Beginning Saturday, Jan. 4, Plymouth Gallery will host Unstolen Dignity—Portraits of the Enslaved, a portrait series which tells the stories of the sacrifices and hardships of enslaved Africans in the United States. This series of oil paintings is the work of artist Ladale Lloyd of Tampa, Florida. It will be shown during the months of January and February to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Black History Month.

Mr. Lloyd uses the stories and historical photographs of former slaves to portray their character and dignity in his work. The subjects are mostly elderly and worn. Their faces show a life of oppression but also resolve, character and endurance. Using the medium of oils, he is able to convey a sense of stateliness and reveal the dignity of each subject; dignity which a life of slavery was unable to take from them.

The portrayal of the truth aligns with Mr. Lloyd’s background as a journalist and his work as an artist. It is his goal that this series provokes thought, fosters dialog and eventually is used as a catalyst for social change.

In addition, each portrait is accompanied by a short narrative. Many of these histories were gathered by the WPA’s 1930’s narrative project which recorded the stories of former slaves as told by them. This project relied heavily on the work of white southern writers and the institution of slavery and the subjects were seen through this lens.

(continued on page 9)
Bread for the Journey

My New Year's Resolution! 2020 will be the year in which Plymouth Church comes to greater clarity about who we are and what God is calling us to do. Because, in the life of a church, nothing matters more. I have enjoyed hearing from so many people about how grateful they are for our interactions with Allen Hilton. His House Unit Project—inviting Christians to form deep relationships across the dividing lines of partisan politics—feels important and even urgent. What we need, in these difficult days, is a way to come together. Allen gave us a glimpse of what might be possible.

It is of course natural to wonder where we might go from here. Let me share a theory that I have been developing as we have worked with Allen: the underlying issue has to do with identity. It is hard to share life in a purple church, harder still in these days of deep division and vicious debate. But I think the hardest thing about it is that we lack clarity about who we are and what God is calling us to do. Unfortunately, Plymouth is especially susceptible to confusion about questions of identity. Because we are not a credal church, we have no shared statement of beliefs held in common. Instead, our covenant commits to sharing life with each other and honoring one another's journey. But that means we have a harder time claiming a common vision of who we are and what God is calling us to do.

Without a clear answer to those two questions, we will fall back on our partisan political identities. We will revert to the scripts handed to us by our contentious political discourse. We will, inevitably, have a hard time befriending or even much tolerating those whose political identities differ from our own.

I believe that our (very real, often painful) struggle to relate across political difference is the sign and symptom of something deeper. Our most profound challenge of sharing life in Christian community must be rooted in a clear sense that we are also beloved of God. In Epiphany, worship will help us to see what that really means. And then, in the season of Lent, we will turn our attention to the question of what it means to be God's Beloved…with each other. Drawing on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's classic work Life Together, I hope to take the season of Lent and turn it into a church-wide conversation about the gift and the challenge of sharing life in Christian community.

My New Year's resolution is that 2020 will be the year when Plymouth Church claims clarity about who we are and what God calls us to do. I urge you to participate. Make sure that your voice, your perspective, your dreams are part of the conversation. We need you in the mix. That is how we will come to clarity.

And, in the meantime, we will do a lot of reflecting together on this whole question of identity. In Epiphany (January and February, essentially), our worship will be shaped by one word: Beloved. Jesus’ entire public ministry begins with God’s affirmation that he is God's Beloved one. Similarly, all of our talking and dreaming together must be rooted in a clear sense that we are also beloved of God. In Epiphany, worship will help us to see what that really means. And then, in the season of Lent, we will turn our attention to the question of what it means to be God’s Beloved…with each other. Drawing on Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s classic work Life Together, I hope to take the season of Lent and turn it into a church-wide conversation about the gift and the challenge of sharing life in Christian community.

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Once that deadline passes, the Transition into Ministry Committee begins to move quickly toward finding the right person to call to Plymouth. We anticipate a round of phone interviews and then onsite visits the weekends of Feb. 1 and 2 and February 8 and 9. The final decision will be made soon after these visits and I should be able to announce our next TiM Associate Minister in the March or April issue of the Contact.

At the same time, Nikira Hernandez-Evans has been preparing to enter the search and call process as her term with us will end at Labor Day of this year. If you feel so moved, please pray for Plymouth's search and call for its next TiM and for Nikira's search and call to find a wonderful new role for her.

The other transition is that 2020 will be the last year of receiving funds for the TiM Program from the Lilly Endowment. They generously launched us and were the sole funders of the program for 10 years. For the past five years, we have shared the costs with them. Beginning in 2021, thanks to your generous support raised during 2018’s Fearful Change campaign, Plymouth will carry the program forward on its own through at least 2030. Lilly’s funding along with strong, stable staff and lay leaders planted and nourished this ministry at Plymouth.

The program now receives advice and oversight from a 12-person committee that rotates members on and off just like every other Plymouth committee. We have an agreement in place with the Plymouth Foundation to manage the funds we have raised to sustain the program. The program is staffed by Matt, who supervises and mentors the TiM Associates, and myself, who leads the recruitment effort, assists the TiM Committee in its role, organizes the transitions of Associates as they arrive and leave, and supports and guides the TiMs in various ways during their time with us.

Opening our hearts and our faith community to these new ministers every year takes courage and patience as we live into our call to be a teaching and learning congregation. As we continue through this new phase of the TiM program, I hope to hear from you when you have questions or suggestions so we can all continue to experience the fruits of this unique ministry.

Matt Mardis-Lecroy
Senior Minister

TiM Transitions

Believe it or not, Plymouth is in its 15th year as a Transition into Ministry congregation. In fact, the next TiM Resident we hire will be the 15th to begin with us.

This time of the year and this particular year both mark transitions for the program.

The time of the year begins the annual transition of finding our next TiM Resident to call. Matt and I have worked hard to find good prospects and those prospects are now, hopefully, putting together the materials they need to apply. Our deadline for receiving applications is Jan. 3.

Once that deadline passes, the Transition into Ministry Committee begins to move quickly toward finding the right person to call to Plymouth. We anticipate a round of phone interviews and then onsite visits the weekends of Feb. 1 and 2 and February 8 and 9. The final decision will be made soon after these visits and I should be able to announce our next TiM Associate Minister in the March or April issue of the Contact.

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Matt Mardis-Lecroy
Senior Minister

You?
2020 HS PARENT YOUTH SOUP SUPPER

All HS youth and their parents are invited to join us on Sunday, Jan. 5 from 5-6:30 p.m. in Wall Hall for a soup supper. Soup, crackers, and drinks will be provided by YEC. Please bring a side, salad, or dessert to share. We will be highlighting our winter and spring fundraisers. Our tour destination will be revealed. You will also be able to sign up for the annual Lock-In. Join us in kicking off a new year of youth activities and events!

PLYMOUTH GROUNDS

Have you visited the Plymouth Grounds Coffee Shop lately? This shop provides training to students with intellectual disabilities during the fall and spring semesters. These students range in age from 18-21, and many are students at Des Moines metro high schools. We call them baristas, and we are very proud that we have a 92% rate of employment for these students after they leave Plymouth Grounds. Shop is open Monday to Friday 8-30 a.m. to noon, and Wednesday from 4-8:30 p.m. Come visit us for coffee/tea and cookies!

JOIN THE INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Do you play an instrument? Join Plymouth’s Instrumental Ensemble – a short-term commitment – to prepare an instrumental selection and present it in worship. We will rehearse on two Wednesday evenings, Jan. 22 and 29, 8-8:45 p.m. in the Sanctuary. We will play on Sunday, Feb. 2. Did you used to play an instrument, but it’s been sitting in the closet gathering dust? Well, now is your chance to pull it out, dust it off, and fall in love with making music again! This opportunity is designed for people like you – join us! Contact Christopher Goodson (cppdson@plymouthchurch.com) by Monday, Jan. 20, to pre-register.

DISCOVER PLYMOUTH

If you’re interested in becoming a member of Plymouth Church or simply interested in learning more about the UCC and who we are, Discover Plymouth is for you! The next class is Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020 from 1-4 p.m. in Burling. New members will join Saturday, Feb. 8 or Sunday, Feb. 9. For more information, contact Sarah Masengar at 515.255.3149, ext. 33 or smasengar@plymouthchurch.com.

MEMORY CAFE

Memory Cafe happens 10-11 a.m. on the third Tuesday of the 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 Friday, Jan. 10. Contact Debra Meek at 515.255.7220 for more information.

FAITHFUL READERS

We start the New Year reading American Dialogue: The Founders and Us by Joseph Ellis. New voices are always welcome, so join us on Thursday, Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. in the Inspiration Lounge. For more information, contact Jean Nelson at 515.255.5019.

CUBA DELEGATION PRESENTATION

Please join the Cuba Delegation for a presentation of the highlights of our Nov. trip on Jan. 26 after Saturday night worship, and Sunday, Jan. 26 at 12:30 p.m. following worship. We’ll share our experiences and insights from our remarkable journey to our sister church Ebenezer Baptist in Havana. Hope to see you then!

EXPLORE THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE NEW YEAR

In January, Plymouth is pleased to offer a new class for those who are looking for a Bible Study that includes discussion and exploration in an intimate community environment. Selected daily readings, a study manual with supplemental information, weekly video, and great discussions will lead the group into Lent, finishing at Easter. Disciple is the most widely used Bible Survey Curriculum in the country, used by many denominations with over a million graduates. The class will be facilitated by Plymouth members Beth Stelle Jones, Rocky Morton. Join us on Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00 p.m., from Jan. 8 through March 25. The course fee of $10 provides a Study Manual which will be available at Church after Jan. 1. Class size is limited to 16, so register today by calling the church office at 515.255.3149.

MARIANA VAN DER MAATEN

Please join us on Sunday, Jan. 26 during the forum at 10:10 a.m. in the Greenwood Room to hear Maria Van Der Maaten share the story of her trip as part of a Sister Parish delegation to Guatemala and El Salvador last Nov. We will learn more about the people of these two countries and about the factors that drive the immigration/asylum-seeking that we are seeing at the U.S. southern border.

ADULT BASKETBALL

Put the kids to bed and relieve some inner stress. Join us Thursdays at 8 p.m. in the gym for friendly basketball competition. For more information, email: stoa.dan@gmail.com.

Plymouth Bridge will be hosting a fun and engaging CUBA delegation presentation which will feature insights from the group’s experience in Havana. During the class, we will focus on the New Testament in the New Year, a class that explores the Bible in a community environment with interactive discussions. This class aims to deepen our understanding of the Bible and its teachings through engaging discussions and weekly videos.

Experiencing the Year of the Pig can be a challenging time for those who want to make meaningful changes in their lives. Our BRIDGE group, consisting of men and women, will be discussing the annual lock-in, an event where people can start fresh, make new friends, and improve their party Bridge skills. The Bridge meetings will start at 12:30 p.m. and end at 3:15 p.m. We encourage both new and experienced players to join and enjoy the camaraderie at these fun gatherings.

The Plymouth church will celebrate a special event featuring interviews with a Sister Parish delegation from Guatemala and El Salvador. This opportunity will provide an inside look at the people, culture, and challenges faced by those communities. Attendees will have the chance to learn about the factors that drive immigration/ asylum-seeking and see first-hand the experiences of these people.

The Plymouth church will also be offering a class focusing on the New Testament in the New Year. This class is designed for those who seek a deeper understanding of the Bible in an intimate community environment. Participants will engage in discussions, select daily readings from the New Testament, and have weekly videos to enhance their learning experience.

Plymouth’s Instrumental Ensemble will provide an opportunity for students to practice and perform in a short-term commitment setting. This ensemble is a great way for students to experience music-making again, even if they haven’t played in years. Weekly rehearsals will be held on Feb. 22 and 29, with the performance to take place on Sunday, Feb. 8. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to gain musical experience and to connect with their peers.

The Plymouth church membership class, Discover Plymouth, will take place on Sunday, Feb. 16. This class is open to anyone interested in becoming a member of the church. It will cover the church’s mission, vision, and values, and provide an opportunity for new members to ask questions and engage with the church community. Plymouth Grounds Coffee Shop continues to offer valuable training opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities, providing them with valuable work experience and employment skills.

The Plymouth church memory care program, Memory Cafe, takes place on the third Tuesday of each month. The Memory Cafe provides a social hour for those living with memory loss and their loved ones, fostering a supportive environment where they can connect with others experiencing similar challenges. The Memory Cafe event scheduled for Jan 10 will feature Debra Meek, offering valuable resources and support for those in need.

Join us for the Plymouth church’s regular programming, which includes American Dialogue: The Founders and Us by Joseph Ellis. The Faithful Readers program begins on Jan 23, offering additional book discussions in a friendly and welcoming environment.

Plymouth Bridge invites all to join them for a fun and engaging CUBA delegation presentation on Jan 26 at 10:00am. This event will feature insights from the group’s trip to Havana, providing attendees with a glimpse into the experiences of their fellow church members.
CALENDAR

JANUARY

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY

5
Motinos, 8:15 a.m.
Children, 8:45 a.m.
Church School, 9:15 a.m.
Chancel Choir, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m.
Flower Delivery Team, 10 a.m.
Church School Teacher Check-Ins, 10 a.m.
Financial Peace University, 6 p.m.

6
Guilting, 10 a.m.
ARC 1619 Planning Committee, 1:30 p.m.
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.
Board of Music & Fine Arts, 5:45 p.m.
RENEW Leadership Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 7 p.m.

7
AMEN’S, 6:45 a.m.
1619 Meeting, 3 p.m.
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5:30 p.m.
Board of Christian Education, 5:30 p.m.
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m.
Stephen Meneses, 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

1
New Year’s Day, Church Closed

2
WISE Meeting, 7 a.m.
House & Space Committee, 8 a.m.
Common Thread, 7 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.

3

8
Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.
RENEW Adult ELL, 10 a.m.
Tal-O-Nee, 9:30 a.m.
RENEW Adult ELL, 10 a.m.
Plymouth Bells, 7 p.m.

9
WISe Meeting, 7 a.m.
Living WW, 1:30 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.

10
Memory Cafe, 10 a.m.

11
RENEW Adult ELL, 3 p.m.
Food Buddies, 4:30 p.m.
Worship, 5:30 p.m.
Childcare, 5:30 p.m.
Youth Lock-In, 9 p.m.

12
Motinos, 8:15 a.m.
Children, 8:45 a.m.
Church School, 9:15 a.m.
K-2nd Parent Orientation, 9:15 a.m.
Chancel Choir, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon
Confirmation Guide Check-In, 10 a.m.
Fellowship Forum, 10 a.m.
Flower Delivery Team, 12 p.m.
Financial Peace University, 6 p.m.

13
Guilting, 10 a.m.
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.
RENEW Leadership Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 7 p.m.

14
AMEN’S, 6:45 a.m.
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5:30 p.m.
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m.

15
Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.
RENEW Adult ELL, 10 a.m.
Tal-O-Nee, 9:30 a.m.
Bridge, 12:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 4:45 p.m.
Youth Conversation & Connections, 4:45 p.m.
Chancel, Charter, Hallelujah!, Treble and Kinder Choir Rehearsal, 5:15 p.m.
Music Makers, 5:15 p.m.
Hand Chime Choir, 6 p.m.
High School Youth Dinners, 6 p.m.
Youth Adulis, 6 p.m.
Mal’s Parent’s Choir and Soul Singers Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Soul Singers, 6:15 p.m.
Consolidation Fellowship Night, 7 p.m.
Bible Study, 7 p.m.
Plymouth Bells, 7 p.m.

16
WisE Meeting, 7 a.m.
Living WW, 1:30 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.

17

18
RENEW Adult ELL, 3 p.m.
Worship, 5:30 p.m.
Childcare, 5:30 p.m.

19
Motinos, 8:15 a.m.
Children, 8:45 a.m.
Church School, 9:15 a.m.
K-2nd SELL, 9:15 a.m.
Chancel Choir, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon
Fellowship Forum, 10 a.m.
Flower Delivery Team, 12 p.m.
Financial Peace University, 6 p.m.

20
Guilting, 10 a.m.
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.
RENEW Leadership Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 7 p.m.

21
AMEN’S, 6:45 a.m.
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5:30 p.m.
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m.

22
Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.
RENEW Adult ELL, 10 a.m.
Tal-O-Nee, 9:30 a.m.
Bridge, 12:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 4:45 p.m.
Youth Conversation & Connections, 4:45 p.m.
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Youth Adulis, 6 p.m.
Mal’s Parent’s Choir and Soul Singers Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Soul Singers, 6:15 p.m.
Consolidation Fellowship Night, 7 p.m.
Bible Study, 7 p.m.
Plymouth Bells, 7 p.m.

23
Chancel Closed, WISe Meeting, 7 a.m.
Living WW, 1:30 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.

24

25
RENEW Adult ELL, 3 p.m.
Worship, 5:30 p.m.
Childcare, 5:30 p.m.

26
Motinos, 8:15 a.m.
Children, 8:45 a.m.
Church School, 9:15 a.m.
K-2nd SELL, 9:15 a.m.
Chancel Choir, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 9 & 11 a.m.
After Worship Fellowship, 10 a.m. & Noon
Fellowship Forum, 10 a.m.
Flower Delivery Team, 12 p.m.
Financial Peace University, 6 p.m.

27
Guilting, 10 a.m.
Yoga, 5:15 p.m.
RENEW Leadership Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
COCI Centering Prayer, 5:45 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 7 p.m.

28
AMEN’S, 6:45 a.m.
Shawl Knitting Ministry, 5:30 p.m.
Line Dancing, 6:30 p.m.

29
Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.
RENEW Adult ELL, 10 a.m.
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Soul Singers, 6:15 p.m.
Consolidation Fellowship Night, 7 p.m.
Bible Study, 7 p.m.
Plymouth Bells, 7 p.m.

30
WisE Meeting, 7 a.m.
Living WW, 1:30 p.m.
Scout Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 6:10 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.

31

4
RENEW Adult ELL, 3 p.m.
Worship, 5:30 p.m.
Living WW, 1:30 p.m.
Consolidation Fellowship Night, 7 p.m.
Basketball Open Gym, 8 p.m.
Strategic Planning Update

AARON BARKER

It isn’t about changing your identity; it means discerning what your identity is and collectively figuring out how to live it out in the world. It means articulating a vision so distinctive and invigorating that your actions follow directly from it. Plymouth Church means something different to each of us, but it also means something important and shared for all of us.

This month, we will kick off our listening town halls so that we can discuss where we are as a church and where we want Plymouth to be. The format will be like nothing you have ever seen, and it will challenge you to agree, resolve, and unite like you never have before.

So as a member of the steering committee for this strategic plan, I earnestly ask every single one of you to attend these listening sessions. I promise that you will learn something new about Plymouth, about each other, and maybe even about yourself.

You can even bring your triple white chocolate mocha. We won’t tell.

January Lunch & Learn

It’s January in Iowa, and Caucus season is upon us! Our Lunch & Learn speakers for Thursday, Jan. 16 will be Iowa State Legislators Jo Oldson and Janet Peterson, two Plymouth members with deep experience in Iowa government and strong commitments to community service, both within the government and as community activists and volunteers.

Jo is serving her second term in the Iowa Senate, representing the 41st District. She serves as the House Minority Whip and also serves on the Appropriations, Judiciary, and Commerce committees. Janet is the first Iowa woman elected to serve as the Senate Democratic Leader and is serving her second term in the Iowa Senate after serving six terms in the Iowa House of Representatives. She represents Senate District 18 on the northwest side of Des Moines.

Jo and Janet are happy to talk about the upcoming caucuses, and will also answer questions about other issues important to Iowans. Please join us! Lunch is at 12:15 p.m.; the 35-50 minute program follows at 12:40 p.m. Cost for the meal is $10. Register before noon Tuesday, Jan. 14 by phone (515.255.3149); online (plymouthchurch.earthlink.net or go to communications@climatemarch.org or call 858.356.2724).

It’s a Parade…for the Climate!

When people ask, “What can individuals do for the climate?” Bill McKibben, leader of the climate action group 350.org, responds: “Stop being an individual!” If you are overwhelmed thinking about what you can do for the climate, here is an opportunity to join with others to take a stand for God’s Creation.

You are invited to participate or watch the Climate Crisis Parade in downtown Des Moines on Saturday, Feb. 1 beginning at noon. The Parade is being organized by a diverse and large group of organizations concerned about climate change. The focus is on encouraging the national media (who will be in Des Moines to cover the Iowa caucuses) and the local media to expand their coverage of Creation’s climate crisis. Plymouth’s Creation Care and Justice Coalition will be in the parade. All are welcome to join us in the parade or we would welcome your encouragement as we pass by. Jim Antal, UCC spokesperson on climate action, reminded us when he was here last February, “climate change is a moral challenge that we as people of faith, are called to address.” Please consider joining the Parade.

We will gather at the Cowles Commons in downtown Des Moines at noon on Saturday, Feb. 1 for speakers, music and chants. Then, we will parade through the streets or the Skywalk (weather will be the determining factor) to the Iowa Events Center. Participating organizations will customize their parade entries to reflect their particular climate concern. For more information contact Lois Schultz at lms444@earthlink.net or go to communications@climatemarch.org or call 858.356.2724.

Unstolen Dignity

“I paint from pictures of actual people, often photographed in tattered, impoverished environments. As a realist, my challenge is to stay true to the physical nature of each subject while using artistic conventions to express and reveal their inner character,” Ladle Lloyd explains.

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to view the moving work of Unstolen Dignity. An artist walk with Mr. Lloyd will be held Saturday, Jan. 11 at 4:30 p.m. A potluck honoring Mr. Lloyd will be held following the 5:30 p.m. worship service. He will also be available on Sunday, Jan. 12 at the 10:10 a.m. forum to discuss his work. Watch the upcoming Current Happenings for more information.

This event is sponsored by the Anti-Racism Committee in collaboration with the Gallery Committee with support from the Plymouth Foundation.
Maria Van Der Maaten

On January 12 during the Forum at 10:10 a.m. in the Greenwood room, Maria Van Der Maaten will give a presentation on her recent trip to Guatemala and El Salvador, as a part of a Sister Parish open-delegation. Sister Parish, Inc. is an international, non-profit organization that establishes long-term relationships between communities of faith in the U.S. and in Guatemala or El Salvador. Through delegations (both to the South and the North), delegates and host-communities get to better now one another and stand in solidarity together. Maria first traveled on a Sister Parish delegation in 2001 and later worked as the U.S. Coordinator for the organization.

The purpose of this trip was to gain an understanding of factors that drive the immigration/asylum-seeking that we see at the U.S. southern border. The project was about building relationships with people, sharing meals, telling stories, with people in several communities in both countries. It is hoped that this will help us continue to think about ways to stand in solidarity with immigrants and asylum seekers not only on our border, but also how we can help them in their own communities.

Please join us for this fascinating presentation!

Living WOW!

Let us remind you what that is. Living WOW stands for: Living Well, Oldering Well.

We know... “oldering” isn’t a word. We made it up! We made up the word because every day, every one of us is getting older, and none of us really know how to do it. Every day is an experience and an adventure and we are all making it up as we go along. So, a made up word seems to fit!

Here’s some of what we’ve been up to:

- Bingo for prizes!
- “Tuesdays With Morrie”
- Trivial Pursuit
- Halloween and Christianity?
- Pastafarianism?
- “Babett’s Feast”
- Making gratitude and Advent cards
- Making pie

Another reminder: Programming under the “Living WOW” moniker is open to everyone, but especially those who are 55 and up. But don’t let that stop you from attending an event if you are interested in the topic… every age is always welcome. We are ALL oldering!

January Living WOW events (Thursdays 2-4 p.m. in Greenwood):

- Jan. 2: Popcorn & Movie
- Jan. 9: Movie Discussion
- Jan. 16: Bingo for Prizes
- Jan. 23: Yoga for everybody! (Taught by LeAnn Stubbs)
- Jan. 30: NONE (5th Thursday)

Flower Delivery Team:

In Need of Volunteers!

Each week you read in the worship bulletin the names of the people who donated the lovely flower arrangements that grace our Chancel during worship. Have you ever wondered what happens to that display once worship is over? It goes to good use, thanks to the dedicated work of Plymouth Church’s Flower Delivery Team!

Immediately after 11 a.m. worship concludes, volunteers retreat to the sacristy and go to work dissecting the arrangements. They redesign the flowers and foliage into smaller bouquets. Then, the best part of all, they personally deliver them to Plymouth members who are homebound or in the hospital.

Plymouth is in need of more volunteers to help with this very important ministry. Do you have a teen who needs to fulfill hours for Silver Cord? This is a fantastic intergenerational opportunity for them to interact with older members of their church community who are in need! It is also a great opportunity for groups like Plymouth Women Adventure Groups (PWAG), who participate in a “random act of kindness” as part of each adventure.

If your group, or family, or Board, or you yourself would like to volunteer, please contact Sarah Masengarb, Administrative Assistant of Care and Welcome at smasengarb@plymouthchurch.com or 515.255.3149.
For more information about Plymouth Church, please scan this code to visit our website at www.plymouthchurch.com, follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/plymouthchurch and Instagram @PlymouthUCC. If you are not able to visit on Sunday, a 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. Print copies of most sermons may be downloaded from the website at Resources/Sermon Library.

To submit information for the Contact, email Cindy Eaton-Eklund, ceaton@plymouthchurch.com

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