MAUNDY THURSDAY
At 11 a.m., Mary Kate Buchanan will be teaching us how to make unleavened bread from the Kitchen on Facebook Live. Then at 5:30 p.m., LeAnn Stubbs will be hosting a service of Live Communion on Facebook.

GOOD FRIDAY
Join us at 6 p.m. on the Plymouth Facebook page for a tenebrae-style service. We will extinguish eight candles as we read from the Passion according to John. You are invited to bring 8 candles to your screen to extinguish with us. We will worship together with our sibling congregation, Trinity Las Americas, in Spanish and English, with leadership from the Plymouth Deacons, Nikira Hernandez-Evans, Alejandro Alfaro-Santiz, and Emily Ewing. If you would like to have an English translation of the parts that will be read in Spanish, print out a copy of our Order of Service.

HOLY SATURDAY
At 5:30 p.m. on Facebook Live, join Mary Kate Buchanan for Holy Saturday reflection.

EASTER SUNDAY
There will be two options for you on Easter Sunday morning! A video will be up at 6:30 a.m. on our YouTube channel organized by our 7th Grade Confirmation students and Lindsey Braun. Then, our Easter Sunday service will be up on our YouTube channel by 9 a.m!

HOLY WEEK GUIDE
Click here to see our 2020 Holy Week guide!
Bread for the Journey

Maybe it is all the social distancing. But I find myself in a philosophical frame of mind. I have been pondering the nature of the church. And do you know what I think?

The church is not a building. The church is not a thing at all. The church is an event. Church happens. Maybe it took the current crisis to show us that.

I am writing this column a little more than two weeks after a global pandemic turned everything upside down. The church building is closed. In-person worship is suspended. Much of the life of Plymouth Church is being conducted online. Every day, our staff has something to share with the people of Plymouth. On the weekends, worship is livestreamed on the internet. These past days have been a blur: learning a lot of new technology, stretching to stay in touch with the congregations, wandering around in a suddenly empty church building.

I know it has been a blur for many of you as well. This column is supposed to be the place where I step back and take stock of our life together. When I manage to do that these days, I find myself thinking about the nature of the church. We often say that the church is not a building. But do we mean it?

I think we are in the process of finding out. No matter how much we may want to avoid it or deny it, the fact of the matter is that the building does a lot to shape our identity. We define ourselves by it and devote a lot of resources to it. Even now, we are taking advantage of this time to paint, to replace carpet, to freshen things up. When we do return to in-person worship, I believe you will be pleased by the improved appearance of the building.

But the church is not the building. I know that because right now the building is empty...but the life of this church continues. Plymouth people are worshipping together on YouTube, sharing highs and lows with each other on Facebook, meeting up with each other on Zoom to do some good in this world.

The building is closed. But the church goes on. Because the church is not a building. The church is not a thing at all. Church is an event. Church happens.

Moments of crisis can give us the gift of clarity. I don’t know what the weeks ahead hold for us. I don’t know when things will return to some semblance of normalcy. But I am ready to make one prediction: this generation of Plymouth people will never again mistake a building for the church.

Church is not a place; church is an event. Church happens. And by God’s grace, church will continue to happen. Thanks be to God!

MATT MARDIS-LECROY
Senior Minister
CURRENT HAPPENINGS

GET CONNECTED!
Use the links below to check out our website, Facebook page, Instagram, and YouTube Channel, so that you get get connected with us online! Plymouth will be closed through May 10. We want to continue to stay connected and minister to everyone that we can, so keep in touch!

- Website
- Instagram
- Facebook Page
- YouTube Channel

DAILY 11 A.M. SERVICES
Each weekday, tune in to our Facebook page at 11 a.m. to join our ministers for special short services! Schedule as follows:

- **Monday:** Join Matt Mardis-LeCroy for Monday Morning Check-In! We will be touching base, share the latest news about Plymouth Church and take some time to pray together.
- **Tuesday:** Join Karen Jeske for Center & Connect Plymouth people for 10-15 minutes to center, process feelings, and connect with other Plymouth members about what we are all experiencing related to social distancing.
- **Wednesday:** Join Matt Mardis-LeCroy for Bible Study, where he will be exploring the text that will inform our weekend worship at Plymouth.
- **Thursday:** Join Mary Kate Buchanan for From the Kitchen. She will be discussing the various ways that we can connect to God and one another during our extra time in our homes!
- **Friday:** Join Lindsey Braun with your families for Family Connection. She will be providing messaging, connection, and resources for families with children.

If you miss the message live, don’t worry! You can always watch them later under Videos on our Facebook page!

EVENING PRAYER
During this unknown and anxious time for our community, we are practicing the discipline of praying together at certain hours of the day. Tune into our Facebook page every weekday at 5:30 p.m. for Evening Prayer with our ministers.

If you miss the message live, don’t worry! You can still find the message under Videos on our Facebook Page. Leave your prayers in the comments of those videos for us to read and pray over later!

FOOD PANTRY & FOOD BUDDIES
The Food Pantry & the Food Buddies Committees had planned to collect peanut butter this month to donate to DMARC and also pack meals for the Food Buddies backpacks. With the current precautions being taken to avoid the spread of COVID-19, some of you have asked how you can help this month and next, so we wanted to answer you! Cash donations continue to be accepted and you have the following options:

- Donate online on the Plymouth website by clicking here. In the Note section, simply write Food Buddies or Food Pantry.
- Donate online using the DMARC virtual drive for Plymouth by clicking here.

Thanks for your continued support to the local community in a time of heightened need and be well!

EASTER FLOWERS
We will be receiving our order of Easter flowers this week! There will be a variety of flowers: Easter lilies, L.A. Lilies, Anthurium, Tulips, and Rieger Begonias. For anyone interested in ordering flowers, it is not too late!

Flowers are $12 each. You can pay online here or mail a check to Plymouth (4126 Ingersoll Ave, Des Moines, IA 50312). Please let us know who/what the flowers are in memory of or in celebration of.

Flowers will be available for pick-up on Friday, April 10 from 10 a.m. to noon in the lower-level entrance.

PLYMOUTH CAREER CLOSET CLOSED
Due to health concerns presented by COVID-19, the Plymouth Career Closet shop will remain closed and support operations suspended until further notice. Until it is safe to reopen, we will not be accepting donations, sorting clothes at the church, or operating the shop at the downtown YMCA. We look forward to the time we can again serve women in need. In the meantime, we ask our volunteers to stay home and stay safe!
With Matins rehearsals and worship leadership on pause, HS youth continue to meet online on Wednesdays at 4:45 p.m. for our regular Conversations & Connections! Participation doubled as we explored ZOOM, sharing highs/lows and thoughtful discussion on “topic” questions.

As our graduating seniors sit with disappointment, cancellations and general unknown, we decided to meet weekly on Tuesday evenings to check-in, sit with and acknowledge our feelings and of course, be a little goofy!

In the meantime, Sooz is taking to Mobile Youth Ministry via drive by’s, FaceTime and Duo to connect one-on-one with our youth. Social distancing is strictly observed, yet relationships are maintained! It’s fun, spontaneous and let’s them know they are loved!

Youth will also be reaching outwards to our older, shut in congregation members and our younger kiddos, connecting as a pen pal during our time of isolation. What a great way to develop and build intergenerational relationships!

AND just because we aren’t Live during the week on Facebook, doesn’t mean we aren’t using social media. We have a new Instagram account @plymouthyouthdm and we have our own Matins YouTube channel.

Click on the icons below to visit our social media accounts!
YOU'RE NOT ALONE
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is for people who are living alone during this crisis. Please feel free to share your prayer requests, how you are coping, what you are learning about solitude, and where you are seeing God during this time.

HOUSEHOLD HARMONY
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is for people who are living with other people during this crisis, especially those who are not used to being at home all day with their families (housemates) and are trying to juggle multiple activities. Please feel free to share your prayer requests, how you are coping, useful routines, and where you are seeing God during this time.

INNER PEACE
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is for people who are actively cultivating a sense of calm during this crisis. Please feel free to share poems, inspiring quotes, how you are coping, books you’re reading, movies you’re watching and where you are finding solace during this time.

GRACE IN WORK
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is for people who normally work outside the home but are now working from home during this crisis. Please feel free to share your daily routines and practices, how to be patient with yourself and your co-workers, how you are coping, and what you are learning about giving and receiving grace during this time.

LOVING MY NEIGHBORHOOD
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is a place to share the discoveries of your immediate surroundings during this crisis and especially to watch Spring unfold. Please feel free to share your observations and especially your PHOTOS!

CREATIVITY
The purpose of Plymouth Groups is for Plymouth members and friends to share their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and specifically where they are finding God during this time. THIS group is for people who are using their time to learn, try, or rediscover various creative activities during this crisis. Please feel free to share your photos and plans and how you are experiencing God inviting you to create.
Welcoming Migrants Pilot Project

Last year the Welcoming Migrants Committee, in partnership with the DMARC Food Pantry and Lutheran Service of Iowa Global Greens, piloted a project whereby the Welcoming Migrants Committee purchased two ‘Abundant Boxes’ from the Global Greens Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program to be donated weekly to the DMARC Food Pantry, who has a goal of providing more fresh produce to their clients. Between May and September, fresh local organic produce was delivered weekly, helping the lives of multiple groups, including refugee farmers working hard to make a living and support their families, and people in our community who are food insecure and need healthy foods to be part of their diet. The goal of this pilot project was to try the concept out on a small scale before expanding it to the broader central Iowa community.

We are excited to announce that this year, that goal is being met and the LSI Global Greens CSA website has been modified so that anyone can purchase a Global Greens CSA box to be donated directly to the DMARC Food Pantry, and people are already signing up to do so. We are gratified that Plymouth was able to be on the front end of a project which has great potential to help a large segment of an underserved population in our community.

Results from the Invitation To 1619 Participants

Several of you asked for another session to dig deeper into the articles presented in the 1619 material and to discuss some of the questions we did not have time to address. Because of the Covid-19 restrictions, we are suggesting four sessions with small groups of about 10, each alike, at different times. Plymouth’s Anti-Racism 1619 Committee will host these sessions by Zoom. Instructions will be sent for how to download the Zoom software and how to join a video conference. These facilitated sessions will be for 1 ½ hours and include the study questions from the Reading Guide as starting points of discussion. Participants in each session can decide which and how many of the questions they want to discuss and then divide the time accordingly.

Here are the times for sessions during the weeks of April 20 & 27. If more sessions are needed, we will make the arrangements.

- Mon., April 20: 7-8:30 p.m.
- Tues., April 21: 9-10:30 a.m.
- Tues., April 28: 3:00-4:30 p.m.
- Tues., April 28: 7-8:30 p.m.

Please send the date for the session you plan to attend to Sheena Thomas: sheenathomas96@gmail.com by April 17. You will receive a confirmation for the date of your session with instructions for downloading Zoom/how to use and the passcode for joining the session you selected. If questions or if you need assistance with Zoom, contact Sheena 515.991.6413. We look forward to continuing the 1619 discussion!

LENEN ORGAN RECITAL

Carl Gravander, Jr., organist, preformed a virtual recital on Plymouth’s Casavant pipe organ. Click here to watch his performance on YouTube!
Easter Offering

Dear Plymouth Member,

As you prepare to celebrate Easter, please consider a Special Offering gift that supports our Just Peace covenant - working toward economic and/or social justice for our Des Moines Metro Area neighbors.

The projects selected for this year’s gifts are:

**CROSS Outreach**
Funds from the Easter offering will help 10 families make essential payments, including rent, mortgages, security deposits and utilities.

**U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants: Des Moines Field Office**
Funds from the Easter offering will enable the group to purchase supplies and assemble essential first aid and hygiene kits for approximately 45 families. The group may also purchase a limited number of dehumidifiers, blood-pressure machines and pulse oximeters for people who require them.

**Youth Emergency Shelter and Services (YESS)**
YESS makes special needs purchases for up to 7,000 children each year. Funds from the Easter offering will help the group buy clothing and footwear, infant formula, baby food, eyeglasses or contact lenses, medications, and pay school-related fees.

**Central Iowa Shelter and Services (CISS)**
Funds from the Easter offering will pay for materials necessary to maintain CISS’ 750-square-foot domed garden. The garden includes a multi-level aquaponics system that grows up to 10,000 pounds of food throughout the year.

**Pastor’s Discretionary Fund**
10% of the Special Offerings will be allocated to Plymouth Pastor’s Discretionary Fund. These funds are directed to urgent needs of community members, covering items such as rent assistance, utility cost, medicine, and bus/travel expense.

To keep our Church Family safe and healthy, there will be no in person Easter Church service. Please make your gifts online at plymouthchurch.com/donations/make-a-donation or mail your check with memo line “Easter Gifts” to Plymouth Church Attn: Nancy Bassett, 4126 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312.

Thank you for your generosity,

Plymouth Board of Benevolences

---

Parents & Caregivers!

If your family has participated in ministries like Church School, Classes for Families, or Vacation Bible School, we’d love to hear from you! Let us know how we are serving your family, and in what areas we could do better. We’ll use your feedback to improve our programming.

https://tinyurl.com/rb8mqb5