcome Jo Ann Smith to our Church family.

Please make sure you turn in your pledge cards for next year. The Leadership team will be planning the budget in December and we need to know how much we will receive from you. Also make sure your pledges for this year are up to date. We still have bills to pay.

If anyone would like to join the Leadership team for 2021, please contact Barb Kleist. Until we reopen, we meet virtually.

In these times of uncertainty, 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. Also, don't forget the video chats via Zoom with Pastor David on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons.

We are still collecting empty prescription/otc pain reliever bottles, with the labels removed.

Remember the Birthday Challenge to fund future capital improvements, such as resurfacing the parking lot. Those of you who have December birthdays are challenged to make a donation.

Also, don't forget our new A/V system. We still need money for three TVs to move us into the 21st century.

December Birthdays

2	Pete Spitt
4	Irma Shepler
5	Terri Gilbert
9	Pastor David Aaron Adams
22	Cathy Stygar

Covid Update *continued*

Free drive-up antigen testing is available for people who *do not* have symptoms, but who attend, live, or work in a group setting, interact with vulnerable populations, travel frequently, or have been in close contact with someone with Covid-19. (Antigen testing results are faster and a positive test means you likely have Covid-19 and need a PCR test. PCR tests take longer to get results and a positive result means you have Covid and need to begin isolation.) Free antigen testing is held Saturdays 12–8 P.M., Sundays 12–8 P.M., and Wednesdays 12–8 P.M. at Memorial High School, 2225 Keith Street. You must register on the day of your test at <https://www.doineedacovid19test.com/>

Leadership Team Minutes

November 9, 2020

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



Our Moderator, Barb Kleist called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Minutes of the October regular meeting and the October special meeting were reviewed and approved.

Financial Reports:

As of October 31, 2020

Year to Date Income	\$103,104.34
Year to Date Expenses	\$101,932.22
Ahead (Behind)	\$1,172.12

Treasurer's Report:

Income for October was \$7,195.54. Expenses were \$9,315.60. Overall envelope income is \$12,913 above last year.

Reserve Fund Balance: \$8,544.57

Memorial Fund Balance: \$5,426.17

PPP loan: No information yet on when this is to be paid.

The financial reports were reviewed and accepted.

Stewardship:

The stewardship mailing has gone out. There will be a reminder in the bulletins that people should return their pledges. Nut sales are going well. We will continue to try for more orders. Joanne Miller reported that she had 15 people willing to bake for the virtual bake sale. This bodes well for an attempt to hold the sale in the spring.

Worship:

Pastor David is asking for video clips

of folks saying what they are thankful for. These will be used for the virtual Thanksgiving Eve service which will be posted to our YouTube page.

Women of Plymouth:

No report

Building and Grounds:

Larry will call Gale who does our snow plowing. There was some discussion of having just half the lot plowed since we are not having in-person worship.

Pastor's Report:

Lynn McFadyen and Sam Zehms have recorded a piece for the Thanksgiving Eve virtual service to be posted on our YouTube page. Pastor David said he finds it easier to put together our Sunday virtual worship if he has a liturgist. Linda Oliver volunteered to do that when needed. Christmas Eve service will hopefully have some special music and be able to end with Silent Night as we have done in the past. The Community Table is asking for food donations to make gift boxes for Thanksgiving. Pastor David was contacted by some folks who have been watching our virtual worship services and are interested in maybe joining Plymouth.

Old Business:

- Barb reminded everyone to stay in touch.
- We will not decorate the entire building for Christmas, but there will be a small tree in the sanctuary and the Advent Wreath will be out.

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Good News

Leadership Team minutes continued

New Business:

- Plymouth sponsored a Boy Scout troop from 1984 to 1990. With the help of a lawyer working pro bono, we will file the necessary paperwork to protect us from any claims.

Barb reminded us that budget and nominating committees will meet next month.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36. Our next meeting will be December 14 via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Mimi Pederson

Memorials

A/V System

In memory of Bob & Ludie Koons:
Cindy Halfen



Christmas Eve Silent Night

One of the most beloved traditions of our Christmas Eve worship is singing Silent Night by candlelight at the end of the service. This year we will not be able to do that, but perhaps we can do something just as meaningful. Each of us can light a candle and go outside at 7:00 P.M. on Christmas eve to sing this carol. Not quite the same, we know, but much like Worldwide Communion, to know that you are doing the same thing as the rest of your church family at the same time, it can offer a sense of togetherness even though we are physically separated. Emotionally and spiritually, we can still be together. Let's give it a try.

Dear friends and family of Plymouth,

We're coming into the final month of the year, and I don't think any of us expected that the pandemic would be so much worse now than it was earlier in the year. Now we come into a strange holiday season: no gatherings for Thanksgiving, no Christmas parties or Christmas concerts, and Christmas Day will surely continue to be unsafe for gathering. This will affect us gathering for worship, too. Christmas Eve worship has always meant singing "Silent Night" in a sanctuary while we all hold candles. It has been so since my earliest childhood memory. This year we won't have that. But we will still have a very meaningful Christmas Eve worship service that will be on our YouTube channel, and we will be lighting our Advent Candles as part of our Sunday worship services, just like normal.



This is also a season of giving, and you have many avenues to help.

Tuesday, Dec. 1, is Giving Tuesday, following the traditional Black Friday weekend and CyberMonday. The latter are dedicated to buying stuff, but Giving Tuesday is about giving money to organizations that we love. Since we did not have our fall thrift sale or our holiday bazaar, you might consider making a donation equal to what you would have given to make baked goods or donated items. Some organizations dear to Plymouth are the Chippewa Valley Street Ministry, the Stand in the Light Memory Choir, Community Table, and our outdoor ministry sites (Moon Beach, Pilgrim Center, and Cedar Valley).

The Street Ministry and Community Table needs are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. The Stand in the Light

Memory Choir has online giving (and giving by checks through the mail), available on their website <https://www.standinthelightmemorychoir.org>.

United Church Camps (our outdoor ministry sites) are also struggling very much this year. No campers has meant no income. A generous donor has just offered a \$200,000 matching grant through the end of the year. The Northwest Association is also offering a matching grant. I serve as the secretary for the Northwest Association Executive Committee and made the proposal, which they agreed to, to offer a matching grant of \$7,000 from our Association funds for those who want to help support our camps. Both matching grants are available through the end of the year. Our congregation has a long history with Moon Beach, and I have a long history with all our camps—over their 160 years of combined existence, they have provided ministry to tens of thousands of children and adults, many of our ordained clergy and even more of our strong lay leaders throughout the church have been formed in the loving and faithful environments of our outdoor ministry sites.

I wish you a most blessed and meaningful Advent and Christmas season, even in the turmoil and strangeness of a pandemic. But whether we are gathered together to sing Silent Night or we do so at home, Jesus comes to us on Christmas morning, a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes to bring peace and goodwill to all the earth. May you find peace, hope, joy, and love through this season.

Blessings,

Handwritten signature of Pastor Dan.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>December 2020</h1> 						
		1 9:00 A.M. C & C	2	3 3:30 P.M. C & C	4	5
6Community Table offering	7	8 9:00 A.M. C & C	9	10 3:30 P.M. C & C	11	12
13Prayers for the People	14 7:00 P.M. Leadership Team	15 9:00 A.M. C & C	16	17 3:30 P.M. C & C	18	19
20OCWM offering	21	22 9:00 A.M. C & C	23	24 Office closed <i>Lessons and Carols online</i> <i>7:00 Sing "Silent Night" outside with a candle</i>	25 Office closed	26
27	28	29 9:00 A.M. C & C	30	31 3:30 P.M. C & C		

What's C & C??

It's *Coffee and Conversation*, a virtual gathering via Zoom for folks who miss the Sunday morning coffee time at church. There is no set topic of conversation, and it's a nice way to keep in touch while we have to maintain social distance. Pastor David hosts the gatherings and posts the link on the church Facebook page. Check it out! <https://tinyurl.com/y2e87nm>