

# Plymouth Presbyterian Church



December, 2025

Dear Friends,

As we enter this beautiful Christmas season, our hearts turn once again to the story that changed everything -- a story of hope born in a humble stable, of light shining in darkness, and of God doing something wonderfully new in the most unexpected way. Christmas reminds us that even when life feels heavy or complicated, renewal is possible. Scripture tells us, *"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light"* (Isaiah 9:2), and that great light still shines for us today.

Yet many of us find it difficult to step into that light because we're still holding tightly to things from the past. Old frustrations, unresolved hurts, disappointments, or even memories of seasons that felt easier can quietly weigh us down. While holding on may feel natural, Christmas invites us to open our hands and hearts to the new things God is doing. As Paul reminds us, *"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on..."* (Philippians 3:13–14).

Consider Mary and Joseph. They had plans, expectations, and a sense of what their future should look like. But when the angel appeared, everything changed. They could have clung to their original path, insisting life remain predictable. Instead, with courage and faith, they embraced God's new direction. Mary's response, *"May it be to me as you have said"* (Luke 1:38), shows a heart willing to release the familiar and receive the miraculous. Their willingness created space for the birth of the Savior.

Then there were the shepherds. They could have stayed in the fields, tending their flocks as they always did. But when the angels proclaimed the good news, they left their routines, fears, and comfort to seek the child (Luke 2:8–16). Their openness brought them face to face with God's promise fulfilled.

We are invited into this sacred movement—from holding on too tightly to stepping forward in trust. Maybe you're clinging to an old disappointment that has shaped how you see yourself. Perhaps a long-past success or failure still influences your decisions. Or maybe you're holding a season of life so dearly that moving forward feels uncertain. But Scripture assures us, *"See, I am doing a new thing... do you not perceive it?"* (Isaiah 43:19). God often meets us not in what is familiar, but in what is new.

This Christmas, I encourage you to take a quiet moment to reflect: What might God be inviting you to release? And what joy, peace, or purpose could be waiting as you step forward?

May this season be one of gentle renewal—an opportunity to breathe deeply, let go graciously, and walk forward with hope. The light that entered the world on that first Christmas continues to shine, guiding us into God's new beginnings.

Wishing you peace, joy, and renewed courage in Christ.

*Pastor Peter Blank*

## DECEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS

December 7: 2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11: 1-10 and Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19; Romans 15: 4-13; Matthew 3: 1-12

December 14: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35: 1-10 and Psalm 146: 5-10; James 5: 7-10; Matthew 11: 2-11

December 21: 4th Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7: 10-16 and Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19; Romans 1: 1-7; Matthew 1: 18-25

December 24: Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9: 2-7 and Psalm 96; Titus 2: 11-14; Luke 2: 1-14 (15-20)

December 25: Christmas Day

Dawn: Isaiah 62: 6-12 and Psalm 97; Titus 3: 4-7; Luke 2: (1-7) 8-20

Day: Isaiah 52: 7-10 and Psalm 98; Hebrews 1: 1-4 (5-12); John 1: 1-14

December 28: First Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 63: 7-9 and Psalm 148; Hebrews 2: 10-18; Matthew 2: 13-23



## ATTENDANCE

October 12 -- 31

October 19 -- 24

October 26 -- 31

November 2 -- 26

November 9-- 25

## MEETING SCHEDULE

### Deacons

The next Deacons meeting will be Thursday, December 4, 11:30 a.m., at Ken and Zelda Anderson's home. Bring your sack lunch; we will have a short meeting, and fellowship

### Session

The next Session meeting will be Wednesday, December 10, at 1:00 p.m., in the church library

HAPPY  
*Birthday*

December 2– Pat Berger  
December 9 – Pat Brown  
December 10 – Gina Harrington  
December 13 – Bill Eagle  
December 27 – Ken Anderson  
December 31 – Kathleen  
Dinwiddie



## FELLOWSHIP EVENT MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The PPC Christmas party and potluck is scheduled for Friday, December 12, at 4:30. Put on your holiday sweater and bring a dish to share and enjoy good food, fun games, and carol singing!

## SUNDAY HELPERS SCHEDULE

### December 7

**Communion set-up:** Adrienne Schilling

**Servers:** Zelda Anderson, Gina Harrington, Adrienne Schilling

**Greeters, ushers:** Ken, Zelda Anderson

**Lay leader:** Pat Berger

**Coffee hour:**

### December 14

**Greeter, usher:** Linda Gaskill

**Lay leader:** Marilyn Brinster

**Coffee hour:** Anita Kjos

### December 21

**Greeter, usher:** Jill Turner

**Lay Leader:** Linda Gaskill

**Coffee Hour:** Linda, Roger Liefeld

### December 28

**Greeters, ushers:** Kathleen, Mark Dinwiddie

**Lay leader:** Gina Harrington

**Coffee hour:** Kathleen, Mark Dinwiddie

## DID YOU KNOW?

Plymouth's website ([plychurch.org](http://plychurch.org)) has printed copies and audio of each week's sermon. Gina posts the audio the same week of the Sunday sermon. Check it out!



The deadline for the January newsletter is December 20. Please send articles to [pfb1202@yahoo.com](mailto:pfb1202@yahoo.com), phone Pat, give her articles on Sundays, or mail them to her. Thank you!

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS NEWS

A very BIG THANK YOU to all who helped to rake our leaves!

Titan Tree Service will be at PPC on December 12th to remove the front hedge and remove/trim the trees.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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.

## FRED MEYER REWARDS

Thank you, Plymouth Presbyterian Church members, for setting up your Fred Meyer account to benefit Plymouth Presbyterian Church with every purchase. Thirteen households earned us \$30.30 in Q3 for the church. If you would like help setting up your FM account, contact Kathleen for assistance. This does not take away any of your rewards.

# THE BAZAAR!!

Our annual Bazaar was a great success! From the minute we opened we were "crazy busy" all day long. Karen & Sharon worked hard to bring back our lunch which is always a great draw and adds to the fun atmosphere of the event. In addition to folks shopping, it was great watching friends greeting and sharing conversation. Often during the day, I was told that this is "the best Bazaar in the area". Wow, what a compliment!

As always, we continued our sale Sunday after church. Over the two days we raised \$4,303.75, an increase of \$1,527 over the weekend sales last year! Thanks to all who donated product and time to make this a wonderful event.

As always, we will have some remaining items out for sale through December, cards and jams/jellies all year. Thanks for all the hard work and contributions to this event.

Adrienne Schilling, Bazaar Chair



## FINANCE NEWS

Submitted by: Sharon Fraser, Finance Elder

### OCTOBER INCOME & EXPENSE SUMMARY

DESCRIPTION	OCT 2025	YTD 2025
Total Income	\$8,456	\$71,718
Total Expenses	\$7,022	\$68,215
Net Operating Budget	\$1,434	\$3,503

The Net Operating Budget reflects a surplus of \$1,434 for the month of October and we also have a surplus of \$3,503 for YTD 2025.

### PLYMOUTH RESERVES

As of October 31, Plymouth Church had \$53,031 in checking and savings combined; plus \$128,475 in our investment accounts. These continue to be strong reserves.

### DESIGNATED FUND BALANCES

#### Carry forward as of 10/31/25

Boxing Day	\$ 323.15
Change for Change	\$ 85.77
Deacons Fund	\$ 643.44
Habitat for Humanity	\$ 250.00
Makindu	\$ 100.00
Memorial Funds	\$ 3,513.32
Mission Market	\$ 1,441.47
Alice Brewer Bequeathment	\$ 63,289.09

## MISSION UPDATES

The amount that Plymouth gets to send locally from the Peace and Global Witness offering is \$280, and will go to the CRPUD Glow Funds.

Quarter Four funds from Change for Change will be going to Columbia Pacific Food Bank (H.E.L.P.).

## CONCERT INVITATION

Our wonderful musician, Margaret Smith, has invited us to her upcoming piano performances. She will be a part of concerts on December 10, at 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 494 E. Main St., Hillsboro, and on December 17, at 7:30 p.m. at Liberty High School, 7445 NE Wagon Dr., Hillsboro.

## BUTTER COLLECTION

Plymouth members donated a total of 50 pounds of butter this year for Community meals. Thank you!

## NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

A new, updated church directory is in the works, and will be available in December.

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Plymouth Presbyterian Church will be held in January, date to be determined soon.

## MAKINDU

Many young siblings of the children in our program are born at home. The basic application process of acquiring a birth certificate can be daunting for the desperately poor mothers. Families receive assistance in navigating this process so that the child has an identity number and access to social services - limited as those are.

The Center offers free community seminars open to all community members on a multitude of subjects, including child advocacy and protection, women's rights (both ethically and legally within Kenya), HIV/AIDS, and more. These workshops have helped to connect many, many villagers over the years to other resource groups within Kenya to assist them.

The kids and families within the Program are given many talks and tools to help guide them to becoming more confident and self-empowered, more capable of advocacy, and more independent and self-sufficient.



## WHAT IS 2026 PER CAPITA AND BASIC MISSION SUPPORT?

At the October 25, 2025, Stated Meeting of the Presbytery, ministers and commissioners voted to set the **2026 Per Capita at \$50.00 per member**, based on your church's 2024 membership.

**Per Capita** is the shared cost of supporting the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at every level:

Governing Body Amount per Member  
General Assembly \$11.26  
Synod of the Pacific \$ 5.22  
Presbytery of the Cascades \$33.52  
Total Per Member \$50.00

### Presbyterian Partnership Giving Pledge

Partnership Giving (Basic Mission Support) provides direct support for our mission congregation at Warm Springs Presbyterian Church, as well as funding Presbytery services, New Worshiping Communities, and mission support to our Synod and General Assembly not covered by per capita. Plymouth Presbyterian Church of St Helens has pledged \$1,620.00 for 2026.

## WHAT DOES OUR MONEY DO?

One example: Thanks to a transformative collaboration between Living Waters for the World Haiti and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, Meyer, Haiti, has received a water purification system that promises to bring health, dignity and relief to families who have struggled far too long without reliable access to *clean water*. The system, installed solely by Haitians, is located at a very large Catholic church. The church has more than 1,000 parishioners and also operates a school on site. Upon dedication of the system on June 1, clean water is now being provided to the school children, the church community, and the Meyer community at large.

# DECEMBER 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4 Deacon meeting, 11:30, at Anderson's	5	6
7 Worship, 10:30  Avamere, 12:30	8	9	10  Session meeting, 1:00, church library	11	12  Christmas party and potluck, 4:30	13
14  Worship, 10:30	15	16	17	18	19	20
21  Worship, 10:30	22	23	24  Christmas Eve worship, 3:00	25	26	27
28  Worship, 10:30	29	30	31			

PLYMOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2615 SYKES ROAD

ST. HELENS, OR 97051

**FIRST CLASS**  
**MAIL**