



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: Troubled prophets and struggling families, you listen to our voices, whoever we are.

P: There is no one like you, God of the listening heart.

L: Those who live in fear, and those who look for signs, you fill us with hope and surprises.

P: There is no one like you, God of steadfast love.

L: Seekers of power, as well as those who serve the vulnerable, you challenge us to use our gifts for others.

P: There is no one like you, God of all people.

Hymn 394

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxG0EhEXA3k>

**In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.**

**In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
God’s service is the golden cord close-binding humankind.**

**In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek, and neither slave nor free;
For men and women live in God, and all are kin to me.**

**In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and North;
One joyous, true community throughout the whole wide earth.**

Prayer of Confession †§

You offer us new life, God of grace, yet we continue to focus on those old ways which are so comfortable and seductive. We are so good at fooling others that we are convinced we can trick you as well. We have been called to walk with you, but run down the paths paved with foolishness and fears. Forgive us, God of steadfast love. You have claimed our lives so we might be set free from sin and be raised to new life. Just as you save us, so give us the strength to be willing to take up whatever task you give us, and the faith to be willing to lose our lives for others, so we might find life forever with you, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon †§

L: This is the good news: God hears our prayers, our cries, our hearts. And, in Christ, we receive new life. We are free, free to walk in the Light of the Lord. You are forgiven!

The Service of the Word

Old Testament Lesson

Genesis 21:8–21

The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. So she said to Abraham, “Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac.” The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son.

But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring.” So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, “Do not let me look on the death of the child.” And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him.” Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

Psalm 86:1–10, 16–17

L: Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

P: Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you.

L: You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long.

P: Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

L: For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you.

P: Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication.

L: In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me.

P: There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours.

L: All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name.

P: For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God.

L: Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant; save the child of your serving girl.

P: Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Gospel

Matthew 10:24–39

“A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

“So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

“Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter

more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

Sermon

Sermon Hymn

“Bringing in the Sheaves”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad54bH-nQTM>

**Sowing in the morning, sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noontide and the dewy eve;
Waiting for the harvest, and the time of reaping,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.**

Refrain:

**Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves,
Bringing in the sheaves, bringing in the sheaves,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.**

**Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds nor winter’s chilling breeze;
By and by the harvest, and the labor ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. *Refrain***

**Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master,
Though the loss sustained our spirit often grieves;
When our weeping’s over, He will bid us welcome,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves. *Refrain***

The Response to the Word

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

“Bringing in the Sheaves” with the choir and orchestra of The New Apostolic Church of Silvertown, South Africa
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7yMUIezLSE>

Although we have had the Hagar and Ishmael story for thousands of years, very few composers have felt the call to put any of the story to music. There are a few songs out there that I found, and I particularly like this one from a folk duo out of Seattle: <https://valleymaker.bandcamp.com/track/hagar-and-ishmael> That link has the words to the song. There is also a live version of them singing it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSfW2KazNaA>

Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self †§

We offer our gifts to you, as well as our lives, Loving God, so they might find their way to those who need your grace, your hope, your joy, and your peace in their lives. 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: As you end this worship, remember that you may be the only grace someone will meet this week.

P: Our service begins, to share God's graciousness with all.

L: Remember you may be the only love someone will encounter this week.

P: Our service begins, to be the love of Jesus for all.

L: Remember you may be the only peace someone will find this week.

P: Our service begins, to share the Spirit of hope and reconciliation with all. Amen!

† <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

Cross illumination for June is sponsored by Jim & Linda Oliver in honor of their family.

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

What does the story of Sarah and Hagar (Gen. 21:8–21) say about God? What does the story suggest about how we might treat one another more justly?

Household Prayer: Morning

O God, I praise you as I arise this morning. You are the giver of all life and you provide for what you have made. Be with my spirit this day and teach me to be thankful for all that you offer. Move me to be generous with others, sharing not only goods, but also time, patience, and kindness. You know what will happen today. Guide me so that I do what pleases you. Be near to me and help me to trust your love. I pray for all the world today, for what I do has effects far beyond what I can know or understand. By your Holy Spirit, let me speak peace, let me do peace, let me be peace, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Creator of heaven and earth, light and darkness, day and night, I thank you for the day just past that you have given me in your mercy. I pray for your forgiveness for those things I did that were displeasing to you and for those missed opportunities to show my love for you. Let me rest tonight, trusting in the grace of your Son, Jesus Christ. Restore my mind and body as I sleep so that when I awake I will have the strength to serve you and your children well. O beloved God, let me rise to a new day giving you thanks and praise, in the name of Jesus Christ the Savior. Amen.

God is still speaking,