Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota UCC Conferences Hold First Tri-Conference Joint Annual Meeting

On the site of a former Jewish country club in Omaha (from the not-so-distant past when people of Jewish faith were barred from membership in other clubs) there sits a synagogue, a mosque, and a church. Down the center of the property runs a creek: Hell’s Creek. And crossing that creek, bridging it not once but twice, is the Bridge of Abraham. The bridge is a quarter mile circle, spanning “Hell” and connecting the campuses of Temple Israel, The American Muslim Institute, and Countryside Community Church (UCC). It was here, on the campus of the Tri-Faith Initiative, that the Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota Conferences of the United Church of Christ met for our first ever Tri-Conference Joint Annual Meeting, June 14-16.

Convened by the Tri-Conference Executive Conference Minister (and Plymouth member) Rev. Brigit Stevens, more than 250 folks gathered representing many of the more than 300 churches across our three conferences. We were challenged and encouraged by Rev. Dr. Chris Davies in her keynote address and preaching; organized around questions and topics of interest and concern using the Open Space practice introduced by Rev. Erin Gilmore; and conducted the annual business meetings of the three conferences.

As part of my service to the wider church, I served on the planning committee for this event. It was gratifying to see such generative conversations taking place across the three conferences and inspiring to meet in a place that is living out such a tangible vision of interfaith engagement.

On Saturday night, I hosted a storytelling event that I had curated for the evening. For this first-ever Tri-Conference Joint Annual Meeting, we wanted those gathered to hear and share stories so all could know one another better. Ahead of the event, I invited stories on the theme of “Better Together: Stories of Hospitality and Community.” People from across more than 200,000 square miles volunteered their stories of community and being better together in the face of church fires and disabilities, standing as Water Protectors at Standing Rock and learning a thing or two about welcome from roller derby, folks shared stories of the welcome they learned from ranchers and campers and even prophetic children. It was a night of laughter and learning, evoking our own stories as we listened to those prepared for us.

And on Sunday morning, we worshiped together at Countryside Community Church. Rev. Stevens brought a word for us and we installed the newly formed staff of Associate Conference Ministers: Rev. Ellis Arnold, Rev. Darrell Goodwin, Rev. Samantha Houser, and Rev. Jonna Jensen by acclamation and a laying on of hands, blob-of-blessing style.

Plymouth is in good company across the wider United Church of Christ. The Spirit is moving. Indeed, we are better together.
Caring

CONDOLENCES
• to the friends and family of Eleanor Noel, who passed away last month.
• the family of Lew VanderNaald, who passed away June 18.
• to the family and friends of Rose Hayne who passed away June 13.

CONGRATULATIONS
• to the friends and family of Eleanor Noel, who passed away last month.
• to Plymouth member Carla Cain and our new TiM minister, Mary Kate Buchanan. Both women were Ordained in the Ministry of Word and Sacrament on Sunday, June 9.

Bread for the Journey

Plymouth Church is under construction. And I find it all very exciting!

As I sit in my office, staring at my computer screen, trying to think of a topic for my July column, there is a lot of noisy activity just outside my window: hammers, drills, the shouts of workers. The repair and restoration of our historic Rollins tower continues. The Urban courtyard—one of my most favorite places anywhere—has been inaccessible for over a year. Scaffolding, supplies, pallets of brick fill the space and obscure my view. Something new is happening. Is it all a little chaotic? Sure. But soon we will all get to see it.

Plymouth Church is under construction. This summer I am hoping that we can initiate a new strategic planning process. The time is right for a congregation-wide conversation about who we are and what we think God is calling us to do in the next 3-5 years. I am a big believer in the congregational way of doing church, and that means we cannot have this conversation without making a place for everyone at the table, making enough time for everyone to weigh in. It may take a little longer, it may be a little less tidy, but I know that it is easier to hear what the Spirit is saying when we work to include everyone in the conversation. And I cannot wait to hear the dreams and plans that God has for us.

Plymouth Church is under construction. Our new TiM Minister, Mary Kate Buchanan, is here and already our church is better because of her ministry among us. But we have some other people to find. I will be spending a lot of my summer on search committees – crafting job descriptions, reviewing resumes, talking to candidates and imagining different possible futures. It feels like such a gift to dream with people about the future of this congregation. I am eager to welcome new partners into this work.

Plymouth Church is under construction. And what we will be is yet to be revealed. Between searching for new staff and embarking on a new strategic plan, we face a lot of unanswered questions.

But God’s people have been here before. Some of God’s best work gets done in seasons like this.

I have been reading the autobiography of Jürgen Moltmann. (Because this nerd has a reputation to uphold). And I am reminded of how important his Theology of Hope has been to me. In that book—which established Moltmann as one of most important and creative theologians of his generation—Moltmann argued that Christian faith is (or ought to be) fundamentally oriented to the future. The promise of God disrupts the status quo and sets us on a journey toward a future we cannot see. Think of Abraham and Sarah leaving their family and homeland in the rear view mirror. Think of the Israelites being led out of their slavery and into freedom. Think of 120 disciples praying in an upper room, when the Spirit suddenly shows up, driving them out of their comfy clubhouse and into a future they could scarcely imagine.

I believe that we are on the brink of just such a Spirit-led moment in the life of Plymouth Church. We do not yet know what, exactly, God has in store. But we know this: God’s best for us still lies ahead. The promise sets us in motion toward a future we cannot yet see.

So what should we do in this uncertain moment, so pregnant with possibilities? I want to make two very specific requests of you.

First of all, show up. Be with us in worship. Join a Bible study, a book discussion, an advocacy group. Volunteer to teach church school or serve as a confirmation guide. Here is something I believe in my bones: The future of Plymouth Church will be shaped decisively by the people who show up for the next nine months. Make sure that you are one of them.

Second, pray. Pray that Plymouth will be open to all that God intends for us. Pray that staff and lay leaders will have a wider vision and greater sense of what is possible. Pray that we will find the right people to join our team. Pray that we will become more even effective in reaching beyond our walls and spreading the word about the work God is
Matins Tour 2019 Recap

The Matins Choir ventured to a familiar destination this year for Matins Tour 2019. The choir of 58 youth, eight chaperones and two staff took up residence June 7-14 at First Congregation Church of Hudson in Hudson, Ohio (just 30 minutes south of Cleveland). This church and town have a special place in our hearts, as it is the church where former TiM minister, Jeanette Brodersen is an Associate Minister and our new TiM minister, Mary Kate Buchanan call home.

We last visited FCC Hudson for a full-week tour in June, 2014, and we have also stayed the night several times on our way out to the east coast on tour. The hospitality extended by the staff and congregation is amazing.

This year, we had the opportunity to sing at the Hudson Grande Living Community as well as the Children’s Center Preschool and Daycare Summer program at the church. The Matins love to sing, share and visit with our neighbors old and young and this is always one of the highlights of tour. We sang at two worship services on Sunday, June 9 at FCC as well as participated through song at the Ordination of Mary Kate Buchanan! The youth took quickly to Mary Kate and are excited to welcome her to Plymouth this summer. We ended our singing year with Final Concert held at First Community Church – South Campus in Columbus, Ohio. We were invited to this beautiful church by former congregation and Chancel Choir member, Molly Hagkull.

We ventured to Cleveland several times to attend a Cleveland Indians baseball game against the New York Yankees and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The group traveled to Sandusky, Ohio to spend the day at Cedar Point Amusement Park! For those youth and chaperones that weren’t fond of roller coasters and topsy-turvy rides, we chilled at the adjoining beach to relax and soak up some rays.

It is challenging to travel with a group that is roughly the size of a small town in Iowa, however, our group represents Plymouth Church so well. We have had numerous notes from the church, local businesses in Hudson and the YMCA which opened their doors every day for us to shower, and they all compliment our group for their polite, friendly manners as well as conscientious nature in using shared spaces. I’m proud of these youth! I am also beyond grateful to the eight adult chaperones that spent four months training, a week off of work and pretty much round the clock care for our youth. Well done, friends! I have asked a chaperone and one Matin from each of the grades to share of their experiences of tour this year. Enjoy!

SAGE JOHNSON
Freshman, Hoover HS
With this being my first tour, I encountered a lot of new experiences. What surprised me the most was the inclusiveness of the group. Matins has always been one of the most accepting groups, but it really shows on tour. Spending so much time together as a group allows people that normally don’t interact to get to know each other. Everyone was willing to listen to each other and make sure everyone felt included. I made a lot of new friends on this tour and I think everyone else can say the same.

HAILEY BOLDT
Junior, Waukee HS
I go on tour because it gives me the chance to form new friendships and strengthen old friendships all while getting the chance to explore an exciting, new place! I thoroughly enjoyed the time we spent getting to explore downtown, Hudson! And I have yet to have a tour experience where I didn’t connect with someone new and then proceed to strengthen that relationship in the following year. During the fall you can try and come up with excuses why you didn’t try and make more friends within our Matins community, but when you’re on tour you have no excuses.

RYAN STRICKLAND
Senior, Southeast Polk HS
I go on tour each year because I know it will renew my spirituality with God. Being young can be, dare I say it, really hard! Being young AND trying to lead a faithful Christian life each and every day is even harder! So sometimes you lose track of what’s really important in life; finding ways to live your life for Christ. Each year I go back on Tour because I know I will realize God’s spirit is so amazing, and it rejuvenated my fire to live my life for Christ. And I thank God for every memory I have made in my 13 years in the Plymouth Choir Program.

PAM DUNLAP JOHNSON
Adult Chaperone
This was my first year as a chaperone for tour and I was curious to see it all in action. It truly is a well-oiled machine. My only regret was not having done this sooner!

What I was most surprised about was how much fun I had with this group of intelligent, insightful, caring, passionate, and fun kids. I sincerely enjoyed hanging out with the kids and learning from them. It gives me great hope for the future. They truly are a wonderful group and have a lot of important things to say; we just need to slow down long enough to listen and learn from them.

The music on tour was beautiful. The experiences of singing for older folks, preschool kids, an ordination, and final concert were moments to be cherished. It expands their horizons past the normal Sunday morning experience.

CONTACT July 2019 3
CURRENT HAPPENINGS

HELP US SUPPORT IMMIGRATION

DSM SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) and Plymouth’s Welcoming Migrants Committee invite you to a three-part film series to explore immigration in the United States. This is an opportunity to deepen your understanding of immigration through film and discussion. Help us change the narrative about immigrants in the U.S.

Our goal is to raise $1,000 at each film screening for the immigrant community in Iowa! The organizations receiving the funds are: Iowa Sanctuary Movement, American Friends Service Committee, and Justice for Our Neighbors. Help us reach this goal and support immigrants in Iowa — mark your calendar for all three dates.

Free childcare available on site. Films begin at 7 p.m. at Plymouth Church.

Suggested donation $10 at door (cash or check)

July 12: Santuario, Fundraiser for Iowa Sanctuary Movement

Aug. 9: Harvest of Empire, Fundraiser for American Friends Service Committee

Sept. 13: America First | The Legacy of an Immigration Raid, Fundraiser for Justice for Our Neighbors

NEW PERMANENT ARTWORK

The art of Jean Berry, recently displayed in the Plymouth Gallery and subsequently acquired by Plymouth, is now in the Center for Spiritual Growth and other places within the Church. The artwork titled “The Cry of Job” is a wonderful addition to the representation of the many depictions of Jesus here at Plymouth.

Thank you to the contributors who made this happen. Ms. Berry donated a portion of the contributions to the Fort Des Moines Museum which honors the black regiments that trained there. A special thanks to the Gallery Committee, Arts, and Memorials Committee, Plymouth Board of Music and Fine Arts, and Anti-Racism Committee for the ongoing support of this event.

CALLING ALL READERS!

If you are a reader and would like to help in expanding the Anti-Racism Bibliography, here is your chance. The Anti-Racism Committee is looking for people who would be interested in reading some of the titles in the current bibliography. A brief description of the books listed on the last page numbered 63 through 76 is currently needed. These mini-reviews will help others explore Plymouth’s Anti-Racism Library by offering a few comments on the book and other recommendations. If your summer reading list has a few openings, it’s time to investigate the many options in the ARC Anti-Racism Bibliography! Copies of the bibliography are available in the literature racks throughout the church.

For more information, contact Arthur Neis (veral01@att.net).

SUMMER CHOIR

Each summer at Plymouth our regular choirs take a break, but there are many opportunities to sing: Summer Choir sings on several Sundays in the summer. Summer Choir offers a unique opportunity for anyone to show up on Sunday morning, rehearse, and sing in the choir. This is everyone’s opportunity to participate. If you are a sixth grader, a centenarian, or somewhere in between, join us to learn an easy anthem and then lead worship. Sing any Sunday you like. No robes…no commitment…no experience necessary. Just show up!

Dates:
• Aug. 4 & 18 | Women’s Ensemble
• Aug. 11 & 25 | Men’s Ensemble

Rehearsal: 10:10-10:50 a.m. in the Sanctuary
Sing in 11 a.m. Worship Service

DES MOINES CHORAL FESTIVAL | MOZART MASS

On Sunday, July 14, 3 p.m., the Des Moines Choral Festival will present a concert featuring W.A. Mozart’s Great Mass in C minor, K. 427, in the Plymouth Sanctuary. Considered one of his greatest works, this large-scale work, a missa solemnis, and is scored for two soprano soloists, a tenor and a bass, double chorus and large orchestra.

MOZART’S MASS IN C MINOR
July 14, 2019 / 3:00pm / Plymouth United Church of Christ
IN THE GALLERY

Currently in the Plymouth Gallery through Aug. 22 is artwork by Plymouth member James Osborn. James prefers minimalist, modern, abstract, and expressionist styles. His goal is to bring forth a pleasing and positive feeling in the viewer.

James’ work can be found in corporate and private collections across North America and Europe. James is inspired by the 1960s and ’70s, sailors, motorcycles, and his family.

BOUNDARY WATERS CANOE TRIP: JULY 25-30

Sermons about Creation are good, but sometimes the wilderness speaks about God more eloquently than any preacher. This summer Plymouth will venture into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for an encounter with the gospel according to nature. We will take everything we need with us in our canoes for a six day journey. For more information, please email nhernandez-evans@plymouthchurch.com.

SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

All summer long, join Matt Mardis-LeCroy at Plymouth at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesdays for Bible study! Each week we dig into the text that will shape worship for the upcoming weekend. As we talk and listen to each other, we develop deeper insights that make worship more meaningful. Whether you are a tenured biblical scholar or a complete novice, all are welcome!

JOB OPENING

Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ in Des Moines, Iowa—a vibrant and progressive congregation of approximately 3,200 members—seeks a full-time Director of Operations and Finance. We are looking for someone with the vision and creativity to help us become the church we are supposed to be. Working closely with the Senior Minister, the Director of Operations and Finance will think strategically about the future of the congregation and facilitate its work in the areas of finance, facilities, human resources, communications and risk management. Qualifications include a bachelor’s degree in accounting or finance. 7+ years of finance and operations management with supervisory experience is desired. Religious faith is not required; however, the successful applicant will respect and support the values of Plymouth Church. Position includes competitive salary and full benefits. A criminal background check is required. Applicants should submit a cover letter and resume to operationsandfinancesearch@gmail.com. Visit plymouthchurch.com for more information.

MEMORY CAFE

Memory Cafe happens 10-11 a.m. on the second Friday of the month (July 12 this month) in the Coffee Shop. If you or someone you love is living with memory loss, come join us for coffee and a social hour. Contact Dian Meek at 515.255.7220 for more information.

PLYMOUTH NURSERY SCHOOL

Plymouth Nursery School offers high-quality half-day preschool classes for children aged 2-5 right here at Plymouth Church! We still have space available for the upcoming school year! Detailed information about classes including new and expanded class offerings can be found at www.plymouthnurseryschool.org. Contact Jan Van Wyk at 515.255.3271 or jvanwyk@plymouthchurch.com.

SUMMER VESPER SERVICES –

July 11, 18 and 25 at 5:30 p.m.

Many of us have come to treasure the Advent and Lenten Vesper services. In July, we will gather for Summertime Vesper services. We will sing, pray, listen to music, and reflect on scripture, creating space in the long, warm days of summer to honor of the spiritual lessons of the season.
### CALENDAR

#### JULY

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<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
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| 1      | Quilting, 10 a.m.  
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.  
Anti-Racism Committee, 5:30 p.m.  
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.  
Scouts, 7 p.m. |
| 2      | AMENS, 6:45 a.m.  
Career Closet Meeting, 5 p.m.  
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5 p.m.  
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m. |
| 7      | Childcare, 8:45 a.m.  
**Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.: Lindsey Braun**  
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon  
Fellowship Forum, 10:10 a.m.  
Flower Delivery Team, Noon  
Community Orchestra Concert, 3 p.m.  
Carla Cain Ordination, 5 p.m. |
| 8      | Quilting, 10 a.m.  
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.  
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m. |
| 9      | AMENS, 6:45 a.m.  
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5 p.m.  
Mental Health & Disability Task Force, 5:30 p.m.  
Quilting, 5:30 p.m.  
AMOS Core Meeting, 6 p.m.  
Board of Deacons Meeting, 7 p.m. |
| 14     | Childcare, 8:45 a.m.  
**Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.: Matt Mardis-LeCroy**  
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon  
Fellowship Forum, 10:10 a.m.  
Flower Delivery Team, Noon  
Des Moines Choral Festival Concert, 3 p.m. |
| 15     | Quilting, 10 a.m.  
Greenwood Park LLC Meeting, 5 p.m.  
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.  
Welcoming Migrants Committee, 5:30 p.m.  
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.  
Common Thread Discussion Group, 7 p.m.  
Scouts, 7 p.m. |
| 16     | AMENS, 6:45 a.m.  
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5 p.m.  
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m.  
Stephen Ministers Meeting, 6:30 p.m.  
Trustees Meeting, 7 p.m. |
| 21     | Childcare, 8:45 a.m.  
**Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.:**  
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon  
Fellowship Forum, 10:10 a.m.  
Flower Delivery Team, Noon  
Willits LGBTQ Committee, 12:30 p.m. |
| 22     | Quilting, 10 a.m.  
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.  
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.  
Scouts, 7 p.m. |
| 23     | AMENS, 6:45 a.m.  
House & Space Committee Meeting, 10 a.m.  
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5 p.m.  
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m. |
| 28     | Childcare, 8:45 a.m.  
**Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.: LeAnn Stubbs**  
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon  
Flower Delivery Team, Noon |
| 29     | Quilting, 10 a.m.  
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.  
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.  
Scouts, 7 p.m. |
| 30     | AMENS, 6:45 a.m.  
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5 p.m.  
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m. |
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<td>4th JULY</td>
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<td>WISE Meeting, 7 a.m.</td>
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<td>Trustees Meeting, 1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Summer Vespers Service, 5:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Human Trafficking Task Force, 6 p.m.</td>
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<td>Summer Vespers Service, 5:30 p.m.</td>
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Plymouth Church will be closed Thursday and Friday in observance of the holiday.
INTRODUCTION

At Plymouth Church, we are proud of our Children’s Choir program. It is not unusual for me to be contacted by directors across the U.S. who have heard of our program and want to know how it works. It is unique! In fact, I am unaware of another church anywhere that has children’s choirs that sing in worship every week during the program year! (That isn’t to say they don’t exist, but like Bigfoot, I just haven’t encountered one.)

Why Children’s Choirs at Plymouth?

• The purpose we have as musicians at church is created by our need to make a joyful noise to the Lord, lead the congregation deeper into worship, be an important and contributing part of the our larger church community, and know about and be able to participate in the musical liturgy and hymn singing of our church.

• Children serve as Worship Leaders: Children are our future and our now; they are an important part of our community and their participation in worship is important, empowering, and culture forming.

• “Children learn by watching the role models in their lives, but they also learn by participating. Providing a children’s choir in which they can learn, grow, move, and serve...is an important way to accomplish spiritual growth in each child’s life.” — Joyce Samples

• Many adults find that their children’s choir experience instilled a homing instinct that brings them back to church.

• Singing scripture helps the children learn and memorize scripture and Bible stories.

• Singing in worship is not performance; it is intended to contribute to the worship experience of all present.

• As children and adults contribute to the Children’s Choir Programs and Worship at Plymouth, we strengthen the fabric of our connections and our community is important ways.

• All are welcome!

RESTRUCTURE

At the end of the Children’s Choir season in April, Meg Smith retired after 31 years leading the Hallelujah! Choir (2nd grade). Meg was hired by Carol Stewart in 1988 to work with Sharon Parker-Lenihan in co-teaching the 2-3rd grade choir. Over the years, Meg stayed with the second graders and taught approximately 1,000 children!

With Meg’s retirement, it was a natural time to evaluate the structure of the Children’s Choir program and consider adjustments to make us stronger for the future. After discernment, we committed to four main interventions.

With a focus on the upper elementary program, grades 3-6:

1. The Glory and Descant Choirs (4th, 5th, 6th grade), which were traditionally separated based on gender, will be integrated into a newly named “Chorister Choir” for boys and girls, grades 5-6.

2. The Treble Choir (3rd grade) will grow to include boys and girls in grades 3 and 4.

With a focus on the lower elementary program:

3. Jade Fox will become the new Hallelujah! Choir director (2nd grade)

4. We are excited to add programming for younger, Pre-K, students in a new “Music Makers Class” for the Pre-K child accompanied by an adult caregiver.

The two structures are compared below:

2018-2019 STRUCTURE
- Kinder Choir (K) | Francine Griffith
- Cherub Choir (1) | Linda McFarlane
- Hallelujah! Choir (2) | Meg Smith (retiring)
- Treble Choir (3) | Kelli Stoa
- Descant Choir (4, 5, 6 boys) | Jade Fox
- Glory Choir (4, 5, 6 girls) | Bri Magel
- Handchime Choir (4-6) | Bloyce Johnson
- Soul Singers (7-8) | Jade Fox

2019-2020 STRUCTURE
- Music Makers Class (Pre-K) | Lydia Schettler
- Kinder Choir (K) | Francine Griffith
- Cherub Choir (1) | Linda McFarlane
- Hallelujah! Choir (2) | Jade Fox
- Treble Choir (3-4) | Kelli Stoa
- Chorister Choir (5-6) | Bri Magel
- Handchime Choir (4-6) | Bloyce Johnson
- Soul Singers (7-8) | Jade Fox
In addition to the programming restructure, we are adjusting the Wednesday rehearsal schedule. In listening to parents during my two years at Plymouth, I have heard one thing consistently: “It’s difficult to get to church by 5 p.m. on Wednesdays!” I always respond, “What would work better?” In response to this need and discussion over the past year, we plan to make a schedule alteration, which we hope will reduce some of that Wednesday afternoon pressure. My great hope is that we have found the “Goldilocks zone” that reduces the pressure of the afternoon commute, but does not cause children to be at church too late. We are also changing some of the room assignments.

The new schedule and room assignments are below:

**TYPICAL WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE**

5:15-5:50 | Youngest Children’s Choir Rehearsals:
  - KinderChoir (K) (Room 302)
  - Cherub Choir (1st) (Room 301)
5:15-6:00 | Children’s Choir Rehearsals & Music Makers Class:
  - Music Makers Class (Pre-K) (Room 303)
  - Hallelujah! Choir (2nd) (Room 304)
  - Treble Choir (3rd & 4th) (Rehearsal Hall)
  - Chorister Choir (5th & 6th) (Recital Hall)
6:00-6:45 | Handchime Choir (4th, 5th, 6th) (Room 306)
6:10-6:50 | Soul Singers Rehearsal (Recital Hall)
6:00-6:55 | Youth Dinner (Youth Room and 3rd floor classrooms)
7:00-8:00 | Matins Choir Rehearsal

**KICKOFF SCHEDULE**

- **General Schedule**
  - Wednesday Rehearsals | 5:15-6 p.m. (Various Classrooms)
  - Sunday Warm-up | 8:30-8:55 a.m. OR 10:30-10:55 a.m. (Rehearsal Hall)
- **September 4 | Children’s Choir Kick-off**
  - First rehearsal for grades 1-6 choirs, Kinders, Music Makers, Handchimes, and Soul Singers
  - Attend kick-off parent meeting on Sept. 4 with the first class/rehearsal on Sept. 11
- **September 11 | First rehearsal for KinderChoir**
  - First class for Music Makers
  - First rehearsal for Handchimes
  - First rehearsal for Soul Singers

**MUSIC MAKERS CLASS (PRE-K)**

We are thrilled to welcome a new staff member, Lydia Schettler, to launch our brand new “Music Makers Class!” Lydia, a Simpson College alum with a Bachelor of Music Education, teaches music at Lawson Elementary (Johnston CSD). She is currently completing coursework for a Master of Arts in Music Education from the University of Saint Thomas, St. Paul, MN. Lydia has training in Kodály, Orff, and Dalcroze approaches; these are different means of teaching music that specifically cater to elementary-age children.

The Music Makers Class is designed for child and caregiver together, and will provide students and parents with enriching musical experiences. The research-based practices in Music Makers will cater to the learning needs and styles that come naturally to small children. Children and their adults will play, sing, speak, and move to build foundational musicianship.

The class-size will be limited to 15 children. Registration information will be in the “Programming for Children & Youth at Plymouth Church” guide, available in early August. For more information, contact Christopher Goodson, Director of Music and Fine Arts (cgoodson@plymouthchurch.com).
Connect through Nine to Dine!

Would you like to meet new people and feel a greater sense of connection to Plymouth Church?
Consider Nine to Dine! It’s a great way to enjoy old friends, reconnect with others and make new friends, too!

Nine to Dine was established more than 25 years ago at Plymouth as a small-group endeavor to help members get to know one another on a more personal level. The groups are comprised of roughly nine people each and typically meet from September through June, with some groups electing to continue to meet throughout the summer. Groups meet once a month to dine together, with each member taking a turn selecting a restaurant or hosting a dinner in their home. Each group collectively decides on the day of the week and time that best suit its members.

Consider signing up for your Nine to Dine this September as a way to grow your social circle and grow in love of God and neighbor over some delicious food! Registration begins Sept. 1 and will run until Sept. 30.

For more information on how to be a part of this community-centered engagement, contact the Administrative Assistant of Care and Welcome, Sarah Masengarb, at 515.255.3149, ext. 33, or smasengarb@plymouthchurch.com.
Hesitantly, she (let’s call her Lisa) came down the hall toward the Plymouth Career Closet. Her friend, who had been a previous customer, was at her side. Lisa was in Information Technology and had interviews coming up. The circumstance that brought her to our door is not clear – she’d had a career in IT.

But something had happened – maybe a health issue, or death of her spouse, illness of a parent or a child – and now she was trying to re-enter the workforce and needed clothing. She had always been able to buy her clothes. Now, for the first time in her life, she was in need of free clothing.

What happened in the next hour was magical. Our volunteers helped find clothing (some items that she would never have considered!). Lisa tried things on. We helped her combine items, found jewelry that polished outfits, and taught her how to tie a scarf. Lisa left with two dresses, five tops, two pairs of slacks, two sweaters, two scarves, a couple of pieces of jewelry and a pair of shoes. She was thrilled and overcome with gratitude. We thought she looked taller as she walked away!

Would you like to experience helping women who need clothing for interviews and work? The Plymouth Career Closet desperately needs volunteers to staff the boutique and to deliver bins of sorted clothing from Plymouth to the Wellmark YMCA. Please prayerfully consider offering a few hours this summer to join a seasoned volunteer — even just one afternoon or morning a month — and change the life of a woman.

Email: Plymouthcareer closet10@gmail.com or call Georgia Sheriff at 515.201.5072.
For more information about Plymouth Church, please visit our website at www.plymouthchurch.com, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/plymouthchurch and Instagram at PlymouthUCC. If you are not able to visit on Sunday, an audio podcast of a portion of the previous week’s service featuring the sermon is available on iTunes, or on the Plymouth website under Resources/Sermon Podcasts. A video podcast is available on YouTube or the Plymouth website. To submit information for the Contact, email Cindy Eaton-Eklund, ceaton@plymouthchurch.com

Matt Mardis-LeCroy ................................................. Senior Minister
Lindsey Braun ........................................................... Minister of Discipleship
Mary Kate Buchanan .............................................. Associate Minister
Cindy Eaton-Eklund ........................................... Director of Communications
Christopher Goodson .......................... Director of Music and Fine Arts
Carl Gravander ......................................................... Organist
Nikira Hernandez-Evans .......................... Associate Minister
Karen Jeske ........................................ Transition into Ministry Coordinator
LeAnn Stubbs .................................................. Minister of Care and Welcome
Jan Van Wyk ................................................ Director of Plymouth Nursery School
Susan Waller .......................................................... Director of Youth Ministry

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