



# waymarks

March

2010

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The Newsletter of Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC

<http://www.plymouthmontana.org>

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## NOTES FROM THE PASTOR

Well, it may just be that spring is on its way. There are signs, that's for sure, and the days are getting longer. That's where the word "Lent" probably comes from: The Old English word for "lengthen". And we're celebrating Lent at Plymouth in a number of ways.

Soul Food is continuing on the Wednesday nights of Lent (up until Holy Week, when we have our Maundy Thursday service on Thursday), with discussion on the series from the UCC: Faithfully Facing Dying. We've already looked at Living Wills and Advance Directives, and Palliative Care, Suffering and Pain Control; coming up will be the topics of Hospice Care, Physician Aid in Dying, and possibly a chance to summarize and look forward.

Soul Food starts at 5:30-ish with a light meal, with discussion starting at 6, concluding at about 7 PM. All are welcome, and Peggy Coggeshall is providing child care for those who want to come with their children. These are serious topics, that's for sure, which we can approach faithfully as the title of the series suggests. Join us!

We've got some new members joining the church soon, and we're building towards Palm Sunday and Easter, too. New ideas for Easter Sunday! Join us for that, too! Come early to get a good seat!

Lately I've been exploring a few different ways to view Jesus and his teachings, as well as his place in the constellation of powerful Jewish or Hebrew prophets. Many of us think of Jesus as a "prayer partner" and example, to help us with our own spiritual growth. He was also a mystic, who apparently had direct personal experiences of closeness to God. Because Jesus was fully human, like us, he's an example for us in that regard, too. We can experience the Divine in ways similar to his experiences through prayer, communal worship, meditation, and, yes, service.

Jesus lived in an unjust world, just as we do! And he saw himself as a prophet as he spoke and acted in ways that were aimed at trying to make the world better. While some of the things he said and did may make us uncomfortable or challenge us to go beyond what we'd prefer, he continues to guide us lovingly forward, if we listen.

The Church season of Lent used to be considered a time of penitence and sorrow at our own human behavior. It still has some value in that way; but it is also a time for us to deepen our spiritual lives, to grow in our "knowledge and love of God". Whether this leads us to change in our own lives, or in the world in which we live, we can leave up to the Holy Spirit, which is Christ working in us.

One of the nice things about Plymouth is that we really don't have a lot of structure getting in the way of good ideas, though sometimes it may seem otherwise! And I've found that it's true about Plymouth folks as it is about people in many UCC churches: The local church may or may not do a lot of things in and for the community and the wider world as a church, but our members do! Lots of us are very active in the community and are helping to make the world a better place in many ways.

So if you've got an urge to try and meet some need in the community, or a great idea for a program or a fund-raiser for the church or a special need – Go for it! If you can get other church members to sign on with you, go do some ministry! No real need to get approval from the Board, though we'd love to know what you're doing! The only thing we ask is that whatever you do, it's in line with the Mission of this church and is of benefit to the church or the world. We as individuals are called to respond to many needs. Don't let even our limited bureaucracy hold you back.

May God bless you on your faith journey.

Dick

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT is scheduled for April 29. This wonderful evening of food and guided conversation is a treat for all who attend, and the working group has put together another excellent program. Church members have the opportunity to sign up first, but then things start filling up fast when we spread the word outside our family. Watch for the fliers and request your choice soon! Early reservations and ticket purchases work the best.

## THANK YOUS!

Thank you to Ed Miller for the beautiful shelving and hanging space in the Flower Power Corner. Careful planning and purchasing were part of Ed's approach and we who use the area are grateful. Ed Canty helped with the construction, also. To two Eds--many kudos from Carol McKerrow.

## GROUP GATHERINGS

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have completed the Group Gatherings that I asked church members and friends to participate in. We certainly have not heard from every voice, but we have heard a lot of you! The response has been encouraging and positive, even if occasionally there was a bit of discomfort. I will report a bit more fully in the near future, without going into a great deal of ponderous detail. Every individual who took part has contributed to a fuller picture for me, and also for the others who shared the discussion. Thank you!

I will say that in a very general way, our perceptions of the various ministries and ministers of Plymouth have been "on the same page" while certainly not being identical. Those who took part listened and shared in a very friendly and warm way, and if we heard things we didn't understand or disagreed with, at least we heard one another. This is good news!

Thanks to all the hosts who allowed people to gather in their homes and shared food for the tummy as we also shared food for thought. More later!

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# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

## PRAYERS OF PEACE AND HEALING

To the family of **Rosie Fossum**, grieving her death on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

To **Jill Rohyans**, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.

## 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

# Calendar



# WORSHIP AT PLYMOUTH THIS LENTEN SEASON

BY ROBIE CULVER, DEACON OF WORSHIP

Worship opportunities will be plentiful, meaningful and exhilarating this Lenten Season. Please plan to make the upcoming worship events part of your Easter experience this year or, as reported by Hal Fossum at his dear mother's memorial service, Rosie would say "you should be in church!"

Some exciting happenings not to miss:

**Sunday March 21** – Adding prominence to the regular worship service, four new members will join Plymouth. Come and welcome them.

Wednesday evening Soul Food through March 24<sup>th</sup> – Soup and bread served at 5:30 and adult education lead by Dick on end of life issues – 6:00-7:00. Childcare is available. Reservations will be taken at the church for each Wednesday session and are appreciated for planning purposes but feel free to drop in whenever you can.

**Palm Sunday March 28<sup>th</sup>** – a drama depicting Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the story of his passion will be a "not to be missed" moving worship that will prepare you for Holy Week.

**Maundy Thursday Service April 1** – In honor of Passover, the ancient Jewish holiday remembering the time when the people fled from slavery in Egypt to the relative safety of promised land, we will offer a simple meal of chicken soup with unleavened bread called matza, apple relish (haroset), and figs and dates. (As the families traveled in haste, they did not have time to let their bread rise, consequently this meal is "flourless"). The menu makes reference to Seder, the ritual feast of Passover. Some scholars believe that Jesus may have shared the Seder meal with his disciples during the week before his crucifixion. While there will always be room for Elijah, please let us know if you would like to partake in this meal beginning at 5:30 PM. Beginning at 6:00 PM will be a service of scripture and prayer in the sanctuary.

**Holy Saturday Easter Vigil April 3** – after sundown (probably about 8:00 PM) we will hold an hour long vigil moving us toward the celebration of Easter. This service will include bringing "light" into the church and preparing the way for Christ's resurrection.

**Easter Sunday April 4** – celebrate this most holy of days at Plymouth as we share the sacred meal of communion. There will be wonderful music, activities for children, and a bake sale that will ease your holiday baking chores. (We welcome all contributions to the sale, those who donate as well as those who purchase. Proceeds will help with summer garden projects on the church grounds).

In addition to these exciting worship opportunities, all of the upcoming worship services will be filled with beautiful symbols of the Lenten season:

"Come to the waters."; "Anyone in Christ is a new creation."; "Anointed with love."

There will be special music and artistic displays that will fill your senses with these themed messages.

**Easter Lilies in memory of your loved ones.** Wouldn't it be wonderful to fill the sanctuary with the beauty and aroma of Easter Lilies? If you would like to provide a lily for use in decorating for the Easter celebration please deliver those lilies to the church before Saturday, April 3. If you would like the lily to symbolize a memorial or honor someone special, a list of those honored will be included in the bulletin on Easter Sunday. Please let the office know what names to include by March 29.

# MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

BY HAL FOSSUM

## “You should be in church. Regularly” or: The Gospel of Rosie Fossum

In difficult times it is especially comforting to have a church home. Following the February 19 death of my mom, Rosie Fossum, there was a tremendous outpouring of support for our family, for which we are truly grateful.

Family arrived, food appeared, flowers came, there were gifts to the church, and a mountain of cards. It was a blessing. It was glorious chaos. Through it all, Plymouth was a source of spiritual support and calm.

As I began consider my Mom's life, one the easiest things to recall was her conviction about the importance of church life.

She was not shy about saying this, and so I'll repeat her words exactly: “You should be in church. Regularly.” I'm pretty faithful but still, I always tended to chuckle at this. Those words seemed awfully strong. They don't anymore.

Rosemary Anderson Fossum lived out some lessons so that I've come to think of as the Gospel of Rosie. Indulge me in relating them (in short form):

**Love extravagantly** – Never leave the ones you love wondering. Love one another. Love. Then love again.

**Be a host(ess)** – This was Rosie's special ministry. There was never an excuse too small for a smile, a hug, or a hearty welcome. She had a way of making a person feel like the honored guest at any gathering, and she had lots of them.

**Be steadfast** – Once Rosie committed to a group, she was in. I never knew her to quit anything. Her sense of belonging was very strong and if she felt a need for change, she helped make it.

**Speak your mind** – Be passionate about things that matter. Seek positive and critical conversation, and not just with people who agree with you. Rosie was positively irrepressible this way.

**Reconcile** – Rosie lived out this, the hardest of lessons. Do not let conflict linger, but seek forgiveness and give it freely whenever you can. Life is too fragile and our time too short for such things.

So love each other. Worship regularly. Be extravagantly welcoming. Stay committed. Be passionate. Seek forgiveness. Be merciful.

Love to you,

Hal Fossum, Moderator

# MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

3/01	Lynn Bolin	3/25	Clara Gilreath
3/02	MacKenzie Bailey	3/26	Elizabeth Chute
3/04	Brenda Byrom	3/26	Jonna Mandeville
3/05	Marilyn Grant	3/27	Mary Capdeville
3/06	Joshua Steiner	3/27	Courtney James
3/06	John Waddell	3/28	Jessica Baird
3/10	Meghan Mandeville Ascheman	3/28	K. B. Curran
3/14	Sunny Ray Mandeville	3/28	Boyce Fowler
3/14	Tyler Pedersen	3/29	Joan Post
3/14	Keri Messmer	3/30	Britta Bindle
3/23	Keith Messmer	3/30	Michael Reid
3/25	Justin Evans,	3/31	Annette Baird

## 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.

# COMMA CLUB!

BY MEGAN GITTINGS

Thanks to all those who made the taco dinner at God's Love such a success! It was such a blessing to serve food and break bread with the men, women and children there.

Coming up next: Fairmont Hot Springs March 14th. Teens, please sign up on the Narthex table or email [megan\\_gittings@bresnan.net](mailto:megan_gittings@bresnan.net) if you are coming. As always, feel free to bring a friend!



**Plymouth Congregational Church**  
400 S. Oakes  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 442 9883

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to nurture our congregation  
and the wider community with  
acts of love and a vision  
of God's image in all things.

