



# Plymouth Congregational Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

January 14, 2018  
Service of the Word  
Second Sunday after Epiphany  
10:00 am

***Our goal is to create a beloved community  
and this will require a qualitative change in our souls  
as well as a quantitative change in our lives.***

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

## THE GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

\*OPENING HYMN

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

There Is A Balm  
O Day of God, Draw Near

Arr. Joe Utterback  
No. 611  
Scott Kraemer

One: God of the prophets, call to us today.

**ALL: Call us into Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of the poets and songsters,  
remind us again how much You love us.

**ALL: Sing to us Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of the disciples, show us how to follow You, no matter the cost.

**ALL: Teach us Your ways of love, justice and righteousness.**

One: God of all creation, help us to know and honor Your ways.

**ALL: We gather to hear Your call ... sing Your praises ... learn and  
grow together ... pray and worship as the Body of Christ and  
Beloved Community.**

WORDS OF WELCOME

Craig French

## THE REFRESHMENT OF FORGIVENESS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

**God of Justice and Mercy,  
we confess that we have silenced our prophets.**

**We have covered our ears  
against those who speak out for justice,  
because it makes us uncomfortable.**

**We ignore calls to end oppression and violence,  
because it is inconvenient for us.**

**We avoid the eyes of the poor,**

\* Please rise if you are able

because they embarrass us.  
 Forgive us, God, for not learning  
 from the mistakes of our ancestors,  
 who ignored and killed their prophets.  
 Forgive us when we follow their example,  
 instead of following your ways.  
 We pray in the name of Christ,  
 who offers us forgiveness.

(A TIME OF SILENT PRAYER)

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*Please share a sign of peace with those around you.*

\*WELCOME SONG (unison) Woke Up This Mornin'

1. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind, stayed on  
 2. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind, stayed on

Je - sus. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind,  
 free - dom. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind,

stayed on Je - sus. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind,  
 stayed on free - dom. Woke up this morn - in' with my mind,

stayed on Je - sus. Hal - le - lu, hal - le - lu, hal - le - lu - jah.  
 free-dom.

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Kim Looney

SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 3:1-18

*Narrator/God: Scott Kraemer; Samuel: Abby Otte; Eli: Stacey Otte*

ANTHEM

Follow the Drinking Gourd

spiritual arr. Jay Althouse

SERMON

Here I Am, Lord

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo-ple cry.  
I who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.

2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo-ple's pain.  
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a- lone.

3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame,  
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

1.

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way.  
I will speak my word to them.  
I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.  
I will give mv life to them.

2.

Whom shall I send? Here I am, Lord.  
Whom shall I send?  
Whom shall I send?

Is it I, Lord? I have heard you call-ing in the  
night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

*Refrain (Harmony)*

**THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER**

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (unison)

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

*There are several beloved versions of this prayer. In an effort to pray in unison while respecting the different versions that many of us have prayed since childhood, we will cycle through the different versions over the course of a year. We will pray using "trespasses" through the first part of 2018.*



## ☞ Music Notes for January 14, 2018 ☞

Today we celebrate Martin Luther King Day using spirituals which were often sung in the struggle for civil rights.

Our **prelude** and **postlude** are chorale preludes in jazz style by Joe Utterback (b. 1944.) In addition to his main career in jazz and in the orchestral pits of Broadway, Joe has been music director at First Congregational Church, Stratford, Connecticut (UCC!) since 1996.

Our **offertory anthem** likewise was sung to direct runaways from Mobile, Alabama to “Follow the Drinking Gourd”, ie: the Big Dipper, which points to the north star, and on to the Ohio River. Note that they would travel only at night. The song goes on to give more specific directions:

*Follow the drinking gourd,*

*for the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom, if you follow the drinking gourd.*

*When the sun comes back, (in winter/spring as the days get longer)*

*and the first quail calls, (the breeding season, usually in April in Alabama)*

*follow the drinking gourd. (the Big Dipper pointing to the North Star)*

*The dead tree will show you the way; (guide trees were marked with the outline of a left foot, peg foot travelling on: left foot, and a round spot in place of the right.)*

*follow the drinking gourd.*

*The river ends between two hills. (headwaters of the Tombigbee River in Mississippi)*

*There's another river on the other side (the Tennessee River which leads to the Ohio River)*

*Where the great river meets the other river (Tennessee River meeting the Ohio in Paducah, KY.)*

*Follow the drinking gourd.*

Moses Hogan (1957-2003) wrote many beautiful settings of spirituals that have been used extensively in schools and churches. He died of a brain tumor at the height of his creative achievements.

*Walk together children, don't you get weary!*

*There's a great camp meeting in the promised land.*

*Gonna walk, and never tire!*

## ☞ About Plymouth ☞

Plymouth was founded in 1853 by a group of Syracusans who wanted to create a Christian abolitionist bulwark in the city. Since then, we have fought against slavery, poverty, and war; for immigrants', natives', workers', LGBT, and women's rights; and sought to be agents of mercy in a hurting world. We believe in beauty, laughter, the struggle for peace with justice, taking risks for God, and the Way of Jesus Christ.

Our faith is over 2,000 years old; our thinking is not!

**We are Open and Affirming** We believe God calls us to welcome all people and their gifts regardless of gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, physical ability, socioeconomic status, or religious background.

**We are Just Peace** We covenant to live actively within the holy longing that weds justice with the quest for peace – within us, between us, in community, and across the globe. We covenant to affirm the sacredness of all life and to honor and preserve creation.

**We are Sanctuary** We provide a space of physical, emotional, and spiritual safety for immigrants without documents, and specifically pledge to the principles of the national New Sanctuary Movement.

**We are Progressive Christians** We try to walk in the way of Jesus Christ, our brother and savior. We believe God speaks new meanings for new days, and that She does so not only in the church and the ancient words of the Bible, but through the insights of science, the arts, the revelations of other religions, and the best strivings of the human spirit. We believe God has granted us a purpose, and that life is too short for long-faced religion. Join us!

Rev. Craig French, Bridge Pastor  
Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music  
Kim Looney, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries  
Kathy Ferro, Church Administrator  
Mark Johnson, Sexton

232 East Onondaga Street ☞ Syracuse, New York 13202  
(315) 474-4836  
plymouthsyr.org ☞ office@plymouthsyr.org