

# Plymouth Congregational Church

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



Service of the Word  
February 15, 2026  
10:00 am – Worship

## ❧ Order of Worship ❧

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

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

BRINGING IN THE LIGHT

PRELUDE SPIRITUAL

“Give Me Jesus”  
Klark Johnson, *soloist*

Moses Hogan

WORDS OF WELCOME

Craig French

*\*Please stand if able.*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

*(adapted from “Call to Worship,” Presbyterian Association of Musicians)*

One: God of the mountaintop, you call us to journey with you.

**All: Shine upon us. Dazzle us with your beauty and glory.**

One: We come with weary souls and exhausted bodies.

**All: Transfigure our imaginations. Show us what is possible.**

One: In the face of unceasing wars and violence,

**All: Transfigure our imaginations. Show us what is possible.**

One: In the midst of devastating disasters—natural and human-made,

**All: Transfigure our imaginations. Show us what is possible.**

One: Move us from scarcity and cynicism.

Transfigure our lowly visions.

Reveal the abundant life of your realm.

**All: Help us to keep watch,  
so that we might leave the mountaintop,  
inspired to continue your work of transformation  
in the valleys of life.**

\*HYMN

“Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”

# 1

\*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 DAY

**All: God who dazzles:**

**As you once revealed yourself in Christ**

**at the Mount of Transfiguration,**

**you send your Spirit now to work in us and through us.**

**Show us today the light of your presence.**

**Reveal your power and glory to us.**

**Illumine our hearts and lives with your brilliance,**

**that we might envision a world**

**transfigured in your image. Amen.**



## 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

## OFFERTORY

“St. Anne’s Reel”

*Traditional*

Andrew Van Norstrand, *guitar* and Alex Sturbaum, *banjo*

## \*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God for visions great and small;  
Praise God who calls us one and all;  
Praise God whose Spirit gives new sight;  
Praise God who fills our lives with light. Amen**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## \*HYMN

“We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding”

#182

## \*BENEDICTION

## CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

## POSTLUDE

“We Are Marching in the light of God”  
*(Siyahamba, South African Freedom Song)*

John A. Behnke

## ☞ Plymouth Runs on YOU ☞

**USHER:** Gert Danzy

**FLOWERS:** Bernie Peterson in memory of  
Geraldine Sophia Pasternacki and Franklin Delano Peterson

**DEACONS ON DUTY:** Andrea Abbott and Arne Hook

**LITURGIST:**

**ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR:** Tom Zorn

**COMMUNITY TIME:** Mardi Gras Crockpot Luncheon and Concert

**COUNTERS:** Kathleen Deters-Hayes and Susan Hawks

### THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Today                      Worship – “Bedazzled Living,” 10am, Sanctuary  
Mardi Gras Luncheon, 11:15am, Memorial Hall (MH)  
Bluegrass, Celtic and Folk Music, 12pm, MH (see page 6)
- Mon    Feb 16              Presidents’ Day (**Church Office is closed.**)  
Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza, 10a-2pm, MH and Sanctuary (see  
page 7)
- Tue    Feb 17              Narcotics Anonymous (NA), 6:30pm, MH
- Wed    Feb 18              Food Pantry, 2pm, Basement  
**Ash Wednesday** worship, 7pm, Sanctuary  
Labyrinth, basement after the service
- Thu    Feb 19              **NO** Vocal Choir Practice until March
- Fri    Feb 20              NA, 6:30pm, MH
- Sat    Feb 21              Syracuse Gay and Lesbian Choir meeting, 9am-1pm, Parlor  
NA, 12noon, MH
- Sun    Feb 22              Worship – First Sunday of Lent, 10am, Sanctuary  
Lent Book Study, 11:15am, Parlor

**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.

## ☞ 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 17<sup>th</sup>; 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 16<sup>th</sup>.
- 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](mailto:ljgeorge62@gmail.com)

# ANDREW VANNORSTRAND & ALEX STURBAUM

*Bluegrass, Celtic and Folk music*

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15**

**12:00pm - Noon**

Plymouth Congregational Church  
232 E Onondaga St, Syracuse, NY



**Message from Laity Empowerment -February 2026**

We are asking that anyone who is interested in any of these **open positions** to please get in touch with Leela George, *Laity Empowerment Chair*, at [ljgeorge62@gmail.com](mailto:ljgeorge62@gmail.com), or text/ call 315-254-7807 Or contact any of the Board Chairs.

BOARD/COMMITTEE	DAY/TIME	TIME/FORMAT/ LOCATION
<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	<i>Varies</i>	Varies
<p><b><u>To assist the Treasurer in these duties:</u></b> <i>The Church Treasurer, or the Treasurer’s designated representatives shall receive all monies of the Church; shall deposit funds received in such depository as the Trustees shall order; shall under the direction of the Trustees have all papers relating to the property of the Church. The Treasurer shall maintain accurate separate accounts of receipts and disbursements for operating expense, capital funds, benevolences, <del>and</del> Good Samaritan Fund, and designated funds. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds at the direction of the Board of Trustees, and in consideration of the requests of the Board of Deacons. Designated Funds shall not be used for operating expense or for equipment or maintenance of the Church, unless designated for that purpose. The Treasurer shall make monthly or other reports to the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons as the President or Chair of such Board shall request; and may arrange for an impartial audit of the Church finances to be reported at the annual meeting of the Church.</i></p> <p align="center"><b>Contact Susan Hawks or Tom Zorn for more information.</b></p>		
<p><b>TRUSTEES</b>  <b>1 opening (2-year term)</b> * must be a church member</p>	<p><b>Second MONDAY</b>  <b>President- Maria Palsinelli</b></p>	<p>6:00 pm In Person/Parlor</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves an annual church budget to take to the congregation for approval</li> <li>• Authorizes any unbudgeted or major expenditures of the congregation</li> <li>• Receives proposals from the building committee for building improvements, maintenance requirements &amp; approves those actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decides all personnel contract/call agreement matters &amp; calls upon the church council, pastoral relations team, personnel committee, &amp; congregation at large when necessary</li> <li>• In support of the Church Treasurer, monitors cash flow, endowment, special</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves all new capital improvement projects to present to the congregation for approval.</li> <li>• Supports the work of the stewardship team &amp; the endowment team in thinking creatively about energy efficiency, legacy</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves all building use contracts &amp; tends to the communication &amp; resolution of difficulties related to the church’s building users, with support from the building use team &amp; the church staff</li> </ul>	funds, capital funds, etc. & makes decisions accordingly in collaboration with the finance committee, endowment committee, and Church Council	giving, & overall stewardship of resources
<b>DEACONS</b> <b>2 openings (2-year terms)</b>	<b>Second TUESDAY</b> <b>Chair- Arne Hook</b>	7:00 pm In Person/Parlor & ZOOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with pastoral staff to set a vision for the worship life of the congregation, discerning themes &amp; special events for liturgical seasons</li> <li>• Leads worship on Maundy Thursday</li> <li>• Decides on the allocation of resources for worship, special events, hospitality ministry, outreach, &amp; benevolence giving. Proposes budgets for each of these to the Treasurer &amp; Trustees for the annual budget each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets the calendar &amp; implements communion – set up, serving, clean up</li> <li>• Supports the food pantry ministry helping create awareness &amp; supporting the volunteers in their decision-making about changes to the food pantry</li> <li>• Recruits, trains, &amp; supports greeters, ushers, community time hosts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates opportunities for the congregation to build community through special events such as Mardi Gras lunch, Advent lunch, Epiphany &amp; Pentecost celebrations</li> <li>• Supports the work of Mission, Justice, and Service</li> <li>• Supports the work of the prayer shawl ministry and Flower Team</li> </ul>
<b>CHRISTIAN FORMATION</b> <b>3 openings (Two 1- year terms, and one 3-year term)</b>	<b>Fourth TUESDAY</b> <b>Chair- Havilah Carroll</b>	7:00 pm In Person/Parlor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposes and <b>monitors budget</b> for nursery care, Learning Community, adult study, youth ministry, &amp; intergenerational learning events.</li> <li>• <b>Hires</b>, in collaboration with Board of Trustees, nursery care staff &amp; <b>supports and guides that staff</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sets vision for overall Christian Formation ministry</b>, including decisions about curriculum, special learning programs, service learning, adult study offerings, discussion series, family support, &amp; special events of the congregation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Facilitates the planning of special events:</b> Advent Workshop, Palm Sunday Alfombras Walk, Heifer Festival, etc.</li> <li>• Helps <b>create a vision</b> for adult study, supporting the forum team, Bible Study, etc.</li> </ul>

# Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza!

**MONDAY**  
**February 16**  
**10:00am-2:00pm**



Designed for youth ages 11-18, this interactive program features performances by local organists and students from Syracuse University's Setnor School of Music, a pizza lunch, a chance to play the Plymouth Church organ, and option to build a model pipe organ.  
There is no cost to attend this program.

For questions, email Vince Guarneiri: [Vincent@Cnyorganist.com](mailto:Vincent@Cnyorganist.com)

Please use the QR code to register

**Plymouth Congregational Church**  
**232 East Onondaga Street,**  
**Syracuse**

Sponsored by the Syracuse Chapter of the American  
Guild of Organists



**Anticipating  
Ash Wednesday?**



**Join us at 7pm, Wednesday, February 18th  
Plymouth Congregational Church  
in downtown Syracuse**

## ☞ 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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