



waymarks

January

2010

The Newsletter of Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC

<http://www.plymouthmontana.org>

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR

Yesterday I looked out the window and saw diamonds in the air! The sunlight glittered on each of the fine snowflakes, and the breeze set them dancing, making a dazzling display of glorious light!

The Longest Night has passed, and already I can sense the increase of light in the mornings and afternoons. We are now heading into the season of Epiphany, which is best symbolized by light - the light of the star that guided magi to Jesus, the light of recognition that Jesus was a new kind of Messiah, the light of inspiration - "Aha!" - that his reign brings new challenges of inclusiveness and hope.

I introduced a new carol on December 27 (at least new to some) called "Sing a Different Song." I love the implication that once we have celebrated Jesus' birth, we have a responsibility to follow through with new incentive for his work. The fourth verse says:

Dance a different dance now Christmas is here,
Dance a dance of war on suffering and fear:
Peace and justice are one, in the light of the sun.
Dance a different dance. God's reign has begun!

Each of us has a calling - a ministry, if you will - to address the hurt in the world. Let's take the momentum from Christmas and burst into the new year with renewed vigor for this dance! Some of you may be asked to serve around the Plymouth Board table, while others may volunteer in the kitchen. Some may reach out to those who are sick or grieving, others to new and potential members. Some may be singers or teachers or readers; others movers and shakers. Each of us has light to shine! Later in January we'll be creating a weaving that illustrates how we connect with each other and beautify the world. As Shakespeare wrote in *The Merchant of Venice*,

How far that little candle throws its beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Shine your light!
Shalom, Cathy

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GRATITUDE ABOUNDING!

Thank you to all who participated in our marvelous Festival of Music on December 20! Leatrice Lily and the Voices of Faith choir: Robie Culver, Patsy and Cynda Tompkins, Julie, Darby, and Jesse Fowler, Marcia Warner, Rosie and Hal Fossum, Mike Maki, Dick Weaver and Cathy Barker. Plymouth Singers: Robie, Patsy, Cynda, Marcia, Hal, Amy Demaree, Jennifer Thompson, Don Harriott, Dick and Cathy. Plymouth Strings: Mary Lou Weddig, Marca Gibson, and Sarah Capdeville with flautist Janet Sperry. Handbell Ringers: Mary Drysdale, Mary Lou, Boyce Fower, Marca, Holt, and Gage Gibson (Gibsons also providing percussion.) Children's choir, led by Peggy Coggeshall: Holt, Willa Fossum, Helen and Neil Bovington, Ashlyn and Ian Boomer, accompanied by Darby Fowler. Ann Moody held it all together on piano and organ, and JJ Coggeshall provided narration.

In addition, a delicious brunch was served with food from the congregation! The kitchen crew included Florence Mayer and Carol McKerrow (coordinators), Rosana Skelton, Dick Mayer, Carol Brown, and many others!

Heartfelt thanks from Cathy and Dick to all who sent and gave us Christmas wishes and financial gifts. (We discussed whether individual thanks should be sent, and decided since there were over 30 gifts we would rely on this message to reach you all!) We are deeply moved to receive such an outpouring of generosity.

RECOMMENDED READING

Dick referenced the fine book *First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach about Jesus' Birth* by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. It's available from Amazon and wherever progressive theology is sold.

A REQUEST

Please bring colorful ribbons, neckties, and strips of fabric at least 2 feet long to church for a project we'll launch in mid-January. Curious? Come to church!

WALKING THE WALK

There's still time to sign up for a work trip to New Orleans February 7-13. Amy Demaree, Cathy, and Dick will be going; contact Dick for details (422-3341).

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation Class for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders will begin in January. If your household includes a teen who fits that description, you will receive a letter soon. (If you don't, please contact Cathy Barker, 422-3346.) If you would like to be a support to this class, by prayer, phoning, food, or transportation, please contact Cathy.

The 2009 Annual Meeting of Plymouth Congregational Church will be held following worship on Sunday, January 24. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall downstairs. At that time we will elect a new board and approve the 2010 budget as well as discuss other church business. It is very important that as many as possible attend to make these decisions.

Calendar

MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

By CHUCK BUTLER

What a wonderful year we have had at Plymouth! Thanks go to each of you, your board, Pastors Dick & Cathy, the choir and Plymouth Singers, Maria and Marca, the Secretaries du jour, Jay, all of the members and leaders of the various church committees and work groups. In other words, we are all very blessed for everything everyone does to make Plymouth a special place in Helena and for so many folks in our growing church community.

As we enter the new year - can you believe another year has come and gone - we have so much to be thankful, joyful and grateful for and to celebrate. My heartfelt thanks to Dick and Cathy for their spiritual leadership and for their warmth and friendliness and for their combined talents to help make so many good things happen at Plymouth with the assistance and support of so many volunteers. I also want to express my appreciation to the worship committee who along with Dick & Cathy plan well-organized services that offer so much for so many.

We should also take pride in our pledge campaign for the next church year, thanks again to the planning and leadership of our pastors, your Board and most of all, the generosity of everyone in the congregation who made a pledge. Again, we are truly blessed with the giving of the talents, time and personal resources of so many folks in our congregation.

I also want to mention how special the service and brunch was on the Sunday before Christmas. Church was full. The music was wonderful. Brunch was fantastic and for those who didn't make it, you missed a great feast and fellowship. The Christmas Eve service was also very special with the Christmas story, beautiful music, communion and singing of Silent Night as we formed a huge circle and lit candles. Thanks again to everyone who makes time to make the Plymouth services and fellowship so special!

Happy New Year!

Chuck

P.S. Susan, Gran and I will miss all of you for a good part of winter, as we head south again in mid-January. I regret missing the annual church meeting, but know that everything will go well as I leave the post of moderator to vice-moderator Hal Fossum, who has worked closely with me this year, and to a great Board along with our pastors Dick & Cathy.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

WOULD LOVE A VISIT

Vince Holmquist at the Big Sky Care Center

Margaret Jeffries, Barbara Derr and **Peg Rule** at the Waterford

Ida Holmquist at Hunter's Pointe

Doug Demaree at the Evergreen in Clancy

Betty Sando at Sonheaven Assisted Living

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

| | | | |
|------|----------------------------|------|-----------------|
| 1/03 | Tyson Arthur | 1/17 | Ashley Reese |
| 1/04 | Nathan Schreder | 1/18 | Jaeger Clark |
| 1/06 | Mary Drysdale, Holly Clark | 1/20 | Lesly Grant |
| 1/07 | Nate Christianson | 1/22 | Steve Ereth |
| 1/08 | Doris Powel | 1/23 | Kellen Swingley |
| 1/09 | Calli Nickel | 1/26 | Lisa Waddell |
| 1/09 | Daniel Reid | 1/27 | Carly Grant |
| 1/10 | Evelyn Nelson | 1/27 | Kristin Murray |
| 1/11 | Connie Basta Griffin | 1/27 | Jill Rohyans |
| 1/11 | Ed Nelson | 1/28 | Stan Howard |
| 1/12 | Marcia Barfknecht | 1/30 | Nolan Bruck |
| 1/16 | Richard Dunkle | | |

Happy Birthday and Congratulations!

If you celebrated a birthday or special occasion this month and your name was overlooked, please call the office so our information can be updated.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BY MARY DICKMAN

PLEASE BRING TACO INGREDIENTS FOR GOD'S LOVE!

The youth will be serving a meal of tacos for our neighbors at God's Love in February. Please sign up to bring food or help in the kitchen!

PLEASE BRING IN YOUR EXTRA WARM CLOTHING!

We are still gathering warm clothing for people in need of a little extra warmth this winter. There is a box in the coffee room.

THANK YOU FOR A WONDERFUL YEAR OF GIVING THROUGH SOCIAL JUSTICE!!

Together, we have collected food for our neighbors through Food Share, gathered blankets and clothing for impoverished babies in Mexico through the St. Andrew's Clinic, fed volunteers who helped build homes in Helena through Habitat for Humanity, gathered food labels to be traded for training aids for Intermountain, sponsored the education of high school children in Uganda through the Uganda Education Fund, bought gifts for Helena families in need of Christmas joy through the Adopt a Family program of the Friendship Center, enjoyed wonderful coffee while directly supporting the families of a community in Chiapas Mexico through Cafe Justo, prepared and served meals to our neighbors at God's Love, bought animals to support families around the world through Heifer International, supported retired clergy through the Christmas Fund, volunteered during Harvest Days at the Farm in the Dell, supported struggling Helena families through the Mission Money Jars, and spread love by supporting missions throughout the world through collections like One Great Hour of Sharing through Church World Services.

Whew! And we have mission trips to New Orleans coming up in the next months!!!!

Thank you for continuing to share the love of God!! If you are interested in more information of helping with social justice, please call Mary Dickman at 461-1106.

SOMETHING NEW IS COMING!

In the near future, you might be getting a call from one of our church members. No, it's not Stewardship Week again! You're being invited to a special gathering in someone's home, for dessert or snacks, and an opportunity to talk about Plymouth Church. Between now and the end of February, Dick wants to hear from as many of you as possible, in a comfortable, small-group setting, about your memories and thoughts about our history – specifically, what you remember about the various ministers who have served Plymouth, and the ministries that have happened here – and also some thoughts about our future – where do we want to go. It doesn't matter how long you've been part of our family – your voice is important.

Dick wants to be at every group gathering if possible, and will ask a few specific questions to guide the discussion. Other questions and ideas may follow, but everyone who is able to be at one of the gatherings will have a chance to respond to the same questions. The groups are being formed in order to get a good mix of ages and interests in each gathering, so there will be some folks there that you know, and some you would like to get to know. Stay tuned!

The ministry of Plymouth
Congregational Church is
to nurture our congregation
and the wider community with
acts of love and a vision
of God's image in all things.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
Check here _____ and return if you no
longer wish to receive this mailing.

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