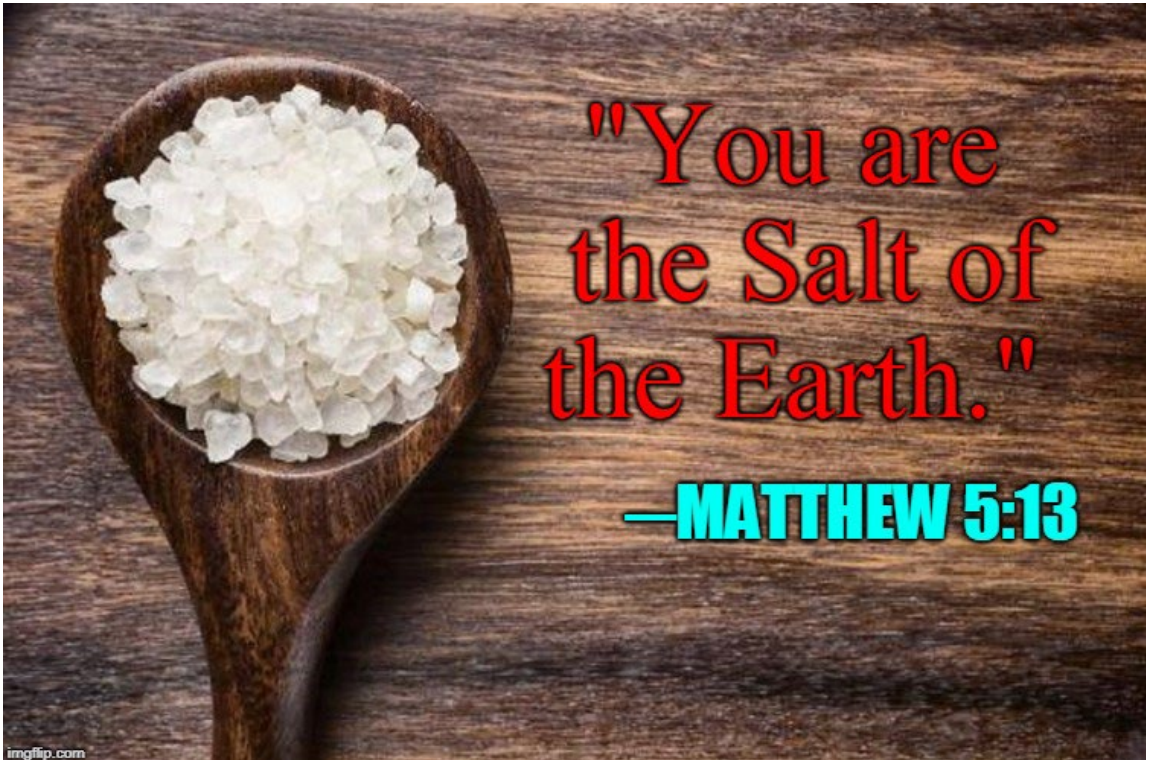


Plymouth Congregational Church
*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
downtown Syracuse, NY*



Service of the Word
February 8, 2026
10:00 am – Worship

We welcome Andrea Abbott
as our guest preacher and for
leading us in worship today.

we thank you, we honour you.
Because you have made us like yourself,
made us to be creative in your world,
we praise you.
Because you have freed us through Jesus
freed us to be people of light and love,
we thank you.
Because your Spirit is present with us,
present to guide and renew,
we honour you.
God of the heavens and the earth,
with joy we praise you,
we thank you, we honour you for ever. Amen

*HYMN

“There’s a Spirit in the Air”

#294

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Peace be with you.

All: And, also with you.

Share a sign of peace with those around you.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

One: Dearest God, Jesus tells us that we are the salt of the earth

All: Let us remember.

One: Salt preserves, salt protects, salt melts ice, in our streets, in our hearts.

All: Let us remember.

One: The savor of salt tells us of the goodness of life.

All: Let us remember.

One: Jesus tells us we are the light of the world.

All: Let us remember.

One: Our light lets us see the way to God’s way.

All: Let my light shine.

One: Our light lets others see the way to God’s way.

All: Let all our lights shine.

One: Let us be both salt and light.

ALL: Amen

A TIME OF SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF COMFORT AND HOPE

ANTHEM

“Let Us Walk in the Light”

Vicki Hancock Wright

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:12-20

(Common English Bible)

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

STORY FOR ALL AGES

Emily Evans

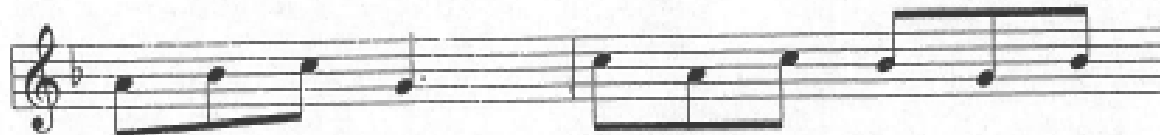
Following the story, children preschool through grade 5 will depart for Learning Community.

2233

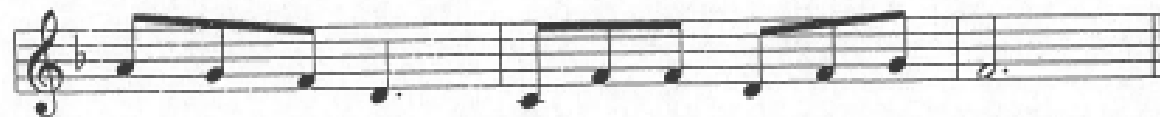
Where Children Belong



This, this is where chil-dren be-long, wel-comed as part of the



wor - ship - ing thron-g. Wa - ter, God's Word, bread and



cup, prayer, and song: This is where chil-dren be - long.

WORDS: James Ritchie
MUSIC: James Ritchie

RITCHIE
Irregular

MESSAGE

“Salty Living”

HYMN

“You Are Salt for the Earth, O People”

#181

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 the different versions over the course of a year. We will pray the prayer with “trespasses” through April.

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.

CALL TO ACTION

CALL TO GIVING

OFFERING

OFFERTORY SPIRITUAL “Walk Together Children”
Klark Johnson, *soprano*

arr. Moses Hogan

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, whose image we all bear;
Praise Christ, whose mercy we all share;
Praise Spirit, making justice grow—
One God from whom all blessings flow!**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN

“This Little Light of Mine”

#525

*BENEDICTION

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

arr. Joe Utterback

✿ Plymouth Runs on YOU ✿

USHER: George Bain

FLOWERS: Gert Danzy, Thank you to all of my Plymouth Family for all your prayers and concerns when they were needed the most.

DEACONS ON DUTY: Kathy Ferro and Frank Leonard

LITURGIST: Kailyn Wright

ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR: Tom Zorn

COMMUNITY TIME: Gert Danzy, “I Love U”

COUNTER: Keith Jackway

THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Today Worship – “Salty Living,” 10am, Sanctuary
- Mon Feb 9 Board of Trustees, 6pm, Parlor*
- Tue Feb 10 Narcotics Anonymous (NA), 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
Board of Deacons, 7pm, Parlor and Zoom*
- Wed Feb 11 Food Pantry, 2pm, Basement
- Thu Feb 12 Urban Jobs Taskforce Advocacy Mtg, 5pm, Parlor
NO Bell or Vocal Choir Practice until March
- Fri Feb 13 NA, 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
- Sat Feb 14 NA, 12noon, Memorial Hall
- Sun Feb 15 Worship – “Bedazzled Living,” 10am, Sanctuary
Mardi Gras Luncheon, 11:15am, Memorial Hall (pages 7&8)
Bluegrass, Celtic and Folk Music, 12 noon, Memorial Hall

** 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.*

Let’s Continue this 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 small cream-colored envelopes in the pews. 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.

Mardi Gras Sunday Celebration

As we prepare to enter the reflective season of Lent, let's celebrate one last time together in Mardi Gras fashion with a potluck Chili, Jambalaya and cornbread lunch.

When: Sunday, February 15 immediately following worship

Where: Memorial Hall

What: Bring a crockpot of chili* or jambalaya*

OR

a plate of cornbread* and butter

A Deacon will be on hand to get your crockpot plugged in and ready.

** Label your dish with ingredients and level of spiciness, please. Gluten free and vegetarian options are much appreciated. Include your name in case people want to ask you for your recipe!*

Note: please bring your chili or jambalaya in a crockpot as we will **NOT** be using the downstairs kitchen to heat dishes. Thanks!

At noon, join former Plymouth member Andrew VanNorstrand and his colleague Alex Sturbaum for a bluegrass, Celtic and folk music concert. (see page 8)

Here is a recipe for Creole Jambalaya, but feel free to use your own favorite recipe for this delicious rice dish.

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp. olive oil	1 ½ cups boiling chicken stock
8 oz. ham, diced	1 ½ cups long grain white rice
8 oz. chorizo sausage, sliced	¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1 large Spanish onion, chopped	1 tsp. hot-pepper sauce
3 cloves of garlic, crushed	1 14-oz can tomatoes
½ tsp. dried thyme	1 green bell pepper, seeded and diced
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley	2 Tbsp. dry white wine

Heat oil in a saucepan. Add ham, sausage and onion. Fry gently for 3 minutes. Add garlic, thyme and parsley. Stir well, then add stock, rice, cayenne and hot-pepper sauce; mix well. Add tomatoes with juice and break up with a spoon. Bring mixture to a boil, stir well, then cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.

Stir in bell pepper and wine. Cover and cook for 8 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Fluff with a fork and serve hot. (Serves 4-6)

ANDREW VANNORSTRAND & ALEX STURBAUM

Bluegrass, Celtic and Folk music

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

12:00pm - Noon

Plymouth Congregational Church
232 E Onondaga St, Syracuse, NY



☞ Joys and Concerns ☞

In the week ahead, you are invited to pray for:

- Elizabeth M's sister in recovery; the soul of Carolyn R. Smithers who passed away on Jan 17th; pray for her sister Diane and four daughters and grandchildren; and friends of Bill W.
- Keith J's mother-in-law who is dealing with heart issues.
- The family of John "Jack" Klock, Peggy K's ex-husband who died December 30.
- Continued prayers for Linda and Scott K. and their family, following the unexpected death of Scott's brother Dwight, on January 16th.
- Leslie A. recovering at home after surgery.
- Sandra B. dealing with multiple myeloma and Alzheimer's.
- Susan G. who will be having hip replacement in February.
- Doris D. rehabbing at Menorah Park, following surgery after a fall.
- Stephen C. dealing with lung cancer.
- Folks dealing with mental illness, incarceration, and homelessness.

Covenant Community Groups 2026

Plymouth Congregational Church currently has four active Covenant Community groups with a total of 34 members. Some of the groups are able to accept new members. We would also love to have additional groups added if you have a group of people interested. All groups meet once a month at someone's home, usually rotating. One group meets on Monday evening, two groups meet on Wednesday evening, and one group meets on Friday evening. Currently, we are also exploring congregational interest in an *afternoon* group.

Plymouth Covenant Communities

What? Small groups of 10-12 who meet monthly for fellowship, conversation, support and sometimes food!

Why? To develop strong relationships in safe spaces, to share our personal joys and concerns, to support and care for each other, and to deepen our faith.

How? You can express your interest in joining a group for **2026**, or just ask questions by calling or texting **Leela George** at (315) 254-7807 or by email at ljgeorge62@gmail.com

Music Notes for Sunday, February 8, 2026

Our **introit** is a short setting of part of our scripture reading today. Virtually nothing is known about William Whytbrooke. This piece is in a collection of music from England in the late 1500s.

*Let your light so shine before all, that they may see your good works,
and glorify your Lord God, which is in heaven.*

It's February, so we will feature several spirituals this month as we celebrate African American History Month.

Our **prelude** and **postlude** are jazz arrangements of familiar spirituals done by Joe Utterback (b. 1944) a prominent jazz musician who is also Director of Music at First Congregational Church of Stratford, Connecticut.

Vicki Hancock Wright taught primary music for over thirty years in Nashville, Tennessee. Our **anthem** is one of many pieces she wrote, originally for children.

*When the first sunrise awoke all creation, God smiled and declared "This is good."
Sun bringing brightness, light spilling from heaven. God's love touching all that it could.*

*Let us walk in the light of the Lord,
Feel God's love shining in us, around us and through us,
Let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

*When you see someone who seems sad and lonely and needing a friend just like you,
God gives you guidance to light up the darkness. God's love touching others through
you.*

Harry Burleigh (1866-1949) was largely responsible for collecting spirituals and preserving and arranging them for concert performances. A century later, Moses Hogan (1957-2003) breathed new life into them with eighty-eight published fresh and memorable arrangements. We're fortunate to hear a couple of his arrangements this month sung by Klark Johnson. (She is preparing several for her next graduate recital this semester.)

*Walk together children, don't you get weary;
there's a great camp meeting in the promised land.
Gonna walk/sing/shout and never tire.*

Our food pantry is gathering hats, gloves, socks, coats, snow pants, and insulated underwear to help our clients during the cold weather.

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

Welcoming Children in Worship: Children of all ages have a place in worship and in the life of the church. At Plymouth we try to engage all ages in different ways. Worship activity kits are available at our worship activity shelf in the back of the Sanctuary for our young children and youth (and for any adults who feel led to use them!). We hope that these activities will help worshipers connect with the service in ways that are meaningful to them. Please return the activity kits with all of the supplies to the shelf at the end of the service.

Nursery Care: Infants and toddlers have a special place in worship, too, and are always welcome. We also offer Nursery care for infants and toddlers starting at 9:45am. There are changing tables in the restroom just off the sanctuary, in the nursery, and in the men's restroom in the basement. The Service is piped into Memorial Hall, next door to the sanctuary, for those who would welcome a space apart.

Flowers – Make our worship space even more beautiful for the glory of God and in honor of whatever you choose. A sign-up sheet is found in the bell tower entry. The cost is \$35 but plans for larger or multiple arrangements can always be made.

Accessibility: Individual listening headsets are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary. Please contact an usher for help. An elevator and ramp are available. Large print bulletins are at the back of the sanctuary.

Ample free street parking is available on the blocks around our church on Sundays, as well as in the lot behind the Catholic diocese building. For those able to walk a short distance, parking here will allow those with mobility impairments or small children to use the spots directly in front of the church.

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 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.

☞ About Plymouth ☞

Plymouth was founded in 1853 by a group of Syracuseans who wanted to create a Christian abolitionist bulwark in the city. Since then, we have fought against slavery, poverty, and war; for immigrant, native, worker, LGBTQ+ 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 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 Immigrant Welcoming We seek to learn, support, and develop practices and programs that facilitate the respectful welcome and inclusion of all immigrants into our congregation and community.

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
Lori A Forrester, Church Administrator
Emily Evans, Youth and Children's Ministries Coordinator

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