

Plymouth Congregational Church

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Service of the Word
September 26, 2021
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
10:00 am

RINGING OF THE BELL

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

Jaya Rogala

PRELUDE

“Liebster Jesu”

J. S. Bach

*OPENING HYMN

“We Have Gathered, Jesus Dear”

No. 74

**We have gathered, Jesus dear, we have come to watch and listen.
Fix our minds, our senses clear, to receive your heavenly lesson.
Please improve our concentration: draw us into contemplation.**

**All our intellectual dreams come to nothing, fade at daybreak.
All our hopeful plots and schemes, start in pretense, end in heartache.
Thoughtful speech, and active justice, you accomplish these within us.**

**Born of God, true light of light, Holy Spirit, pure, unfailing:
All our faculties excite, ears and heart and mouth unsealing:
Then, through Jesus’ mediation, God will hear our supplication.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rich Jaeger

One: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all you people!

All: **With shouts of joy we celebrate the good news of God’s love.**

One: Open your hearts to the warmth of God’s redeeming love.

All: **God has poured such wonder into our lives!**

One: Come, let us worship God with hearts and souls and voices!

All: **Let our praise ring to the rafters and ascend to the heavens!**

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (*unison*)

For the healing love you have offered to us; for the patience you have with us; for your presence that will never fail, we give you thanks, O Lord. Bring our hearts and spirits to you that we may grow in our faith and service to you by serving others. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Gary T. Smith

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Peace be with you.

All: **And, also with you.**

Please share a physically distanced sign of peace with those around you.

**Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit Three in One;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.**

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Sarah Cowles

SCRIPTURE

James 2:5-8, 14-22

One: Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works.

Mark: 7:31-37

Then Jesus returned from the region of Tyre and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

“Working on a Building”

Spiritual

Tara Sandlin, soprano; Christine Richardson, contralto; Rick Cowles, tenor; Liam Hines, bass

*Well, I'm workin' on a building; It's a true foundation.
I'm holding up the glorious banner for my Lord.
Well, I never get tired workin' on a building;
I'm going up to heaven, oh Lord, to get my reward.
Well, if I was a sinner, let me tell you what I would do:
Well, I'd quit all my sinning and work on a building too.
Well, if I was a preacher, let me tell you what I would do:
Well, I would keep on preaching, and work on a building too!*

SERMON

Renewing Our Vows: Growing in Faith
“Be Opened...Once Again”

Rev. Gary T. Smith

*HYMN

“I Want Jesus to Go With Me”

No. 490

**I want Jesus to go with me; I want Jesus to go with me;
All along my pilgrim journey, O I want Jesus to go with me.**
**In my trials, O comfort me; in my trials, O comfort me;
When my heart is almost breaking, O I want Jesus to comfort me.**
**When I'm in trouble, O stay with me; when I'm in trouble, O stay with me;
When my head is bowed in sorrow, O I want Jesus to stay with me.**

THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER

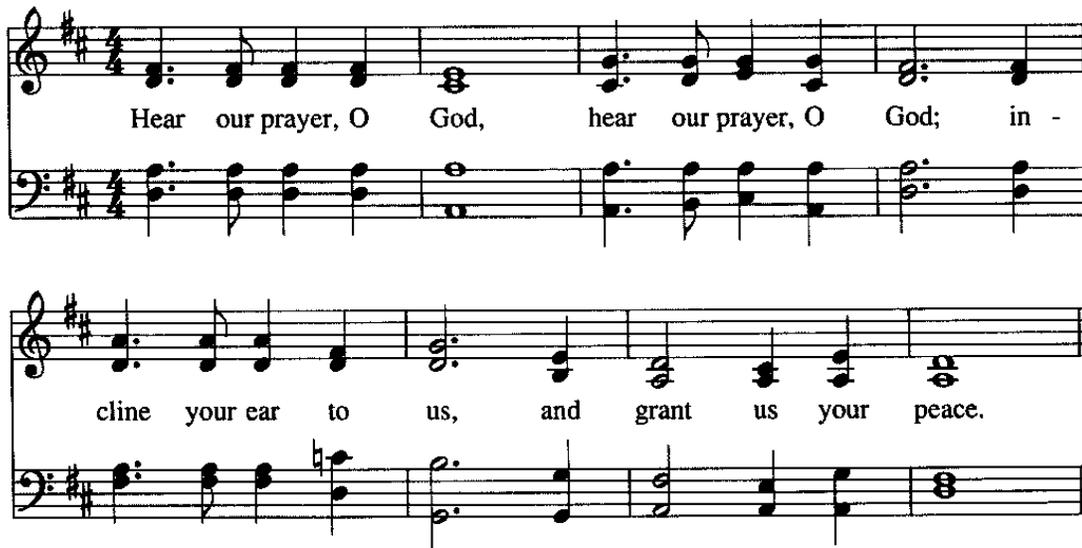
CALL TO PRAYER

THE PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S 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 different versions over the course of a year. On the last Sunday of the month we pray the following, which is adapted from the New Zealand Prayer Book and uses contemporary, inclusive language. It is a paraphrase – not a translation – of the original Greek in the New Testament.

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver
Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by people of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hopes and come on earth.
With bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
May it be so. Amen.**



OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

“Brotherhood”

Frank Loesser

*There is a brotherhood of man, a benevolent brotherhood of man,
 A noble tie that binds all human hearts and minds
 Into one brotherhood of man.
 There is a sisterhood we share of benevolent sisters everywhere.
 Oh, aren't you proud to be in that sorority
 That is the sisterhood we share.
 Oh that noble feeling; feels like bells are pealing; Down with double-dealing!
 You, you got me! Me, I got you! The brotherhood of man!*

*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise God, all creatures here below!
 Praise God for all that love has done!
 Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN

“Lord, Make Me More Holy”

No. 75

**Lord, make me more holy. Lord, make me more holy.
 Lord, make me more holy, until we meet again.
 Holy, holy, holy, until we meet again.**

**Lord, make me more faithful. Lord, make me more faithful.
 Lord, make me more faithful, until we meet again.
 Faithful, faithful, faithful, until we meet again.**

**Lord, make me more humble. Lord, make me more humble.
 Lord, make me more humble, until we meet again.
 Humble, humble, humble, until we meet again.**

**Lord, make me more righteous. Lord, make me more righteous.
Lord, make me more righteous, until we meet again.
Righteous, righteous, righteous, until we meet again.**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Trip to Pawtucket”

Oliver Shaw



This morning we are grateful for the worship leadership of Plymouth member Rev. Gary T. Smith.

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☞ Plymouth Runs On YOU ☞

ACOLYTE: Jaya Rogala **USHERS:** Frank Leonard and David Palladino-Cowdery
LITURGIST: Rich Jaeger **DEACON ON DUTY:** Susan Hawks
FLOWERS given by Bernie Peterson in memory of his parents Franklin Delano Peterson and Geraldine Sophia Pasternacki

Rev. Eric Jackson, Pastor, ejackson@plymouthsyr.org
Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music
Kim Looney, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries
Kathy Ferro, Church Administrator
Mark Johnson, Sexton
plymouthsyr.org ☞ office@plymouthsyr.org

☞ Some Things You Ought to Know ☞

We continue to worship both in person and streamed live on Facebook: We ask that you wear a mask when inside Plymouth and to practice physical distancing with those who do not live in your household since there are those 11 years of age and younger as well as other individuals who are not able to be vaccinated. The worship service can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/plymouthUCCsyracuse/>.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF REPAIR: Reparations and a Faithful Response to Systemic Racism: Join us for the second in a series of spiritually grounded, open conversations about transformative, faithful anti-racist action for reparation, restoration, and reconciliation. This week’s topic is “White privilege and personal family history connections to harms and benefits.” We’ll meet via zoom from 4:00-5:30 pm on Sundays Sept 26, Oct 3, Oct 10. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6039333178>, Password: 13202. These gatherings are inspired by last year's Racial Justice Working Group WOW Workshops. All are welcome! Watch a brief video invitation here: <https://vimeo.com/602135413>.

Clothes for Jail Ministry: Jail Ministry is taking up a collection for the Onondaga County Justice Center to provide clothes for people coming out of the Justice Center. Many inmates leaving may need different clothing than what they wore when they were arrested, due to seasons changing or their weight changes or damage to those clothes.

Jail Ministry will take new and slightly used clothing. If you focus on one item and brought a bag of them in that would be great. The need is for men's and women's clothes, and any donation helps.

Items needed are

1. Socks
2. T-shirts, short sleeve and long sleeve
3. Sweatpants and sweat tops
4. Jeans
5. Flannel shirts
6. Fall and winter jackets
7. Sneakers and boots
8. New undergarments
9. Winter hats and winter gloves

Drop your donations off in the bins at the back of the Sanctuary. We will collect items through October 2. If you are going to do more than one item, please put different items in different bags. It is important for folks to have a decent set of clothes when they are released from the Justice Center so they feel like it is a bit of a fresh start.

Plymouth likes to share its story! Photos are often taken during worship and at Plymouth events and are shared on the website, in social media and by partnering organizations. If you **DO NOT** wish your photo to be used, please contact the church office.

October 17 is "Hymn Sing" Sunday! Nominate up to five of your favorite hymns by completing the nomination form in the bulletin and placing it in the offering plate, emailing the church office, or by [CLICKING HERE](#). We'll sing as many of the "winners" as possible during worship on October 17. Deadline for submission is Sunday, October 10.

Community Garden Events: Syracuse Grows, a grassroots network that cultivates food justice through advocacy, education, and resources in support of urban food production, is holding a garden demonstration at 10am on Sunday, October 3 at 100 Bellevue Ave., Syracuse. And from 2pm – 4pm at the same location Syracuse Grows, in collaboration with Urban Delight Farm, is sponsoring a potluck Harvest Dinner. All are invited! Contact Mable Wilson if you have any questions.

Call for Counters: The deposit of donations and payments to Plymouth Church is prepared every week by volunteers. We have a core of experienced counters and we are looking to expand the group. No special experience is needed. It usually takes less than 30 minutes and is done directly after worship. This is an important ministry and contributes to the smooth operation of Plymouth. If you feel you could take on this important job, or if you would like more information, please contact Susan Hawks at 315-481-9148 or shawks@twcny.rr.com.

Ushers and Greeters are needed every Sunday so that we can continue our mission of "Welcoming all." Volunteer today by:

- 1) Signing up online (Visit our website: www.plymouthsyr.org; click on GET INVOLVED at the top of the screen, scroll down to GREETERS, USHERS and HOSPITALITY VOLUNTEERS, click on SIGN UP and follow the prompts OR
- 2) Contacting the church office

THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Mon. September 27 Bell Choir Rehearsal, 10am, Kirtland Hall
Food Pantry, 2pm – 4pm
- Wed. September 29 Safe Church Working Group, 7pm via Zoom
- Thurs. September 30 Bell Choir Rehearsal, 5:30pm, Kirtland Hall
- Sun. October 3 Worship with communion, 10am, in-person in the sanctuary and livestreamed on Facebook
Conversations about Reparations, 4pm – 5:30pm via Zoom

☞ Welcome to Plymouth ☞

232 E. Onondaga Street | Syracuse, NY 13202 | 315-474-4836

We are an Open and Affirming, Just Peace, Immigrant Welcoming, Progressive Christian, and Sanctuary Congregation.

Plymouth was founded in 1853 by a group of Syracusans who wanted to create a Christian abolitionist bulwark fighting slavery. Since then, we continue to live our faith by standing against racism, white supremacy culture, poverty, and war; standing up for the rights of immigrants, indigenous people, workers, women, and LGBTQ folk; and seeking to be agents of mercy in a hurting world. We believe in beauty, laughter, the struggle for peace with justice, taking risks for building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive Beloved Community in God, and the Way of Jesus Christ which is love and compassion for ourselves and our neighbors.

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

- **Resources for Worship:**
 - Worship Activity Kits are available for children ages 3 - 5th grade on the shelves in the back of the sanctuary. We ask that your children put their names on the blank label on the box the first time they use a kit, take that kit each week, and return it at the end of worship.
 - Due to safety concerns, hymnals and Bibles are available on a cart in the back of the sanctuary. You are invited to take them to your seat in the pew to use during the service. Please return them to the cart as you leave.
- **Visiting for the First Time?** We are so glad to meet another member of our extended global family. To add your name to our mailing list so we can know how to best serve you, please fill out the card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate or email office@plymouthsyr.org.
- **Giving:** Part of worshipping God is through giving. We can only live into our mission to impact the world TOGETHER with the generosity of all! You can share your gifts during the morning offering, or by mailing a check to Plymouth Church at the address above or via PayPal to giving@plymouthsyr.org.
- **Prayer Requests:** We are excited to be worshipping together both with members of Plymouth Church and the wider world. To add a name to our Prayer List, fill out the card found in the pew and place it in the offering plate or contact office@plymouthsyr.org.