

Plymouth Sunday Forum
Autumn 2019
10:00–10:50 a.m., Jackman (unless noted)

September 15, Howard Conn Theater

Reinventing the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office

Presented in collaboration with the Immigrant Welcoming Work Group

Hennepin County Sheriff David Hutchinson will address matters of immigration, the opioid crisis that's plaguing Hennepin County and other current public safety issues. The Sheriff will also discuss the progress on his stated priorities and what's left to be done to make Hennepin County a better and safer place for everyone.

Sheriff David Hutchinson began his law enforcement career more than 15 years ago as an officer in Bayport, Minnesota. In 2006, he joined Metro Transit Police served as a sergeant. Hutchinson worked in some of the poorest and most forgotten neighborhoods in Hennepin county where he supervised Peer Support Programs, Crisis Intervention Training and the Community Engagement Team. Public safety and Service is a proud tradition in Sheriff Hutchinson's family. His father, now retired, was a police officer for 30 years. Today, Sheriff Hutchinson lives in Bloomington with his husband Justin and their dogs, Nike and Rex.

September 22

Affordable Housing I: The Findings of the Civic Caucus

The Civic Caucus is a nonpartisan, non-profit public policy organization which carries on Minnesota's proud tradition of exploring the state's critical public policy issues and solutions and debating them in an informed nonpartisan fashion. In studying the current housing crisis in Minnesota, they have conducted dozens of interviews with individuals and organizations involved with the issue.

Attorney John Cairns, Plymouth member, is a board member of the Civic Caucus and was one of three members who have led for the past year a detailed analysis of housing issues in the Twin Cities. He founded his own law firm in 2008 after 19 years with Briggs and Morgan. He was part of a MN group that created charter schools. He has worked in the charter sector for nearly 30 years. John is a former Minneapolis City Council member (and youngest ever) City Council President. He sits on many non-profit boards, including that of Civic Caucus: www.civicaucus.org (where notes of interviews with housing policy experts are posted).

Note: *The crisis in affordable housing has been a major topic of discussion in Minneapolis and St Paul, in outstate Minnesota, and at the Legislature. This Forum series (four sessions this fall) will provide an overview of the situation as well as the work of several important non-profits in addressing housing and homelessness. We will also hear about steps the City of Minneapolis is taking in response to last year's encampment on Hiawatha Avenue.*

September 29, Howard Conn Theater

The Theology of Prince

Prince (and the Artist formerly known as Prince), was a Minnesota-bred international artistic phenomenon. He had a long career starting in the late 1970s and ending with his death in 2016. Prince is credited with having produced 39 studio albums, four live albums, 152 music videos, and five movies, including the iconic *Purple Rain*. Prince saturated the international markets with his art, yet many people do not know that Prince espoused his theologies throughout his art and intended to be a messenger for God. In this presentation, Pamela Ayo Yetunde will talk about how United Seminary engaged in their Theology of Prince project and how this engagement may impact the study of contemporary prophets and theologians.

Pamela Ayo Yetunde, J.D., TH.D., is Asst. Professor, Pastoral Care and Counseling and Director of Interreligious Chaplaincy at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She chaired the Theology of Prince project .

October 6, 9:00-9:50 am (one church service at 10:00 am for World Communion Sunday), Howard Conn Theater

Aspects of the History of Race Relations in Minnesota

Presented by the Racial Justice Initiative

The history of race relations in Minnesota goes back to our days as a territory. Bill Green is an expert on that long history and has been an integral part of it, serving on the Minneapolis School Board, and for four years as Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools, bringing much needed stability during a difficult time. As Professor of History at Augsburg, he continues to have his finger on the pulse of the state, and race relations that continue to challenge us.

Dr. William D. Green received his B.A. in History from Gustavus Adolphus College and his M.A., Ph.D. and J.D. from the University of Minnesota. He also studied school reform at Harvard. He has written three books – *A Peculiar Imbalance in Early Minnesota: 1837-1869*, *The Children of Lincoln: White Paternalism and the Limits of Black Opportunity 1860-1876*, and *Degrees of Freedom: The Origin of Civil Rights in Minnesota* (for which he won the 2015 Minnesota Book Award-Hognander Prize)– as well as articles, op-ed pieces, and book chapters on history, law and education.

October 13, Howard Conn Theater

Affordable Housing II: The Hiawatha Homeless Encampment: One Year Later

Presented by the Plymouth American Indian Initiative

Noya will discuss how the Minneapolis Health Department worked with the Hiawatha Homeless Encampment last year and at the subsequent Navigation Center. She will also share what has been done since then to prepare for the possibility of future encampments as well as discuss how the current opioid epidemic is impacting Minneapolis.

Noya Woodrich, MSW, LISW. Noya is an Alaskan Native and member of the Athabascan Tribe. Her formal education is in Social Work with both a Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from Augsburg University. For 26 years, starting with an internship, she worked at the Division of Indian Work, in South Minneapolis serving the Native Community. She spent nearly two years working for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe as their Director of Health Services and then Executive Director of Health and Human Services. Currently she is the Deputy Director of the Minneapolis Health Department and worked on the Hiawatha Homeless Encampment last year.

October 20

Forming Leaders for an Evolving Spiritual Church and Community: Changing Models for Progressive Seminary Education

Presenter: Lewis P. Zeidner, PhD – President United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and Plymouth Church member.

United Theological Seminary (UTS) is a graduate school founded by the United Church of Christ as an ecumenical institution. Founded through the merging of two seminaries, it has been operating in the Twin Cities for 63 years. This year UTS sold its campus in New Brighton, MN and moved into the heart of the Twin Cities along the Greenline light rail. UTS has been recognized nationally as a leader in innovating theological education and as an institution that has created a true paradigm shift in preparing church and community leaders. Students are attracted to graduate Seminary education for different reasons than in the past. While efforts to manage student debt put pressure to shorten training programs, expanding skill requirements in church and organizational leadership create a need for pedagogical creativity. This presentation will review various creative models being used to support and prepare tomorrow's spiritual leaders.

Lew Zeidner, UTS President and Plymouth member, is an executive who has started, grown and sold businesses and as a result he understands the difference between developing a strategic plan and successfully executing on that plan. Lew started his career as a clinical psychologist and was a hospital administrator for 15 years. He then transitioned into industry and ran an M&A department of a fortune 500 company. Lew was named CEO of several of the acquired companies and became experienced in the cultural transitions that go into bringing an acquired team and business into a larger company. Subsequently, Lew has been a management consultant focused on helping entrepreneurial business founders prepare for transitions into retirement. After serving eight years on the Board of Trustees of UTS, Lew became Chair of the Board in 2014. In 2016 he was asked to serve as the President of the Seminary when the then President retired. He has focused on utilizing the deep historical successes of the school to create a foundation for its future in an evolving market for theological education.

October 27, Howard Conn Theater

Affordable Housing III: Simpson Housing, Its History and Its Hopes for the Future

Presented in collaboration with the Board of Outreach and the Simpsons Partners

According to Wilder Research, homelessness in Minnesota rose 10 per cent over the last three years. Steve Horsfield will cover the efforts that Simpson Housing has undertaken to provide safe, stable housing for people who have experienced homelessness. Simpson has operated a single adult shelter at Nicollet and 28th for the last 37 years, but also has robust programming for families and single adults exiting shelter, operates a young adult housing program, and recently ran the temporary shelter for the people who were camping at the Hiawatha encampment. He will outline Simpson's philosophy for serving those in need, some national best practices, and hopes for the future.

Steve Horsfield has served as Simpson Housing Services' Executive Director since 2012. Steve's core values are deeply rooted in social justice and servant leadership; he believes that every person deserves dignity, respect, and equal access to critical resources such as housing, healthcare, education and employment.

November 3

Medical Ethics at the End of Life

Presented by the Mortality Project

There are many issues to attend to at the end of life, and some decisions can be difficult ones pertaining to medical care choices. Our speaker, Dr. Victor Sandler, is a specialist in end of life care and the medical ethics decisions that may need to be addressed at that time in our lives or the lives of our loved ones. Join us to hear Dr. Sandler's presentation and to address your questions. This presentation is part of the Plymouth Church Mortality Project series.

Dr. Victor Sandler is Board certified in internal medicine, Hospice and Palliative Medicine. He is the Medical Director Homecare and Assoc. Medical Director Hospice for Fairview Hospitals; President, MN Hospice and Palliative Care Physicians; Co-Chair, MN Medical Association POLST (Provider Orders for Life

Sustaining Treatment) Task Force; Co-Chair, Bioethics Committee, U of M Medical Center; and Assistant Professor, Dept. of Family Medicine and Community Health, U of M Medical School.

November 10

FutureScape – How Self-Driving Cars will Re-Shape our Cities, Streets and Neighborhoods

Presented by the Caring for Creation Committee

Self-driving cars are coming (right on time for our aging baby-boomers whose driving skills are already deteriorating), and their arrival will change the shape and functioning of, inter alia, our downtowns (parking ramps will be unnecessary), freeways (lanes will be fewer and narrower), and neighborhoods (home garages will be re-purposed). With the changes and freed-up spaces will come opportunities for re-imagining and re-designing our surroundings. Come get a glimpse of what this future will look like.

Professor Thomas Fisher holds the Dayton Hudson Chair in Urban Design at the University of Minnesota School of Architecture and College of Design. He is currently the Director of the Minnesota Design Center, and served previously as the Editorial Director of Progressive Architecture magazine. Dr. Fisher is a graduate of Cornell University in architecture and Case Western Reserve University in intellectual history. In 2005 he was recognized as the fifth most published writer about architecture in the United States.

November 17

Justice for Immigrants

Presented in collaboration with the Immigrant Welcoming Work Group

Our current immigration policies and procedures are not working. As a country, we disregard immigrants' rights and we are not providing needed or available social or economic benefits. Michele Garnett McKenzie will describe the ways in which U.S. immigration policies and procedures have failed as well as needed revisions to achieve justice for immigrants and better outcomes for all.

Michele Garnett McKenzie is Deputy Director and Director of Advocacy for The Advocates for Human Rights. She serves on the senior leadership team at The Advocates and is responsible for research, education and advocacy on the organization's domestic priority issues, including migration and human trafficking. She joined The Advocates in 1999 as an attorney representing asylum seekers and detained immigrants and later managed the organization's immigration legal services program. In addition, Michele heads The Advocates' universal representation team to ensure access to justice for detained immigrants. She is the author of publications on human trafficking and immigrant rights. Michele serves on the national leadership team of the Immigration Advocates Network and on the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault public policy committee and previously chaired Detention Watch Network. A member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, she is admitted to practice in the State of Minnesota. She has served as an adjunct clinical faculty member of William Mitchell College of Law and the University of Minnesota Law School. Prior to joining The Advocates, Michele was in private immigration practice, and served as a judicial law clerk for the Executive Office for Immigration Review in Arizona and Nevada. She received her J.D. *cum laude* from the University of Minnesota Law School and her B.A. *cum laude* from Macalester College.

November 24

Your Voice Matters - How We Will End Gun Violence in Minnesota

Presented by the Gun Violence Prevention Group

Mass shootings and partisan politics make it seem that ending gun violence is an impossible task. In reality, each of us has the power to save a life in Minnesota starting with peaceful conversations with our friends and loved ones. Learn what you can do to make a difference in Minnesota and beyond.

Marit Brock is a gun violence survivor and a founding member of the Minnesota Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Since forming the chapter in 2013 Marit has served in a variety of volunteer leadership roles including state Chapter Leader. She currently serves as Deputy Chapter Leader and is an Everytown Survivor Fellow.

December 8, **Howard Conn Theater**

Reclaiming Basketry: Working Through Stigma to Reach Creative Potential

Presented by the Board of Fine Arts

Martha Bird will present on basketry as a tool for healing and empowerment in this groundbreaking talk. She will share basketry from past to present, including the impact of stigma on creative expression within the field. Martha uses her own personal experiences as well as research to challenge the everyday references that often are shrugged off and contribute to perpetuating stereotypes of a medium. Through the process of working through stigma, she will show how raising awareness and naming problems can help us achieve creative potential.

Martha Bird is an interdisciplinary artist who specializes in traditional and sculptural basketry. She is a Certified Holistic RN and holds a MA in Human Development and has exhibited nationally, and locally at the MN Landscape Arboretum, MIA, Duluth Art Institute and other venues. She has also toured her work with the National Basketry Organization. Committed to community, Martha has been involved in the arts as a volunteer, curator, arts organizer and teaching artist. Martha is a 2019 recipient of an Artist Initiative Grant from the MN State Arts Board, made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a legislative appropriation by the MN State Legislature and by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Sunday December 15

Affordable Housing IV: No Room at the Inn? Congregations Stepping Up for Shelter and Housing

Presented in collaboration with the Plymouth Beacon Leadership Team

Plymouth founded the organization that would become Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative and built Lydia Apartments out of a deeply held faith response to people sleeping on the church property, with nowhere else to go. And for decades, congregations like ours have been providing temporary shelter through Families Moving Forward. This summer, we completed our 18th apartment building, Great River Landing, and launched two more that our members are working to bring to reality. Share in a time of reflection on the need and our response in the spirit of Advent – as we remember the birth of Jesus in the stable. Together we can challenge the myth that there is no room in the inn, and the acceptance that any child of God goes without a home.

Rev. Emily Goldthwaite-Fries, Senior Congregational Organizer, joined the Beacon staff in the fall of 1918 from Mayflower United Church of Christ, where connecting with neighbors at Creekside Commons was a highlight of her five years there. With experience organizing for social and environmental justice in local, state and international campaigns, Emily has witnessed the powerful role congregations can play in the healing of communities, especially when it comes to housing and homelessness. Emily grew up in Oregon, earned her M. Div. at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, and has worked in ministries in South Dakota, Iowa, Illinois, and Palestine and Israel. She now lives with her family in Minneapolis.