



Progressive, Inclusive, Home
firstplymouth
 congregational church



January 2012

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Whole Earth Study Group and Whole Earth Group
 Greening our Faith & Transforming our Whole Earth Covenant



In October, our church focused on *our faith's call to care for all of Creation*, in worship, in prayer, in action, and in Christian formation and education. These efforts are the first steps in what will be an on-going, conscious act of nurturing a deeper understanding of our responsibilities as Christians to recognize and acknowledge the significant pressure humankind places on our planet, its diversity of life and ecosystems, and people at the margins of society/consumer culture.

We learned in October that the congregation is interested in both the big transformational ideas and the smaller practical efforts like composting and the local food movement.

Over the next year, the Whole Earth Study Group will continue to discuss ideas to keep a forward momentum. Troy Abfalter has offered to lead a monthly hike or outdoor experience; we're considering a quarterly speaker program about "big ideas" like the industrial food system and western water issues; and we will be working with Rev. Eric Smith and Noanie Geistert to incorporate programs for youth, children, and families. Eco-Justice Ministries Rev. Peter Sawtell continues to offer guidance, and we are also partnering with Ministry of Christian Education for a Lenten series titled "Simple Abundance."

If you have an idea along these lines, and especially if you're willing to lead it, we would love to hear about it and support your efforts. One aspect of the transformation we're attempting is to not be a "Whole Earth Committee" but a "Whole Earth People." Contact one of us if you'd like to be more involved

Whole Earth Study Group: Mary Kay Kernan, Pete Fogg, Anne Kleinkopf, Galen and Carolyn Weaver, Keith Conner, Laurie Klisaris, Doug and Noanie Geistert, Eileen Robinson, and Jan McCoy and Pam Schmidt, Co-Chairs

Whole Earth Committee: Craig Eley, Ginnie Heddens, Ken and Diane Hoagland, Pam and Paul Erickson, Jackie Geist, Debbie Harrington, and Kari Collins

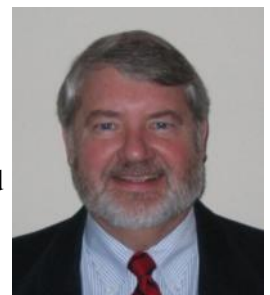
Coming in 2012 – "I need...." and "I 'd like to pass along..."

Stewardship of Creation can also include good stewardship of our possessions – those we use, and those we no longer need. While many of us donate unneeded items to charities, there may be some needs within the congregation that we can help fill.

Beginning in January, a portion of the Whole Earth Bulletin board will be set up to facilitate matching items we no longer use and need with someone who can benefit from them. We'll use post-its; write your item and your name and contact information and place in the appropriate column. For example, you might have a sewing machine you no longer use, or you might need a bicycle. This is a work-in-progress - we'll see how things go, and modify as necessary. (Thanks to Andrea Anastos for the idea.)

Reverend Jim Deming, Sunday February 5

The Stewardship Ministry and the Whole Earth Group are honored to host Reverend Jim Deming as our guest preacher for Stewardship Sunday. Rev. Deming, Minister of Environmental Justice for the UCC, will preach on the theme that stewardship means protecting and supporting the things we say we value. Is there a common ethic and a common language that guides intentional stewardship of the things we value in this world, whether that be our church or Creation?





Worship Opportunities

Sunday Morning at First Plymouth

- 8:45 a.m.** Fellowship and Adult Christian Education/Formation
9:00 a.m. Choir/Musician Rehearsal
10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary/Children's Sunday School
 Contemplative Worship in the Chapel
11:15 a.m. Fellowship, Children's Choir, Adult Christian Formation

8:30 a.m. through the end of the 10:00 a.m. service: Nursery Care in B09

January 1 - Service of Holy Communion Rev. George Anastos Revelation 21:1-6a

New Year's Day. New Year's resolutions. January is the busiest month of the year at fitness centers; by February things are back to normal. But what if we discovered a way to keep our New Year's resolutions?

January 8 - Baptism of Jesus Rev. George Anastos Acts 19:1-7

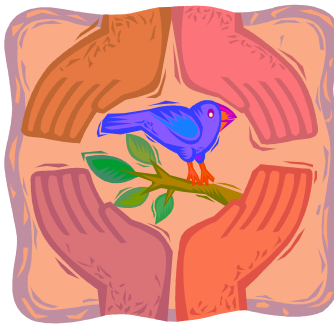
The book of Acts is one of the lesser known books of the bible to most "liberals" and "progressives." It has so much to say about evangelism and that often does not sit well with many. Today's passage might fit well into the liberal's discomfort. Then again, a second read may actually open up other possibilities for a different sense of engagement altogether.

Sunday, January 15 Anne Kleinkopf 1 Samuel 3: 1 - 10

We are in the second week of what the church calls "ordinary time" – and today's readings tell of divine calls heard by ordinary people in ordinary times, urging them to do extraordinary things. Does God still call to us today – ordinary people in our own ordinary times? Do we have the courage and hope to open our ears and hearts to divine promptings, to say "Here I am!" when we are offered the vision and challenge of new life?

January 22 Rev. George Anastos Jonah 3:1-5, 10

After two millennia of plying its version of religion, you would think the Church might actually have succeeded in bringing about Peace on Earth. Nope. Hasn't happened. Maybe that is because we are not supposed to be plying a trade. Maybe that is because the Church was never, ever called to "succeed" but only to be faithful. Maybe that is



because the Church lost a sense of mission and started to care more for the institution rather than the institution's purpose. Maybe it's because it all seems so futile: we've been at it for 2,000 years and so little has changed. Or maybe, just maybe, there is something else going on here.

January 29 Rev. George Anastos Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Prophets are so...cantankerous. They are SUCH a pain in the patouie (that's Greek for "elbow.") (Kidding.) Seriously, though, prophets ARE hard to take sometimes. They point out what we try to ignore. They shine lights in corners we don't like to see. They say words that elicit strong reactions. But what if one of us, or all of us as a church, is called to be a prophet? It's hard enough being disciples. But prophets?

January Lectionary Texts

Jan. 1	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Psalm 148	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40
Jan. 8	Genesis 1:1-5	Psalm 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
Jan. 15	1 Samuel 3:1-10 , (11-20)	Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
Jan. 22	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Psalm 62:5-12	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
Jan. 29	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	Psalm 111	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28

Minister & Moderator's Corner

Moderator's Corner

*And we, we took the road less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

- Robert Frost

Until recently, church success was measured by increasing the number of people in the pews on Sunday and the financial commitments they made. By those measures, the church is dying. Nationally, locally, and at First Plymouth both attendance and pledging have been on a steady decline since at least 1968. At First Plymouth we have tried repeatedly to grow our numbers and our finances, only to find ourselves falling farther behind within a short time.

First Plymouth, like many other mainline churches, must grow or die. But how do we grow if those traditional methods are ineffective? If we are to survive--and thrive--we have to grow our church *spiritually*. Our hope must lie in becoming disciples in an authentically Christian church, a church guided by the scriptures and spiritual practices of the Christian tradition. We must learn to pray, to discern, to reach out. We must learn to let go of those things which are not essential to our mission or which will not welcome the people who are not yet with us. We must also become a church not for ourselves, but for the world.

Mike Rinehart, Lutheran bishop of Louisiana, recently wrote these words:

The turnaround of the mainline churches will happen when we in those churches care as much about those outside the church as we do those inside. To embrace relevance, we will have to let go of survival.

I encourage you to read the whole article at <http://tlgconnections.wordpress.com/2011/12/02/insiders-and-outsiders/#comment-85>

At the Council retreat in November, we spent the day grappling with the following questions:

- What is First Plymouth doing now that transforms lives?
- What core qualities of First Plymouth you think are the *essential gifts* we have *been given*.
- Imagine First Plymouth 5 years from now. What initiatives do you think the Spirit may have sprouted and begun growing in the church without our planning or work?
- What do you think we will be focused on growing intentionally?

We affirmed that First Plymouth is already transforming the world--we certainly don't need to start from scratch. We have a strong foundation to build on. We explored the many gifts we have been given and acknowledged that much of our growth as a transformational church will be nurtured and guided by the Spirit and carried out by our efforts.

At our second retreat in January we will focus on how to involve the whole congregation in the process of discernment--of listening to the promptings of God about becoming a transformed and transforming church. There will be a congregational meeting January 29 to give more details on the Council's reflections. In the spring we will be inviting each you to small groups to continue the process of charting our course for the next few years.

Meanwhile, let us all ask God to send us the people we need to carry out our mission, and to be a church they would like to attend.

Peg Thompson, Moderator

moderator@firstplymouthchurch.org



Minister's Meditation

The LORD God will raise up for you a prophet...from among your own people
(Deuteronomy 18:15)

Can an entire congregation have a prophetic voice? Can a gathered group of disciples be the voice crying the wilderness? the voice proclaiming justice? the voice painting a vision of healing, of comfort, of rest?

When we consider the prophets of our own age—Aung San Suu Kyi, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr.—we are struck by the fact that there is really very little difference between them and us. Almost no difference at all. They eat and rest as we do. They are inspired by the same vision of peace on earth, goodwill to all as we are. They want a world of justice and mercy for all, just as we desire the same.

So what is the difference between them and us?

All around us exists a community that longs for a prophetic voice in its midst. Our neighbors sicken and die for lack of healthcare. Our environment sickens, and in places dies, for lack of a sustainable relationship with what God's has created. Our political system continues to sicken with polarized rhetoric and posturing for lack of grownups. It all seems so out of control. We function as best we can as madness swirls around us. We look for our havens of sanity and rest as refuge from a world gone amok.

All around us exists a community that longs for a prophetic voice in its midst.

What is the difference between prophets and us?



Children's Programs

Noanie O'Brien Geistert, Director
fpchildren@firstplymouthchurch.org

Heifer Project

Our kids did a fabulous job raising money for our year-long effort for the Heifer Project. The Alternative Gift Market fundraising was coordinated by Eileen Robinson, ably assisted by Jenna Luttkus, Vicki Krieger, Amy Erickson, David and Gus Thorpe, Jane, Rolf, Jonathan and Ben Asphaug, Heather, Troy, Avery, and Henry Greenwood and the rest of the Robinson family, Sam, Ben and Zach. Our bake sale made a whopping \$648 – a huge thank you to Dorothy Eckert, who donated so many and tasty items, and thanks to others who also contributed baked goods. Our Heifer table in Plymouth Hall made \$449 for a total of \$1,047 from the AGM alone. Our grand total for the year is also includes the individual fundraising efforts of Avery Greenwood, Henry Greenwood, Annie Possehl, Ellen Possehl, and Hadden Spencer.

Caitlin Boykin Wins Best in Show

Congratulations to our Nursery Manager, Caitlin Boykin, who won Best in Show for her original art out of over 100 pieces entered in the APCD/ MSCD art auction. The event was sponsored by the Colorado based non-profit Asian Pacific Refugees in conjunction with Metro State College, where Caitlin is a senior.

As we begin the new year, we at Children's Ministries wish you all a happy and healthy new year filled with goals that are met and dreams fulfilled for you and your loved ones. Our new year resolution to you is to make our program bigger and better for your child with the tremendous help of our wonderful volunteers.

We thank our Cherub Choir and the First Plymouth Children's Choristers, along with Directors, Erika Henkart and Frank Perko III, for the wonderful Christmas Eve family service. Thanks also to the children who helped tell the Nativity story and the candy cane elves. They all did a super job!

Thanks to Leigh Green and Ann Lane for teaching our **elementary kids** in December. This month the children are so lucky to have Dave and Heidi Thomas for the January rotation of their *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum. January topics:

Date	Theme	Worship Emphasis	Verse
1/1	No Class	Intergenerational Worship Service	
1/8	New Beginnings	To ponder being God's beloved children	Mk 1:4-11
1/15	Called and Recalled	To recognize God's call: Samuel and Eli	1 Sam 3:1-10
1/22	Moving Forward	To hear the call to follow Jesus	Mk 1:14-20
1/29	With Authority	To recognize Jesus as a powerful teacher and healer who builds community.	Mk 1:21-28

Our **Communion class**, taught by Lisa Ray, will begin January 15 and is open to first graders and anyone else who is interested. Communion Sunday will be February 26. To sign your child up, contact Noanie Geistert.

Our **Early Childhood class**, ages 3 through kindergarten, is so lucky to have such superb teams teaching them throughout the year, giving so generously and tirelessly of their time. The teachers and their youth helpers are:

First Sunday: Nancy Joe Shaw and Pat Gunckel with Cassie Calhoun-Liebnow and Penny Riggins

Second Sunday: Jerry and Betty Arca with Madeleine and Jacqueline Adams.

Third Sunday: Marian Camden and Ingrid Serio with Anna, Michael, and Kate Serio

Fourth Sunday: Gini and Bill Blunden through March, and Nancy and Pete Fogg in April and May, with Jacqueline and Madeleine Adams doing double duty for us!

The *Rock Solid* curriculum themes this month are:

Date	Theme	Faith Point	Story
1/1	New Year's Day	No Class, Nursery Only	
1/8	Jesus at the Temple	To learn about God as Jesus learned	Lk 2:41-52
1/15	Jesus is Baptized	Jesus is the Son of God	Mt 3:13-17
1/22	Jesus calls the Fishermen	Jesus invites us to follow him	Mk 1:16-20
1/29	Jesus calls Matthew	Jesus invites us to follow and help him.	Mk2:13-17

Adult Education & Spiritual Formation



The Haskins Lectures

“Questioning Christianity” The 2012 Haskins Lectures

The Christian Education Ministry is excited to announce a new lecture and discussion series at First Plymouth! This series both revives an old tradition – the Haskins Lectures – and begins a new tradition – a monthly series of lectures and discussions by noted scholars and religious authorities on challenging, contemporary topics.

These lecture/discussions will introduce you to mind-opening new perspectives on religious issues and will give you the opportunity to ask all of those troubling questions you’ve always been afraid to ask. Each speaker will lecture twice: once on Sunday afternoon from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and again on Wednesday evening from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.. Every presentation will include both a lecture and a discussion period with the audience and refreshments and conversation afterwards. A good will offering will be taken at each event.

Mark your calendar for every lecture, and invite your friends!

January 22 and 25

Rev. Dr. Stuart Haskins, Minister Emeritus
First Plymouth Congregational Church
“Challenging Christianity”

February 26 and 29

Dr. Pamela Eisenbaum, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies
Iliff School of Theology
“Scribes, Scrolls and Scripts: How the Bible Was Transcribed, Transmitted, and Translated, and the Implication for Today”

March 11 and 14

Dr. Gregory Robbins, Chair, Department of Religious Studies
University of Denver
“Why Are Americans Giving Up on God (Tim Tebow Notwithstanding)?”

April 15 and 18

Dr. Sofia Shafi, Visiting Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies
Iliff School of Theology
“‘It Happens All the Time in Heaven’: Islam’s Tradition of Extreme Love”

May 20 and 23

Dr. Edward Antonio, Associate Professor of Christian Theology and
Social Theory, Iliff School of Theology
“The AIDS Crisis in Africa: The Threat to Christianity”

Many thanks to the First Plymouth Endowment Committee for making this series possible!



Sunday Morning Offerings for Adults

All of our Sunday classes welcome drop-ins and regular participants. Check them out and see which ones fit you!

Bible Basics and Beyond Bible Basics and Beyond will resume on January 8. We will be reading and studying Marcus Borg's new book, *Speaking Christian: Why Christian Words have Lost Their Meaning and Power - and How They Can Be Restored*. The book is available at bookstores throughout the metro area and online at Amazon.com. All are welcome to participate; just bring an open mind and prepare for lively discussions in this lay-led study.

For further information about the class contact Bill James at BJames5317@aol.com or Fletcher Brown at brownsinco@q.com.

Bible Workbench - 8:30 a.m.
Columbine Room

Led by lay facilitators, this lectionary-based class asks questions about how the inner meaning of a text might be active in today's world and how it might have personal meaning. The mission of Bible Workbench is to equip people to become interpreters of life and to enable them to decipher the meaning of their own experience. For more information, please contact Chip Cole at 303-693-0485.



Share the Plate

Each month, First Plymouth's Ministry of Christian Outreach chooses a worthy organization with which to Share the Plate. Eighty percent of loose offerings and those offerings put in Share the Plate pew envelopes are donated to the organization designated for that month, with the remainder going to Outreach to help organizations who make *ad hoc* requests for help. Proceeds from the fifth Sunday Share the Plate in January will go to the Ministers Discretionary Fund.

In January, we will again be Sharing the Plate with Work Options for Women. Founded in 1997, WOW is a nonprofit social enterprise that trains women for food service industry jobs to help them gain the skills and confidence they need to work their way out of poverty and become gainfully and permanently employed.

Your Outreach Ministry hopes all FPer's will join it in supporting Work Options for Women during January. To learn more about this organization, visit workoptions.org.

Outreach/Mission

Habitat Happenings – Around the World

First Plymouth proudly supports the Loaves and Fishes coalition of Habitat for Humanity with volunteer work and financial help, focusing on building one new home in Denver each year. But Habitat also offers opportunities to take part in "builds" all over the world.

Jeanne Fischetti, volunteer program manager for Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver, has enjoyed two adventures as a Habitat Global Village volunteer. "In 2004 I went to Guatemala with 15 volunteers and staff members from Metro Denver Habitat," she says, "and in 2010 I joined a local team to work in Macedonia." She recalls, "In Guatemala homes are built of cinder blocks. We spent a week in a rural village, unloading cinder blocks from a semi-trailer and carrying them up one hill and down the next along a dirt path to the work site. It was hard work! We were exhausted at the end of the day, but it was a lot of fun. I got to know one woman and her family who had been living in a glorified shack. They were tremendously excited to have a safe, solid home with actual rooms."

In contrast, the Macedonia volunteers worked on two three-story blocks of townhouses in the city of Veles, where unemployment exceeds 30 percent. Jeanne met one family – a couple, their daughter, and the husband's parents – who were living in a summer cabin and running a pig farm because the husband had lost his industrial job. They have now moved into their new three-bedroom townhouse.

Volunteers pay their own airfare and a program cost that covers nearly all in-country expenses. Trips ranging from Argentina to Zambia (as well as 26 other countries) are already scheduled for 2012. Visit habitat.org for information on destinations, costs, and many other details for each trip. Click on "Get Involved," then on "Volunteer Programs" and "Global Village Programs."



Loaves and Fishes in Mexico



Can Do

Congratulations and thank you First Plymouth on a Can Do success in November! We filled the Can Do cart with nearly 900 pounds of food. It was a beautiful sight.

Please remember our next Can Do Sunday on January 15. Start the New Year out by taking advantage of after-Christmas sales on lots of items that are good all year round.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You

A Big Thank You...and Did You Know???

A note from Frank Perko III, Director of Music

On behalf of the Department of Music at First Plymouth Congregational Church, I would like to thank the First Plymouth Endowment Committee for their continued support and generosity in the funding of much needed continuing education opportunities for the music staff. In the summer of 2010, the First Plymouth Endowment funded my convention and travel expenses for the American Guild of Organists bi-annual National Convention in Washington D.C. While in Washington D.C., I attended classes in working with clergy and music, hymn-playing and leadership, improvisation at the organ, multidenominational trends in worship, MIDI and digital technologies in music, new choir music reading sessions, and leading worship in the style of Taizé. I was also able to make valuable connections with acousticians and to accumulate material dealing with sanctuary. Music was also purchased our Taizé services, for other worship services, and for our Chancel Choir and Orchestra concerts.

Former Associate Director of Music Gwen Blumenschein attended a national handbell conference for in the summer of 2011. This conference and its expenses were also funded by the First Plymouth Endowment. Gwen obtained many new ideas, materials, and techniques for the of leading and teaching our handbell choir here at First Plymouth. Though Gwen is no longer at First Plymouth, she has continued to share with our new Associate Director of Music, Benjamin Ehrlich, much of the information that she gathered.

Again, many thanks and gratitude to the First Plymouth Endowment Committee.

Carole Westphal Appreciation Sunday is January 22

It is with a mixture of gratitude and sadness that we acknowledge Carole Westphal's retirement as Director of Administration. Although she announced her plans two years ago, it is still hard to say goodbye (staff-wise) to this remarkable woman. Carole will remain as a member of the First Plymouth community. We will be honoring Carole on Sunday, January 22, both during the 10:00 a.m. worship service and at a reception following the service.

When we spoke with Carole about a parting gift, she told us that she is busy divesting herself of "stuff" in order to live a simpler life in her new RV. She has asked that we thank her by making donations in her name to Loaves & Fishes, the Habitat for Humanity consortium of which First Plymouth is a member. Carole has been an enthusiastic Habitat supporter and volunteer for many years and plans to continue her involvement as part of their Care-A-Vanners program for RV owners. Your donations will help purchase the materials needed for the home that *Loaves & Fishes* builds each year in the Denver area. Your donations may be made to First Plymouth and are tax deductible. The church (and Carole) both thank you for your generosity!



Notes of Thanks

First Plymouth Members,

A quick note to speak of my overwhelming sense of gratitude for all that has been give me on this journey. From the support and nurture of First Plymouth family, to the thoughtful and moving questions of the In-Care journey . . . THANK YOU. Finally, I am honored and moved by the beautiful gift of the cross. How amazing to know of its connection each time I put it on. Blessings!

Rev. Corbin Tobey-Davis

On behalf of the community members, staff and Board of Directors of Karis Community, I would like to thank First Plymouth Congregational Church for their very generous financial contribution. Your generosity helps us keep our rent fees down (\$540 a month for a single room, \$439 a month for a shared room) so we can help as many people as possible. Thank you for being agests of God's goodness and love through your support!

Grace and Peace,
E.J. Barkley, Executive Director.





Fellowship

Travel Club

Why do Italian hotels have the world's smallest elevators? Why don't their windows have screens? Why does Michelangelo's "David" sport a gargantuan claw for a right hand? These and other important questions will be addressed (although not necessarily answered) at January's Travel Club. In November, 32 First Plymouth members traveled with our youth director, Eric Smith, to Italy. They went to see Venice, Rome, Pompeii, Florence, Pisa and all the sights those cities have to offer. Since it would have been great fun to go with them, at least now we can have a chance to share in the adventure. Craig has volunteered to tell their saga but I am sure others will be there to defend themselves and offer some variations on the tale.



Thursday Afternoon Circle

The Thursday Afternoon Circle meets on January 12 at 12:30 p.m. for socializing and refreshments and 1:00 p.m. for its program. Carole Westphal will tell us about her travels to Easter Island. If you would like to attend, please call Phyllis Rigsby at 303-693-0187, or just show up!

Men's Fellowship Breakfast

Men's Fellowship Breakfast is Saturday, January 14, in the Commons Room from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Enjoy a hearty home-cooked breakfast and good fellowship with FP men. Newcomers are especially welcome!

Our speaker will be Fred Joseph, the Banking and Securities Commissioner of Colorado. Despite being engaged in what some may consider a fairly dry area of endeavor, Fred is known for his sense of humor in relating the misadventures of some of Colorado's more recent hucksters, swindlers, charlatans and rogues. Soapy Smith could have learned from these guys!

For more information about Men's Fellowship, contact Fletcher Brown at brownsinco@gmail.com.



Couldn't go on the Italy Trip? This Travel Club Meeting will be the next best thing!



In Other News...



CAMP NEWS

Save the Date for 2012

It's never too early to start thinking about the best week of every summer – Community Camp at La Foret!! Camp is July 22-28, 2012, in the amazing beauty of Colorado's Black Forest at the La Foret Conference and Retreat Center just outside of Colorado Springs. This year's theme is "Believing, Being, Becoming: Living Our History." We will learn about our past, discover new things about our present journey, and envision what our future might possibly look like, both as a community of faith and as individuals. Registration will begin in March, and we hope you can join us for an amazing week. Any questions? Please contact Jason Spillman at jspillman@nglsupply.com or Erika Henkart at ehenkart@gmail.com.

Your Support is Appreciated to Keep the Spirit of La Foret Alive

La Foret serves thousands of children, youth, and families every year. Our facilities provide a safe and beautiful environment that hosts countless events. While 95% of our operating budget comes from leasing the facilities, this only covers the cost of daily expenses such as utilities and support staff. La Foret relies on donations and other support to raise the necessary funds to maintain our historic buildings and grounds.

Help ensure La Foret's legacy by making a financial contribution. All donations are 100% tax deductible and you can contribute by:

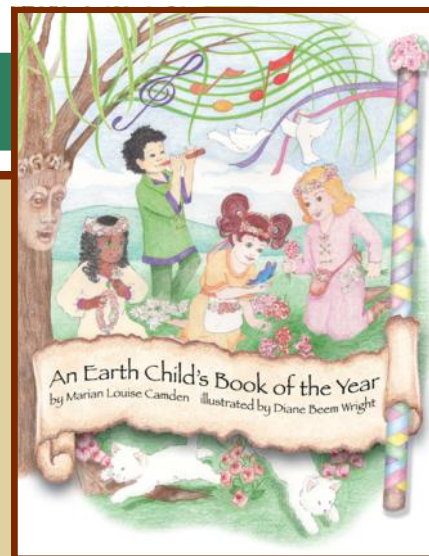
- Sending your check made payable to: La Foret, 6145 Shoup Road, Colorado Springs, CO 80908.
- Calling our office at 719-495-2743 to make a donation by credit card
- Picking up a donation packet at Mission Central during the month of January

La Foret has been providing a place for spiritual growth and nurture for over 50 years – please help us keep it going for another 50. Thank you!



Reverend Eric Smith's Role at First Plymouth

In 2007 when Eric joined us as Youth and Young Adults Director he was clear that he would be staying four to five years. As we are approaching the end of his fifth year with us we are speaking about ways to keep Eric on staff. His exceptional gifts in education and preaching are just two of the areas that we have learned to appreciate his extraordinary gifts. The Mission Team and the Council are in dialogue about this and we will keep you informed.



FPCC Member Marian Camden Publishes *An Earth Child's Book of the Year*

Our very own Marian Camden has just published two wonderful children's books which she sold at the Alternative Gift Market for the benefit of the Heifer Project. The first book is *An Earth Child's Book of the Year*, a beautifully illustrated book with Marian's lyrical prose about the wonders of the Earth's changing seasons. The second book is *An Earth Child's Book of Verse*, a poetic accompaniment to her first book. Marian is a licensed psychologist specializing in help for children and their families.

Student Art Show January 20-February 12

Arts at Plymouth will host this annual event which consists of a juried art show. The exhibitors are all area high school students. Look for some interesting, edgy work from talented young people. A reception will be held after church on February 12 to award prizes and meet the student artists. All are welcome.



Around the Parish: Ministries of Care Opportunities

Flower Delivery: As a visible and tangible expression of care for our beloved community, First Plymouth has delivered flowers to homebound and hospitalized members for years. The Pastoral Care Office is looking for a volunteer to coordinate the weekly delivery of flowers. Please contact Nanette or Terry.

Prayer Teams: Are you seeking a way to serve others? First Plymouth members have a long-standing commitment to pray for one another, and our prayer teams are one vehicle to facilitate that. If you feel moved to pray for others, please contact Nanette and Terry in Pastoral Care.

Planning Ahead? Pastoral Care has copies of *Memorial Service Planning* and *Five Wishes* for anyone to use.

We Are The Church Together

Terry Crews & Nanette Harland, Pastoral Care Coordinators

pastoralcare@firstplymouthchurch.org • 303-762-0616 x225

Joys & Concerns

The Share the Care handbook talks about the healing journey: "Everyone has the ability to heal, but the form of healing is different for each of us. Some of us heal with our hands, some with our laughter, some with our stories, some with our faith. We heal with the funny get well card, the homemade lasagna, the lighting of a candle. We heal by having the courage to tell the truth. We heal others out of the things we've come to terms with in our own life—our own pain, our own disappointments our own illnesses."

Joe and **Dedra Merrill** happily announce the birth of their son, Tanner Joseph, on November 12. Family members include grandparents **Dale** and **Kristi Zimmerman** and aunts and uncles Tom and **Leah Huxtable** and **Andrew** and **Erika Henkart**.

Gates Roe's brother Peter and his wife Laura lost their daughter, Caitrin Claire Roe, at childbirth on 11/11/11 in Austin, Texas. Rev. George Anastos conducted the memorial service, assisted by musicians Heidi and Trinity Thomas.

Caitlin Boykin, our Nursery Manager, and goddaughter of **Doug** and **Noanie Geistert**, received the Best in Show at the November 11 art auction sponsored by the Asian Pacific Development Center (a Colorado based organization that supports Asian Pacific Refugees) and Metropolitan State College of Denver. The two organizations worked together to raise funds for the children involved with APCD. More than 100 pieces of art were entered in the competition.

Virginia (Ginnie) Fraser, long time member of Ridge Road Congregational Church and active participant in the Rocky Mountain Conference, died November 18. Her daughter Cindy is married to **Frank** and **Marion Taylor's** son Brad. Memorial service was held at First Plymouth on November 29.

Teena and **Jim Brenkendorff's** infant grandson Caeden James Carrington is in the neonatal intensive care unit in Heidelberg, Germany. Please keep Teena and Jim and his parents Tianna and Jay in your prayers.

Laura Bauman is receiving in-home hospice care. Now is the time to put your thoughts into action and send a card or a check; no visits or calls/texts please. Please keep the Bauman/Wilson family in your prayers. Continue to follow Laura's journey through her Caring Bridge site: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/laurabauman>.

A group of First Plymouth volunteers directed by **Ardy Cowperthwaite** hosted the annual Senior Luncheon December 6. The luncheon was underwritten by the Women's Fellowship Fund. **Lois McClosky** and **Nini Post** entertained the exuberant crowd. Our thanks to the many volunteers who made this event successful.

Lucile Leopold died Monday, December 5, at the age of 99. Rev. George Anastos presided over a memorial service on December 7 at First Plymouth. Remember Lucille's son, Honorable **John P. Leopold** (Ret.), and his wife Terry in your prayers.

Ryan English, age 19, nephew of **Beth Baker Owens** and **Kent Owens**, died November 26 in an automobile accident. His mother, Jo English, would like to thank La Foret and the members of First Plymouth for making Community Camp one of the best memories of Ryan's young life. Please keep Jo and Ryan's cousins, Keefe, Kelsey, and Kirk, in your prayers.



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*Happy
New Year!*

**Browse the First Plymouth
Library Catalog online at
www.librarything.com/catalog/Firstplymouth**



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The Back Page

The Newsletter Deadline for the February Issue is
Tuesday, January 10!

Send your articles and information to:

news@firstplymouthchurch.org

(Or put them in the newsletter box in the church office.)

Late submissions may not be included,
 and all submissions are subject to editing.

Special Thanks to:

Newsletter Assemblers: Ellyn Domnik, Ginny Galloway, Corrine Lude, Glen Pray, Phyllis Rigsby, Jerre Wilson, and Claire Yetter

Church Office Volunteers: Myra Kolditz, Linda Glenn, Nancy Cole, Kari Collins, Betsy Lewis, Carolyn Weaver, Marilyn Mattson, and Dalyce Due

Sunday Office Volunteers: Dottie Herbertson, Ginny Galloway, and Elaine Hoss

Sanctuary Straighteners: Fred Fowler and Marion Woodward

Flower Arrangers: Jan Spomer and Heidi Stevenson

Data Base Clerks: Marilyn Mattson and Suzanne Moser

Archivist and Historian: Don Zeller

DVD Maker: Alan Long

Music Librarians: Heidi Thomas and Alan Long

Assistant Treasurers: Don Zeller, Debbie Harrington, Wayne Langley, and Betty Stevenson

And to all of the other volunteers who help to carry out First Plymouth's mission in so many ways. We often don't know who you are or even that you have undertaken the task, but we very much appreciate your continued dedication and commitment – thank you, thank you, thank you!

Tales from the Archives

When First Plymouth moved to the corner of Hampden Avenue and Colorado Boulevard in 1958, the area had no infrastructure such as water. By arrangement with the Denver Water Board, First Plymouth became its own water district under a distributorship agreement with Denver Water, holding license #148. As a distributor the church was responsible for setting up and maintaining the water mains and granting water taps for the mostly vacant area. Over time, as the area began to build up, First Plymouth had several customers for water, including the Nazarene Church to the west of the First Plymouth and the Cherry Hills Elementary School which was located where the Colorado Community Church is now.

In 1979, Church leadership became concerned about the potential liability involved in maintaining 1800 feet of six-inch water mains. At a special business meeting in the summer of 1980, Joe Field of the Business Ministry committee presented a proposal to request Denver Water to “amend our contract service area into the Mansfield Heights Water and Sanitation District and terminate our Distributors Contract #148.” The congregation voted approval of the proposal. The change-over was scheduled to take effect on October 22, 1980. As luck would have it, one of the mains broke on October 13 and cost \$2,000 (in 1980 dollars) to repair. The cost of the repair was shared with the Cherry Creek School District.

The Mansfield Heights Water district was later absorbed by Denver Water.

January Birthday Wishes...

...to Our Seniors

1/1 Corinne Lude
 1/5 Rosemary Smith
 1/6 Charleen Roberts
 1/6 George Young
 1/7 Elizabeth Eha
 1/7 Ray Kirkpatrick
 1/9 Jan Humphreys
 1/10 Dana Switzer
 1/11 Marion Taylor
 1/17 John Humphreys
 1/17 Chuck Willis
 1/18 Eleanor Olvey
 1/20 Herb Dunham

1/24 Jeanne Ehekircher

1/29 Polly Angelo

1/30 Marilou Taggart

...and to Our Children

1/2 Cameron Forgey
 1/7 Leann Luttkus
 1/13 Sandoval Stevens
 1/20 Alyssa McKenna
 1/21 Owen Lauber
 1/25 Alexa Harding
 1/25 James Martin
 1/29 Clark Roe

