

The Perspective

Volume 47

Number 5

May 2024

May 5

Sacrament of Communion

Abide, Nurture, Grow | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching
John 15:9-17

May 12

Mother's Day

A Place in Ministry | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching
Acts 1:15-17,21-26

May 19

Pentecost Sunday | Confirmation Sunday

Confirmands leading worship
Ezekiel 37:1-14, Acts 2:1-21

May 26

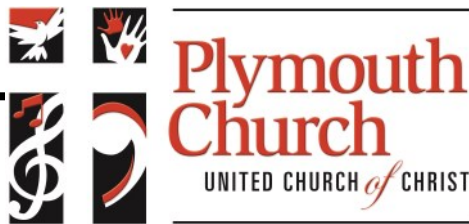
10:00 am Summer Worship Time Begins

Trinity Sunday

The Spirit of God is on the Move | Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster Preaching
John 3:1-17

Worship is at 10:30 am in the Sanctuary & online at plymouthchurchucc.org

Worship will move to 10:00 am beginning May 26th



***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

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister

mwooster@plymouthchurchucc.org

Pastor Dillon Shipman

Designated Associate Minister

dshipman@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

Church Office

216-921-3510

Pastor's Corner

Dear Plymouth Church,

Depending on when you read this, Plymouth Church may already have a new sign out in front of our church building. As I write this in late April, the spring sun is shining on the two new brick pillars that will support the new sign between them.

You might ask: why are we having a new sign installed?

Almost a year ago, I made these observations during a sermon on May 21:

Maybe you have noticed that our beloved church sign, which stands at the corner of the front lawn at the intersection of Coventry, Weymouth, and Drexmore roads, is falling apart. The wood has rotted, the structural integrity seems suspect. It does not reflect that Plymouth Church is home to a vibrant and energetic community. Instead, you might say that the unintended message of the sign is something like: 'here is a church built years ago that is not really keeping it together in the present.' That is not true, but it is an impression that someone might form by looking at the old sign. So we are getting ready to replace it with a new sign that lets people know: this is Plymouth Church, United Church of Christ, An Open & Affirming, and Just Peace Church. It will be a sign that has a sense of permanence. The subtext of the new sign might be 'trust us, we're here for the long haul. We're not falling apart.'

Now the new sign is almost here, ready to proclaim our presence. The sign is an act of faith. It is an investment in the ministries of this church for next year and for years to come, because we trust that we are called to share the generous and inclusive love of God, and we know that this healing work is needed.

Let's be honest – having a nice sign is not enough to invite our neighbors to the gifts of worship and community at Plymouth Church. I don't expect 200 new guests to show up for worship on the Sunday after the sign is installed. (Although it is fun to imagine that!)

The message of the sign is that Plymouth is a vibrant community of God's abundant love and healing grace, but we know the sign isn't enough.

So let's take it one step further:

What can you do in your life – and what can we do together – to let people know about the gifts we have to offer?

I'll see you in church.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster, Senior Minister



From Dillon's Desk

May 19: A Supersized Sunday!

Dear friends,

As soon as you're finished reading this, I hope you begin gearing up for worship on Sunday, May 19, as we will have much to celebrate that day. It is both **Pentecost** and **Confirmation Day!**



Our celebration of Pentecost commemorates the gift of the Holy Spirit to the first followers of Jesus as depicted in the Acts of the Apostles and in our lives as well. The Holy Spirit is God at work in the world and in the Church. When we notice or feel God working in our lives and in our world - we are encountering the Holy Spirit. The Spirit inspired the prophets of the Bible to proclaim God's message to the world in their day and continues to inspire those who work to lead the world closer to God's vision for it today. We experience the Holy Spirit in our own lives whenever we are brought into love and harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors, and with all creation.

The symbols of the Holy Spirit are the dove (which descended on Jesus when he was baptized in the Jordan River), holy fire (the burning bush, the tongues of flame in the Acts of the Apostles), and a mighty wind and the breath of God (which moved over the waters in the Creation story in

Genesis, and which was breathed out upon the apostles by Jesus). The liturgical color of Pentecost is **Red** - symbolizing the fire of the Spirit burning within us.

When we were thinking about which day our confirmands would be confirmed, it made perfect sense that it would be on Pentecost Sunday! Anders Beckman, Bohdan Chrobak, Catherine Cleminshaw, Luke Grube, Wesley Lewis, Sophia Morris, and Kyle Szalay have been on a journey of exploring their faith since this past August. These seven amazing youth are discerning how they feel called to be part of the Church. God has already given them the gifts of the Spirit, bestowed upon them throughout their lives up until this point, and through baptism, but they can take on a new life through confirmation, as a greater understanding of one's faith has been named and claimed.

I have seen new understandings and sparks of excitement about their faith come alive over the course of the past year. It is important to remember that this growing in and exploration of their faith will not stop when we lay hands on them and confirm them this month. We, as part of their faith community, make a promise to them in both their baptism and their confirmation that we are here to support them as they continue to explore what it means to be a Christian, and in turn, how they live out their faith in this world. It is a great duty that we are called to as the church, but also an immense honor, as these seven already bless our community in amazing ways.

Come to church on May 19 and **WEAR RED** as we celebrate the Spirit of God - leading us, guiding us, inspiring us to live lives of courageous faith and of love and harmony with God and the world around us, and blessing our confirmands as they enter a new chapter of their faithful journey!

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

ALL Church Picnic

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

11am - on the Plymouth Church lawn

Plymouth Church hosts its annual ALL CHURCH PICNIC Sunday, June 2, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., outside on the grounds immediately following worship. All are welcome! Swenson's will serve burgers, fries and milkshakes. You're welcome to bring other dishes to share, if you like. To cut down on waste, bring your own dishes and silverware. Bring lawn chairs or blankets for seating. And, if you have an outdoor game, those are welcome too!

Bouncy Houses!
Fun & Games!
Swenson's Food Truck!



Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Quarterly Report

Jennifer Gerard, Treasurer

Below are the financial results for the three months ending March 31, 2024.

General Fund		Annual Budget	YTD 3/31/2024	Variance	%
Income	Offerings - Pledges/Member Gifts	\$501,308	\$330,993	\$230,315	58.97%
	Foundation Fund Support	203,180	0	263,189	0.00%
	Building Use	144,187	36,157	\$108,030	25.08%
	Other Income	46,821	12,177	\$34,644	26.01%
	Total Income	\$1,015,508	\$379,327	\$638,179	37.35%
Expenses	Professional Services	\$12,000	\$3,616	\$8,384	30.14%
	Partnership & Service	57,011	0	57,611	0.00%
	Children & Youth	8,845	1,272	7,573	14.38%
	Caring	1,790	103	1,687	5.73%
	Adult Faith & Life	11,000	135	10,865	1.23%
	Evangelism & Growth	6,434	1,235	5,199	19.19%
	Building & Grounds	225,120	61,394	\$163,726	27.27%
	Worship	8,525	2,997	5,528	35.16%
	Giving	750	0	750	0.00%
	Council	18,500	1,719	16,781	9.29%
	Compensation	662,771	137,647	525,124	20.77%
	Total Expenses	\$1,013,348	\$210,119	803,228	20.74%
Net Total	YTD Net Surplus/(Deficit)	\$2,159	\$169,208		

Special Funds

Special Funds are those used for unique purposes such as one-time offerings and other expenditures falling outside of the General Fund. Special Funds have account balances and activities that roll over from one fiscal year to the next as compared to the General Fund which starts with new account balances on January 1st of each year.

Special Fund balances for the three months ending March 31, 2024 are summarized below.

Special Fund	12/31/2023 Ending Cash	Net Increase (Decrease)	03/31/2024 Ending Cash
Buildings & Grounds	\$105,262	(\$20,696)	\$84,566
Caring	18,017	(\$410)	17,607
Children & Youth	53,458	(\$1,158)	52,300
Partnership & Service	8,387	(\$3,694)	4,673
Worship	10,089	\$587	10,656
Arts/Plymouth	21,288	\$353	21,619
Council - Fellowship	18,329	\$0	18,329
Adult Faith & Life	2,342	(\$2,365)	-23
Totals	237,110	(\$27,384)	\$209,726

Treasurer's Report

Foundation Fund

The Foundation Fund is Plymouth's endowment fund and allows members and friends of Plymouth to give gifts that sustain the work of Plymouth for generations to come. Foundation Fund investments are managed by six Trustees (Plymouth's Treasurer and five others appointed by Church Council for five year terms).

The Foundation Fund's activity through 03/31/2024 is as follows:

Ending Balance at 12/31/2023	6,487,747
Net Capital Additions/(Withdrawals)	\$ 300
Reinvested Income/Dividends	\$ 373,371
Reinvested Capital Gains (Losses)	-
Fees and Charges	\$ (4,527)
Ending Balance at 03/31/2024	6,856,891
Net Change in Value of Investments	\$ 369,144.00

The 03/31/2023 balance of the Foundation Fund accounts compared to the prior quarter end.

	12/31/2023	3/31/2024
Unrestricted Fund	\$ 3,483,187	\$ 3,683,314
Perpetual Pledges	\$ 1,831,553	\$ 1,936,812
Property Preservation	\$ 91,550	\$ 95,758
Outreach (Benevolence)	\$ 153,868	\$ 163,075
Arts Plymouth	\$ 183,307	\$ 193,316
Herr Music	\$ 81,935	\$ 86,770
Youth Programs/Dively	\$ 387,156	\$ 387,659
Youth Mission	\$ 43	\$ 81
William & Anne Cook Fund	\$ 295,347	\$ 310,106
Total	\$ 6,487,747	\$ 6,856,891

The Foundation Fund's investments as of March 31, 2023 were as follows:

	Investment	% of Total Portfolio
Cash	Fidelity Government Cash Reserves	1.75%
Equity	Ninety One Global Franchise Fund	7.00%
	Baillie Gifford Long Term GLBL GR	7.00%
	Cliffwater Corporate Lending Fund	5.00%
	Mondrian Global Equity Value Fund	7.00%
	Goldman Sachs Small Cap Value Insights	4.00%
	Loomis Sayles Small Cap Growth	4.00%
	Nationwide Intl Small Cap R6	5.00%
	Vanguard Equity Income Admiral FD	9.00%
	Vanguard Instl Index Class	28.00%
	Vanguard Mid Cap Index Admiral SHS	4.00%
Fixed Income	Diamond Hill Short Durat Sec Bond I	3.00%
	Federated Hermes TTL Return Bond	10.00%
	Lord Abbott Short Duration Income CL 1	5.00%
	TOTAL INVESTMENTS	100%

Children & Youth



MAY PLYMOUTH YOUTH CALENDAR

May 3 (Friday) through **May 5** (Sunday) – Confirmation Retreat!

May 12 (Sunday) – Confirmation @ Plymouth in Room 204, 10:30-11:45am

**Note the time and room change. We will meet during the service so our youth can celebrate Mother's Day after church with their families.*

May 19 (Sunday) – Confirmation-Pentecost Sunday! Meet at 9:45am in the Parlor

May's calendar is filled with events for our confirmands as they prepare for Confirmation Day, a momentous occasion in their life of faith. For our youth who are not in confirmation right now, know that we will be back to gathering together for food, fun, and discussion in the month of June.

As always, all youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to join us every time we gather 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. Reach out to Pastor Dillon with any questions you have.

Church, we ask that you continue to pray for 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 or Leslie as soon as possible!*

Children & Youth

CHILDREN & YOUTH Parent Meeting & Picnic

C & Y families are invited to come give feedback and share ideas about the faith formation programs & events for families and children at Plymouth Church.

LET'S TALK ABOUT...

Sunday school
Children's church
Worship Space
Youth Group
Service Trip
Spooktacular
Sugar Plum
Christmas Pageant
OWL

POSSIBLE FUTURE PROGRAMS INCLUDING...

First Sundays
Parent study groups
Faith at home
Volunteering/giving
Babysitting club

Bring the kids & let them play while we meet! The agenda will be the same for both meetings.

Sign Up in the Welcome Center or contact Leslie or Dillon

June 19
6:30 PM
or
July 14
11:30 AM



Plymouth Kids Calendar

May - June

May 5

Communion | No Sunday School

May 12

Sunday School

May 19

Pentecost | Confirmation Sunday
No Sunday School

May 26

LAST Sunday School

June 2

Communion | No Sunday School

June 9

Children's Church begins

June 16

Children's Church

June 19

Parent Meeting

June 23

Children's Church

June 30

Worship on the lawn | Children's Church



Summer Children's Church

Children in pre-school through middle school are welcomed to join us in the garden Sunday mornings beginning June 9th. In our *Caring for Creation* summer program, we connect the Bible lesson to the garden through stories, games, & crafts.



Summer times

10 AM Memorial Day weekend (May 26)
- Labor Day Weekend (September 1)

Locations

Sanctuary through June
Chapel through Labor Day Weekend

Worship on the Lawn:
June 30, July 28, August 25

Summer Worship Schedule



Pride Parade

Plymouth will once again join the Pride March on Saturday, June 1st. The parade staging will begin at 10 AM with the march starting at 11 AM near Public Square. We will meet at Plymouth Church at 9:00 AM to carpool. More details to come!

Come and support the LGBTQ community!

Caring Department

Flower Power

By Cindy Hill

Sometimes, there are just “no right words” to comfort a painful life situation. Our words can even fall short just trying to capture a sacred moment of pure joy!

And yet, one of God’s quietest creations – flowers – manage to say it all, without a word! Flowers share our love and support, and invite everyone to celebrate life’s sweetest blessings.

Fresh colors, textures and scents of flowers embrace all our senses like a hug. Varieties are as diverse as they are beautiful.

No doubt, our Creator sees each one of us like a flower. We bud, grow, bloom and fade in the great circle of life on this garden planet before God’s loving eyes.

Consider contributing to the Caring Department’s Flower Ministry this year! Try a fun, easy way to make a huge difference in a member’s life.

Donate flower arrangements for the Altar.

Carry Altar or holiday flowers to a member or a senior we haven’t seen in awhile.

Design table and window arrangements for events and receptions.

Pick up flowers from donors or at a store.

Prepare flowers for special events like a baptism or Mother’s Day.

You choose what works with your schedule, on your own or in a group! Sign up in the church office and we’ll reach out.

Whether a single bloom or a breathless arrangement – like those handcrafted by our beloved Pat Schinabeck – all flowers know the language of the human heart.

Welcome New Members



Melanie Wright



Alan Petrov



Ben & Bethany Miller, with their children



Ken Noetzel



Happy Bengston

Strengthen the Church

The **Strengthen the Church offering** supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

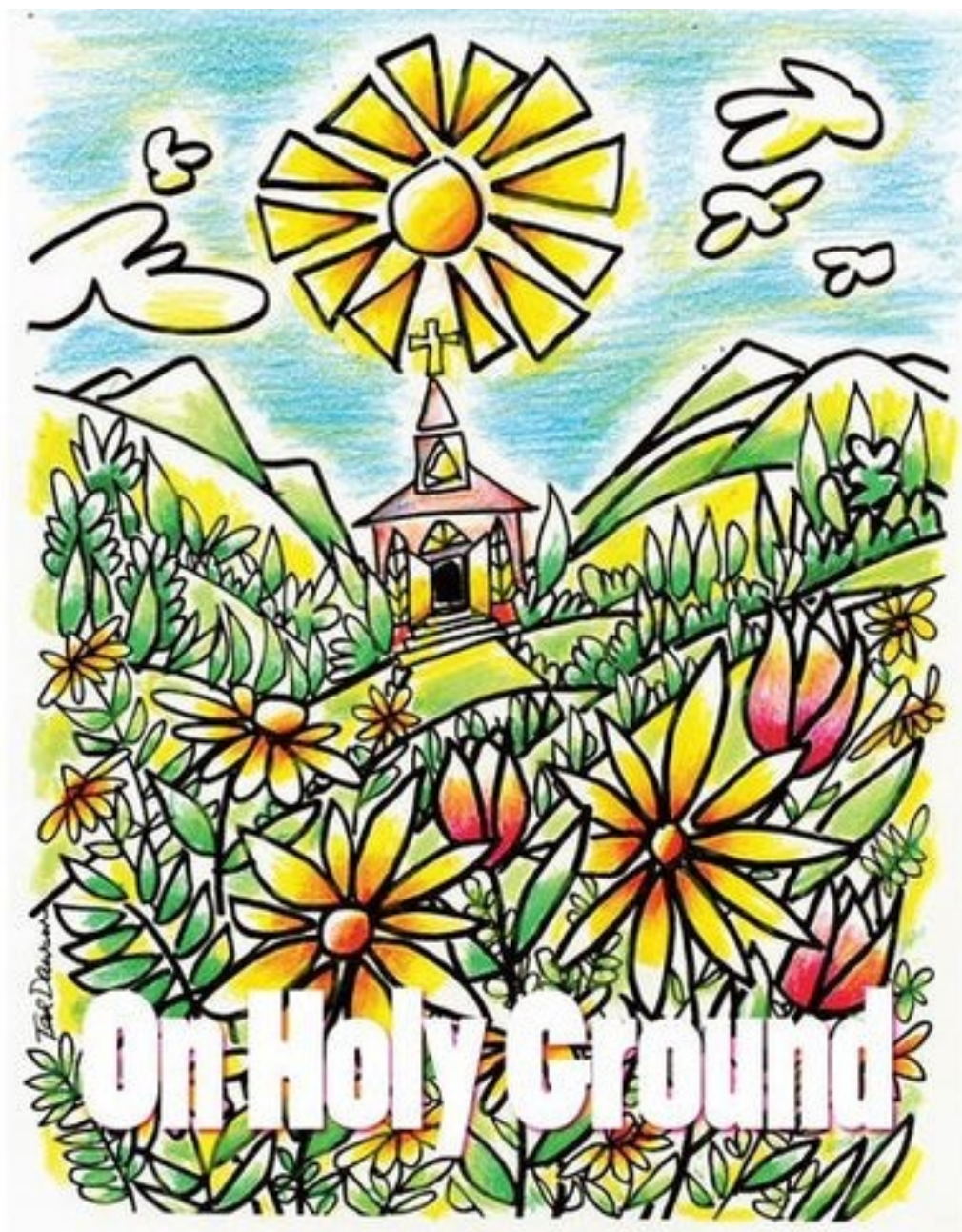
The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC.

Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local

congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. **By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.**

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

Plymouth Church will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 2024.



Volunteer at the Cleveland Food Bank

Plymouth volunteers for the Greater Cleveland Food Bank meet on the 2nd Tuesday and the 3rd Wednesday of every month, from 6:00-8:00 pm. Volunteers are invited to join us this month on **Tuesday, May 14 and Wednesday, May 22** at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, at 13815 Coit Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44110. We will gather afterwards for a bite to eat and a cup of cheer.

Contact Paul Qua pqua@classicautocampus.com



Greater Cleveland
Food Bank

**Sign-up to
help with
coffee hour
in the
Welcome
Center**



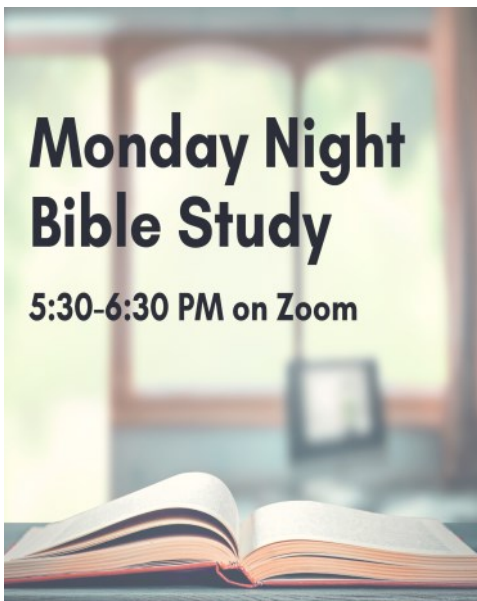
Shaker Heights Hunger Center Volunteers

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

Monday Night Bible Study

5:30-6:30 PM on Zoom



PLYMOUTH CHURCH

FOSSIL FUEL

May 1st & 15th

8:30 am in the Candy Circle
Conference room



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



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, May 1 at 1:00 pm The Book Group

The Book Group will meet - Wednesday, May 1 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 ***Summer at Sag Harbor* by Sunny Hostin**

Wednesday, May 8 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, May 15 at 12:30pm Lunch Club In Fellowship Hall

Join us for lunch and fellowship, as well as a time of discussion as about health and wellness. We will hear about the expanding health and wellness programs of the YMCA, which in addition to physical fitness classes and activities, is now providing educational programs to promote healthier lifestyle decisions, offering a variety of wellness programs that support physical, intellectual, and spiritual strength. The suggested donation for lunch is \$10. RSVP to Pastor Dillon at dshipman@plymouthchurchucc.org, which is necessary for food preparation. Reservations are due Sunday, May 12.



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, May 20

SEND TO:

Happy Birthday!

To our Four Score Plus

Marisue Besse

Lee Makela

Helen Mercer

Bob Sattler



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