Plymouth United Church of Christ

Upbeats

News and Views
from the
Jazz and Justice Church

September 2011

IN THE MEANTIME . . .

It is hard to believe that we are marking the tenth anniversary of September 11th this month. Little did I know how much my own family's life would be affected as I sat in disbelief watching TV as the tragic events unfolded and I tried to make sense of it all. No sense could be made.

My son, Brandon, was a junior in high school at the time. He and many young men of his generation were so profoundly affected that they felt compelled to join the armed forces. Some 8 ½ years later, Brandon was sent to Afghanistan and was seriously injured four months later. August 21, 2011, was the first anniversary of his injury. Even though he isn't completely healed yet, he celebrated by climbing Mt. Baker in Washington State! I continue to be overwhelmed with gratitude that he is alive and not permanently paralyzed.

Below is what I wrote for this column ten years ago:

We live in a new world now. That's been said over and over again. We're told it's different because we know we're vulnerable. We're told it's different because we suddenly realize that our future isn't predictable. We're told it's different because we've become increasingly aware that we're distrusted and even hated in many parts of the world.

But I'm not really sure that our world is all that different than before September 11th. I think we're actually living in the world that the bible describes and the world that most of humanity has known throughout history. The world changes. The world can be a hostile place. Our security can never be guaranteed. We don't control our future.

This might be depressing if we couldn't trust our God to be with us no matter what happens. One of my favorite bible passages is:

"For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." [Romans 8:38-39]

. . . When we remember that we can't be separated from God, our anxiety and fear subside, and we can be free to be a healing presence to each other and to our community . . .

This community of faith, along with countless family and friends, have been a sign during the past year of the abiding and sustaining presence of God. I am grateful to you all.

Blessings,

Rev. Lois

What's Happening Within the Plymouth Community

Our Community in Life Together

Birthday Blessings in September

1	Raymond Holkko
15	Julie Kramer
18	Carolyn Collins
21	Greg Jones
22	Lillian Woo
	Paul Bolduc
30	Kathy Engle

Prayers for the Congregation

Prayers of Concern

- Carol & Cecilia Camlin and Isabelle de Rezende -- Isabelle had a malignant tumor removed from her eye.
- Marylin Tracy – who faces a repeat knee replacement surgery
- Patricia Goff – who broke both ankles on a trip to Yosemite
- All who are unemployed, under-employed and facing financial hardship

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Congratulations

- Dr. Opal Taylor who completed a medical mission trip to Rwanda
- The safe travel of Rhina Ramos to El Salvador
- Our new members who will join Plymouth on September 18th
- Rev. Melissa Gardner-McBride -- who had surgery

Gathering of Waters

Homecoming Sunday - September 11th

If you are traveling this summer, please bring back a small amount of water from your destination! On our *Homecoming Sunday, September 11*, we will have a ritual in which we will combine water from our travels to symbolically reconnect as a community. If you are not traveling, we are happy to receive water from your tap or a public park. San Francisco Bay and Lake Merritt are great, easily accessible local sources for water !

Plymouth's Second Annual National Night Out

Our second annual block party on August 2 was a huge success! Well over one hundred people joined us for this festive celebration. We had many Plymouth members as well as a large number of our neighbors who came together for food, music and fun.

Young, old and in-between came to share together in a safe and welcoming environment.

Many thanks to all who worked so hard to make this a successful gathering, and especially to Estela Lopez, Rhina Ramos and Mary Lou Watson who provided such wonderful leadership.

Spiritual Formation at Plymouth

Our pastors and the members of our Spiritual Formation Ministry are excited to announce the Fall programming!

We look forward to continuing to offer young people an opportunity to learn about God and listen to the Spirit at work in the world and in their hearts.

Some things will look a little different:

Childcare – for infants and toddlers

* childcare will be available on Sunday mornings 10:45 – 12:30
* location will be in the library
* Alma Draper is moving to being a sacred-zone teacher and we are in the process of recruiting a new childcare provider

The Sacred Zone – for children in Kindergarten – 4th grade

* kick-off session is Sunday, September 18
* five teachers will rotate teaching responsibilities
* will take place in the Fireside Room during worship

God-Talk – for young people in 5th – 12th grade

* kick-off session is Sunday, Oct. 2 during worship
* will continue on the first Sundays of each month
* discussion format led by Rev. Marjorie Matthews on October 2

The Spiritual Formation Ministry is made up of: Alicia Van Riggs and Chris Lundin - Co-Chairs, Alma Draper, Karen Eppler, Vanessa Lovejoy-Guron, Shirley Robinson, and Jennifer Moxley. Pastoral advisor: Rev. Lois Mueller

Please talk to one of us if you have questions or would like to become involved!

Do You enjoy singing hymns?

Had a hard time finding a hymnbook?

We've solved the problem!

We now have additional New Century Hymnals in our sanctuary. If you would like to sponsor a hymnal in memory of a loved one, please let us know via email (plymouthoakland@sbcglobal.net), phone (654-5300) or sign up after worship.

The cost is $20 and your loved one's name and your name will be placed on the inside cover.

Have You Returned

Your Pledge Card?

Prayer at Plymouth

Prayer Is Not Just for Sunday Mornings

Intercessory Prayer - An intercessory prayer team is forming who will learn about intercessory prayer and pray from home for the needs and concerns of our congregation and community. Ayanna Moore is coordinating this effort. If you are interested, please contact her at 425-894-9016.

The *Jazz* of Prayer continues under the leadership of Julie Kramer, M.Div. The group meets in the Pastors' office on September 6 (Prayers for Change), September 13 (Wordless Prayers), and September 20 (Healing Prayers). Speak with Julie if you are interested.

Scripture Meditation

This group meets in the Plymouth Fireside Room at 1:00pm each Wednesday. Different selections from scripture are used each week. Participants reflect on whatever might be on their hearts and minds as they share and reflect on these readings.

Feeding as a Spiritual Practice

Theresa Freeman coordinates a program that feeds dozens of people nutritious meals each week. Theresa brings to this process a deeply held belief that sharing food is a spiritual practice as well as engagement in social justice.

You are encouraged to join Theresa each Thursday from 10am to 2pm to prepare and distribute food and to reflect on feeding hungry people as a sacramental act.

Contact Theresa for more information:

TFreeman7@sbcglobal.net

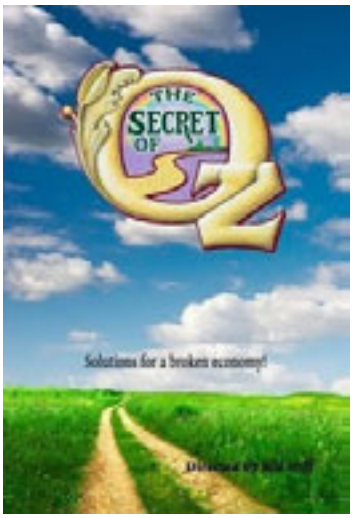
510-227-4060

Thursday Night Adult Education

Justice Film Series Begins September 29

A new adult education series will begin at Plymouth on **September 29**. This will be a film series focused on various justice issues and will be held each Thursday evening at **7:00pm** through November 10. This new offering will provide members and friends an opportunity to learn about and discuss a wide variety of concerns and issues.

Currently lined up are the films *Son of Man* as the first offering, as well as *The Secret of Oz*. Another possibility, if the cost is not prohibitive, is *The Economics of Happiness*. Additional titles are being explored for the remainder of the series.



Plymouth Church Calendar

September, 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Spiritual Feeding Practice 32nd St @ San Pablo 10am to 2pm	2	4
4 Worship 11:00 am Communion	5 	6 The Front Porch 10am to 12 noon The Jazz of Prayer 7:00pm	7 Scripture Meditation 1:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm	8 Fellowship Luncheon 12:00 noon Spiritual Feeding Practice 32nd St @ San Pablo 10am to 2pm	9	10
11 Worship 11:00 am Birthday Sunday	12	13 The Front Porch 10am to 12 noon Church Council 7:00 pm The Jazz of Prayer 7:00pm	14 Scripture Meditation 1:00 pm Choir - 7:00 pm	15 Spiritual Feeding Practice 32nd St @ San Pablo 10am to 2pm	16	17
18 Worship 11:00 am Communion	19	20 The Front Porch 10am to 12 noon	21 Scripture Meditation 1:00 pm Choir - 7:00 pm	22 Spiritual Feeding Practice 32nd St @ San Pablo 10am to 2pm	23	24 Oakland Care Center 3-4pm
25 Worship 11:00 am **Interim Conference Minister** **Rev. Phil Hart** **Guest Preacher**	26	27 The Front Porch 10am to 12 noon Justice & Witness Ministry 6:30 pm	28 Scripture Meditation 1:00 pm Choir - 7:00 pm	29 Spiritual Feeding Practice 32nd St @ San Pablo 10am to 2pm Justice Film Series 7:00pm	30	

There's a lot going on and we don't want you to miss anything.

What's Happening at Plymouth?
&
How Do I Find Out?

These are ways to be sure you know what's happening at Plymouth during the week:

- **Listen for the announcements just prior to the start of worship each week**
- **Read the monthly newsletter for articles and a complete calendar of events**
- **Read the notices and inserts in each week's worship bulletin**

Plymouth Goes to the Oakland Care Center

Members from Plymouth Church visit, pray and sing with residents of the Oakland Care Center each month. Join us during our next visit:

Saturday, September 24

3:00pm

3030 Webster St., Oakland

This is always an inspiring and much appreciated time with some very grateful people.

The Front Porch Senior Center At Plymouth

If you are looking for a place to meet new friends and share old stories, the Front Porch is the place for you. Yoga, crafts, special speakers and just plain conversation and hospitality are available.

Fireside Room - Tuesday mornings

10 a.m. to noon.

Front Porch Questions?

Please call Marcella Conley (653-9880) or Joanne Grimm (451-4219).

Come get your picture taken for a new directory!

Rev. Kay Wellington is volunteering to take our pictures **after worship on September 18 & 25** so that our next directory can include photos. She will take photos of family groupings and individuals. Please try to attend on one of those Sundays to get your picture taken. As we continue to grow, it will be a great gift to our community to have pictures of each other while we're getting to know each others' names.

Rev. Phil Hart to Preach at Plymouth

Plan to join us to welcome our Interim Conference Minister for the Northern California Nevada UCC on **Sunday, September 25** when Phil will be our guest preacher

What's Happening in the Wider Church
In & Around Our Neighboring Communities

Congratulations to Jean Lindborg

Jean received the **Human Rights Award** from Church Women United on Friday, August 5th, at Elmhurst United Methodist church!

The award was presented to Jean for her "leadership service as a mentor and social activist in human rights and human development, an advocate for peace and justice with no boundaries of political system, country, cultural background or religion." Jean has been an active member of Church Women United for almost as long as she has been a member of Plymouth Church.

S.A.V.E

Soldiers Against Violence Everywhere

Consistent with the congregational survey done by the Justice and Witness Ministry last fall, our church council voted at the August 9 meeting to support the organization known as S.A.V.E., a movement established to raise awareness about the crisis of violence in our city.

S.A.V.E. brings together residents who "Stand-in" in the neighborhoods, and march in the streets for peace. Soldiers Against Violence Everywhere encourages residents to break the silence, speak out, get engaged and take a non-violent stand against the rampant murders in our community. S.A.V.E. is a citywide grassroots movement to provide resources and solutions for a more peaceful existence in Oakland.

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