

PLYMOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF
CHRIST
BURLINGTON, WI

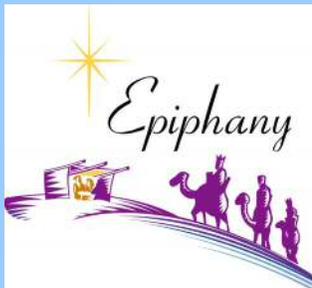
VOL XII, ISSUE I
JANUARY 2017

Special points of
interest:

Family Bowling Event

ONA Task Force

Inclement Weather info



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The Plymouth Epistle

A Newsletter for the Members & Friends of Plymouth Congregational UCC, Burlington, WI

WORDS FROM WANG – “New Year Hope”

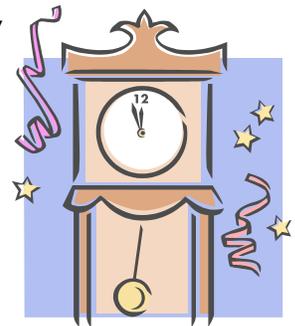
I do hope you will excuse me for repeating an illustration I used in my column a few years ago but some things, as they say, are worth repeating. Because inquiring minds want to know, the month *January* was named after the Roman god Janus. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look back on the past and look ahead toward the future simultaneously. And so as we bid goodbye to an old year and look forward to a new one, we're a little bit like Janus. And if you are like me this is often cause for a little weeping.

Truth is, you don't have to look very far to find someone who has lost a loved one or friend in the past year; or who experienced some heart ache or who suffered some personal challenges. Consequently, there are those years that we can't wait to put behind us and seek to start a fresh. But by the same token as we look back we can always find something to celebrate as we seek to cherish all that is good.

As a church we have much to celebrate; successes and milestones that have moved us to offer God our praise. We also recognize the heartaches, losses, and set backs. As a country we endured perhaps one of the hardest years that we have in our nation's history in spite of the Cubs winning the World Series. A sad reality is that between the violence and the heated elections we remain a grieving and divided nation.

Therefore, our newly elected officials say that the time has come to re-build and transform, on one level, our system of national governance. But on another level, others are saying that the time has come to renew our personal commitment to the work of healing and bridging that which divides us. Never has there been a time that faith communities have been more needed to do the work of justice and extending compassion to those who are on the fringe or falling through the cracks. I hope you will all join me as we embark upon a new journey as a congregation that we might keep our eyes on the horizon and be open to what God has in store for us.

Therefore I Pray... *May God make your year a happy one! Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain, but by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes. Not by making your path easy, but by making you sturdy to travel any path. Not by taking hardships from you, but by taking fear from your heart. Not by granting you unbroken sunshine, but by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows. Not by making your life always pleasant, but by showing you when people and their causes need you most, and by making you anxious to be there to help. God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead. Amen.*



See ya' in church. Pastor Bob

Worship Opportunities for January

January 1 – 2nd Sunday of Christmas

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46

Sermon Theme: “The Jesus in You”

January 22 – 3rd Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Matthew 4:13-23

Sermon Theme: “Claimed, Called, and Sent”

January 8 – 1st Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17

Sermon Theme: “Beloved”

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion

January 29 – 4th Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

Sermon Theme: “In the Pursuit of Happiness”

January 15 – 2nd Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Isaiah 49:1-7

Sermon Theme: “Destined”

February 5 – 5th Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Acts 11:1-18

Sermon Theme: “You Are What You Eat”

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion



PLYMOUTH PRAISE IN WORSHIP – January 24

Welcome to 2017! “Plymouth Praise” is a group of singers and players who lead with a more contemporary style of worship music and does so typically on the 4th Sunday of the month. With January 1 being on a Sunday, however, everything will be pushed back a Sunday leaving Plymouth Praise with the 5th Sunday for music and leading in the first month of the new year. If the New Year inspires you to join us by all means DO!

January 22 @ 11:30 – Rehearse for the next Sunday

January 29 @ 8:45 - Rehearsal with 10:00 worship to follow.

We always welcome new singers or players. Come help us make a joyful noise.

JANUARY 8th - FAMILY BOWLING EVENT!

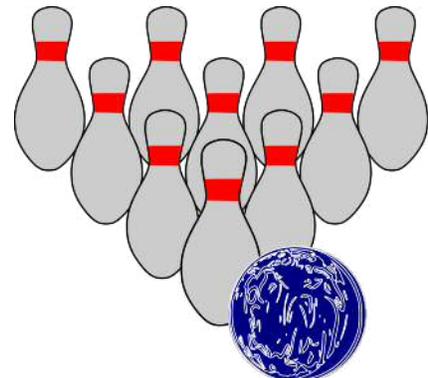
Join us for fun and fellowship

Town & Country Lanes

3:00pm

\$10 per person

Includes pizza, soda, shoes,
and 1 1/2 hours of bowling



From the Moderator



Christmas and New Year's will be over by the time you read this. I hope this finds you healthy and full of good cheer from time spent with family and friends. As the new calendar year starts, our church is entering the second half of our church year. Logos numbers may be down a bit but the enthusiasm of the kids and commitment of the leaders is as strong as ever. If you aren't familiar with Logos, just spend a few minutes with Nikki Burd and you'll feel the excitement too. Jill Albrecht and

her volunteers did an excellent job with the Shoebox project, and Betty Peterson and Karen Iselin continued their good works in organizing the Giving Tree gift project. I shouldn't single out individuals by name because I know I am missing many others that should be recognized too. My point here is that we have a lot going for us at Plymouth thanks to our dedicated church family.

I am asking all of you to pray for your leaders on the Operating Council, and for God to give us wisdom and guidance. The OC will meet in January and spend half a day talking about our church...where we are, and where we want to go, and where we SHOULD go, to make sure Plymouth is doing its part to meet the spiritual needs of our entire community. Soon after our meeting we will share our thoughts with the membership before any final decisions are made. More to come on that.

Last month I mentioned the idea of holding some classes to discuss and better understand our Christian Faith. Think of this as a refresher course to the Confirmation Classes many of us participated in as youths. I will be scheduling these classes but the details aren't set yet. Keep watching for more information.

One final thought: many of us set some New Year's Resolutions, for example, lose weight, exercise more, spend more quality time with family. That's all good but I think we need to do that on the Spiritual side too, so here are some questions for you to think about, to pray about, and share with others if you are so moved.

- 1) What is God calling me to do in 2017? What is God calling our Church family to do in 2017?
- 2) What can I personally do to be a blessing to Pastor Bob (and to our church) this year?
- 3) What spiritual habit do I need to start or expand on this year? Read the Bible more? Pray more? Participate more in church activities?
- 4) What is the single biggest time waster in my life and what will I do to change that this year?
- 5) What can our church do to best meet the needs of our community and share our faith with others?

We are very blessed by God. I pray that God will continue to bless us all in the New Year.

Ron Moersfelder

ONA 2017 (New monthly feature) **“A New Years Resolution”**

Plymouth Church has historically been a church that seeks to practice hospitality in the Burlington community and welcome, with open arms, all those who enter our doors. A number of years ago, the United Church of Christ (our parent denomination) introduced a marketing campaign as a way to intentionally engage in a fresh effort to circulate our “brand” of church with the slogan, *Never place a period where God has placed a comma, God is still speaking.* This led to yet another catch phrase, *No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey you are welcome here.*



Still another initiative of the United Church of Christ, one that preceded the first two and that has caused some controversy within the denomination, was a **resolution** presented and adopted at General Synod (our biennial national meeting) in 1985. The “therefore” portion of resolution read:

*“Therefore, the 15th General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages a policy on nondiscrimination in employment, volunteer services, and **membership with regard to sexual orientation**; encourages Associations and Conferences and all related organizations to adopt a similar policy; **and encourages the member congregations of the United Church of Christ to adopt a nondiscrimination policy and Covenant of Openness and Affirmation of persons of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender orientation within the community of faith.**”*

Plymouth Church Burlington has, as some level, been faithful to these initiatives and has been mindful of how we as a congregation might live into these philosophies and practices though we have never **formerly** acted on them. This past summer, following the attack on the gay club in Orlando, Pastor Bob preached a sermon in response to this tragedy and begged the congregation to reflect on its role as a faith community in response to such tragedies. Furthermore, he asked that the congregation consider how we might stand in solidarity with victims of hatred and violence. Consequently, he suggested one very good way we could live out our faith with compassion and concern and that is by considering the path of becoming an **Open and Affirming** church as stated in the above resolution; by ourselves adopting a nondiscrimination policy and Covenant of Openness and Affirmation of persons of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender orientation within the community of faith.

After much prayerful consideration, a task force was put together to review the process, gather resources, schedule listening sessions, plan discussion and Bible study groups, and invite every member of Plymouth Church to engage in open dialogue that all may be informed on what this might mean for us as a congregation. Therefore, by next fall we hope to be able to introduce our own **resolution** for adoption at a specially called congregational meeting. A **resolution** would include the following explanation:

*“An Open and Affirming (ONA) church of the United Church of Christ means that it has publicly declared that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer (LGBTQ) people are **welcome** in its full life and ministry. It bespeaks a spirit of hospitality and a willingness to live out that welcome in meaningful ways.”*

We trust that every Plymouth Church member will let their heart be their guide in response to this very important initiative. Stay tuned.

Children's Ministry News

The month of December is always a joyous time for our Children's Ministry. It's time to get ready for the birth of Jesus and celebrate that time with our families and friends. We had another successful Christmas program on Sunday, December 11th with our youth. We involved our LOGOS kids with a cute Advent skit. It was a wonderful message on the waiting and preparing for Christmas and the true meaning of why we celebrate Advent.



We are wrapping up LOGOS for 2016.....are attendance is a little lower than in the past but we love the new faces that still show up every year!! Thank you to all our volunteers to help make this program such a great addition to our church. I consider myself very fortunate and blessed to have a hand in this wonderful program in our church. Our Sunday school attendance has been great this year!! We are excited to have so many younger families in our church that take the time to bring their little ones on Sunday morning. We also look forward to them all joining LOGOS in the years to come. I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! See you in 2017!!

Nikki Burd
Children's Ministry Director

Thank You! 

A huge thank you to Jill Albrecht for all her work to organize and facilitate this year's Christmas Dinner. It is such a wonderful gift that we give to our community. We delivered about 65 meals and provided a place for 20 others to join together to celebrate Christmas Day. We also thank all those who donated their time or items for the dinner. We could not have done it without you!!!

We would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to all of you who purchased gifts or donated money to our annual LOVE Family Christmas project. As the deadline approached, there were still many "gifts" on the tree. But, as you always do, you came through in a BIG way! Consequently, we were able to "adopt" another family and purchase grocery gift cards for each of our families. All in all, we helped to brighten Christmas for 7 families, 13 children. This is such a wonderful outreach mission for our church! Also, we want to thank our ever-ready delivery elves, Don Klaehn and Dick Peterson. ~Betty Peterson and Karen Iselin

Thank you so much for the very thoughtful gift presented to me on Christmas Eve. Plymouth Church is a special group of people and I truly appreciate you all. ~Pastor Bob



Our goal is to **not** cancel church for typical Wisconsin winter weather. Pastor Bob has 4 wheel drive and will be here to conduct worship, even if only a few others venture out. The exception to that would be ice storms or blizzard conditions under which authorities are directing the public not to be on the roads. Under those situations Beth will change the voicemail at the church to indicate that we have cancelled our worship service and the closing will be reported on WISN Channel 12. **HOWEVER**, we urge all to use their own discretion. If you feel uncertain about being on the road, then please stay home and be safe. Otherwise, we'll see you in church!

January 21st -11am - 5pm

Bring a game you'd like to play,
but be prepared to play
something new!

Find us on Facebook and see what the fun is
all about! [https://www.facebook.com/
s/643078015702637/](https://www.facebook.com/s/643078015702637/)

**Plymouth UCC
Game Night!**



**Missions
Team**

VALENTINE'S COOKIES FOR SHUT INS.....

We are looking for people willing to bake 2 dozen cookies and bring them to the church by Sunday, February 5. They will be assembled after church that day and delivered during that week. If you could help assemble or deliver please contact Jill Albrecht (262-534-4640).

The Missions Team is also looking for college students from our church to send care packages to. If you have a college student in your family, please give their name and address to Jill Albrecht or the church office.

Mark your calendars....Riverview Manor Luncheon on February 12th.

On December 11th the LOGOS kids presented “The Advent Journey”



December 18th
our choir presented
“JOY!”
a Gospel Christmas
Celebration





2 - Sammi Brenner	17 - Kim Lunderskov
3 - Harmony Jones	21 - Scott Freitag
4 - Pat Brown	22 - Kay Pockat
6 - Eric Lindell	23 - Elliot Kerkhoff
Dana Marty	Nicole Schultz
7 - Betty Mathews	24 - Mary Ellen Close
Henry Peterson	Stacie Coleman
9 - Tracy Freitag	25 - Marilyn Gander
10 - Gabriela Bowman	27- Bob Kastengren
13 - Tawney DeBoth	28 - Carol Berndt
14 - Gerry Swanberg	Rayni VanSwol
Robyn Kay-Warner	29 - Sarah Peterson
Suzanne Jagodzinski	31 - Jolene Peterson



Dan & Kelly Iselin – January 6
 Christopher Bowman & Krista Klaehn – Jan 12
 Gary & Suzanne Jagodzinski – January 14
 Allen & Rachel Jones – January 30

Special congratulations to:

Betty Mathews who celebrates her 94th birthday on January 7th

Geraldine Swanberg who celebrates her 99th birthday on January 14th



**“Ladies Lunch Bunch”
 January 4th at Noon**

Pine Street Café

Come for fun and pleasant conversation.
 Order from the menu and pay for your own lunch.
 If you need a ride, call the church office at 763-6890.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Pat Sandstrom and her family after the passing of George Sandstrom on December 1, 2016. A Memorial Service was held at Plymouth on December 17th. Our prayers are with Pat, Todd and Carmen and their families.

We have also learned of the passing of Virginia (Ginny) Dickinson - Price, on February 14, 2016. She passed away at her home in Lakewood, Colorado with all 6 of her children with her. A funeral was held in the chapel of her apartment building, and in October a graveside service was held at the Burlington Cemetery where she was laid to rest beside her husband Wayne Dickinson. Ginny was the secretary of Plymouth Church while Rev. Trent Rockwell was our minister. Their children Sandy, Nancy, Laurie, Diana, David and John grew up attending Plymouth Church. We extend our prayers and sympathy to them all.





**Fair Trade Coffee Project –
Items sold 2nd Sunday of the month**

- Organic Tamari Roasted Almonds — \$5.00 per package
- Equal Exchange Teas — \$3.00 per package
- Regular Whole Bean and Ground Coffee — \$7.00 per bag
- Decaf Whole Bean and Ground Coffee — \$8.00 per bag
- Regular Flavored Coffees — \$8.00 per bag
- Hazelnut Decaf — \$9.00 per bag
- Hot Cocoa Mix — \$6.00 per can
- Equal Exchange Large Chocolate Bars — \$2.50 each
- Divine Chocolate Bars - \$1.50

**We also have Women’s
Bean Project items:**

- Soup Mixes - \$5.50 each
- Cookie Mixes - \$5.00
- Iced Tea Mixes - \$3.50
- Dip Mixes - \$3.75
- Chocolate Covered
Espresso Beans - \$5.75

Sharing Sunday — 1st Sunday of every month — All items go to Love, Inc.

Love’s food pantry continues to need your help!
The following non-perishable food and other items are greatly needed:

- canned fruit, canned vegetables, soup
- toothpaste, toothbrushes
- hair spray, hand soap
- feminine hygiene products
- canned spaghetti
- brown sugar, sugar
- mayonnaise, mustard, catsup
- disposable razors

- mouth wash, shampoo
- tissues, toilet paper
- diapers (all sizes)
- macaroni, cereal
- jelly, peanut butter
- laundry detergent
- dish soap, deodorant



Monetary contributions are always accepted. Just place your check in the offering plate or mail it to Plymouth Church.

**Plymouth Children’s Center
receives funds from grocery
stores**

Plymouth Children’s Center collects grocery receipts from Richter’s Market-place. We receive 1% of the total on the receipts. Richter’s receipts require a *Funds for Friends* sticker on the back and can be turned in at the daycare office. Thank you for your continued support.



Blood pressure screening - January 8th
Blood pressure screening will take place in the Fireside Room following worship.



Flowers for Sunday

If you would like to supply flowers for the altar on a Sunday, please sign up for a date on our Flower Chart. It is located by the door in the parlor that leads to the nursery. Look ahead to important dates in your life that you would like to commemorate by providing flowers for our church service. We thank Marty Baker for the *exquisite* arrangements she has been providing for the past several months. We have truly appreciated her gifts of time and talent!!

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

SUNDAY	Jan. 1 10:00 am	Jan. 8 10:00 am	Jan. 15 10:00 am	Jan. 22 10:00 am	Jan. 29 10:00 am
DEACONS	January 8: Paul Gander – Bread Tyler & Becky Daniels, Steph Eveland				
USHERS	Need Volunteers	Dick & Joan Shecterle Kiffie Scott	Tyler & Becky Daniels Barb Freeman	Bob & Jackie Kastengren Deb Lindell	Joe & Karen Iselin John Kranich
LITURGIST	Carolyn Schoneck	Ron Moersfelder	Jamie Edwards	Jim Burd	Don Howell
FELLOWSHIP SERVERS	Need volunteers	Keith & Sue Krumholz	Paul & Marilyn Gander	None needed Potluck	Rod & Lori Benstead
AV OPERATOR	Jamie Ellingstad	John Kranich	Dave Snyder	Al Murin	John Kranich
NURSERY	None needed	Ellen Gyger	Meghan Peterson	Sara Graham	Becky Daniels
ACOLYTE	None needed	Gibson Souther	Josh Katzman	Raegan Rediger	Elysia Escobar

**Deadline for the February issue of *The Plymouth Epistle* is :
Friday, January 20th Thanks, Beth**

PLYMOUTH UCC STAFF

Rev. Robert E. Wang, Minister
 Beth Picazo, Secretary
 Stephanie Eveland, Financial Secretary
 Nikki Burd, Children's Ministry Director
 Jeffrey Hughes, Custodian
 Marty Baker, Wedding Coordinator
 Diane Olson, Organist & Bell Choir Director
 Jamie Edwards, Choir Director
 Lisa Carnahan, Choir Accompanist

**PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S CENTER
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Sara Trewyn, Program Director
 Phyllis Hancock, Assistant Director



Rev. Robert Wang, Minister– Office Hours:

Tuesday-Friday: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Email: Minister@PlymouthUCCBurlington.org

Office: 262-763-6890

Home: 262-308-4180

If possible, please call ahead to make sure Pastor Bob is available

Church Office Hours:

Beth, Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Fridays, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Steph, Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Church Office: 262-763-6890

Web Site: www.uccply.org

Email: Plymouth@PlymouthUCCBurlington.org

Financial Secretary Email:

steph@PlymouthUCCBurlington.org



JANUARY CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00am Worship NO Sunday School 11:00am Coffee & Conversation	2 Church office closed	3 7pm Choir	4 Noon Ladies Lunch Bunch 5pm LOGOS 6:30pm Bell Choir	5	6 6am Men's Breakfast	7
8 8:45am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship (Communion) 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Coffee & Conversation 11:00am Taking Down Greens 3:00pm Family Bowling Event	9	10 10:30am A.S.A.P. 7pm Choir	11 6:30pm Operating Council Meeting 6:30pm Bell Choir	12	13 6am Men's Breakfast	14
15 8:45am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Coffee & Conversation	16	17 7pm Choir	18 5pm LOGOS 6:30pm Bell Choir	19	20 6am Men's Breakfast	21 8am-2pm Operating Council Mtg 11am Game Day
22 8:45am Bell Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Worship – Baptism 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Church Pot Luck	23	24 10:30am A.S.A.P. 7pm Choir	25 5pm LOGOS 6:30pm Bell Choir	26	27 6am Men's Breakfast	28
29 8:45am Plymouth Praise 10:00am Worship 10:15am Sunday School 11:00am Coffee & Conversation	30	31	Notes:			



**PLYMOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
124 W.
WASHINGTON
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53105-1478
262-763-6890
262-763-6802 FAX**

**ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT
DELAY
JANUARY 2017
EPISTLE**

We hope you like our monthly newsletter. It is such a great communicator of happenings at our church. However, if you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, please notify us by either mail, telephone (262-763-6890) or email - plymouth@plymouthuccburlington.org.



Begin
the
Year
with
God