

Plymouth Presbyterian Church



September, 2025

Dear friends,

I want to touch on something: making guests of Plymouth Church feel at home. One of the greatest joys of being the church is welcoming new people into our faith community. Did you know that about one in five visitors will return and become part of a church family long-term? But here's something even more encouraging: when a guest comes back for a second visit, those chances double.

That tells me something simple and powerful: the way we welcome people matters. Think about how you've felt walking into a new place—maybe a new school, job, or restaurant in town. It can be exciting, but also a little nerve-racking. When someone smiles, opens a door, or takes time to introduce themselves, suddenly it feels less overwhelming. Church can be the same way. Our hospitality can make the difference between someone visiting once and someone finding a spiritual home.

Who Walks Through Our Doors? People visit churches for all kinds of reasons:

Some come with a friend or family member. They might not be looking for a new church, but they're willing to try it out because someone they love brought them. Some are curious seekers. They may have little or no background in church, but something inside is nudging them to explore faith. Some are "church shopping." They're trying out different congregations to see where they feel most at home. Some carry hurt. They've had painful experiences elsewhere but are hoping this time will be different. Some are ready to dive in. Maybe they've just moved to town or feel called to find a new church family.

Each story is unique. But all of them are longing for the same thing: to feel seen, welcomed, and loved. There are some ways—big and small—we can make visitors feel like part of our family from the very first moment:

***Warm greetings** at the door. A smile and "We're glad you're here" go further than we think.

***Clear information.** Signs, bulletins, or a simple info table can help newcomers know where to go and what to expect. ***Kind words** in worship. A heartfelt welcome from the pulpit helps break the ice. ***A website** that feels like us. These days, most people "visit" online before ever walking in. Let's make sure our website shows who we really are—welcoming, down-to-earth, and Christ-centered. ***Space for connection.** Whether it's a simple card to leave prayer requests or a conversation over coffee, people want to be known. ***Follow-up.** A note, email, or call that says "Thanks for joining us—you matter" can mean the world.

Let's take hospitality beyond Sunday with a picnic, service project (Habitat Build), or game night that give visitors a chance to meet us in a more relaxed setting. None of these require perfection. They just require a spirit of love—the same love God has shown us. In the end, welcoming visitors isn't about programs or strategies. It's about seeing every person as a beloved child of God and letting them know there's a place for them here. Let's be the kind of church where people don't just attend once—they come back, and keep coming back, because they've discovered a community that feels like home.

See you in church (our Plymouth community),

Pastor Peter Blank

SEPTEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS

September 7: 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 30: 15-20 and Psalm
1; Philemon 1: 1-21; Luke 14: 25-33

September 14: 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32: 7-14 and Psalm 51: 1-10;
I Timothy 1: 12-17; Luke 15: 1-10

September 21: 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Amos 8: 4-7 and Psalm 113;
I Timothy 2: 12-7; Luke 16 1-13

*September 28: 16th Sunday after
Pentecost*

Amos 6: 1a, 4-7 and Psalm 146;
I Timothy 6: 6-19; Luke 16: 19-31

MEETING SCHEDULE

Deacons

The next Deacons meeting will be
Thursday, September 4, 10:00 a.m.,
at the church

Session

The next Session meeting will be
Wednesday, September 10, at 1:00 p.m.
IN PERSON, at the church.

Worship & Nurture

Our next meeting will be on
September 2 at 1:00 p.m., at the
church.

HAPPY
Birthday

September 2 – Gayle Clemmer.
September 13 – Candy Cole



ATTENDANCE

July 27 -- 28

August 3 -- 29

August 10 -- 23

To My PPC Church Family....

Thanks to so many of you for your kind words
on the special card received at the coffee hour
on Sunday, June 29, and to the wonderful ladies
who put the surprising time together.

The beautifully decorated cake was delicious
and the orchid is absolutely gorgeous.

Thanks also to Gina for her lovely tribute.

It has been such a privilege as well as an honor
to have been your Session clerk for over a
decade plus a few years. My gratitude goes
to your new clerk, Kathleen, and we all know
she will do an amazing job.

You each make up a very special and unique
church family---and I am blessed to be a part
of it.

With love,
Helen Purkerson

UPDATE! UPDATE!

It was so too bad to have to cancel the Cruise In because of rain – and: never fear! It has been reset! Mark your calendars now for Friday, September 12, from 6 – 8 p.m. (of course: depending on the weather . . .). This event has again been scheduled to happen in our lot – we are hoping for appropriate weather, and for many of you in attendance.

SUNDAY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

September 7

Communion set-up: Adrienne Schilling
Servers: Adrienne Schilling, Gina Harrington
Greeters, ushers: Ken, Zelda Anderson
Lay leader: Pat Berger
Coffee hour: Anita Kjos

September 14

Greeters, ushers: Kathleen, Mark Dinwiddie
Lay leader: Gina Harrington
Coffee hour: Kathleen, Mark Dinwiddie

September 21

Greeter, usher: Karen Roldan
Lay Leader: Sharon Fraser
Coffee Hour: Appreciation Day – Fellowship Committee

September 28

Greeters, ushers: Linda, Roger Liefeld
Lay leader: Bill Eagle
Coffee hour:

NOTE: If you shop at Red Apple market, save your receipts and put them in the jar in the Fellowship Hall. PPC will receive financial Rewards for your receipts.

FROM YOUR BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMISSION

Peepholes have now been installed in the doors in the Fellowship Hall and in Hutchinson Hall.

The St. Helens sewer project: the sewer upgrade project has been approved by St. Helens City Council. This may mean some disruption in our parking lot; we will keep you apprised as we receive information.

COMMUNITY MEALS NEEDS OUR HELP

We will be having a butter shower for Community Meals. Can you help? Please bring butter to the church and put it in the refrigerator. We thank you for supporting our community, and so does Community Meals.

FROM FRAN . . .

“Many, many thanks for all of the lovely birthday cards – they made my day! I can now walk 20 feet, and there is much left to accomplish. I am supposed to move to my son’s home on August 31, and I think I will do it before that. I love you all! Blessings!”



The deadline for the October newsletter is. **September 20.** Please send articles to pfbbl202@yahoo.com, phone Pat, give her articles on Sundays, or mail them to her. Thank you!

FINANCE NEWS

Submitted by: Sharon Fraser, Finance Elder

JULY INCOME & EXPENSE SUMMARY

DESCRIPTION	JUL 2025	YTD 2025
Total Income	\$8,991	\$47,866
Total Expenses	\$7,692	\$47,660
Net Operating Budget	\$1,299	\$206

The "Net Operating Budget" shows a surplus of \$1,299 for the month of July. We also had a small surplus of \$209 for YTD 2025. This is great finance news! Note that the total income does include the monthly transfer from savings of \$1,075/month, as approved by Session in the 2025 Budget.

DESIGNATED FUND BALANCES

Carry forward as of 07/31/25

Boxing Day	\$ (73.49)
Change for Change	83.56
Deacons Fund	743.44
Habitat for Humanity	200.00
Makindu	50.00
Memorial Funds	5,950.81
Mission Market	1,905.47
Alice Brewer Bequeathment	63,283.09

PLYMOUTH RESERVES

As of July 31, Plymouth Church had \$56,382 in checking and savings; plus \$127,328 in certificates of deposit and a money market. These continue to be strong reserves.

UPDATE FROM HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

We've officially begun construction on our newest home build in St. Helens! This home will be built for a family with a disabled child with their increasing medical needs in mind. We are excited to get this project off and running!

Angela Carlson.
Family Services/Admin
Columbia County Habitat for Humanity

(There will be sign-up sheets for helping with the building, for bringing building materials, for bringing snacks to the building site, and for giving monetary gifts. Heads up!)



WOMEN'S RETREAT DELAY

Due to way too many conflicts (we all know how that goes . . .) the long-awaited women's retreat needs to be rescheduled.

This time, we will give more notice: soon, a sign-up sheet will be in the Fellowship Hall with two or three choices for a Spring retreat date. One will be chosen, and this is going to work. Please mark your choice on the sheet, so that we can choose wisely.

We will be going to the Trudeaus's house at Rockaway Beach.

FAITH BUILD FUND RAISER

Coming up soon – we don't know when exactly yet – will be a very much fun fund raiser for our Faith Build with Habitat for Humanity.

Parts of this fund raiser will include a chili cook-off, a bake sale, a talent show, and (maybe most intriguing of all . . .) a minister magician! More details will be coming our way soon; we hope you will be able to participate in the way or ways that fit best for you.



SCHOOL BELLS WILL BE RINGING!!

Plymouth Presbyterian Church will be the home to a new school pod.

SHAPA, Sheridan All-Prep Academy, a public charter school, will be using the choir room in Hutchinson Hall beginning September 1st from 8am-2pm. This school pod will be for students

K-12. SHAPA currently has a 6-12 pod in Scappoose.

We've been looking for ways to better utilize all the extra space we have in Hutchinson Hall. This will also give us a boost financially, as they will be leasing the space.

To that point, we will not be entering that back door or back room beginning next week. There are safety protocols, and we will follow them to the letter. We are excited to share our space and have an opportunity to be part of an exciting new venture.

PLYMOUTH AT WARM SPRINGS!

On World Communion Sunday, October 5, Plymouth will be worshiping at Warm Springs Presbyterian Church. Several other churches in the Presbytery have done this; Warm Springs is without a pastor, and this helps them quite a bit. Pastor Peter will be leading worship there; Pastor Pat will lead here at Plymouth for those not able to go. There will be sign-up sheets so people can make carpooling arrangements. We have given them much water, and several monetary gifts; now we can meet them and see their location. In addition: we will be among the first to see their renovated manse, to which we contributed! Mark your calendar and stay tuned; more details to follow.

MAKINDU

GUARDIANS: TRUE GLUE OF THE PROGRAM

The children live in the homes of "guardians", who are primarily elderly grandparents or distant relatives. The guardians willingly share their wisdom and compassion but have few material resources available; the average Makindu family makes less than \$20 a month and often supports a large compound of family members. The Center helps to support each of these family units so that the orphans are no longer seen as an intolerable burden. The kids regain their sense of family once again and are reunited with their community, rich in both heritage and wisdom. (from the website)

FRED MEYER COMMUNITY REWARDS

You can contribute to Plymouth Presbyterian Church by signing up for Fred Meyer Community Rewards. For every dollar you spend at Fred Meyer, they will donate a percentage to a charity of your choice. It does not take away any of your benefits or rewards. Go to <https://www.fredmeyer.com/i/community/communityrewards>. Or sign into your digital account, search for Plymouth Presbyterian Church or NPO# AC 499, enter the name or NPO#, select the organization from the list, and click "Save".



SEPTEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Worship and Nurture meeting, 1:00, at the church	3	4 Deacon's meeting, 10:00, at the church	5	6
7 Worship, 10:30 Avamere, 12:30	8	9	10 Session meeting, 1:00 p.m., in person, at the church	11	12 Cruise In 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	13
14 Worship, 10:30 2 nd annual St. Helens ecumenical potluck picnic – after worship until 3:00	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Worship, 10:30	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

PLYMOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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FIRST CLASS MAIL