Executive Committee

Practice: Operational Excellence
Meets: 1st and 3rd Monday; Time: 5:30 pm; Location: Zoom and Greenwood Room
Moderator: Jodi Gruening
Secretary: Nathan Blake

Members: Nathan Blake, Julie Carroll, Jodi Gruening, Matthew Harvey, David Johnson, Greg Kenyon, Saria Rice, Doug Rumple, Emily Tripp

Purpose: The bylaws provide that the Executive Council will establish overall policies affecting Plymouth’s operations, property, finances, and personnel, and will resolve time-sensitive matters.

We Agree to Differ. We Resolve to Love. We Unite to Serve, by Practicing Radical Love, Everywhere and Always:
Hospitality & Belonging; Meaning & Purpose; Justice & Kindness
Operational Excellence

AGENDA – July 19, 5:00 p.m.
1. Invocation/Opening Prayer, All in unison
   O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
2. Financial Sustainability Study Group Draft Report – closed session with FSSG
3. Faith Formation Hour Draft – LeAnn, Lindsey & Chris
4. Revised MAP template - Sarai
5. HR Committee members update – Jodi
6. Senior Pastor Search update – Jodi
7. Benediction/Closing Prayer - Sarai
MINUTES – July 19, 2021

Present:
Absent:

1. Invocation/Opening Prayer, All in unison
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6. Senior Pastor Search update – Jodi
7. Benediction/Closing Prayer - Sarai
Faith Formation Hour DRAFT Plan
Monday, July 12, 2021

Present: LeAnn Stubbs, Georgia Sheriff, Karen Jeske, Rushing Kimball, Lindsey Braun, Christopher Goodson (note taker)

Introduction
To be written by LS & LB.

Next steps
• (CDG) Draft 9:00 OOW
• Draft plans for substantive adult faith formation
  o Train lay people to run tech
    o Waveland 4 | Liturgist runs Fellowship Forum
    o Waveland 3 | Preacher with Sermon talk-back / Bible study
    o Waveland 2 | Book study or Animate (Christianity: 101)
    o Waveland 1 | Overflow adjustment
    o OWL
    o Stepping Stones
    o PYA Sunday School
• Youth programming
  o TBD
• Children’s programming
  o TBD

Items to consider
• Kitchen size in Greenwood
• Technology preparedness
• Communications
• Background checks through Shelby
Communications | Socialization plan

- Send plans draft to Boards, Executive Committee
  - Step 1 | Share with staff for discussion (July 13)
  - Step 2 | Boards & Committees
    - Executive Committee | July 19
    - All boards (email) | following Executive
  - Step 3 | August CONTACT Tease
  - Step 4 | September CONTACT
  - KICKOFF | September 12

  - (LB & LS) Prepare introduction and messaging

  - For questions or to share feedback, please contact... ??

  - (CG) Plan for breakfast
    - Check with Wendell Garretson
    - Based on freewill offering
Pre-COVID Sunday Morning Schedule
7:00-9:00 | Worship prep (Sanctuary)
8:15 | Matins Warm-up (Recital Hall)
8:30 | Children’s Choir Warm-up (Rehearsal Hall)
8:30-8:47 | Matins Breakfast (Youth Room)
8:45 | Childcare available (Nursery & Toddler Rooms) [End time?]
9:00 | Worship (Sanctuary)
9:15-10:00 | Church School (All Classrooms)
9:30-9:50 | Chancel Chorale Warm-up (Rehearsal Hall) [if needed]
9:45-10:10 | Chancel Choir Warm-up (Recital Hall) [if needed]
10:00 | After-worship Fellowship (Waveland Hall)
10:10 | Fellowship Forum (Greenwood Room)
10:10-10:50 | Chancel Choir Warm-up (Sanctuary)
11:00 | Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00 | After-worship Fellowship (Waveland Hall)
12:00 | Flower Delivery Team (Sacristy)

Proposed Schedule Draft | Sunday Morning Schedule
7:00-9:00 | Worship prep (Sanctuary)
8:15 | Matins Warm-up (Recital Hall)
8:30 | Children’s Choir Warm-up (Rehearsal Hall)
8:30-8:47 | Matins Breakfast (Youth Room)
8:30-12:30 | Childcare available (Ages? Birth to 5?)
8:30-10:30 | Breakfast (Greenwood/Burling/Courtyard)
9:00-9:45 | Worship (Sanctuary)
9:30-9:50 | Chancel Chorale Warm-up (Rehearsal Hall) [if needed]
9:45-10:10 | Chancel Choir Warm-up (Recital Hall) [if needed]
10:00-10:50 | Church School (All Classrooms, all ages)
10:00 | After-worship Fellowship (Greenwood/Burling/Courtyard)
10:10 | Fellowship Forum (Waveland 4)
10:10-10:50 | Chancel Choir Warm-up (Sanctuary)
10:30-11:00 | Children’s Choir Warm-up (Rehearsal Hall)
Possible: 10:40-11:05
11:00 | Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00 | After-worship Fellowship (Greenwood/Burling/Courtyard)
12:00 | Flower Delivery Team (Sacristy)
Ministry Action Planning Process

To Grow in Love of God and Neighbor
(By practicing radical love everywhere and always)

The Ministry Action Plan (MAP) process is an annual opportunity for Plymouth Boards and Committees to take stock of their direction and align their efforts for the coming year with the Strategic Plan. This process should also be the basis for your proposed budget that is submitted to the Board of Trustees. Please submit all reports that you generate from this process to your staff liaison and Emily Tripp at etripp@plymouthchurch.com.

STEP ONE: Purpose and Past Accomplishments
August Meeting (30 Minutes)

STEP TWO: Priorities for 2021-22 Program Year
September Meeting (30 Minutes)

STEP THREE: Budget for 2021-22 Program Year
Chair or Subcommittee can work on this with staff liaison
Due October 29th, 2021, to Emily Tripp

STEP FOUR: Assign a Board member to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Task Force.
Name and contact information due October 29, 2021, to Senior Minister
STEP ONE: Purpose (August Meeting, 30 minute discussion)

1. Take time to re-read the Strategic Plan and any supplemental materials from the Church Council's Executive Committee.
2. Review your Board's mission/purpose.
3. Identify the pillars that align the most with your Board/Committee.
4. Make a list of your accomplishments from the past year.
5. Brainstorm ideas for the coming year.

*No report is needed from this meeting.

STEP TWO: Priorities for 2021-22 (September Meeting, 30 minute discussion)

1. Review the work you did in August.
2. Identify your key projects and priorities for the 2021-22 Program Year.

*Submit a report outlining your key projects and priorities for the year, organized and aligned as best as you can with the four pillars of the strategic plan (see Strategic Plan Matrix).
STEP THREE: Budget (can be handled outside of regular meetings and approved at your October meeting)

1. Using your report from September, identify the financial resources your Board/Committee will require to accomplish each project or priority.

2. Review your budget and monthly financials from the previous year, as well as any designated accounts, and determine:
   a. **Validity:** Is the line item still needed?
   b. **Effectiveness:** Is the item accomplishing its objective? Does the item relate to the Strategic Plan?

3. Prepare a new budget that reflects the financial needs to complete your projects and priorities. Consider:
   a. **Efficiency:** Is there a way to accomplish the same thing with less money or fewer human resources? Have competitive bids been solicited from suppliers and service providers? Is this ministry being duplicated anywhere else at Plymouth Church?
   b. **Expansion:** How can more be accomplished if additional resources are available? Can more people become involved if more money is allotted? Can more people be reached or helped if more money is allotted?

*Submit your budget to Emily Tripp at etripp@plymouthchurch.com by October 29.

**For all Plymouth Boards except Trustees – please assign one member of your Board to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee with the Senior Minister as needed throughout the Program Year. Once that person is selected, please give their name and contact information to the Senior Minister no later than October 29, 2021**
**ONGOING: Working the Plan**

1. **Late Summer/Fall:** Work through the MAP process at your meetings during August and September. Assign the Chair or a subcommittee to prepare the budget. Provide final copies to all team members. *(Church Boards will also assign one member to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee.)*

2. **Ongoing:** Executive committee members use the MAP as a guide for setting your agendas, planning and assessment of goal progress with staff liaison.

3. **Ongoing:** Periodically review MAP in plenary meetings to maintain focus on goal progress.

4. **Spring:** Use MAP to review the year’s work, assess accomplishments/disappointments. Submit a narrative annual report to Church Council.

5. **Summer:** Church Council may outline new priorities for the coming year and communicate these to Plymouth Boards and Committees as they begin the next cycle of the MAP process.
TO: Jodi Gruening
    Greg Kenyon
    Sarai Rice

FROM: Christine Woods
    Karen Jeske
    Strategic Plan Implementation Committee

DATE: July 15, 2021

RE: Strategic Plan Implementation, Status Report

Preamble:

This report is one summary of the implementation work underway to bring to life the goals of the Strategic Plan. The Interim Senior Minister, the Director of Operations and Finance and other staff or groups may have additional information about other projects or efforts that are also working to advance the aims of Plymouth’s Strategic Plan, Practicing Radical Love Everywhere and Always, with its four practice pillars of: Meaning and Purpose, Hospitality and Belonging, Justice and Kindness, and Operational Excellence.

In particular, work is ongoing or has been completed to:

• Improve the technological resources at Plymouth
• Hire a Volunteer Coordinator
• Review/revise all staff job descriptions
• Implement a new data system
• Change our approach to stewardship
• Remodel the Center for Spiritual Growth
• Reinvent the Sunday morning schedule at Plymouth to enable significant new practices toward Meaning and Purpose as well as Hospitality and Belonging.

In addition to this report, each of these efforts should also be considered significant pieces of implementing the Strategic Plan.

Background:

The Church Council adopted the new Strategic Plan: Practicing Radical Love Everywhere and Always on August 25, 2020, just as the work of the Boards and Committees for the 2020-21 Program Year was getting underway. As stated above, the Plan is organized around four
“pillars”— *Practicing Meaning and Purpose, Practicing Hospitality and Belonging, Practicing Justice and Kindness, and Practicing Operational Excellence.*

To begin the implementation of the plan, the Church Council asked the Boards to add an element to the existing MAP (Ministry Action Plan) process, identifying the “pillars” most aligned with the work of that particular Board. The Council also put out a general call for Plymouth members to help implement the plan and asked each Board, except Trustees, to assign one person to round out a Strategical Planning Committee.

The full committee was filled in January 2021. Christine Woods agreed to Chair the committee and Karen Jeske was asked to staff the group as they began their work.

The others members of the committee include:

- Keith Uhl (at-large)
- Barbie Sullivan (at-large, representing the Strategic Plan Committee)
- Anita Micich (Board of Christian Education)
- Jen Jensen (Board of Membership)
- Judy Stark (Board of Deacons)
- Larissa Hadley (Board of Spiritual Growth)
- Lori Fenton (Board of Music and Fine Arts)
- Lorraine May (Board of Stewardship)
- Robin Maharry (Board of Benevolences)
- Alicia Clabaugh (Board of Christian Social Action)

“We Have a New Strategic Plan”

The first large task was to begin to share the Strategic Plan with the congregation. This work began as the committee was still being formed during the fall of 2020 and the winter of 2021. Cindy Eaton and Elsie Brault, Communications staff, assisted during this phase.

In addition to making a special place for the plan on the website and discussing it during worship, fellowship forum, Church Council and Board meetings, staff and Implementation Committee members produced a series of articles in The Contact and put together a booklet of Lenten practices that was mailed to all members of the church, encouraging them to engage with personal and communal practices in each of the pillars of the plan. (Articles and the Lenten guide are attached)

**Implementation Committee Work and Priorities:**

Once fully formed in January 2021, the committee met during the winter and spring months of 2021. Members shared the priorities of each Board as well as their impressions about the Strategic Plan. Working together, they created a matrix of the work of Plymouth’s Boards and how the work fits with the different pillars of the plan. (Attached)

The Committee quickly determined that the pillar of *Practicing Hospitality and Belonging* is being engaged by several Boards, especially the Board of Deacons and the Board of Membership. Significant hospitality projects seem to overlap between different groups and also felt especially relevant as we were looking ahead and imagining a time when we would be able to “come back” to church as pandemic conditions began to improve.
Having shared this initial direction with other staff, Sarai Rice, asked the Committee to also look at and talk about some of the spaces in the church - the gym, the courtyard, and the Waveland Hall kitchen - and how improvements to these spaces might be viewed in light of a focus on *Hospitality and Belonging*.

**Recommendation:** The Church Council and the Boards should make *Practicing Hospitality and Belonging* a priority for the 2021-22 Program Year.

*Hospitality and Belonging* Recommendations/Opportunities:

- Each Board or Committee should pay special attention to *Hospitality and Belonging* efforts in their MAP processes for 2021-22.

- The Board of Deacons, Board of Membership, and Plymouth Women should work jointly to improve Sunday morning hospitality and the whole welcome process leading new members to join the church.

- Create a work flow with the new database to track and monitor attendance of members to alert us to members at-risk of leaving.

- The Gym is potentially a new gathering space for alternate forms of worship, but it is also a potential space for children and youth activities. The House and Space Committee should engage a process for the best use of this space with appropriate stakeholders.

- The Waveland Kitchen is small and not terribly functional. In addition, equipment and supplies are old and/or outdated. The House and Space Committee should be asked to lead a process, engaging multiple stakeholders at Plymouth, to determine future use and needs for this space.

- The Committee was very captivated by the possibilities of the Courtyard (see more below). Everyone noted as well the beauty of the Greenwood and Burling Room spaces that are adjacent to the Courtyard. The Committee recommends that Plymouth consider these three spaces - Greenwood, Burling and the Courtyard - as the “living room” of the church and consider moving Sunday morning coffee/fellowship into these spaces.

**From Planning to Doing**

As stated above, several Committee members become captivated by the potential of the Courtyard. They organized themselves very efficiently and quickly into a volunteer gardening committee, working for several weeks to clean-up and beautify that space. As we begin coming back to church and gathering in the Greenwood and Burling rooms, the Committee hopes people will also feel like extending their time at the church into this space.
Continuing, Next Steps

One other topic captured the attention of the Committee — the MAP process. (See the Proposed MAP Process Attached)

Recommendation: The MAP process should be revised to be simpler and to also generate more meaningful conversation for the Boards and Committees. They ask that staff work on this process and propose a revised process to the Church Council Executive Committee.

The Committee also greatly valued the opportunity to talk to each other and learn about the work of the other Boards.

Recommendation: Continue using a similar Implementation Committee to help keep the work of the Boards aligned with the Strategic Plan. Recruiting a new Implementation Committee each year can help generate fresh ideas and will extend knowledge and engagement with the Strategic Plan to more of the congregation.

It has been a pleasure and honor to initiate these efforts at Plymouth. We welcome comments and questions.
After months of gathering and sifting through the ideas and reflections all of us offered about our beloved Plymouth Church, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee delivered our plan to us at the Church Council meeting on August 25. The Church Council then adopted our plan and it is now in place to guide our church community through 2025.

The 2020-25 Strategic Plan is called Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always.

This title includes some very big words and the first way we can engage with our new plan is to invite ourselves and our Plymouth friends to examine and reflect on these words together.

Practice. Radical Love.
Everywhere and Always.

Over the next few months we hope you will read the plan and find time to discuss these words. While you’re doing that, we will use some of the space in the Contact to do the same. This month we are looking at Radical Love.

Continued on page 6
Our New Strategic Plan: Radical Love

A Conversation Starter

Radical is a difficult word for some people. It’s provocative and attention-grabbing. And it has some specific connotations for some people that aren’t related to their faith. One thing that Jesus asks his followers, though, is to re-think or re-interpret our current understandings and knowings. So... maybe we are being invited to look at this word anew?

Radical can be used as both an adjective and a noun. (It’s worth a mention that some have used the noun version to label Jesus.) The strategic plan uses it as an adjective. And as you know, adjectives require a noun in order for them to mean something. This is important. In our strategic plan, we are not using Radical alone, we are using it to describe LOVE.

If we apply a dictionary definition to the word in this context, then to practice Radical Love is to love in ways that are more far-reaching and more thorough. In short, it is a challenge to us to stretch and do more to extend love. Far more important than the dictionary, though, is how we see Radical Love. I asked two members of the Steering Committee and two members of the Implementation Committee and here are their reflections:

"Radical love is the fuel that makes us burn brighter and do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. It is selfless. It is ministering in the name of Jesus Christ."

Pam Kenyon
(member of the Steering Committee)

"Practicing radical love means seeking to love ourselves and others the way God loves us. Love that is not based on merit or earned, but rather love that is limitless and cannot be fractured."

Caroline Bettis Valentine
(member of the Steering Committee)

"Nonjudgmental acceptance of everyone!"

Keith Uhl
(member of the Implementation Team)

"Unselfish, caring, respectful love (with God’s help)"

Christine Woods
(member of the Implementation Team)

Plymouth Friends, it’s your turn. What does Radical Love mean to you? Feel free to share your thoughts with me at kjeske@plymouthchurch.com.
Thinking and talking are great ways to start, but maybe you can put our new Strategic Plan words into action and explore them further by participating in a seven-day challenge.

1. Complete any six of these items on any six days you choose during the month of November.

   - After the election or anytime you feel frustrated or angry with someone, use this prayer:
     
     ________ , I acknowledge that of God in you. I accept that God cares for you as God cares for me. I release you from my anxiety and concern, imperfectly…and with baby steps. I choose to see you as God sees you—a unique human being with qualities and abilities that bless the world. I thank God for you.

   - When you are feeling anxious or insecure about yourself, use this prayer:
     
     ________ , I acknowledge that of God in me. I accept that God cares for me as God cares for everyone. I release my anxiety that I am less worthy than other people, letting go of that fear imperfectly…and with baby steps. I choose to see myself as God sees me—a unique human being with qualities and abilities that bless the world. I accept the challenge and the responsibility to become all of whom I am meant to be. I thank God that I am just the person I am.

   - Send a note or email to someone you really appreciate, but might not know how appreciated they are.

   - Bake something and share it with a neighbor.

   - Order food from a locally-owned restaurant.

   - Do an internet search for “Audrey Assad Your Peace Will Make Us One” and listen to this re-working of The Battle Hymn of the Republic.

   - Attend the AMOS Delegate Assembly on November 8 to celebrate the work of 2020 and look ahead to 2021. To join this Zoom event, register here or contact amosiowa@gmail.com.

   - Record a three second “I’m grateful for….” video and share it with our staff by November 13, so we can include it in our Thanksgiving worship service this year.

   - Consider an increase in your annual gift to the Thanksgiving offering.

   - Watch our Special Thanksgiving worship service.

2. For the seventh day take a rest or sabbath.

Make space for an intentional break from your work, worries, stresses or whatever feels heavy in your life right now. Make the duration whatever length of time would feel like a true sabbath - five minutes, an hour, half a day or a whole day. We need to rest and recharge. We need sabbath in order to pursue Radical Love.
BY: KAREN QUANCE JESKE

We continue our discussion about our new Strategic Plan this month by continuing to explore what this plan is inviting us to do. But first, let me share just a little bit about how this plan is being used to organize some of our collective endeavors.

As I write this, each of the church’s Boards are appointing one member each to serve on an Implementation Committee. In addition, we have other members who have also volunteered to serve. The Implementation Committee will have two main tasks: work on ideas to engage the general membership with the plan and also to keep track of projects and initiatives that our Boards and Committees will lead toward its implementation.

All of this is just getting organized. In January, look for a list of our committee members and more detail about how we will approach our work. In the meantime, the committee members who have met have been working on your 7-Day Challenges.

Now, let’s continue where we left off last month and explore a couple more pieces of our invitation to Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always.

Everywhere and Always: A Conversation Starter

While Radical is a difficult word for some, Everywhere and Always are more easily understood and accepted as ingredients in our faith. We know as Christians we are called to love God and love each other Everywhere and Always. And we also know it’s really hard to do and that we all fall short.

No matter what though, God keeps loving us Everywhere and Always. In this way, Everywhere and Always serve to both assure us of God’s love and to challenge us to deliver it.

So, how can we honor this expansive and timeless giving and receiving of love? We can practice. We can look for reminders of God’s unfailing love for us and we can seek reminders of our call to love others. We will explore the concept of Practice more in January, but during the December we offer a new 7-Day Challenge to get more comfortable with the Everywhere and Always parts of our new Strategic Plan.

While you’re doing it, feel free to share your thoughts with me at kjeske@plymouthchurch.com and with each other whenever you have the chance.
Our New Strategic Plan: Everywhere and Always

A Seven-Day Challenge

1. Complete any six of these items on any six days you choose during the month of December.

• Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to get centered, then repeat the **St. Patrick’s Breastplate Prayer** (see this prayer on the right) as often as you need to remind you that Christ is with you Everywhere. Feel free to add hand gestures.

• If you didn’t pick up an Advent Bag at the church, download this year’s Advent Devotional from the Plymouth website, *Maya Angelou and the Freedom Poetry of Advent*, and try to follow the weekly program and practices outlined in the booklet.

• Set up an Advent Wreath at home and light the candles during worship or when using the *Maya Angelou and the Freedom Poetry of Advent* devotional to remind you that hope, peace, joy and love are available to us Everywhere and Always.

• Download the recipe for *Angel Eyes* cookies from the Plymouth website and bake them to share with a neighbor or someone who could use some cheer and a reminder of God’s love this season.

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**St. Patrick’s Breastplate Prayer**

*Christ with me,*
*Christ before me,*
*Christ behind me,*
*Christ in me,*
*Christ beneath me,*
*Christ above me,*
*Christ on my right,*
*Christ on my left,*
*Christ when I lie down,*
*Christ when I sit down,*
*Christ when I arise,*
*Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,*
*Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,*
*Christ in every eye that sees me,*
*Christ in every ear that hears me.*

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**Daily Devotionals for Everyone**

A great way to stretch toward Everywhere and Always is to find a daily dose of inspiration such as the United Church of Christ’s (UCC) *Still Speaking Daily Devotional* which is available as a free daily email by subscribing at: [https://www.ucc.org/daily_devotional](https://www.ucc.org/daily_devotional).

If you prefer a book format you can try:

From the United Church of Christ:

• *God is Still Speaking: 365 Daily Devotions* by Christina Villa

From local author, Joyce Rupp:

• *Anchors for the Soul*
• *Fragments of Your Ancient Name*

Or a year of poetry:

• *A Poem for Every Day of the Year* by Allie Esiri

Or a year of music (you need to have Apple Music)

• *Year of Wonder* by Clemency Burton-Hill

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• Do an internet search for “Nichole Nordeman Legacy” and listen to this beautiful song as an expression Always.

• Attend the *Nativity Seen* event for all Plymouth members on Zoom on Sunday, December 13 at 6 p.m.

• Attend the Longest Night drive-through service at Plymouth on Monday, December 21 at 6 p.m.

• Attend one of the special Caroling or virtual concerts offered by Plymouth during December. You can download an Advent Calendar from the website or check the Events page for details.

• Prepare for 2021 by subscribing to or purchasing a daily devotional to use everyday next year. (See the recommendations to the left).

2. For the seventh day take a rest or sabbath.

Make space for an intentional break from your work, worries, stresses, or perfectionism. Make the duration whatever length of time would feel like a true sabbath: five minutes, an hour, half a day or a whole day. Unlike God, we need to rest and recharge to be more loving.
This is the third and final article to introduce you to our new Strategic Plan. As I write, we are waiting for a few more appointments to the Implementation Committee but the work of Implementing the Strategic Plan will officially begin when the Committee meets on January 11.

As a reminder, the Implementation Committee will have two main tasks: work on ideas to engage the general membership with the plan and also to keep track of projects and initiatives that our Boards and Committees will lead toward its implementation. Look for updates about this work in future issues of the Contact.

For now, let’s finish our initial exploration of the Strategic Plan, Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always. We started with Radical Love, then looked at Everywhere and Always, so let’s explore what we mean by Practice.

Practice: A Conversation Starter

If you own a copy of Marcus Borg’s The Heart of Christianity, take a look at Chapter Ten again. It’s all about Practice in the Christian context. According to Borg, Christians are really good at reminding ourselves that God loves us, but we need a little help remembering that we are also called to love God.

If we love God, we will do two things: pay attention to God and also love what God loves. Anything we do that helps us pay attention to God or to love what God loves is a Practice. So, Christians should really think of their faith as a set of practices, plural. These include the things we do on our own as well as with each other such as devotional disciplines, but also acts of kindness or justice.

If we think of Practices as something akin to exercising our bodies or learning something new, then we also understand that we won’t get it right all of the time and that there are rewards for repetition as well as for trying out new things.

So, how can we Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always? If you’ve been doing our 7-Day Challenges, you have begun.

Finding ways to pay more attention to God and to what God loves, is a lifelong calling. The Practices that work for us today or worked for us yesterday might not be the ones we need in the future. In January, we offer a new 7-Day Challenge to help you explore new and different Practices. While you’re doing it, feel free to share your thoughts with me at kjeske@plymouthchurch.com and with each other whenever you have the chance.

We hope you’ve enjoyed these 7-Day Challenges. If you have, you’re going to love Lent at Plymouth. This year our theme will be “Practice Makes Plymouth.” We will explore the four pillars of the Strategic Plan and offer you a 40-Day Challenge to help make all of these new ideas more real for you.
1. Complete any six of these items on any six days you choose during the month of January.

- Silence is one way we can pay attention to God. Find a Practice of silence that works for you. Start with five minutes a day, experimenting with different times of the day and building the length of time to whatever feels right for you. If you want, you can do this for each of your six days.
- Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to get centered, then recite the Lord’s Prayer (our most well-known prayer) as often as you need to remind you of your love for God and your call to love what God loves.
- For inspiration about how we are called to love each other, practice saying the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis. Find this prayer to the right.
- Read Chapter Ten of *The Heart of Christianity* by Marcus Borg.
- Do an internet search for Dr. Martin Luther King’s Letter From a Birmingham Jail and take an hour to read it, thinking about the challenge it still poses for us today.

### Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

2. For the seventh day take a rest or sabbath. Make space for an intentional break from your work, worries, stresses, or perfectionism. Make the duration whatever length of time would feel like a true sabbath—five minutes, an hour, half a day or a whole day. Unlike God, we need to Practice rest in order to be our most loving selves.
February 2021

Dear Plymouth,

We are about to enter the season of Lent for 2021.

It will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17th. To mark this beginning, we will have a worship service available to view at home and our Stephen Ministers will be thoughtfully and carefully offering ashes in the circle drive from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. that day.

To honor the entire season of Lent we are offering a Lenten Challenge – *Practice Makes Plymouth* – included in this mailing.

Traditionally, Lent is a season of reflection and preparation for Easter. It echoes the 40 days and 40 nights that Jesus spent in the desert before bringing his ministry to Jerusalem. In the season of Lent, we draw closer to God through practices that challenge us.

Our new Strategic Plan – *Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always* – is also asking us to draw closer to God by challenging ourselves as individuals and as a church community. Specifically, it is asking us to *Practice Meaning and Purpose, Practice Hospitality and Belonging, Practice Justice and Kindness*, and *Practice Operational Excellence*. The more we engage with these practices, the more our love will spread. In other words, *practice makes Plymouth*.

The enclosed guide shares some ways to practice these “pillars” of the Strategic Plan, and it invites you to make your own plan for this season. Feel free to experiment and combine some different ideas, and to include your own ideas.

We hope the guide and the online toolkit we’ve created to go with it inspires you, and we ask that you prayerfully and playfully make a commitment to a practice-centered season of Lent.

Blessings,

Karen Quance Jeske
On behalf of the Plymouth Staff
THIS GUIDE and our accompanying ONLINE TOOLKIT are designed to allow you to explore various faith PRACTICES during this Lenten season and show how they align with the four pillars of our new STRATEGIC PLAN – Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always. Quite simply, the more you PRACTICE, the more we fulfill the aims of the plan. In other words, PRACTICE makes PLYMOUTH.

Engage, explore, and enjoy finding the most meaningful practices for you during this Lenten Season!

You can find the Online Toolkit and all of the materials we reference in this Guide at plymouthchurch.com/practice-makes-plymouth
What do you need in your life that will help you live your faith everyday? What daily commitments do you need to make to study, worship, or pray? What would help you see yourself as a minister of Jesus Christ at home, at work, and in the community? Are you called to help other Plymouth members discover meaning and purpose?

- Download the Lenten Devotional, Emily Dickinson and the Poetry of Lent, and follow the readings, prayers, meditations, and other practice suggestions that it includes.

- Pick one day, Monday–Thursday, each week to participate in the 5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer services on Plymouth’s Facebook page. (Not on Facebook? No worries. Just follow the link on our website and you can view it through your web browser.)

- Join Plymouth’s regular weekly Bible Study on Zoom on Wednesday nights.

- Join the Wisdom in the Time of Pandemic book study led by LeAnn Stubbs and Brian Leckrone on Sunday afternoons.

- Set aside time each day for prayer or silence. Start small with a minute or two and gradually increase this throughout Lent.

- Visit the church for some sacred time. The sanctuary will be open a few times each week for private prayer. The Gallery will allow visitors in small groups. A Labyrinth will be set up in Waveland Hall during Holy Week. Watch church publications and the website for details.

- Download and print the Gratitude Jar — one for the family or one for each family member — and write a word or phrase you are grateful for each day during Lent.

- Love to take photos? Check out the Lenten #PracticeRadicalLove #PlymouthChurchDSM photo challenge in the Toolkit. Be sure to include both hashtags!

- Download the Practice Radical Love playlist and listen to it often.
How can you nurture and develop a greater sense of hospitality in your life? Can you be welcoming and supportive to more people? Would you like to feel deeper connection with your family, friends, or co-workers? Are you called to help Plymouth be a more hospitable and welcoming place?

- Commit to watching worship each week when it's LIVE on Facebook at 5:30 p.m. on Saturdays or premiering on YouTube at 9 a.m. on Sundays. When you watch worship LIVE, you can engage with other members in the comment area. (Not on Facebook? No worries. Just follow the link on our website and you can view it through your web browser. You simply won’t be able to participate by making comments.)

- Volunteer to call on other Plymouth members and check in with them during Lent.

- Get an email list of our newest members who joined this year from Mary Kate Buchanan (mbuchanan@plymouthchurch.com) and send each of them a welcoming email.

- Bake cookies and share with a neighbor.

- Reach out and find ways to connect with your most important people. Have a conversation about how they have found meaning during this pandemic.

- Purchase Plymouth merchandise and wear it!

FOR FAMILIES:

Looking for a fun way to explore a variety of PRACTICES with the whole family? Bless this Mess is a downloadable set of Lenten PRACTICES you can print at home on paper or card stock that cover each of these first three pillars. They are designed to provide your family with fun and meaning during the season. Feel free to connect them to the pillars outlined here by writing the name of the pillar that best captures each Practice on the back side.
What does it mean to you to DO justice, LOVE kindness, and to walk HUMBLY with God? Plymouth is a Just Peace Church that is also committed to anti-racism education and creation care and justice. How familiar are you with this work at Plymouth? Do you need to learn more, or is it time to become more active in these pursuits? Plymouth also actively reaches out to organizations in our community to support those in need. How can you do your part? How might your life change if you looked for ways to show kindness to strangers more often?

- Learn more about Des Moines’ history with urban renewal by participating in the Understanding Social Injustice Through the Power of Place series that will take place on four Saturday mornings in March.

- Check out Plymouth’s all new Digital Library and our Practice Radical Love Book List. You will find titles for all of the pillars, including some great ones to learn more about practicing Justice. Select a book and read it during Lent.

- Participate in the I Was a Stranger Lenten challenge. You can find a link with more information in our Online Toolkit, but this challenge combines daily scripture reading with building awareness around immigration concerns and issues.

- As we move closer to Easter, watch for information about our Special Easter Offering. At Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas, Plymouth selects local organizations that provide direct service to people in need to receive our special offering. Consider a generous gift this Easter.

- Donate to a local charity providing relief to people in need.

- Support a locally owned business and/or give radically generous tips to restaurant or drive-thru workers during Lent.

- Try the 25 Random Acts of Kindness Challenge in the Online Toolkit.
If our PRACTICES — yours combined with all of our members — make our church, then our PRACTICES of presence and attention to the ways we function as a church are critical. Plymouth is confronting a few critical crossroads — being a vibrant church during a pandemic, new Senior Minister Search, new proposed Bylaws, new Strategic Plan. What attention can you bring to these matters? You are Plymouth Church! Your time and attention to these and other matters will make us a better church.

A Checklist of Ways You Can Help Plymouth Achieve Operational Excellence:

- Attend Worship.
- Attend events and try new things at church.
- Stay informed by reading The Contact each month.
- Stay informed by reading our three weekly emails:
  - Monday’s Moderator Minute covers governance concerns
  - Tuesday’s Your Faith @ Home gives you tools to deepen your faith
  - Thursday’s Plymouth Weekly points you to upcoming events and activities
- Share your time, talent, and treasure….maybe on a board or committee? Board nominations take place during Lent.
- Express gratitude for the work of church leaders and the staff through email.
- Read the Strategic Plan.

TAKE A SABBATH

Attend to your own Operational Excellence by making time for rest or sabbath. Make space for an intentional break from your work, worries, or stresses. Make the duration whatever length of time would feel like a true sabbath — five minutes, an hour, half a day or a whole day. Unlike God, we need to rest and recharge to practice radical love everywhere and always.
(5-10 minutes, extra worksheets available in the Toolkit)

Use this worksheet to make a PRACTICE plan for your Lenten Season. There are no rules here and perfection is not a requirement. Just set some intentions and see where they take you. (And if a BINGO card for the season is more your style, you’ll find one in the Toolkit!)

Take a moment to reflect on which pillars are calling to you in this season of your life? It’s okay to pick one or to divide your intentions among two, three, or all four. Use the pie chart to reflect your focus for this season among the four pillars.

___% Practicing Meaning and Purpose
___% Practicing Hospitality and Belonging
___% Practicing Justice and Kindness
___% Practicing Operational Excellence
Now, take a few minutes to consider what PRACTICES can make your Lenten Season more meaningful?

What can you do in the next six weeks to Practice Radical Love Everywhere and Always? Organize your plan and approach here. (You do not need to fill in each box.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT CAN I DO...</th>
<th>to practice Meaning and Purpose?</th>
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<th>to practice Justice and Kindness?</th>
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<td>Every Day</td>
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<td>Every Week</td>
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<td>At least once during Lent</td>
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How do I hope to be changed by this Lenten Challenge:
The Online Toolkit that supports your Lenten PRACTICE MAKES PLYMOUTH Challenge can be accessed at: plymouthchurch.com/practice-makes-plymouth

or by scanning this QR code:
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<th>Hospitality and Belonging</th>
<th>Justice and Kindness</th>
<th>Operational Excellence</th>
<th>Not Sure?</th>
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<td>We live our faith every day through study, through worship and prayer, and being ministers of Jesus Christ at home, at work, and in the community.</td>
<td>We pray for the gift of difference as we celebrate and welcome all.</td>
<td>We pursue God’s requirement to do justice, love kindness, and walk humble.</td>
<td>We support our work with effective structures and digital tools to create a frictionless experience for everyone.</td>
<td>This Board serves to forge links between members’ faith and their material lives.</td>
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<td><strong>Membership</strong></td>
<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
<td><strong>Deacons</strong></td>
<td><strong>Operational Excellence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not Sure?</strong></td>
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<td>The Board of Membership serves meaning and purpose by initiating, facilitating, and supporting opportunities to help members and church attendees deepen relationships with each other and with Plymouth Church.</td>
<td>Welcome Desk — when church services are in person, a representative of the Board of Membership is at the Welcome Desk before, between, and after the service. The Welcome Desk has become a valuable place of connection for visitors and members alike. Visitors stopping at the desk receive a Plymouth insulated mug to welcome them to Plymouth Church.</td>
<td>In addition to obtaining pledges that help support the initiatives of Plymouth, this Board is responsible for Financial Peace University that provides financial education. It offers TIM ministers and newly married couples the course at no cost through a Plymouth Foundation competitive grant.</td>
<td>The work of this Board is focused on pledges. But given the impact of tax laws (that limit the tax benefits of charitable contributions federally) and make fulfillment of pledges through donor directed foundations inappropriate, perhaps a broader focus on overall levels of contributions from numerous sources would be helpful.</td>
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<td>Plymouth Merchandise - an offering of various merchandise to the Plymouth family can show its presence in the community. Ingersoll Live Presence - on hold during pandemic; Membership organizes a booth for Plymouth at Ingersoll Live Gathering, making our presence known in the community.</td>
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<td>The work of this Board focuses on obtaining the financial resources necessary to make all other committed membership of Plymouth feasible. It seeks to collect the revenue to support all of Plymouth’s foundational practices. This board partners with the Board of Trustees and the Director of Operations &amp; Finance to provide transparency on financial matters.</td>
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<td>Discover Plymouth Classes - held three times a year, the Board organizes a series of classes to enlighten prospective New Members on the diversity of services and programs offered at Plymouth Church. Before classes begin, members of the board reach out via phone or email to potential new members to increase participation.</td>
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<td>New member potluck - annual get together for new members to provide hospitality and connection points within the church.</td>
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<td>Ambassadors - a new initiative, on hold until in person worship resumes, with a mission to create a support network to identify visitors attending Plymouth Services.</td>
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<td><strong>Christian Stewardship</strong></td>
<td><strong>This Board serves to forge links between members’ faith and their material lives.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Board of Christian Stewardship invites all to contribute to Plymouth financially in communion with our total membership to join our resources in furtherance of our shared purposes and goals. It is a definitive way to become part of the force that is Plymouth. While COVID-19 has caused a pause in these activities, this Board has historically reached out to all other Boards to assure commonality of purpose and happily sponsored Pie Sunday; we will do so again.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Deacons</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Deacons practice Meaning and Purpose through our contributions to the worship services and gatherings at Plymouth, including support of Communion, Baptism, sharing of our gifts (offering) and funeral services.</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Deacons also practice Justice and Kindness through the Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner that raises funds to help those in need through the Pastors discretionary fund and through our contributions to the dinners at Central Iowa Shelter and Services.</strong></td>
<td><strong>With clear and timely communication from Plymouth staff, the Deacons contribute to excellence in worship through what we hope is a warm welcome and otherwise seamless and meaningful experience.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Members and visitors need to feel welcomed at Plymouth worship services and other gatherings. The Deacons will continue to keep Hospitality front-and-center in our worship support considerations. Other efforts such as the Visitors’ center,</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Board of Deacons</strong></td>
<td>The Board of Deacons helps Plymouth members and visitors grow in love of God and neighbor by practicing warm welcome to, and seamless support of, meaningful worship, funeral services and other gatherings at and of Plymouth. of the year, consistent with our role in Hospitality and Belonging. In the interim, we will continue to support limited-participation services and events.</td>
<td>greeting members and visitors in the pews, and engaging with members and visitors during fellowship will require an effort beyond the Deacons.</td>
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<td><strong>Spiritual Growth</strong></td>
<td>The Board of Spiritual Growth’s mission is discovering and looking at Plymouth’s meaning and purpose constantly and using these resources to understand what the congregation may be currently needing spiritually, mentally, and physically. Spiritual growth wants to provide and have an open mind and space for each person to feel welcomed and appreciated. Currently working on a remodeling project for the library and spiritual growth lounge. Spiritual Growth knows that everyone has their faith journey and by broadening the possibilities and experiences makes a better environment for our church. This board is works together to figure what might the congregation be eager for, examples would be education classes, bible in 90 days, lenten services, OWL class, meditation. Currently working on a format to offer a course and discussion on grieving due to the Pandemic and other topics that might be a struggle for many.</td>
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<td><strong>Benevolences</strong></td>
<td>The Board of Benevolences benevolence activities provide opportunities to work as ministers of Jesus Christ at home, at work and in the community. Board of Benevolences initiatives attempt to appreciate the gift of difference and provide all with opportunities for connection to Plymouth. The Board of Benevolences work aligns most closely with this pillar. The definition of Benevolence in our MAP is &quot;the disposition to do good; goodwill; kindness; charitableness; and the love of mankind accompanied with a desire to help others.&quot; The Board of Benevolences identifies, creates and coordinates opportunities for members and participants to live their faith through volunteer service to assist those dealing with homelessness, food insecurity and economic injustice. The Board of Benevolences Mission Statement was amended to say that the Board promotes the practices of Justice and Kindness by providing opportunities for members and participants to live their faith through volunteer service to others beyond the Plymouth campus. The Board of Benevolences is working with effective structures and digital tools to create a frictionless experience for everyone. One of the Board’s goals for the upcoming year is to work toward a coordinated volunteer effort across all of Plymouth’s initiatives. The intent would be to make volunteer opportunities, both church and community, more accessible to members and participants and provide a more direct way for people to learn of opportunities and engage.</td>
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### Christian Education

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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We, the Board of Christian Education, create, facilitate, and</td>
<td>The Board of Christian Education is committed to engaging families and</td>
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<tr>
<td>support programs and opportunities for children and families to grow in</td>
<td>children/youth in programming and opportunities that support growth and belonging. During this</td>
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<tr>
<td>love of God and neighbor.</td>
<td>pandemic the Board of Christian Ed and Church School Teachers have engaged families with virtual</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Board of Christian Education helps families with children grow in</td>
<td>church school on Wednesday evenings through zoom, through creating and distributing Family Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>love of God and neighbor through our church school programming and</td>
<td>Bags for the seasons of Advent and Lent and are exploring how to create family community groups</td>
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<td>other classes and opportunities. We also work towards the strategic</td>
<td>through outreach efforts.</td>
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<td>initiatives of evangelism and stewardship including them as much as</td>
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<td>possible in our programming.</td>
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<td>The Board of Christian Education has engaged families in outreach</td>
<td>The Board of Education has engaged families in outreach activities. These included service projects</td>
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<td>activities. These included service projects for the DMARC food bank,</td>
<td>for the DMARC food bank, hosting an OWL leadership training, conducting a survey of families to</td>
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<td>hosting an OWL leadership training, conducting a survey of families to</td>
<td>determine what programs are most rewarding for them and what could be changed to better meet their</td>
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<td>determine what programs are most rewarding for them and what could be</td>
<td>needs. Vacation Bible School was a huge success. It was virtual with activity bags to pick up, had</td>
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<td>be changed to better meet their needs. Vacation Bible School was a</td>
<td>pre-recorded songs, stories and skits. 62 families with 35 children and their parents and 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>huge success.</td>
<td>volunteers from the Plymouth Quilters, and Career Closet Committee.</td>
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<td>The Board of Education has engaged families in outreach activities.</td>
<td>Georgia Sheriff has been an invaluable leader for Plymouth’s Board of Christian Education during</td>
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<tr>
<td>These included service projects for the DMARC food bank, hosting an</td>
<td>this time of transition. The two year delay in the search process for a new Director of Child and</td>
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<td>OWL leadership training, conducting a survey of families to determine</td>
<td>Family Ministry has been disappointing and has created a vacuum in leadership when it was most</td>
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<td>what programs are most rewarding for them and what could be changed to</td>
<td>essential. An essential goal for the ongoing work of Plymouth Church and for the Bd of Christian</td>
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<td>be changed to better meet their needs.</td>
<td>Education is to engage in a process to search and hire a new Director.</td>
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<td>Ongoing initiatives of evangelism and stewardship including them as</td>
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<td>much as possible in our programming.</td>
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<td>The Board of Christian Education has engaged families in outreach</td>
<td>The BCSA continues to think through the most effective possibilities for communicating and how</td>
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<td>activities. These included service projects for the DMARC food bank,</td>
<td>to best disseminate information about committee work, especially in a virtual environment.</td>
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<td>hosting an OWL leadership training, conducting a survey of families to</td>
<td>The board will continue to use the Google Drive location where BCSA information will be documented,</td>
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<td>determine what programs are most rewarding for them and what could be</td>
<td>so that year-to-year operations are more consistent, with the goal to transition to Touchpoint</td>
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<td>be changed to better meet their needs.</td>
<td>when possible. Finally, the board will bring all committee funding requests back to the three</td>
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<td>Ongoing initiatives of evangelism and stewardship including them as</td>
<td>pillars of BSCA: “Identify, Stimulate, Invite” and the four pillars of Plymouth’s strategic plan:</td>
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<td>“Practicing: Meaning &amp; Purpose; Hospitality &amp; Belonging; Justice &amp; Kindness; and Operational</td>
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<td>Excellence.”</td>
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### Social Action

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<td>The Board of Christian Social Action promotes conversation during</td>
<td>The BCSA champions a number of initiatives that help create meaningful dialogue and extend a</td>
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<tr>
<td>monthly meetings and throughout the church aimed at identifying best</td>
<td>church welcome beyond the walls of Plymouth. Examples include, but are not limited to, the bi-</td>
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<tr>
<td>practices in the area of Christian Social Action. The board is made up</td>
<td>annual provision of meals to the Central Iowa Services and Shelter, sponsorship of a refugee</td>
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<td>of committees including Anti-Racism, Human Trafficking, Welcoming</td>
<td>family, partnership with the Ebenezer Baptist Church is Cuba, supporting members of the community</td>
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<td>Migrants, Cuba Partnership, AMOS, Peace, P-JPAN, Transition from Prison,</td>
<td>find place and home after prison, the work of the Anti-Racism Committee, through intentional</td>
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<td>Interfaith Alliance and Creation Care.</td>
<td>efforts to lower Plymouth’s carbon footprint, through on-going collaboration with other churches</td>
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<td>and organizations and by connecting people to the work through information sharing.</td>
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<td>The BCSA focuses on justice by working together and through the</td>
<td>The BCSA continues to think through the most effective possibilities for communicating and how</td>
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<td>inclusive committees to share and implement ideas relative to</td>
<td>to best disseminate information about committee work, especially in a virtual environment.</td>
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<td>Christian Social Action. The board leverages the communications</td>
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<td>platform of P-JPAN to increase outward-facing information exchanges</td>
<td>so that year-to-year operations are more consistent, with the goal to transition to Touchpoint</td>
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<td>about ongoing activities and to solicit additional ideas.</td>
<td>when possible. Finally, the board will bring all committee funding requests back to the three</td>
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<td>Additionally, the board has mobilized committees to seek and identify</td>
<td>pillars of BSCA: “Identify, Stimulate, Invite” and the four pillars of Plymouth’s strategic plan:</td>
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<td>areas of collaboration between other committees and boards going</td>
<td>“Practicing: Meaning &amp; Purpose; Hospitality &amp; Belonging; Justice &amp; Kindness; and Operational</td>
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<td><strong>Music and Fine Arts</strong></td>
<td>The Board of Music and Fine Arts promotes the practice of Meaning &amp; Purpose through exploring, nurturing, and celebrating the relationship among artistic expression, personal enrichment and spiritual growth.</td>
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<td><strong>Stephen Ministry</strong></td>
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Ministry Action Planning Process

To Grow in Love of God and Neighbor
(By practicing radical love everywhere and always)

The Ministry Action Plan (MAP) process is an annual opportunity for Plymouth Boards and Committees to take stock of their direction and align their efforts for the coming year with the Strategic Plan. This process should also be the basis for your proposed budget that is submitted to the Board of Trustees. Please submit all reports that you generate from this process to your staff liaison and Emily Tripp at etripp@plymouthchurch.com.

STEP ONE: Purpose and Past Accomplishments
August Meeting (30 Minutes)

STEP TWO: Priorities for 2021-22 Program Year
September Meeting (30 Minutes)

STEP THREE: Budget for 2021-22 Program Year
Chair or Subcommittee can work on this with staff liaison
Due October 29th, 2021, to Emily Tripp

STEP FOUR: Assign a Board member to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Task Force.
Name and contact information due October 29, 2021, to Senior Minister
**STEP ONE: Purpose (August Meeting, 30 minute discussion)**

1. Take time to re-read the Strategic Plan and any supplemental materials from the Church Council’s Executive Committee.
2. Review your Board’s mission/purpose.
3. Identify the pillars that align the most with your Board/Committee.
4. Make a list of your accomplishments from the past year.
5. Brainstorm ideas for the coming year.

*No report is needed from this meeting.*

**STEP TWO: Priorities for 2021-22 (September Meeting, 30 minute discussion)**

1. Review the work you did in August.
2. Identify your key projects and priorities for the 2021-22 Program Year.

*Submit a report outlining your key projects and priorities for the year, organized and aligned as best as you can with the four pillars of the strategic plan (see Strategic Plan Matrix).*
STEP THREE: Budget (can be handled outside of regular meetings and approved at your October meeting)

1. Using your report from September, identify the financial resources your Board/Committee will require to accomplish each project or priority.

2. Review your budget and monthly financials from the previous year, as well as any designated accounts, and determine:
   a. **Validity:** Is the line item still needed?
   b. **Effectiveness:** Is the item accomplishing its objective? Does the item relate to the Strategic Plan?

3. Prepare a new budget that reflects the financial needs to complete your projects and priorities. Consider:
   a. **Efficiency:** Is there a way to accomplish the same thing with less money or fewer human resources? Have competitive bids been solicited from suppliers and service providers? Is this ministry being duplicated anywhere else at Plymouth Church?
   b. **Expansion:** How can more be accomplished if additional resources are available? Can more people become involved if more money is allotted? Can more people be reached or helped if more money is allotted?

*Submit your budget to Emily Tripp at etripp@plymouthchurch.com by October 29.

**For all Plymouth Boards except Trustees – please assign one member of your Board to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee with the Senior Minister as needed throughout the Program Year. Once that person is selected, please give their name and contact information to the Senior Minister no later than October 29, 2021*
ONGOING: Working the Plan

1. **Late Summer/Fall:** Work through the MAP process at your meetings during August and September. Assign the Chair or a subcommittee to prepare the budget. Provide final copies to all team members. *(Church Boards will also assign one member to work on the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee.)*

2. **Ongoing:** Executive committee members use the MAP as a guide for setting your agendas, planning and assessment of goal progress with staff liaison.

3. **Ongoing:** Periodically review MAP in plenary meetings to maintain focus on goal progress.

4. **Spring:** Use MAP to review the year’s work, assess accomplishments/disappointments. Submit a narrative annual report to Church Council.

5. **Summer:** Church Council may outline new priorities for the coming year and communicate these to Plymouth Boards and Committees as they begin the next cycle of the MAP process.