

PLYMOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF
CHRIST
BURLINGTON, WI

VOL XVI ISSUE I
JANUARY 2021



Special Interest:

**Farewell
Pastor Bob**



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The Plymouth Epistle

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

FINAL WORDS FROM WANG – “On Saying Goodbye”

It goes without saying - saying goodbye is never easy. But rather than saying goodbye, I would really like to say **thank you Plymouth Church!** Thank you for every single blessing that you've been to me and my family. From your openness to new ideas, especially music, to your willingness to support some huge projects, like a capital campaign, a new building project, and the process of becoming an Open and Affirming church. And on a personal level, so many of you have extended words and gestures of support, kindness, and gratitude over the years, that I could not even begin to name you individually; but you know who you are so thank you from the bottom of my heart.

To say we have accomplished much in our time together is an understatement. We would, however, be arrogant to say that we are a perfect church. And neither could I say that I am a perfect pastor. However, and to use a sports analogy, we can certainly boast together of a winning season in our nearly twelve years serving God together. We have championed many causes so let's focus on and celebrate those things worthy of our delight. And let us give thanks together.

As I considered what I might say in my last epistle, it didn't take long for me to realize that there was one among you who had already provided me with the appropriate inspiration and language to convey my sentiments. My good friend and Plymouth Church member, Bob Wren, has blessed us on several occasions with some of his poetry. The following was a poem that he shared with me upon receiving word of my resignation. Thank you and God bless you Bob Wren.

LIFE by Robert Wren

*Life is a journey - A one way street
With places to go and people to meet
It makes its turns both left and right
Some days are gloomy some days are bright*

*As we follow this path - this void in time
There are goals to reach and hills to climb
We must always look up and never look back
Remembering our life is on a one way track*

*And when the time has come, and the journey is through
I will always be glad that I have met you.*

I will always be glad that I have had the privilege of serving among you - so it is with the deepest regard that I convey my heartfelt gratitude to the entire Plymouth Church family. I pray for nothing but continued growth and success for you, the body of Christ on Washington St. That God may continue to be glorified in the work and mission of those of you called to serve and worship in this place and beyond.

See ya' in church (virtually, of course, with my last service being January 24).
Fondly, Pastor Bob

KEEP THE FAITH AND TRUST THE PROMISE

This paragraph is being included in this month's newsletter to encourage each and every one of you that you may remain committed to the work of Plymouth Church despite its entering into a time of transition. Change is not always welcome, but change must be accepted as part of God's plan for the church of Jesus Christ.

We are so fortunate to be a part of a system that is able to provide us with the tools and resources needed to adapt and move through some of the most challenging transitions. The United Church of Christ is represented in countless ways; locally, regionally, and nationally. And as our extended church family, we can always count on the support and guidance of those called to shepherd the local church when in need of such leadership.

At the time of writing this piece, the Southeast Association of the Wisconsin Conference is unable to name an interim pastor to lead the church in the transition, but be rest assured that they will provide what and who is needed to guide the church as it engages in the process of calling a new settled pastor. This process can take a fair amount of time and will most likely not see complete results until well toward the end of 2021.

That's why it is imperative that each and every one of you keep the faith by continuing your support of and participation in the life of the church. Perhaps you may be approached or nominated to serve on the search committee.

In a word, we pray that you trust the promise that God and the United Church of Christ is making with you in this interim period. Don't be one of those who sit back and wait until a new pastor is called. Though we understand your frustration and anxiety over the change, we want you to know that our mission and purpose will not change. Hang in there, folks. It may be that the best is yet to come. Keep the faith and trust the promise.



News from United Church Camps

We are **EXCITED** to announce that through the generosity of many ... **WE HAVE MET OUR \$200,000 GOAL** for the "Keep the Fires Burning" - Matching Gift Campaign! **THE TOTAL GIFT IS OVER \$400,000!** **THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!**

We have **MORE** exciting news ... we are pleased to announce an additional **\$85,000** challenge gift! Another generous couple was so inspired by the "Keep the Fires Burning" - Matching Gift Campaign, and the support of so many people, that they have come forward to join in on the fun! Consequently, from now until the end of the year, we can raise an *additional \$170,000* with the "Keep the Fires Burning" - Matching Gift Campaign!

Folks, the ministry of UCCI is not raising money. But the ministry cannot happen if we are bankrupt, and this pandemic brought us perilously close. The funds from these matching gift initiatives will get us into 2021. We ask that you help us finish this campaign as strong as possible!

Worship Opportunities for January

January 3 – 2nd Sunday After Christmas

Scripture: John 1:1-18

Sermon Theme: *“Prologues and Passages”*

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be served albeit virtually. Please prepare your own elements prior to logging onto the link.

January 10 – The Baptism of Christ Sunday

Scripture: Mark 1:4-11

Sermon Theme: *“Beginnings”*

January 17 – 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Sermon Theme: *“It’s Personal: On Having Intimacy With God”*

January 24 – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: Mark 1:14-20

Sermon Theme: *“To Follow as God Leads”*

January 31 – 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: TBD

Sermon Theme: TBD

Note: Rev. John Gibbon to lead worship.

Disclaimer: Our ability to hold indoor worship continues to be a challenge. Unfortunately, this reality remains a great stressor for us all, a disappointment for all of us as we long to be together as the body of Christ. But the fact remains, based on the data and the science of the pandemic, it’s just not prudent to gather yet. Let us therefore pray, that as the vaccine gradually becomes available to the general public, that the worshipping body may be joined together once again. Bring it on 2021!!



VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR ON ZOOM - January 10 @11:00 a.m.

Many of you have enjoyed our virtual coffee hours on Sunday mornings so, let’s try for another meeting after the holiday rush is over. As usual, we don’t have a big agenda for the time as it’s all about fellowship and checking in with one another. This would also be a good time to enjoy a little more conversation with the pastor before his departure at the end of January. So, we’d love to see many of you join in. As they say, come as you are and, of course, bring your own choice of beverage or coffee hour style treat.

If you’ve never joined a zoom call/meeting it’s quite simple though you will need a device (laptop, tablet, smart phone, or PC with a camera/mic combo). You may want to practice with someone who has had some experience with the tool beforehand. We also recommend watch a YouTube or Google instruction video which will help tremendously. Here’s one you can watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>.

Dear Pastor Jim Burd,

I was incredibly happy to get your letter. I want to greet all the members of Plymouth Church. I would like to tell them to stay close near the crucifix during this troubling moment of time. The world is trying to survive despite everything being dark. Christ is our only hope, and His light will be able to lead us to peace and hope.

There are times where I want to give in to the despair in our country. We have such economic and sociopolitical issues in Haiti. But then I remember this phrase that says that the future belongs to those who prepare today and that laziness is the worst things for those who dream of achieving their goals. This year is precarious. The political instability and the pandemic of Covid19 have made it difficult to attend classes. By God's grace we have returned to normal. I have been going to the university and I hope to finish the academic year and be able to advance to the next level.

It is good to cultivate the earth because these natural products benefit our bodies and are good for our health. I am proud of you because God needs men like you to lead His people in love and hope. Your gifts are not just objects on this earth. You will be greatly rewarded in heaven. I wish you the courage in this work and God's spirit will help you in everything.

Keep up the good work with our Savior,
Roody



My Dear Roody:

I can tell by your writing that you are quite a young man! I have observed your remarkable growth over these years. I appreciate your educational accomplishments and your hard work! You have become an inspiration to the people of Plymouth Church! Thank you for that!

We live in difficult times, but I have been to your great country and observed first-hand the determination, but also the joy in the faces of the people there!

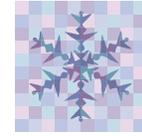
I pray God's blessing on you, your family and your country!

God bless and keep you always!

Your brother in Christ,
Jim Burd



January Calendar



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Office Closed	2
3 Service 10:00 Choir	4 Bells 6:00	5 Choir 6:30	6	7	8	9
10 Service 10:00 Bells	11 Bells 6:00	12 Choir 6:30	13 OC Meeting	14	15	16
17 Service 10:00 Choir	18 Bells 6:00	19 Choir 6:30	20	21 February Epistle Deadline	22	23
24 Service 10:00 Bells	25 Bells 6:00	26 Choir 6:30	27	28	29	30
31 Service 10:00						



Thank you once again to our Plymouth family! While we were not able to gift specific families this year, we received a list of requested items from LOVE and your generosity allowed us to buy so many gifts that LOVE will be able to distribute as needed.



A total of \$2930 was collected and with that we purchased a large variety of practical gifts. Some of the items we purchased were sheets and comforters, bath and kitchen towels, a vacuum, crock pot, toaster, coffee maker, cutlery and a set of dishes. We also had fun selecting fleece hoodies, pajamas, hats and gloves, socks, underwear, boots, clothing, watches, lotions and cologne. In addition to all of these gifts, we were able to purchase \$1000 of gift cards to grocery stores, gas stations and restaurants.

We are sure that your generosity and kindness will help to brighten the Christmas of many! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Warm Christmas wishes to all of you, Betty and Karen

ADVENT CALENDAR

Please consider being a blessing to Love, Inc.
Donations may be dropped off at church by January 8th, 2021.

- December 1 - box of cereal
- December 2 - peanut butter
- December 3 - stuffing mix
- December 4 - boxed potatoes
- December 5 - macaroni and cheese
- December 6 - canned fruit
- December 7 - canned tomatoes
- December 8 - canned tuna
- December 9 - dessert mix
- December 10 - jar of applesauce
- December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
- December 12 - cranberry sauce
- December 13 - canned beans
- December 14 - box of crackers
- December 15 - package of rice
- December 16 - package of oatmeal
- December 17 - package pasta
- December 18 - spaghetti sauce
- December 19 - chicken noodle soup
- December 20 - tomato soup
- December 21 - can corn
- December 22 - can mixed vegetables
- December 23 - can carrots
- December 24 - can green beans



Missions
Team

Happy New Year!!!

Well, we made it through 2020, and I know it wasn't an easy one but we did it!! 2021 is going to be a good year. I can feel it! We will start off this year with saying goodbye to Pastor Bob, and this will be with mixed feelings for all of us. We are happy to hear that he has found a new calling to another church, but we will miss the pastor that has been in our midst for the past eleven years. With that being said, I would like you all to know that we are in the process in looking for an interim minister. I am working closely with Lorraine, our conference minister, weekly to find just that right person to help us through this transition.

I hope everyone had a wonderfully blessed Christmas and Safe New Year!! Just remember that we can do anything with our dear LORD on our side. I look forward to Plymouth Church's bright future and will do everything I can to help make that happen.

Blessings and Love to you all!!

Nikki Burd - Your Moderator

We are so excited that we now have a bigger group of kids joining us! Even though we still can't meet in person we are still able to do fun activities and projects together!

In November our theme was "In all things give thanks". The kids made cards for some of the members of our congregation & shared things to be thankful for. They were mailed out to them before Thanksgiving. The cards turned out beautiful! We have a creative group of kids! We heard that the recipients were so delighted to receive them. This made us feel so happy!

In December "Happy Birthday JESUS" was our theme. We delivered white bags to the kids' front doors. Inside there was little white stocking with the name JESUS on it in gold writing. Each included a poem inside that reminds us all of the true meaning of Christmas & a tradition they can start by writing down goals/ gifts to JESUS. It's such a wonderful tradition to start!

Pastor Bob played the 12 Days of Christmas with the kiddos where they all got to take a "day" and share their artwork!

The kids then all played Christmas Bingo together which each square pertained to the birth of JESUS. They all really enjoyed it! Thanks Marcia!

It was really special that even though we weren't able to have a Christmas Pageant this year that we all were able to sing "HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS" all together with a birthday cake!

Sorry not all of us got to eat the cake ;)

The week of Christmas the kids received another gift bag at their doors. Inside we included a cake mix, frosting, sprinkles, and a candle. In our home we have this tradition we have done for years. As a family we make a cake together and on Christmas Day sing Happy Birthday to JESUS! And everyone gets to enjoy cake to share! Included as a gift to them was an ornament for their tree that says Happy Birthday JESUS we hope this reminds them of the true meaning of Christmas!

We miss everyone and can't wait until we all meet in person again. We pray everyone had a healthy and safe Christmas enjoying it with family!

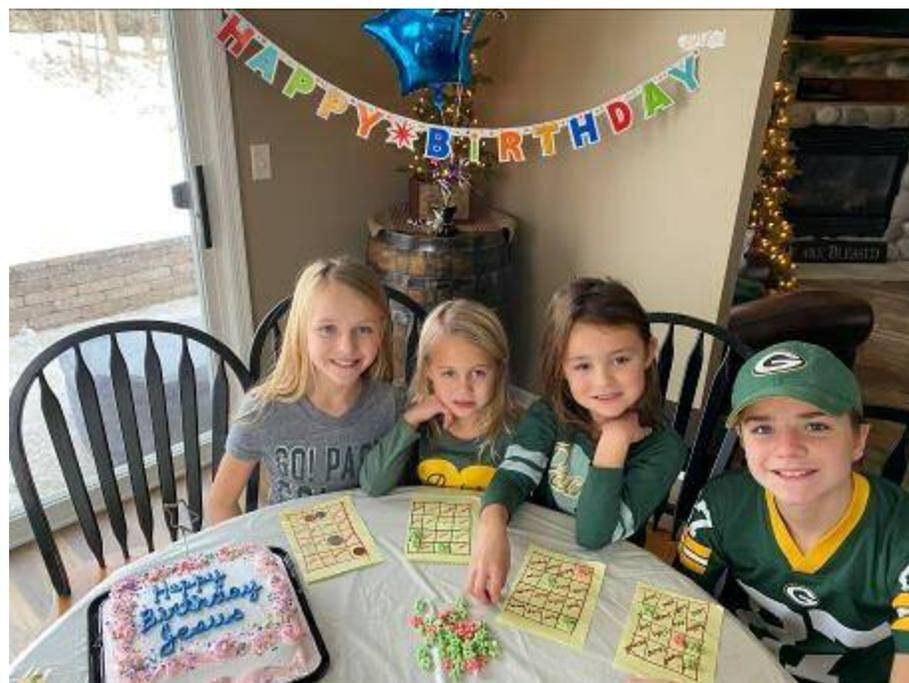
Our Children's Youth Ministry group IMPACT will continue to meet on selected Sunday mornings from 10:30-11:30. ALL kids are welcome! Please join us!

Blessings,

Tracy Freitag & Becky Daniels



Youth Ministry Happenings



1-Pe Poe
 1-Par Tar Bu
 1-Dylan Runhkel
 2-Sammi Brenner
 3-Harmony Jones
 4-Pat Brown
 6-Eric Lyndell
 6-Diane Olson
 6-Dana Marty
 7-Betty Mathews
 6-Stacie Schellpfeffer
 7-Henry Peterson
 9-Tracy Freitag
 10-Gabriela Bowman

14-Robyn Warner
 14-Suzanne Jagodzinski
 15-Kerry-Anne Greeter
 16-Halie Behnke
 17-Kim Lunderskov
 20-Stacy Novak
 21-Scott Freitag
 22-Kay Pockat
 23-Nicole Schultz
 23-Elliot Kerkhoff
 24-Mary Ellen Close
 24-Stacie Coleman
 25-Marilyn Gander
 26-Abby Ilger



26-Abby Ilger
 26-Andrew Novak
 27-Bob Kastengren
 28-Rayni Van Swol
 28-Corrinne Hammes
 29-Sarah Peterson
 31-Jolene Peterson



6-Daniel & Kelly Iselin
 12-Chris Bowman
 14-Gary & Suzanne Jagodzinski
 29-Bernice Zygowicz
 30-Allen Jones

To the Congregation

Thank you for your continued support for the church maintenance fund. Even though we have had no in person church services, we have continued to update and preserve our house of worship.

The Maintenance Team

December's Love meal was handed out to 50 grateful members of our community. This hearty meal consisted of our famous chicken and rice casserole, corn soufflé, fruit, and Christmas cookies. Special thanks to our cooks, bakers and packers: Karen Iselin, Jane Olisar, Jackie Kastengren, Pat Sandstrom, Diane Hanson, Stephanie Eveland, Susie Krumholz, Ev Price, and Betty Peterson.

It is so wonderful to have people call and volunteer. Already someone has put their name in for January 20!

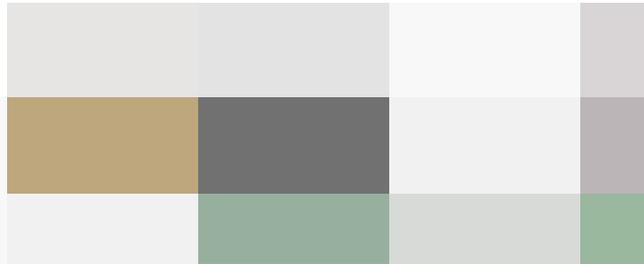
If you want to be on this list, call Julie at 262-763-8404 or 262-492-4713.



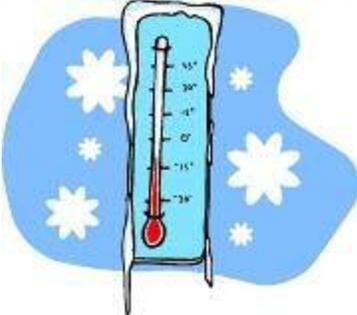
PARKING REMINDER

In an effort to be a good neighbor to Town Bank, let's remember to **PARK IN THE PLYMOUTH CHURCH LOT** located directly across the street (on the corner of Washington & Johnson), especially Mondays through Saturdays when the bank is conducting normal business hours but **ALSO DURING WINTER EVENING HOURS**. We would like to allow their plows to clear their lot.

The Town Bank has continued to generously share their private lot with us on Sunday mornings. Please show our appreciation by using our own lot Mondays through Saturdays to avoid impeding on their operations. Thank you for being neighborly representatives of Plymouth Church.

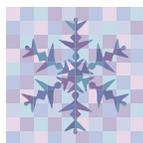


Any cancellations due to dangerous weather conditions will be on our voicemail and on WISN Channel 12.

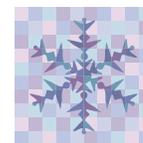


Support Plymouth Children's Center receives when you shop on Amazon.com!

If you shop on Amazon, simply go to smile.amazon.com from your web browser and sign in to your Amazon account. You will then be asked to choose an organization. Just type in Plymouth Children's Center Inc. and select them as your charity of choice. (You may also support multiple charities in this manner!) That's IT!! Now, every time you shop, just remember to go to smile.amazon.com instead of the regular Amazon site and a portion of the price of your purchase will be donated to the Children's Center. If you have Amazon on your favorites list, you will want to change that as well to go right to smile.amazon.com.



January Volunteers



Ministry	Jan 3rd	Jan 10th	Jan 17th	Jan 24th	Jan 31st
Deacons					
Ushers					
Liturgist	Pastor Bob	Carolyn Schoneck	Lori Benstead	Paul Gander	Nikki Burd
Fellowship					
AV					
Nursery					
Acolyte					

**Deadline for the February issue of *The Plymouth Epistle* is Friday, January 21.
Thanks, Kathy**

PLYMOUTH UCC STAFF
 Rev. Robert E. Wang, Minister - 262-308-4180 (H)
 Kathleen O'Brien, Secretary
 Stephanie Eveland, Financial Secretary
 Becky Daniels & Tracy Freitag, Children's Ministry
 Jeffrey Hughes, Custodian
 Marty Baker, Wedding Coordinator
 Diane Olson, Organist & Bell Choir Director
 Jamie Kennow, 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 am to 4:30 pm
 If possible, please call ahead to make sure Pastor Bob is available.

PLYMOUTH UCC OFFICE HOURS
 Kathy: Tues & Thurs 8:30 am-2:30 pm
 Fri 8:30 am—12:30 pm
 Steph: Mon & Wed, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Church Office: 262-763-6890
 Web Site: www.plymouthucc.church
 Email: PlymouthUCCOffice@gmail.com or office@plymouthucc.church
 Minister Email: pastor@plymouthucc.church
 Financial Secretary Email: finance@plymouthucc.church

Contact Information Form

We need to update our records, particularly since we have been unable to meet face to face. Please complete for each member of your household who would like to be included in the church directory. If there are certain months of the year pertaining to a specific address, please indicate so. Please circle any information you do not wish to have published in the Plymouth Yellow Pages but will allow church staff to have for communication purposes. Otherwise, leave blank.

LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	PHONE	AREA CODE	XXX - XXXX	ADDRESS
		CELL			STREET
		LANDLINE			CITY,STATE,ZIP
		CELL			STREET
		LANDLINE			CITY,STATE,ZIP
		CELL			STREET
		LANDLINE			CITY,STATE,ZIP
		CELL			STREET
		LANDLINE			CITY,STATE,ZIP
		CELL			STREET
		LANDLINE			CITY,STATE,ZIP



LASTNAME	FIRSTNAME	BIRTH DATE	ANNIVERSARY
		mm/dd/yyyy	mm/dd/yyyy

When finished, please return this form to the church office via e-mail: PlymouthUCCOffice@gmail.com or by mailing to Plymouth Church, 124 W. Washington St., Burlington, WI 53105



**PLYMOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL
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124 W.
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STREET
BURLINGTON, WI
53105-1478
262-763-6890
262-763-6802 FAX**

**ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DO NOT
DELAY
JANUARY 2021
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 - PlymouthUCCOffice@gmail.com

