

The Perspective

Volume 47

Number 4

April 2024

April 7

Sacrament of Communion

Christ Has Risen Indeed: Now What? | Rev. Brian Shields Preaching

John 20:19-31

April 14

Witness | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching

Luke 24:36b-48

April 21

Sacrament of Baptism | Earth Sunday

Wade in the Water | Pastor Dillon Shipman Preaching

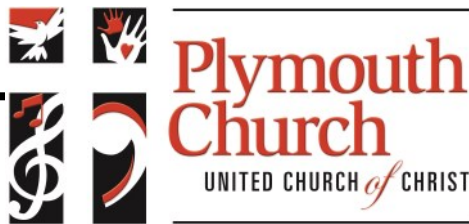
Mark 1:4-11

April 28

Love is the Way | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching

1 John 4:7-21

Worship is at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary & online at 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 2024

Council President	David Turner
Council Vice-President	Russell Lamb
Secretary	Andrew Cleminshaw
Treasurer	Jennifer Gerard
Assistant Treasurer	Linda Sempliner
Adult Faith & Life - Co-Chairs	Ken Rogers Brenda Grauer
Building & Grounds (B&G) - Chair	Steve Kaufman
Caring - Chair	Yaa Ansah
Children & Youth (C&Y) - Chair	Carolyn Jillson
Evangelism & Growth (E&G) - Chair	Jonathan Kraft Carrie Wise
Giving - Chair	Mendle Adams
Partnership & Service (P&S) - Chair	J. Horner
Worship - Chair	Kendalle Cobb
Personnel Chair	John Markt
Foundation Chair	Mitch Sanborn
Council Youth Member @Large	Catherine Cleminshaw
Council Member @Large	Mary Smith
Council Member @Large	Lucas Hershberger
Council Member @ Large	Sara Martin
Council Member @ Large	Robert Woolfrey

Plymouth Staff

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Senior Minister

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Pastor Dillon Shipman

Designated Associate Minister

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Temp. Communications Coordinator

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Church Office

216-921-3510

Pastor's Corner

Dear Plymouth Church,

In seven words, Paul invites the world in on a mystery that is too good to be kept secret: “Listen, I will tell you a mystery!”

Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. – 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

We have just completed our annual journey through holy week, from the joy of Palm Sunday to the terror and grief of the crucifixion, followed by the mystery of resurrection. In holy week, there was no mystery about the forces that rallied against Jesus. When the Roman authorities condemned Jesus, there was no mystery about the powerful using their power—what could be less surprising?

And when the compromised religious leaders conspired against Jesus, no explanation of corruption was needed—we’ve seen it often enough. And when Peter and the other disciples ran away from Jesus in fear, we recognized the impulse for self-preservation.

There is no mystery about the powers in the world that oppose the life and love of God.

The mystery is how the power of God’s love and life is stronger.

The mystery is that Jesus meets the powers of evil and death with love, even though he has every reason to meet them with hate. When the soldiers placed him on the cross, Jesus prayed to God to forgive them, for they didn’t know what they were doing.

The mystery is that the power of God raised Jesus from death, and the mystery is that God does the same for all of us. As Paul wrote: “we will all be changed...the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.”

This April, we live in the church’s season of Easter—seven weeks until Pentecost Sunday on May 19. May it be a season for us to practice the art of receiving mystery. Although it is all too easy to find reasons for sorrow and anger, we can practice finding the mysterious goodness of strength, mercy, love, and the power of God’s life.

I’ll see you in church.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster, Senior Minister



From Dillon's Desk

Dear friends,

Despite the trumpets and Alleluias, the eggs and bunnies, and the celebration of Christ's resurrection, some folks may not feel particularly joyful throughout the entire Easter season. (*That's right - Eastertide is a festal season that begins on Easter Day and stretches fifty days, all the way until the Day of Pentecost!*) We are living through surreal times, which includes political uncertainty, war and violence throughout our world, losses and pains, and even death and grieving for many people around us. Maybe even including us. How does the hope and promise of Easter come alive for us when caught amid such a reality?

You may not be feeling particularly hopeful or seeing the signs of new life around you this year. The disciples couldn't do it on that first Easter, either. We're reminded, throughout the Gospels, of how they couldn't bring themselves to believe that Jesus was walking alongside them again. They locked themselves behind closed doors because they didn't know how to process what was happening. They were in fear, they were shocked, they were looking for answers while dealing with the loss of their leader and the direction of a clear mission.

If you're feeling like that right now, that is more than okay, and know that you are not alone. The beautiful thing is that Jesus is still going to show up for you and surround you with his love. The locked doors couldn't keep him away from the disciples 2,000 years ago, and nothing can keep him away from us today. So, wherever you find yourself during Eastertide 2024, whatever you're struggling with, whatever barriers you feel you may have up, do take heart: Christ is standing with you through it all.

Resurrection is a tricky thing because it's different from resuscitation or reviving. Being resuscitated or revived means that you simply bring back to life what was lost before. Whatever is being resuscitated or revived is the same thing, no changes have been made, it simply lives again to see another day. But resurrection means that transformation has happened. What lives again is not the same as it was before, it is a new creation with new life, new hopes, new fullness, and a new shape.

We began to learn throughout the pandemic, maybe more clearly than ever during our lifetimes, that the Church is on a journey of resurrection. What we've know about our way of life and our faith as disciples of Jesus has been radically changed. So, what part do we play in making sure resurrection happens? How do we live out our lives in this new reality so that we allow the kind of transformation Jesus showed us to happen? The biggest danger we face may be trying to make this resurrection a resuscitation. It is tempting to want to go back to the comforts of what we've always known. We may desperately want to go back to the way things were. But, for the sake of heaven and earth, we have to fight that, and trust that God is leading us into something new, something beautiful. Even if we are afraid of what it might be, the great promise we have is that Jesus is standing right with us, resurrected and alive, to help lead us with love and hope all along the way.

In the Love of the living Christ,
Pastor Dillon Shipman
Designated Associate Minister



Earth Day

EARTH WEEK AT PLYMOUTH

*And God saw
that it was good*



Green Team Are you interested in exploring ways that Plymouth Church can be more environmentally friendly? Are you excited about the potential for ministry that our beautiful property holds? Let's imagine ways that our church community could be an example of caring for creation, welcoming our neighbors and fighting for environmental justice. Please join us for a meeting on April 21 after church at 11:45 am in room 102 to discuss developing a new Green Team at Plymouth!

Vote for Climate Hope Art Contest The UCC is conducting a Vote for Climate Hope Art Contest. UCC children and youth are invited to draw, paint, or color about the world and the environment in which they want to live. Art submissions can be made all the way up until April 16. Templates are available in the Welcome Center. Completed artwork can be turned in to Leslie for submission. An online award ceremony for finalists will be held on May 4, and the winning art will be featured on "Climate Hope Voter Pledge Cards" that church members throughout the UCC will collect during the summer and fall before Election Day.

Lunch Club will be in the Fellowship Hall @ Plymouth Church on Wednesday, April 17 at 12:30 pm. Join us for lunch and fellowship, as well as a time of discussion as we approach Earth Day. Rev. Brooks Berndt, the United Church of Christ's Environmental Justice Minister, will be with us to talk about climate care and creation stewardship. The suggested donation for lunch is \$10. Sign up in the Welcome Center or RSVP to Pastor Dillon, which is necessary for food preparation.

Brunch and Doan Brook Stream Sweep Meet @ Plymouth on Saturday, April 20, 11:30 am-3:00 pm To celebrate Earth Day, Plymouth will gather to show the Doan Brook some love by pulling trash, debris, and invasive vegetation from the stream corridor and surrounding trails and roadways. We will meet at church at 11:30 am for brunch and fellowship, and then we'll carpool over to the Cleveland Cultural Gardens to work from 1:00-3:00 pm. Please dress for the weather and wet or muddy conditions. This is an intergenerational event sponsored by the Youth Group, and ALL are welcome! Sign up in the Welcome Center or RSVP to Pastor Dillon, which is necessary for food preparation.

Earth Sunday, April 21 Join us for worship at 10:30 am, as we celebrate God's creation on the Sunday closest to Earth Day, and continue to pray for climate justice. We will also have the joy of participating, as the congregation, in the baptism of one of our newborn members!

Caring Department

Caring Corner

By Cindy Hill, Caring Department, Vice-Chair

Matthew 25:35

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.

Matthew 25:40

And the king will say to them in reply, "Amen, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Have you ever received a hot meal from a friend when you faced a difficult time? Or have you struggled to prepare a balanced meal with leftovers?

Food brings such lasting comfort and connection with others, whether it's around the meal table or handed to a grateful person in need.

Plymouth offers four food ministries because "caring through food" is more important now than ever before! Check out these facts.

According to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank:

1 in 8 people are food insecure across Greater Cleveland, not knowing where their next meal will come from.

Cleveland's child poverty rate is the highest among large U.S. cities.

1 in 4 senior citizens in the Greater Cleveland area are at risk of hunger.

In 2023, the Food Bank served over 400,000, due to high cost of food.

Friends, we hope you will prayerfully consider exploring one of these food ministries this year as caring through food will bless you in your faith journey as much as those people you have served!

Greater Cleveland Food Bank

Third Wednesdays, 6-8 pm

On the 3rd Wednesday of every month, Plymouth volunteers gather at the Greater Cleveland Foodbank to collect, sort, and repack donated food that comes through its warehouse.

This is Plymouth Church's **24th year** providing financial and volunteer support to the Cleveland Food Bank. Join the team to make a difference and have some fun, too!

The Cleveland Food Bank address is 13815 Coit Road, Cleveland.

Please email Paul Qua with questions or to volunteer.

pqua@classicautocampus.com

Caring Department

Shaker Heights Hunger Center

Last two Mondays and Wednesdays, between 9 am - 11 am

The Shaker Heights Hunger Center serves mostly senior citizens, who receive a 3-5 day supply of non-perishable food, once a month.

Plymouth Church has partnered with the Hunger Center at Shaker Heights Community Church for over **30 years** to supply needed food to qualified applicants in Shaker Heights and surrounding communities.

On the last two Monday and Wednesday mornings of every month, volunteers gather at the Shaker Heights Hunger Center, between 9-11 am, to fill bags and stock shelves with foods from the Cleveland Food Bank.

The Hunger Center address is located at Shaker Heights Community Church, 20120 Lomond Blvd (it's on their lower level, accessed by outside stairs).

Please email Charlene Nevans with questions or to volunteer.

charlene_nevans@hotmail.com

The Little Free Pantry

Open 24/7

The Little Free Pantry, located in the north end of the parking lot, near the Children's Garden, is busy every day of the week, visited by families, who are food insecure.

You can keep the box filled, 24/7, by bringing your "shelf-stable" food donations (cans, jars and boxes) to the Little Free Pantry.

Next time you come to the church for a meeting or worship, bring your donated, non-perishable foods for the pantry. If the box is already full, check the next time you are at church!

Plymouth Meal Train

As calls come in

There's nothing like receiving a hot, home-cooked meal when you are in need. Volunteers for the Plymouth Meal Train prepare and deliver a meal for a member in need, during a difficult time, illness or even the joyous birth of a new baby.

Our Coordinator receives the call, learns the dietary restrictions, the number of servings needed, and the drop off time, date and address (and any house markers). Then she puts out her request for volunteers by email. Prepare and deliver your meal to see those big smiles in the doorway!

Please sign up to be a Plymouth Meal train volunteer or contact Lashawn Caldwell with your questions.
909-435-1850

Children & Youth



APRIL PLYMOUTH YOUTH CALENDAR

April 7 (Sunday) – Youth Group @ Whirleyball in Bedford Heights, 5:00-7:30pm

Join us for an evening of fun and dinner at Whirleyball. We will meet at the location (5055 Richmond Rd, Bedford Heights, OH 44146.) A donation of \$20 is suggested to cover the cost of the bowling, and the church will cover the cost of dinner.

April 14 (Sunday) – Confirmation @ Plymouth in Krumbine, 12:00-1:30pm

April 20 (Saturday) – Brunch and Doan Brook Stream Sweep, meet @ Plymouth, 11:30am-3:00pm

To celebrate Earth Day, Plymouth will gather to show the Doan Brook some love by pulling trash, debris, and invasive vegetation from the stream corridor and surrounding trails and roadways. We will meet at church at 11:30am for brunch and fellowship, and then we'll carpool over to the Cleveland Cultural Gardens to work from 1:00-3:00pm. Please dress for the weather and wet or muddy conditions. This is an intergenerational event sponsored by the Youth Group... ALL are welcome!

April 28 (Sunday) – Confirmation @ Plymouth in Krumbine, 12:00-1:30pm

All youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to join us every time we gather for food, fun, and discussion for Youth Group events. Youth, invite your friends to come along! No one has to be of any particular faith background to be welcome and experience a safe space in our Youth Group.

Church, I ask that you continue to pray our seven confirmation participants and their families, as well as our confirmation teachers and mentors, as they journey through this time of preparation and spiritual exploration.

****All Plymouth youth participating in Youth Group or Confirmation events must have an updated **Registration and Activity Release Form** completed and on file for the 2023-2024 year. These can be found in the Welcome Area. Please return to Pastor Dillon as soon as possible!*



COFFEE & CHRIST

**Second Sundays
10:45 am | room 204**

High school youth are invited to join us for refreshments & discussion!

Coffee & Christ Sunday, April 14

Senior High students are invited to monthly gatherings for conversation, fellowship and refreshments during the Sunday School hour. Students will meet on the second Sunday of the month. Our next gathering will be **April 14, room 204.**

WEDNESDAY'S Together

Plymouth Church, UCC and Heights Christian Church are both blessed to call our building at 2860 Coventry Road home. This coming year, both congregations are looking forward to growing friendships between our members, as well as discerning what ministry opportunities and events we can embark on together! One way we will seek to expand our relationship is through sharing "Wednesdays Together." On the first three Wednesdays of each month, we will share in fellowship and formation with one another. We look forward to seeing many folks from HCC and Plymouth at each gathering!



Wednesday, April 3 at 1:00 pm The Book Group

The Book Group will meet - Wednesday, April 3 at 1:00 pm in Room 102 at Plymouth Church. If you would like to have lunch before the meeting, bring your own and come at 12:30. We will be discussing the book **Tom Lake by Anna Patchett**

Wednesday, April 10 at 1:00 pm The Meditative Arts Group In the Atrium

Everyone is welcome to join us for Zentangle, coloring or other relaxing art activities. We look forward to sharing our art while listening to meditative music.



Wednesday, April 17 at 12:30pm Lunch Club In Fellowship Hall

Join us for lunch and fellowship, as well as a time of discussion as we approach Earth Day. Rev. Brooks Berndt, the United Church of Christ's Environmental Justice Minister, will be with us to talk about climate care and creation stewardship.

The suggested donation for lunch is \$10. RSVP to Pastor Dillon at dshipman@plymouthchurchucc.org, which is necessary for food preparation.






Volunteer at the Cleveland Food Bank

Volunteers are invited to join us this month on **Tuesday, April 9 and Wednesday, April 17** from 6-8pm at the Greater Cleveland Foodbank. Join us afterwards for a cup of cheer at Muldoon's.

Contact Paul Qua pqua@classicautocampus.com



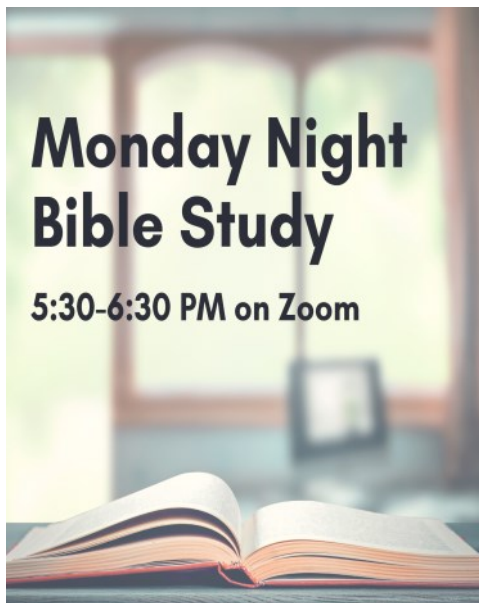
The logo consists of a blue circle containing a white fork and spoon, followed by the text "Greater Cleveland Food Bank" in blue and green.



Shaker Heights Hunger Center Volunteers

Volunteers are needed on the last two **Monday and Wednesday mornings of each month** to fill bags and stock shelves with food from the Cleveland Food Bank and from individual donors. The Hunger Center is located at Shaker Heights Community Church, lower level, 20120 Lomond Blvd.

Please contact Charlene Nevans
charlene_nevans@hotmail.com



The Coffee House

is open Sundays
from 9:30am until
10:15am. Stop in
for coffee, tea and
conversation!



The icon shows a brown coffee cup on a saucer with three wavy lines above it representing steam.

Easter



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, April 15

SEND TO:

Happy Birthday!

To our Four Score Plus

Roma Blunt

Jim Chaney

Dick Pogue



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