“The person who loves their dream of community will destroy community, but the person who loves those around them will create community.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community

More than twenty years ago, the sociologist Robert Putnam spurred widespread conversation in the United States about trust and social cohesiveness in American community life when he published Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. Putnam argued that a decline in participation in civic, social, and fraternal organizations meant less social connectedness and civic engagement, making people less trusting and less neighborly. He worried that a lack of social cohesion undermines our public institutions and thus a strong democracy.

While the debate about Putnam’s theory continues, I continue to wrestle with the increasingly visible evidence that we have become less trusting and less neighborly. Every day, social media platforms are populated with sound and video clips of people in conflict with one another, yelling, fighting, and cursing their neighbors. We are saturated with images of people at their worst doing and saying horrible things to one another. Even the people we expect to serve as examples of reason and decorum, like leaders in faith, business, and government, are captured hurling invectives or mistreating those with less power and status. While I know this has been going on long before being captured by our now more advanced technology, there is still something so sad about how difficult it is to live together in unity and community. We don’t trust each other, and we have become less neighborly, especially toward those not like us.

Last month, as the trial of Derek Chauvin in the murder of George Floyd began, I sat in several meetings with clergy, government, and law enforcement to discuss the trial, protests, and security. Sadly, the single, most consistent thread running through the conversation was the lack of trust people of all backgrounds have in our leaders and government. People do not trust law enforcement nor the courts. They do not trust our leaders to bring us together. How can there be trust when so many people in our communities have been left to languish in poverty? How can we truly be a community when vulnerable people are ignored, neglected, and thrown away? How can we trust the leaders who have previously failed to respond to historic injustices and misconduct by law enforcement?

As I reflected on what began to appear to me as the elusive goal of a truly beloved community within a divided nation, I came across a post on Twitter, a nugget of wisdom that I cannot ignore. The post simply read, “Being human together is hard work.” I have no idea what particular incident prompted the post. And yet it resonated with me. How do we live together? What does it take to treat each other fairly and decently? How do we unite across our differences?

As we continue to wait, watch, and work in this community until the conclusion of this trial, perhaps our experience of covenantal community at Plymouth can serve as a model and inspiration to others. I pray that we are led less by our desire to be community and more by our love for our neighbor. I pray that we take on the practice of neighborliness, the visible expression of love and a covenantal commitment to the common good. I hope we find ways to demonstrate a robust commitment to life together, not just among ourselves, but beyond the walls of Plymouth with people who live throughout our city.

May it be so.
Growth Is Not an Option

BY LYNN MOLINE

A healthy garden is always growing. A garden not growing ceases to be a garden. Even while encased in frozen soil beneath layers of snow, roots, bulbs, and seeds change and grow, preparing to burst forth as the sun climbs higher in the sky each day.

Growth, in garden terms, doesn’t necessarily mean getting larger, though gardens have a way of doing that. More precisely, growth means blooming beautifully and resplendently, coming back resiliently and vigorously spring after spring, no matter how cold and dark the winter.

The most resplendent gardens are the products of relentless watering, fertilizing, weeding, thinning, moving, trimming. The gardener must also respond to changes in conditions; when trees grow so densely that a once-sunny spot becomes a shady sanctuary, the gardener must reimagine that spot and cultivate something entirely different.

When the Growth Task Force (GTF) began exploring “growth” nearly two years ago, we initially conceptualized growth in terms of increased membership and offerings. But, like gardeners, we soon realized growth is far more. Rather, as we wrote in our Visioning Document report to the Leadership Council, “Growth is the process of changing to become more of what we are called to be as a congregation.”

The Visioning Document listed ten specific areas in which to consciously seek to grow. Moreover, it asked our congregation to be open to change as we live our Purposes. It acknowledged that change brings not only new beginnings but also “unsettling endings to that which is familiar.” It suggested we need to “respond to the perspectives and needs of new generations and to new ways of living that influence how we worship,” and that we must “open our hearts and minds to experimentation with further deliberate changes” to “usher in new and even more relevant spiritual experiences for all who yearn for a connection to the divine in community with others.”

At the time we on the GTF wrote those words, we didn’t imagine that a global pandemic would infuse our recommendations with startling new relevance and urgency just two months after the Leadership Council endorsed the document. As painful as this past year has been, we of Plymouth began doing instead of debating what to change in order to grow. Like gardeners, we reimagined what we do and how we do it to become more of what we are called to be.

- We incorporated technology.
- We changed our conception of what worship can be and our weekly attendance grew.
- We began reaching out to one another daily, not just on Sunday, in fellowship, prayer, meditation, and spiritual formation.
- We are considering how to more fully use our building and other physical assets to fulfill our purposes.

Through those changes and more to come, we will grow in ways that hold the potential to make us more beautifully resplendent, more caring, connected, resilient, and relevant than ever. It’s not clear what the post-pandemic future will look like at Plymouth. What is clear is that today’s situation gives us an opportunity to look through new lenses at what may be required to grow—to become more of what we are called to be as a congregation.

Growth Task Force Members

Chris Bohnhoff
Carol Brandenburg
John Cairns
Beverly Gores
Kelly Hugunin
Jay Matre
Lynn Moline
Bill Read
Theresa Voss
Steve Wellvang
Nicki Zeidner
Daniel Wolpert
DeWayne L. Davis

The Ten Growth Areas

- Community and fellowship within
- Personal spiritual growth and development
- Use of physical space and assets
- Communication within
- Social justice
- Radical hospitality and service
- Worship
- Name recognition and awareness
- Connection with our neighborhood
- Financial security
GRACE NOTES

A Festive Month of Music
BY PHILIP BRUNELLE, ORGANIST-CHOIRMASCER

Preparing virtual music for each Sunday during the past year has been a creative challenge—as you can imagine! Nonetheless, our wonderful directors and singers have continued to offer inspiring music week after week. Laura Caviani and the Jazz Trio—along with yours truly at the organ—have been on-site as have our solo instrumentalists.

For our Chapel Singers, Youth Choir, and Cherub and Chorister singers, it has been a much more challenging situation as each of them must record individually from their homes and then have their directors (Marie Scholtz, Siri Keller and Mary Laymon) combine those tracks into a musical entity...with visuals. Imagine how many hours this takes for every single piece of music!

For our Solo Quintet, the process begins with me recording an organ or piano accompaniment, which Sonja Thompson then transfers to a process called SoundTrap. This is then sent out to the five soloists, each of them records their part—making it sync with the accompaniment. Sonja then balances the voice parts and sends it to me to approve. From there the music goes to Cody Bourdot for final tweaks and engineering and then to Chris Bohnhoff to insert into the service.

For the Adult Choir it has been a year of waiting...and waiting...until they can return and sing in person. The time and personnel necessary to record 52 individual voices for a single anthem is more than we can manage, so I am grateful that we have been able (with the help of Emily Venell and Cody) to extract anthems from Sundays of the past.

Hopefully, it won’t be too many more months before we can sing for you—safely—in person. In the meantime, thanks for your understanding and support.

Philip Brunelle

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!

DEACONS

A Conversation with the Congregation

Please join the Deacons on Sunday, April 11, at 11:30 a.m. for a Conversation with the Congregation to learn how Plymouth might implement the recommendations in the Growth Task Force’s report: “Advancing Plymouth Church 2019–2022: A Visioning Document.” Lynn Moline, chair of the Task Force, will give an overview of the report and the possibilities it presents. We will discuss the proposed Marketing/Communication Task Force and will invite your ideas for fostering growth.

As you listen to Lynn’s presentation and discuss it, we want you to consider these questions:

• In which areas do you think Plymouth has the greatest potential for growth?
• What are some things you think Plymouth should do to foster growth?
• What are you personally willing to commit to in that effort?

Please join here or at Plymouth.org for this one-hour Zoom session.

The Deacons and Leadership Council are eager to hear your response to the Growth Task Force’s report and your ideas for bringing it to life. We look forward to being with you in virtual community!

DEACONS

YOUR SUPPORT

plymouth.org | flame | 3
Plymouth Sunday Forum
BY REBECCA MILLER

Dear Plymouth Members,

We hope you’ve been enjoying the Sunday Forum presentations these past few months, and there are more to look forward to. We will continue to have Sunday Forums over the summer on June 20, July 18, and August 15 (third Sundays of the month). Sunday Forum will also be hosting conversations between Christian and Muslim clergy with the opportunity for all of us to listen and then ask questions on June 13, July 11, and August 8 (the second Sunday of the month).

The Committee is now looking at plans for the fall, so if you have ideas, we would love to hear from you. Below are topics and speakers through May.

—Rebecca Miller, Bryce Hamilton, John Humphrey, Tim Jensen, Jane Koll, Seth Patterson, Jackie Prince

April 11: Citizens’ Climate Lobby—Going BIG on Climate Action, presented in collaboration with the Climate & Environmental Justice Committee (Board of Outreach), with Mindy Ahler, Rod Johnson, & Paul Thompson

April 18: Theater 45°—A Program of Plymouth Church with Ashawnti Sakina Ford & Seth Patterson

April 25: Introducing Plymouth’s Green Fund, presented in collaboration with the Climate & Environmental Justice Committee (Board of Outreach), with Rick Neville, Fred Quirsfeld, Dave Homans

May 2: Ethics Bowl with Cat St. Croix

May 9: Old School by Steeple People, with Joe Partyka and Molly Johnson

May 16: How Plymouth Services Are Made and Recorded, with Chris Bonhoff, Cody Bourdot, & Alex Johnson

May 23: Living in a Polarized World—Learnings from Braver Angels, with Bill Doherty

Some Vivian Jones Lore
BY PHILLIP BRUNELLE

With the recent passing of Vivian Jones, and after the special Zoom hour arranged by Beth Hoffman Faeth shared by many of us with Vivian and Mary’s daughters, Anna and Heledd and their families, my wife Carolyn reminded me of the stone fountain in the Plymouth courtyard in celebration of Vivian and Mary. Looking in our wonderful Fine Arts Notebook I discovered Vivian’s comments from 1994 about the fountain:

Mary and I wanted a free-standing fountain in a contemporary style rather than a classical one, which would be too European for our taste. Besides, Jesus’ message is always a contemporary one. The fountain, created by Michael Bigger (head of the Sculpture Department at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design) is made of Mankato limestone, which means much to Mary as it is the native rock of the Holy Land. The link with Mankato means something to both of us, partly because it’s Minnesotan, and partly because a number of immigrants from Wales came to Minnesota and settled in the Mankato area.

Near the fountain there is a plaque with a few words in Welsh from the Bible, and with an English translation for barbarians. One summer’s day, years down the road, perhaps some Plymouth member will walk in to the courtyard with a guest from Wales who will see the words and say, “Those are Welsh words—how did they get there?” And the member will reply, “Gee, I’m not sure, but I think a Welsh couple belonged to the church once—I think he might even have been a minister here.”

We hope you all enjoy the fountain, its appearance, its sound, its message.
Two Sisters, Two Media, One Perspective
BY CAROLYN BRUNELLE

The upcoming virtual show in the gallery will be with two artists who are also sisters. I met Sally Nystrom at the Grand Marais Art Colony a number of years ago, and we have become artist friends. I met Tori a couple of years ago through her sister.

Here are their artist statements:

**Sally Nystrom** is an artist and art teacher with a private studio in the Casket Arts Building in Northeast Minneapolis. She graduated with a B.A. from St. Catherine’s College in 1991 and has continued her studies, focusing on her love of art history. In 1991, she became a teaching protege with Sally Brown, a founding member of WARM (Women’s Art Registry of Minnesota). Together they taught in Sally Brown's studio school and for U of M adjunct programs. Sally’s latest body of work is figurative with a bittersweet view of the past.

**Tori Jensen** says: “After retiring in 2016, I joined my sister, Sally Nystrom, in her studio and got back to making art. I fell in love with charcoal and worked only with it for about two years. The still lifes are a combination of objects around the studio and things from my home. Some of the subjects are just pleasing to me, while others have a deep connection to my life and my children.

“I have just begun to paint in oil using some copyright-free photographs, painting portraits of people that I find pleasurable.”

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**PARISH REGISTER**

**RECENT BIRTHS**
Tilly Bud Hines Trostel, child of Molly Trostel & Ben Hines; grandchild of Chris & Rick Trostel; great-grandchild of Parker & Al Trostel
Tashiro “Tashi” Phan Bennett Vo, child of Emi Bennett Vo & Nguyen Vo; brother of Hana Vo; grandchild of John & Lani Bennett; nephew of Drew Bennett and Mari Bennett Skemp and families

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**RECENTLY BEREAVED**
Elizabeth Blanchette & Curt Teunissen, death of Curt’s sister, Carol Smit
Roxanne Ezell, death of husband, Rev. Dr. Roger Ezell; David Ezell, death of father
Rebecca Miller & Karl Jones, death of Rebecca’s mother, Irene Miller
Sue Shepard, death of brother, David Campbell

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**RECENTLY DECEASED**
Olivia Chutich, daughter of Margaret Chutich & Penny Wheeler
Vivian Jones, husband of Mary Jones; father of Anna Vivian Jones and Heledd Jones
Jeanne Madson
Virginia Puzak
Roger Sisson, former husband of Chris Childers

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THE COLOR OF LAW:
A Virtual Conversation with Richard Rothstein

Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 7-8:30 PM

Pay as you can. Registration: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/142289478661

In this virtual event for Twin Cities residents, Richard Rothstein will discuss his critically acclaimed book The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America, a groundbreaking account of how federal, state and local policy explicitly segregated metropolitan areas nationwide.

Looking Back to Move Forward: The Housing Crisis

Thursday, April 15, 2021, 7-8:30 PM

Pay as you can. Registration: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/145300839723

Today, the Twin Cities are grappling with an unprecedented housing crisis, which disproportionately affects BIPOC communities. We must ask: How did we get here? How can a shared understanding of history help us carve a better path forward? Join us for a local conversation among public historians and housing justice practitioners.

Hosted by:

Sponsored by The Pohlad Family Foundation and the Minneapolis Foundation
Life Around Earth Day at Plymouth

Earth Day 51st Anniversary, April 22
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Everyday we should be asking ourselves:

“As people of faith, how do we protect, restore and rightly share God’s creation?”

The Climate and Environmental Justice (CEJ) committee is hosting several Earth events throughout April. We hope to see you there! (Registration or links to attend are on the church website.)

April 11, 9:30 a.m., Sunday Forum: Citizen’s Climate Lobby. Citizen’s Climate Lobby (CCL) empowers and trains citizens to focus on what they see as the single most impactful solution to climate change—a national carbon fee and dividend. Learn more about their approach and their successes. Zoom.

April 18, 12:30 p.m., Film Club: Discussion of Kiss the Ground. This documentary focuses on growing our food in a way that builds and protects our precious soil, helps to restore ecosystems and also draws back into the ground the carbon dioxide that is causing climate change. The film explains why transitioning to regenerative agriculture could be key in rehabilitating the planet, while simultaneously invigorating a new sense of hope. Zoom.

April 25, 9:30 a.m., Sunday Forum: Plymouth’s new Green Fund. Introducing the Green Fund, a voluntary carbon-offset program that benefits the Plymouth campus, our members, our local community, and the earth. Members can make gifts to the Green Fund based on their self-calculated carbon footprint. These donations will be held in a separate account to fund sustainable and carbon-reducing projects on the Plymouth Campus or in our community. Zoom.

April 25, 10:30 a.m., Earth Sunday service. This year, our special Earth Sunday theme will be “Voices of Young People,” with music, readings, photos and short videos. What do they love about Mother Nature? What are their hopes and dreams for a healthier Earth? Where do they want change? Excerpts will be read from letters written 50 years ago by children for the first Earth Day, April 22, 1970, as well as thoughts from today’s youth and families. And stay tuned for a special Earth Sunday Fellowship Joy.

Rev. Dr. DeWayne L. Davis to preach.

Treat every day as Earth Day, and take action at home: Here are a few ideas for what you can do to have a positive impact on environment—There are so many ideas for making choices for a more sustainable living model. Here is a link to get you started.

Your Guide to Eco-Friendly Living

Step 1: Turn it off.
Step 3: Switch to renewables.
Step 4: Eat less meat, particularly beef. This is one of the most important things we can do to reduce CO2 emissions, starting today.
Step 5: Don’t waste food. 30–40% of food is wasted in this country.
Step 6: Compost.
Step 7: Recycle everything that can be recycled . . . but don’t recycle things that can’t! Learn about “wish-cycling” and the harm it can cost. Find out which plastics your recycler can accept and recycle.
Step 8: Try to cut out plastic in general. Purchase your own metal straws and decline plastic ones.

“We only have one earth, so we need to take care of her.” —Gaylord Nelson, founder of the first Earth Day, on April 22, 1970.

Questions? Email us at CEJ.plymouth@gmail.com

Join our email list to learn about upcoming events and ways you can be involved.
New at Plymouth—The Green Fund

BY RICK AND JAN NEVILLE

Announcing the Green Fund, a new initiative at Plymouth that benefits the Plymouth campus, our members, our local community, and the earth. The Stewardship, Climate & Environmental Justice, and Building and Grounds Committees are working together to establish this voluntary carbon offset program. The Green Fund is modeled after conventional carbon offset/credit programs that people contribute to, but with several important and local benefits. Plymouth members will be asked to make voluntary additional gifts to the Green Fund based on their self-calculated carbon footprint. These donations will be held in a separate account to fund sustainable and carbon reducing projects on the Plymouth Campus or in our community.

Green Fund projects will be chosen based on criteria such as: reduction of carbon emissions, sustainability, “budget relieving” to Plymouth over the life of the project, and support of local contractors with equitable employment practices. We plan for the Green Fund to be an annual spring campaign with a green project announced near Earth Day in April every year.

In addition to the multiple benefits to Plymouth and our local community, here are other reasons to support the Green Fund:

- **Learning:** By better understanding your personal carbon footprint, you can be more effective in making choices that reduce your personal CO2 emissions.
- **Motivation:** Investing your own money in the Green Fund increases the likelihood that you will also take other personal climate-friendly actions.
- **Tax-deductible contribution:** Unlike other carbon offset programs, contributions to the Green Fund are fully tax deductible. You will receive an annual contribution statement from Plymouth.
- **Membership growth:** The Green Fund demonstrates to our community and prospective members our mission and values and would be an asset to attracting new members.
- **Purposes of the Church:** Reducing Plymouth’s carbon footprint supports “living out our values and furthering environmental justice” as stated in the Purposes.

Perhaps someday we will have the will to recognize the true social and environmental cost of CO2 by imposing a carbon tax. Until then, we have to demonstrate our stated values to the community and actively reduce our carbon emissions and support living sustainably rather than just talk about it. Please join us in voluntary support of the Green Fund for Plymouth.

You can give to the Green Fund on Plymouth’s website: choose "Green Fund" in the giving drop-down menu. If you have questions, send an email to the Climate & Environmental Justice committee at CEJ.plymouth@gmail.com.

Learn more on Earth Sunday—attend the April 25 Sunday Forum on Zoom to learn more about the Green Fund, have your questions answered and make suggestions for Green Fund projects.

How much should you contribute? Just like your annual pledge, there is no absolute correct amount. To get a ballpark estimate, we suggest that you do the following.

1. **Estimate your annual household CO2 emissions.** (See below.)
2. **Consider a donation of $8 to $15 per ton of CO2 emissions, based on your ability to support.** (Even $15 per ton is at the low end of most estimates of the true cost to society of CO2 emissions.)

Estimating your annual household CO2 emissions:

- **a. Use the chart and descriptors below to find a household that resembles yours, or**
- **b. Calculate your own carbon footprint using your own actual household information and this calculator: Nature Conservancy Carbon Calculator (https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/carbon-footprint-calculator/).**

![Photo Credit: David Astin](https://example.com/credit.png)
“Building homes shouldn’t be this hard!” That’s a statement we’ve heard around the Beacon collaborative since two of our shovel-ready projects providing supportive housing for over 80 families making $30,000 or less a year have faced funding roadblocks in the new year. Often the most important things are the most difficult to achieve.

Hennepin County is a primary funding source for creating homes for families. In May, the county commissioners will vote on which homes get built, for whom and when. Despite our many conversations with the commissioners, funding for projects like Vista 44 in Hopkins and Emerson Village in North Minneapolis, both deeply affordable, remains uncertain.

We can make a difference and it won’t be difficult. Be part of one or all of the three virtual meetings we have planned with county commissioners in April as we invite them to join us in prioritizing funding for those that struggle the most finding a safe, stable place to live. Find out your Hennepin County Commissioner here:


• **Tuesday, April 13, 7–8:00 p.m.** (Districts 1 and 2: Lunde & Fernando—North Hennepin)

• **Monday, April 19, 7–8:15 p.m.** (Districts 3, 4, and 5; Green, Conley, & Goettel—South Hennepin)

• **Tuesday, April 27, 7–8:00 p.m.** (Districts 6 and 7; LaTondresse & Anderson—West Hennepin

To register for these events, go to: https://beaconinterfaith.org/events/ and click on April calendar.

Thanks for living out the best of our faith by being part of the solution for home!!
Will You Pray with Me?

BY ELIZABETH JARRETT ANDREW

The first time I asked a friend if she’d be willing to pray with me, I felt as nervous as a school girl on her first date. I knew my friend practiced Centering Prayer; I also knew she’d say yes. Even so, as an intellectual liberal Protestant, I’d been enculturated to relegate prayer to the clergy, to Sunday morning worship, to pre-dinner recitals, and to the privacy of my heart. The thought of bringing authentic prayer into a friendship conjured up images of fundamentalist Christians touching foreheads and muttering in tongues, social impropriety, an awkward insertion of faith into secular arenas. I wasn’t that kind of Christian!

Six years and a magnificently enriched relationship later, I see that, underneath my self-consciousness and prejudice was an intuition about the power of shared prayer. I was scared to pray with my friend because I was afraid of what might happen. I shouldn’t have been. That half-hour of silence each week, in which we consent to God’s presence and movement within, between, and beyond us, has been a steady wellspring through some difficult years . . . as has silent prayer with the Plymouth Contemplatives. Last summer, we prayed on the church lawn as foot traffic passed up and down Nicollet; we prayed under the tent on West Broadway in North Minneapolis, joining together for eight minutes and 46 seconds in honor of George Floyd’s life and for the healing of our city; we’ve prayed together at Lake of the Isles in snow storms and bitter cold. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” Jesus said. If Jesus meant that the source of life, hope, and wellbeing shows up when we gather with open hearts, I can testify that this is so.

Silent prayer makes space for mystery. I call that mystery God, although other names (source, love, the universe, being) work just as well. Praying alone tends our relationship with that mystery. When we gather with others, we form community; when pray together in silence, we deliberately welcome mystery’s participation in our community. Then relationships deepen; energy is restored; ideas arise; right action naturally springs up.

Community is core to Christianity. Jesus’s words describe a basic metaphysical principle of our faith: In order to fully call forward God’s incarnational presence, today, now, we need to come together with open hearts—even if it feels socially awkward, even if it challenges our theology. In order to learn how to love one another, to magnify our capacity for love, and to augment the agency of our love, we need each other, and together we need to connect with a love greater than us.

Yes, this is still possible in a pandemic, although it takes intention and effort. At a recent Deacons’ meeting, I was struck by how often people mentioned small group gatherings on Zoom as what’s keeping the spirit of Plymouth alive through our forced isolation. Whether in book discussions, Sunday School clubs, coffee hour circles, or even committee meetings, Plymouth online gatherings remind us that we are a community. I wonder whether COVID doesn’t also present us with an invitation: Can we not just watch church but really be church for one another, even over Zoom? The Christian path invites us into ever-deepening presence, to ourselves, one another, our neighbors, and God. Now, when we’re profoundly hungry for meaningful connection, can we risk taking a step toward this presence?

As a way to help small groups on this path, the Plymouth Contemplatives developed a toolkit that’s available to the congregation on the church website. It gives some easy ways to integrate contemplative practices and processes into church gatherings—even online. We’re also piloting a spiritual formation small group model that we hope to extend to the congregation soon. Shared silent prayer stirs our hearts in profound ways. Only together can we become the conscious circle of love and justice we are most meant to be.
Plymouth Film Club is offering a discussion of Kiss the Ground (2020, 84 min., documentary, all ages welcome) Sunday, April 18, 12:30-1:30 pm on Zoom. Guest host Plymouth CEJ–Climate and Environmental Justice committee–chose the film. Seth Patterson and organic farmer Emma Homans will facilitate the discussion. Please view it on your own before the discussion: see options below.

What if a simple solution existed to help balance our climate, replenish our freshwater supplies, and feed the world?

In the beginning of Kiss the Ground, the film’s narrator, actor Woody Harrelson, states, “Earth—it’s a great place to live, but when it comes to the future of our small planet, there is so much bad news... The fear that we are headed for a cliff puts most of us into a state of paralysis. But what if there was another path? This is the story of a simple solution, a way to heal our planet. In fact, the solution I am talking about is right under our feet, and it is as old as dirt.”

Kiss the Ground documents how we can grow our food using a method that builds and protects our precious soil. It restores our ecosystems instead of destroying them. It absorbs carbon dioxide safely back into the ground, rather than releasing it to destroy the atmosphere. “Regenerative agriculture” is the key. A farmer, an agronomist, a scientist, a government expert, and others show us how we can help rehabilitate the Earth.

Critics call the film “passionate” (TV Guide), “compelling” (SF Chronicle), “innovative” (People), and “groundbreaking” (Awards Daily). The New York Times says it “inspires a rare feeling of hope.” The LA Times declares it “Earth’s climate savior.” The film also has won four awards and four nominations at recent film festivals.

REGISTER FOR THE DISCUSSION IN ADVANCE: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwud-yqg6uG9XaazQC_30hAM5oR9pCjdH. You’ll immediately receive the discussion’s link. (If you’ve never used Zoom, join us 10 min. early to download the simple, safe software.)

VIEW FILM INDIVIDUALLY BEFOREHAND:
Trailer/Preview: https://kissthegroundmovie.com (2½ min.)
Full movie free online: https://vimeo.com/528900233. Password: kiss
Subscription: Netflix (by subscription), Vimeo (subscription + $1)
Purchase DVD: Walmart ($7), Target ($16), et al.
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](http://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.

**Sunday Forum**
Every Sunday @ 9:30
See schedule at Plymouth.org or on page 4.

**Contemplative Prayer**
available Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m.
Thursday 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 Wednesday.

**Spiritual Exploration Classes**
More information at Plymouth.org