



# Plymouth Congregational Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

Service of the Word  
February 16, 2025  
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany  
10:00 am – Worship

## ❧ Welcome to Plymouth ❧

### Wisdom of the Week (Psalm 1:1-3, 6)

*Happy are those  
who do not follow the advice of the wicked  
or take the path that sinners tread  
or sit in the seat of scoffers,  
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on God's law they meditate day and night.  
They are like trees  
planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.  
God watches over the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

### Standing on Holy Ground ...

*We acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation,  
Firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee,  
Indigenous People on whose ancestral land  
Plymouth Church now stands.  
Holy is this place. Holy is this time.  
Holy the memory and the hope of the people of God,  
the Body of Christ.*

# Order of Worship

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

*Be still ... and aware of God's presence  
within you and all around you.*

PRELUDE

“There Is A Balm”

arr. Joe Utterback

GREETING

Craig French

CALL TO WORSHIP (*enfleshed.com, adapted*)

Hannah Stevenson

- One: Blessed are those exploited by the rich.  
**All: Blessed are those demonized by talking heads.**  
One: Blessed are those overworked and underpaid.  
**All: Blessed are those trying, everyday, to get by.**  
One: Blessed are Appalachians.  
**All: Blessed are immigrants.**  
One: Blessed are Indigenous people.  
**All: Blessed are Black people.**  
One: Blessed are trans people.  
**All: Blessed are educators and social workers.**  
One: Blessed are healthcare providers.  
**All: Blessed are incarcerated people.**  
One: Blessed are victims of climate collapse caused by corporate greed.  
**All: Blessed are community organizers and protesters.**  
One: Blessed are those doing what they can with what they have.  
**All: For these are the People of God.**  
One: These are not enemies or undesirables.  
**All: These are the Children of God.**

\*SPIRITUAL

“Oh Mary Don't You Weep”

*insert, pg. 11*

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*John van de Laar, adapted*)

TBD

- One: At a time like this, when the triumph of death seems inevitable  
and the suffering around us makes us want to turn away,  
**All: We commit to resurrection.**  
One: In secret chambers where power brokers meet,  
**All: We commit to making the voice of life and justice heard.**  
One: In crisis moments when quick decisions must be made  
with human lives hanging in the balance,  
**All: We commit to raising the cry for peace and co-existence.**  
One: In forgotten corners where the powerless and poor  
daily walk the valley of the shadow of death,  
**All: We commit to equity, compassion and generosity.**  
One: In the dying places on our planet, where human carelessness and  
consumption threatens the survival of all,  
**All: We commit to simplicity and sustainability.**  
One: As you stand among us now, Jesus, in your risen glory,  
**All: May we know the power of your life.**

*\*Please stand as you are able.*

**All: May we turn away from death.  
And may we become agents of resurrection  
wherever we find ourselves.**

SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF GRACE AND POWER

## THE GIFT OF THE WORD

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Emily Evans

*Following the story, children preschool through  
grade 5 will depart for Learning Community.*

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

TBD

ANTHEM

“Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

arr. Jerry W. Harris

MESSAGE

Troubling Texts:

Joe Steiner & Craig French

*Are There Different Ways of Understanding Resurrection?*

\*SPIRITUAL

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

*insert, pg. 11*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

*(This is one of several versions that we rotate through the year.  
You may pray this or other wording familiar to you.)*

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.  
Your kingdom come; your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

CALLS TO ACTION

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“I’ve Been ‘Buked”

arr. Hall Johnson

\*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, whose life and grace belong  
to good and bad, to weak and strong;  
whose ways are not our human ways,  
whose mercy gladdens all our days!**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*HYMN 433

“In the Bulb There Is a Flower”

*insert, pg. 12*

\*BENEDICTION

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE

“Nobody Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen”

arr. Joe Utterback

Rev. Craig French, Bridge Pastor  
Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music  
Emily Evans, Youth and Children's Ministries Coordinator  
Lori A Forrester, Church Administrator  
Church Office ✉ [office@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org)

### ✉ Plymouth Runs on YOU ✉

**USHER:** Gert Danzy  
**LITURGIST:** Hannah Stevenson  
**DEACONS ON DUTY:** Kathy Ferro and Nancy Gwin  
**COMMUNITY TIME:** Joe Downing  
**COUNTERS:** Susan Hawks and Keith Jakway  
**FLOWERS:** Bernie Peterson - In memory of  
Geraldine Sophia Pasternacki and Franklin Delano Peterson.  
**ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR:** Tom Zorn

Please join us after the service for Community Time in Memorial Hall.

### **THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH**

- Mon. February 17 President's Day: The church office will be closed. But...  
CNYNOW will be presenting "When the Clergy Went Underground,"  
1:30-3pm, Memorial Hall  
Christian Formation, via Zoom, 7pm\*
- Tues. February 18 Church Council, Parlor, 5:30pm\*
- Wed. February 19 Food Pantry, 2-4pm
- Thur. February 20 Bell Choir rehearsal, Sanctuary, 5:30pm  
Choir rehearsal, Memorial Hall, Memorial Hall, 7pm
- Sun. February 23 Worship, Sanctuary and online, 10am  
*Last of the sermon series on "Troubling Texts"*  
"Do I really have to love my enemies? All of them?"  
Learning Community, upstairs (during worship)

*\*Board meetings are open to all; please contact the Church Office to be put in contact with the Chair who can receive your request and share meeting information with you.*

**Start a New Tradition** — Make a Donation whenever we sing a Spiritual. Here's how:  
You are invited to contribute \$1 every Sunday we sing a spiritual. Place your \$1 in the envelope in today's bulletin. Our gifts will be used to support the Creative Arts Academy (part of the Community Folk Art Center). CAA is a free visual and performing arts immersion program for young creatives ages 8-16. Courses include visual arts, piano, ballet, West African drum, personal development, and poetry. Participants also learn about freedom, activism, and community.

**Pastoral Transition News:** Another eventful week, as the early stages of our pastoral search process begin to take shape. On Monday, the Trustees issued a call for a special congregational meeting on Sunday, March 2 (following worship), for the purpose of electing a Search and Call Committee. Three months ago, congregation members were invited to nominate themselves or others to serve on the Search and Call Committee. Persons who were nominated back then remain eligible to be on the slate to be elected on March 2. However, the nominating process has just been re-opened to allow for other possible nominees. *New nominations must be submitted to Rich Jaeger (Vice Moderator) or Craig French (Bridge Pastor) on or before Wednesday, Feb. 19.* This will provide time for any new nominees to review the job description of the committee, along with the desired characteristics of committee members. Finally, our Interim Consultant, Rev. Arlen Vernava, will be in charge of constructing the official slate of nominees to be voted on, so as to provide a good blend of temperaments, skills, experience, qualities and perspectives.

**Parking Reminder:** If you are using the Diocese parking lot, please be respectful of where you park. Do not park in front of the garages; there are vehicles that may be needed at any time. Thank you.

### Music Notes for Sunday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

This week we continue our celebration of Black History Month with spirituals of comfort. Surely there has never been a people more in need of comfort and support than the enslaved.

Joe Utterback (b. 1944) is an accomplished jazz musician whose long career includes major commissions and performances in New York City, San Francisco, St. Louis, and Kansas City. He is also the long-time music director of First Congregational Church (UCC) in Stratford, Connecticut.

Jerry Weseley Harris (1933-2021) was an Oregon-based music educator who taught in the Beaverton School District for thirty years. He also taught music education at Portland State University. He published over 850 compositions, mostly for church or school choirs.

*Jesus walked that lonesome valley. He had to walk it by himself.  
Oh, nobody else could walk it for him. He had to walk it by himself.*

*I must walk this lonesome valley. I have to walk it by myself.  
Oh, nobody else can walk it for me. I have to walk it by myself.*

*I must go and stand my trial. I have to stand it by myself.  
Oh, nobody else can stand it for me. I have to stand it by myself.*

Hall Johnson (1888-1970) is often mentioned along with Nathaniel Dett and Harry Burleigh as one of the most influential people in preserving and promoting spirituals in the twentieth century. Primarily trained as a violinist, he became increasingly interested in choral music and spirituals and formed the choral ensemble The Hall Johnson Negro Choir in 1928. In 1930, the choir appeared in the Broadway musical *The Green Pastures*, and then in 1933 in Johnson's own musical, *Run, Little Chillun*. The choir continued to do a lot of commercial work, including providing music for Frank Capra's film *Lost Horizon* and Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. In 1941, in addition to doing the music for Disney's *Dumbo*, members of the choir also did voice work for the cartoon characters. The choir also performed in Disney's *Song of the South*. (The word 'buked is short for rebuked.)

*I've been 'buked and I've been scorned, children.  
I've been talked about sure as you're born.  
There is trouble all over this world, children.  
Ain't gonna lay my (re)ligion down, children.*

# When the Clergy Went Underground



A Dramatic Reading Written by Carol Kammen

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## What?

- Based on a memoir of Reverend David Evans, the founder of the Upstate New York Clergy Consultation Service (CCS) in the 1960s for those who wanted a safe abortion in pre-Roe America.
- Reverend Richard Gilbert, minister at the First Unitarian Society of Ithaca and member of the Clergy Consultation Service at that time, will discuss his role.
- Readers are David Dietrich, Emme Edmunds, Linda Hoffmann, Michael Hoffmann, and Sue Perlgut.

**Free and Open to the Public!**

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## When?

Monday,  
February  
17th, 2025  
@ 1:30pm

## Where?

Plymouth  
Congregational Church  
232 E. Onondaga St.  
Syracuse, NY 13202

## Parking:

On the street or  
Behind the Church or  
OnCenter parking lot  
three blocks away.

## Who?

Sponsored by EAS, CNY NOW and Syracuse NAACP



Instagram - @endingabortionstigma

Facebook - @endabortionstigma



Join us for a  
Ramadan Dinner

Muslim Families of the  
CNY RISE Center are hosting  
iftars (dinners to break fast)  
in their home this Ramadan

[Click here to join a family dinner!](#)

LEARNING TOGETHER  
WITH OUR NEIGHBORS

Ramadan 2025  
March 1–March 30

CNY RISE  
center  
Respect • Inspiration • Service • Empathy

SAVE  
THE  
DATE

SUNDAY  
APRIL 27  
1-7 PM



\*Includes dinner

ANNUAL  
LEARNING TOGETHER  
WITH OUR NEIGHBORS  
EVENT



**A collaboration of**

All Saints Church  
Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ  
CNY Rise Center  
Congregation Beth Sholom-Chevra Shas  
Pebble Hill Presbyterian Church  
Plymouth Congregational Church  
St. Lucy's Church



## **CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH!**

The Student Coalition on Race and Equity (SCORE), in partnership with the Dunbar Association, invites you to two powerful workshops exploring African American history. Led by youth, these sessions will provide engaging and insightful perspectives on teaching hard history and reshaping how the African American story is told.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn, reflect, and engage in meaningful discussions! Spaces are limited, so be sure to register below to attend one or both workshops. Each workshop will be offered twice; the times and dates for the workshops are listed below.

# **FEBRUARY 17 - 20**

**1453 SOUTH STATE ST.,  
SYRACUSE, NY 13205**

### **TEACHING HARD HISTORY:**

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH, FROM 5:30-6:30PM OR  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH, FROM 11AM-12PM

### **A BETTER WAY TO TELL THE STORY:**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH, FROM 5:30-6:30PM OR  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH, FROM 11AM-12PM

**SCAN THE QR CODE OR THE  
VISIT THE LINK BELOW TO  
REGISTER!**



[HTTPS://WWW.SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/SCORERFEB2025](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCORERFEB2025)

## ☞ 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 Children:** Worship Activity Kits are available for children ages 3 - 5th grade on the shelves at 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.
- **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](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org).
- **Giving:** Part of worshipping God is through giving. We can only live in to 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](mailto: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 the church office at [office@plymouthsyr.org](mailto:office@plymouthsyr.org).

\*SPIRITUAL

“Oh Mary Don’t You Weep”

8 Oh Ma-ry don't you weep, don't you mourn. Oh Ma ry don't you weep, don't you mourn. *Fine*

12 Pha-roah's ar - my got drown - ded. Oh Ma-ry don't you weep. The

If I could I sure-ly would stand on the rock where Mo-ses stood.  
 Lord told Mo - ses what to do to lead those He - brew chil-dren through.  
 God gave No - ah the rain-bow sign: No more wa-ter but the fire next time.  
 When I get to hea-ven, gon-na sing and shout. No - bo-dy there to\_\_ put me out!

\*SPIRITUAL

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

22 Swing low, sweet cha - ri - ot, Co-min' for to car-ry me home. Swing low, sweet cha - ri - ot, *Fine*

27 Co-min' for to car-ry me home. I looked o-ver Jor-dan, and what did I see? Co-min' for to car-ry me  
 If you get there be - fore I do  
 I'm some times up, and some times down.

home. A band of an - gels com-in' af-ter me, Co-min' for to car-ry me home.  
 Tell all my friends I'm com-in' too.  
 But still my soul feels hea-ven-ly bound.

# In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Natalie Sleeth, 1985

*Unison*

1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;  
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;  
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise; but - ter - flies will soon be free!  
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.  
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,  
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y.  
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.  
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

*Natalie Sleeth composed her "Hymn of Promise" first as a choral anthem and then adapted it to this version for congregational singing. It was dedicated to her husband, Ronald Sleeth, who died shortly after she completed it.*

Tune: PROMISE 8.7.8.7.D.  
 Natalie Sleeth, 1985