



Plymouth First United Methodist Church

Message from Pastor Bob

“I pray that your partnership in the faith might become effective by an understanding of all that is good among us in Christ.” (Philemon 1:6, CEB)

I have an exciting update related to our mission of sharing Christ’s Gospel to more and more people. You will recall that our PFUMC 5-yr Church Vitality Plan was approved by church leadership and set in motion mid-2019. And while the last 2 years have been fraught with unanticipated and numerous challenges, we have never lost sight of our overall mission or its strategic elements and, as such, substantial progress has been achieved in many areas.

One of those areas involves our engagement with the online or digital community—our ever evolving online Live-Stream worship offering being one such example. This has made experiencing worship available when obstacles such as weather, illness, travel, and/or geography present themselves. It has also made our church within reach to those not yet inclined or able to walk through our physical doors. You have undoubtedly heard me refer to this ministry initiative as our *Digital Campus*. I am excited to inform you that after much prayer and discernment on the part of your Lay and Clergy church leadership, we are boldly taking the next step to fortify the substance of our *Digital Campus* offering as well as boosting our community outreach, and doing so in partnership with our Michigan Conference.

To increase and strengthen our church’s connection and engagement with persons participating digitally we will be receiving an additional appointed Associate Pastor who will be able to devote focused attention to reaching out and building our online community or *Digital Campus*. In other words, Plymouth First will develop into a multi-campus church, one being our existing “*Brick-and-Mortar*” campus, and the other *Digital*. This is an incredible opportunity to deepen our mission as the online connection has become in many ways a new “front door” to the church, with most everyone in today’s world seeking information and making choices after first investigating online.

But in addition to the building of connections with *online* church goers, we will also fortify focus and energy on building physical relationship communities as an outreach to folks not necessarily presently active in church. In many ways, such communities can serve as bridges between our two—*Brick-and-Mortar* and *Digital*—campuses, thereby strengthening and building our overall Plymouth First Church. The term for this part of our growth initiative that you will be hearing much more of in the coming months is *Fresh Expressions*, with our newly added Associate Pastor also leading this effort within our congregation.

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As the Appointive Cabinet within the Michigan Conference is currently setting appointments for the upcoming year that begins in July, I expect an announcement pretty soon as to who our newly added 3rd clergy member will be. But we can rest assured that this Pastor will come with substantial training and Conference resource support, as part of the partnership with the Conference. To be honest, I am so delighted that our church has been recognized as being worthy of partnering within such an important and strategic area of ministry in this present 21st century. Personally, I think that says a great deal about who and how we are here at Plymouth First Church.

I expect you may have a few questions popping up in your mind. Some of those questions we will be answering as we go as this is pretty new terrain for the Church. But overall, I hope you share in our excitement for the opportunity it affords our church, but even more for the opportunity to share the Gospel of Jesus with new hearts as a part of Christ's Church.

As always, blessings and peace to you, and those close to you ... Pastor Bob





Singing with a Clear View

As the Covid-19 pandemic wanes (at least for now!) and there is consideration of when to make wearing masks optional, I've been wondering how to navigate the transition, particularly with respect to the choir. Singing in a group remains one of the riskier pandemic activities, so we'll need to make changes cautiously.

As the mask-wearing pandemic days have stretched into many months, I've realized how much I miss seeing my singer's faces. At first, the thrill of being able to sing together at all was enough. As the case counts ebbed and flowed, the presence of masks on faces was a reassuring sight, especially to one who stands in front of a group of people breathing and singing towards me. The brief times we unmasked for a few minutes to sing anthems for worship provided a welcome glimpse of facial expressions and the sound of clearly articulated words rather than muffled text and tone. The lack of the visual cues of relaxed or lit up faces when an anthem is going well or the frowns that accompany struggles with notes and rhythms has made leading the choir more challenging. And the challenges for masked singers are great. I am continually grateful for their perseverance, breathing hot, stale air, doing their best to sing well.

And yet, after all this time, here we stand on the threshold of freedom, full of hope and longing – to sing fully and freely, breathing in great gulps of cool, fresh air, filling our lungs to capacity with oxygen to give wings to God's word proclaimed in song. Is freedom from our masks truly close at hand? I hardly dare utter the words.

When I reflect on the pandemic experience of leading the choir with a view of just their eyes and masks and a mask-muffled sound, I'm reminded of I Corinthians 13:12 -

“We don't get to see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!” (The Message)

I try to envision how it will be - after all the waiting, striving, struggling, plodding, persevering and compromised vision of our earthly lives, our sight will clear and we will gaze upon the radiance of God, more glorious than anything our imaginations can conjure up. And here we are, thinking about how great it will be to sing without masks! Surely that is a beacon of hope after a long pandemic haul, but a mere blip when you consider what is ultimately in store for us.

Masks or no, that's a reason to sing! - *Marcia*

Upcoming NOTEworthy Concerts at PFUMC

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

Prokofiev's Classical Symphony and Ravel's Le Tombeau de Couperin, and Boccherini's B-flat major Cello Concerto. For tickets and required safety protocols visit dso.org
the DSO requires proof of vaccination or a negative Covid test

Michigan Philharmonic Friday, March 11th, 7:30 pm

A Night in the Tropics – for tickets michiganphil.org *proof of vaccination required*

For all ticketed events, complementary tickets are available for those who are unable to afford³ to purchase them. Contact Marcia Van Oyen marcia@pfumc.org or 734-453-5280 ext. 115.



Message from Pastor Suzy

Friends -

On March 2nd we begin the Christian season known as Lent.

Historically this was a season of preparation for baptism on Easter Sunday. We still use this as a time of preparation. During Lent we prepare ourselves for the good news of Easter resurrection, Christ's triumph over death. We are Easter people!

In fact, every Sunday in the church is supposed to be a "mini-Easter."

It's a celebration of the resurrection of Christ and the new life we experience through Christ.

But during Lent we take time to remember what we are without Christ. We start with Ash Wednesday where we remember our deaths. We move through the season reflecting on the ways our lives fall short of God's glory.

We remember how the people before Jesus struggled to fully live into the law they were given, and realize that we too would be unable to achieve our own salvation through obedience. We grieve the ways we fail. And we repent, turn and go a different direction, strive to be closer to God.

Lastly, we walk through the events of Holy Week. We remember the jubilation of Palm Sunday, the tension of that Passover dinner on Thursday, the horror of Good Friday, the grief of Holy Saturday.

We do all this so that when Easter Sunday comes the brightness and joy of the resurrection can be fully appreciated in contrast to what our lives would be without it. We journey through the desert places of our own lives so that we can rejoice more boldly in the oasis that is life in Christ.

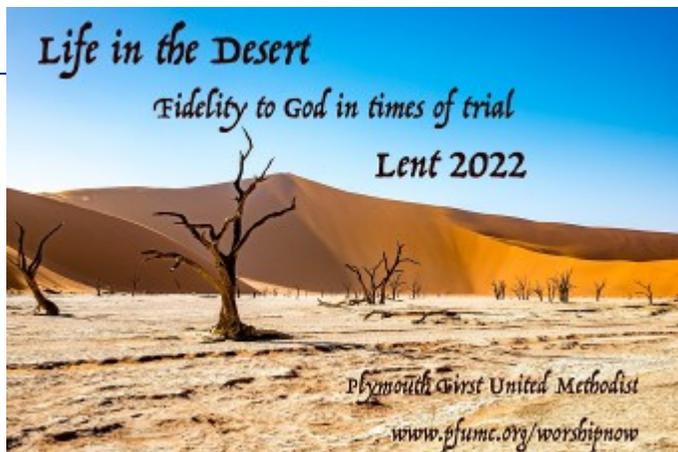
This Lenten season I will be leading a Bible study group that will correlate with our sermon series. We will be looking at the desert journey of the Israelites with Moses and the desert journey Jesus took.

We will look at the temptations that the Israelites faced and how they responded in contrast with the temptations Jesus faced and how He responded. We'll examine how this alters the way we read the Gospel, and how it forms the Christian life. This class will be Tuesday, and most sessions will be in person. If you are interested in taking this journey with us, please RSVP to Cathy Montgomery cathym@pfumc.org. There is no book for this study but there will be Bible readings weekly.

Lenten services:

- Ash Wednesday. March 2 7:30PM
- Holy Thursday. April 14 7:30PM
- Good Friday. April 15 7:30PM
- Easter Sunday. April 17 9:15AM & 10:30AM

Come and join the journey!
Pastor Suzy



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Last month I shared with you how I am working on balance, and for me that means God has to be first place in my life in everything. I am working on that, and some days are better than others. Here is what I am finding; my ability to give God His rightful place in my life has a direct correlation with my capacity to trust Him. My capacity to trust God is limitless, but my follow through on that is often lacking.

It's not that I don't want to trust God. It's not that I don't think God is trustworthy. Stuff just seems to get in the way. Often times, that stuff is self-imposed. Maybe you can relate. For me it can range from things such as I am busy and I want to be in control, to worrying about things I can't control (that is the big one for me).

What God has been reminding me this month is that He is faithful. Over and over again through His word, He reveals His faithfulness. The challenge for me, the challenge for you is to lean into it. As we choose that faithfulness, as we choose to trust, we deepen our relationship with God and strengthen our faith.

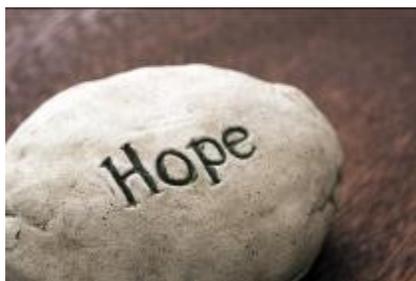
This, like everything in life, is easier said than done. Choosing to trust in God's faithfulness has been and continues to be tough. We officially opened for good after the closing from the pandemic in April of 2021. It has almost been a year since we re-opened. We have made some changes and additions. We have added online worship and Sunday school. The number of kids and youth who have come back since our doors have opened up is a fraction of what we were welcoming pre-pandemic. When I think about the current reality of our situation as a church, leaning into that faithfulness I was talking about is hard.

The thing about God's faithfulness is that it is never ending and never changing no matter what our circumstances might be. Psalm 117 says:

Praise the Lord, all you nations!
Worship him, all you peoples!
Because God's faithful love toward us is strong,
the Lord's faithfulness lasts forever!
Praise the Lord!

This is a short Psalm but it is full of hope, isn't it? It reminds us that not only does God love us but His faithfulness lasts forever. This is just one of many passages in God's word that points us to His faithfulness. It's up to us to choose to trust that God is faithful and we can count on Him, even when we can't see it yet.

Sarah



ANNOUNCEMENT

David Daly and his finance, Nancy Bergum, would like to announce their upcoming wedding and would like to invite everyone.

The ceremony will take place Saturday, March 26th at 10 am.

There will be a reception afterwards in the Impact Space. No gifts, but if you like to bake, please feel free to bring cookies or a dessert.

*Life
Together*



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

March 13 & 27 @ Church
3:30 pm—5:00 pm—new time for the month

Snacks will be available, **dinner will not be served.**

FUSION youth

Sundays 6-8 @ Church

March 13, 20

April 10, 24

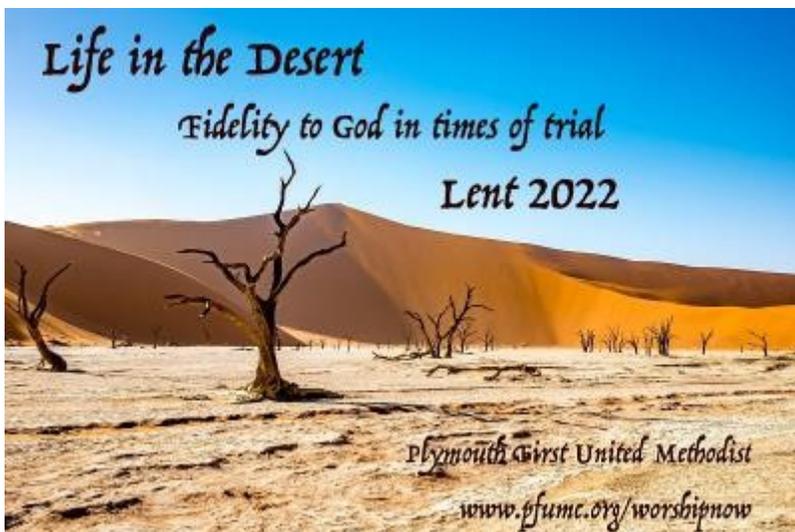
Join Us For Our Current Series:



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
(March 8 & 15 may be on Zoom)

&

Wednesdays @ 12:30 pm –in person
March 9—April 13

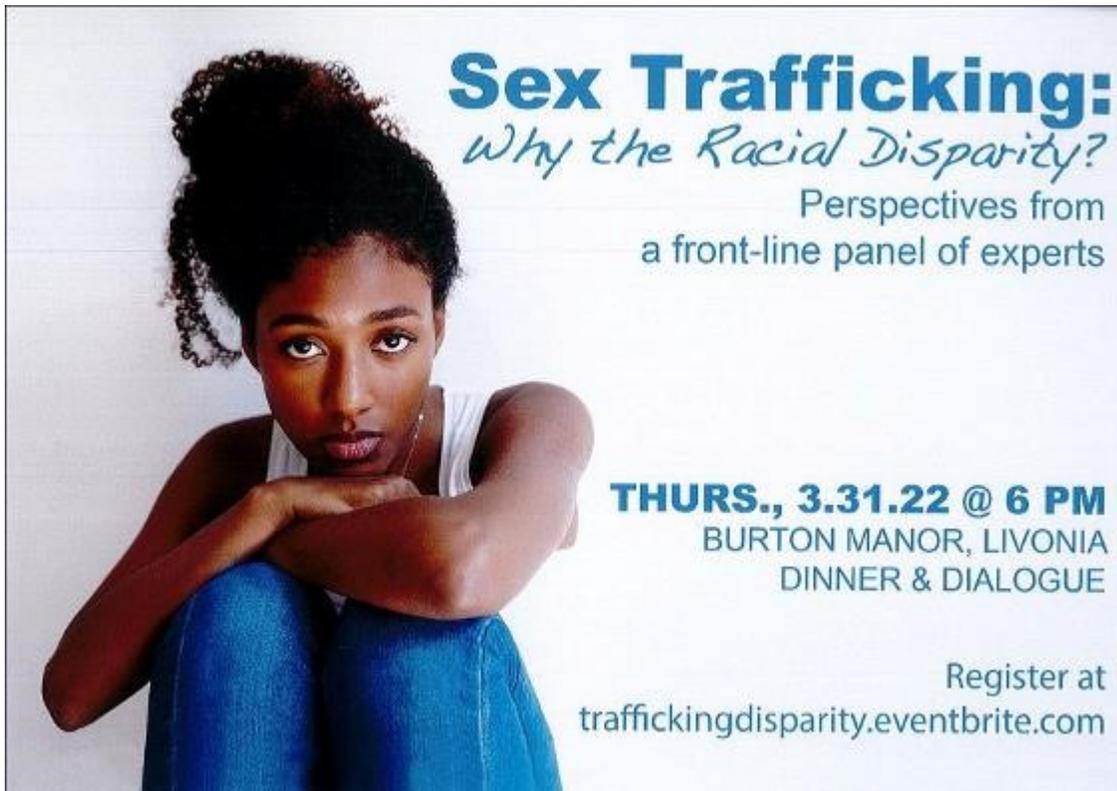
Explore what we can learn
from Moses and Jesus about surviving
the desert seasons of our lives.

Contact Cathy Montgomery
(cathym@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.



**STARTING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH—
Masks will be optional**

For Sunday School - the children will wear masks—for the time being.

Members of the choir will follow the guidelines that Dr. Marcia Van Oyen has put in place.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the church office or speak to a pastor.





FINANCIAL UPDATE
January 2022

Income \$ 58,745
Expenses \$ 69,953

YTD 2022

Income \$ 58,745
Expenses \$ 69,953



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.



MARCH 13

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 72 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.

LENT CALENDAR

Ash Wednesday	3/2 worship 7:30 pm—Sanctuary
Palm Sunday	4/10 worship Impact 9:15 am /Sanctuary 10:30 am
Maundy Thursday	4/14 worship 7:30 pm Impact
Good Friday	4/15 worship 7:30 pm Sanctuary
EASTER	4/17 worship Impact 9:15am /Sanctuary 10:30am



Pastor Lidia Rodionova in Moscow, Russia, sends us her thanks for Christmas greetings and is very appreciative of our help and aid to her church. She is grateful that we haven't forgotten her, especially in these times. She sends all her best wishes for us in 2022 and prays that God's grace, help, and abundant mercies will enable us to reach all our goals and that He will always be with us to help us. (She and all her family are doing well!)



60+ on hold till further
notice
Stay tuned for updates

PRAYER CONCERNS

Members

Jeff Berliner
Marge Brown &
Tom Brown
Joy Coyle
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 Gene Best who passed away February 8th. His funeral was February 12 .

Continued prayers of comfort for the family.



Lorraine Dermyre wants to thank everyone for sending cards and staying in touch with her while she continues to gain strength in hopes of returning home.

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 February 2022

March BIRTHDAYS 2022

3/1 Kai Hering
Zoe Hetzel
Janet Wilson
3/5 Carole Brooks
3/6 Anna Fowler
Deborah Kay
3/8 Brad Soash
3/9
Mary O'Shaughnessey
3/10 Mel Bobcean
3/11 Jan Kavulich
Richard Pushies
3/13 Charlotte Cross
Liz Ramsay
3/14 Jeremy Muse
Sandy Ofiara
Julia Rodriguez
Leah Stevens
Janet Tercala
3/16 Jennifer Hetzel
Richard Moore
3/17 Pete Tavoriana
Jacob Underwood

3/19 Silas Buster
Margie Olson
3/20 Jenny Boebinger
3/21 Jodi Jonson
3/22
Kylie Satterfield
3/25 John Leeper
Florence Turner
3/26 Bev Forsyth
3/27 Jerilyn Bullock
3/28 Joy Coyle
Barbara Kraft
Geof Satterfield
3/29 Carol Massey
Janet Robertson
3/30
Chuck Migyanka
3/31 Darlene Little
Brenda Rice

