

PLYMOUTH
CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
BURLINGTON, WI

VOL XVIII, ISSUE II
FEBRUARY 2023



The Plymouth Epistle

Monthly Newsletter

February 2023

Dear Members and Friends of Plymouth UCC,
First of all, thank you all so much for the generous Christmas gifts. I was overwhelmed by your kindness and generosity. Overall, it has been a good year together, now we start year 3. This is an interim, isn't it?
Life in church has been interesting as we navigated a number of changes. When I first started in ministry 30+ years ago I didn't have a secretary, a computer, not even a copying machine. I had an electronic typewriter and a mimeograph machine. With all of the advances one would think going without a secretary in this day and age wouldn't be that much of a challenge. HA! Now I need to learn PowerPoint and Publisher and some stuff I don't even know what to call it. When I retire, I will NOT be volunteering to be anyone's secretary any time soon.
I want to say a big THANK YOU to Stephanie for all of her help over the past weeks. She has been incredibly flexible and helpful. We also discovered that we both really hate the newsletter. It's always nice to have a companion in misery.
Seriously, we have had to learn to be flexible and this is probably the most important lesson we need to learn in the church. As you've heard me say, we really can't go back to the golden days. 1. They probably weren't as golden as we remember. 2. Life marches forward, not backward. As we move forward from this place we need to be constantly asking ourselves the questions:

Who Is God calling us to be in the here and now?

Where is God calling us to go, that may be unfamiliar and uncomfortable?

Who is God calling us to serve, along with that, who are we overlooking?

What does it mean to be the church in the 21st century after a global pandemic?

As we continue on this journey, may we continually engage one another in these questions, and others that might arise. May we always be open to listening for God's call and direction. May we practice holy patience with one another and ourselves as we discern our direction collectively and individually.
In a few weeks we will begin journeying through Lent. May we find this to be a holy season of exploration and prayerful questioning.

Blessings for the journey,
Rev. Becky

From the Moderator:

In Rev. Becky's sermon on Jan. 15th, she talked about the concerns many of us have about growing our membership. One of the important things she mentioned was the importance of us being excited about what happens in our church and being willing to talk that up in our conversations with others.

As most of you know, I am a retired UCC pastor. I was ordained in 1984 and have ever since followed the general literature about "church growth." Often, we think that when we get a new pastor, that person will miraculously attract all kinds of new members. Unfortunately, one of the statistics that has not changed in growth literature is the fact that at the very best a minister accounts for one to two per cent of new people choosing to join a congregation. The other statistic that continues to remain unchanged is that the vast majority of church growth (90% or more depending on whose study you look at) comes from individual members or families personally and directly inviting others to join them on a Sunday for the worship service.

Growing churches are active churches. There are small groups involved with book studies, discipleship development, pastoral care and visitation training, special events and projects. There are music groups and discussion groups. There are regular services and special worship opportunities. Do any of these sound familiar???

We have a lot to offer – an outstanding music program, a degree of "high-tech" that is not intrusive, meaningful messages and prayer times, an amazing mission program reaching out into the community and beyond! If we are not excited and sharing what all happens here, who is going to know or be interested?

The national media has generated numerous reports that the pandemic and lock downs devastated church membership throughout the U.S. (and many other nations as well). Once we get out of a habit and the longer the hiatus, it becomes increasingly difficult to return to that pattern.

However, one aspect of this fact is that there are a lot of people out there in our community who are no longer attending a church. Sometimes, all it takes to change that is a simple invitation – "Hey, why don't I pick you up this Sunday morning and we can go to church together. Our choir is singing, and they make such wonderful music."

NOTICE OF SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

WHEN: February 19, 2023 following worship

WHAT: Approve revised constitution

Change fiscal year to align with Calendar year

Grant permission to pursue a Capital Campaign

Proposed items for a capital campaign:

Replace old furnace (necessary and will be energy saving)

Repairs/replacement of elevator

Replace front doors and handicap accessible mechanism

Replace all lights with LED (energy saving)

Reinforce stained glass windows

Update bathroom on 2nd floor of day care

Refurbish Chapel

Per our constitution no other business can be brought forward at a special congregational meeting other than that which was previously advertised.

A Copy of the revised constitution can be found here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/>

[d/1tJ8f80GQCmNwKYEiT-1-lo8vPF2P74v8/edit?pli=1](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tJ8f80GQCmNwKYEiT-1-lo8vPF2P74v8/edit?pli=1)

Report from the Pastoral Search Committee

The past two months were very quiet and we did not receive many pastor profiles to review. We met with our Associate Conference Minister and she asked us to be patient with the process. Now that the holidays are over, we hope we'll receive more profiles.

In the meantime, the profiles we did receive were either eliminated because they did not match our needs, or in some cases, are still being evaluated to see if they qualify for further consideration.

We ask all of you to be patient and trust that the process is working. We welcome your prayers asking God to guide our committee and encourage us as we continue our work.

Stay tuned, the best is yet to come.

Worship Opportunities for February

February 5 – Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-20

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be shared.

February 12 – Sixth Sunday After Epiphany

Scripture: Matthew 5:21-37

February 19 - Transfiguration Sunday

Scripture: Matthew 17:1-9

February 22 - Ash Wednesday

February 26 – First Sunday of Lent

Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11

March 5 – Second Sunday of Lent

Scripture: John 3:1-17

Note: The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be shared.

VOLUNTEERS

Ministry	Feb 5	Feb 12	Feb 19	Feb 22 Ash Wednesday	Feb 26
Acolyte					
AV Operator	Aaron Jenson	Aaron Jenson	Aaron Jenson	Aaron Jenson	Aaron Jenson
Communion Preparers	Karen Iselin LaVonne Howell (bread) Peggy Voss (assist)				
Fellowship	Carolyn Schoneck Jackie Kastengren	Joe & Karen Iselin	Lori Benstead Marlene Peacock		Jackie Kastengren Lori Benstead
Liturgist	Carolyn Schoneck	Lori Benstead	John Gibbon		Steve Picazo
Ushers	Tim & Kay Burd	Ron & Pam Moersfelder	Katie & Terry Simenson	Don Howell & Diane Hanson	Nicki Friske & Nikkie Burd



MISSIONS

SHOEBOXES DESTINATION: All of Plymouth's shoeboxes were sent to the country of Lesotho, which is located in the Southern region of the continent of Africa.

A big thank you to all those Plymouth people who prepared food and /or helped serve food to very appreciative folks at Love, Inc on Pine Street in 2022! We will continue to provide these meals the third Wednesday of every month in 2023. Please call Julie, 262-492-4713, if you would like to contribute!

The Missions Team would like to thank you for all of those who gave so generously to our Reverse Advent Calendar Collection for TLC. They were very appreciative of all of our donations. The Missions Team is grateful for your ongoing support.

Thank you to everyone who donated and helped with the Christmas Dinner. This year we served 137 meals.

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

January-Toothbrushes
February-Toothbrushes
March-Bar Soap
April-Sewing Kits and tools
May-Comb, brushes and mirrors
June-T-shirts, flashlights
July-Flip Flops (children sizes)
August-School Supplies (notebooks, pencils, pens, crayons etc)
September-Socks and bandannas
October-toys
November-Packing Party
December-Shoeboxes in transit

Our goal for 2023 will be 150 Shoeboxes
Crafters we would appreciate crochet or knitted soap cozies



Ron & Pam Moersfelder
February 2

Terry & Katie Simenson
February 26



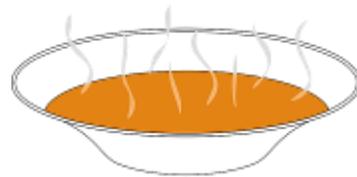
- 2 - Sue Nelson
Matt Pieters
- 4 - Kiffie Scott
- 7 - Mary Skwierawski
- 9 - Kelly Diem
- 10 - Royce Kennedy
- 11 - Ellen Graham

- 14 - Emma Iselin
- 16 - Brad Brenner
- 25 - Diane Hanson
- 27 - Sue Alby
- 28 - Chad Peterson



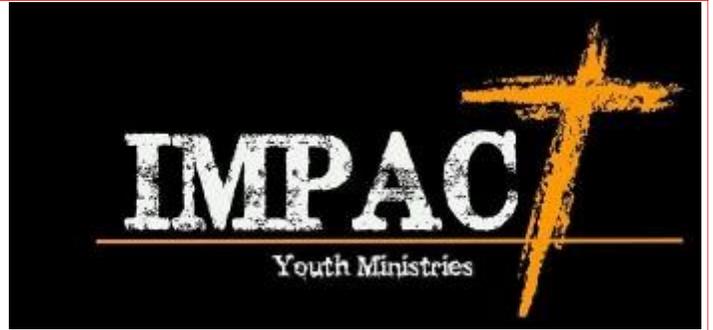
Returning this year before the Ash Wednesday service is our soup supper. A variety of soups will be provided, as well as bread and beverages. Soup Supper to begin at 6pm. If you would like to make a soup or dessert, please contact Lori or Karen. Thank you.

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22nd.



Children's Ministry

The children are back in session on Sunday mornings. They are once again enjoying a meal together following their sessions. If you would like to provide a meal for them, please sign up on the sheet in the foyer.



We hope everyone had a safe & healthy Christmas & New Year!

We were so proud of our IMPACT kids in another great performance in the Christmas pageant this year! They all did a wonderful job! Also a special thanks to Paul & Don for helping us out this year!

We are looking forward to some upcoming events...

On Sunday Feb. 12th the IMPACT Youth will be having a BAKE SALE & HAM & ROLLS after the service! Come support our youth group!

The kids will be also helping out with Emergency Hygiene Kits for Missions in February. They enjoy being involved with this every year!

We are still looking for volunteers to Signup to make lunch for our IMPACT group. The Signup sheet is on the bulletin board by the entrance. Please consider helping us out and signup. Thank you so much!

Keep spreading the word...

We invite ANY children ages K-8 grades to please come and join us!

If you know of any families that might be interested please let me know or have them just come and join us!

IMPACT- Youth Ministry meets on Sundays 11:00am-12:30pm (after church)

We would like to continue to thank everyone who helps out with IMPACT- Youth Ministry group in anyway! We truly appreciate it!

Looking forward to warmer weather and spring!





Any cancellations due to dangerous weather conditions will be on our website, Facebook page, or WISN News Channel 12.



Deadline for the March issue of *The Plymouth Epistle* is Thursday, 16 February.

PLYMOUTH UCC ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Rev. Rebecca A. Johnston, Interim Minister
Financial Secretary, Stephanie Eveland
Office Secretary,

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Children's Ministry Director, Tracy Freitag  
Custodian, Tom Reda

Choir Director, Jamie Kennow  
Organist & Bell Choir Director, Diane Olson  
Wedding Coordinator, Marty Baker

**PLYMOUTH CHILDREN'S CENTER  
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Sara Trewyn, Program Director  
Phyllis Hancock, Assistant Director



**REV. REBECCA A. JOHNSTON**

**INTERIM MINISTER OFFICE HOURS**  
By appointment only; please call or email

Pastor for availability.

**PLYMOUTH UCC OFFICE HOURS**

\*Labor Day-Memorial Day only

Church Office: 262-763-6890

Web Site: [www.plymouthucc.church](http://www.plymouthucc.church)  
Children's Ministry: [\[pact@gmail.com\]\(mailto:pact@gmail.com\)](mailto:plymouthuccim-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Financial Secretary: [plymouthuccfinance@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthuccfinance@gmail.com)

Minister: [plymouthuccpastor@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthuccpastor@gmail.com)

Office Secretary: [plymouthuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthuccoffice@gmail.com)

Moon Beach

Daycholah Center

Cedar Valley

Camp AweSum

ON YOUR MARK . . .

**UCCI  
Registration Opens  
Monday, January 30  
7:30 a.m.**

**Camp AweSum Registration  
Opens Monday, February 6  
7:30 a.m.**



# February

# CALENDAR

| Sun                                                                                                     | Mon                                            | Tue                                                             | Wed                                                                                   | Thu                          | Fri                    | Sat                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|                        |                                                |                                                                 | 1                                                                                     | 2                            | 3                      | 4                      |
|                                                                                                         |                                                |                                                                 | Rev. Becky<br>vacation                                                                | Rev. Becky<br>vacation       | Rev. Becky<br>vacation | Rev. Becky<br>vacation |
| 5<br>Choir<br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship, Impact                                             | 6<br>6:00 pm<br>Bell Choir                     | 7<br>1:30 Book<br>Group<br>6:30pm Choir<br>postponed            | 8                                                                                     | 9<br>6:30 pm<br>Missions Mtg | 10                     | 11                     |
| 12<br>Bells<br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship, Impact<br>Confirmation<br>11:30 Operating Council | 13<br>6:00 pm<br>Bell Choir                    | 14<br>10:30 Prayer<br>Grp<br>1:30 Book<br>Group<br>6:30pm Choir | 15                                                                                    | 16<br>Epistle<br>Deadline    | 17                     | 18                     |
| 19<br>Choir<br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship, Impact                                            | 20<br>President's Day<br>6:00 pm<br>Bell Choir | 21<br>1:30 Book<br>Group<br>6:30pm Choir                        | 22<br>Ash<br>Wednesday<br>Choir<br>6:00 pm Soup<br>Supper<br>7:00 pm Ash<br>Wednesday | 23                           | 24                     | 25                     |
| 26<br>Praise<br>1st Sunday of Lent<br>10:00am Worship<br>11:00am Fellowship, Impact                     | 27<br>6:00 pm<br>Bell Choir                    | 28<br>1:30 Book<br>Group<br>6:30 Choir                          |                                                                                       |                              |                        |                        |



**PLYMOUTH  
CONGREGATIONAL  
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OF CHRIST  
124 W. WASHINGTON  
STREET  
BURLINGTON, WI  
53105-1423  
262-763-6890**

**ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED  
DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE DO NOT DELAY  
FEBRUARY 2023  
EPISTLE**

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on our mailing list, please  
notify us by mail,  
telephone,  
(262-763-6890)  
or  
email  
[plymouthuccoffice  
@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthuccoffice@gmail.com)*

**LOVE**