



Plymouth United Church of Christ Rev. David Huber, Pastor

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PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist

Greeting

Greetings to you in the love and peace of Jesus Christ!

Call to Worship †§

L: Come to worship, people of God, with praises on your lips.

P: **Even when we are feeling isolated and fearful, we can worship the One who holds our hands in our loneliness.**

L: Come into the presence of the One who makes holy every place, every space, holy and sacred.

P: **Even where we continue to stay safe in our homes, the doors of grace are flung wide open for us.**

L: Come and hear the stories of the One who loves you.

P: **In living rooms, on laptops and devices, we will sing our songs and tell those tales of the peace and of the hope which is ours.**

Hymn 31

“All Things Bright and Beautiful”

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

Refrain

**All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.**

**Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings,
God made their glowing colors, and made their tiny wings.** *Refrain*

**The purple-headed mountain, the river running by,
The sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky.** *Refrain*

**The cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden, God made them every one.** *Refrain*

Prayer of Confession †§

We must tell you, God who knows us better than we think, how easy it is to put our trust in those who offer easy fixes, quick solutions, cures and tests and false hope in these days. It is easier to believe the glib words of politicians, the conspiracies of the theorists, the unsourced opinions offered as facts, rather than those who are rational and based in science. All too easily, we can put our human wants ahead of your call for us to love our neighbors and be a community that shows grace and compassion. Forgive us, God of mercy, when we deny your reality. Help us, please, to accept your Word that can transform our lives. You are not a disembodied or distant voice, but the One who calls us to life, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon †§

L: Always we are God’s people, and always God calls us into a relationship of life and love. Through Jesus’ love, you are forgiven!

The Service of the Word

Psalm 66:8–20

- L: Bless our God, O peoples, let the sound of his praise be heard, who has kept us among the living, and has not let our feet slip.
- P: For you, O God, have tested us; you have tried us as silver is tried.**
- L: You brought us into the net; you laid burdens on our backs; you let people ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.
- P: I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will pay you my vows, those that my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.**
- L: I will offer to you burnt offerings of fatlings, with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams; I will make an offering of bulls and goats.
- P: Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for me.**
- L: I cried aloud to him, and he was extolled with my tongue.
- P: If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.**
- L: But truly God has listened; he has given heed to the words of my prayer.
- P: Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me.**

Gospel

John 14:15–21

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.”

Sermon

Sermon Hymn 293

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QZZtmhu3kc>

**There’s a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know that it’s the Spirit of the Lord;
there are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.**

Refrain

**Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love;
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise.**

Without a doubt we’ll know that we have been revived when we shall leave this place.

**There are blessings you cannot receive till you know that Spirit’s fullness and believe;
you’re the one to profit when you say, “I am going to stay with Jesus all the way.”** *Refrain*

The Response to the Word

Offering (*You may send your offerings to the church, or drop them off in person.*)

Special Music: The Stamps Quartet (used to perform with Elvis!) “Sweet, Sweet Spirit”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjZuIT_NTJ8

If you like the bass of the Stamps Quartet (he’s pretty low!) you might enjoy some Russian Orthodox sacred music with the Russian Basso Profundo (basses that sing an octave lower than usual basses). Here is a recording of two hymns, “We Hymn Thee” (from the Passion of St. John) and “Verily, He is Worthy.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LIMr9E14iQ> The translation of the “We Hymn Thee” is “To thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. My God, I trust in thee. To thee, O Lord, do I lift my soul. My God, I trust in thee.” I could not find a translation of “Verily, He is Worthy.” This music is quite different from what we’re used to, but traditional in Russian Orthodox Churches.

Offering Prayer

Abandoned by hope, forsaken by others, left behind by those who said they loved them—there are orphans all around us, Holy God. May the gifts we offer be a home, a family, a rest, a respite for them and all the others around us. This we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Benediction †§

L: Wherever you are, continue to speak of what God has done.

P: We will remind everyone that, despite everything, God loves us.

L: Wherever you find yourself, continue to sing of what God is doing.

P: We will rejoice that God has not left us orphaned, but makes us one with everyone around us.

L: Whenever you can, continue to imagine what God will do.

P: We will witness to that hope which seems to distant, yet is as close to us as our hearts.

† <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com>

§ Written/modified by Rev. David Huber

This week we pray for:

- All UCC missionaries and ordained and licensed ministers; the ministry and mission of the UCC and the Church universal

The next Interfaith Prayer Service is this Wednesday, May 20, at 7 P.M. It is being hosted by the Unitarian Universalist congregation. You can participate in the service via Facebook live or YouTube live, at either of these links: <https://www.facebook.com/UnitarianUniversalistCongregationEauClaire/> or <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7Rv53j33j4w2ArXHSxybvw>

Who we are...

Plymouth UCC is an Open and Affirming congregation, embracing diversity and affirming the dignity and worth of every person, since we are all created in God's image. We welcome into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, ethnic background, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, socio-economic background, marital status and background. We welcome all to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, humor, and blessings of participation in our congregation.

Spiritual Care Package

Questions for Reflection

According to the psalmist, God brought the people through trials, tests, burdens, and pain to a spacious place of life, breath, and salvation. God heard their prayers and opened them to deliverance. Where have you felt such a spacious place? What story do you tell of the ways that God is blessing you? What story does your faith community tell of the ways in which God is blessing them?

Household Prayer: Morning

I give thanks for the gift of life and breath that is mine today in Christ. Make me eager to do good and to resist evil, and grant me the wisdom to recognize the difference. Fill me with your assurance in all I say and do that I may share the hope that is within me in gentleness and reverence of Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

O God, in whom I live and move and have my being, you hear me when I cry and listen to my prayer; you set my feet on steady ground, you never leave me alone. As I rest in you tonight, sanctify my heart in Christ, and fill me with your strength, that I may rise to love and serve you and greet another day. Amen.

God is still speaking,