

# ANNUAL REPORT: 2019



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**Plymouth  
Church**  
UNITED CHURCH *of* CHRIST

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**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2018  
PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC**

Pursuant to the Plymouth Church Constitution, there must be 75 members present for a quorum. Attendance was counted, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Council President Chris Karr called the meeting to order.

The Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe began the meeting with a prayer.

Andrew Cleminshaw made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting. Heather Kimmel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kendalle Cobb made a motion to approve the minutes of the minutes of the 2017 Annual Meeting. Pam Beck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### Senior Minister's Report

Rev. Dr. Monroe reported that this has been a year of staff transitions and efforts to keep our financial house in order. She is grateful for the many in the congregation who stepped up to see us through this challenging time. Many churches are in trouble at this time, and she is grateful and humbled that Plymouth continues to thrive.

There is much to celebrate. We are a diverse church, and we must nurture the diversity of our various constituents and meet their needs. We have lots of new babies and families at Plymouth; this is cause for rejoicing for they are the future of the church. Plymouth has lots of artists, musicians, writers, poets, glass artists, fiber artists and weavers.

ArtsPlymouth, under Jim Riggs's leadership, is thriving. Our congregation has many young professionals who are looking for a church home. Many in our church have a passion for peace and justice issues; we must stand with them.

We must continue to be stewards of our large church building and see that it is used to meet the needs of the community. For example, thousands attend concerts held at Plymouth throughout the year. The Boy Scouts continue to meet here.

Finally Shawnthea expressed it is a privilege to be the pastor of Plymouth, and she gives thanks to God for all that has happened at Plymouth and all that is to come.

#### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Juanita Faulx said when she assumed this position 10 months ago the job was quite easy -- sign checks, attend meetings -- and then Connie Hartley resigned giving only two weeks' notice. Connie gave her a crash course in what was needed to care for the church's financial affairs, and the staff stepped forward and did what needed to be done to make finances run smoothly. A company called Budget Ease has been hired to fill in the gaps.

Plymouth's overall financial condition continues to be strong.

## Foundation Fund Report

Jeff Pollock reported that the Foundation Fund, the church's endowment, which is overseen by five directors appointed by Church Council, has had a good return of 6.96% this year. The Fund had \$5.4 million in it as of September 2018.

Jeff encouraged people to include the Foundation Fund in their estate planning.

## President's Report

President Chris Karr noted this has been a year of staff transitions with both Director of Finance Connie Hartley and Facilities Manager Ed Willmott leaving. Our staff stepped up big-time and assumed responsibilities way out of their comfort zones. The Personnel Committee is busy filling those positions.

The May All-Church Retreat generated two important initiatives: (1) a recommitment to a sustained Planned Giving effort and (2) the formation of a Building Use Committee to plan how to better use our building to serve our community and to generate a modest income.

Chris has served on Church Council in various capacities for ten years. He thanks all who have supported him during these years.

## Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Nominees.

Kendalle Cobb thanked the six members of the Nominating Committee, as well as all who served in an elected capacity last year. She announced the slate of nominees for 2019. Those who were present came forward.

Council President (F)	Gloria Sturghill
Council Vice-President (F)	Brian Grube
Secretary	Val Arbie-McClelland (3)
Treasurer (F)	Juanita Faulx (2)
Asst. Treasurer (F)	Lisa Hunziker (2)
Council Memb@Lrg	Ros Gauchat
Council Memb@Lrg	Cindy Hill
Council Memb@Lrg	Reggie Williams
Council Memb@Lrg	Sean Hall
Council Memb@Lrg	Camille Lamb (January-June 2019)
Adult Faith & Life Chair	Vicki Werneke
Adult Faith & Life Vice-Chair	Mike Schiavoni
B&G Chair (F)	Bill Menges
B&G Vice-Chair	Ron Werneke
Caring Chair	Dave Faulx
Caring Vice-Chair	Adrienne Walicke
C& Y Chair	Brian Shields (2)
C& Y Vice-Chair	Jeannie Clarkson (3)
E & G Co-Chair	Mendle Adams
E & G Vice-Chair	Pat Schinabeck (2)
Giving Chair	Russell Lamb

Giving Vice-Chair  
P & S Chair  
P & S Vice-Chair  
Worship Chair  
Worship Vice-Chair

Bob Green  
Robin Johnson (2)  
Joann Hall  
Mary Powell (3)  
Amy Holbrook

UCC W. Reserve Assoc. Rep.  
UCC W. Reserve Assoc. Rep  
UCC W. Reserve Assoc. Rep

Pam Beck (2)  
Adrienne Brockway (2)  
Bill Green (3)

Key: B&G, Building & Grounds; C&Y, Children & Youth; E&G, Evangelism & Growth; P&S, Partnership and Service, UCC W Reserve Assoc., United Church of Christ Western Reserve Association.

Kenyon Mau moved to accept the slate. Anne Cook seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

Kendalle also presented the names of the members of the five Standing Committees of the Church: the Finance Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Pastoral Relations Committee, the Foundation Fund, and the Personnel Committee. These appointments have already been voted on by the Church Council. The Nominating Committee presented these appointments for ratification at this Annual Meeting.

Finance Committee 19  
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Finance Committee @ Lrg 19

Gloria Sturghill  
Brian Grube  
Juanita Faulx  
Lisa Hunziker  
Personnel Chair  
Russell Lamb  
Bill Menges  
Foundation Chair  
Noel Nilson  
Bob Green

Foundation Dir 21  
Foundation Dir 22  
Foundation Dir 22  
Foundation Dir 23  
Foundation Dir 23

Jeff Pollock  
Dick Pogue  
Christine Bretz  
Lalana Green  
Mary Bright

Nominating Cmtee 19  
Nominating Cmtee 19  
Nominating Cmtee 19  
Nominating Cmtee 20  
Nominating Cmtee 20  
Nominating Cmtee 20  
Nominating Cmtee 21

Kendalle Cobb  
Vicki Werneke  
Ramona Wiles  
Amy Holbrook  
Doug Powell  
Jan Wilkens  
Wayne Hall

Nominating Cmtee 21  
Nominating Cmtee 21

Hans Hunziker  
Mai Moore

Pastoral Relations 19  
Pastoral Relations 19  
Pastoral Relations 20  
Pastoral Relations 20  
Pastoral Relations 21  
Pastoral Relations 21

Ben Beckman  
Mary Bright  
Noel Nilson  
Vicki Werneke  
Jim Holbrook  
Tracy Williams

Personnel Cmtee 19  
Personnel Cmtee 20  
Personnel Cmtee 20  
Personnel Cmtee 20  
Personnel Cmtee 20  
Personnel Cmtee 21

Karen Reich  
Ruth Garwood  
Brian Grube  
Heidi Klein  
Kenyon Mau  
Jim Holbrook

Paul Qua made a motion to accept this slate. Dave Faulx seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

#### Recognition of 50+-year members

Chris Karr and Shawnthea read the names of people who have been members of Plymouth Church for 50 years or more. A reception to honor them was held in the parlor following the meeting.

#### New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Shawnthea then paid tribute to Chris Karr for his many years of service, particularly his 10 years on Church Council and his leadership as Council President this year. In appreciation, she presented him with a pen engraved: "Christopher Karr Council President".

#### Adjournment

Bob Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lalana Green seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Makela

## **AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING | NOVEMBER 10, 2019**

- I. Determination of presence of a quorum
- II. Call to Order & Invocation
- III. Call for motion to dispense with reading of the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes (see 2019 report)
- IV. Call for motion to approve the 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes
- V. Video Presentation
- VI. Treasurer's Report
- VII. Foundation Fund Report
- VIII. President's Report
- IX. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Nominees
- X. Recognition of 50 Year Members
- XI. New Business
- XII. Adjournment

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 2019

I remember the day that I joined Plymouth – how welcoming everyone was on that day and over the few months I had been visiting. I felt more comfortable here than any church I had been to in a long time.

To me, being a member of a church means being involved. I bonded with the senior high youth on my first service trip to Philadelphia working in a summer day camp. When my mother passed away in 2004, my Christ Care family, among others, helped me to get through it. I've met friends that I probably never would have. Over the past twenty or so years, I have volunteered in pretty much every department. I started out as a greeter, became a Sunday school teacher, an usher, work with the youth groups, go on Service trips, help with the Christmas Pageant, teach confirmation, am a member of C&Y (former Chair and Vice Chair), directed the Talent Shows, cashier at Sugar Plum, sing in the Choir, was a member of the Fellowship (now Caring) Department, volunteered with Family Promise, was a member and led a Christ Care Group. I'm sure a lot of you have lists just like this. And I keep saying that I'm going to take a break from Council and now that I'm finishing my year as President, I think that might finally happen.

2019 has been a busy year, and another year of transition, for Plymouth. Kathryn Kundrat joined us as the new Financial Administrator and jumped right in to make sure our financial house is in order. We're very fortunate to have her here. It has been rewarding to work with the faithful and thoughtful leaders on staff and the various departments and committees as your President. We have lost some members, either through moves to other locations or churches, and we have gained new members. There have been marriages and baptisms. And sadly, other members have passed away. Through it all, our fabulous staff – Jim Riggs, Matt Bauhof, Leslie Szalay, Katherine Kundrat, Paul Holter and Nicole Whitcomb – keep things together. We don't always see this behind the scenes work, but they spend many hours making sure that things run smoothly.

In January, I started my year as Council President with a couple of goals in mind, but the main focus was stepping up our communication with each other and the rest of the congregation. I asked everyone to make sure they read all minutes prior to Council, that they really be eyes and ears to the Congregation, talk to members who are not on Council. I asked them to be consistent and intentional in their departments: have regular meetings; send out agendas so people can prepare; take minutes so that there's a historical record, especially if monies are being spent; communicate with Nicole in the office – in addition to scheduling your meeting space and making sure you have equipment if needed, she can help to get the message out with notifications, posters, social media messages, etc.; and to make sure that they check their box in the copy room - to make sure requisitions are signed to avoid any delays in payments; Finally, I reminded them that each department should be represented at every Council meeting so that everyone is informed when business is discussed and voted on – either the Chair, Vice Chair or another designee. Seems like a lot, but it's critical. We have to work together. Communication is the backbone of the church – it has to be clear and transparent all the time, but especially now.

Buildings & Grounds and ArtsPlymouth are working together on the Partners for Sacred Spaces Project that will help us really focus on who we are and where we plan to go. We have a beautiful building that needs to be used. With PDO ending last year, and Head Start leaving this year, it's time to continue the conversation started at last year's Leader's Retreat and figure us out. Who is Plymouth in 2019?

We're being intentional using the Ministry Architects study conducted with Children & Youth to include the children and youth in more areas of worship on Sundays.



Adult Faith & Life and Evangelism & Growth, have had several successful collaborations this year, especially Plymouth 101 and the Staying Connected discussions started in August when Rev. Shawnthea Monroe let us know that she would be leaving. Giving everyone a space to talk and discuss feelings has made us a closer congregation that will help us through the next year.

Speaking of the coming year, it's going to be the one of the biggest transformations Plymouth has had in a while. In July, Shawnthea gave notice that she accepted a call to be the Senior Minister at The Peoples Church in East Lansing, Michigan and her last day with us was on September 29. My first thought when she told us was "this is a joke, right?" but I knew it wasn't. It was a very thoughtful decision and this was the time. She has become a good friend of mine and I miss being able to stop in and talk whenever I want or need to. Once some time has passed, we can catch up.

But for now, Plymouth has to move on. Jim Riggs is our Acting Staff Administrator; the Transition Team has started work on next steps and will also be the Pulpit Committee for our Interim Senior Rev. Dr. Deborah Lindsay; and the Search Committee will start their work in January or February. As we have heard and said many times, Plymouth is the people and we will have our next Senior Minister when the time is right.

Finally, this has been a year of growth for me and I want to thank everyone for your support. It's been a pleasure being your President.

Gloria Sturghill

President of Council

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT - 2019

The Finance Committee has overall responsibility for overseeing Plymouth's financial affairs, including developing the annual budget in collaboration with the departments, monitoring overall budgetary compliance, overseeing the Treasurer to assure that appropriate financial controls are in place and are being followed, and periodically reviewing the compensation of all church employees.

The committee ably and effectively performed all its tasks this year. We began the year by welcoming Kathryn Kundrat, our new Finance Administrator. Kathryn has enjoyed a long career providing accounting and human resource services to a wide range of organizations. Her strategic goal is to simplify and streamline information systems so they are accessible and serve the needs of the organization. And she has been applying that expertise since she arrived, guiding the committee and working with our outside auditing firm to learn and assess Plymouth's systems and to identify opportunities for improvement.

Over the course of the year, we have worked to ensure our revenues and expenditures matched our budget, making adjustments for unexpected events, such as Shawnthea's departure and the imminent arrival of our interim senior minister, Rev. Dr. Deborah Lindsay. We oversaw our auditor's review of our agreed-upon financial procedures and controls, which identified and corrected some modest bookkeeping errors that arose between the departure of our last finance director and Kathryn's arrival. And lately, of course, we have been working with Plymouth's departments and committees to develop our 2020 budget.

To ensure a healthy financial future for Plymouth, the committee also has begun a conversation with the Building and Grounds department and the Foundation directors concerning the demands of maintaining our treasured building responsibly and the demands of managing our Foundation sustainably. The conversation is an acknowledgment that these demands are interrelated and at times competing. And the purpose of the discussion is to ensure that we are assessing them accurately and realistically, so we can advise and guide the membership on how best to manage them and to support Plymouth's broader mission. This conversation will continue, and we welcome any and all communications about it.

Please join me in thanking the committee's members for their willingness to embrace this work and to manage deliberately, thoughtfully, and faithfully Plymouth's financial welfare:

- Gloria Sturghill, President
- Kenyon Mau, Personnel
- Bill Menges, Building and Grounds
- Russell Lamb, Giving
- Noel Nilson, Member at Large
- Juanita Faulx, Treasurer
- Lisa Hunziker, Assistant Treasurer
- Shawnthea Monroe, Senior Minister (ex officio)
- Kathryn Kundrat, Finance Administrator (ex officio)

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Grube, Vice President

## **PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | TREASURER'S REPORT – 2019**

I have been working closely with Kathryn Kundrat, Finance Administer, since her arrival in January, 2019. It took a while for the files to be adjusted when the interim accounting firm, BudgetEase, left, but everything is running smoothly now. A new brokerage account with PNC Bank was opened. Those who wish to make a donation in the form of securities (stocks, bonds, etc.) can contact Kathryn to obtain the new DTC and brokerage account numbers to transfer the securities.

We are beginning a yearlong campaign to better explain the sources of funding, role of restricted funds and how the church's money is utilized. The target audiences include council and the members at large.

Beyond the Agreed upon Procedures Audit, additional work with Ellen Lefko from Ciuni & Panichi will focus on improving the tracking and allocation of funds within the Foundation and strengthening the bank reconciliation process to go beyond the Realm program and properly tie into the Trial Balance.

As of September 30, 2019:

Plymouth Foundation balance is \$5,492,217

General Fund (operating) balance is \$179,62

Expenses are well in hand with 75% of the year completed and 36% untouched

### **General Funds**

The General Fund is the operating fund of the church. Pledges and offerings go into this fund and expenses such as compensation and benefits, building operations and all department charges are paid out of this fund.

### **Special Funds**

Special Funds are monies that are restricted by the donor for a specific purpose. These funds are managed by the various department chairs to assure prudent monitoring and expenditures consistent with the donor's intent.

The overall financial condition of Plymouth is strong. Please contact me if you have questions.

Juanita Faulx, Treasurer

Plymouth Church, UCC

## **PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | FOUNDATION COMMITTEE REPORT – 2019**

The Plymouth Foundation is the Church's endowment that provides important annual support to Plymouth's operations, special activities and various programs authorized by Church Council. The Foundation has both unrestricted and restricted funds that are only available for specific purposes.

The Foundation's investments are monitored and administered by directors who are recommended for appointment by Church Council. The Foundation's funds are a portfolio of diverse investments with moderate risk, composed of both bonds and stocks. Contributions to the Foundation are welcome whether in one's estate plan, or to commemorate a significant event such as a baptism or wedding.

The Foundation's annual contribution to the Church's budget is calculated based on the average of the fair market value of its portfolio at September 30 of the current year and December 31 of the prior 2 past years. The portfolio was approximately \$4.68 million at December 31, 2018 and \$5.5 million in August, 2019.

Christine Bretz

Foundation Committee, Chair

**PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS REPORT – 2018-2019**

**November 1, 2018 through November 10, 2019**

**Summary of Changes in Membership:**

Total Membership as of November 1, 2018	626
New Members received	15
Deceased Members	7
Confirmed	0
Members who transferred to other churches	0
Members who resigned their membership	1
Members resigned as a result of culling letter	0

Total membership as of November 10, 2019 **633**

*\*The church staff & leadership are in the process of updating our memberships, associate members and friends to better reflect our total membership. Likely there will be a significant change in this number for 2020.*

**Additions to Membership**

**Members were received as follows:**

**0 Became Associate Member**

**5 By Letter of Transfer:**

<u>New Member</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Kristen Connors	March 10, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Marcus Henry	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
John Lozier	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Nicole Lozier	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Alissa Wible	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

**10 By Confession of Faith:**

<u>New Member</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Cory Isler	March 10, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Anthony Manzo	March 10, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Kenneth Rogers	March 10, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Michael Gadus	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Carolyn Jillson	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Brittain Lamoureux	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Michael Merte	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Richard Merte	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Rebecca Neal	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Jesse Robbins	October 27, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

**0 By Confirmation**

## Losses to Membership:

### 0 Removed by Letter of Transfer

#### 1 Who resigned Their Membership

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>	<u>Date Ended Membership</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Janet Larsen	May 31, 1987	October 28, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

### 0 Removed Membership by Plymouth Church as a result of culling letter

#### 6 Due to Death for whom a Funeral or Memorial Service was conducted at Plymouth Church or by Plymouth Church staff for a member:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Memorial/Funeral Date</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Bob Perkins	December 5, 2018	December 20, 2018	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Rick Stege	February 7, 2019	February 12, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Alice Ladanyi	April 15, 2019	April 26, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Bob Green	May 13, 2019	May 21, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
David Namkoong	June 17, 2019	June 22, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Mary Alice (Mickey) Horner	October 17, 2019	October 26, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

#### 1 Due to Death (No Service)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Richard Oviatt	December 31, 2018

### Other Funerals or Memorial Services:

#### 0 Funerals or Memorial Services conducted at Plymouth Church or by Plymouth Church staff for a non-member:

#### Baptisms:

#### 7 Received the Sacrament of Baptism

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Baptism</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Eleanor Jane Hall	March 31, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Adeline Rose MacGregor	April 28, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Michael Gadus	September 25, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Brittain Lamoureux	September 25, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Jesse Robbins	September 25, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Ellery Robbins	September 25, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Lucy Robbins	September 25, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe

#### Dedications:

#### 0 Received Service of Dedication

## Weddings: 2

Name	Date	Officiating Minister
David Turner & Jason Falkofsky	August 3, 2019	Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe
Clarissa Gerber & Evan Katz	November 10, 2019	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

## Fifty + Year Members

Name	Date Joined	Name	Date Joined
Jeannie Chaney	03/02/1969	Martha Forth	10/07/1962
Barbara Hawkins	03/02/1969	Bob Brucken	05/07/1961
Helen Reed	03/02/1969	Christina Webster	03/30/1961
Dick Ogle	05/04/1969	Lois Averina	01/05/1958
Shelley Anderson	11/23/2019	Jim Chaney	05/06/1956
Beth Sanborn	05/05/1968	Barbara Ginn	03/06/1955
Joni Gray	03/03/1968	Ruth Nowicky	01/02/1955
David Rodgers	03/03/1968	Anne Cook	10/03/1954
Norma Rodgers	03/03/1968	Pax Van Sweringen	10/03/1954
Gretchen Smith	11/19/1967	Barbara Kacir	04/15/1954
Bryan Mau	03/23/1967	Frank Carpenter	01/03/1954
Stephen Murphy	03/23/1967	Terry Shockey	04/06/1952
Fred Stueber	04/07/1966	Dick Brubaker	04/10/1949
Eva Garden	01/09/1966	Carl Gray	03/21/1948
Judi Hoerner	01/09/1966	Peggy Campbell	04/14/1946
Frances Zverina	04/15/1965	Marcia Christian	04/14/1946
Mary Ann Davis	11/22/1964	Richard McCrea	04/14/1946
Tom Daniel	10/04/1964	Chuck Davis	03/25/1945
Janet Daniel	10/04/1964	Marion Hill	03/25/1945
Gus Schrader	03/01/1964	Rich Gray	04/02/1944
Holly Hitchcock	04/11/1963	Mary Alice Cannon	04/18/1943
Sue Rappaport	04/11/1963	Joanne Ross	03/29/1942
Carol Prochaska	11/18/1962		

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ACTING STAFF ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – 2019

Officially I began my work in this new role on October 1, 2019, although the work began September 1 as a bridge before Shawnthea's departure. In this role, I am running weekly staff meetings, working on staff development, meeting weekly with each staff person, and doing one on one lunches.

I am grateful to the Personnel Committee for their support. Ruth Garwood, from Personnel, attended a staff meeting to offer comments on what we can expect during a time of transition. There was an opportunity for staff to ask questions and raise any concerns. The staff is working together to better communicate around issues, vacation, and our comings/goings to ensure staff coverage and security of our building. Soon we will be working with the book, Strengths Finder 2.0, to uncover our top strengths for self-awareness and for finding ways to apply these strengths to our staff team. This tool will be useful as we embark on performance reviews and goal setting. During this season of transition, our Interim Senior Minister, a staff liaison from Personnel, and I will together conduct staff reviews/goal setting.

Per Finance guidelines, I take the weekly deposit to the bank and I sign-off and distribute payroll.

No doubt this has been a juggling act to balance these duties along with my music responsibilities. I have not yet mastered the balance, but it is better with each passing week. I am getting to know each staff person better through this process. We are a small team, but we are working together to manage many moving pieces. I offer my gratitude to each of our staff for their individual work and collective team work.

Finally, this role will end when the permanent Senior Minister is hired. At that time I will relinquish all these duties back to the new Senior Minister.

James P. Riggs

Acting Staff Administrator

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ASSOCIATE MINISTER REPORT – 2019

I continue to be in awe of the support I have received at Plymouth. As an associate minister, I have been given so many opportunities to grow and develop as a pastor, preacher, teacher and counselor. This church has believed in me from the beginning and allowed me to enter into the most sacred moments of your lives. You have trusted me and made space for me in your hearts. I am grateful.

“But let all who passionately seek you erupt with excitement and joy over what you’ve done! Let all rejoice continually in the Savior, saying, ‘How great and glorious is our God!’” – Psalms 40:16

This has been a year full of transitions. We lost our Head Start program as a tenet this year as they downsized and consolidated programs in our area. Currently we no longer have any weekday tenets who use our building on a daily basis. This year we learned our beloved Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe accepted a new call and she transitioned to this new position in October. In the upcoming year we will welcome our new interim minister, start the search for a new senior minister, and discern what this community sees as our direction and story moving forward. While this number of transitions together can seem a little daunting, I believe we should move forward into this upcoming year filled with a spirit of abundance. Thinking about the resources we have in our building, our foundation, our staff, and the amazing community who worships here, I am excited about the possibilities before us and am looking forward to witnessing how this community will transform, reform and renew in the years to come.

### YOUTH

This year I discovered and reached out to Ministry Architects, an organization which does consulting work for churches and their Children and Youth programs. Ministry Architects focuses on building sustainable youth ministry programs; programs that rely on a whole church community being devoted to youth ministry. Ministry Architects has been a blessing so far and their help has really invigorated the Children and Youth department. We have found their advice to be incredibly helpful and we are looking forward to what this ongoing work will create at this church in the upcoming years.

I love having our children and youth participate in worship. It seems as though every time we have created space for them to participate in worship, they arise to the occasion and showcase the Spirit of God in our community. Children and Youth Sunday remains one of my favorite Sundays of the year. This past year we had three fantastic youth preachers, middle school students lead the children’s sermon and children participate as ushers, greeters, and singers. I was so proud of our students. The Spirit of God shows up through each of them in a beautiful way.

Throughout this past year and in the year to come, the Children and Youth Department is focused on creating more opportunities for our youth to participate in worship. We believe if we want our youth to grow up and be faithful Christians, we need to teach them how to worship. To learn how to worship, they must in worship. This means we need to make worship a place that feels inclusive and inviting for children and youth to be. We are continually looking for ways to create these circumstances for children and designing liturgy that will be engaging for our intergenerational community.

To view an excerpt from Ministry Architects Youth Ministry Virtual Assessment of Plymouth’s youth ministry programs, please turn to page 34.



## PASTORAL CARE

I have continued to host and organize Plymouth Lunch Club. We have a strong and consistent group that shows up each month. Lunch club continues to be an excellent opportunity for our community to gather together and build relationships. I really do enjoy spending time each month building community over a quality meal, learning about a variety of topics, and deepening relationships with members of this church.

I am consistently impressed with the people here as I discover more about who they are and what they do. Plymouth is the spiritual home of people who are doing great work in the city and who support a number of wonderful programs and organizations. I am looking for more ways for people to tell their stories, because I am positive, we would benefit from knowing more about one another and being inspired by each other.

## WORK OF THE CHURCH

This past summer Shawnthea and I developed a “Faith Seeking Understanding” sermon series where each week we preached on a different theologian. This was a lot of fun for us preachers and it got a lot of positive responses from Plymouth. Our congregation continues to be a community who loves to learn and enjoys diving deep as they deepen their relationships with God.

I have spent a lot of time working with staff on advertising for Plymouth Church this year. I helped E&G create a GoogleAd word campaign which consistently brings people to visit our website. I have played a role (Nicole deserves all of the credit) in helping shape and create some content for our Plymouth website. This year we have created a new “Welcome Center” outside of the parlor and the office as a place for visitors and members to congregate, sign-up for events, and find information about our church.

Plymouth remains a community that appreciates art and creativity. Trying to spark that yearning, our staff is always exploring ways to incorporate art and creativity into the life and worship of this congregation. In Lent we brought out a big Easter coloring poster for all generations to color during the season of Lent and then hung it up throughout the EasterTide season. During our Lenten Wednesday gatherings I focused on bringing different forms of art to the group discussions each month. We had a gallery walk, colored, reflected how we could see God in pictures, explored prayer stations and found God as we created our own art pieces. Opportunities like this will remain a focus for our staff and congregation.

Rev. Matthew Bauhof

Associate Minister

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT – 2019

### Sunday School

During the 2018-2019 school year, we completed a rotation model of Deep Blue curriculum with a one room format for children preK-5th grades. As with any curriculum there are pros and cons to this format, but overall I would consider it an excellent option for future use. The Jr. High students (grades 6th-8th) did a program called re:form which posed questions about the Bible and God to engage the students in further conversations.

For the 2019-2020 school year, we are changing to a curriculum called Holy Moly! for kids prek-5th grades and Connect for the Jr. High kids. Both of these programs include a short video and leaflets with activities. The prep for these classes is very easy and requires minimal supplies. I'm very excited for these new programs and look forward to seeing the children grow their knowledge and faith through our Sunday School programs.

We believe being in church for worship is an important part of a child's faith development, therefore we continue to not offer Sunday School on the first Sunday of every month to give families the opportunity to worship and receive communion together.

### Children's Church

I am pleased to report we just completed our third summer of learning in our Children's Garden. This is a popular program with kids of all ages as we spend our time outdoors learning about caring for God's creation through activities that focus on conservation, self-care & caring for others. We picked and prepared produce to share with the congregation during Coffee Hour each week in August, and we held a farmers market in September which raised \$230 for the Cleveland Foodbank.

We are also very blessed to have received a grant in the amount of \$1000 from the Living Water Association to support our work in the garden. We purchased three convertible benches (bench/table) for the children to have places to sit and work in the garden. We also purchased a composter for church-wide use. It is wonderful to see this garden expand and grow each year.

### Special Events and Programs

- *Movie Nights* We held two movie nights for the 4th summer. This event was created as a community outreach and fellowship opportunity, and we have had about half church members and half community members attend.
- *OWL* We will begin offering two age level classes each year on a scheduled rotation.
- *Back to Sunday School Ice Cream Social* What better way to kick off Sunday School?
- *Farmers Market* raised \$230 for the Cleveland Foodbank.
- *Bible Sunday* Our tradition of passing out Bibles continued this year with 1 Deep Blue Bible going home with fourth graders, and 4 Jesus Calling Storybook Bibles going to kindergartners.
- *Spooktacular* invites the community to some spooky fun with a haunted hallway and Trunk or Treat, this event continues to grow with over 100 people attending in 2018.
- *Advent Wreath Building* Plymouth Kids learned about and made their own Advent Wreaths to take home and share with their families.
- *Heifer International* collection raised more than \$5000 this year!

- *Sugar Plum* is a long-time and very successful community event led by Shelli Smith. Participants hand-make their holiday gifts.
- *Christmas Pageant* Holiday tradition that takes many hands and hours to prepare, but with fantastic and fun results.
- *Kids Epiphany Art Show* displays children's creativity during this kids-only art show.
- *C & Y Sunday* kids take active roles in planning and participating in a special service.
- *Valentines Cookie Baking* Children bake cookies and make hand-made cards to be delivered to homebound Plymouth members.
- *Lenten Kids Program* is a great way for families to observe Lent together with special activities for the children.
- *Easter Family Photos* captured us in our Sunday best as more than 40 free pictures given out.
- *Jr. Easter Egg Hunt* is a special event for our youngest members, the Jr Easter Egg Hunt was once again held in the parlor before our Easter service. This event was made for kids 6 and under as a way to intentionally be inclusive of this younger age group.
- *Thumbprints for Footprints* is a new Earth Day service project to raise money for earth friendly missions through baking and selling cookies. We raised \$378 donated to Cool Effect.
- *Parents Night Out* is offered September through May for children in pre-k-5th grade on the first Friday of the month. This program gives parents the opportunity for a night out while we play games, do crafts, have dinner and watch movies.
- *Plymouth Parents* is a fellowship/support group for caregivers that meet once a month after church during the school year. We received a generous donation for this program to provide lunch, which we have been very grateful for. We will continue monthly meetings and hope to see attendance continue to grow.

#### Looking ahead

This is an exciting time for the Children and Youth Department as we have seen a marked increase in attendance of families with young children. In order to grow our programming and better serve the needs of these families my role as DCE has been expanded to 30 hours/week as of October 1, 2019. My goals for the coming year include focusing on intergenerational and family faith practices and engaging families with young children in existing and new programs.

#### Thanks to our Volunteers

Special thanks to all of the volunteers who help to make all of this programming possible; Our Sunday School teachers Justin & Lashawn Caldwell, Ali Day, Rosalind Gauchat, Heather Kimmel, Cindy Hill, our Sugar Plum coordinator Shelli Smith and the many volunteers needed to run it, Nursery workers Karen Sommers & Judy Thomas, all of our committed OWL Facilitators, the many people who help with the Christmas Pageant, and to the C & Y department Brian Shields, Jeannie Clarkson, Gloria Sturghill, & Matt Bauhof.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Szalay

Director of Christian Education

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | MINISTER OF MUSIC AND THE ARTS' REPORT – 2019

By March of 2019, I knew there was a shift taking place on how we do music at Plymouth Church when two soloists spoke of the demands of being tied down every Sunday. I felt a huge shift with the sudden passing of choir member and church leader, Bob Green. Then a few months later Shawnthea Monroe announced her call to The Peoples Church in East Lansing, MI. The realities of life (job changes/retirement) have caused a few people to leave our music ministry. Finally, a joy was having nine new folks sing in Summer Choir, but again this spoke to a shift taking place.

As we enter a new and different season, we find ourselves responding to this shift with new offerings. For me, this is the good news—we are responding to how the spirit is moving within this community. The new initiatives are:

- Job sharing with some of the soloist positions within the Plymouth Choir to allow more flexibility while maintaining quality.
- Sunday Choir—following the same format as Summer Choir, folks gather once a month before worship to rehearse and then sing for worship. This allows people who cannot commit to weekly rehearsals to maintain a connection to the choir.
- We are more deliberate in using our children and youth in worship. An excellent study done by the C&Y area is guiding us.
- Our first ever Piano Sunday in September used the diverse musicians of our congregation who shared their talents.



Many things have remained:

- The devoted leadership of the Plymouth Choir and soloists, the Plymouth Ringers, and the Plymouth Folk Revival.
- The return of our excellent Organ Scholar, Katherine Johnson from Oberlin.
- Various soloists and instrumentalists enhancing worship.
- Continued good singing by the Congregational Choir.

I was grateful to have had a mini-sabbatical this past spring for six weeks. Upon my return, I was asked to serve as Acting Staff Administrator for this interim time (see additional report). With the departure of HeadStart in July, we are now faced with our lower level of space/classrooms being vacant. Working with ArtsPlymouth and the Building and Grounds Dept, we are engaging Partners for Sacred Places to lead us through a process to help Plymouth Church communicate its story effectively and compellingly to the community, build and strengthen relationships that will allow

the congregation to make the most of its assets, and ensure the value of those assets is maximized for ministry, collaboration, and new opportunities to serve within Shaker Heights and the larger region.

We have entered into a liminal time at Plymouth. I am grateful to the staff, the lay leadership, the music makers, and you the congregation for your ongoing support and prayers as we step through the doorway into what is next.



James P. Riggs

Minister of Music & the Arts

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ARTSPLYMOUTH REPORT – 2019

*Where the arts, faith and the community converge*

Mission Statement: ArtsPlymouth is dedicated to presenting arts events for the spiritual enrichment of the congregation of Plymouth Church and the community it serves.

ArtsPlymouth ended its 21st season in May 2019 with 4,200 people attending music/arts events at Plymouth Church. The Cleveland Chamber Music Society, the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society, BlueWater Chamber Orchestra and Les Delices (Artist in Residence) offered an array of concerts.

A team of Concert Hosts was again organized by Jan Wilkens and Kathy Smyth. Some 20 volunteers served as hosts welcoming visitors to Plymouth Church for these events. AP member David Turner began serving as Concert Manager, coordinating artists and staff and facility needs.

MusicTogether continues to offer music and movement classes for children birth-3 years old.

ArtsPlymouth continued the spiritual practice of walking the labyrinth. This year, the program was expanded to include Healing Arts. Kevin Monaco provided music during labyrinth walks and other meditative opportunities.

Plymouth Spooktacular was offered again in October 2018. This family-oriented, Halloween-inspired program included organ music and singing of “Pumpkin Carols”. This year the event was open to community and included Trunk or Treat with decorated car trunks and Plymouth members and friends passing out candy to those in attendance. As in past years, this event was well attended and enjoyed by all.

In December 2018, ArtPlymouth presented a Candlelight & Carols event that included Plymouth Choir, Imperfect Fourths (handbell ensemble) and group carol/hymn singing. Desserts and Wassail punch were served.

With other generous donations, along with allocated ArtsPlymouth funds, additional choir stoles were purchased in the remaining four liturgical colors (purple/white, red/green). They were debuted by the choir in October 2019.

In February 2019, an open meeting was held for anyone interested to attend and discuss how they would like to see the Arts program at Plymouth grow and expand. Six attendees joined the committee discussion about future offerings as well as additional mediums for artistic expression (theatre, poetry, visual arts, healing arts with kids, space for artists to create and/or include others in their creating, etc.).

The ArtsPlymouth Scholarship program is still in need of some revision and updating, so no money was awarded this year. The fund continues to increase as planned.

The ArtsPlymouth team is a working team – each team member shares in various tasks to make ArtsPlymouth a vital presence at Plymouth Church and in the community. Team members include: Ann Eberhard, Pam Ford, Sally Lang, Noel Nilson, Karen Reich, James Riggs, staff, Kathy Smyth, David Turner, Jane Underwood, Sally Lang, and Jan Wilkens.

Karen Reich

ArtsPlymouth

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | COMMUNICATION REPORT – 2019

Now into my 2nd calendar year of communications here at Plymouth Church, I am glad to report that I have felt a heightened sense of connection and growth across Plymouth congregants and staff, and have noticed substantial progress and effectiveness in implementing ways to clearly communicate projects and church news to our congregation, community, volunteers and vendors.

In 2019, publicizing Plymouth online has had a primary focus through Facebook and our website, [www.plymouthchurchucc.org](http://www.plymouthchurchucc.org). We are now able to expose our church to the online Facebook community through Facebook Ads—which allows you to pay to boost your posts in order to reach a larger, specified audience. These specifications can be narrowed down to Facebook users interests, their location you can select on a mile radius of 0-100 miles, and friends of people who like or follow your page. Using this marketing platform, the staff and myself have seen great results in reaching local people in our community who may not have otherwise ever heard about Plymouth Church. We have worked to keep our website easily accessible, clear & concise and full of relevant church resources you may need and can obtain by visiting.

Our most significant communication projects of 2019 seem to be the installation of the TV in the welcome area—which allows a visually pleasing display of our weekly activities to be available and loop on Sundays and during Plymouth events—and the support and dedication this church family puts into keeping up with each other and church projects.

Needless to say, bidding farewell to our previous Senior Minister, Shawnthea Monroe, was hard. Her warmth and wit and proactive leadership that I had only 18 months alongside—the people of Plymouth Church eagerly showed up on Sundays for more than 11 years to hear her preach God’s love and share their passions and grow in Christ, with the guidance and care of this amazing minister. While this transition has certainly had us saddened and unsure at times, I am incredibly thankful and hopeful for the remarkable congregation and staff that have stepped into this transition with optimism, open hearts and consideration for each other. Working in the main office, I am included on a great amount of communication materials and want to extend my thank you to the entire congregation for the endless help and support. Seeing everyone put such effort into keeping the many projects of this church going and still making the time to check in on each other, discuss, and reflect on where God wants Plymouth to go from here, has me excited to see what 2020 has in store for this dynamic group of people wanting to keep God present in our community and this world.

Thank you for all you do—Plymouth communication in 2019 has been a pleasure to be a part of.

Nicole Whitcomb

Communication Coordinator

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | FACILITY MANAGER REPORT – 2019

It has now been 13 months since I accepted the role of Transitional Facility Manager and I am glad to tell you all that I am your Plymouth Church Facility Manager, Interim no longer! I am grateful for the opportunity to assist you, The Congregation at Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights, as you transition to an Interim Senior Minister AND begin the search for your next Senior Minister. This will be a time of great change and an opportunity to review, renew and consider the Mission of The Church.

As 2019 progresses in the Advent Season, I continue to work diligently to support your Church Events here at Plymouth Church. And, as in 2018, I continue to quietly observe the rhythms and patterns of the Church so I can assist you all in the Stewardship of this now 97 year old building.

Elsewhere in this Annual Report, the activities of the Building and Grounds Committee who guide and assist me to achieve and accomplish goals on behalf of the Congregation have been presented. But consider just a few things that 2020 will bring:

1. New, updated electrical service equipment, replacing electrical panels and circuits installed in 1923!
2. New, renovated exterior doors for ease of use and improved security
3. New, renovated garden spaces including the Centennial Garden & the Joyce Cherry Memorial Garden
4. New, technology equipment for Church Staff creating better communication and greater “online” presence
5. New, signage for Congregation and Visitors to Plymouth Church

I continue to be indebted to the welcome and trust that Shawnthea, Matt, Jim, Nicole, Kathryn & Leslie have shown to me. The Building & Grounds Committee of Bill Menges, Ron Werneke, Noel Nilson, Pat Pogue, Janet Neary, Charlene Nevans and Robin Menges continue to create sustainable plans for the use of the Church in its role with the Congregation, the greater communities of Shaker Heights and Northeast Ohio, and partner organizations including: Les Delices, the Cleveland Chamber Music Society, the Blue Water Chamber Orchestra, the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society, the Boy Scouts of America- Boys & Girls Troop(s) 15, Music Together, the Art of Tai Chi, Empowering Youth- Empowering Justice and the Baldwin Wallace Men’s Chorus.

As always, the Congregation should be thankful for the great care that James Lake and Rose Munn have shown to the building. They continue to demonstrate great personal pride in their stewardship of the Church and it is my job to continuously support their efforts on your behalf.

I promise to remain steadfast in my stewardship of Plymouth Church as we transition together in God’s plan. Thank you and God Bless!

Paul Holter

Facility Manager



## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | FINANCE ADMINISTRATOR REPORT – 2019

I was quite pleased to be hired by Plymouth Church with a start date of January 22 of this year. After learning the basics of twice weekly deposits, cutting checks, journal entries, online processing of payments and donations, month ending reconciliations and payroll/benefits, I was ready to tackle some special projects.

I began by rolling over all online and banking accounts with new identification, password and updated contact people. I reduced the number of companies that can reach into our checking account and withdraw payments to a select few. I developed a method for providing Statement of Activities by department on a monthly basis.

I reviewed payroll and made adjustments to the pay/Social Security offset/Housing allowance for the Senior and Associate Ministers, as they were not correctly implemented with the new year. I discovered that we were not withholding funds to pay for vision coverage, which is an elected/employee paid benefit along with dental. I also adjusted the 25% of medical coverage that is employee paid, as the rates had changed with the new year. I selected a new provider for the cafeteria plan that allows employees to use “pre-tax” dollars to pay for benefits. The annual plan cost went from \$750 to \$99 with this change.

The Foundation Fund spreadsheet and reconciliation to the bank statement required an overhaul that took some time. Several errors came to light and were corrected.

I developed a spreadsheet to track credit card purchases by account and verify that requisitions were properly obtained.

I made adjusting entries for a credit card payment posted in January that pertained to the prior year. This had an impact on the budget which had to be taken into consideration.

Upon Brian Grube’s urging I contacted members to verify which pledges received in December and January were prior year, current year or pre-paid advance pledges. This helped us to properly track the results of each year’s pledge drive and to understand how much was paid and how much could yet be expected.

I responded to a Bureau of Workers Compensation audit by locating and reporting prior year’s salaries and payments which resulted in “insignificant results” and a \$15 credit.

The Approved Procedures Audit allowed us to revisit some earlier issues with the Foundation Spreadsheet and fully verify that all monies were accounted for as both coming out of the Foundation and going into the operating checking account. We had just a few findings with suggestions offered for increased security in regard to IT access and access to the Finance Office.

Finally we had to set up a new brokerage account to process gifts made in the form of securities: stocks, bonds and the like.

I will be forever grateful to all of the people who have supported me, and continue to support and inform me, as I learn the ways of Plymouth Church.

Specifically, I would like to thank Juanita Faulx, Treasurer, for her unwavering support and confidence in my abilities. And for so often providing the key insight that lead me to properly understand and book the activities of the church.

A special thanks to Noel Nilson, for suffering through my early attempts to work in Realm and faithfully reviewing financial statements prior to release. Your efforts were not wasted – look how far we have come!

Thanks to Brian Grube, Chair, for his leadership and the other members of the Finance Committee: Gloria Sturghill, Council President, Lisa Hunziker, Vice Treasurer, Kenyon Mau, Chair Personnel, Russell Lamb, Chair Giving, Bill Menges, Chair Building & Grounds and Christine Bretz, Chair Foundation.

Kathryn Kundrat

Finance Administrator

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | WORSHIP REPORT – 2019

Current members of the Worship Department are Mary R. Powell (Chair and coordinator of communion servers); Amy Klum Holbrook (Worship Department and Chancel committee co-chair); Jim Riggs, Rev. Matt Bauhof; Christine Bretz (chancel co-chair); Kendalle Cobb (ushers); James Callihan (communion), Roslind Gauchat, Heidi Makela (coordinator of greeters). In September, new members joined our group as we realized the significance of Worship in keeping us connected through the Spirit to each other during our pastoral transition. They are: Nicole Lepley, Brenda Grauer, Alissa Wieble, and Lalana Green. We appreciate all they bring to us.

Our goal this year was to continue efforts of recent years to expand the worship experience to the breadth and depth of the congregation and visitors, opening spaces for the Spirit to move in a community filled with diverse personalities. Shawnthea Monroe and Jim Riggs worked diligently to create liturgies that allowed this to happen week after week. There were many special services, but an August one marking the 400th Anniversary of the arrival in Virginia of 20 enslaved Africans, was especially poignant, filled with African-American spirituals. We began 2019 in a unique and meaningful way, asking community members to write their hopes/intentions for the New Year and bring them to the altar. We received hundreds. Each month 10-12 are posted on a hallway bulletin board and incorporated in the Prayers of the People the first Sunday of each month.

As we end 2019, we are well aware of the significance of Spirit-filled services as we transition to a new Senior Minister. Our September 4th meeting was especially exciting as we planned for October (including World Communion Sunday) and November (including All Saints and Transgender Sundays). We look forward to a meaningful Advent and Christmas season that will include a Blue Christmas service on Dec 11th. We also look forward to welcoming our Interim Pastor, Rev. Dr. Deborah Lindsay, and she joins and help guides, our spiritual journey.

We tried to create a warm sense of connection through the smiles of twenty-four greeters, the beautiful work done by the five members of the chancel committee, and the commitment of thirteen communion servers.

The Chancel Committee, in addition to enhancing the worship experience through thoughtful presentation of the sanctuary, worked to keep the pockets on the back of the pews filled with supplies.

We will continue to seek input and to engage more community members to participate in our services as liturgists and communion servers. We have a great community and want to activate its worship creativity.

Mary R. Powell

Worship Department, Chair

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ADULT FAITH & LIFE REPORT – 2019

The theme for this year's Adult Faith and Life Department has been Being Better Stewards. This applies to our church building, our fellow parishoners, our community and our world. To further that theme, AF&L offered programs in connection with other departments in the church.

Plymouth 101 was a class on the history and inner workings of the church for people considering joining the church. This was done in connection with the Evangelism and Growth Department. There were two classes offered, one in February and one in October. Both were well attended and informative.

In May, AF&L in conjunction with the Building and Grounds Department hosted a Plymouth Behind the Scenes. Our faithful and knowledgeable tour guide was Paul Qua. There was a light lunch and then a walk around the church including the "Ladder that Leads to No Where."

In June, AF&L sponsored a night at Ragtime, a musical at Cain Park Theater. The director of Ragtime was Vice Chair Joanna Cullnan.

Also in June, Plymouth participated in the Cleveland Pride March. Over two dozen Plymouth folks showed up as we marched with thousands of people through downtown Cleveland. We also handed out plastic rainbow bracelets with the Plymouth website printed on them. It was a great demonstration of love and acceptance for our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters.

We continued the tradition of Theology on Tap, but changed the name to Topics on Tap. We met the third Tuesday of the month at the Academy Tavern on Larchmere Ave. The food and drink were great, but it did get loud. The group will continue to meet, but are exploring other venues to see which works best, including the Krumbine Room at Plymouth. There are anywhere from 4 to 14 people who attend to discuss a specific topic that can be based on a theology, or a pressing issue of the community. In October, we discussed Good v. Evil.

We offered Lenten Devotionals that we purchased from the national UCC office. We are currently working on Advent Devotionals that we will be publishing in house with submissions by church members. Look for those for the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019.

This has been a great year and we look forward to great programming for 2020.

Peace,

Vicki Werneke

Adult Faith and Life Department, Chair



## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | BUILDING & GROUNDS REPORT – 2019

As the year ends once again in transition, we thank the Committee members for their thoughtful participation and input in the maintenance & operations of the Plymouth Church: Chairman, William (Bill) Menges; Vice-Chairman, Ron Werneke; Committee Members, Robin Menges; Pat Pogue; Noel Nilsen; Janet Neary; Charlene Nevans; and Doug Powell.

We are thankful for the pastoral care and leadership of our departing Reverend Dr. Monroe. We are thankful for the continuing support of the Plymouth Church Staff, including Matt Bauhof, Nicole Whitcomb, James Riggs, Kathryn Kundrat and Leslie Szalay. It is a great team of staff members, who, with the support of the Committee and the entire Plymouth Church Congregation, keep the building looking good. And of course, we thank Rose Munn and James Lake for their continuing & longtime care and stewardship of the Church building.

As the year comes to a close, the Committee has completed the following projects:

- Exterior painting of the south facing elevation of the Sanctuary, including windows and wooden facades at the roof line
- Engineering analysis of the Chapel AC unit, concluding that this unit does not need replacement: this saved \$90,000 of expense which can be used for other urgent repairs
- Engineering analysis of electrical service and panels within the Church Building, informing improvements scheduled for late 2019 and early 2020
- Led by the **Green Building Initiative Committee** within Building & Grounds, The Joyce Cherry Memorial Garden Phase 1 is complete. Phase 2 installation with the dedication service is scheduled for May 2020.
- New preventative maintenance contract for all HVAC assets within the Church
- Painting and new window treatments in Room 102
- Painting of the Krumbine Room & Kitchen
- New landscaping and installation of the Centennial Garden at the Sanctuary Entrance
- New retaining wall at the Main Entrance of the Church
- New mulch and landscaping for the Children's playground
- New copier machine for the Main Office
- New computers for all staff members
- New internet service provider (in progress)
- New telephones (late 2019)
- New Emergency Lighting in Chapel Wing Education Classrooms
- Replacement of expansion tank, combustion fan & primary circulating pump for the heating system
- Architectural project to renovate eight (8) exterior doors of the Church Building
- Thoughtful repurposing & recycling of surplus equipment & furniture within the Church

Looking forward to 2020, we anticipate the following capital expenditures:

- Exterior painting of the Main Sanctuary Entrance, including wooden facades below the steeple
- Interior painting of the 1st Floor Office Wing
- Interior painting of Ground Floor Chapel Classrooms & Hallways, adjoining Krumbine Room
- New main service electrical panels for the Church, replacing 65+ year old panels
- New electrical service panel to the Sanctuary
- New controllers and thermostats to improve heating and cooling efficiency within the building

- New property signage welcoming Congregation Members and Visitors to Plymouth Church
- Safety and Security Survey of the Church Building
- New keypad entry system
- Air-conditioning of Room 102 for year round use of the Conference Room

As we conclude 2019, completing our 97th year in our Sanctuary, we ask for your prayers, support and contributions to the operations of the Church. Nothing happens here that does not originate from the Holy Spirit and your hearts & souls. On behalf of the Building and Grounds Committee, we thank you for allowing us to serve you, our fellow Plymouth Church Members, our partner organizations, our community at large and those in need. May God Bless you all, at all times and in all places. I conclude this report with a quote from John Wesley:

*“Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.”*

— John Wesley

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Building & Grounds Committee

Paul Holter

Facility Manager of Plymouth Church

### **PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ARCHIVE REPORT – 2019**

The Plymouth Church Archives is located on the second floor. There, we process and preserve historical records and artifacts that pertain directly to the life of this congregation. We welcome all donations that are accompanied by your name and contact information (I may need to contact you with a question). Please do not drop off or send materials without first contacting the archivist, Ann Eberhard (921-4777) or (aeberhard@sbcglobal.net). I want to make sure that your potential gift is properly identified and cared for. Anonymous gifts are not helpful.

Thank you,

Ann Eberhard

Archive Coordinator

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | CARING REPORT – 2019

The Caring Department coordinates and supports the various caring-focused committees of Plymouth Church. While each committee within the department provides a unique service, the department as a whole, is committed to providing care, friendship and support to others. Along with the ministers' leadership and assistance, committees provide food, flowers, rides, prayer shawls, welcome notes, friendship and comfort to others throughout the year. The department has hosted food and fellowship events, memorial receptions and the annual reception to honor 50 plus members.

### Feed Our Neighbors

When the need to restock our pantry arises, we are notified by Rev. Cynthia Sheldon. A list of needed items is placed in the bulletin and these items are stored in the library to be distributed by the office staff.

### 50 year Member Reception

The reception is held November and hosted by the Caring Department. All caring department members and the November connections group participate in the event to honor members who have attended for 50 years or more. Sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, cookies and beverages are served.

### Flower Ministry

Currently, the delivery teams are in need of more deliverers. Requests for volunteers are posted in the bulletin and the Perspective. Without more volunteers, this ministry is in jeopardy.

### Food Ministry

Lashawn Caldwell oversees this ministry. While not lacking willing volunteers to cook, there have been no requests this year.

### Memorial receptions

Jeannie Chaney coordinates the receptions. She has a group of volunteers to provide and serve food. I believe that there have been 2 memorial receptions this year.

### Pastoral Care Team

The members continue to meet regularly and are visiting and comforting members. Regular visits as well as phone calls are made to members who are confined at home or in assisted living, rehabilitation and nursing home facilities. Linda Tuthill coordinates the meetings and tracks contact.

### Plymouth Lunch Club

The lunch club is the third Wednesday of each month. Programs are in place until the end of the year. Rev. Matt Bauhof is in charge of programs and is open to suggestions. The cost of a meal is \$7.00. Shelli Smith and Hans Hunziker are the chefs.

### Wednesday night food and fellowship

This program runs during the Lenten Season and is generally well attended. The meals are reasonably priced and are prepared by Shelli Smith and Hans Hunziker. They include a main dish, side dish and dessert.

Transportation Ministry

This ministry provides rides to medical and other appointments as well as church services and functions.. It handled case by case upon request I would like to thank the Department members, Ministers and staff for their assistance in making this important ministry possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Faulx

Caring Department Chair

**PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | PRAYER SHAWL REPORT – 2019**

We are a group of Plymouth Church women who meet monthly to knit and crochet and to share items worked on at home. We make prayer shawls, baby blankets and hats & scarves. Prayer shawls are given to those in need of comfort and warmth as well as those in times of celebration. Baby blankets go to new babies in the congregation. Also the knitting group makes hats, scarves and gloves for the students at Miles Park School.



## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | CHILDREN & YOUTH REPORT – 2019

### Overview and Membership

The Plymouth Church Department of Children and Youth (C&Y) coordinates the religious education functions of the church and promotes the spiritual formation of Plymouth Church's children and youth. This year in C & Y we have been guided by a consultant, Ministry Architects, in revising and creating a sustainable infrastructure within C & Y. Ministry Architects gave us an assessment of where we were and a month-to-month guide to attain a thoughtful, strategic and volunteer based ministry for Plymouth children and youth as well as children-youth visitors of our Greater Cleveland community. Our intent is that the Department of Children and Youth be a vibrant and vital ministry of Plymouth Church.

The members of C&Y are as follows: Rev. Matthew Bauhof (Associate Minister), Leslie Szalay, (DCE), Brian Shields (Chair), Jeannie Clarkson (Vice-Chair), Gloria Sturghill, Tom Cullian, Shelli Smith and Adrienne Walicke. Chair and Vice-Chair will retain their roles for continuity of leadership during our pastoral transition.

### Infant and Toddler Nursery

The Plymouth Church Infant and Toddler Nursery (room 202) cares for children from birth to 2 years old. The nursery is staffed by paid childcare workers, Karen Sommers and Judy Thomas, from 9:15 – 12:00 on Sundays, and for special events throughout the church year.

### Pre-K through 8th Grade Education

Please see the Director of Christian Education report for more information.

### Pre-K through 5th Grade Activities

Pre-K through 5th grade activities during 2018-2019 included monthly Parents' Night Out (PNO), Valentine's Cookie Baking, Halloween Spooktacular event, Advent wreath-building, Heifer mission, Epiphany Art Show, the Sugar Plum Workshop, the Christmas Pageant, summer Movies on the Lawn, Bible Sunday, Youth Sunday and Children's activities at the All-Church Picnic. In the summer of 2019, community gardening program served as summer Sunday School. Children helped plant, cultivate and harvest crops from our raised beds. Our garden served fresh vegetables at Summer Fellowship, and the sale of garden produce raised \$230.00, which was donated to the Cleveland Foodbank. This amount was doubled by another donor.

There has been a dedicated effort to reach out to the community with several of C & Y events, such as the Halloween Spooktacular, Sugar Plum Workshop, Movies on the Lawn and Our Whole Lives (OWL).

### 6th-8th Grade Youth Group, 9th– 12th Grade Youth Group

Our youth groups continue to meet on our regular basis with consistent and appropriate attendance from our community. Youth group meetings have been focused on creating and developing a Christian community through gatherings that focus on service, community, and fun. Each summer our Junior and Senior High youth groups will have a service trip option and summer activities sponsored by Plymouth.

### Our Whole Lives Program (O.W.L)

This is a comprehensive sexuality education program serving children from ages 5-18 years of age; providing them with a holistic approach to their sexual health and behavior.

There was an attempt to offer a Jr. High OWL class for Gr. 7-8 students, but not enough students signed up. In the spring of 2019, Jeannie Clarkson, Matt Bauhof and Brian Shields facilitated Senior High OWL on select Sunday nights from January-April. In late summer, Tracy Williams and Matt Bauhof ran a 9-10 grade OWL retreat weekend for Plymouth youth which went surprisingly well for talking about sexuality for 10 hours straight. Participating youth gained a framework for a value based sexuality and sex health construct.

### Service Projects

Our children and youth programming have created many opportunities for service. We raised funds on Earth Day to purchase low emission stoves for people in other countries, made cookies to be delivered to members on Valentine's Day, sent college care packages to Plymouth youth, raised money for Thanksgiving dinner baskets for students, cleaned up the Doan Brook Waterway, and delivered flowers to members at home. We are always looking for ways to integrate service and faith for our Plymouth youth.

### Parenting Support Group: Plymouth Parents

Plymouth Parents offers support and parenting tools to strengthen the families at Plymouth. It is led by parents who are Plymouth members and provides an opportunity for fellowship, allowing families to connect and build relationships with each other. In 2019, this group met on most 2nd Sundays after church. A pizza luncheon was provided and a topic of parenting was discussed. Plymouth Parents is open to parents who are members or friends of Plymouth Church. Child care is provided during this meeting.

Rev. Brian Shields

Children & Youth Department, Chair

## **YOUTH MINISTRY VIRTUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR PLYMOUTH CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SHAKER HEIGHTS, OH BY MINISTRY ARCHITECTS**

### **BACKGROUND**

Plymouth Church is a United Church of Christ congregation located in Shaker Heights, Ohio. Church members describe their church family as "welcoming," "dynamic," and "small." The membership of the church is 532 and on an average week, 150-175 people attend the church's 10:30 AM worship service. Plymouth Church is led by Senior Minister Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe, who has been at the church since 2008.

Currently, there are approximately 60 sixth through twelfth graders on the rolls of the church. During a typical week, 15 of them participate in either Sunday school, Sunday night senior high youth group, or junior high youth group. Youth also participate in special events, Confirmation, trips, and Our Whole Lives. The youth ministry is described by some as a "fun" and "inclusive" place, while others say it is a "small" "under-appreciated" ministry.

The youth ministry is led by Matthew Bauhoff, Associate Minister, who has been at the church since August of 2017. There is also an active children's and youth committee that meets monthly. There are 2 adult volunteers involved weekly in one of the major youth programs.

The church has a 2018 budget of \$1,042,000 of which approximately \$35,000 is dedicated to the youth ministry. This includes the program expenses as well as the salary and benefits for the staff, consisting of the Associate Minister.

To assess the youth ministry at Plymouth Church, Ministry Architects provided the Associate Minister with an online diagnostic to share with key stakeholders. 13 people responded to Ministry Architects online diagnostic. Additionally, 5 stakeholders participated in virtual listening groups via video conference.

## YOUTH MINISTRY NORMS

As the leadership of the youth ministry develops their long-range vision, five rules of thumb –“youth ministry norms” – will be helpful to keep in mind. These are not necessarily targets for success; they are simply what an average church typically experiences:

1. 10% of the Worshipping Congregation: In a typical church, the size of the youth ministry tends to settle at a number that is around 10% of the worshipping congregation. A church with an average worship attendance of 150-175 could expect an average weekly attendance of around 15 youth per week. The current weekly attendance of 15 youth is right on target for a church of this size.

2. 20% Ceiling: Ministry Architects has also discovered that in many churches, the youth ministry has difficulty growing beyond a level that equals 20% of the weekly worshipping congregation.

Very few youth ministries seem to be able to break beyond this 20% level.

Plymouth Church might keep in mind, then, that the expected ceiling for this youth ministry is around 30 youth. The road to that level of participation is dependent on increased staffing, volunteers, and budget.

3. \$1,500 per Youth: With a budget of approximately \$35,000 (including program budget, staff salaries, and benefits) dedicated to the youth ministry, Plymouth Church has the capacity to effectively reach and maintain a weekly participation level of somewhere in the neighborhood of 23 youth in some aspect of the church’s life. With 15 youth currently participating every week, the ministry is funded for moderate continued growth.

4. 1 Full-Time Staff Person for Every 50 Youth: Considering all the positions giving time to the youth ministry, including the Associate Minister, Plymouth Church has the equivalent of 0.5 full time staff person dedicated to youth ministry. According to this rule of thumb, Plymouth Church has the capacity to sustain the engagement of about 25 youth on a weekly basis. The current staff configuration allows room for moderate numerical growth.

5. 1 Adult for Every 5 Youth: Ministry Architects likes to think in terms of “spans of care,” recognizing that, realistically, most volunteers cannot effectively oversee the church’s Christian nurture of more than about five youth on an ongoing basis. With 2 weekly volunteers, Plymouth Church is currently at a ratio of 1 adult leader to every 8 youth, giving the ministry a capacity for 10 youth weekly. In other words, the team is too small to attend to the relational needs of the 15 youth who currently attend. The volunteer pool will need to expand if the church wants to sustain its impact with youth.

## FINDINGS FROM THE DIAGNOSTICS

### Assets:

- **Dedicated Staff:** Parents raved about the way Matt relates with the youth and his dedication to the program.
- **A Fun Ministry:** The youth who attend find youth group fun and engaging.
- **Eat Up:** The emphasis on food has been positive and youth enjoy cooking with Matt.
- **Special Events:** Students look forward to the offsite events, like laser tag, and more students attend those events.
- **Clarity of Need:** Consensus that there is a room to ample room improve and grow in the youth ministry.
- **Our Whole Lives:** The sexuality education program is intentional and structured and it is appreciated by parents.
- **Youth Who Augment Worship:** The youth are an asset to the Sunday worship experience on the occasions when they are involved in the service.

### Challenges:

- **Critical Mass:** The number one thing that attracts kids is other kids. Currently, there is a small number of kids present on an average youth group night,

especially in the high school group

- Retaining Older Youth: After middle school and confirmation youth are attending youth group less and losing touch with the youth group.
- One-Eared Mickey Mouse: The youth ministry is siloed off and the youth do not have rituals and experiences that link them to the larger church and affirm their identity.
- Volunteer Recruiting and Training: The ministry is currently lacking an ample number of committed and well-equipped leaders.
- Curriculum Plan: There is no clear long-term roadmap for building young disciples who form a life-long faith.
- Vision Vortex: The ministry lacks a shared understanding of success amongst parents, staff, and leaders, including a clear mission, values, and three-year goals.
- Missing Major Event System: There is no system for equipping people beyond the children's and youth ministry staff to share the responsibility for planning and executing major events.
- Climate: Some youth find it difficult to engage in the ministry because of the behavior of other active participants in the youth ministry.
- Cracks in the Foundation: Some keys documents or systems - such as a 12-18 month calendar, a clear communication plan, and consistent attendance tracking, and follow-up processes - are missing from the youth ministry.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Start-Up Recommendations:

- Reframe the next 12 months as a time of building long-term infrastructure for the youth ministry. Understanding that significant and immediate momentum will be built throughout the process of renovating the ministry, target June 2020 as

the date when the ministry renovations will be complete.

- Establish a Prayer Team to undergird this renovation process.
- Present this report to the leadership of the church, requesting that they endorse a 12-month strategic renovation process for the youth ministry.
- Establish a Coaching Rhythm to offer guidance and experienced direction for the building of an infrastructure for the youth ministry and provide ongoing coaching for the associate minister.

#### Long-term Infrastructure Recommendations:

- **Volunteer Recruitment:** Build a volunteer leadership team, some of who will do relational ministry with youth, while others work behind the scenes. Create a clear and complete list of the volunteer needs. Create a “fishing pond” list of at least 25 possible volunteers to call on for weekly volunteer positions.
- **Broaden Volunteer Definition and Opportunities:** Create additional, nonthreatening opportunities for adult involvement in the program. Encourage volunteer involvement in both visible and behind-the-scenes opportunities.
- **Leadership Launch:** Schedule and implement an inspiring leadership-training event for all volunteer youth workers at the beginning of each school year.
- **Integration:** Develop a strategic plan for helping the youth become an integral part of the whole church, weaving the youth ministry into the fabric of the entire church.
- **First-Timer Process:** Develop a process for welcoming new youth, families, and guests to the church so that they feel warmly welcomed. Document a timely follow up plan to ensure their return to the church.
- **MIA Process:** Develop a process for intentionally reaching out to missing-inaction (MIA) youth and reconnecting them in the life of the church.
- **Marketing:** Establish clear internal marketing processes that allow parents, youth, leaders, and the broader church to be exposed to the successes and good

news surrounding the youth ministry.

- Measurable Markers of Effectiveness: Determine reasonable participation goals for all youth ministry events and weekly programs through August 2020 and take responsibility for filling those events.
- Personal Connection Plan: Develop a system for ensuring that every family in the current youth directory is contacted personally at least once a year in order to make a connection, express support, and clarify if there are any parents

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requesting that their sons and/or daughters be removed from the church's directory.

- Visioning: Invite parents and leaders to participate in a process of visioning a new future for the youth ministry resulting in a mission statement, core values, and a set of three-year revolving goals with one-year benchmarks.
- Youth Ministry Scope and Sequence: Develop a long-range scope and sequence for the youth ministry, identifying all major topics that will be taught to teens while they are in the youth program and when each topic will be addressed. The Scope and Sequence should also include a detailed one-year teaching plan. Consider reading *It's a Just Phase -- So Don't Miss It: Why Every Stage of a Kid Matters* and *at Least 13 Things Your Church Should Do About It* by Reggie Joiner and Kristen Ivy
- Control Document Development: Complete and publish an 18-month calendar, create major event notebooks to help event planners succeed, and generate a preventative maintenance calendar that schedules behind-the-scenes activities for each month (like "September: nail down the date for next year's summer trips").
- Compliance Documents: Ensure that copyright licensing for music and videos has been obtained, an application and screening process for every volunteer is in

place, and all adults working with any youth affirm a sexual abuse/child protection policy.

- Youth Database: Work on the youth ministry database, collecting the most recent information for youth and their families. Categorize the database in a manner that will follow up on First-Time Guest and MIA youth and their families. Identify Youth with appropriate tags so that targeted communication for one-time visitors to long-time members is streamlined and effective.
- Communication: Document the rhythms and methods for effective and timely communication with parents, youth, and leaders utilizing as many forms of communication as possible including updating the youth page of the church's website, Facebook, mass texting, mail, e-mail, etc.
- Youth Ministry Manual: Develop a manual for the youth ministry, including the most recent youth directory, a 12 to 18-month calendar, results-based job descriptions for staff and volunteers, compliance documents, budgets, game plans, a preventative maintenance calendar, and notes for every major youth ministry event.
- Sustainable Pace: Help the associate minister develop a "rhythmic week" including a Sabbath and "balcony" time (that is, time to look at the big picture and make strategic plans).
- Retention Plans for the Youth Ministry: Create game plans for
- Keeping youth involved in the youth programs after they have graduated from middle school ministry.
- Engaging youth in the high school group after Confirmation.
- Continuing to engage youth who have gotten their drivers' license.



## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | EVANGELISM & GROWTH REPORT – 2019

Plymouth Church Constitution identifies the mandate for our department as: *“The Evangelism and Growth Department shall develop and implement a comprehensive church growth strategy that seeks to attract, identify, inform, and encourage potential members to join the church and live out their gifts as active members of the church.”* There are other responsibilities involving the application and reinstatement of membership.

Your E & G Department has addressed each of these responsibilities prayerfully and thoughtfully.

### **To develop a comprehensive church growth strategy:**

#### **Priority One: To attract, identify [potential members] ...**

We have reached out to the UCC supported MissionInsite Program for assistance in a demographic mapping and analysis of Plymouth Church’s immediate neighborhoods and assistance in identifying potential members.

We have developed a Steeple Strategy by using the internet technology to establish an on-line presence that is both attractive and accessible.

#### **Priority Two: informing potential members...**

We worked closely with other departments by purchasing and to distributing attractive UCC brochures in addition to the Plymouth Church specific DVD with highlights of our various ministries and church programs.

We have purchased and displayed attractive outside and inside welcome banners, as well as to redesign the main entrance to the sanctuary using video and banners to identify a welcome table for making visitors feel welcome.

#### **Priority Three: Encourage potential members to join...**

We worked with the pastors to give leadership and support to Plymouth 101 classes for potential and new members.

We inaugurated a Welcome Ambassadors program with commissioned artistic scarves to identify individuals who could be approached after worship by persons wishing to become members or wishing further pastoral contact.

#### **Priority Four: [Encourage]...to live out their gifts as active members of the church.**

We purchased and distributed Lenten and Advent devotional guides for members.

We recruited lay members to ‘give public testimonies’ during worship service, E & G Meetings, and on-line addressing “Why I am Here at Plymouth Church”.

We initiated an ‘in house’ pictorial church directory to be completed this winter.

**Budget issues:** Thanks to the gifts of members and staff, we have been able to accomplish our mandates well within the budget we received from the General Fund. We have agreed to the 5% reduction in budget for 2020 with the full expectation that we will be able to carry out our responsibilities faithfully.

### **Anticipated Goals for 2020:**

- 1] We will strengthen the Department by formalizing our committee structure.
- 2] We will formalize the comprehensive plan for church growth.
- 3] We will reestablish the ‘Dinner with the Minister program by including transition team representatives.
- 4] We commit to doing the hard task of identifying members who have moved on or dropped out, in order to present a realistic membership census for our prospective minister.
- 5] We will challenge the congregation to developing a 5-yr. membership goal and tracking our progress quarterly.

Rev. Mendle Adams

Evangelism & Growth Department, Chair

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | CONNECTION GROUPS REPORT - 2019

Connection Groups began in October 2013 and now, six years later, we have a ministry that is thriving. There are 13 Connection Groups within the church, and each group serves for one month.

The original formula for each group was to be intergenerational, with one third under the age of 40, one third over the age of 65, and one third between ages 40-65. There was also an original synthesis of length of church membership. The idea was to create opportunities for people to connect within the church.

In 2019, 160 members of the church were invited to participate in their Connection Group, and 126 people answered that call, which is a record breaking 79% participation rate! Each Connection Group has approximately 10 church members actively involved in their group.

Of course, over time, people have moved away, passed away, decided not to participate for a variety of reasons, and new members have been added as needed. One of Connection Group's foremost goals is to integrate new members into the life of the church. In 2019, 11 new members joined their Connection Group, with a record breaking 85% participating!

Lay leadership is crucial to the success of each Connection Group. Each group is led by one of its members, who contacts everyone in the group through email and sometimes phone calls. This coordinator sets up all the shifts for the month: 45 minutes before church to make coffee and put out the food and 45 minutes after worship to serve the coffee and clean up the empty trays, load the dishwasher and wipe the counters. The coordinator tries to fill each slot with at least 3 people from the group, including those members who might have mobility issues but can provide fellowship and conversation. The schedule is determined for the month and distributed to the group, with email reminders from the coordinator. As of 2019, there is a total of 34 people, among the 13 groups, who have served as coordinators, with an average of 2-3 experienced coordinators within each group.

Connection Groups began as part of the Caring Department and moved to the Evangelism and Growth Department in 2017. Another critical goal for Connection Groups is inclusivity. We have tried different ways to include youth in the Connection Groups, and with the help of Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Gloria Sturghill, the Senior High youth has hosted 5 Sundays this past year.

We have successfully created a Senior Table, where folks with limited mobility, can sit and small trays of food are hand delivered to the table.

Summer Fellowship has undergone many transitions in an effort to enjoy the green space outside of the Chapel, while still being mindful of those congregants that are unable to navigate the uneven Chapel steps.

We have an annual meeting of all the Connection Group coordinators to share best practices and address challenges.

As Connection Groups have grown and changed over the past 6 years, I am now stepping down and handing the reins over to Margaret Reuthinger. Paul Qua will also help in carrying on this important ministry of weekly fellowship after Sunday worship, where visitors can be welcomed, old friends can catch up, treats can be enjoyed, and the life of the church can be strengthened.

There are many people that make Connection Groups work, but I will only mention a few. The church buys the food for Coffee Hour and Summer Fellowship, purchased by the amazing Shelli Smith. James Lake, a Plymouth facilities staff member, provides valuable support every Sunday morning, and especially as a new group begins its month of service.

Paul Holter, Plymouth's facility manager, orders supplies, keeps everyone up to date, and creatively problem solves with a smile on his face!

I have loved seeing this ministry flourish and will continue to participate in my Connection Group, as I hope all of you will too!

With deep appreciation,

Jeannie Clarkson

Committee Chair for Connection Groups 2019

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | GIVING REPORT – 2019

Co-Chairs: Bob Green, Russell Lamb

Members: Juanita Faulx, Pam Markt, Dick Pogue, Matt Bauhof (ex-officio)

The Giving Committee is responsible for conducting and facilitating financial support to the church from its members and friends. This year, the Committee members worked diligently to develop an annual campaign that would engage a broad number of contributors as well as provide a nominal increase in financial contributions for the 2020 operating budget as compared to the 2019 total pledged support. The departure of our senior minister, Rev. Dr. Shawntea Monroe, in late September at the commencement of our campaign year and the need to find a replacement leader put more emphasis on the need for a successful campaign.

The Annual Campaign launched in early September with an appeal of support from members of Church Council as well as lead givers from the past year. The main appeal was launched on October 6th with an all-church brunch and information regarding giving at Plymouth and the financial state of the church.

The currently ongoing campaign's goals are \$570,000 in pledges from 170 pledgers. Both of these goals – financial and participation – are important to demonstrate the vibrancy of Plymouth Church to candidate members. The Committee is managing the campaign process with the wonderful support of the church financial and administrative staff.

The Committee deeply misses the wisdom and insight of our co-chair Bob Green. A good friend and stalwart supporter of Plymouth Church was lost with Bob's passing.

Russell Lamb

Giving Department, Co-Chair

## **PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | PERSONNEL REPORT – 2019**

The past year has been mostly an uneventful year bookended between adding one key staff member and saying good bye to another. In January, we welcomed Kathryn Kundrat as our new Financial Administrator and has been integrating herself seamlessly into the fabric of Plymouth's day-to-day operations as well as adding a very keen eye for process improvements. In September, we reluctantly yet with love and affection bade farewell to Dr. Shawnthea Monroe as Senior Minister after 12 years of service. Plymouth is fortunate to have secured the services of Dr. Reverend Deb Lindsey as our interim Senior Minister. In the meantime, Personnel is helping Jim Riggs in his interim role as Head of Staff as well as the rest of the staff as we enter the transition phase of eventually settling on a new permanent Senior Minister. We will use this time to help staff in the policy and procedure needs that will arise in this interim period.

Kenyon Mau

Personnel, Chair

## **PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICE REPORT – 2019**

Plymouth Church is a very generous church, both with both our money and our time. We set aside 5% of our annual pledges for distribution to organizations in the Cleveland metro area as well our national and association churches. We also organize and encourage service opportunities within the church, the community and with our partnership organizations.

### **Distribution of Funds**

There are many needs in our community. To discern the most effective way to distribute the funds, we have established criteria: 1) the 501c3 organization must be located within or service the Cleveland Metro/Cuyahoga County area 2) a member of the church is a liaison to the organization, and 3) the grant request is for specific program, and not for normal operating expenses. There are five areas that the organization and the request must affect as well: 1) education, 2) environment, 3) homeless or disenfranchised, 4) hunger, and 5) LGBTQ+ community. Most of our partner organizations impact more than one area.

We also support the Living Water Association and the UCC National Office with substantial gifts. And we support the scholarship funds to the universities our ministers attended and a chapel organ retreat to honor our minister of music.

This year we had \$52,750 to distribute.

This is the breakdown of what we supported.

- 14 grant applications received, 12 were funded.
- 1 sponsorship.
- 3 universities that our Plymouth ministers attended.
- National and local offices of United Church of Christ.

As of Oct 20, 2019 we have distributed all the funds in the following way.

UCC National Office	\$8,000
Living Water Association	\$14,000
McCormick Theological Seminary	\$500
The Portageville Chapel	\$250
Yale Divinity School	\$1,000
Cleveland Botanical/Holden Forest & Gardens	\$1,000
Cleveland Foodbank	\$1,000
Community Service Alliance	\$1,500
Edwins	\$500
EYEJ	\$2,500
Family Promise	\$4,000
Foresteing Hope	\$2,000
Frontline	\$2,500
Habitat for Humanity	\$5,000
Rainbow Terrace Learning Center	\$2,000
Salvation Army	\$2,000
Thea Bowman Center	\$3,000
UCC ONA	\$2,000

The Church throughout the year also participates in several special offerings.

The SERRV committee once again hosted a sale of SERRV items to Plymouth members on the first 3 Sundays in Advent. SERRV is a nonprofit fair trade organization dedicated to empowering small-scale artisans and farmers to earn a fair living for their work so as to help break the cycle of poverty and build stronger communities worldwide. We anticipate being able to disburse some of our sale proceeds in the coming year to support community needs.

#### Service Opportunities

Serval church members participated in Habitat for Humanity by helping with several house builds in the Cleveland area.

Plymouth members have volunteered at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank once a month for several years. Members also volunteer at the Shaker Hunger Center by sorting food in the pantry and delivering good bags to people in the community. Our service to the community is an expression of our faith and how we are attempting to improve others in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin D. Johnson

Partnership & Service, Chair

## PLYMOUTH CHURCH, UCC | ELECTED LEADERSHIP 2020

This roster represents the elected and appointed leadership of the church. It assumes that the recommendations of the Nominating Committee (the nominees for the fall 2019 Annual Meeting and those nominated for appointment by Council) will be accepted. It is included in the Annual Report to add to that report's comprehensive portrait of the congregation and not to preempt the election or appointment process.

*Note: Numbers in parentheses denote that this will be the person's 2nd, 3rd etc term.*

*Key: B&G: Building & Grounds; C&Y: Children & Youth; E & G: Evangelism & Growth; P&S: Partnerships and Service; (F): member of Finance Cmtee*

Council President (F)	Brian Grube
Council Vice-President (F)	Mary Bright
Secretary	Val Arbie-McClelland (4)
Treasurer (F)	Juanita Faulx (3)
Asst. Treasurer (F)	Lisa Hunziker (3)
Council Memb@Lrg	Ros Gauchat (2)
Council Memb@Lrg	Cindy Hill (2)
Council Memb@Lrg	Shelli Smith
Council Memb@Lrg	Molly Warmbein
Council Memb@Lrg	Nicole Lepley
Adult Faith & Life Chair	Vicki Werneke (2)
Adult Faith & Life Vice-Chair	Joanna Cullinan (2)
B&G Chair (F)	Bill Menges (2)
B&G Vice-Chair	Ron Werneke (2)
Caring Chair	Dave Faulx (2)
Caring Vice-Chair	Don Grauer
C& Y Chair	Brian Shields (3)
C& Y Vice-Chair	Jeannie Clarkson (4)
E & G Co-Chair	Mendle Adams (2)
E & G Vice-Chair	Lalana Green
Giving Chair	Russell Lamb (2)
Giving Vice-Chair	Carolyn Jillson
P & S Chair	Robin Johnson (3)
P & S Vice-Chair	Joann Hall (2)
Worship Chair	Mary Powell (4)
Worship Vice-Chair	Amy Holbrook (2)
Personnel Chair (F)	
Foundation Chair (F)	
UCC Living Water Assoc. Rep.	Pam Beck (3)
UCC Living Water Assoc. Rep	Adrienne Brockway (3)
UCC Living Water Assoc. Rep	Doug Powell

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Brian Grube  
Mary Bright  
Juanita Faulx  
Lisa Hunziker  
Personnel Chair  
Russell Lamb  
Bill Menges  
Foundation Chair  
Hans Hunziker  
Chris Karr

Foundation Dir 21  
Foundation Dir 22  
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Jeff Pollock  
Dick Pogue  
Christine Bretz  
Lalana Green  
Mary Bright

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Kristen Connors  
Doug Powell  
Jan Wilkens  
Wayne Hall  
Hans Hunziker  
Vicki Werneke  
Pam Beck  
Sara Martin  
Mai Moore

Pastoral Relations 20  
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Noel Nilson  
Vicki Werneke  
Jim Holbrook  
Tracy Williams

Personnel Cmtee 20  
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Ruth Garwood  
Kenyon Mau  
Jim Holbrook  
Paula Colahan-Sederstrom  
Karen Reich