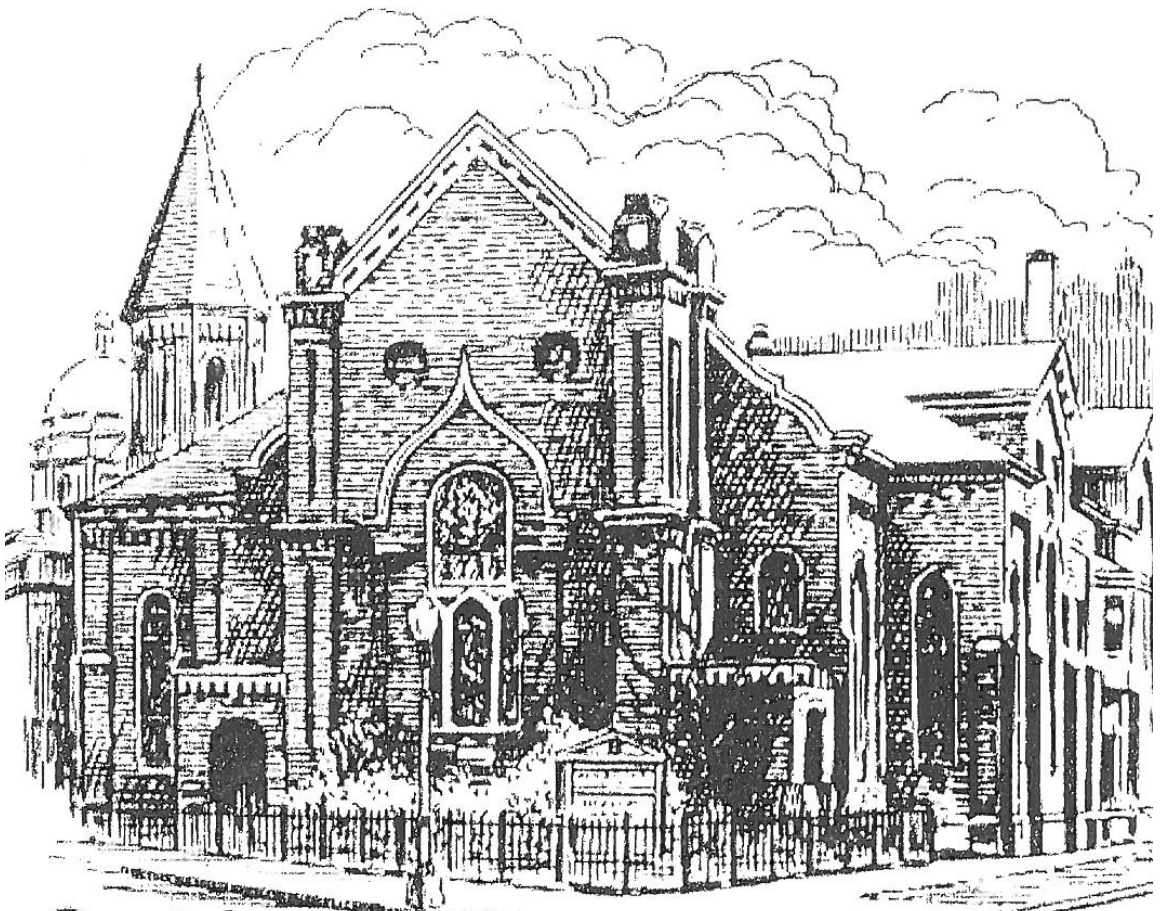


Plymouth Congregational Church

*a Congregation of the United Church of Christ
in downtown Syracuse, NY*



*Plymouth Congregational Church
Syracuse, N.Y. — E. Nielsen*

Service of the Word
April 26, 2026
10:00 am – Worship

*Joining us this morning is “Mother Earth”
(a 17’ puppet) presented by Leslie Archer and
Brie Caufield. Don’t miss Community Time!*

*Pulpit: I have places to lie down and rest
under the cedar trees and on grassy plains.*

Organ: You lead me beside quiet waters
that are pure enough to fish in, to swim in and to drink.

ALL: My whole being is nourished and restored.

*Pulpit: You guide me along the right paths:
learning the right way to live with all creation.*

Organ: Even though I walk through the valley of death
I will fear no evil, for you are with me.
Your loving kindness comforts me.

*Pulpit: You prepare a table before me
in the midst of those I love and those I disagree with.*

Organ: We have time to talk and discuss and settle our differences
while eating wonderful food.

*Pulpit: You provide medicines and smudge for my healing
and my cup overflows.*

Organ: Surely your goodness and mercy ... humility and honesty ...
respect and bravery ... wisdom, truth and love ...
will follow me all the days of my life.

**ALL: And I will live in the house of Creator
for as long as the sun shines and the rivers flow.**

ANTHEM

Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd

William Kirkpatrick

STORY FOR ALL AGES

*Following the Story for All Ages, children preschool through
grade 5 will depart for Learning Community.*

HYMN

Halle, Halle, Halle

#236

SCRIPTURE

John 10:1-10

Common English Bible

MESSAGE

Who Belongs?

*HYMN

Welcome

insert

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN

We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky

#563

*BENEDICTION

CARRYING OUT THE LIGHT

POSTLUDE

Prelude on Brother James' Air

Christopher Tambling



Something to Think About

Through Light and Shadow

through light and shadow
I am led, I follow,
through the ins and outs
the ups and downs
of these days,
when my heart is failing,
when my spirit rejoices,
when I can barely put one foot
in front of the other
still you beckon me on...
when I stumble you support me,
when I can go no further
you carry me,
through light and shadow,
in death's dark vale,
and on the mountain peaks
you lead me,
through tangled webs,
on rocky ground,
on smoother paths,
through light and shadow
you lead me,
I follow,
may I never
walk alone...

from Sally's *Eternal Echoes* website

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.

☞ Plymouth Runs on YOU ☞

USHER: Frank Leonard

FLOWERS: Esther and Thomas Zorn

DEACONS ON DUTY: Heather Evans, Kailyn and Aspen Wright

LITURGIST: Lori Forrester

ONLINE WORSHIP COORDINATOR: Tom Zorn

COMMUNITY TIME: Nancy Gwin

COUNTERS: Kim Dill and Keith Jakway

THIS WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

- Today Worship, 10am, Sanctuary
 Community Time and Forum, 11:15am, Memorial Hall*
- Mon Apr 27 Good Neighbors Team, 5:30pm, Parlor**
 Syracuse Gay and Lesbian Choir, 6pm, Memorial Hall
- Tue Apr 28 Pastoral Search Committee, 5:30pm, Parlor
 Narcotics Anonymous (NA), 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
 Christian Formation, 7pm, Parlor**
- Wed Apr 29 Food Pantry, 2pm, Basement
 Speranza Choral Rehearsal, 6:30pm, Sanctuary
- Thu Apr 30 Bell Choir Practice, 5:30pm, Sanctuary
 Vocal Choir Rehearsal, 7pm, Memorial Hall
- Fri May 1 NA, 6:30pm, Memorial Hall
- Sat May 2 NA, 12noon, Memorial Hall
 Speranza Choral Concert, 4pm, Sanctuary, see pg. 10
- Sun May 3 The Mountain Goat Run, allow extra time to get to church
 Worship, 10am, Sanctuary
 Community Time and Forum, 11:15am, Memorial Hall*

**You are invited to join us for Community Time for coffee, tea, and refreshments in Memorial Hall after worship.*

Our Forum today is learning how puppetry has been and can be used for Earth's justice. Leslie and Brie are puppeteers, artists, and historians. They have a PowerPoint presentation for us at Community Time. **The Forum next Sunday** will be making our own puppets! All are welcome.

*** 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.*

Today is the last day that Addison "Addie" Flower will be with us. She has been playing timpani and drum set and singing in the choir with us for the past 2+ years. She graduates in May with her Bachelor of Music Composition and will be leaving the Syracuse area. Please have a slice of cake in her honor at Community Time.

∞ Joys and Concerns ∞*

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

- Mable W. asking for your prayers. She and her family are going through some emotional and medical issues.
- The Mace family on the sudden passing of Robert Caleb, 24, son of Fria and Matthew and sister of Serafina.
- Geri H. following another back surgery is currently at Fahey recovering.
- Healing and health for Jasmine (friend of Amanda P.)
- Our shut-in congregants; Myrtle B., Fung-Chan C., Joanne C., Geri H., Pat H., Chris H., Marilou O., and Mable W.
- 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.*

Just a reminder Plymouth Congregational Church Administrator's office hours are 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday through Friday. We appreciate your awareness of this schedule change and encourage you to reach out during these hours for assistance. The Office will be closed on Federal Holidays.

Plymouth's Food Pantry is asking for donations of laundry detergent and fabric softeners either powder, liquid, or sheets.

What are the 50 days of Easter (Eastertide)

The 50 days of Easter, or "Eastertide," constitute a joyous liturgical season in Christianity spanning from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. It celebrates the Resurrection, the ascension of Jesus, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, acting as a period of reflection on new life and the continued presence of Christ.

Key Aspects Eastertide and Poem

- **Beginning and End:** It begins with the Easter Vigil (Saturday night/Sunday morning) and concludes on Pentecost Sunday.
- **The Octave of Easter:** The first eight days (Easter Sunday through the following Sunday, known as Divine Mercy Sunday) are celebrated as a single, solemn "octave," treated with the same high joy as Easter Sunday itself.
- **Ascension:** The Ascension of Jesus is celebrated on the 40th day, a key milestone within this season.
- **Pentecost:** The 50th day celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, marking the birth of the Church.
- **Significance:** It serves as a contrast to the 40 days of fasting in Lent, representing resurrection, renewal, and hope.

During this period, Christians often focus on reflection, celebrating the "resurrection people" mindset, and attending church services that highlight the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.

The Ice Cream Man

Rum and raisin, vanilla, butterscotch, walnut, peach:
you would rhyme off the flavours.

That was before they murdered the ice-cream man on the Lisburn Road,
and you bought carnations to lay outside his shop.

I named for you all the wildflowers of the Burren I had seen in one day:
thyme, valerian, loosestrife, meadowsweet, tway blade, crowfoot, ling, angelica,
Herb Robert, marjoram, cow parsley, sundew, vetch,
mountain avens, wood sage, ragged robin, stitchwort,
yarrow, lady's bedstraw, bindweed, bog pimpernel.

+ Michael Longley

Music Notes for Sunday April 26, 2026

This Sunday we read about Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and all of our music relates to this theme. Our **prelude** is from a cantata Bach wrote when he was the court organist in Weimar. It was written for the 31st birthday of Duke Christian, and the original text talks about how citizens living under a wise ruler are like sheep grazing safely under a faithful shepherd. However, in most performances today, the faithful shepherd is implied to be Jesus.

William Kirkpatrick (1838-1921) was an Irish-born American hymnwriter who published over 1,000 gospel hymns and over 60 hymnbooks. Our **anthem** is typical of his work – somewhat sentimental and overdramatic:

*Dear to the heart of the shepherd; dear are the sheep of his fold.
Dear is the love that he gives them, dearer than silver or gold.
Dear to the heart of the shepherd, dear are his other lost sheep.
Over the mountains he follows, over the waters so deep.*

*Out in the desert they wander, hungry and helpless and cold.
Off to the rescue he hastens, bringing them back to the fold.*

*Dear to the heart of the shepherd; dear are the lambs of his fold.
Some from the pastures are straying, hungry and helpless and cold.
See, the Good Shepherd is seeking, seeking the lambs that are lost.
Bringing them in with rejoicing, saved at such infinite cost.*

*Dear to the heart of the shepherd; dear are the ninety and nine.
Dear are the sheep that have wandered out in the desert to pine.
Hark! He is earnestly calling, tenderly pleading today:
“Will you not seek for my lost ones, off from my shelter astray?”*

*Green are the pastures inviting; sweet are the waters and still.
Lord, we will answer thee gladly: “Yes, blessed Master, we will!”
Make us thy true under-shepherds; give us a love that is deep.
Send us out into the desert seeking thy wandering sheep.*

Our **offertory duet** comes from Handel’s *Messiah*:

*He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and he shall gather the lambs with his arm
And carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.
Come unto him all ye that labour, and he will give you rest.
Take his yoke upon you and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart
And ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

Our **postlude** uses the tune from today’s opening hymn. Christopher Tambling (1964-2015) was Director of Music at Glenalmond College in Scotland.

Standing on Holy Ground...
We acknowledge with respect to the Onondaga Nation,
Firekeepers of the Haudenosaunee,
Indigenous People on whose ancestral land
Plymouth Church now stands.



Sing for
hope!

Sing for
delight!

Sing for
beauty!

Speranza Chorale

presents

SING FOR JOY!

with music of Brahms, Mendelssohn, Tallis and Victoria

A concert to benefit *A Tiny Home for Good*

Saturday, May 2nd at 4:00 p.m.

**Plymouth Congregational Church
232 East Onondaga St. Syracuse**

\$10-30 suggested donation

 speranzachorale.org



Speranza
Chorale

100% of your
donation will be
given to

a tiny home
for good.

☞ Some Things You Ought to Know ☞

Want to stay informed about the news and events at Plymouth Church? Sign up for Plymouth's weekly email newsletter by contacting George Bain at georgesbain@aol.com

Hospitality Ministry – Please consider serving as a host for Community Time. There is a sign-up chart in Memorial Hall. It's easy and we'll help you!

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

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