Confirmation 2021

Courage, commitment, and chutzpah. These are the charisms that this year’s class brought to COVID-19 Confirmation. A total of 33 7th and 8th graders and their fourteen small group guides met on Zoom for theme nights all year. Small groups gathered creatively outdoors for campfires, winter scavenger hunts and hot cocoa, walks to look at Christmas lights and do creek cleanup. Like so many things in this year of COVID-19, it was not ideal, but it was good. One parent observed to me at the Easter Vigil (that the confirmands helped lead) that the word for this year must be grace. Grace for each other, for ourselves, for each old thing done in a new way, for all the patience and learning and screw-ups and silliness along the way. This class has shown much grace.

On Sunday, May 2, we were able to celebrate them. Thirteen of our fifteen 8th graders confirmed their faith and became official members of Plymouth Church. It was a joy to be able to gather in our sanctuary for this special service. Each family acted as a mini blob of blessing for their child. And the weather even cooperated, giving us a glorious day to bring cake outside to linger and visit and celebrate. God has been good to Plymouth in and through this class of special young people. Please welcome and congratulate them on this important step in their faith journey.

Welcome Confirmation Class of 2021! It’s so good to grow in love of God and neighbor together!

BY: LINDSEY BRAUN

Bryrne Bellaire
Ava Boldt
Delaney Boldt
Ella Christensen
Abigail Galloway
Xiomara Hanson
Hadley Harvey
Kate Johnson
*Lexus Kapler
Liana Krell
Noah Olson-Daniel
Buck Pattinson
Caroline Ramsey
*Bea Vermeer
Hannah Witt
*Chose not to be confirmed at this time

Thank you to the volunteers who made it possible!

Robin Fortney
Hayley Harvey
Matthew Harvey
Brian Pattinson
Sarah Ramsey
Erika Smith
Jen Vermeer
Sarah Witt
Caring

CONDOLENCES

• to all those who have lost someone to COVID-19.

CONGRATULATIONS

• to all our loved ones graduating from high school and college.
• to Caroline and Nick on the birth of their baby, Amelia Valentine.
• to Jenna Bishop and Woody Sabroske on their recent marriage.

THANKSGIVING

• for our outgoing Moderator, David Johnson, and all other outgoing church leaders.

BY: KAREN QUANCE JESKE

This summer at Plymouth we will celebrate a faith in which we are invited to talk to God about our joys, our fears, our doubts, our anger, and all of our questions. Our Summer of Living the Questions will include:

• Sermon Series: We asked you to help us create this series by sharing your questions and you sent us some great ones. Our pastors will help us explore these questions with scripture, theology and reflections. A guide is available on the Plymouth website. In it you will find questions for yourself as well as books and podcasts to explore in order to deepen your faith.

• Small Groups: We will offer organized small group opportunities to talk with each other and make sense out of the past 15 months of living through a global pandemic.

• Vacation Bible School: Join us for fun, questions, and conversation for your whole family.

• Concerts: When our questions are beyond our understandings, we all appreciate the balm of music. You can be sure that summer at Plymouth will offer many opportunities to enjoy music, including the return of our outdoor lawn concerts.

Information about all of these opportunities will be available on the website and in our church publications. Please join us in Living the Questions.
As an art student at UNI one of my favorite teachers was Shirley Haupt. She ultimately became my advisor and was the reason I finally graduated in 1974. Her drawing and painting classes were my favorites. Her instructions went far beyond just stating the facts. She taught me about life. Once, she said that if the world ever came to an end it would probably be on a Sunday afternoon because it was so calm and slow. She also said I would find my "voice" at some point, and it would impact my art work a lot.

Sitting on my chaise lounge during the summer months, I would drift into states of calm and reflection. One day as I looked at the rainbow windsock I had placed on the ceiling above me, I realized I could use it as a metaphor for the gay experiences in my life. Its colors would represent the Biblical story of Noah and the flood and how God placed a rainbow overhead and promised the world would be better. For the LGBTQIA+ community it is a reminder of this pledge, and a way of seeking our path to justice and peace in this new world where God is still speaking.

Nearly 20 years ago Plymouth Gallery allowed me to show 15 pieces in watercolor that helped describe the gay experience. I am forever grateful for this opportunity. Plymouth has been so important in offering me sanctuary, worship opportunities, and the chance to engage with thinking people around Des Moines and the world. This gallery continues to be a place of wonder, education, and peace for me.

This new series is made from my most recent thoughts about the gay experience and is mostly done with acrylic paint on canvas. I think I have found my vision and my voice. Sometimes it takes a lifetime to find your way. Open and affirming love and God are part of it all now.

**HOW CAN YOU SEE THIS EXHIBIT?**

Stop by Plymouth and see Rick Miller’s beautiful art series. You can do so on Sunday mornings when the church is open for worship from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. You can also stop by Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. No appointment is necessary. To see the exhibit Park on the 42nd Street Circle Drive and ring the doorbell. A volunteer or staff member will meet you at the door to let you in. This series will remain in the gallery through the end of June.
What does your Plymouth's data management system have in common with spring showers? The clouds! They may bring the rain coming down on your gardens, but here at Plymouth our old Shelby V5 System has gone to the clouds! Yes, that's right! We have completed the first phase of upgrading our church data management system.

The first piece of making this a success was to clean up our current data. Thanks to the help of the staff and many volunteers, we have updated thousands of records. Simple updates from telephone formats to identifying the various types of relationships folks have with our church to inputting key dates in the life of the church such as baptisms, confirmations, new members and deaths. This process was extremely manual and we will need your help down the road to validate many portions for us.

After the data clean-up, we moved it over to Shelby Next which will be our platform for the future. The first phase was “membership” and this includes demographics on members, families, giving, organizations, and attendance.

The new system was rolled out to our financial and administrative staff in mid-May and is currently being rolled out to our pastoral staff, followed by our volunteers and board chairs by the end of June. During this time we will be creating new statements, forms, groups and online interactions that are critical for our staff to serve such a large and caring congregation.

Now for the really cool stuff! Our goal for August is to have the new application in your capable hands, so you can review your basic data and demographics and make those changes yourself. We know that not everyone is ready for this technology change, but we will have kiosks set-up to help and volunteers available to take your calls. We’ll do everything we can to make this easy for all.

There will be more to come next month, but we have lots of exciting things coming your way like upgrading our Wi-Fi and a mobile app for you to access our church information and check-in on upcoming services or activities.
Jesus, from Matthew 25:35-40:

‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me’… Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you?’… the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

The Welcoming Migrants Committee and the Board of Christian Social Action are excited to introduce the Plymouth Welcomes a Refugee Family Project! Over the next several months, our congregation will welcome and assist a refugee family as they establish their new home in our city.

A group of Plymouth volunteers is hard at work planning and preparing for the family’s arrival later in the year. We are coordinating our project with USCRI-Des Moines (United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants). USCRI is handling the governmental aspects of relocating the family; we will focus on providing food, clothing, housing, furniture, household goods, mentoring, and friendship.

What we know: a family is coming to our city, as early as this September.

What we don’t know:

• the family’s country of origin
• the family member profile: numbers, ages, special needs
• date of arrival

With so many unknowns, planning can be a bit challenging! We have secured a generous grant from the Plymouth Church Foundation to help fund the project. We will be looking for a pool of volunteers and donations as the Plymouth Welcomes a Refugee Family Project progresses.

We’ll provide project updates, volunteer requests, and specific needs in the coming weeks. You can find more information on the Plymouth website (plymouthchurch.com/refugee-family-project).

Ready to practice some radical love? Consider how you might get involved with the Plymouth Welcomes a Refugee Family Project! In the meantime, please hold the refugee family and project committee in your prayers.

Thank you!

Jesus, from Matthew 25:35-40:

‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me’… Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you?’… the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Photo from USCRI-Des Moines
2021 Scholarship Recipients

PLYMOUTH WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP | Lily DeForest Colvig

Lily DeForest Colvig is a Master of Social Work (MSW) student at the University of Iowa—Des Moines Pappajohn Education Center. She has been a member of Plymouth Church since 2004. She participated in youth choirs as well as Matins Choir where she was a member of the Youth Leadership Team. She is still an active member at Plymouth and participates in the Young Adult Book Study. She will graduate with her MSW in May of 2022. Upon graduation, she hopes to work at a children's hospital as a medical social worker.

PLYMOUTH WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP | Jen Jensen

Jennifer Jensen will begin her journey at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities this fall. An active member at Plymouth for over a decade, Jen has served on several boards including Deacons, Music & Fine Arts, and Membership. She has been a Plymouth theater participant and has taught church school, the Infant & Toddler Class, and is an OWL Facilitator. Jen was baptized at Plymouth alongside her daughter in 2014 and has continued leaning into her faith journey ever since. Jen credits the love and support shown by the members and pastors at Plymouth for giving her the confidence to begin the work of discernment into ministry.

MARIE GREEN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT | Claire Bissmeyer

Claire Bissmeyer is the daughter of Pamela Porter and Lee Bissmeyer. She is a senior at Roosevelt High School and has been a part of Plymouth for most of her life. She has been in Plymouth's youth choirs since kindergarten and is currently a part of Matins Choir. Claire has had many opportunities in different leadership roles through Plymouth such as Youth Leadership Team and co leading the HS Youth Summer Book Study. She also partakes in Plymouth's various service projects. Claire plans to study abroad in Costa Rica and the South Pacific her freshmen year of college and afterwards attend Luther College.

MARIE GREEN SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT | Zoe Zmolek

Zoe Zmolek is the daughter of Noelle Trevillyan and Tom Zmolek. She has participated in Sunday school since kindergarten and was confirmed at Plymouth. She has been an active member of the Children’s Choirs, Soul Singers and Matins Choir. She served on the Youth Leadership Team to help facilitate and organize youth programming, such as tour announcements, and Variety Show. This past summer, she facilitated and led the HS Youth Book Study that read So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo and participated in the HS Youth Note Writers program, writing to older members of the Plymouth community during the height of the pandemic. Zoe has many amazing memories at Plymouth and Matins; her favorites being her freshman year tour and her junior year variety show. Zoe plans to attend the University of Iowa to pursue degrees in microbiology and political science, along with pursuing a museum studies certification.
Plymouth Youth Class of 2021!

Natalie Bennett  Claire Bissmeyer  Alex Bray  Luke Carroll

David Finn Claypool  Parker Johnson  Jack Joyce  Lennox Krell

Nate Stone  Ella Sundstrom  Grace Sundstrom  Lily Ungs

Ryan Williams  Maya Wright  Zoe Zmolek
BY: GEORGIA SHERIFF

Plymouth's 2021 Virtual Vacation Bible School will start on Monday, July 26.

We have a wonderful curriculum with Bible stories, skit scripts, songs, craft ideas, and yoga, that will help children practice LOVINGKINDNESS!

Plans are underway to create materials, content and videos to help kids cultivate COMPASSION for others, themselves, and the world.

How can you help (at a time & location that's convenient for you)?

- **Skits**: Be part of a small group who will use scripts in the curriculum to create a skit for each day.
- **Props**: Help put together simple props for skits.
- **Bible Stories**: Tell the story of the day from the curriculum.
- **Music**: Help create the daily music for VBS. Sing one, two, three or four of the original songs in the curriculum.
- **Crafts**: Put together craft bags.
- **Yoga**: Create four 10-minute yoga videos (breath/yoga sequences are outlined in the curriculum).
- **Family Chats**: Short family chats about a LOVINGKINDNESS practice (with scripts). This can be: a different family each day or a family can create multiple videos.

To sign up or request more information, visit: tiny.cc/VBS-Volunteer21 OR email: gsheriff@plymouthchurch.com or text: 515.201.5072.

We can’t wait for you to join the CAMP COMPASSION Team!! Interested in registering children for COMPASSION CAMP? Watch for information in the Plymouth Weekly and Plymouth social media.

MORE FUN COMING THIS SUMMER FOR FAMILIES!

The Board of Christian Education and Child & Family Ministries are working on Summer Family Events. The first event will be on Saturday, June 26 at Westchester Park. Join us for crafts and fun! Join us for crafts and fun!

Watch for information in the Plymouth Weekly newsletter on Thursdays or on the Plymouth website (plymouthchurch.com)
Plymouth Merchandise Pop-Ups:
Take a bit of Plymouth with you wherever you go!

The Board of Membership is excited to announce dates for summer pop-up shops for Plymouth Merchandise. Current merchandise available includes short sleeve shirts, long sleeve shirts, quarter zip sweaters, face masks, reusable bags, and travel coffee mugs. All items currently offered will be available for viewing and purchase at the pop-up shops.

**Pop-up Shop Dates:** June 6, July 11, and August 1.

The pop-up shop will be set up outside church doors at the upper parking deck between services from 9:45 a.m. to 11 a.m. Please note that if the weather is inclement, the shop will not be open. At this time, cash and check are the accepted forms of payment. In addition to the pop-up shops, merchandise can be purchased via this online order form: [tiny.cc/Plymouth-Merch](http://tiny.cc/Plymouth-Merch).

If you have questions, contact Jen Jensen via email at: jen.jensen1010@gmail.com.
REGULAR WEEKLY OFFERINGS

STAY IN TOUCH!

We have several virtual offerings available to you throughout the week on a variety of platforms! Email, Facebook Live, Zoom, and YouTube. On this page, you will find a list of all of our regular weekly offerings during this month.

We have regular weekly email offerings. If you would like to receive these emails, visit: eepurl.com/dhGrYv, fill out the form with your first and last name and your email address.

MONDAYS...

Monday Moderator Minute: On Mondays, you will receive an email update from our Moderator and Moderator-elect.

Practice Makes Plymouth *(Formerly Weekly Kick-Off)*: At 12:30, join Karen Jeske on Facebook Live to say hello to Plymouth friends, gain understanding of our liturgical seasons, get grounded with worship themes and scripture, and receive a blessing for your week.

TUESDAYS...

Your Faith @ Home: On Tuesdays, you will receive an email with the week’s Scripture, a journal prompt, and Plymouth staff recommendations.

Evening Prayer: At 5:30 p.m. join our ministers on Facebook Live for a service of prayer.

WEDNESDAYS...

Summer Bible Study: Join Pastor Rushing for an eight week Bible Study on Ecclesiastes on Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. on Zoom, starting on June 16! To join, visit the Plymouth website, and click Summer Bible Study.

THURSDAYS...

Plymouth Weekly: On Thursdays, you will receive an email with a list of highlighted activities going on at Plymouth Church.

FRIDAYS...

Friday Music with Seth Hedquist: This event was announced in the May Contact, but it has been canceled.

*Lawn Concerts*: At 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Fridays in June, July, and August (at 6 p.m. in September), join us on the Ingersoll lawn for the "Sounds of the City" concert series. Registration is not required. These concerts are family friendly. We recommend bringing a camping chair or folding chair along.

SATURDAYS...

Virtual Weekend Worship: Our Weekend Worship Service will be available beginning at 5:30 p.m. on our Facebook Page each Saturday.

SUNDAYS...

Weekend Worship: Our Weekend Worship Service will be available beginning at 9 a.m. on our YouTube Channel each Sunday.

*Outdoor Worship*: Join us on the Upper Level Parking Deck for Outdoor Worship each Sunday from 9 to 9:45 a.m. Registration and masks are not required for outdoor services. This service is family friendly, and activities will be available for children. If there is rain, this service will be moved indoors. Check our Facebook page for updates. We recommend bringing a camping chair or folding chair along.

Fellowship Forum: Sunday morning at 10 a.m. join us on Zoom for our weekly conversation about God, life and whatever happens to come up. To join, visit the Plymouth website and click the Fellowship Forum icon.

*Indoor Worship*: Join us in the Plymouth Sanctuary for our indoor Worship service each Sunday from 11:15 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration is not required. Masks are distancing are required in the building at all times. This service is family friendly.

*ABOUT IN PERSON EVENTS...*

Plymouth is looking forward to celebrating the summer and worshipping together in person this summer. Weekend Worship will continue to be offered either in the pre-recorded format Plymouth has been using or live-streamed to our Facebook page. Plymouth is continuing to monitor the COVID-19 Pandemic and is busy working to adapt worship services to current CDC guidelines to offer safe worship for all attendees. If you would like to read more about how Plymouth’s offerings will change this summer, visit: plymouthchurch.com/COVID-19. You will also receive any updates to Plymouth’s plans via email if you are subscribed to our weekly offerings (see “Stay in Touch” for information about subscribing).
CURRENT HAPPENINGS

CHILD ACTIVITIES VOLUNTEERS

Have you seen the Children’s Activities at Sunday Worship services? Kids are excited to have new ways to participate in worship: scarves to wave, dance during songs and music, coloring pages, books, and sidewalk chalk are all popular! Volunteers help distribute items—it’s a great way to meet children and families AND participate in worship. Each week, volunteers:

- Set up the activity table at 8:30 a.m. or 10:45 a.m. All items are ready to go!
- Greet children and families who come to the table and invite them to take activities.
- Direct children and families to place items in designated bin for cleaning.
- Put all items away at the end of worship.

Volunteers receive training & support. Volunteer once, or once a month, or more often. At least one volunteer is needed and two would be great. To sign up, visit: tiny.cc/ActivitiesVolunteers

PLYMOUTH YARD SIGNS

We still have Plymouth Radical Love yard signs available. You can get one for your home at any of our in-person worship services, while supplies last. Just ask one of our Deacons for a sign. You also can stop by Plymouth Church through the circle drive entrance off 42nd Street. Ring the doorbell between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday, and ask one of our office volunteers or staff for a yard sign.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

We have been caught up in a world-wide pandemic for over a year. Which means most of us survived a year that included a lot of isolation, caught up in a vacuum, without our church family by our side. All of us have some joy, some grief, that we weren’t able to experience fully because we were not living in community with one another. We need to catch up! Our Stephen Ministers, Board of Spiritual Growth and Plymouth’s staff are teaming up to offer a bunch of “what happened to you” small group experiences. Each experience will meet for 90 minutes each week for three weeks. Times, locations, dates and registration information will be coming your way in July. Stay tuned, and get ready to catch up with your church community.

2021 GENERAL SYNOD

To keep everyone safe, the 33rd General Synod of the United Church of Christ will be held virtually. This means EVERYONE can attend! If you’ve always wanted to see our covenantal denomination in action: this is your chance!

For more information, visit: www.generalsynod.org
Save the Date: July 11-18, 2021

VOLUNTEER EMAIL LIST

Looking for a way to connect and serve God and one another with a friend, your family, or church? THIS IS IT! To be added to this email blast list of volunteer opportunities: eepuri.com/heSU4b. By subscribing to these emails, you will hear from us each Friday with details about volunteer opportunities available at Plymouth. If there aren’t currently any volunteers needed, we will continue to email each Friday to let you know.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

What is Stephen Ministry? Our Stephen Ministers are trained members of Plymouth Church who are available to help bring a spiritual presence into your life through caring, listening, and prayer. If you are struggling with something in your life and looking for someone to walk it with you, please reach out. Contact LeAnn Stubbs at 515.255.3149 or lstubbs@plymouthchurch.com to discuss having a Stephen Minister assigned to work with you.

CHANCEL FLOWERS

You may notice flowers during our Weekend Worship services on occasion. If you would like to donate flowers on an available week, you can sign up at any of our indoor worship events, or contact Diane Hayes at her email: dhayes@plymouthchurch.com.

DIGITAL LIBRARY

Did you know that Plymouth has a digital library? Go to plymouthchurch.overdrive.com and set up your login. You may sign up for an Instant Digital Card on your smart phone using the Campaign Code: puccwinter20. Remember to select United States for your phone country code. If you need help signing up, email the Library Committee (overdrive@plymouthchurch.com).