

The Perspective

Volume 45

Number 8

September 2022

September 4

Communion | Sacrament of Baptism

10:00am in the Chapel

Wonderfully Made | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching

Psalm 139:1-6,13-18

September 11

Homecoming Sunday

10:30am in the Sanctuary

Get Found! | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching

Luke 15:1-10

September 18

10:30am in the Sanctuary

Sermon Series *Means of Grace*, part one

A Radiant, Sacramental World | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching

Psalm 19:1-10

3:00pm afternoon Service of Ordination for Betsy Wooster

September 25

Bible Sunday

10:30am in the Sanctuary

Sermon Series *Means of Grace*, part two

Baptismal Waters | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster preaching

Matthew 3:1-3, 11-17

Worship is at 10:30am in the Sanctuary and livestreaming at [Plymouthchurchucc.org](https://www.plymouthchurchucc.org)



***An Open & Affirming and Just Peace Congregation
of the United Church of Christ***

Our Mission is to be a Christ-centered community led by the Holy Spirit that supports the spiritual journey of all who strive to boldly live out their faith in the world. We are committed to diversity, spiritual growth, and putting our faith into action locally and throughout the world.

Plymouth Church Leadership 2022

Council President	Mary Bright
Council Vice-President	Val McClelland
Secretary	Vicki Werneke
Treasurer	Juanita Faulx
Assistant Treasurer	Jennifer Gerard
Adult Faith & Life - Chair	Mendle Adams
Building & Grounds (B&G) - Chair	Russell Lamb
Caring - Chair	Dave Faulx
Children & Youth (C&Y) - Chair	Carolyn Jillson
Evangelism & Growth (E&G) - Chair	Margaret Reuthinger
Giving - Chair	David Turner
Partnership & Service (P&S) - Chair	Robin Johnson
Worship - Chair	Amy Holbrook
Personnel Chair	Kenyon Mau
Foundation Chair	Christine Bretz
Council Member @Large	Ros Gauchat
Council Member @Large	Jan Wilkens
Council Member @Large	Richard Merte
Council Member @ Large	Sara Martin
Council Member @ Large	Robert Woolfrey

Plymouth Staff

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister

mwooster@plymouthchurchucc.org

James P. Riggs

Minister of Music & The Arts

jriggs@plymouthchurchucc.org

Leslie Szalay

Director of Christian Education
Temp. Communications Coordinator

lszalay@plymouthchurchucc.org

Paul Holter

Facility Manager

pholter@plymouthchurchucc.org

Kathryn Kundrat

Finance Administrator

kkundrat@plymouthchurchucc.org

Linda Watson

Office Administrator

office@plymouthchurchucc.org

Rose Munn

Facilities Staff

Church Office

216-921-3510

Pastor's Corner

Dear Plymouth Church,

When the novelist and minister Frederick Buechner died in August, at the age of ninety-six, a number of people wrote to me to share the news, sending links to published remembrances and their favorite quotes. Some of them knew that Buechner has been an influential writer in my life. His honest and penetrating way of describing the Christian faith helped me to transition from the wonderfully concrete faith of childhood to a nuanced and tested faith of adulthood. Significantly, Buechner's writing is honest about the relationship of doubt and belief within a life of faith.

In a definition of doubt, he wrote:

Whether your faith is that there is a God or that there is not a God, if you don't have any doubts, you are either kidding yourself or asleep. Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith. They keep it awake and moving.

(From *Wishful Thinking*, reprinted in *Beyond Words*.)

Buechner was drawn to faith as an adult, after he's published his first novel to good reviews. He had started seminary when he wrote his third novel, *The Return of Ansel Gibbs*, in which a character says this about Christian faith:

If you tell me Christian commitment is a kind of thing that has happened to you once and for all like some kind of spiritual plastic surgery, I say go to, go to, you're either pulling the wool over your own eyes or trying to pull it over mine. Every morning you should wake up in your bed and ask yourself: "Can I believe it all again today?" No, better still, don't ask it till after you've read *The New York Times*, till after you've studied that daily record of the world's brokenness and corruption, which should always stand side by side with your Bible. Then ask yourself if you can believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ again for that particular day. If your answer's always Yes, then you probably don't know what believing means. At least five times out of ten the answer should be No because the No is as important as the Yes, maybe more so. The No is what proves you're human in case you should ever doubt it. And then if some morning the answer happens to be really Yes, it should be a Yes that's choked with confession and tears and. . . great laughter.

If you haven't yet discovered Frederick Buechner, I recommend his book *Beyond Words*, which is a collection of short writings, perfect for a few minutes over breakfast, or before bed. His memoir, *Telling Secrets*, is a rich meditation on faith and personal struggles.

I'll see you in church.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster, Senior Minister



Music Ministry

Opportunities to Share Your Gifts Jim Riggs, Minister of Music and The Arts

I ask you to prayerfully consider how you might get involved this year in expressing your musical or artistic gifts. I have a few suggestions below to jump start the creative thinking process. If you have any questions or comments, feel to reach out to me at jriggs@plymouthchurchucc.org

Instrumentalists of all ages participate in worship playing solo music, accompanying a choir anthem, and/or adding to our congregational singing. Younger players can share their talents in our Kids Konzerts happening in October.

Plymouth Choir is living into a new model of rehearsing and singing. As we do, we invite all voice parts to consider being part of the choir for shorter time commitments. Speak to Jim Riggs to find out more details regarding the fall schedule.

Joyful Noise is a new ensemble for children and adults of all ages and stages that prepares a short musical pattern to call the congregation to worship. This will happen on the third Sunday of each month with a short rehearsal the Sunday before. If interested in giving it a try, sign up in the Welcome Area for as many slots as you would like.

Plymouth Ringers ring 5 octaves of handbells along with 3 octaves of handchimes using an array of techniques. The group meets most Thursday evenings from 6:30 pm—7:20 pm and rings for worship about once a month. Space is limited and a time commitment is involved. Currently there is one open spot. Contact Jim Riggs for more details.

Plymouth Folk Revival is a band that sings and plays instruments. They enhance our worship every 4-6 weeks. The group meets as needed to rehearse. If interested, contact Wayne Hall (waynenjeri@gmail.com)

Sunday Choir is a “show up” that day for a brief rehearsal at 9:45 am and then sing for worship. For the fall, Sunday Choir will take place on September 25, Oct 23, and December 18 It is helpful, but not necessary to email Jim Riggs of your intention to sing.

Family Choir is comprised of families who sing at various times of the year. Designed to meet the needs of busy families, music along with learning videos are sent so families so they can learn together at home. Reach out to Jim Riggs to be included on the email list. Next opportunity is September 25.

Liturgical Dance in recent months has made a reappearance. We are hopeful to create a few more artistic expressions this coming year. This is open to all ages and stages. If this interests you, email Jim Riggs.

Music Ministry

Opportunities to Share Your Gifts *(cont.)*

Congregational Choir is the largest choir at Plymouth. It is the congregation singing hymns and service music with energy and enthusiasm as we express our faith through music. Whether a shower singer or a professional singer this is your place.

Concert Hosts welcome guests and offer directions at an array of Tuesday, Saturday, and Sunday concerts. As a concert host you get to enjoy the concert for free. A list of available dates is available in the Welcome Area for you to sign-up. Additional questions may be addressed to Kathy Smyth (kathleensmyth6@gmail.com) and/or Jan Wilkens (janetwilkens@yahoo.com).

Power of Prayer (POP) Okay, you are not going to do music, so this new group is for you. You can pray for us. There is much to pray for as musicians and artists recover from the pandemic and as we learn to live and be in new ways. Sign up in the Welcome Area to receive a monthly email of prayer requests.

Save the Dates

October 30—Kids Koncert, 12 noon

December 11—Organ, Choral, and Handbell Christmas Concert, 3 pm

May 14, 2023—Service of Thanksgiving for Jim Riggs 25th anniversary at Plymouth Church, 10:30 am

September Sunday Choir

Sunday Choir will sing next on **September 25** with a rehearsal at 9:45 am in the sanctuary. This choir is open to all who love to sing. It is helpful, but not necessary, to let Jim Riggs (jriggs@plymouthchurchucc.org) know of your intention to sing.

Music Ministry

From the Bench—Jim Riggs, 25 years in reflection

Growing up our family would take Sunday afternoon walks. We would pass the Bower Homestead. As we did Mr. and Mrs. Bower often were sitting on their porch. Mr. Bower would start, “It was nineteen hundred and fifty-one.....” and so we were held captive to another story. Now in my 25th year at Plymouth I feel like Mr. Bower. It has been a joy for me to reflect on the highlights of these past twenty-five years. Each month I plan to share a few of those highlights with you. The first installment covers the period 1998- 2001.

In 1998, there were no cellphones, email was in the very early stages, and the national price of gas was \$1.12 per gallon. I arrived at the end of June 1998, to a state of chaos. The church had raised over a million dollars to renovate the entire church building. Jeff Pollock and his team, the Expenditure Oversight Committee, were meeting regularly to oversee the renovation. The church office had been relocated to what is now room 102. Painters, electricians, carpenters, etc., were everywhere. A fire and a security system were being installed. Among the chaos there was a level of excitement. If you recall the current color scheme of the parlor, that was the color scheme of the entire building.

Our worship services were broadcast on WCLV on Sunday mornings at 7:30 am. It was the service from the previous week that had been edited. It was done on reel-to-reel tapes at the start with volunteers cutting and splicing the tape as we had to condense the service from one hour to about twenty-five minutes. ArtsPlymouth had recently launched offering monthly programs for children on Wednesday evening in conjunction with Wednesday Night Dinner and Sunday programs for adults. In the March of 1999, I played a solo organ recital on the sanctuary organ.

During the 1999-2000 season, the West Virginia University choir joined with the Plymouth Choir to offer John Rutter’s, *Requiem*. I recall this being a highlight for many. We purchased the 4th octave of handbells through an anonymous gift. It was also the year that the sanctuary organ was removed (yes, over 3,000 pipes) for cleaning and upgrades as the renovation of the sanctuary took place. The sanctuary was painted in a colonial green color with green carpeting and yellow pew cushions. The transformation as we know it today included a new color scheme, expanding the chancel area, moving the choir loft forward, adding the window in the Comfort Room, and adding cove lighting at the ceiling. It was in the fall of 1999, that the first Organ Scholar began. Since then we have had ten Organ Scholars.

ArtsPlymouth received a \$6,000 grant from the John P. Murphy Foundation during the 2000/2001 season. Plymouth member, Tim Mendelsohn was on the board and made a recommendation ArtsPlymouth receive this money. This money was seed money for outreach to our then partner school, Buckeye—Woodland Elementary School (no longer open) where we provided music and art instruction for the students. Over the course of this program ArtsPlymouth gave \$30,000.

Music Ministry

From the Bench—Jim Riggs, 25 years in reflection *(cont.)*

It was during the summer of 2000, as the sanctuary was undergoing renovation, pews were removed—the room completely empty, then Senior Minister, Jim Antal entered the building one morning and smelled smoke. Upon entering the sanctuary, he found a fire burning in the center of the room. Workers had left a pile of rags from staining the floor and they combusted. The fire company came and with chainsaws cut through the renovated floor to make sure the fire had not spread, but that also meant they had cut through the ceiling of fellowship hall which had been completely renovated the year before. There was minimal smoke and water damage, but still a mess to clean up.

October of 2000, was the rededication of the sanctuary although only a small portion of the organ was up and running. It had fallen behind on production schedule. The Plymouth Ringers rang a concert at the Shaker Historical Museum. A black-tie affair was held on March 10, 2001, to showcase the renovated sanctuary organ for which I played. The Cleveland Cello society began hosting concerts at Plymouth. There was also the formation of a children's choir and a youth handbell choir.

September 11, 2001, arrived and we were forever changed. That following evening Plymouth hosted a community service to a full sanctuary. In December, ArtsPlymouth gave a gift to the community with an afternoon of music by various artists in half hour intervals at Joseph Beth Bookstore on Shaker Square. When you are at Plymouth next, make a visit to the music floor to see several ArtsPlymouth display boards from the past highlighting programs and events.

Until next month, I'll see you on the bench.



Neighbors in Need

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States.



In 2022, the Neighbors in Need “BEHOLD!” offering focuses on an economic justice. With inflation impacting all of our households, we wanted to provide a way to discuss this through a faith lens.

As you may recall, one-third of the offering supports [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM).

Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Plymouth Church will be collecting the offering on October 2, 2022 as part of World Communion Sunday, but contributions can be made at any time.

Thank you for your support!

From the Lerner School...

My name is Megan Schoenholz. I am the Coordinator of Educational Services at the Lerner School Center for Autism. We currently operate three preschool classrooms in the lower-level floor of Plymouth Church. We are interested in starting a reverse inclusion program, where neuro-typical developing children join our classroom to provide communication, socialization, and play models for our students. If you have a child, 2-4 years old, who loves to play and socialize with other children, and you are interested in him/her participating in our preschool, please contact me either by phone 440-554-5611 or email smithm19@ccf.org. I will be more than happy to talk to you about our program and answer any questions.

There are countless benefits for neuro-typical children in inclusive learning environments. Here are just a few:

- Continue to grow and learn through play
- Learn about children with autism and how to play/communicate with children with different needs
- Embrace individual strengths and needs
- Have an opportunity to build relationships with a wide range of peers
- Continue to develop social/communication skills in a fun and enriching environment



Plymouth Men's Bowling League

97 Years and Rolling, with spots available

Did you know that Plymouth Church has a men's bowling league with nearly a century of tradition? In the Fall of 2025, the Plymouth bowling league will celebrate its Centennial birthday. The league began at the old Kinsman Lanes in Shaker Heights with 32 bowlers, all members of Plymouth Church. As participation from Plymouth dwindled, the league was opened to a broader membership, and today it is made up of members from several east-side congregations and their friends and relatives, with a focus on community building. Though the league does not include religious practice, and has hardly any participation from Plymouth, it continues to use and honor the Plymouth Church name and has committed to give a monetary gift to Plymouth every year when the bowling season ends. There is a weekly fee for using the lanes, funding the year-end banquet and prize money, and Plymouth's gift. It is a league of men sharing a unique bond of friendship with ages 40-80 and a wide range of bowling averages.

The league has openings for 3 new members to join their league this Fall, making 8 teams of 4 bowlers, or 32 bowlers in all. They meet every Wednesday evening at 6:15pm at Rollhouse Lanes in Solon on Bainbridge Road. The season begins right after Labor Day, taking a break over the Christmas holiday, starting back up in early January, and ending in mid-April with an awards banquet at the end of the year. However, if anyone can't start immediately, needs to miss a week or several weeks, it is not an issue.

If you have an interest and/or want to hear more details, please contact Plymouth member John Markt at: jhmarkt54@gmail.com or 216-469-3179.



Service of Ordination

Betsy Wooster

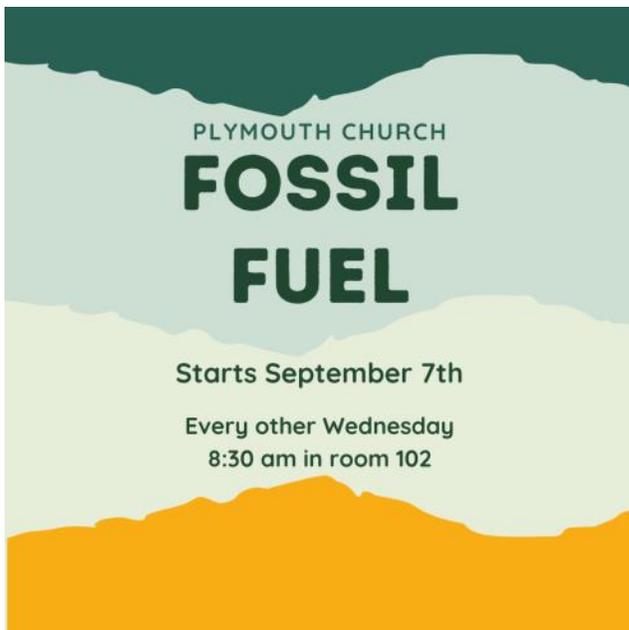
Sunday, September 18, 3:00 pm



Plymouth Church UCC
2860 Coventry Road
Shaker Heights, OH 44120

A reception will follow.

Clergy are invited to robe
with red stoles and
process together.



**Greater Cleveland
Food Bank**

Volunteer at the Cleveland Foodbank

Volunteers are invited to join Plymouth Church members at the Greater Cleveland Foodbank each month.

The next gathering will be
September 21, 5-8pm.

Contact Paul Qua at pqua@driveclassic.com.

Monday Bible Study

5:30-6:30PM on Zoom
Begins September 12

Led by Rev. Matt Wooster, Monday Bible Study is a weekly hour to become more familiar with the scriptures, and more engaged in the wisdom that they hold. Each week is a self-contained discussion of a scripture passage that will be the focus of an upcoming worship service. The sessions do not require preparation. To register, and receive an email each week about the scripture passages and the zoom link, contact Rev. Matt Wooster about your interest in joining Monday Bible Study.



Congregational News

Condolences to

- the family of Alice-Mae Suits, who died on August 17, 2022
- Marylin Christian on the death of her brother-in-law, Rev. Harold Barger, on August 9, 2022
- the family of Barbara Dabb, who died on August 6, 2022

Children & Youth

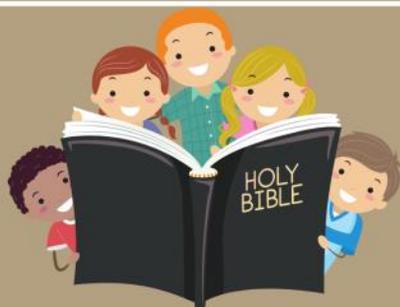
Sunday Morning for Families with Children

Children of all ages are always welcomed at Plymouth! We offer many programs and events throughout the year to foster faith development in children and fellowship among our families.

We have Sunday School and childcare available during worship or we invite families to remain together throughout the service. Families can gather in the new Children's Worship Space, or grab busy bags and Children's Bulletins from the ushers. Families are welcomed to use our Comfort Room located on the second floor of the sanctuary, and we are please to announce that we have recently upgraded our TV/audio system in the Comfort Room! Childcare (for children 4 & under) is available in the professionally staffed nursery in the education wing on the second floor.

There is no Sunday School when Communion is served (first Sunday of the month).

All children and youth are welcome to the table!



Bible Sunday

September 25

It is a Plymouth tradition to present a Bible to students entering fourth grade, and a storybook Bible for those entering kindergarten. For many students this will be their first Bible. Kindergarteners will receive the beautifully illustrated *Jesus Calling Bible Storybook*—full of more than 100 stories from the old & new testaments. These stories will help set the foundation to know the story of God's love. Fourth graders will be receiving a student *Connect Bible* (NRSV)—an age-appropriate student Bible that will make biblical content more accessible and engaging to our kids. We hope all new Kindergarteners and 4th-graders will join us in service September 25 to receive their very own Bibles and Bible storybooks.

Upcoming C & Y Events

September 11

Homecoming Sunday
Sunday School Kick-off
Cocoa & Christ (Jr High)
Ice Cream Social

September 18

Sunday School
Coffee & Christ (Sr High)
Farmers Market

September 25

Bible Sunday
Sunday School
Jr. & Sr. High Gathering

O.W.L.

Plymouth Church will be offering an OWL (Our Whole Lives) program for students in grades **Kindergarten & 1st**, and for students in **7th & 8th grades** this year. Our Whole Lives values self-worth, responsibility, sexual health, justice and inclusivity. OWL programs equip participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. It provides not only facts about anatomy and human development but helps students clarify their values, build interpersonal skills and understand the social, emotional and spiritual aspects of sexuality.

Plymouth Church will be offering the following rotating schedule of classes:

2022/2023	grades k/1 & grades 7/8
2023/2024	grades 5/6 & grades 11/12

More information about the upcoming k/1 & 7/8 classes will be available soon!

If your child would be interested in joining one of these classes, or if you have any questions or want more information, please contact Jeannie Clarkson at jeannieabc@yahoo.com or Leslie Szalay at lszalay@plymouthchurchucc.org



Children & Youth

Jr. & Sr. High

Jr. & Sr. High students are invited to monthly meetings in the Krumbine room for conversation, fellowship and refreshments during the Sunday School hour. Jr. High students will meet on the second Sunday of the month, and Senior High students will meet on the third Sunday of the month.

September Meetings:

Cocoa & Christ for Jr. High meets **September 11**

Coffee & Christ for Sr. High meets **September 18**



FOR JUNIOR HIGH
Cocoa & Christ
Second Sundays

FOR HIGH SCHOOL
Coffee & Christ
Third Sundays



*Sunday School Kick-off
&
Ice Cream Social*

SEPTEMBER 11

LSZALAY@PLYMOUTHCHURCHUCC.ORG

Sunday School Kick-Off & Ice Cream Social

Kick-off Sunday School with Sundaes! **Sunday School begins September 11** and we're celebrating with an ICE CREAM SOCIAL! Children pre-k through 8th-grade are invited to Sunday School after the Passing of the Peace in service. Pick up your kids in the education wing after service, and please take a few minutes to make sure your child's registration information is up to date. Then head down to Fellowship Hall to make ice cream sundaes with new and old friends!

POSTMASTER: Send address change to
Plymouth Church, *The Perspective*

PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC
2860 Coventry Road
Shaker Heights, OH 44120-2200
216-921-3510



Perspective Deadline
Monday, September 19

SEND TO:

Happy Birthday!

Four Four Score Plus

Bob Brucken
Mary Alice Cannon
Carol McWilliams
Bob Sieck
Holly Sieck

