



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Gossip and Gratitude

PAULA NORTHWOOD, ACTING LEAD MINISTER

"You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in the thanksgiving of God."
—2 Corinthians 9:11

The word gossip is rooted in the Old English term, *godsibb*, recorded sometime around 1014, meaning "a child's godparent or sponsor at a baptism." Over time, and after a number of spelling changes, gossip came to mean "a good friend, usually a woman." By the 1500s, the word was mostly used for "idle chatter and rumor." Another source stated that the term originates from the bedroom at the time of childbirth. Giving birth used to be a social event exclusively attended by women, and they would congregate and idly converse. Over time, gossip came to mean to talk of others. And one source said that gossip comes from the same root as "gospel." It is a contraction of "good spiel" meaning a good story. In the Bible, the words often translated as *gossip* literally mean slanderous talk.

Whatever the source of gossip, we all do it, and churches are not immune. Often it is harmless and

amounts to repeating innocuous information. But there are other times it can really hurt people's lives and reputations are ruined.

There is one piece of gossip at Plymouth that I would love to put to rest. I have often heard that Plymouth does not handle finances very well and that we have spent our endowments and investments down to nothing. This is just false.

During my time at Plymouth our endowments and investments have more than doubled from \$3 million to \$7 million. And while our giving has remained flat, we have maintained a \$2.2 million budget with few problems. Because churches must present a balanced budget, we budget as if we will be taking 4% of our investments, a standard procedure. Some years, to make the budget balance, we have included an additional draw. We rarely ever use that additional draw and, in fact, do not always take the 4%.

At our year-end budget meetings, maybe we have not been effective at letting the church know this, and for that I apologize. But if you have heard this kind gossip, please put it to rest.

What I want this church to know is my gratitude for your generosity. The church has a strong core of members and friends who support the ministry of the church. There are also others, who have the means who can be counted on to help fund special projects. You are a generous church and it shows!



Going forward, you are in a strong financial position. But there is a theological question about how Plymouth Church administers resources. Our ministry goal is not to "make money" but to "make ministry." We are a church, not a bank. We have made a great deal of money. Is it time to share some of it? As the quote from Corinthians says, you will be enriched so that you can be generous. Blessings as you discern how best to share your riches!

—Paula

Staying Creative

BY PHILIP BRUNELLE, ORGANIST-CHOIRMASTER

As I mentioned in September's "Grace Notes," Plymouth's music program will rise to the challenge of being creative. Already we have found many ways to provide meaningful music for worship and will continue to do so!

During the Sundays in November all of Plymouth's singing groups will be heard: Cherub Choir, Chorister Choir, Chapel Singers, Plymouth Adult Choir, and our Solo Quintet. Of course, our Jazz Trio will be with us, along with guest instrumentalists from the congregation: Diane and Greta Hallberg (flute duet) and Sanna Walker (piano). There is a lot of wonderful music in store for you every Sunday! (Of course, I will be playing the organ and look forward to joining you for the hymn singing.)

Someone recently asked me what the title of my column means—Grace Notes. Well, a grace note is a note in small type that gives a "grace" to the main note. It is sometimes improvised, sometimes written out or sometimes indicated by a sign. I chose the term since it allows me to comment on music at Plymouth church in many ways: staying creative, improvising, or offering a "sign" of something to come!

—Philip Brunelle



New Books in the Library

For Children:

The Day You Were Born
By Debra Fraiser

For Youth and Adults:

Immigration Stories from a Minneapolis High School:
Green Card Youth Voices
Edited by Tea Rozman Clark

The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir
By Thi Bui

For Adults:

The Instinct to Heal: Curing Depression, Anxiety and Stress Without Drugs and Without Talk Therapy
By David Servan-Schreiber

Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery
By March Charles and Soong-Chan Rah

Spiritual Socialists: Religion and the American Left
By Vanessa Cook

To request a book from the Plymouth library, send your name and your request via email to library@plymouth.org



Your Ongoing Support

Even though we cannot gather, the ministry of the church continues, and we deeply appreciate your ongoing support. Thank you for your generosity! The ministry, support and programs continue because of your continued donations. To make this even easier, you may text your gifts to 612-999-2874 or go the Plymouth Church website at plymouth.org/give.

Thank you!

Complete Your Pledge Card

The Annual Stewardship Drive has begun. Please complete your pledge card and mail it in, or complete it online at plymouth.org/pledge.



Virtual Offerings to Keep Us Connected

We offer these virtual options until we can gather together again in person.

More information may be found on www.plymouth.org.

Weekly Sunday Service

available every Sunday by 10:30
via Facebook Live or at www.plymouth.org/worship.

Morning Meditations

every Tuesday and Thursday
on Facebook and our website.

Email Reflections

delivered to your inbox Mondays and Wednesdays. To sign up to receive these reflections, e-mail dougf (at) [plymouth.org](mailto:dougf@plymouth.org).

Sunday Forum

Every Sunday @ 9:30
See schedule at Plymouth.org or in pages below.

Contemplative Prayer

available Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m.
Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m.
and Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m.

Musical Moments with Philip Brunelle

A musical reflection is available every day at noon.

In-Depth with Seth and Beth

Beth Hoffman Faeth and Seth Patterson discuss Sunday's sermon, available on Plymouth.org by Tuesday afternoon.

Spiritual Exploration Classes

More information at Plymouth.org

Relationships and Gifts from the Healing Garden

BY EMILY JARRETT HUGHES

This summer, the Plymouth Climate and Environmental Justice group began a medicine garden with healing plants from around the world. Using the raised beds outside of Jones Commons, we grew basil, marjoram and oregano from Europe and sweetgrass, sage, St. John's wort, cedar and tobacco from North America. The plants flourished, in no small part due to steady care from Brad Wieman.

Our tobacco harvest was particularly spectacular. We wondered, how could we rightly share this with the community? There are two commercial tobacco stores within sight of Plymouth, but traditional tobacco is quite hard to find.

When my friend Tara Perron, a Dakota and Ojibwe woman, shared with me her son's work to gather items for people who are homeless, I saw a great opportunity for our garden to be of service.

Members from the Climate and Environmental Justice Committee—Sally Nettleton, Sue Astin, Linda Seime and I—met up with Tara to create 100 prayer ties filled with Plymouth's tobacco. Tara and her son Isaac will give these prayer ties as a form of spiritual support to the unsheltered indigenous people in our community.



This is one of many ways that this garden is an opportunity for us to connect more with the earth, with plants and with our neighbors. We have only just begun; there is still a lot to learn. Look for a book study on the book *Braiding Sweetgrass* this winter.

Construction Begins on New Choir Shelves in One Groveland



From L to R: Jim Christensen, Ned McCraine, Ed Curtiss, Hal Schneebeck and Bob Grams. Photo: Malcolm Williams

Many thanks to these five Plymouth members who built the wall and shored up the flooring in One Groveland on which the new choir library shelves from the Wenger Corporation will be installed in November. A photo of the finished music files will appear in a later *Flame*. Thank you, gentlemen, for your impressive work!

Plymouth Sunday Forum Schedule

BY REBECCA MILLER

The Sunday Forum Committee is looking forward to the variety of topics and speakers we have scheduled. All fall sessions will be held virtually via Zoom webinar. These are similar in format to congregational meetings, though no registration is required. You can also be in fellowship in the Chapel for either a live or remote presentation. Chapel attendance is limited, and you must register and follow Plymouth's attendance protocols. Sessions start at 9:30 and end by 10:20, with the last 10–15 minutes set aside for questions and answers.

November 8

The Idea of America: Our Lost Civic Argument

Can people govern themselves? Our confidence in “The People” and in their ability to develop and administer civic justice with some degree of wisdom suggests a belief in an elusive democratic or general enlightenment. Enlightenment, when manifested in the people, is always subtle.

November 15

Doing Justice: Moving from Social Concern to Strategic Action

Join Steve Newcom for an engaging conversation about Kaleo Center's work training leaders across faith traditions in the skills of social change, building social justice within theological education and advancing local movements of social transformation. Steve will share his social transformation leadership framework and think with the participants about its application to the deep racial injustice being revealed in our world.

November 22

All Square: A New Approach to Overcoming Discrimination for Those Coming Out of Incarceration

All Square, a gourmet grilled cheese restaurant, opened in 2018 with a mission to ensure that those affected by the criminal justice system have the financial support and the social capital necessary for a bright and productive future. One fellow from the original cohort has started an online business, and another has gone on to pursue a law degree. The second cohort of fellows was welcomed last year to work in the restaurant, learn about the legal system and to imagine and work toward a bright future in the All Square Institute and Dream Lab.

December 6

What Muslim Americans Would Like You to Know about Islam

Learn about Islam, its foundation and its interesting principles while honoring our human dignity and respecting our religious differences. These are indispensable conditions for world peace.

December 13

Hidden Recipes: A Holocaust Memoir

Before the Second World War, Ica (Elena) and Ernő (Ernest) each lived a comfortable life in Czechoslovakia. Their lives were shattered by Nazi cruelty, prejudice and devastation. While sharing stories with fellow inmates about their lives when food was abundant before the war, Ica secretly wrote down hundreds of recipes. Ernő spent several years in various Hungarian forced labor units, where he was required to perform strenuous manual labor. He courageously escaped. *Hidden Recipes* is a story of endurance, will to survive, courage, faith and finding joy and happiness again.

Seeking: Plymouth Members to Listen to a Podcast Series

BY BARB IVERSON

Plymouth ministers and members of the Racial Justice Initiative (RJI) are often asked: “What can I personally do to recognize my white advantage and become more antiracist? I really care about this, but I don’t know where to begin.”

Whether you’ve been involved in racial justice issues your entire life, for a couple of decades or just a few months, the podcast series “Seeing White” is a superb way to familiarize yourself with how the concept of whiteness has shaped our nation.

All Plymouth members are invited to listen to this series at their own leisure and to then join a Zoom discussion on each episode on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. The first monthly discussion will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 24, and the final session will be Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022. Registration for the monthly podcast discussions is not required, and you do not need to attend every session.

RJI member Shirley Rutherford, who is working with Mari Bennett and Seth Patterson on this RJI offering, said: “This is a rare intergenerational opportunity at Plymouth. This series will meet you wherever you may be on the journey. It is a great program for people who haven’t known where to start. The hosts John Biewen and Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika are likeable and have wonderful voices. They are direct but non-confrontational.”

You might ask: Just what is going on with white people? Police shootings of unarmed African Americans. Acts of domestic terrorism by white supremacists. The renewed embrace of raw, undisguised white-identity politics. Unending racial inequity in schools, housing, criminal justice and hiring. Some of this feels new, but, in truth, it’s an old story.

Scene on Radio host and producer John Biewen, who is originally from Mankato, takes a deep dive

into these questions, along with an array of leading scholars and regular guest Kumanyika, in this 14-part podcast series, released between February and August 2017. *Scene on Radio* originates at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.

The podcast series, which includes episodes that range in length from 15 to 63 minutes, tells stories exploring human experience and American society.

The series and topics include:

#1 Turning the Lens. Events of the past few years have turned a challenging spotlight on white people, and whiteness, in the United States. An introduction to our series exploring what it means to be white. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2020)

#2 How Race Was Made. For much of human history, people viewed themselves as members of tribes or nations but had no notion of “race.” Today, science deems race biologically meaningless. Who invented race as we know it, and why? (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2020)

#3 Made in America. Chattel slavery in the United States, with its distinctive—and strikingly cruel—laws and structures, took shape over many decades in colonial America. The innovations that built American slavery are inseparable from the construction of whiteness as we know it today. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021)

#4 On Crazy We Built a Nation. “All men are created equal.” Those words, from the Declaration of Independence, are central to the story that Americans tell about ourselves and our history. But what did those words mean to the man who actually wrote them? (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021)

#5 Little War on the Prairie. Growing up in Mankato, John Biewen heard next to nothing about the town’s most important historical event. In 1862, Mankato was the site of the largest mass execution in U.S. history—the hanging of 38 Dakota warriors—following one of the major wars between Plains Indians and settlers. In this documentary, originally produced for *This American Life*, John goes back to Minnesota to explore what happened and why Minnesotans didn’t talk about it afterwards. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Mar. 23, 2021)

#6 That’s Not Us, So We’re Clean. When it comes to America’s racial sins, past and present, a lot of us see people in one region of the country as guiltier than the rest. Host John Biewen spoke with some white Southern friends about that tendency. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Apr. 27, 2021)

#7 Chenjerai’s Challenge. “How attached are you to the idea of being white?” Chenjerai Kumanyika puts that question to Biewen, as they revisit an unfinished conversation from a previous episode. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, May 25, 2021)

#8 Skulls and Skin. Scientists weren’t the first to divide humanity along racial—and racist—lines. But for hundreds of years, racial scientists claimed to provide proof for those racist hierarchies—and some still do. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, June 22, 2021)

#9 A Racial Cleansing in America. In 1919, a white mob forced the entire Black population of Corbin, Kentucky, to leave, at gunpoint. It was one of many racial expulsions in the United States. What happened, and how such racial cleansings became “America’s family secret.” (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, July 27, 2021)

#10 Citizen Thind. The story of Bhagat Singh Thind, and also of Takao Ozawa—Asian immigrants who, in the 1920s, sought to convince the U.S. Supreme Court that they were white in order to gain American citizenship. Thind’s “bargain with white supremacy,” and the deeply revealing results. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Aug. 24, 2021)

#11 Danger. For hundreds of years, the white-dominated American culture has raised the specter of the dangerous, violent Black man. Host John Biewen tells the story of a confrontation with an African American teenager. Then he and recurring guest Chenjerai Kumanyika discuss that longstanding image—and its neglected flipside: white-on-Black violence. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021)

#12 My White Friends. For years, Myra Greene had explored Blackness through her photography, often in self-portraits. She wondered, what would it mean to take pictures of whiteness? For her friends, what was it like to be photographed because you’re white? (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Oct. 26, 2021)

#13 White Affirmative Action. When it comes to U.S. government programs and support earmarked for the benefit of particular racial groups, history is clear. White folks have received most of the goodies. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Nov 23, 2021)

#14 Transformation. Seeing White. The concluding episode in our series, *Seeing White*, is an exploration of solutions and responses to America’s deep history of white supremacy. (Zoom discussion on Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021)

Final post-series discussion: Jan. 25, 2022

Ann Manning, a member of RJI, said of the series: “Seeing White invites the listener into what can be very difficult stories of U.S. history, and to conversations about that history, in a very engaging way. James Baldwin said, ‘American history is longer, larger, more various, more beautiful, and more terrible than anything anyone has ever said about it.’ After listening to this series, I not only agree, I’m hungry for more.”

Plymouth members can listen to the series at their own pace. <https://www.sceneonradio.org/seeing-white> or download from a podcast app on a smartphone, *Scene on Radio: Seeing White*.

In the future, there will be a link in the Friday emails for each monthly Zoom discussion and on Plymouth’s website.

Reflections on the Sacred Sites Tour

BY JEAN KENNEDY, RJI MEMBER

On a beautiful fall afternoon, several members of the Racial Justice Initiative and our three ministers, Paula, Beth and Seth, visited sacred sites of the Dakota people to learn about our Minnesota history. The group was on a Sacred Sites Tour led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs, who is a member of the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Nation and is currently the program director for racial justice at the Minnesota Council of Churches and a parish pastor at Church of All Nations, located in Columbia Heights.

The goal of the tour is to bring increased awareness and understanding of the Dakota, the original people of this area, and our Minnesota history. Perhaps this is a piece of history that you did not learn in school.

The tour includes visiting three sites in and around the Fort Snelling area; each of these sites is sacred

to the Dakota people and central to their culture. We experienced each site’s history and significance through Rev. Jim Bear’s masterful storytelling skills. These are stories of betrayal, oppression and violence that resulted in the death of many Dakota people and the loss of their land. After listening to these powerful stories, we had the opportunity to hold this history in silence in personal reflection.

One of many things we learned is the Dakota people think about history as rooted in place rather than in time, such as along a linear path that many of us may think about history. Returning to these sites for annual ceremonies, being in community and in these places are ways the Dakota people keep history and culture alive.

At the end of the tour, Rev. Jim Bear told us that being on these sacred sites and learning the history of the

Dakota people will transform us. I believe this is true. I know that as I travel around the Twin Cities, I will remember the stories with a sense of deep loss and longing for what might have been—and a promise to never forget.

Through the Racial Justice Initiative, Plymouth will be offering opportunities to take this Sacred Site Tour in the spring/summer of 2021. Watch for more information starting in March 2021. I encourage each of you to go and be transformed.

The purpose of the Racial Justice Initiative, which is made up of 15 members of Plymouth, is to accelerate Plymouth’s actions to heal pervasive racial injustice through individual, congregational and community transformation.

CAPAX DEI

BY NELSON COFFEY, PLYMOUTH CONTEMPLATIVES

“The mind is the image of God, in that it is capable of Him and can be partaker of Him.”

Thus wrote Augustine of Hippo, who believed that human beings are endowed with a quality he named “capax dei,” the capacity for knowing and experiencing God. It must be admitted that this capacity lies dormant in many people, including many sincere Christians. In 1 Corinthians chapter 2, Paul teaches that the capax dei derives from the indwelling spirit “who is from God” and who is given “that we may understand what God has freely given us” (vs. 12), for “the spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (vs. 10). If it is true that “we have the mind of Christ,” (vs. 16), why do so many feel disconnected from God?

How are we to awaken our capacity for God?

In Paul’s prayer for the Ephesian church, he asks for them to be “filled with all the fullness of God.” As my southern grandfather used to say, “put that in your pipe and smoke it!” If they were not capable of being filled with God’s fullness, why would Paul ask God to do it? And if the people of the Ephesian church had that capacity, then so do the people of Plymouth. Perhaps the greatest hinderance to our being filled is that we are already full. No water can be added to a glass already full. Of what are we full?

The Christian remedy for the poignant human dilemma of being so full of ourselves is the way of kenosis, or self-emptying, as laid out in Philippians chapter 2. Even Jesus had

to walk this path of letting go, and he is our exemplar of the road to being filled with the fulness of God. There are many practices that belong to the way of self-emptying. Contemplative prayer can be a powerful daily practice of kenosis, of letting go. In silent prayer, we:

- Let go of thoughts and concepts;
- Let go of feelings, both positive and negative;
- Let go of attachments to security, pleasure and approval;
- Let go of anxiety about the present and fear of the future.

All of this necessary letting go, which the mystics called “detachment,” makes room for the gift of God’s presence to be realized in us, proving our capax dei.

SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

Spiritual Exploration Seeks Your Ideas

BY JAN RABBERS

The committee that brings you a variety of book studies, retreats and workshops to enrich your spiritual journey wants to hear from you about ideas for future programs.

If you would like to lead a class or have thoughts about subject material and other possible program leaders, we invite you to submit your proposal for the 2021 winter/spring semester for consideration by the committee. The purpose of the Spiritual Exploration Committee is to create

experiential, participative encounters for Plymouth pilgrims of all ages to deepen and enlighten their individual spiritual journeys. Please consider how your offering can be presented to help influence spirituality and practice.

We are unsure about presentation methods as of this date—whether we will be able to offer classes in person, or if we will still conduct them by Zoom, but we have great trust in this community’s ability to adapt. Once

selected, a committee member will be assigned as your liaison to help usher you through logistics.

On another note, we are always seeking new members to the committee. We’d love for you to join us.

Contact Jan Rabbers at jrabbbers (at) comcast.net or 612-860-6658 for a Proposal Form or with further questions.

Align Mpls Strives through Empowerment and Advocacy to End Homelessness

BY KRISTIN MAKHOLM

Align Mpls is the new name of the former Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness. Established in 2008, it is an interfaith collaboration of 18 Minneapolis congregations, of which Plymouth is one. Unlike the larger Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, which works with dozens of congregations like Plymouth to build low-income housing and fund transitional support (through programs like Families Moving Forward), Align focuses on both immediate- and long-term solutions through education, advocacy, homeless prevention and direct work with persons impacted by homelessness.

Besides advocacy, Align has two major programs that currently fuel its activities (StreetSong MN is on hiatus due to the pandemic). The Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) program supports individuals and families by providing rental assistance in times of financial crisis, effectively helping people stay in their homes rather than face eviction and becoming homeless. Applicants have access to facilitators that help them navigate the application process. ERA has helped over 500 households avoid homelessness since it began in 2016.

Street Voices of Change (SVoC) empowers persons who have current or past experiences with homelessness by offering a loving community that meets regularly to create positive change and restore dignity to every aspect of the homeless experience. SVoC members actively reach out to homeless individuals and communities



Street Voices of Change at Homes4All Homeless Rally at the State Capitol in 2019

with support for coping with this devastating experience. They also participate in advocacy actions at the State Capitol, such as the Homes4All Homeless Day on the Hill (pictured). SVoC meetings are the only regular in-person community meetings attended by David Hewitt, Director of the Office to End Homelessness for Hennepin County, with whom SVoC has created a much-needed case for the adoption of its Shelter Residents Bill of Rights. Hewitt has said that he makes a point to come to all SVoC meetings because he doesn’t get this type of intimate experience from any other group.

At its core, however, Align’s work would not be possible without the volunteer and financial support of its 18 partner congregations and their congregants. Plymouth gives annually to Align through its Outreach and Community Funds, but it is its volunteers that make all the

difference. As a member of Plymouth, I volunteer my time to write grants and develop fundraising strategies for Align. Others assist ERA applicants with filling out their forms and making sure they can navigate the complicated housing system properly. Yet others serve on Align’s Organizing Team, which helps get more members involved in advocacy, educational opportunities and coordinated congregational actions that aid the homeless, such as goods drives and Third Sunday Meals.

By educating people and advocating against housing injustice, we can together build solutions to help keep people in their homes and build agency for our community’s most vulnerable. Please consider supporting Align’s unique, grass-roots work through a financial gift or through your valuable volunteer time and talents. For more information, check out alignmpls.org.

Homelessness Awareness Month

BY KAREN BARSTAD AND NINA JONSON

It's hard not to be aware of them—those tent encampments that have sprouted like mushrooms in parks and along bike paths and city streets. We are aware that they provide meager shelter in summer weather and totally inadequate shelter once winter comes. Even our children are aware of them, and they wonder why our leaders are content with simple awareness rather than actual action—everyone deserves a place to live!

Providing safe, affordable, supportive housing has been a core value at Plymouth Church for over 20 years. We are the birthplace of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, which spun off as its own 501(c)(3) organization and now harnesses the work of almost 100 congregations. We can be proud of the work we've done, but our work is not finished, and, in this unprecedented time, we cannot rest on our actions in the past but must challenge ourselves to create a better future. November is National Homelessness Awareness Month, and this month we will look for ways to expand our awareness and mobilize it.

Our children and youth will be spending their church school time during November learning more about homelessness, specifically the impacts of being homeless

during a pandemic. They will also be engaging in service projects to support the unhoused community and to increase awareness among the Plymouth community and beyond. Our middle schoolers will be creating a short public service announcement highlighting issues of homelessness specific to Minnesota that our congregation will be able to share with their family, friends and the community, and our younger grades will be turning our “compassion house” that was created during Peace Camp (see photo) into a “Home for All,” covered with depictions of “home”—illustrations of responses received from members of the church of all ages. The “Home for All” will be shared on social media but will also be available for scheduled visits so you can take a closer look!

For several weeks, there was a large blue tarp stretched along the tent encampment across from the Lake Harriet Bandshell. Spray-painted on the tarp in big yellow letters was the question: “What’s the solution?”

By committing our hearts, our time and our voices to being

champions for ending homelessness, we can demonstrate that our core values are lived values. We can make a significant difference in the lives of our neighbors as we collaborate with them and for them in building a better future for them and their children. We can turn awareness into action and action into solutions. We can make sure that tents are used for vacation camping instead of desperation housing—and that all people have a home.

Stay tuned to our weekly emails and social media throughout November for ways you can get involved!



PARISH REGISTER

MARRIED

Andrew Born & Janeen Bolden, son of Wendy & Pat Born, brother of Kristin Born Crawford and Megan Born

BEREAVED

Pat & Wendy Born, death of Pat's mother, Donna Born; Kristin Born Crawford, Megan Born and Andrew Born, death of grandmother

Robert & Lydia Brock, death of Robert's son and Lydia's stepson, Bobby Donell Brock

Hazel Lutz & Tom Anderson, death of Hazel's brother Thomas Hartman Lutz

Joan Thompson & Drew Hamre, death of Joan's father, Harvey Thompson; Claire Stansberry and Paul Hamre, death of grandfather

Crossing the Courtyard—Intergenerational Interviews

BY ADELLA JONSON, KAREN BARSTAD AND HOPE ESPAROLINI

During our time of being scattered, yet gathered, it is important to have members of different generations connect. This gives our church community the opportunity to build new relationships and create ties across groups. One way that our children will be crossing the (virtual) courtyard is by interviewing adult members of Plymouth, some whom they know well, and others they don't know as well. This month, 9-year-old Adella interviewed (via Zoom) church members Karen Barstad and Hope Esparolini. Adella wrote her own questions and is excited to share what she learned. Here are some of the highlights from each interview.

* * *

With Karen, I learned that she is the baby of her family, like me. She was named Karen because it was very popular when she was born. She likes to eat dates and always has them in her house. She is the Moderator at church, and she explained that the Moderator helps with special church meetings, like when we voted on DeWayne Davis to be our new minister. The Moderator also helps make sure

that our church is being the best it can be and that we are following our values, and the moderator is someone you can talk to if you have questions or concerns about things at church. Karen doesn't have any kids of her own, but she loves the kids of Plymouth because they are welcoming, creative and fun and we ask good smart questions. What we have in common is that we both like to sing and we are both in choirs at Plymouth. Karen is in Chapel Singers and I am in Choristers.

With Hope, I learned that her first name is from her mom, and when she got married, her husband's last name means “Family of Hope,” so she has lots of hope in her name! We both have the same favorite colors—she likes shades of blue and shades of green, and I like teal, which is blueish-green. She grew up outside of Chicago, and she joined Plymouth in 1981. She has two older brothers who don't live here, and, because she was the only girl, her brothers had to share a room when she was little, but she got her own room, like I have at our new house. Hope and I both like salads and fish, and she also

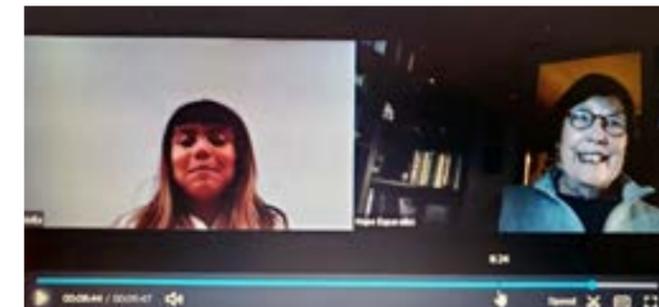
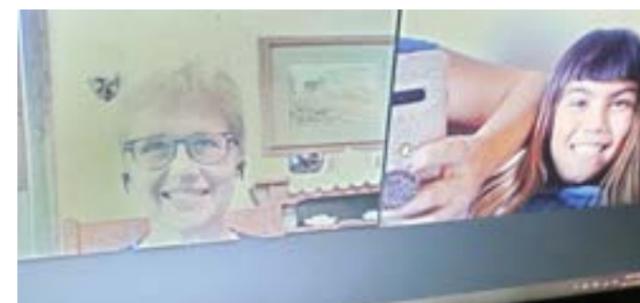
likes hamburgers. She is on the Committee for Children, Youth & Families, like my mom, and she is a classroom friend for the 4th and 5th graders. She is very nice and I liked talking to her. When we are back in the building, she will be the classroom friend for my class!

* * *

What a special opportunity for multiple generations at Plymouth to get to know more about one another. Next month, Heiko will be sharing about David Astin, and Dag will be sharing about John Humphrey!

For more information on upcoming intergenerational opportunities, please check out next month's *Flame*. Nina Jonson, Marie Scholtz (Music Coordinator) and Philip Brunelle are working on some special projects for the Christmas season!

If you have ideas of ways you'd like to connect with our young people, please email Nina, [ninaj\(at\)plymouth.org](mailto:ninaj(at)plymouth.org)—Crossing the Courtyard is a group effort, and our church community is better for it!



Art for All Exhibit Focuses on Radical Inclusion in the Arts

BY SONIA CAIRNS

On Sunday, November 1, Art for All: The Stephanie Evelo Fund for Art Inclusion, a stunning virtual art show featuring artists with disabilities, opened. And at the Sunday Forum that day, Sheryl and David Evelo described how they created Art for All to honor the memory of their daughter Stephanie (1969–2012), a gifted artist who worked at Minnesota’s Institute for Community Integration. Nicholas Fernholz of the ICI introduced the artists and shared more about the Endowment and how the audience could support the artists of Art for All.

“The artists’ work is so honest, with a great sense of design and color,” said David Evelo. “Sometimes people think that if the artist has a disability the art won’t be well-executed, but that’s not at all the case.” Evelo went on to say that many of the artists don’t identify as people with disabilities even though they must face complex challenges throughout their lives. He added that being in a show legitimizes their lives as artists and also gives their families ways to see them in a broader context

The Evelos recalled their own daughter’s love of art but also the power that art gave her. “She was so

thrilled to see us understand how meaningful it was to her,” Sheryl Evelo said. “When she had her own exhibit at Pattee Hall on the University of Minnesota’s campus, it became an important part of her life to think about herself as an artist.”

Among the featured artists in the show is Devin Wildes (devinwildes.com), a 22-year-old Stillwater man with autism, who has won several art awards and spoken to groups about his art. View a PBS story about his work [here](#).

Wildes has been with Interact Center, a St. Paul organization for performing and visual artists with disabilities, for the last four years. When Interact closed its physical space due to the pandemic, moving to online programming, Devin needed inspiration to work from home.

“He loved going to that art center,” said Devin’s mother, A. J. Paron-Wildes. “It was his passion, and my fear was, ‘What is he going to do to keep busy?’” Devin had previously created artwork from photos of the Burning Man festival he received from a friend, so A. J. put the word out to Devin’s family, friends and followers on social media that he

wanted photographs to turn into works of art.

The community delivered, and Devin has since created dozens of works using high-quality markers and paper. Among them: “Wisconsin Union,” from a photo of empty café chairs, a nod to the pandemic’s effect on everyday life; “Lois’ Heavenly Sunrise,” from a photo taken the morning a dear friend passed away; and several landscapes. In addition to his pieces selected for the show, viewers will be able to link directly to all of Devin’s works during the pandemic. Originals and digital copies are available for purchase, with proceeds benefitting Interact.

“It’s just amazing, his sense of color and design and the abstract quality. He does a wonderful job of executing his work,” Sheryl said.

Other featured artists include Jimmy Reagan, Kathryn Fitzgerald, Lena Ahmed, and Geoffrey Mikol. Please visit Plymouth.org to view the virtual Sunday Forum and see the exhibit featuring these talented and inspired artists.

View the Art For All exhibit at plymouth.org/explore/arts/art_for_all



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SUNDAY WORSHIP

Please check our website (www.plymouth.org/WORSHIP) for November services.

No calendar is available for November due to changing circumstances of the coronavirus outbreak.

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