

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



Service of the Word
March 29, 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

“The Palms”
Michael Chellis, *bass*

Jean-Baptiste Fauré

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Craig French

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 21:1-10

Michael Chellis

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”

#216

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Peace be with you.

ALL: And, also with you.

Share a sign of peace with those around you.

PALM SUNDAY LITANY (*by Benjamin Cremer, adapted*)

One: We want the warhorse.

ALL: Jesus rides a donkey.

One: We want the eagle, a bird of prey.

ALL: God's Spirit comes as a dove.

One: We want to take up swords.

ALL: Jesus takes up a cross.

One: We want the roaring lion.

ALL: God comes as a lamb to be slaughtered.

One: We keep trying to arm God.

ALL: God keeps trying to disarm us.

One: May the palms we wave today

**Please stand if able.*

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 your reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
May it be so. Amen

CALL TO ACTION

CALL TO GIVING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Ride On, King Jesus” arr. Moses Hogan

*DOXOLOGY

**Throughout these Lenten days and nights,
we turn to walk the inward way,
where meeting Christ, our guide and light,
we live in hope of Easter Day.**

*RECESSIONAL HYMN “Before Your Cross, O Jesus” next page

*BENEDICTION

Today’s worship service will continue with our traditional Palm Sunday Neighborhood Walk, starting with the children’s Alfombra in front of the church and returning for a pancake brunch downstairs in Kirtland Hall.

Before Your Cross, O Jesus

Ferdinand Q. Blanchard, 1929; alt.

Mark 8:34; Gal. 6:14; Phil. 1:27; 3:7-10

- 1 Be-fore your cross, O Je-sus,
our lives are judged to-day;
the mean-ing of our ea-ger strife
is test-ed by your way.
A-cross our rest-less liv-ing
the light streams from your cross,
and by its clear, re-veal-ing beams
we mea-sure gain and loss.
- 2 The hopes that lead us on-ward,
the fears that hold us back,
our will to dare great things for God,
the cour-age that we lack,
The faith we keep in good-ness,
our love, as low or pure,
on all, the judg-ment of the cross
falls stead-y, clear, and sure.
- 3 Yet hum-bly, in our striv-ing,
we rise to face its test.
We crave the power to do your will
as once you did it best.
On us let now the heal-ing
of your great Spir-it fall,
and make us brave and full of joy
to an-swer to your call.

Ferdinand Q. Blanchard, moderator of the General Council of Congregational Churches (1942-1944), was active in missions and was a leading advocate of educational opportunity for African-Americans. This hymn was written for Euclid Avenue Congregational Church in Cleveland, Ohio, which he served for forty years.

Tune: ST. CHRISTOPHER 7.6.8.6.8.6.8.6.
Frederick C. Maker, 1881



Something to Think About

Ridiculous king

The tattered little man rides his donkey,
as if a king.
Onlookers humor us. "Hail!" they laugh,
pouring another beer.
He is the farthest from their minds.

But he is not far from their hearts.
He is there, calmly enduring our evil,
the raggedy dreamer
peacefully overpowering the world's deep sickness.
He is there, enthroned in our broken depths,
his spirit rising in the worst of us,
smiling, with light in his eyes.

He is there, laughable,
standing firm amidst all that is wrong with the world,
still loving, still undefeated.

Nothing, not the most powerful armies
or heartless tyrants, nor the most profound evil
or the forces of death itself, can stop him
from putting an arm around your shoulder.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

USHER: Gert Danzy and Maurice Forrester
FLOWERS: Esther and Thomas Zorn
LITURGIST: Michael Chellis
DEACONS ON DUTY: Nancy Gwin and Frank Leonard
ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR: Tom Zorn
COUNTERS: Elaine Wolf and Keith Jakway

THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Today Worship, 10am, Sanctuary
 Alfombra and Palm Sunday Neighborhood Walk, outside
 Pancake Brunch, Kirtland Hall
- Mon Mar 30 Syracuse Gay and Lesbian Choir, 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
- Tue Mar 31 Narcotics Anonymous (NA), 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
- Wed Apr 1 Food Pantry, 2pm, Basement
 Speranza Choral Practice, 6:30pm, Sanctuary
- Thu Apr 2 **Maundy Thursday Service**, 7pm, Sanctuary
- Fri Apr 3 NA, 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
 Good Friday Ecumenical Service, 6:30pm, Pebble Hill
 Presbyterian Church, 5299 Jamesville Road
- Sat Apr 4 NA, 12noon, Memorial Hall
- Sun Apr 5 **Easter Sunday Worship**, 10am, Sanctuary
 Community Time, 11:15am, Memorial Hall

If asked for a handout (\$) during worship at Plymouth, we encourage you *Not* to do so. Instead, welcome each person lovingly and respectfully, as a sister/brother/sibling in Christ. Then, make a gift—especially on communion Sundays—to Plymouth’s Good Samaritan Fund. This allows our pastor (on your behalf) to respond to requests for financial assistance.

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

☞ Joys and Concerns*☞

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

- The Mace family on the sudden passing of Robert Caleb, 24, son of Fria and Matthew and sister of Serafina.
- Geri H. will be undergoing a revision back surgery on April 8.
- Healing and health for Jasmine (friend of Amanda P.)
- Kathleen W. is celebrating the recent birth of two grandsons. Ford was born to Katya on February 1, and Zayden was born to Ana on March 8. Big brother and cousin, Austin is thrilled and grateful he is the oldest.
- James, currently in a hospital in Philadelphia, father of Meghan M. of Syracuse.
- Sandra and Rollin B. as they move into Alzheimer's care in RI as Sandra's illness progresses with all that entails.
- Our shut-in congregants; Myrtle B., Fung-Chan C., Joanne C., Pat H., Chris H., Marilou O. and Mable W.
- Marva H., a Plymouth Food Pantry volunteer, is recovering at home.
- Elizabeth M's sister in recovery.
- Stephen C. dealing with lung cancer and other health issues.
- Folks dealing with mental illness, incarceration, and homelessness.

**The listings for Joys and Concerns will be kept for one month; after that you can request they be re-upped by contacting the Church Office.*

"The Poet Thinks about the Donkey,"

On the outskirts of Jerusalem
the donkey waited.
Not especially brave,
or filled with understanding,
he stood and waited.
*How horses, turned out into the meadow,
leap with delight!*
*How doves, released from their cages,
clatter away, splashed with sunlight.*
But the donkey, tied to a tree as usual,
waited.
Then he let himself be led away.
Then he let the stranger mount.

Never had he seen such crowds!
And I wonder if he at all imagined
what was to happen.
Still, he was what he had always been:
Small, dark, obedient.
I hope, finally, he felt brave.
I hope, finally, he loved that man who
rode so lightly upon him,
as he lifted one dusty hoof and stepped,
as he had to, forward.

+ Mary Oliver

Music Notes for Sunday, March 29th, 2026

It wouldn't be Palm Sunday at Plymouth without Jean-Baptiste Fauré's *The Palms*. We're grateful to Michael Chellis for faithfully singing this every year.

Eugene Butler (b. 1935), has enjoyed wide acclaim as a composer, conductor, and music educator. Throughout his over 60-year career, he has published more than 1000 works, including choral octavos, large choral works, piano duets, and instrumental works. Our **anthem** was first published in 1967.

*Sing Hosanna in the highest; blessed be the King who comes,
King of Israel, King of heaven, Lord of all his earthly sons.*

*Sing Hosanna, peace in heaven, glory be to God on High.
Spread your branches and your garments, raise your anthems to the sky!*

*Sing Hosanna to the Saviour as he comes in mighty love.
Praise the king who reigns forever with our holy God above.*

Sing Hosanna in the highest. Glory be to God on high!

In the early twentieth century, Harry Burleigh and Nathaniel Dett preserved the spirituals that might have otherwise become lost. In the last decade of the twentieth century, Moses Hogan (1957-2003) brought new life to the traditional spirituals with bright, rhythmic arrangements and fresh harmonies. Our **offertory anthem** is typical of these arrangements.

*Ride on King Jesus. Ride on the conquering King.
Ride on King Jesus, ride on. No man can a-hinder thee!*

*I was but young when I begun,
But now my race is almost done.*

*King Jesus rides a milk-white horse.
The river of Jordan he did cross.*

*He's the King and the Lord.
He's the First and the Last.
Jesus is the Prince of Peace.*

INFO SESSIONS: HOW TO REPORT ICE IN CNY

When: 2nd Saturdays 1:30pm - 3pm
4th Thursdays 6:30 - 8pm

What: This training is for community members who want to know what to look out for and how to report ICE sightings in the area. It is NOT a comprehensive ICE Watch training or a Know Your Rights training.

Where: Zoom - join the session using the links or QR codes below

Saturday: bit.ly/SatSIRDNSession

Thursday: bit.ly/ThursSIRDNSession



Saturday



Thursday

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, Transition Pastor
Dr. Joseph Downing, Director of Music
Lori A Forrester, Church Administrator
Emily Evans, Youth and Children's Ministries Coordinator

232 E Onondaga Street ☞ Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 474-4836

plymouthsyr.org ☞ office@plymouthsyr.org