

Good News

Plymouth United Church of Christ

July 2024

Published monthly by
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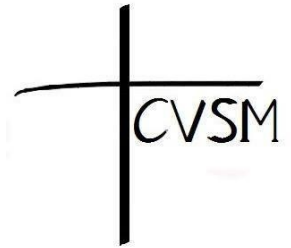
***Cross Illumination for July
is sponsored by Larry &
Barb Kleist in honor of their
wedding anniversary.***

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Chippewa Valley Street Ministry (CVSM) celebrates 12th anniversary

On June 12, 2012, three people headed to downtown Eau Claire, WI, to evaluate the needs of people living without permanent shelter. They brought a cooler of water and a few boxes of granola bars and did not know who they would find or what conditions they would find themselves in. Originally known as Plymouth Street Ministry, we've grown and are now a staple for the homeless community to receive not only clothing, food, water, and other items, but also unconditional support. This is an excerpt from one of the Street Ministry's earliest journals. It describes what we do perfectly:



“From its earliest days, Plymouth Street Ministry has had a philosophy of being with the people we serve as equals. We met them, and still meet them, in their territory. They don't need to go to an intimidating office and talk to someone across a desk—we are there among them, even if it means standing for over an hour in below-zero temperatures. We have never proselytized, although we will pray with people if they ask for it and initiate it. The people we serve have often been lectured to, preached at, and judged by religious institutions and we don't want to do that. Instead, we share God's love by simply loving them. We try to love all, to help all, and to judge no one, and we know that those we serve are every bit as important as we are in God's eyes, perhaps even more important because of their need.”

Now, in 2024, we're serving 60+ people each evening when we're out and taking calls on “off days.” The needs have changed drastically from twelve years ago: mental health concerns have skyrocketed, hopes for housing have plummeted. There seems little way of moving past this situation for the majority of the people we serve. There are more people living on the street with chronic health conditions who try to manage their needs in a difficult environment. People are more stressed and tense as they survive day to day, from one season to another and from one year to another. We've streamlined our services to consistently and reliably provide for the needs of our brothers and sisters as they are on their journey.

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July Worship Calendar

10:30 A.M. Worship

Communion the first Sunday of the month

July 7

7th Sunday after Pentecost

Hunger offering

2 Samuel 5:1–5, 9–10 or Ezekiel 2:1–5;
Psalm 48 or Psalm 123; 2 Corinthians
12:2–10; Mark 6:1–13

July 14

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Prayers for the People

2 Samuel 6:1–5, 12b–19 or Amos
7:7–15; Psalm 24 or Psalm 85:8–13;
Ephesians 1:3–14; Mark 6:14–29

July 21

9th Sunday after Pentecost

OCWM offering

2 Samuel 7:1–14a or Jeremiah 23:1–6;
Psalm 89:20–37 or Psalm 23;
Ephesians 2:11–22; Mark 6:30–34,
53–56

July 28

10th Sunday after Pentecost

2 Samuel 11:1–15 or 2 Kings 4:42–44;
Psalm 14 or Psalm 145:10–18;
Ephesians 3:14–21; John 6:1–21

July Birthdays

7 Hailey Barnhardt
9 Louise Partlow
10 Gracie Cartmill
11 Mel Rude
15 Lyle Carlson
17 Bill Sprouse
18 Kayla Stygar
19 Megan Eisberner
26 Jim Rusch

Prayer Ministry

In July, we are praying for these individuals/families: Maria Patton, Mimi Pederson, Kevin & Jean Phillips, Kenny (Annette) Polden, Aurora (Matt) Robison

Memorials

In memory of Gordy Heimstead:
Paul & Gay Gilbertson

In memory of John Moore:
Larry & Barb Kleist
Louise Partlow
Mimi Pederson
George Stecher
Paul & Gay Gilbertson
Sandy Moore (Family & Friends)

CVSM continued...

From the start of the street ministry, we have been funded solely through the generosity of churches, individuals, businesses, etc. Without you, we could not meet people where they're at and support their needs. Whether the contributions are in monetary form or material donations, we have always been blessed with your generosity. From all of the volunteers, THANK YOU. As we continue forward with the street ministry, please keep the people we serve in your thoughts and prayers and if able, please continue to support the street ministry by donating. Your donations truly do make a difference to this community. It is heartwarming to see the relief, almost disbelief, on a person's face when they ask for something and we provide it without condition. Again, thank you!

Blessings always,
Chippewa Valley Street Ministry - Staff

Go to
www.chippewavalleystreetministry.org
to see their needs list and information on how to donate items or money.

Sabbatical Information

For the congregation, the sabbatical should be a growing experience. We should do this by "considering our identity as a church and as individuals, in order to fuel community, spiritual journeys and service." (From Bill Sprouse's thoughts at our May meeting)

For the actual services during the time, we could have a guest minister 2-3 times. We have our own in-house pastor, Rev. Bill Sprouse, who is willing to help out when his schedule permits. Also we can invite various speakers from several

of the nonprofit organizations that we support to learn more about them. Lynn is also willing to lead us in 1 or 2 hymn sings.

We may also ask members if they would like to speak or write about their faith journey and how Plymouth has helped them. This would be part of the service and would be short, like a Worship Reflection, during the beginning of the service. We could have group meetings after worship, to discuss how to expand our outreach and maybe even a session on Plymouth's history.

None of these ideas are set in stone. We are just getting thoughts together. If there's anything you think could be of benefit to the congregation, let anyone on the Leadership Team know. Our August meeting will revolve around what Pastor David's thoughts are about his goals while he is away.

Food for Thought

Communion will be July 7. We will be serving communion or we will have the sealed cups for you. We will also be taking our offering for the Community Table. We will not have a pot luck this month.

We record our worship service to view on Facebook, for those who feel safer at home or can't make it to worship. COVID, RSV and the flu are still around in our community. Make sure you get a booster and also your flu shot. Masks are always available at church if you feel you need one.

Please don't forget our homeless friends. Mike and his crew are out checking on the homeless to make sure they are okay.

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Please keep them in your prayers. We have a collection box in the Gathering area for clothing, or else you can send a check to CVSM, PO Box 51, Eau Claire, WI 54702-0051.

Also, don't forget our Birthday Challenge where you to make a donation in your birthday month corresponding to your age. The money will be used to seal and stripe our parking lot and seal our driveway. We are a little short in our fund for this project. July birthdays, help your church out!

Come and visit our libraries. We have one curbside for anyone to use and one inside in Fellowship Hall. Different books are added frequently.

If anyone knows of a family member or member of this congregation who is in the hospital, please let the church office know. Unless someone tells us, we don't know if you're in the hospital. Also, make sure the hospital knows you belong to Plymouth UCC.

On the same subject, we would like emergency contacts for all our members. We will have forms on the counter next to the office or you can contact Mimi to give her that information.

Mark your calendars for our next event! September 14 we have a Thrift Sale, Craft-Quilt Sale, and Bake Sale. See the following article.

September 14 Thrift, Craft, Quilt & Bake Sale!

Sounds like a lot of work, but with everyone's help we can do it! We have fall and winter crafts to sell, plus whatever anyone wants to make and

donate. The Quilters want to be included, so they will be showing and selling their quilts.

We haven't had a Thrift Sale in a couple years, so it's time we have one again, but we are going to do it a little differently. We will not be marking clothing this year. We are going to have a bag sale for that—whatever fits in a grocery bag will cost the customers \$5. Also, books will not be marked. We will have a set price for them. Everything else must be **MARKED!!** If it's not marked it will be given back to you. If you're unsure of a price, just guess and put a price on it. Items will be checked when you bring them in to make sure they are marked. You can bring in your goods from September 1–8. After that we won't accept goods. The office will be closed Labor Day, so no goods can be brought in. Otherwise, either Mimi or Barb will be there to accept your goods in the morning from 9-12 and Barb or other members of the Leadership Team will be there on the two Sundays.

We had to implement these rules since the people who actually set up the Thrift Sale are few and in the past some people brought in everything unmarked, which is more work for us. The time limit is to insure we have enough space and time to get the merchandise out. No one wants to work at setting up 4–5 hours a day, which happened last time.

Then of course, we are having a Bake Sale! We have a great reputation for our baked goods, so gear up for lots of baking!

There will be sign up sheets out in August for help setting things up beforehand, help during the sale, and for clean-up.

Dear friends and family of Plymouth,

Now that we are in our summer months, we thought this is a good time to ask again for your favorite hymns. Let's spend summer singing our favorites! You can tell me in person or send a message or call with your favorite one or two hymns. Your choice doesn't need to be a favorite, either—if there's one you like that we haven't done in a while and would like to do again, or one that you like that we've never done, let us know. When we did this during Lent this year, we had a couple hymn requests that weren't in any of our song books, so we tracked them down and learned some new wonderful music! When Lynn and I are planning worship, we'll slot in your favorites.



If you have been curious about witnessing the process of how we affirm ministers, the Northwest Association is holding an Ecclesiastical Council for the purpose of examining Shannon Joshi. Shannon has been a Member in Discernment at First Congregational UCC here in Eau Claire, and some of you heard her preach at our Thanksgiving service.

The second-to-the-last step in becoming an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ is to write what we call an Ordination Paper, which is written after graduating from seminary and having fulfilled any other requirements (such as Clinical Pastoral Education, psychological evaluations, and so on). The Ordination Paper is then made public to the entire membership of the Association for anyone to read, and then the Association holds what is called an Ecclesiastical Council, open to all members, in which the candidate reads a portion of the paper and then anyone can ask the candidate any question they want

about their paper, ministry, theology, their sense of call, or anything related to the church. After all questions have been sufficiently answered, those who are gathered then vote whether the candidate should be ordained or needs to go back for further studies. I had mine 20 years ago, and it was a good experience, but I was horribly nervous going into it!

The Ecclesiastical Council presents this opportunity for all participating churches within the Northwest Association. Shannon's Ecclesiastical Council will be held on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at First Congregational United Church of Christ, 310 Broadway St, Eau Claire, WI 54703-5561. Please support Shannon Joshi with your participation in this Ecclesiastical Council. I will be there, and it would be wonderful to be there with some other Plymouth people.

A copy of her ordination paper is available on-line at <https://tinyurl.com/2gqy4rqk>

(The final step to being ordained, by the way, is to find a call—a church, hospital, organization, etc. that wants to call the candidate to be a minister. Passing the Ecclesiastical Council is necessary in order to be able to search for a call).

Please let me know if you would like to participate in this. No reservations are required, but it would be nice to plan to sit together.

May your summer be filled with blessings of sun and growth!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Shannon Joshi".

Leadership Team Minutes

June 9, 2024

Members present: Larry Kleist, Barb Kleist, Cindy Halfen, Mike Tschumperlin, Deb Zehms, Mimi Pederson, and Pastor David

The meeting was called to order at 11:41 A.M. The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Financial Reports:

As of May 31, 2024

Year to Date Income	\$67,906.99
Year to Date Expenses	\$63,011.43
Ahead (Behind)	\$4,895.56

Treasurer's Report:

Year to date envelope giving is \$11,935 over last year at this time. We made \$754.50 at the bake sale in May. Expenses included \$620.89 to repair the coffee maker, \$396.10 for the annual fire extinguisher inspection, and \$400 for lawn mowing.

Memorial Fund Balance: \$18,223.47

Reserve Fund Balance: \$10,451.23

Financial reports were reviewed and accepted.

Stewardship:

- Larry will present information on changing the type of our checking accounts at RCU at the next meeting so that we can make an informed decision.

Worship:

- We will have an outdoor service in August. Date to be determined.
- There will be no pot luck in July, but there will be one August 4 with brats and burgers.

Building and Grounds:

- We have signed a contract with Senn Blacktop to refurbish our driveway and lot pavement. This will happen some time in July. The cost will be \$9,216 and will be taken from the Contingency Fund.
- The chairs in the sanctuary need to be reset. We'll do this after worship on June 16.

Pastor's Report:

- The Festival of Homiletics was good.
- Things seemed pretty quiet until this past week, then BAM!...a baptism, a funeral, and a wedding...all in the same week!
- Bill Sprouse will be a Wisconsin Conference alternate delegate for General Synod 35 in 2025
- Pastor David will take vacation August 12-18.

Old Business:

- The libraries are being well looked after by Lil Savage and Linda Oliver
- The Pete Spitt memorial wind chimes are up and make a lovely sound. Barb will invite the donor (Barb Sprain) to come and see them.
- Barb shared some of her thoughts on our plans for Pastor David's sabbatical next year
- Our bake sale in May was a great success, and there were good comments about how well the two organizations worked together.

New Business:

- Our fall Thrift Sale will be September 14. We discussed what to mark, when to bring items, and any advertising we might want to do.
- We briefly went over the Building Use Policy for Funerals and made some changes/corrections.

Meeting adjourned at 12:29 A.M. Our next meeting will be Sunday, August 11, 2024 after worship.

Respectfully submitted,
Mimi Pederson



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>July 2024</h1> 						
	1	2 10:00 A.M. No Quilters	3	4 <i>Office closed</i>	5	6
7 Hunger offering 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Communion worship	8	9 10:00 A.M. Quilters	10	11	12	13
14 Prayers for the People 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship	15	16 10:00 A.M. Quilters	17	18	19	20
21 OCWM offering 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship	22	23 10:00 A.M. Quilters	24	25	26	27
28 10:00 A.M. Coffee 10:30 A.M. Worship	29	30 10:00 A.M. Quilters	31			