

# The Herald

Plymouth UCC Dodgeville

MAY  
2025

*From the Pastor....*



## New Life Awakens

On Easter we celebrate that God brings life to the world! God can bring life even from death, specifically from the death of Jesus.

I am writing on the day after Easter, the day that Pope Francis died. A man who spent his life trying to follow the teachings of Jesus, as he understood them, got to hear God's promise of new life one more time. And then he left this life to receive that promised new life.

There has been a lot of new life at Plymouth over the past several months! We have received new members and welcomed visitors to worship. We have created new guidelines for our community life with an updated constitution. We have lifted up the leadership of members who are serving on Council, leading worship, and helping with various other tasks in the life of the church. We have rearranged some of the physical spaces of our building to make it more welcoming to visitors. And, thanks to M&M, we now welcome middle schoolers on Wednesdays and senior citizens on Tuesdays for drop-in programs. The church is seeing a lot of new life!



**OUR VISION** "To be a welcoming and thriving Christian Community, living our faith through reflection and action, while remaining grounded in God's love."

**OUR MISSION** "To grow and share our faith, worship God, and follow Jesus Christ in the ways of love, peace, compassion, justice and the nurturing of God's creation."

### Church Office:

#### Office Administrator Hours

Tuesday & Thursday

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Wednesday

8 am - 2:00 pm

### Pastor:

Pastor Katya Ouchakof

[puccdodgeville@gmail.com](mailto:puccdodgeville@gmail.com)

608-616-5075

### Office Administrator:

Mary Haag

935-5727

[plymouth@mhtc.net](mailto:plymouth@mhtc.net)

### Organist:

Marilyn Dunn

No single life lasts forever, as the death of Pope Francis reminds us. But God is constantly bringing new life to the world, both resurrecting what has been, and creating things that have never been seen before.

In that spirit, I will be hosting two conversations in May about the ongoing life of the congregation. These conversations will happen over fellowship time after worship, on May 4 and May 18.

On May 4<sup>th</sup> we will explore the question: what does Plymouth UCC mean to you? I invite stories of what brought you to Plymouth, memories from years past, and why you keep coming today.

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, we will consider how we see Plymouth moving into the future. I invite your honest reflections on how you feel Plymouth might find new life, whether by continuing ministry as usual or reinventing ourselves in creative ways.

In this season of new life, please join in this time of reflection on the church's life. We can learn from the examples of Jesus and Pope Francis, on how to live and die and live again. I look forward to our conversations.

Peace,  
Pastor Katya

P.S. If you are unable to attend these conversations, but have reflections to share, please feel free to send your thoughts to me at [puccdodgeville@gmail.com](mailto:puccdodgeville@gmail.com), or call/text me at 608-616-5075.

## Usher/Reader/Communion

### May

4 - Steve and Jenny  
11 - Chuck and Jill Roethe  
18 - Earl and Shirley Barnes  
25 - Mark and Lisa Pepelea

### June

1 - Mary and Rick Stellick  
8 - Mark and Lisa Pepelea  
15 - Earl and Shirley Barnes  
22 - Chuck and Jill Roethe  
29 - Steve and Jenny

**\*If you would like to volunteer to help with Worship, please contact Mark Pepelea or the church office.**

## Joyful Noise

### May

Homeless Coalition

### June

1 - Mini Pantry  
8 - STC  
15, 22, 29 - Mini Pantry

## Fellowship

### May

4 - Steve  
11 -  
18 -  
25 -

### June

1 -  
8 -  
15 -  
22 -  
29 -



**Watch Worship online via  
our Facebook page,  
Sundays, at 10 am.**

## The Radish Seed Fund

The "Radish Seed Fund" is a peer-to-peer community loan fund. It was created through contributions from ordinary people. In May 2025, one individual/household will receive \$1,000. Over the course of one year, they will pay back that loan with zero interest.

Once the loan has been repaid, the fund will open up again and a second individual/household will receive \$1,000. This money will continue circulating through our community over and over again, for as long as it is repaid. That means that one chunk of money can help a whole lot of people.

**MORE INFORMATION & APPLICATION:** <https://sites.google.com/view/radishseedfund>

## Summary of Council Minutes

March 19, 2025

Members Present: Lisa Pepelea, Moderator; Steve Pieroni, Treasurer; Mary Stellick, Clerk; at large members Chuck Roethe, Denise Whitish, Shirley Barnes, Pastor Katya Ouchakof

Absent: Chuck Roethe

The meeting was called to order by Lisa at 7:03. Pastor Katya offered a prayer.

The minutes from the February council meeting were reviewed. Denise moved and Steve seconded to approve them as written. Motion carried.

### Old Business:

Everyone has approved moving the diaconate and council meetings to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month going forward instead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday.

### Pastor's Report

Focused on priorities for the next few months: to hold at least two brainstorming sessions where people can share their ideas of what the church means to them and how they see us moving into the future; create functional and accurate job descriptions for staff positions; ensure that appropriate policies are in place for things such as the endowment fund, building use (in cooperation with M&M), entering into contracts, etc.; and develop a more sustainable model for managing the church's finances.

## CHURCH COUNCIL

### Moderator

Lisa Pepelea

### Treasurer

Steve Pieroni

### Clerk

Mary Stellick

### At Large council members

Shirley Barnes

Denise Whitish

Chuck Roethe

### Meetings

**Council and Diaconate meet on the 3rd Wednesday monthly. Diaconate meetings start at 6 pm, and Council meetings start at 7 pm.**

If your address, phone/cell number, or email have changed, please contact the office so that we may update our records . You may call the office at 935-5727, or email the office at [plymouth@mhtc.net](mailto:plymouth@mhtc.net).

**Newsletter submissions are due the Sunday following council meetings.**

### Mission/Outreach Report

\$207.00 was collected in February for the Free Clinic.

### Financial Report

The Treasurer's report was submitted (copy available on request). Stewardship through February was larger than last year but a portion was designated for 2024. Endowment interest and dividends through February are much less than last year. Received the first quarter check from M&M.

### Trustee Report

Dave Brick is working hard on the bat cave project. He hopes to be done sometime next week.

Shirley and Mary Haag are working on putting together the Operating Manual for the Church to pass on to the next Trustee chair.

### Diaconate Report

The communion liturgy will be changed seasonally, with the current one used until Pentecost. The Good Friday service with Dodgeville UMC will be here at 6:00. Easter flowers will be ordered.

Mark, Jill, and Mary will go through the paraments and banners and decide which ones to keep, along with cleaning out other items in the storage room. Pastor Katya reached out to other

clergy re donating the old choir music. Also discussed were the Christmas costumes. Farmers' Appreciation Day parade was discussed, will use Mark's truck, Rod and Marilyn agreed to play music. Mark will obtain banners with the church name on them for the sides of the truck.

### **New Business:**

Request for financial contribution to Mineral Point UCC to support the Rewilding Series of lectures and services being offered there March 22-May 18 – Steve moved and Denise seconded to send them \$100. Motion carried with 3 in favor, 1 against, and 1 abstention.

In light of the news that Facebook will only be keeping streamed videos available for 30 days, do we need to consider switching platforms? No action taken.

Policies/Bylaws – discussed forming a committee to propose policies

## **Important Dates**

**Ongoing Life of the congregation conversations will follow worship.**

**May 4** - What does Plymouth UCC mean to you?

**May 18** - How do you see Plymouth moving into the future?

## **Share Your Photos & Support the Pantry!**

### **Website photos needed!**

If you have photos of church activities in the past year or so (worship, pasties, meetings, whatever!) please send them to Mary in the office. She will try to find a place for them on our updated website!

The **Little Free Pantry** is looking a little bare. Please bring in donations of shelf-stable food items that are not expired, to support our neighbors in need!

or bylaws to address the following and any other identified issues: Committee descriptions and responsibilities, use of the church for other religious services not led by our pastor as well as M&M use, authorization to sign contracts, and finances. Tabled until next meeting.

Newsletter – content, deadline (Sunday following council meeting) – discussion of setting consistent deadline to submit and publish newsletter, including a summary of Council meetings.

Management of finances – discussion re exploring other options for bookkeeping. Pastor Katya will meet with a woman who does the books for Grace Lutheran to find out what they do, will re-visit next month. Shirley moved and Mary seconded for Pastor Katya to be able to look at the church's QuickBooks information. Motion carried.

Interest by a Spanish-speaking church group to rent the church space for their worship on Saturday afternoon (currently using space at Grace but have outgrown it). Steve will contact Monica Sella to set up a meeting between the pastor, Pastor Katya, Shirley, and Steve.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25.

Next meeting Wednesday, April 16, 7:00 p.m.

Mary Stellick, Clerk

Full Council meeting minutes, including Committee reports, are available on request.