



Plymouth First United Methodist Church

Message from Pastor Bob

“For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.” (1 Tim 4:10, NRSV)

If you are like me, you don’t like surprises ... unless it involves chocolate—those kinds of surprises are always ok. But seriously, there’s always a tinge of frustration upon finding out, especially after the fact, that an event had taken place that would have been great to participate in. Crazy thing is, it seems that keeping everyone well informed of church related events and opportunities is one of the most pervasive problems almost every church struggles with.

But that particular struggle does make sense if one really thinks about it. There are so many different modes of communication, information pathways, and habits and preferences on the part of individuals, that the task of keeping everyone fully informed is mind boggling. Add to that one of our top goals as a thriving church congregation virtually exacerbates the challenge—that being having all generations represented, each with their own learned ways of communicating. It’s the stuff of hilarious Saturday Night Live sketches (or Carol Burnett skits).

But the truth is that most churches really do care and strive to effectively communicate to both their existing congregation members as well as folks not yet attending ... even if it doesn’t always look that way. I can tell you that leadership here at Plymouth First Church absolutely cares and continuously evaluates how well all that is going. But despite everyone’s best efforts, we know that there are both hits and misses. One of my hopes is that in knowing that there *is* conscious efforts to effectively communicate, that everyone can reach into the grace and forgiveness bag when one of those *surprises is* encountered.

So, as you read this month’s Beacon newsletter, be sure to also pay special attention to the various announcements that accompany the main articles. Such snippets are one of the principal avenues in place to keep you, and people you invite, aware of the many opportunities available here at First Church. Also, make a point of scanning our weekly “What’s Happening Here” email blast that goes out on Thursdays for more up to the minute information. Finally, be sure to fill out the Digital Connect Card (PFUMC.org/connect) when you attend worship as it is updated weekly with faith formation ideas and options to connect with.

For one can credibly make the case that a major part of our mission is to advance the communication of Christ’s Gospel to the world, and between believers. Sometimes that is straight forward. Sometimes there is a bit more struggle. But we all do all we do *“because we have our hopes set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people.”*



Blessings and peace to you, and those close to you, always ...
Pastor Bob

B
E
A
C
O
N





Have a 4th, 5th, or 6th grade student?
We have a group for them!

February 13 & 27 @ church
3:30 pm—5:00 pm—new time for the month of February

Snacks will be available, dinner will not be served.

FUSION youth

Sundays 6-8 @ Church
February 13, 27
March 13, 20
April 10, 24
Join Us For Our Current Series:



Upcoming NOTEworthy Concerts at PFUMC

Stay safe while listening to great music!

Audience members are required to wear masks for all events



Music Notes

Detroit Symphony Orchestra Friday, March 25th, 8:00 pm

Ari Peltó conducts a program featuring Prokofiev's Classical Symphony and Ravel's poignant Baroque-inspired suite, Le Tombeau de Couperin. Making his DSO debut with Boccherini's B-flat major Cello Concert, Zlatomir Fung is the youngest musician ever to win First Prize in the cello division at the International Tchaikovsky Competition. For tickets and required safety protocols visit dso.org

the DSO requires proof of vaccination or a negative Covid test

Plymouth Community Band

Friday, February 11th, 7:00 pm

free admission

Michigan Philharmonic

Friday, March 11th, 7:30 pm

for tickets michiganphil.org

A Night in the Tropics – our tropical adventure features the pulsating rhythms of dynamic steelpan soloist Josanne Francis – especially highlighted during Jan Bach's unique Concert for Steelpan and Orchestra.



For all ticketed events, complementary tickets are available for those who are unable to afford to purchase them.

Contact Marcia Van Oyen

marcia@pfumc.org or 734-453-5280 ext. 115.

Thank you to all of our Plymouth First Musicians in the Chancel Choir, Orchestra, Festival Bells and Impact Band!!

I am deeply grateful for your perseverance over the last 18 months making wonderful music amidst all the various safety precautions we've had to implement. Our worship has continued to be musically vibrant and inspiring thanks to your efforts and commitment to our music ministry.

- Marcia Van Oyen



Message from Pastor Suzy

Dear friends -

Meghan Trainor sang, "All About that Bass" in 2014 and she was catapulted into pop music popularity. Every time it came on the radio, I couldn't help but sing along. It was a catchy tune. It was joyful, if not particularly wholesome.

Ever since that big hit I've imagined what it might be like if the church led the world in singing "All About that Grace." The church is known for lots of things in this world, and grace is not always the top of the list. First and foremost, we're probably known for our Sunday morning worship. The willingness to get up on Sunday morning and gather is a "symptom" of Christianity. Churches are known for their buildings.

I suspect in most towns everyone could point you to a church building, even if they do not know what goes on inside. But truthfully, neither of those two things are central to the Gospel.

What would have to happen for people in the world to think of the church as a way of grace rather than a place? Those of us within the church know the beauty of experiencing grace. We know how it transforms our lives and the ways that we see the world. Grace is contagious! When you have experienced it, been transformed by it, you want it so deeply incorporated into your life that you become a purveyor of grace.

What would it look like for grace to be as contagious as that Meghan Trainor tune? Dream about how the Kingdom of God would rule in this world if everyone was tapping their toes, humming and singing that it's all about that grace, and lived as if it were true.

It's not easy, but church is "All About that Grace," so let's dance.

Pastor Suzy



February Sermon Series

Go beyond cultural expectations of kindness and deepen your sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. By extending Grace we can overcome barriers such as fear, busyness, and prejudice.

Have fun in February while breaking the ice with your neighbor with Grace Bombs. What is a Grace Bomb? They

are intentional acts of love prompted by the Holy Spirit. When we Grace Bomb our neighbors, spouses, or strangers on the street, we are responding to God's call to love those people in generous and surprising ways. Learn more during Worship on Sunday mornings in February.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I have a love/hate relationship with social media. I love parts of it because it helps me keep in touch with much of our family that lives far away and friends I don't see much of anymore these days. I hate it because it is a huge time sucking vortex. I can say to myself I am going to check Twitter real quick and lose 20 minutes of my day, or I can pop onto Instagram to look at some pics just for a second or two and somehow it's fifteen minutes later and I have seen pictures and little sayings and memes and Tik Toks that people have posted. My daughter's favorite is Snapchat. She will ask me to borrow my phone for "a minute." A half hour later I will be looking around for my phone only to find her playing around with the Snapchat filters. Then there is Facebook, the place where I can become angry in an instant because someone has a different opinion than I do (I know some of you are judging me, you know you have done it). Facebook is also the place of endless quizzes and word games. Most recently, probably because we started a new year, I saw several of these word search type games, maybe you saw them, too. There was one that said something like "the first three words you see will define your 2022." Of course I did it.

Before I go any farther, I should preface this with two things: I normally don't really put much into things like this at the same time, I don't believe in coincidence. The three words I saw first were balanced, grateful, and bold. Because I normally don't put much into this kind of thing, my immediate reaction was those are good words. Then I started thinking, and if there is one thing I am good at, it is over-thinking something. I thought about why I saw those words of all the words I could have seen and concluded, as a person of faith, I was supposed to see those words. But why? I thought about those words and I prayed about them and I realized those were words that I needed to take into 2022 with me.

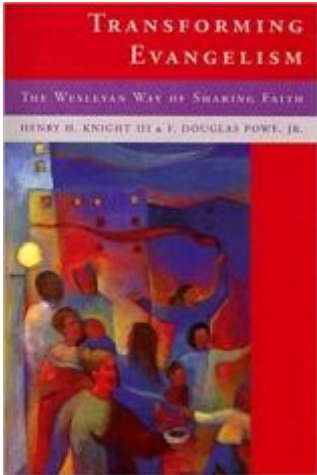
What good is a word without some meaning behind it? I looked at each of those words and I went to Scripture with each of those words and found a verse or set of verses that went with each of them. The word balanced was a challenge for me. It isn't like the other two words, I could think of many verses or passages that went with those off the top of my head. Balanced seemed more new age than biblical, but I did what anyone in 2022 would do; I googled bible verses about balance. What I found surprised me.

I love it when God gives me a fresh insight about a verse I have known as long as I can remember. I looked it up in The Passion Translation specifically because it is a translation I am not familiar with to see it in a fresh way; Matthew 6:33 says "So above all, constantly seek God's kingdom and his righteousness, then all these less important things will be given to you abundantly." You will notice, the word balanced is not in this verse, this was the first verse that came up in my google search.

As I read it, it was like a lightbulb came on. The word balanced might not be in that verse, but it is absolutely about being balanced. It tells us to constantly seek God and his ways and everything else will fall into place. I think that is the lesson I am supposed to learn this year. I tend to let the little things distract me or take my focus off what matters God. When that happens, that is when I notice I feel out of balance. Putting God first is what brings balance for those of us who call ourselves believers. Sarah



TRANSFORMING EVANGELISM THE WESLEYAN WAY OF SHARING FAITH



Because of the more aggressive and confrontational tactics we hear about, evangelism has developed a bad connotation. Doors are shut hurriedly, phone calls end abruptly and emails left unanswered. After all, isn't this a task better handled by the pastor? Perhaps it's time to re-examine John Wesley's model of evangelism as a full, natural circle - where it's a communal beginning point rather than a solitary end. The central motive of authentic evangelism is: Having



EXPLORE the meaning of evangelism.
EXERCISE learning in the presence of others in a small group.
EXTEND your witness to the world.

Tuesday Nights
@ 6 to 8 pm on Zoom
February 1—March 1
 with Pastor Suzy

received a message that's made all the difference in our lives, we desire to share that message with others in the hope it will transform their lives as well.

Wesley models an evangelism that reaches out and welcomes, invites and nurtures, and speaks to both head and heart. Evangelism is about relationship. How we are in relationship to God, who is able to transform us into new beings and how we are in relationship to our neighbor, whom we must love like ourselves."



EMMAUS
 OF SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

The Walk to Emmaus is coming to Plymouth First UMC!

What happens on the Emmaus Weekend?

The Walk to Emmaus is a 72-hour experience of Christian spiritual renewal and formation. You will enjoy three busy days singing, learning, laughing, praying, worshiping, and participating in small groups. Discussions center around fifteen talks given by laity and clergy. The theme of each talk is God's grace, how that grace comes alive in the Christian community, and how it expresses itself in the world. You'll also discover how grace is real in your life, how you live a life of grace, and bring grace to others. You will have the opportunity to participate in the daily celebration of Holy Communion and to understand more fully the body of

Christ. You will experience God's grace through the prayers and acts of anonymous service offered by the Emmaus community. You will leave with an experience of Christian love in action that will equip you for new levels of grace-filled service and leadership.

If you are interested in experiencing an Emmaus weekend contact Cathy Montgomery 734-560-3498 or cathym@pfumc.org

Emmaus Weekend

Men's Walk
 February 24 - 27, 2022

Check out the Emmaus of Southeast Michigan web site for more information.

faithwalk.us or emsem.org

Intentional Faith Development

What is your *NEXT STEP*?

Consider joining a small group in 2022...



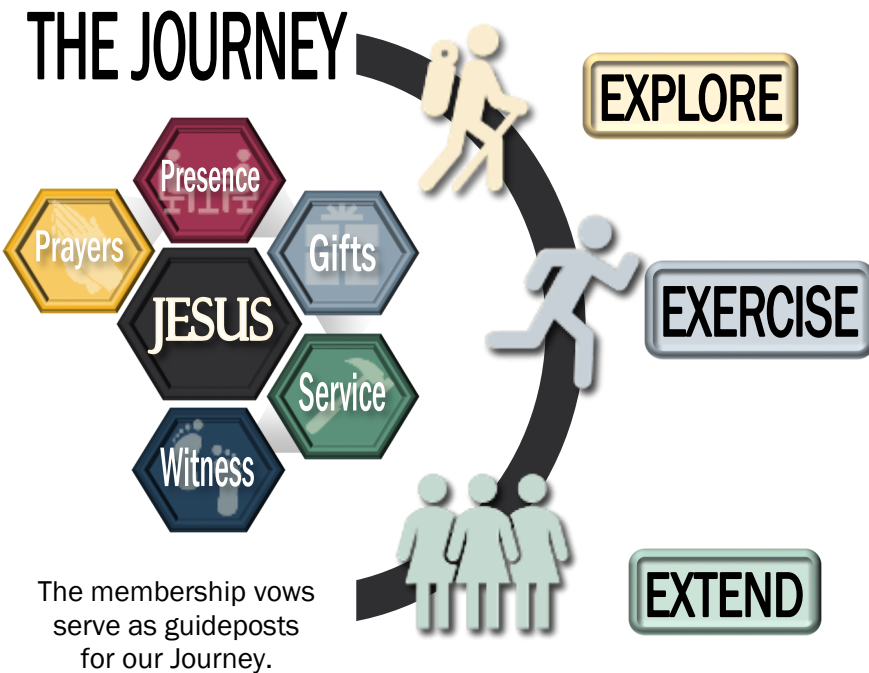
Lent 2022 Small Group

“Desert Living”
with Pastor Suzy

Tuesday nights March 8—April 12
6:00 pm @ Suzy’s house

Explore what we can learn from Moses and Jesus about surviving the desert seasons of our lives.

Contact Pastor Suzy (suzy@pfumc.org) if you would like to participate.



How can I help? Contact me and let’s sit down for coffee, tea, breakfast or lunch. I would love to share in a conversation with you about God and your NEXT STEP that will take you deeper in your faith.

Cathy Montgomery
Intentional Faith Development
(734) 560-3498 (cell)
cathym@pfumc.org.

Youth & Children's Faith Formation February Grace Bomb

Fusion youth ministry and Kids Kingdom children's ministry is sponsoring a:

DIAPER
DRIVE



Bring new, unopened packages of diapers each Sunday during the month of February to be donated to a local Pregnancy Resource Center. Drop them off in the church entry way starting February 6th.



FINANCIAL UPDATE
December 2021

Income \$ 72,374
Expenses \$ 64,064

YTD 2021

Income \$ 761,075
Expenses \$ 689,892



Fast Easy Secure		VANCO FAITH	
Online	Text	Mobile App	Check/Cash Direct Bank Bill Payment
www.pfumc.org/give/ To set up and manage your one-time or recurring gifts.	1-844-208-0637 the amount you want to donate.	Download the Vanco Mobile app to make contributions.	Drop off or mail check/cash. Set up automatic giving through your bank provider.



DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN DONATE YOUR IRA ASSETS TO THE CHURCH ?

IRS rules mandate that individuals age 72 1/2 and older take a required minimum distribution from their IRA each year. (This doesn't apply to Roth IRAs which has tax-free withdrawals and no required distributions.) You are allowed to make charitable contributions from your traditional IRA to a church or charity at age 70 1/2. You can transfer up to \$100,000 per year from your traditional IRA to the Church or Charity. You can enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that you are contributing to a worthy cause while effectively lowering your tax bill.

Ask your IRA administrator or tax consultant what steps you need to take.



The PFUMC knitters were busy in 2021. over 100 hats, about 50 scarves, 8 afghans and several infant items were completed. These were donated to: Redford-Brightmoor Initiative, the Plymouth Salvation Army and Cass Community Services. Yarn is always appreciated.

It can be placed in the “Yarn Bin” in the counter under the Great Hall coatrack.

Anyone interested in knitting, see Elsie Mae Trinkka or call her at 734-453-6187.

This good news was just received from the Salvation Army Board:

◆ Salvation Army kettles plus checks dropped off at the church were 10% higher than last year. You helped raise over \$187,000 in kettle dollars. Plus, the Angel Tree had a record year.◆

So again, many thanks to those who participated and donated to help this worthy community outreach program. God bless you for your generosity of time and resources.

Debbie Single



60+ on hold till further notice
Stay tuned for updates



PRAYER CONCERNS

Members

Jeff Berliner
Gene Best
Marge Brown &
Tom Brown
Lorraine Dermyre
Carol Lewis

Lois Maiorana
Vincent Maiorana
Bill & Mary McCully
Richard Moore
Nancy Nelson
Dennis Piggott
Ruth Slade
Peter Slazinski
Raymond Wells

Military

Suzanne Gyde—Hall
Brian Krautler (Ramsay)
Andrew D. Piggott

Members Shut In

Anna Fowler
Cleo Pappin
John & Sydney Paul
Jim Walk

Missionaries

Hannah Kappler
South Korea

Family & Friends

Rich Brown, friend of George Thompson
Matt Carter, family of Stella Smith
Clay Good, Dale Good's son
Dawn Harrison—Gyde's daughter
Robert Nulty & Phyllis Nulty
Mike Petri and family, friend of Dale Good
Kristen Zander, Ken Zander's sister



We extend our sympathy to the family of Jack Tornga who passed away peacefully January 20th. There are no details at this time. Please continue to keep his family in prayer.

PART TIME CUSTODIAN JOB OPENING-

We are looking to hire here at the church. Possibly a high schooler or retired individual. Job responsibilities include opening and closing the building, room set ups, snow clearing, on the porch and steps, and light cleaning inside the building. Applicants will need to pass a background check. If interested or have questions, please contact Jim Albright at facilitymgr@pfumc.org, or call the church office at 734-453-5280



RETURN ADDRESS
First United Methodist Church
45201 North Territorial Road
Plymouth, MI 48170
www.pfumc.org
Phone (734) 453-5280
Fax (734) 453-0375

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY—THURSDAY 9 AM—3 PM
OFFICE CLOSED ON FRIDAY

PERIODICALS

Printed January 2022

February BIRTHDAYS 2022

2/2 Barb Lehmann
Lois Merriman
Paul John
2/3 Sharon Minning
Matt Schroeder
Emma Swales
2/4 Jeff Berliner
Bob Butler
Christy Haradean
Kim Kuzak
Debra Magee
2/5 Carrick Secorski
Isaiah Williams
2/7 Samantha Darragh
Henry Salla
Evan Smith
2/8 Sharyn Hoard
2/9 Rich Anderson
2/10 Mike Cox
Zachary Patterson
Ryan Schilling
2/11 Asher LaBelle
John Prueter
2/13 Faye Fry
Margie Kappler
Carey Maiorana

2/16 Carl Christenson
Wilford McWhirter
2/18 Nancy Braden
Gideon Chichila
Lillian Chichila
Gene Overholt
Dave Pruitt
Garrett Sutphin
2/19 Jackson Cross
Penny Joy
Don Williams
2/20
Corinne Robertson
Gabe Trost
2/22 Maria Evans
Jan Shettler
2/24 James Conway
2/25 Greg Giles
2/26 Chuck Davis
2/27 Margot Cooley
2/28 Jeanette Nabozny

