



*“I am the  
true vine and  
my Father  
is the  
gardener.”*

*John 15:1*



**Plymouth United Church of Christ** Rev. David Huber, Pastor

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PlymouthUnitedChurchOfChrist

# Plymouth United Church of Christ

May 2, 2021

10:30 A.M.

## The Family of God Gathers

### Gathering Music

“Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus”

*Please let the prelude be a signal to prepare for worship.*

### Greeting

### Call to Worship †§

L: In the wilderness, water brings life.

**P: Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.**

L: In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

**P: Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.**

L: In the bread and the wine, the grace of our Savior nourishes everyone.

**P: Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.**

L: Come and praise the vine that gives all goodness.

**P: We are his branches, following in his Way.**

### Opening Music

“Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”

**Come, O Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing your grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of endless praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.  
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing love.**

**Here I pause in my sojourning, giving thanks for having come,  
come to trust, at every turning, God will guide me safely home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God,  
Came to rescue me from danger, blessed body, precious blood.**

**O to grace how great a debtor daily I am drawn anew!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to you.  
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've known:  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your very own.**

### Prayer of Confession †§

**God of mercy, we confess we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit and our branches are too often found barren. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you by cutting ourselves off from our neighbors. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

*\* Those who are able are invited to stand.*

## Assurance of Pardon §

- L: We are the branches on Jesus' vine, and thus are directly connected to the source of all life: and because he would have us live as fully as possible, he erases all shame and guilt. In Jesus' name, you are forgiven!
- P: You are forgiven!**
- L: May the peace of Christ be with you!
- P: And also with you!**

## The Sign of Peace

*Now please take a moment and share the peace with those in your household and/or offer a moment to send prayers of peace to those you love who are not with you.*

## Centering Music

“We Come to Hear Your Word”

**We come to hear your word: Lord, open up our hearts and lives again.  
So let your voice be heard: we're ready to receive this daily bread.**

*Refrain:*

**Your word is truth and life to us, so light the way. As we believe your promises, renew our faith.**

**We come to hear your word: let revelation shape our hearts anew.**

**We long to know you more: come, Spirit, lead us deeper into truth. *Refrain***

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## The Service of the Word

### Psalm 22:25–31

- L: From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him.
- P: The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the Lord.**
- L: May your hearts live forever!
- P: All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him.**
- L: For dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.
- P: To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.**
- L: Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord,
- P: and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.**

## Gospel

John 15:1–8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

## Sermon

### Musical Offering

“All Are Welcome”

*Please mail your offerings to the church or drop them off at the office.*

*Refrain:*

**All are welcome, friend and stranger, at the banquet of the Savior.  
All are welcome. All are welcome here.**

**From the woman who comes crying, leaving tears at Jesus' feet,  
to the man who knows the right way but cannot see. *Refrain***

**From the ones who feel forgotten, those who sense their place is gone,  
to the ones who live in hunger, here you belong. *Refrain***

**Go into the streets and cities, to the farms and families,  
tell about the splendid table, God's mercy. *Refrain***

Hans Peterson, Larry Olson Text ©1999 Dakota Road Music  
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## Communion

### Prayer †§

L: May the God of life be with you.

**P: And also with you.**

L: Bring your hearts to the One who loves you.

**P: We offer them so God may plant fruit-bearing seeds in them.**

L: You cried out your Word, creating God, and called forth life out of nothingness, planted seeds that branched into vines, poured clear water into earth's hollows, and crafted us in your imaginative image.

**P: You showed all of this to us, with delight in your heart, but we did not understand what we were seeing, and so chose death and sin to be our guides.**

L: Though we loved you last, you loved us first, sending your prophets to declare all you had done, but we continued to abide in the tangled briars of temptation.

**P: So you sent Jesus to us, the One who would bear your fruit of salvation and hope for all your children.**

L: Love is your language of holiness and Jesus Christ, our Savior, is the true Vine of your heart.

**P: When we were wandering lost and alone, trying to understand what we were doing, he joined us in this journey we know as life.**

L: When we could do nothing to prevent our bondage to the temptations of idolatry and selfishness, he came to set us free.

**P: When we could not learn how to make things right with you, he went down the wilderness road into the cold tomb of death, so, as you raised him to new life, he might proclaim to us, “Do not be afraid!”**

- L: Abide in us at this Table, as you pour out your Spirit on the gifts of the bread and cup, and on your children gathered in this place. The broken bread reminds us that you loved us first so that, as we eat of it, we might put the needs of the hungry, the searching, the hurting, the lonely before our own.
- P: The cup of grace nourishes us so we can join the oppressed and the outcasts, intertwining our branches with theirs, so we all become part of the Vine of justice and of hope.**

L: Then, when we no longer sleep in death, but are gathered around your Table with our sisters and brothers of all time and places,

**P: we will join in singing with one voice and heart, “Holy, holy, holy are you, God of all creation.”**

## The Story

### 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.**

**Distribution** “Thy Will Be Done”

Hannah Zehms, soloist

### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying to self that we are born to eternal life. Amen.**

### Benediction †§

L: The blessing of Almighty God be upon you today and always. Go out with joy that you have been fed and healed, ready to answer the mysteries of life with love.

**P: We leave here nourished and fed, securely abiding as branches of the true vine.**

L: As Jesus entered into human life, his life is still alive in you.

**All: Amen!**

### Postlude

“Hope Will Rise Again”

† *Feasting on the Word* Worship Companion, Year B, Vol. 1 ©2014 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

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

§ Modified/written by Rev. David Huber

## Worship Leaders

Pastor: Rev. David Huber • Ministers: All the people of Plymouth • Pianist: Lynn McFadyen • Liturgist: Linda Oliver

*We of Plymouth extend to you our hand of fellowship and an invitation to become a member. If you are interested, or have any questions, please speak with or send a note to Pastor David or our Moderator, Barb Kleist. Our table always has room for more.*

## **This Week at Plymouth**

### **Sunday, May 2**

#### ***Community Table offering***

10:30 A.M. Communion Worship

### **Tuesday, May 4**

9:00 A.M. Coffee & Conversation

### **Thursday, May 6**

3:30 P.M. Coffee & Conversation

### **Sunday, May 9**

#### ***Prayers for the People***

10:30 A.M. Worship

### **We pray for:**

- The leadership and staff of Plymouth United Church of Christ

***Coffee and Conversation*** is a virtual gathering via Zoom for folks who miss the Sunday morning coffee time at church. It's a nice way to keep in touch while we have to maintain social distance. Pastor David hosts the gatherings and posts the link on the church Facebook page. Check it out! <https://tinyurl.com/y2e87nrn>

### ***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*

## *Question for Reflection*

What is your deepest desire? Jesus says that “whatever you wish . . . it will be done for you” (John 15:7). Spend time in the next days asking yourself at evermore profound levels what you most devoutly wish for in this life and the next. Then ask for it.

## *Household Prayer: Morning*

God of all beginnings, you bring a new day, and you promise to journey with me through the hours. I thank you for the breath and strength I have, and I beg your help that I may use my powers wisely and with compassion toward everyone I meet. Let my questions today be a form of pruning to bring forth in me new understandings, healing, and good fruit; in Jesus’ name. Amen.

## *Household Prayer: Evening*

Sweet Jesus, in this night of rest, heal my broken places and restore my faith. You are my vine; only in you am I strong enough to face the darkness of this world. I thank you for the safety of my home and pray for those who have no bed tonight. Make me grateful, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all. Amen.

# **God is still speaking,**