Camp Compassion is Plymouth 2021 Vacation Bible School (VBS)! Enjoy stories, skits, songs, movement, crafts, snacks, and games when it works for your family's schedule! Virtual VBS begins Monday, July 26. Access whenever it works for you! VBS is for children ages 3 to rising 5th graders.

Please register by 5 p.m. on Friday, July 15 to ensure materials for your family. You can register for VBS here: tiny.cc/VBS-2021.

Pick up materials beginning Thursday, July 22. More details to come after you register.

VBS Volunteers Still Needed
Camp Compassion is still in need of volunteers. You can volunteer: one time, several times, at-home, or in-person! Looking for a volunteer opportunity that benefits children and families?

Get on our radar and we’ll get on yours! To see what volunteer opportunities are available, visit: tiny.cc/VBS-Volunteer21.

NO OBLIGATION! We’ll share information about opportunities as they come up. Thank you!
Caring

CONDOLENCES

• to all those who have lost someone to COVID-19.
• to the family and friends of Tom Kush.
• to Kait Scanlon whose grandfather passed away.
• to the family and friends of Katherine Fisher.
• to the family and friends of Mia Peterson.
• to the family and friends of Dr. James Sommers.
• to the family and friends of Frank Thomas.

BY: DIANE HAYES

Did you ever notice how connected our lives are, and in so many unexpected ways? That web of connection through Plymouth Church extends much farther than you might imagine.

One of the things I do for Plymouth is report copyrights and permissions for every piece of music played in service. That is, any musical text that is printed in the bulletin or included in a podcast is reported. During Pride Month, we’ve been using hymns from *Songs for the Holy Other*, a collection of hymns affirming the LGBTQIA2S+ community. I can report most of these hymns as usual but some of them require us to obtain permission directly from the poet or composer.

On June 6, we sang the hymn, “God of Queer, Transgressive Spaces,” written by Edward Moran. He graciously gave us permission to use it after looking Plymouth up online, and realizing that his pastor, David Nunn-Telfort, served here as a TiM. Edward told me it was the first time he’d heard all the verses sung in one performance, making it a “world premier” of sorts.

On June 20, we will sing “For Those Who Suffered,” words and music by Benjamin Smith. He quickly said yes to my email. Moments later, Rushing Kimball appeared in my doorway telling me that Benjamin had emailed Rushing to let him know that I had contacted Benjamin about Plymouth using the hymn. It turns out they are friends from Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

The world may be a big place, but thanks to webs of relationships and generations of ministry, Plymouth’s connections stretch far beyond Central Iowa. Let us give thanks and continue the work of building community, sharing our light of love with all we meet.

The Plymouth Version of “Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon”

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.
The visual arts are my kind of storytelling. Art is the most compelling form of communication: you don't need to be of a certain age or background, a student or lover of art, nor must you "understand" what the artist intends. Art should be able to stand on its own, with merit seen and unseen.

My work reflects form and light as observed and imagined in my world. I believe my larger works to be unique because they are so personal. They say something about my view and existence, fundamentally no different from anyone else’s, but perhaps processed and reflected on differently.

As an art teacher I am constantly reflecting and analyzing my instruction, my students' progress, and my own work. It's the only way to grow and improve. Unpredictable responses are welcome. Confused, pleased, or baffled, love it or not, let me know. It's all good.

About David Borzo

David is an award-winning artist who has participated in dozens of shows over the last 30 years, and has had work published in local, state, and national publications. Earning a bachelor's degree in Painting and Drawing from Drake University, David then earned a master's degree in education from Drake, with endorsements in Art, Gen-Ed, and Special-Ed. David is now in his 10th year of teaching art at Edmunds Elementary, sharing his love of art and creativity with children.

Working in ink, charcoal and photography, David most recently won Best in Show from the 2021 Polk County Heritage Gallery Competition; First Place in Drawing at the 2018 Iowa State Fair, and Third Place in drawing at the 2020 Fair.

Other Best of Show awards have come from The Des Moines Women's Club, The World Pork Art Exposition, and Art on My Own Time: Downtown.

See more of David's work on Instagram @davidborzoart.

David also has carved a path in business writing and editing, with work done for Bigelow Tea, The New York Children's Aid Society, Smart Talk Connected Conversations, WAVIN Netherlands, McClure Engineering and Storied Gifts.
Plymouth Welcomes a Refugee Family

Learn More Here!

Plymouth is partnering with the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants Des Moines (USCRI) to sponsor a refugee family's relocation and settlement in Des Moines.

Who is USCRI?

- USCRI is a non-governmental, nonprofit organization and is one of two federally-approved refugee resettlement agencies in Iowa.
- Established in 2010, local agency USCRI Des Moines has welcomed more than 4,000 refugees from around the world to central Iowa: persons forcibly displaced by ethnic, political, or religious persecution; economic or political instability; or war.
- USCRI provides housing assistance (with initial few months' rent), cultural and community awareness classes, school enrollment, healthcare coordination, employment preparation and placement, English language lessons, transportation assistance, mental health counseling, legal services, and anti-human trafficking services.

What is Plymouth’s role?

We are responsible for securing food, clothing, furniture, and household goods prior to the family’s late summer arrival. Along with the USCRI case manager, we will greet the family at the airport. For the next several months, we will provide mentoring and friendship as the family settles into their new home.

What is USCRI’s role in our project?

Working with Plymouth, the agency determines which family we will sponsor. USCRI Des Moines provides our project committee volunteers with orientation and training and conducts background checks on those who will interact directly with the family. USCRI also provides cultural information to help us better prepare for the family’s arrival and success. Once we know the family’s country of origin, USCRI provides a list of foods the family will likely enjoy so we can appropriately fill their pantry and prepare a welcome dinner. We have requested a family with about six members and have learned we must provide a chair and a bed for each family member, a table for meals, and other household furnishings.

From where might our refugee family come?

Refugees resettled in Des Moines have come from Afghanistan, Bhutan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Burma, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, and Syria. We don’t yet know who our refugee family is. We expect to receive more details from USCRI as early as August.

Why is Plymouth getting involved with this project?

Like USCRI, Plymouth has a proud legacy of advocacy. Co-sponsoring a refugee family dovetails with the church’s mission to practice radical love and to extend our commitment to justice and kindness beyond the walls of the church. This project is an opportunity for Plymouth members to live their faith through service to others. We will learn together about the global refugee crisis and put our love for God into action.

A PROUD HISTORY OF ADVOCACY

USCRI has its roots in the International Institute, founded in 1911 in New York City. A young social worker, Edith Terry Bremer, started the organization to provide social and legal services to immigrant girls and women. At that time, three-quarters of the city’s population were immigrants or first generation Americans. The institute evolved over the next century to become today’s USCRI. Throughout the years, the focus of the organization has been to advocate for refugees and immigrants.

“...fundamental values that embrace the newcomer with equal rights and equal opportunity. In return, America prospers—built by those who have placed their bets on the idea of America, e pluribus unum (‘from many, one’).”

- U.S. Committee for Refugees & Immigrants (USCRI)

Want to know more about USCRI? Check out USCRI Des Moines’ website. You’ll find additional articles and information about refugee resettlement, as well as other volunteer and contribution opportunities.

To get involved and learn more about the Plymouth Welcomes a Refugee Family Project, go to our webpage at plymouthchurch.com/refugee-family-project.

Watch for more project updates in the weeks ahead!
Got Hearing Aids?
What You Need to Know About Using Hearing Assistance Devices at Plymouth

Pastor Sarai’s sermon on May 21 admonished us to pay attention. It is hard to do that when one can’t hear most of what is going on. In a quick survey of five Plymouth wearers of hearing aids, none knew if their hearing aids had telecoils or not. Do you have hearing aids? Do you have telecoils or not? And how does one find out?

A telecoil (t-coil) is a very small device in some hearing aids that can detect electromagnetic signals from sound systems then amplifies the signal and presents it to the ear through an individual’s hearing aid. The name telecoil originated from the early form of telephones that would emit an electromagnetic signal as well as sound. Hearing aids were subsequently designed to take advantage of that signal. The limiting factor to t-coils is size of the battery case. The coil is about 1/40 the size of a dime. But it can be crowded in the battery case. About 30-40% of hearing aids in the USA have t-coils.

What does this have to do with hearing aids at Plymouth?
Since the renovation of the sanctuary worship space (nave and chancel), we have a wired loop around the perimeter of the room that emits an electromagnetic signal carrying the sound from the church sound system. This loop also surrounds Burling and Greenwood rooms for overflow situations. When the sanctuary sound system is on, the loop picks up transmissions from microphones used by pastors and choir. Additionally, another loop in Waveland Hall is activated when the sound system is in use there.
The loop transmits sound directly to t-coils in hearing aids if the t-coil is activated. If it isn’t activated, the microphone in the hearing aid does the best it can. If t-coil is activated, pastors’ speech should be clear and audible. The microphone in the hearing aid works for talking to the person next to you in the pew, but not in a large space like the church.

How does one know if the hearing aid has a t-coil? And how is it activated?
The simplest method is to talk to one’s audiologist. Further, take off the hearing aid and look at the battery case. There may be a toggle switch or a button on it. It may be labeled T, M, or TM. Those would stand for Telecoil, Microphone, or Telephone and Microphone.

The hearing aid needs clear instruction on what it is supposed to do:
• T will allow you to listen to the loop/t-coil. You will be able to hear the church service clearly.
• M will allow you to hear the person next to you with the microphone on the hearing aid.
• TM will allow you to do both. You will be able to hear the church service and hear what a someone nearby is saying.

If there is a button on the battery case rather than a toggle, one may need to push it 1, 2, or 3 times to activate the desired function. Best bet: check with your audiologist.

How does one know the public space has a loop?
Look for a sign in the room or on the bulletin/program with a symbol of a blue or black background with two lines and the T. The T is key. Many public spaces such as the Civic Center have a loop.

What about the hearing devices available during church services?
These hearing devices also are connected to the main sound system (just ask one of our Deacons). However, these devices are not engineered to a specific hearing loss. If you have a personal hearing device, it will be calibrated to your needs and work much better for you.

Questions?
Contact your audiologist or the church office at 515.255.3149. We can learn this together! See you in church!
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/dhGrYy, fill out the form with your first and last name and your email address.

MONDAYS...

Monday Moderator Minute Email: On Mondays, you will receive a bi-weekly email update from our Moderator, Jodi Gruening, and Moderator-elect, Greg Kenyon.

TUESDAYS...

Evening Prayer: This service is on break for the summer. Evening Prayer will return in September. Stay tuned for details.

WEDNESDAYS...

Summer Bible Study: Join Pastor Rushing for summer Bible study on the book, Ecclesiastes, each Wednesday night at 7 p.m. on Zoom! To join, visit the Plymouth website, and click Summer Bible Study.

THURSDAYS...

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

FRIDAYS...

Lawn Concerts: At 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Fridays in July and August (at 6 p.m. in September), join us on the Ingersoll lawn for the “Sounds of the City” concert series. These concerts are family friendly. We recommend bringing camping chairs for a place to sit during the concert. Masks are not required. In the event of inclement weather, concert will be moved in to the Sanctuary.

SATURDAYS...

Saturday Night Worship: This service will be outside on Plymouth’s upper level parking deck at 5:30 p.m. each Saturday. This service is led by Saturday Night Band. Masks are optional at these services.

SUNDAYS...

Sunday Morning Worship: Join us in the Plymouth Sanctuary at 9 to 9:45 a.m. or 11 to 11:45 a.m. each weekend for Sunday Morning Worship. Masks are required at the 9 a.m. service and optional at 11 a.m.

Virtual Sunday Morning Worship: Join on live our Facebook page or YouTube channel for a live stream of both the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. in person worship services.

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

LIVING THE QUESTIONS...

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 our questions. Visit our website for more information: plymouthchurch.com/living-the-questions.
CURRENT HAPPENINGS

FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS
Interested in helping “feed the need” here in the Des Moines metro, over the summer and into the fall? DMARC is hosting Meals from the Market, every Farmer’s Market Saturday, until the end of October. Volunteers are needed at their booth, for the following roles:

- **Booth Volunteer** (engage with market attendees about DMARC), from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Donation Collection** (collecting donated produce from vendors), from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sign up you and/or your people at [www.dmarcunited.org/volunteer](http://www.dmarcunited.org/volunteer) and look for the Meals from the Market link.

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](http://www.generalsynod.org)

**Save the Date:** July 11-18, 2021

EASTER OFFERING
Thank you to all who gave generously to Plymouth’s Easter Offering! Like so many things, Covid meant we collected this offering a little differently this year. We kept the offering open through the season of Eastertide and by Pentecost we received $13,062 to share with our community partners! Thanks to continued generous giving to Plymouth’s Good Samaritan Fund, we were able to bridge the small gap that remained to offer grants to all seven organizations at the level promised. Those organizations are Dorothy’s House, CISS, Fatherhood Outreach, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Bhutanese Community in Iowa, Trinity Las Americas, and Hawthorne Hill. Through your gifts, our whole community gets to experience the radical and life-giving love of God and neighbor.

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: [dhayes@plymouthchurch.com](mailto:dhayes@plymouthchurch.com).

BOARD OF BENEVOLENCES
Looking for a way to be more engaged in Church activities? The Board of Benevolences (BoB) has two open board positions—both would fill remaining two year terms. BoB has oversight of these committees: Special Offerings; Food Pantry; Family Promise; Shelter Meals; Food Buddies; The Career Closet; Furniture Pickup; and UCC Relationship. Plymouth Church.

**Benevolence:** the disposition to do good; goodwill; kindness; charitableness; the love of mankind, accompanied with a desire to help others. Please contact Irene Hardisty, BoB chairperson, to discuss further, email ihardisty@yahoo.com or call 515.491.0136.

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, visit: [eepurl.com/heSU4b](http://eepurl.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.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
We have been caught up in a worldwide 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. Contact LeAnn Stubbs for more information: [lstubbs@plymouthchurch.com](mailto:lstubbs@plymouthchurch.com).

DIGITAL LIBRARY
Did you know that Plymouth has a digital library? Go to [plymouthchurch.overdrive.com](http://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).

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