



The Grapevine *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower."*

John 15:1

Grapevine next publishing: January 15th.

A Letter From The Pastor

By Barbara Anne Keely

Dear People of Plymouth Presbyterian Church,

As we celebrate the Coming of the Christ Child, and we again welcome the Presence of God into our lives, I thank you for welcoming me as your bridge pastor for these four months. I have been touched by your hospitality and welcoming spirit, and grateful for the leaders and members of this church who have both supported my work and heard my hopes for Plymouth Presbyterian.

When I served here ten years ago, one of my responsibilities was to take the children out of worship during the closing hymn, gathering them for a song and prayer before they went to their Sunday School classes. It's a favorite memory of my time here, so I have been aware of the shift in the congregation these past years.

When I serve a church, I hold it before God in prayer. I am concerned with the number of members who used to be in worship, but have not returned to the sanctuary or active involvement in the church, I assume because of COVID. But I firmly believe the Holy Spirit has plans for this church, and I will continue to hold the future of this wonderful congregation in my prayers after I complete this time with you. May you each be led to be part of the visioning and implementation of future plans, and may the mission and ministries flourish!

My final Sunday is January 1, which is during the Season of Christmas (12 days, through Epiphany). The Reverend Howard Thurman reminds us that Christmas is more than one day:

"When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins: to find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry, to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart. And to radiate the Light of Christ every day, in every way, in all that we do and in all that we say. Then the work of Christmas begins."

May you engage in the work of Christmas throughout the year, and may the Spirit of God flourish within and among you!

Barbara Anne Keely, Bridge Pastor

PLYMOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Welcome to Reverend Carol Reed, Transitional Pastor

On December 10, 2022 Session approved Reverend Carol Reed as PPC's Transitional Pastor. Her first day at PPC is January 16, and she will begin leading our worship services on January 22. She has experience working in the west metro suburbs while serving with Calvin Presbyterian Church in Long Lake. At that time she was involved in a few joint activities with the PPC and Calvin youth groups, so she has some experience with PPC. A brief biography is below.

Carol Reed grew up in Minneapolis and received a Bachelor's of Science in Home Economics Education at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. She served as a teacher in Ocho Rios, Jamaica for two years before seminary. After graduating with a Master of Divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, she was ordained to do mission service in Taegu, South Korea. She has served churches in Binghamton, NY, Milwaukee, WI, Long Lake, MN, plus interims in Binghamton, NY, Willmar, Minneapolis, and Melbourne, Australia. She comes to us from Central Presbyterian Church in St. Paul where she served as Transitional Pastor. When she finds free time you can find her hiking, gardening, bird watching, or doing fiber arts.



Advent Worship Services

During this busy season, it is easy to forget that Advent helps us prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord. Here are our Advent Bible readings and my sermon titles. Pastor Barbara Anne

December 18 "Living the Dream"

Romans 1:1-6; Matthew 1:18-25

Christmas Eve Bible Readings

Christmas Eve services will be at 4:00 and 9:00, and will include several Scripture readings. If you will be attending at either 4:00 or 9:00, and are willing to do one of the readings, please let Barbara Anne know at pastor@plymouthpc.org.

Christmas Joy Offering

November 27—December 18, 2022

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. There will be envelopes available in church beginning November 27, or you may donate online and indicate "Special Offering".



Is God Calling You?

Serving on your church's board is a privilege. It is a huge responsibility and a calling, but also a blessing.

Make a difference at Plymouth Presbyterian Church and in our community by prayerfully considering joining fellow members to serve as a deacon or elder of our congregation. This is a great opportunity to make an impact on our church and how we are viewed within the community. We are currently looking to fill three elder and five deacon positions. If interested in joining and building relationships within PPC, please reach out to Penny Blankenship or Loni Gradick to discuss how you can make a difference.

Book Club

The PPC Book Club meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month in the Fireside Room.

The next meeting is on January 25 at 10:00 am. We will be discussing the 2022 Newbery and Caldecott winners:

The Last Cuentista by Donna Barba Higuera

Watercress by Andrea Wang, Illustrations by Jason Chin.

We will also be discussing book titles suggestions for 2023. Joanne Mann suggests our February book be Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng.

PPC Prayer Chain: The Ministry of Confidential Prayer

One of the ministries of our church is the privilege of praying for one another. If you desire the support of confidential prayer, send your request to PPCprayerchain@plymouthpc.org. Please do not put anyone on the prayer chain without their permission. When a prayer request is sent, it is understood to be just that, a confidential request for prayer between the one praying and God. And requests sent to the prayer chain go only to the pastor and those who have offered to pray for others. It is a wonderful gift to know that others in the church are holding you in prayer!

For support in ways other than confidential prayer, please contact your deacon or the pastor directly. Barbara Anne's email is pastor@plymouthpc.org .

If you would like to join the prayer chain, so that you may include others in your prayers, contact the church office at office@plymouthpc.org. It is expected that prayer chain members keep confidential all requests for prayer. As tempting as it is to reach out to someone who has requested prayer, please understand many are just requesting prayer, and do not want to talk about it. We are always encouraged to reach out and support each other, but a request for prayer on the prayer chain is only that.

The privilege of praying for others draws us closer to the One who desires to be in relationship with us. Choosing to pray for someone else is a gift for them and will also enrich your relationship with God. Thank you for considering this ministry!



Message from COVID Response Committee

The following Covid Guidelines were approved at the November Session meeting.

- Vaccinations and up-to-date boosters are strongly encouraged, but proof of vaccination is not required.
- Wearing masks during the church service is strongly encouraged because of the medical community's projections of higher flu and COVID-19 numbers this winter.
- Handwashing and sanitizing are encouraged, and hand sanitizing stations will be provided.
- We have people at risk, so be aware of those wearing masks, and be sensitive to social distancing.
- Those providing food for Fellowship will follow safe food handling procedures.

Mission Updates

ICOP Food Collection

Starting Christmas Eve we will resume food collection for ICOP. We will have a donation bin in the coat closet (feel free to leave bags of food in the bin before then too). As you may know, the need for food is great, and Minnesotans have visited food shelves this year more than any year on record. We will communicate future plans for 2023 later.

Most needed donations: Healthy snacks including fruit squeeze pouches, cashews, almonds, rice cakes, pretzels, popcorn, fruit cups, granola bars, turkey jerky, cheese sticks, goldfish and juice boxes.

Upcoming Events

- **Sunday, December 18th and Christmas Eve—** Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary
- **Saturday, December 24 - 4 PM service, 9 PM service** - Both worship services will include the Celebration of the Lord's Supper and the congregational candle lighting. The Choir will sing at 9:00 service.
- **Sunday, December 25**—There will be no worship service
- **Sunday, January 1**—Pastor Barbara Anne's last day with us
- **Sunday, January 8, 10:45 AM**— Sunday School class on the Star of Bethlehem
- **Tuesday, January 17, 7:00 pm** —Session meets
- **Sunday, January 22** — Transitional Pastor Carol Reed's first worship service at PPC
- **Wednesday, January 25, 10:00 am**—Book Club

Bloom Early Learning Center

Bloom Early Learning Center would greatly appreciate help them painting the classrooms on December 27, 2022. They will be painting from 8 am to 4 pm.

Please fee free to join the team as they paint their classrooms.

Thank you for offering to help!



New Administrative Assistant



Hello! I'm Credo Aguiya! Here's a little about myself...

Born in Benin, West Africa, I speak French as my first language before learning English. I am from a small family of two. I have one brother. I love going to church and singing in my choir. I am so glad to be part of PPC and thank you to everyone who has stopped by the office to meet me.

My office hours are Monday through Thursday 8am to 1pm. Please send any announcements and information for the bulletin to

office@plymouthpc.org by **end of day Wednesdays**.

Thank You.

Educational Opportunity The Star of Bethlehem — Was It Real?

Have you ever wondered what it was the wise men saw that caused them travel to seek out the baby Jesus? Why did they see the star in the east and "followed" the star to the west? Was the star a fairy tale, or a miracle, or is there evidence it was an actual astrological event? Come and explore some of the theories about the Star of Bethlehem with Mike and Sandy Hawley on January 8 at 10:45 am.



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