

Plymouth Congregational Church

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Service of the Word
May 11, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Easter
10:00 am - Worship

Order of Worship

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



BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

~ *"In Your Light, We See Light"* ~

PRELUDE

"Enigma Variations: 'Nimrod'"

Edward Elgar

GREETING

Pastor Craig French

CALL TO WORSHIP (*from enfleshed.com*)

Havilah Carroll

One: Amidst destruction,

All: Blessed be the creators.

One: Amidst despair,

All: Blessed be the nurturers of connection.

One: Amidst cynicism,

All: Blessed be those practicing hope.

One: Amidst cruelty,

All: Blessed be the gentle.

One: Amidst death-dealing systems,

All: Blessed be those with reverence for life.

One: The God of New Life blesses those who love compassion and justice.

All: Let us worship God.

*OPENING HYMN 11

"Bring Many Names"

insert, pg. 9

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

****Please stand as you are able.***

OPENING PRAYER *(from enfleshed.com)*

**All: Praise be the protectors, organizers, educators, and conservationists.
Praise be the healers, death doulas, midwives, and caregivers.
Praise be the artists, writers, singers, and visionaries.
Praise, praise, praise be the children, the playful, the open-hearted,
all those who school us in present-moment living.
Holy Spirit, guide us towards what is ours to do today.
Root us in spiritual practices, that we may be grounded in our work.
Remind us that we are part of a web of interdependence;
that collective thriving requires both steadfast devotion and soulful rest.**

SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF GRACE AND HOPE

THE GIFT OF THE WORD

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Emily Evans

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

ANTHEM

“Dorcas”

Joseph Downing

SCRIPTURE

Acts 9:36-43

Common English Bible

SUNG RESPONSE 236

“Halle, Halle, Halle”

insert, pg. 10

MESSAGE

“The Vulnerability of Community”

*HYMN

“Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth”

insert, pg. 11

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD’S PRAYER

*We will pray using “debts” through the end of summer.
You are welcome to pray this or other words of your preference.*

**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 debts
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

CALL TO ACTION

OFFERTORY

“Have I Done Any Good”

Joseph Downing

OFFERING

*Today we will take up a special offering “Boiler Fund” to help us pay
for our new boiler to be installed over the Summer and Fall.
Please use the envelope provided at the end of each pew.*

*DOXOLOGY

Let trumpets sound and voices sing!
Let all on earth their praises bring!
For Christ has conquered sin and death,
and given life eternal breath.

*CLOSING HYMN 479

“God Is My Shepherd”

insert, pg. 12

*BENEDICTION

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE

“March from ‘Athalia’”

Felix Mendelssohn

✿ Plymouth Runs On YOU ✿

USHER: George Bain **LITURGIST:** Havilah Carroll
DEACONS ON DUTY: Kailyn Wright and Frank Leonard
COMMUNITY TIME: the Men of Plymouth
FLOWERS: Esther and Tom Zorn in honor of our Plymouth Family.
COUNTERS: Kathleen Deters-Hayes and Susan Hawks
ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR: Tom Zorn

<p>Rev. Craig French, Bridge Pastor Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music Emily Evans, Youth and Children’s Ministries Coordinator Lori A Forrester, Church Administrator Office ✿ office@plymouthsyr.org</p>

✿ Some Things You Ought to Know ✿

Plymouth loves to share its stories! Photos are often taken during worship and at Plymouth events, and then shared in the monthly Plymouth Story, on the website, in social media and by partnering organizations. If you have taken any pictures that you want to share, please submit them to the church office.

We are a Welcoming Congregation: Please wear your name tag during the Service and at Community Time. Let’s get into the habit of letting people know who we are, whether they are new or just visiting.

THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Today **Happy Mother's Day** Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary
Community Time, Memorial Hall
- Mon. May 12 **No** Board of Trustees mtg. until next Monday
- Tue. May 13 Board of Deacons, 7pm, Parlor and Zoom*
- Wed. May 14 Food Pantry, 2–4pm, Basement
Endowment Fund meeting, 7pm, Parlor*
- Thu. May 15 Bell Choir, 5:30pm, Sanctuary
No Vocal Choir rehearsal until Autumn
- Sun. May 18 Worship Service, 10am, Sanctuary
Community Time, Memorial Hall
Heifer Plant Sale, Sanctuary
The plants are donated by Carol Watson Greenhouse.
Heifer International will double all funds raised!
Part 1 of 2 De-escalation Training “Mental Health 101,”
12:15-2:30pm, Parlor, see more details on the next page.

**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.*

Please join us: after Worship for Community Time in Memorial Hall.

Sunday, May 18: Mental Health 101, 12:15-2:30pm in the Parlor will present an overview of the kinds of emotional and behavioral problems congregation members may see with persons attending church events. **Bring a lunch.** This training will offer participants a background for part two, De-escalation, on June 18th.

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. Also, please don't park in unmarked spaces. If it is not a designated parking place, then it is to be used to get to another area in the parking lot. If you park there, you will be blocking someone in or out of legitimate parking spaces. Thank you.

From the Office of Public Policy and Advocacy of the United Church of Christ

Tell Congress: NO CUTS to Federal Support for Mothers and Children!

As Mother's Day approaches, we know that all our moms deserve much more financial, emotional, and physical support. Children are blessings, who model for us what it means to follow Jesus and help all of us see Christ's love for the world.

Yet Congress is currently considering cutting the funding it provides for children and new parents. **Cutting this funding would reduce assistance that helps children in families with low incomes get enough to eat, see a doctor when they are sick, and meet their basic needs and thrive.** This assistance is essential for our children's health and wellbeing.

For more information go to: votervoice.net/JAWM/Campaigns/126160/Respond

*“We acknowledge with respect the Onondaga Nation, Firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee, the Indigenous People,
on whose ancestral land Plymouth Church now stands.”*

WHAT'S NEW THIS EASTER SEASON

@ PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

1. Sermon Series: "Building Blocks of Christian Community" ... based on the Book of Acts ... Sunday mornings at 10:00 ... May 4 - June 1.
2. Join a Covenant Community: Covenant Communities are small groups of 8 - 12 people who meet monthly in different homes for fellowship, conversation and the sharing of food. They provide a safe, confidential place, sharing joys and concerns, and experiencing God's presence and caring in each other. Sign up in May.
3. TBA (~~sometime in May~~): The first event in the pastoral transition process. Help create an annotated timeline of the past 50 - 60 years at Plymouth.
4. Be part of a nearly 50-year tradition of feeding the world's hungry through Heifer International. Plant sale & fun-raiser: Sunday, May 18 (after worship).
5. Visit and learn about the new Food Pantry set-up, plus recognize our many past and present Pantry volunteers. Sunday, June 1 (following worship).
6. Help plan for and host the return visit of the choir from Michelstadt, Germany (Oct. 9-13). Non-singers welcome! Talk to Joe Downing ASAP.
7. Add your name to a group of persons interested in becoming an official part of the Plymouth congregation, either as a full or associate member. Contact Rev. French or the church office for more information.
8. Promote healthy relations in the congregation and with visitors. This 2-part series will focus on emotions and behaviors that act as triggers + effective de-escalation skills. Sun., 5/18 and Sun., 6/1 ... 12:15 - 2:30. Bring a bag lunch.

Music Notes for Sunday, May 11th, 2025

No one has ever resolved what the original theme was for Edward Elgar's (1857-1934) *Enigma Variations*. This was the piece that propelled him from being a little-known composer to an internationally recognized one. Each variation depicted a friend of his, and our **prelude**, the ninth variation depicted Augustus Jaegar. "Jaegar" is the German word for "hunter" and the most famous biblical hunter was "Nimrod." Hence the name of the variation.

It had to happen. I searched our extensive choral library for a piece relating to today's scripture passage about Peter raising Dorcas/Tabitha from the dead and found nothing. Likewise, an online search for any anthems yielded nothing. So, I went to Google's AI "Gemini" and asked it to write a hymn about Tabitha. Within about four seconds it produced the following text. I made a few minor changes (like changing "Tabitha" to the more poetic "Dorcas") and then wrote the music. The poem is not the best text we've sung this year, but neither is it the worst!

*In Joppa's streets, a woman there, her hands once full of work and care.
Dorcas was her name so bright, now lost in death's eternal night.
But Peter, bold in faith and prayer brought hope and light into despair.
He spoke, and said, "Arise, be free." She was restored to life to see.*

*O lord of life, you hold the key. You raise the dead and set us free.
With faith we rise and joy is found. In your great love we're glory bound.*

*The saints and widows wept and sighed, their faith in God was not denied.
Peter's hands with power showed; the risen Christ his glory showed.
And Dorcas, now with breath anew raised up her voice in praises true.
Her life restored by God's own grace; a miracle of love and faith.*

*So may we live as Dorcas did with hearts of love our lives to give.
When we face the shadows deep, we trust in God who never sleeps
For Christ our Savior is the way; the life, the truth, the light of day.
In Christ we rise and stand in grace, to follow him and see his face.*

I learned the words to our **offertory anthem** as a youth. The tune was a simplistic one, so I wrote a new one.

*Have I done any good in the world today? Have I helped anyone in need?
Have I cheered up the sad, or made someone feel glad? If not, I have failed indeed.
Has anyone's burden been lighter today because I was willing to share?
Have the sick and the weary been helped on their way? When they needed my help was I there?*

*Then wake up! And do something more than dream of some mansion above.
Doing good is a pleasure; a joy beyond measure; a blessing of duty and love.*

*There are chances to help all around just now; Opportunities in our way.
Do not let them pass by thinking, "Sometime I'll try," but go and do something today.
'Tis noble for us to work and to give; love's labor has merit alone.
Only they who do something help others to live. To God will each good work be known.*

Two Announcements from Joe

The Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will hold its annual Dinner and Recital at Plymouth Congregational Church on Friday, June 6th. You are invited to

attend either, or both the dinner and organ recital. The dinner will be at 6 pm, prepared

by Joe Downing and Carole Brzozowski and cost \$20 per person, and the recital will follow and is free for all to attend. The recitalist will be Valentina Huang who won both the First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2024 Poister International Organ Competition. For the dinner, please call Lori at the church office before June 1st to reserve a place (you can pay at the door).

Second Announcement

Following our choirs' trip to Germany, we will be hosting the Choir of the Protestant church of Michelstadt, Germany (where our former intern Anneke Peereboom is pastor) for a choir festival to be held at Plymouth the weekend of Thursday, October 9th to Monday, October 12th. We plan on about 4 choirs from Onondaga county to participate along with our guests from Germany. This will be an "all hands on deck" event for Plymouth as we attempt to approximate the overwhelming hospitality shown us. We are looking for the following volunteers:

- 1. A committee to oversee the entire weekend*
- 2. A committee to plan an opening banquet on Thursday for our German guests, a reception following the Saturday evening concert, and a final lunch following Sunday services.*
- 3. A committee to plan entertainment for our German guests, including a Friday trip to Niagara Falls, and a Sunday afternoon Finger Lakes Wine Tour.*
- 4. Approximately 6 mini-vans and drivers to provide transportation from Thursday until Monday.*
- 5. Housing for approximately three dozen choir members/spouses.*
- 6. Fund raising to cover expenses for this project.*

If you can help in any way, please contact Joe Downing at jdowning@syr.edu



The Sankofa bird is a mythical bird that represents the importance of learning from the past to create a better future. It is the principle of Sankofa which reminds us to be intentionally careful reviewing of our past, gathering good lessons, and using them to inform future directions in our work together to understand the legacy of white supremacy culture and stand against injustices.

☞ 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!

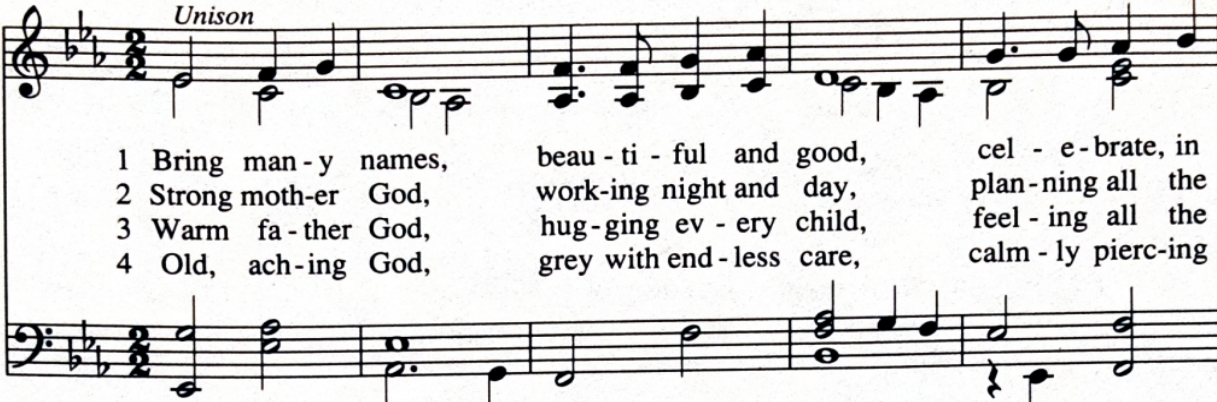
- **Resources for Children:** Worship Activity Kits are available for children ages 3 - 5th grade on the shelves in the back of the sanctuary. We ask that your children put their names on the blank label on the box the first time they use a kit, take that kit each week, and return it at the end of worship.
- **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.

Bring Many Names

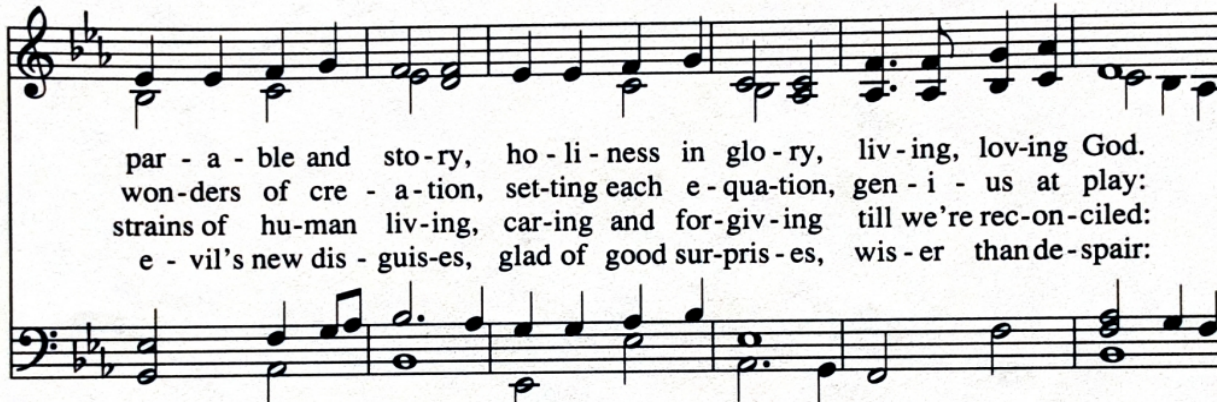
Brian Wren, 1989

Gen. 1:27

Unison



1 Bring man - y names, beau - ti - ful and good, cel - e - brate, in
 2 Strong moth - er God, work - ing night and day, plan - ning all the
 3 Warm fa - ther God, hug - ging ev - ery child, feel - ing all the
 4 Old, ach - ing God, grey with end - less care, calm - ly pierc - ing



par - a - ble and sto - ry, ho - li - ness in glo - ry, liv - ing, lov - ing God.
 won - ders of cre - a - tion, set - ting each e - qua - tion, gen - i - us at play:
 strains of hu - man liv - ing, car - ing and for - giv - ing till we're rec - on - ciled:
 e - vil's new dis - guis - es, glad of good sur - pris - es, wis - er than de - spair:



Hail and Ho - san - na! bring man - y names! great, liv - ing God!
 Hail and Ho - san - na, strong moth - er God!
 Hail and Ho - san - na, warm fa - ther God!
 Hail and Ho - san - na, old, ach - ing God!

5 Young, grow - ing God, ea - ger,
 on the move,
 say - ing no to false - hood and
 un - kind - ness,
 cry - ing out for jus - tice,
 giv - ing all you have:
 Hail and Ho - san - na,
 young, grow - ing God!

6 Great, liv - ing God, nev - er ful - ly known,
 joy - ful dark - ness far be - yond our see - ing,
 clos - er yet than breath - ing,
 ev - er - last - ing home:
 Hail and Ho - san - na,
 great, liv - ing God!

The author states that aspects of the divine are revealed in our maleness, femaleness, youth, and age in a moving, growing matrix of life in God. The tune Westchase was composed especially for this text.

Tune: WESTCHASE 9.10.11.9.
 Carlton Young, 1989

Halleluja

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Traditional

Musical notation for the first line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: A, E, A, D, Bm, and E.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.

Musical notation for the second line of the song. It features a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staff: A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4, E7, and A.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le - lu-ja, hal - le - lu - ja.

This joyous response may be used following readings of scripture, or as a processional or recessional, especially during Easter.

Tune: HALLELUJA
Caribbean melody

Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth 2050

1. Moth-er - ing God, you gave me birth in the bright
2. Moth-er - ing Christ, you took my form, of - fer - ing
3. Moth-er - ing Spir - it, nur - t'ring one, in arms of

morn - ing of this world. Cre - at - or, source of
me your food of light, grain of life, and
pa - tience hold me close, so that in faith I

ev - ery breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
grape of love, your ver - y bod - y for my peace.
root and grow un - til I flow'r, un - til I know.

God Is My Shepherd

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Scottish Psalter, 1650
 Adapt. Lavon Bayler, 1992

Ps. 23

1 God is my shep-herd, I'll not want, I feed in pas-tures green.
 2 Re - stored to life each morn-ing new, I rise up from the dust
 3 When I must pass through shad-owed vale, where loss and death a - wait,
 4 No en - e - my can o - ver - come, no power on earth de - feat
 5 Good-ness and mer - cy all my days will sure - ly fol - low me;

God grants me rest and bids me drink from wa - ters calm and clean.
 to fol - low God whose pres - ence gives me con - fi - dence and trust.
 I will not fear for God is there, my shep-herd strong and great,
 the ones a - noint - ed by God's grace and fed with man - na sweet.
 and where God reigns in heaven and earth, my dwell-ing place will be.

Through dai - ly tasks, I'm blessed and led by One I have not seen.
 I praise the name of God to - day; in God I put my trust.
 Whose rod and staff will com - fort me and all my fears a - bate.
 My cup is filled and o - ver-flows as I my Sav - ior greet.
 My shep-herd bless - es, cares, and leads through all e - ter - ni - ty.

The Scottish Psalter of 1650, developed over a span of 100 years, is still in use today. Its metrical version of Psalm 23 is the most popular entry in this classic work of Protestantism.

Tune: BROTHER JAMES' AIR 8.6.8.6.8.6.
 James Leith Macbeth Bain, c. 1840-1925
 Arr. Gordon Jacob, 1934

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