



LEARN, REFLECT, SHARE

## Motivated by the Marriage Amendment

BY ALLISON CAMPBELL JENSEN

The November 2012 ballot's so-called marriage amendment to Minnesota's constitution would limit marriage to being between a man and a woman. This is not tenable for many at Plymouth Congregational Church.

As a church that has long embraced all people, whatever their orientation, Plymouth clergy and staff are committed to help Minnesotans lead the way to civil discourse on this issue and to provide spiritual grounding for members, friends and others. While we recognize that not every Plymouth member or friend will want to oppose the proposed amendment, we believe that many will.

### LEARN MORE

With the showing of the film *A Fish Out of Water*, 12:15 p.m., Feb. 12, Plymouth Church begins a monthly series on Perspectives on the So-called Marriage Amendment. The Religious Exploration committee developed this series to help those wondering how to discuss the proposed amendment with friends, neighbors and family, especially if people are not in agreement. *Fish* is co-sponsored with the Plymouth Film Club; Paula Northwood will lead

the discussion. The series continues, always at 12:15 p.m., with Yvette Eramus talking about Compassionate Communication, March 11; Shannon Kearns discussing Old Testament passages, April 15; and Karl Jones exploring New Testament passages on slavery and how they might inform the current debate about acceptance of the GLBT community, May 13.

In addition, Plymouth Church hosts OutFront Minnesota faith organizer Javen Swanson speaking about "Why Marriage Matters" at the 9 a.m., Feb. 19 Adult Forum. Javen is a married gay man who will share his conviction that marriage matters personally, politically and spiritually.

### ATTEND A SERVICE

State Senator John Marty speaks at the Healing Minnesota service, 5 p.m., Feb. 26. Healing Minnesota services offer song, speakers and spiritual reflection to inspire love, respect and healing in a time of division. Healing Minnesota services model civility and love as we move toward the voting booth decision on the marriage amendment in November 2012. Join in and invite friends, 5 p.m., on the fourth Sunday of the month, through Oct. 28, 2012.

### TELL STORIES

Offering voices in opposition is video blogger Matt Peiken ([faithforwardmn.wordpress.com](http://faithforwardmn.wordpress.com)), who presents views of such faithful people as U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison, Rabbi Melissa Simon and Rev. Rebecca Voelkel. Learn to tell your own story, in an impactful way, about why marriage is important to all families through training sessions offered by Minnesotans United for all Families. For times and locations of classes, see the website ([www.mnunited.org](http://www.mnunited.org)). Whatever your opinion, you are invited to speak out.

### JOHN MARTY



# A time for healing

BY JAMES GERTMENIAN



Photo: Chris Bohnoff

An unseasonably warm January together with a modestly early Lent conspire this year to give the impression that Spring is just around the corner when, in fact, it is more likely to be around the corner and then miles down the road. When, a few weeks ago, our clergy and program staffs met to make plans for Lent and Easter, the smell of Christmas greens was still lingering in Jones Commons, Guild Hall and the Sanctuary—and there was an air of unreality about it all. Nevertheless, Ash Wednesday will fall on February 22, and with it we will begin—once again—the 40-day journey toward Christianity’s signal celebration: the day of New Life.

“Progressive faith healing the world,” has been the theme we’ve traced thus far in this program year, and for the six weeks in Lent we will look more closely at the idea and experience of healing in its many forms. In sermons, prayers and music, we will think together about how broken things become mended, how wounded people are made whole, and how hurting souls are restored to their natural strength. Hopefully, through it all, we will be able to acknowledge that every one of us is in need of some sort of healing.

There will be a brief hiatus in the theme on Feb. 26, when

my friend Dr. Joerg Rieger will lecture for Adult Forum and preach at the 10:30 service. Joerg, who teaches at Perkins School of Theology in Texas, is a compelling thinker at the crossroads of theology and economics. I have referred to his most recent book, *No Rising Tide*, in a couple of my own sermons, and I know that he will be provocative, thoughtful, insightful and challenging.

Then, as we move toward Lent’s ending, I will take the second half of my 2010 Sabbatical. As you may recall, I took the first half at the end of 2010 in order to help care for my father who was then living in California. The upshot of that visit was to bring Dad to Minnesota, which we did last March. This year, I will be gone from April 1 until May 15. Our tentative plan is for Sam and me to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary with a brief trip to the Hebrides off the coast of Scotland, after which I will return to Crete for some time of reflection and writing. Meanwhile, Plymouth’s pulpit will be ably filled by my colleagues, with Paula preaching on Palm Sunday and Jeff on Easter Day. Cathie and Tara will take their turns in subsequent weeks.

A personal note: as I write this, we are in the middle of seven performances of The Eat Street Players production of *The Fantasticks*. It has been a singular joy for me to be part of this production, and I want to thank my colleagues and Plymouth’s lay leaders who were patient as I undertook this time-consuming project.

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 GRACE NOTES
 

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## Cellist Ross, the Youth Choir and Lent

BY PHILIP BRUNELLE

February promises to be another wonderful month for music at Plymouth Church! On Feb. 5, I am very pleased that Tony Ross, the principal cellist with the Minnesota Orchestra, will return to play in the morning service music of Fauré and also music of the young Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo, who will be with us that morning. Those of you who wish to practice your Norwegian will have a chance with Ola after the service! Then on Feb. 12 the Youth Choir will be with us to sing the anthem. The season of Lent begins in February and this year the Plymouth Choir will

be singing a different setting each Sunday of the ancient text *Kyrie eleison* (Lord, have mercy on us). Feb. 26, the first Sunday in Lent, will feature the beautiful setting composed by the French organist and composer Maurice Duruflé. The following Sundays will include settings by Gardner, Kodály, Haydn and Schubert.



Photo: Ann Marsden

# Invitation to the Member Dance Show

BY ELSIE MARTIN

On Sunday, March 18, after the 10:30 worship service, the Board of Fine Arts will sponsor two events—a reception in honor of the opening of the new art exhibit in the theater foyer and a Member Dance Show in Guild Hall.

We at Plymouth are blessed by bountiful examples of art. We have a beautiful church building filled with many wonderful pieces of fine art and a handsome Guild Hall with a magnificent embroidery. Our windows hold many beautiful stained glass art works. Our sanctuary and halls fill with amazing music week after week. The library, Literary Witnesses, and Adult Forums help us experience the literary arts. But that is not all. For some, dance—moving in a purposeful, mindful way—is art that moves us spiritually as well as physically.

Last year Guild Hall was the venue for a presentation of dances on a Sunday in May immediately following the 10:30 service. This year, the Dance Show will occur on Sunday, March 18

at approximately 12:15 p.m. in Guild Hall. This year's show will feature the Children's Dancers directed by Carole Humphrey, and possibly Carole will again offer an improvisation. Minneami Salsa will present a

Please consider joining us!

The Board of Fine Arts invites you to participate in our Member Dance Show on March 18, as a presenter, as a participant or as an audience member.



SCENE FROM NEW DANCE: GRASSES

Cuban Rueda dance. This group is coordinated by Jay and Stephanie Owen-Lyons and provides free lessons Thursday nights at Plymouth. Elsie Martin will show her newest composition, *Grasses in the Wind*, with six dancers. To try something new this year, the *Grasses* dancers will improvise while Sam King reads her poem "Grasses" from her book *Bog Orchids*.

To awaken the congregation to art around us and within us.  
—Mission of the Board of Fine Arts

We welcome dancers and choreographers of any age and genre who might like to showcase their work. Each dance piece should be no more than six minutes. Dancers and choreographers interested in participating should contact Elsie Martin at [emyersmartin@gmail.com](mailto:emyersmartin@gmail.com) or 612-926-7593 before March 1. Do come and enjoy the show! All are welcome.

**Philip Brunelle** is the 2012 recipient of the Weston H. Noble Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions over several decades to the musical life of the North Central division of the American Choral Directors Association. He will receive the award during an ACDA ceremony Feb. 9 at 8:30 p.m., in Madison, Wis.

## Jolly Good News!

In celebration of the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne, *The Choirbook for The Queen* has been published with 44 British composers represented. Included among the 44 composers are two—Bob Chilcott and Judith Weir—whose anthems were composed for the Plymouth Church Choir! The Chilcott anthem, *The Heart-in-Waiting*, states: "Commissioned in honour of Philip Brunelle's 40th anniversary as Choirmaster-Organist of Plymouth Congregational Church, Minneapolis, and dedicated to David Buran, faithful Plymouth Choir member for those 40 years." Judith Weir's *a blue true dream of sky* includes the dedication: "In honour of Philip Brunelle." Plymouth Church is the only U.S. congregation included in the choirbook.

## Minnesota's Poet Laureate Reads Feb. 5

BY JIM LENFESTEY

Everyone knew Minnesota's first Poet Laureate had to be Robert Bly. Everyone is thrilled that the second is Joyce Sutphen. Literary Witnesses is pleased to present Ms. Sutphen reading in the chapel at noon, Sunday, Feb. 5.

Sutphen grew up on a working farm near St. Joseph, Minn., and no one writes so reverently about rural life. Her physical migration has not been far from that farm, to Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. But along the way she fell in love not only with farm life but Shakespeare, earning a Ph.D. in Renaissance Drama at the University of Minnesota and becoming a professor at Gustavus of British Literature and creative writing.

She is revered among readers of poetry for her subtle mastery of form, including the sonnet, and her honest explorations of love, for which she has been well recognized. Her first collection of poems, *Straight Out of View* (Beacon Press, 1995), won the Barnard Women Poets Prize. Her second, *Coming Back to the Body* (Holy Cow! Press, 2000), was a Minnesota Book Award finalist; her third, *Naming the Stars* (Holy Cow! Press, 2004), won the Minnesota Book Award. Red Dragonfly Press has recently published a gorgeous letterpress edition of *Fourteen Sonnets*, and her latest full-length collection, *First Words* (2010).



JOYCE SUTPHEN

London, a dying marriage, stories of plain exaltation and ordinary weariness."

All her books will be for sale at the Literary Witnesses reading by Birchbark Books.

Sutphen has read her poems on public radio's *A Prairie Home Companion*, where host Garrison Keillor described her subjects as "scenes of the family farm, Paris,

## Feb. 12 Eric Utne Reads *Brenda, My Darling*

Hear a true love song, at noon, Feb. 12, in Jackman, when Eric Utne, reads from his book *Brenda, My Darling: The Love Letters of Fridtjof Nansen to Brenda Ueland*.

Minneapolis's own Brenda Ueland was born and raised on Lake Calhoun and died on Lake Harriet. In between she divided her 93 years between Greenwich Village and Minneapolis. Her father immigrated from Norway and dug sewers while working through law school. Her mother was a pioneering suffragette whose bust stands in the Minnesota State Capitol. Brenda is the author of "the best book on writing ever written" (Carl Sandburg on *If You Want to Write*, reprinted in 1987, a perennial bestseller for Graywolf Press), and patron saint of all aspiring writers of memoir for her extraordinary autobiography *ME*.

She also was the recipient of more than 30 love letters from the famous Norwegian explorer, humanitarian and winner of the 1922 Nobel Peace Prize, Fridtjof Nansen. The two met in New York City in 1929. They had a brief love affair and a year-long correspondence until his death. *Brenda, My Darling*, edited by Ueland's step-grandson Eric Utne, presents Nansen's letters to Ueland (hers to him are lost) and a sampling of Ueland's published work and unpublished diaries. In the foreword, Norwegian Nansen biographer Per Egil Hegge wrote: "These love letters from Fridtjof Nansen to Brenda Ueland make for compelling reading...the letters are so earnest, so intense, and so beautifully written, it is more appropriate to classify them as literature—a true love song."

## Lenfestey Reads Feb. 26

In 1974, James Lenfestey came upon *Cold Mountain: 100 Poems of the Tang Dynasty Poet Han-Shan*. The result 33 years later is his collection of poems inspired by the form and sensibility of that Chinese hermit poet, yet brimming with his own humor. At noon, Feb. 26, in the chapel, Lenfestey will read from *A Cartload of Scrolls: 100 Poems in the Manner of the Tang Dynasty Hermit Poet Han-Shan* and will also show a short film of his pilgrimage to China where he paid homage to Han-Shan. Jim Lenfestey chairs the Literary Witness Program at Plymouth.

# Communications: What's new in our conversations at Plymouth?

BY SONIA CAIRNS

Over the past several weeks, the Ad Hoc Communications Committee has been hosting small group discussions to deepen the conversations on some key themes raised by the survey we sent you this past fall. In these conversations, we wanted to learn more about how you, Plymouth members, think we're doing as a congregation in communicating among ourselves and talking about Plymouth to the larger community.

You may remember we've been charged by the Church Council to make recommendations to them this spring "to achieve effective, clear, compassionate communication that enriches, deepens and grows our spiritual community." We've learned a great deal from the congregation. First, participants in the conversations were interested enough in how we're doing on communications that many of you came to one of about 10 meetings held between December 2011 and

early February. Second, a large majority of attendees was very positive about how we communicate with one another in respectful and trusting way and offered a rich variety

in conversations, and reviewing our work at various stages. We are grateful to each person. Now, we are in the process of making sense of all we learned from you and drafting

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A majority was very positive about how we communicate—and offered ways we could improve on what's going well.

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of ways we can improve on what's going well. Third, there's considerable interesting in clarifying and being able to articulate what we as a congregation value as a Progressive Christian community of faith.

Our committee of eight, staffed by Jeff Sartain and Allison Campbell Jensen, is grateful for valuable assistance from other members in the form of facilitating meetings, synthesizing survey comments, organizing the suggestions made

our recommendations to the Church Council. Thanks for all of your input. We have every reason to be optimistic that our spiritual community at Plymouth will be enriched, deepened and grown by the processing of working with you, the members.

Please send any additional thoughts you have for the Communications Committee to [scairns@mosscairns.com](mailto:scairns@mosscairns.com). Thank you on behalf of all of us.

## GOVERNANCE UPDATE

The Governance Committee continues its work. We are currently reviewing our core values as stated in the Strategic Plan and developing a governance philosophy which reflects and is consistent with these values.

The values and governance philosophy will provide the context for proposed changes in our governance. We have engaged an external consultant to help us with this phase of our work.

— Claire Kolmodin, for the committee

## Working Women Invited

One More Chair, a large church fellowship group, has begun smaller interest groups. At this time, an evening fellowship group is forming for women who work days. Interested? Please email Mary Steinson ([marysteinson@gmail.com](mailto:marysteinson@gmail.com)).

The format will be determined at the initial gathering sometime at the end of February or beginning of March.

# A Call with Complications and Rewards

BY SHANNON KEARNS



Can you speak about a call without speaking about the church? I'm not sure that you can, but while my calling to ministry has remained steady, my relationship with the church has been complicated.

I grew up in a Grace Brethren church (a fundamentalist, evangelical tradition) and I recall being aware as early as junior high that I was called to serve God in ministry. But the church I attended didn't allow women to be ordained or to do any kind of ministry other than children's ministry and I knew that's not what I was called to.

As I got older I came to terms with my queer identity and that was

another roadblock. What church would possibly ordain me as a queer, transgender person? Yet even through my complicated relationship with the church, my calling from God has remained strong even when I wasn't sure the form that calling would take.

I've tried to remain open to the leading of the Spirit even when that leading hasn't made sense. I studied youth ministry in college even when I was told I couldn't be a youth pastor. I got a Master of Divinity even when it wasn't certain that I would find a denomination to ordain me or a church to hire me.

Now as I get closer to ordination I realize that my sometimes tense relationship with the established church has prepared me in deep

ways for the people to whom I feel called: Those on the margins, those wounded by Christians, those who seek the face of God in spite of continually being turned away and told they are not welcome.

I know what it's like to stand at the door and knock and be denied entrance. I know what it's like to feel you can only bring some of yourself to worship. And I have seen the healing that happens when someone hears for the first time that they are wholly acceptable to God, as they are, no exceptions.

Calling is a mysterious and messy endeavor. I hope to be worthy of the calling that has been placed upon me.

Shannon, who is Plymouth's interim community ministries and youth activities coordinator, will be pursuing ordination with the North American Old Catholic church, an independent Catholic denomination that is focused on new church starts, clergy development and social justice. Shannon hopes to be ordained to the Diaconate in May and ordained to the priesthood in the late fall.

## Ordinations: Wise, Jan. 8; Edgerton, Feb. 11



**Shai Wise**, shown at right with his son, Ian, is a Plymouth member who's been serving as pastor at the First Congregational Church of Christ in Algona, Iowa. Shai was ordained at Plymouth Congregational Church on Jan. 8, 2012. The service offered the Masai Creed, which includes: "God created humanity and wanted this creation to be happy in the world."

**John Edgerton**, previously a pastoral resident at Plymouth Church, will return to be ordained at the church, 1 p.m., Feb. 11. All are invited to attend the ceremony.

John currently serves Old South Church in Boston as interim associate minister.

# Plymouth Members Stepping Up

## YOUR PLEDGES SUPPORT THIS CHURCH AND ITS WORK

The Stewardship Committee chose an inspiring theme for the giving campaign for 2012: Progressive Faith Healing the World. They also set exciting goals: 750 pledges totaling \$1,800,00—increases of 75 pledges and \$200,000 over last year. The end-date for reaching these goals is the Annual Meeting of the congregation in June. We can reach these goals. As of late December 2011, we have received

596 pledges, which is an increase above where we stood at this same time last year of 71 pledges. In dollars that is \$1,544,508, which is \$105,754 above last year. If you have not done so already, please pledge as you are able to support Plymouth Church, our community and our work in the world.

For a pledge card, call the Church Office at 612/871-7400.



**PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING TIMM DOUMA, ABOVE, AS THE NEW MINISTRY ASSISTANT FOR ADMINISTRATION IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

## Why Not the Best? Seeking Board Nominations

BY JEFFREY SARTAIN

The congregation is invited to assist the Church Council in its exciting charge to fill the slate of elected Board Members and Officers for the church. The Church Council convenes to start this assignment in March, and now invites suggestions from the entire congregation for those who might be gifted and willing to provide leadership beginning in June. The official slate of nominees will be finalized by the Church Council in May after they consider carefully the overall needs of the church together with the variety of gifts of our members.

The following is a list of the Board members and Officers of the church to be nominated:

- All Boards
- Treasurer
- Clerk
- Church Council Members at Large (2)
- Moderator

You may put forward the name of any member of the church, including your own, for consideration by the Church Council.

It is helpful if you add some additional information such as the particular experience and gifts the individuals

you are highlighting might offer.

You can submit these names in three ways:

- by email to [Emilyv@plymouth.org](mailto:Emilyv@plymouth.org),
- by filling out a form that will be in the bulletin on Feb. 5, 12, and 19,
- by going online to [www.plymouth.org/leadership/index.php](http://www.plymouth.org/leadership/index.php)

Thank you for considering who might serve Plymouth as leaders!

### PARISH REGISTER

#### DECEASED

Charles Brown, husband of Betty Brown, father(in-law) of Judy and Kent Hodder, grandfather of Mike, Drew, Annie and Bob Motch and Will Hodder

Margaret Farewell

Jerry Flom, partner of Scott Hall Johnson, former husband of Martha Flom, father(in-law) of Sarah and Gary Kiecker, grandfather of Evan Kiecker, father(in-law) of Craig and Susan Flom, grandfather of Emily, Ben and Peter Flom

Richard Griffis (assistant minister at Plymouth, 1960-1963), husband of Anne Griffis

Elaine Mitchell

William Thayer, husband of Marion Thayer

Bill Venell, husband of Jane Venell, father of Kathryn Koessel, grandfather of Sarah Koessel, father(in-law) of Greg and Emily Venell, grandfather of Maggie and Christy Venell

#### BEREAVED

Jill Hennesen, death of father, Charles Hennesen

Brian Johnson and Marsha Hunter, death of Brian's mother, Margaret A. Johnson

Nancy and Brian Siska, death of Nancy's mother, Mary Pentecost; Luke and Sian Siska, death of grandmother

#### BIRTHS

Emily Claire Glidden, daughter of Elizabeth Glidden and Eric Pusey

Madeline Louise Swanson-Hysell, daughter of Nick and Sarah Swanson-Hysell, granddaughter of Tom Hysell and Susan Marie Swanson

#### BAPTIZED

Graham Jefferson Hollander, son of Jeffrey Keith Hollander and Kristin Tongson-Hollander

# Centering Prayer: Resting in God

BY DIANE BORUFF

During Advent James Gertmenien eloquently spoke of the desires and longings of our hearts for God, for belonging, for home and for joy. This ancient longing tends to be set aside in our busy lives. We study and read and have an intellectual experience of God but shy away from anything else. Yet we are left with this longing.

When my children were young and I “had it all”—wonderful husband and children plus a teaching career that I loved—why and what was this longing in my heart? The longing drew me to an adult class at church on praying in many ways that included meditative or centering prayer.



In the past, I had been required to do much reading and studying of religion but it had always been an intellectual exercise. With centering prayer, I sat in silence with the desire to be in a deep relationship with God. There was no “burning bush” moment, but something happened in my heart.

As Thomas Keating writes, “God’s first language is silence.” I also learned that even though it was unlike my active nature, I could sit still, be quiet, and even look forward to being still.

## ORIGINS

Centering Prayer is derived from the Christian tradition of contemplative prayer that leads to contemplation. For centuries contemplation, which was defined by Gregory the Great as “resting in God,” was the goal of prayer. From the desert mothers and fathers of the third century, contemplative prayer was passed down; it was mainly found in the monasteries.

In the mid ’70s, three Trappist monks adapted the monastic practice of silent meditation into a prayer form that could be practiced by people not living in a cloistered community. The name Centering Prayer was chosen in reference to Thomas Merton’s description of contemplation as being in “the center.” Thomas Keating is the most well-known writer on the practice and theology of Centering Prayer. Contemplative Outreach is the organization that fosters Centering Prayer and the transformation it brings. For more, see [www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org).

## HOLY MYSTERY

Exactly how mediation or centering prayer transforms your life is

a holy mystery but we see the transformation. Henry Emmons spoke at Plymouth about the benefits of meditation and writes about daily practice in *The Chemistry of Calm*. Thomas Keating refers to centering prayer as “divine therapy” because the practice of letting go of thoughts transfers into daily life and changes behavior. During the prayer, I do not sense a change in me—it shows up later in my daily life as the “fruits of the prayer.” In fact, people around you who have known you a long time may be the ones to notice the change first. The practice of centering prayer helps me in all aspects of life—the good times, the tough times and the ordinary times. As I sat in surgeons’ and oncologists’ waiting rooms, I could close my eyes and enter into the prayer. When I awoke during the night, I could return to the sacred word of the prayer and sleep held in the arms of God. I could feel the peace of God and “that all manner of things shall be well,” as Julian of Norwich wrote in very frightening times.

After my use of centering prayer during cancer diagnosis and treatment, I felt nudged to be a teacher of the prayer in order to share the great blessing that I had received. God’s infinite love calls us all to live and serve in love and so I hope that you will answer this call and join us on Sunday mornings in Centering Prayer.

**Diane Boruff and Jan Mattox will leading a Centering Prayer group 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., Sundays in the Fireside Room at Plymouth beginning Feb. 26, the first Sunday of Lent.**

**COMPASSIONATE  
COMMUNICATION:  
INTENTIONAL  
CONVERSATIONS**

Basic Training with trainer Yvette Erasmus, Saturday, Feb. 18, 2012

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

\$75 Partial scholarships available

Recent training participants have said the following:

- helped me deal with my anger
- saved my sanity
- helped me improve school staff/parent relations
- saved my marriage
- helped me understand, forgive and love myself
- helped me clarify my professional relationships

Marshall Rosenberg calls it the Language of The Heart. When we recognize that human feelings and

needs are universal, we will listen and speak with more respect and understanding. We can then create true, authentic connections—so vital to all humanity.

Please join us to learn and explore.

Co-sponsored by the Deacons' Committees: Spiritual Enrichment and Religious Exploration and Connection. Register online (link to form is at [www.plymouth.org/learning/spiritual.php](http://www.plymouth.org/learning/spiritual.php)) or by email [DougF@plymouth.org](mailto:DougF@plymouth.org). For more information, go to [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org) or contact [anneseltz@aol.com](mailto:anneseltz@aol.com).

**MORE ADULT LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES ONLINE**

And there's more! Check out the entire roster of this season's Adult Forum, Spiritual Enrichment and Religious Exploration online. Start at [www.plymouth.org/learning/adult.php](http://www.plymouth.org/learning/adult.php)

**FEB. 23: ROOTED IN THE  
COMMON GOOD**

At the root of Judaism, Islam, Unitarian Universalism and Christianity is love for one's neighbor. Where does this come from in our sacred texts? How does this translate to working for the common good? Why is this a value in each religion?

Join the conversation, 7 p.m., Feb. 23, in Plymouth's theater. Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman from Temple Israel, Rev. Kendyl Gibbons from First Unitarian Society, Imam Makram El-Amin from Masjid An-Nur, Rev. John Bauer from the Basilica of Saint Mary and Pastor Rick Nelson, Central Lutheran Church—all senior clergy of Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness—delve into the commonality in these four religious traditions: to care for one's neighbor.

**Feb. 25-26: Bareedina & Siiqqee (Oromo for "Beauty & Solidarity")**

Global Connections invites you to attend an upcoming photography exhibition and cultural presentation that showcases Oromo women from the Horn of Africa. Experience how these women cultivate beauty despite great challenges in their lives, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 25 and 26 at Augsburg College Music Hall. Along with 1-4 p.m. open houses in Foss Atrium, presentations about the history and culture of the Oromo people with a focus on the role of women in shaping their culture take place 2-3 p.m., in Sateren Auditorium. Presenters include Peri M. Klemm, Associate Professor of Art History, California State University; Martha Kuwee Kumsa, Associate Professor of Social Work, Wilfrid Laurier University, in Waterloo, Ontario; and our own Plymouth member Tshai Wodajo, Founder and Executive Director of Resources for the Enrichment of African Lives (REAL). Tshai will share her personal story and also speak about her work to help promote education of girls in Ethiopia. The event is free of charge; however, a freewill donation is encouraged to help develop a film documenting the outstanding resiliency of these Ethiopian women. Augsburg College Music Hall is located at 2211 Riverside Ave. S., Minneapolis. For parking and additional information, call 612-724-2096 or visit

# February 2012

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## 01 WEDNESDAY

9:30 Groveland Food Shelf  
10:30-12 noon Compassionate  
Communications Practice Session  
1:00 Drop-In  
5:00 New Testament Greek  
5:15 Katy's Cafe  
6:00 Cherub Choir  
6:00 Church Council  
6:00 Young Voices  
6:30 Child Care  
6:30 Chorister Choir  
6:30 Coventry Ringers  
6:30 Genesis Dancers  
6:30 Gay-Straight Alliance  
6:45 Spiritual Enrichment-Yoga  
7:00 Alleluia Dancers  
7:00 Family Gathering Time  
7:00 Plymouth Choir  
7:30 Bells Jubilee  
7:30 Youth Choir

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## 02 THURSDAY

9:00 Needlers  
10:30 Meals on Wheels  
12:00 Clergy Members of Plymouth  
5:30 Global Connections Committee  
6:30 Drop-In  
7:00 Cuban Rueda Salsa Dance

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## 03 FRIDAY

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## 04 SATURDAY

9:30 Drawing for the Truly Terrified

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## 05 SUNDAY

8:45 -11:45 Childcare  
9:00 Adult Forum  
9:00 Adult Bells Rehearsal  
9:50 First Service  
10:00 Blood Pressure Screening  
10:30 Sanctuary Service  
10:30 Church School  
11:50 Katy's Cafe  
12:00 Joyce Sutphen: Literary Witness  
12:00 Youth Committee

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## 06 MONDAY

9:00 Needlers  
7:00 Great Books group  
7:00 Needlers

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## 07 TUESDAY

9:45 Knit A Bit  
12:30 Traumatic Brain Injury Support  
Group  
6:30 Spirituality and Healing Group

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## 08 WEDNESDAY

9:30 Groveland Food Shelf  
10:30-12 noon Compassionate  
Communications Practice Session  
1:00 Drop-In  
5:00 New Testament Greek  
5:15 Katy's Cafe  
5:30 Board of Fine Arts  
6:00 Cherub Choir  
6:00 Board of Children, Youth, & Families  
6:00 Young Voices  
6:30 Child Care  
6:30 Chorister Choir  
6:30 Coventry Ringers  
6:30 Genesis Dancers  
6:30 Board of Deacons  
6:30 Board of Membership  
6:45 Spiritual Enrichment-Yoga  
7:00 Alleluia Dancers  
7:00 Family Gathering Time  
7:00 Plymouth Choir  
7:30 Bells Jubilee  
7:30 Youth Choir

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## 09 THURSDAY

9:00 Needlers  
10:30 Meals on Wheels  
5:00 Communications Committee  
6:30 Drop-In  
7:00 Cuban Rueda Salsa Dance

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## 10 FRIDAY

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## 11 SATURDAY

9:30 Drawing for the Truly Terrified  
12 noon Youth Committee  
1:00 John Edgerton ordination  
6:00 The Vault Coffee House

---

## 12 SUNDAY

8:30 Board of Stewards  
8:45 -11:45 Childcare  
9:00 Adult Bells Rehearsal  
9:00 Adult Forum  
9:30 New member breakfast  
9:50 First Service

10:30 Sanctuary Service  
10:30 Church School  
11:45 New member reception  
11:50 Katy's Cafe  
12:00 Eric Utne, Literary Witness  
12:00 Caring for Creation  
12:15 Film Club: *A Fish out of Water*

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## 13 MONDAY

9:00 Needlers  
5:30 Building & Grounds meeting  
6:00 Home Retreat Meeting  
6:30 Network of Spiritual Progressives  
7:00 Needlers

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## 14 TUESDAY

9:45 Knit A Bit  
4:30 American Indian Initiative  
6:30 BeFrienders

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## 15 WEDNESDAY

9:30 Groveland Food Shelf  
10:30-12 noon Compassionate  
Communications Practice Session  
1:00 Drop-In  
4:00 BeFrienders  
5:00 New Testament Greek  
5:00 Trustees Personnel Committee  
5:15 Katy's Cafe  
6:00 First Service Planning Team  
6:00 Cherub Choir  
6:00 Young Voices  
6:30 Child Care  
6:30 Chorister Choir  
6:30 Coventry Ringers  
6:30 Genesis Dancers  
6:30 Religious Exploration Comm.  
6:30 Board of Outreach  
6:30 Trustees  
6:45 Spiritual Enrichment-Yoga  
7:00 Alleluia Dancers  
7:00 Family Gathering Time  
7:00 Plymouth Choir  
7:30 Bells Jubilee  
7:30 Youth Choir

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## 16 THURSDAY

9:00 Needlers  
10:30 Meals on Wheels  
6:30 Drop-In  
7:00 Cuban Rueda Salsa Dance

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## 17 FRIDAY

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## 18 SATURDAY

9:00 Compassionate Communications—  
Basic Training

---

## 19 SUNDAY

8:45–11:45 Childcare  
9:00 Adult Bells Rehearsal  
9:00 Adult Forum  
9:50 First Service  
10:30 Sanctuary Service  
10:30 Confirmation  
10:30 Confirmation parent meeting  
10:30 Church School  
11:50 Benevolence Committee  
11:50 Katy's Cafe  
5:00 Third Sunday Meal

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## 20 MONDAY

9:00 Needlers  
4:30 Stewardship Committee  
7:00 Needlers

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## 21 TUESDAY

9:45 Knit A Bit  
12:30 Traumatic Brain Injury Support  
Group

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## 22 WEDNESDAY

9:30 Groveland Food Shelf  
10:30–12 noon Compassionate  
Communications Practice Session

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1:00 Drop-In  
5:00 New Testament Greek  
5:15 Katy's Cafe  
5:30 Spiritual Enrichment Committee  
6:00 Ash Wednesday service  
6:30 Cuba Connect  
6:45 Spiritual Enrichment-Yoga  
7:00 Lenten Meditations  
7:00 Alleluia Dancers  
7:00 Family Gathering Time  
7:00 Plymouth Choir  
7:30 Bells Jubilee  
7:30 Youth Choir

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## 23 THURSDAY

9:00 Needlers  
10:30 Meals on Wheels  
6:30 Drop-In  
7:00 Cuban Rueda Salsa Dance

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## 24 FRIDAY

## 25 SATURDAY

9:00 Spiritual Writing

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## 26 SUNDAY

8:45–11:45 Childcare  
9:00 Adult Bells Rehearsal  
9:00 Adult Forum  
9:30 Bible Study: What's Good Friday  
About?  
9:30 Centering Prayer

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9:50 First Service  
10:30 Sanctuary Service—Communion  
11:50 Katy's Cafe  
12:00 James Lenfesty reads Chinese  
poet Cold Mountain; sponsored by  
Sumac Fellowship group  
5:00 Healing Minnesota service

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## 27 MONDAY

9:00 Needlers  
7:00 Needlers

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## 28 TUESDAY

9:45 Knit A Bit

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## 29 WEDNESDAY

9:30 Groveland Food Shelf  
10:30–12 noon Compassionate  
Communications Practice Sessions  
1:00 Drop-In  
5:00 New Testament Greek  
5:15 Katy's Cafe  
6:00 Cherub Choir  
6:00 Young Voices  
6:30 Child Care  
6:30 Chorister Choir  
6:30 Coventry Ringers  
6:30 Genesis Dancers  
6:45 Spiritual Enrichment-Yoga  
7:00 Alleluia Dancers  
7:00 Family Gathering Time  
7:00 Plymouth Choir  
7:30 Bells Jubilee

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### FEBRUARY-MARCH 2012 PROGRAMS

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#### CALLING CHAPEL SINGERS!

Singers of all ages and experience levels are invited to join the Chapel Choir. This group sings once per month in First Service, with one rehearsal at 9 a.m. prior to the service. Please join us on Feb. 12. Upcoming dates: March 11, April 15 and May 13.

#### SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 20 DAY ON THE HILL

March 20, 2012 is Day on the Hill, the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition's annual policy briefing and lobby day. Participants are briefed on portions of the JRLC agenda that are being debated and voted on at our State Capitol. Clergy and lay people from across the state attend Day on the Hill to show the interfaith commitment to social justice and to participate in the lawmaking process. Registration is required (go to [www.jrlc.org](http://www.jrlc.org)).

Participants gather in the morning at RiverCentre in downtown St. Paul for inspiration and issue briefings. Buses then transport them to the Capitol for a short rally. Meetings are held with legislators in the afternoon. Buses shuttle between RiverCentre and the Capitol until 4 p.m.

Rev. Alika Galloway, Kwaanza Community Church, will be our keynote speaker. This year's theme, *And What Does God Require?* comes from Deuteronomy 10: 12-13, 17-18:

*So now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you?...to walk in all his ways.... For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing.*

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2/13 for March, 3/12 for April, 4/13 for May.  
We reserve the right to edit or delay the  
publication of any article.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:50 First Service in the Chapel  
All are welcome for this 30-minute  
creative pause for our church family,  
especially children. Service ends at  
10:20.

10:30 Service in the Sanctuary  
Preaching:  
Feb. 5 James Gertmenian  
Feb. 12 James Gertmenian  
Feb. 19 Jeffrey Sartain  
Feb. 26 Guest Joerg Rieger,  
Lenten Communion

Ash Wednesday Service  
Feb. 22, 6 p.m., James Gertmenian

Healing Minnesota Service  
Feb. 26, 5 p.m., State Senator John  
Marty speaking (see p. 1)

Plymouth Congregational Church

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**Drivers Needed!**

BY DAVE ENGHUSEN

Groveland Food Shelf has long been allowed to use the Plymouth van to pick up bulk foods. When Plymouth purchased the new bus, the church donated that van to Groveland.



But we have lost a few volunteer drivers for Groveland's Hope for the City pickup and are scrambling to find additional drivers. If you have any interest in volunteering to fight hunger and enjoy driving, we have a great opportunity.

Hope for the City provides us with a miscellaneous assortment of foods. It is picked up each Tuesday morning at the warehouse just west of Minneapolis near Methodist Hospital. The food is loaded at their warehouse and unloaded by staff and volunteers at the food shelf. No lifting is required.

Depending on the number of drivers available, this would be a commitment for once per month or once every two months. If you have an interest but have difficulty predicting your availability, feel free to volunteer as an on-call or fill-in driver. If interested, contact Sheila Rafert at 952-356-2796 or rafert@hotmail.com. You can also contact Dave Enghusen at 612-871-0277 (food shelf), 612-558-8837 (cell) or dave@grovelandfoodshelf.org.