



PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FROM PASTOR BLAIR'S DESK

SEPTEMBER 2025

As I turned in my first full draft of my project paper to Phillips Theological Seminary, I thought that I might give a glimpse in what, with your gracious cooperation, I have been working for this extended period of time. What follows is the preface to my paper.

*Every person born in this world represents something new, something that never existed before, something original and unique.<sup>1</sup>*

When I was a child, church was a magical place as it was somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand, it was a formal place, where one was expected to be quiet and respectful because it was "God's House," and, as such, it was a place to be revered and honored. On the other hand, it was a place where friends met other friends and shared stories both sacred and secular, laughter, and tears with one another. It was years later that I made a discovery that that very holiness that I ascribed to the "magic" of being in "God's house" which I did not understand was actually the holiness of the community of people laughing, crying, and telling stories. My parents helped me discover that.

In her introduction to Karl Rahner's treatise on the trinity, Catherine Mowry Lacugna wrote:

By the end of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) a new spirit was blowing in the church ... The documents of Vatican II were themselves the fruit of innovative thinking and opened the door to a fresh way of thinking about the nature of theology and the arrangement of theological themes ... Karl Rahner (1904-84) was particularly prolific, and immediately attracted a multinational following.<sup>2</sup>

What Rahner challenged was the Neo-Scholastic way of thinking that, in his view, through their attempts to use logic and apologetics to simplify the apparent inconsistencies in such doctrines as the trinity, salvation, and grace, became rigid and unimaginative. For Rahner, God was *Absolute Mystery* alive through *Self Communication*. This was a movement by Rahner to describe God not as theoretical and distant but, to use his terms, *economic* and *immanent*. God is economic, Rahner contended, in that God is revealed in acts of history and immanent in that God is known through God Self-Communication which, in turn, is the very essence of God.

Is it possible for the winds of change to blow again pushing for a deeper sense of intimacy between divine and human where

God is seen not so much as Holy One and Divine Other but as part of one's own being and life itself and can such an intimacy be so communicated within a church setting so that members can find more agency in their faith lives? It is to that question that this project is designed. Why preach incarnational theology? I turn to the poetic prose of Frederick Buechner for part of the answer:

<sup>1</sup> Martin Buber and Maurice S. Friedman, *Hasidism & Modern Man* (Princeton: Princeton Univ

<sup>2</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Crossroad Pub, 1997).pg. vii

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## FOLLOW THE LECTIONARY

**September 7, 2025**

**Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*A New Identity*

Jeremiah 18:1-11 & Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 & Psalm 1

**Philemon 1:1-21**

Luke 14:25-33

**September 14, 2025**

**Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Growing In God's Love*

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28 & Psalm 14

Exodus 32:7-14 & Psalm 51:1-10

**I Timothy 1:12-17**

Luke 15:1-10

**September 21, 2025**

**Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Prayerful Living*

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1 & Psalm 79:1-9

Amos 8:4-7 & Psalm 113

**I Timothy 2:1-7**

Luke 16:1-13

**September 28, 2025**

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Surprising Investment*

Jeremiah 32:1-3am 6-15 &

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16

Amos 6:1a, 4-7

**I Timothy 6:6-19**

Luke 16:19-31

Psalm 146



## REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Dustan Burgard, Cooper Davis, Alan Eppen, Annette Cook, Karen Filegar, Eric Gerber, Dale Mork, Linda Mork, Jaxon Kaiser, Bob Olson, Joyce Ochsner, Marjorie Ormand, JoAnn Sanborn, Eddy Schaeffer, Jeannette Sorge, Shirley Schaeffer, Janet Von Eschen, Alan & Corene Chapman and Greg Wilson.

**Pray for our members and friends who reside in care facilities or are shut-ins, wherever they reside:**

Betty Betten, Colleen Carman, Dorothy Dockter, Erna Gross, Betty Gutjahr, Emma Heiser, Alice Hopfinger, Ruth Overby, Priscilla Pfeifle, Joan Sanders, Lois Wales, Kelli Wells, Nancy Wells and June Whites.

### REMEMBER OUR SERVICE PEOPLE

**And All the Troops Stationed Around the World**

*Please contact the church office (225-2557) to be added to or removed from the Prayer List.*

**Yes! We still have nuts for sale!**

**Slivered Almonds....\$8.00**

**Whole Almonds....\$8.00**

**Gourmet Mixed Nuts....\$10.00**

**English Walnuts....\$8.00**

**Call the Church and place your order today! (225-2557)**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MODERATOR

The fair is done, and fall is in the air.

The children are all back at school, with their teachers and classmates.

Enjoy the bountiful harvest of our gardens and the produce they provide. Pray for peace in Ukraine. Be kind to and love one another.

Pray that the members of the Congregation who are ill or alone do well during the coming months.

God Bless you all,

Brad Olson

*Heartfelt thanks to our church family for the outpouring of love, support, and prayers as we deal with the loss of Bill.*

*He was an awesome part of our lives and will be truly missed.*

*Pat Haigh and family*



Vitalant would like to have another blood draw here at Plymouth.

We set the date for Friday November 14th in the afternoon. We are in need of a volunteer to help coordinate the event. They will help you with all questions about what your duties will be.

Contact Laura if you are interested 605-225-2557



# CELEBRATIONS

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 9-01 Nancy Wells  
Darin Gully
- 9-03 Gene Mastel
- 9-05 Sheila Bunke
- 9-07 Cynthia Born  
Marc Bitz
- 9-08 Mark Mulder
- 9-09 Kordel Chmela
- 9-10 David Johnson
- 9-11 Keelie Kirschenmann
- 9-13 Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher
- 9-16 Koos O’Kennedy
- 9-17 Ruth Overby  
Daniel Kirschenmann  
Sami Leddy
- 9-18 Jay Tobin  
Lydia Hopfinger  
Brynn Noelle Cunningham
- 9-19 Graig Brunson
- 9-20 Douglas Heupel
- 9-21 Dorothy Dockter  
Brayden O’Connell  
Inara Schmaltz
- 9-22 Adalyne Kirschenmann
- 9-23 Kelsey Mundt
- 9-24 Shane Richey
- 9-25 Doug Eisenbeisz
- 9-28 Jane Niederbaumer  
Bill Regula  
Bobbie Lier
- 9-29 Herman Lier  
Joyce Ochsner

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

- 9/01 Herman & Ester Lier 68 years
- 9/02 Allan & Shelley Ochsner 19 years
- 9/08 Steve & Cristy Biegler 41 years
- 9/12 Dick & Linda Gohn 44 years
- 9/13 Kent & Dani Roeker 22 years
- 9/23 Bryan & Carolee Owens 25 years



*Note: If you know of a birthday or an anniversary that was missed, we are deeply sorry. Please advise the Plymouth Congregational Secretary and she will make sure the dates are calendared for the future.*

### 2025 Visioning Team Members

- Moderator Brad Olson-(605)216-2450
- Moderator Elect Mark Gutjahr-(605)228-5150
- Facility Manager Alan Chapman-(605)377-3291
- Communications Patricia Swanson-(605)730-0714
- WF Representative Erin Gutjahr-(605)216-2660
- At Large Dani Roeker-(605)377-3080
- At Large Ron Beil-(605)228-1035
- At Large Chad Masters-(605)380-0498
- Financial Ed Bosanko-(605)228-2486
- Spiritual Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher-(605)380-8688
- Auditor Rod Fouberg-(605)229-1310



## Women's Fellowship

Welcome all to the Women's Fellowship meeting on Thursday September 11th at 7pm in Church Library.

We will be planning for the Bazaar on Saturday November 1st and making plans for coming year.

Election of Officers will be held.



### From Pastor Blairs Desk Cont..

Let the preacher tell the truth. Let him make audible the silence of the news of the world with the sound turned off so that in the silence we can hear the tragic truth of the Gospel, which is that the world where God is absent is a dark and echoing emptiness; and the comic truth of the Gospel, which is that it is into the depths of his absence that God makes himself present in such unlikely ways and to such unlikely people that old Sarah and Abraham and maybe when the time comes even Pilate and Job and Lear and Henry Ward Beecher and you and I can laugh till the tears run down our cheeks. And finally let him preach this overwhelming of tragedy by comedy, of darkness by light, of the ordinary by the extraordinary, as the tale that is too good not to be true because to dismiss it as untrue is to dismiss along with it that catch of breath, that beat and lifting of the heart near to or even accompanied by tears, which I believe is the deepest intuition of truth that we have.<sup>3</sup>

I believe that it is in the tears, laughter, and dreams of persons where the reality of God is present more than in some Divine Other. This is the heart of incarnational theology and it is what, I believe, gives those same persons to have agency and find faith in something beyond themselves.

I realize that much of the impetus for my development of this project comes from my need to re-evaluate how I understand my role as minister and the role of preacher in that understanding. I am becoming even more aware of what theological presuppositions that I am bringing to the project that need to be revisited and re-imagined. In short, how has my call changed and how is this project a reflection of that change in who and what I am called to be?

Much of my evaluation of my value as a minister has been wrapped up in the roles of preacher, teacher, and leader of a congregation with all the authority that has afforded me. Is that evaluation still valid within the world in which I now find myself? Was it even valid at the start of my ministry when such roles seemed to carry even more weight? What does incarnation ministry mean for me? That is a question that I may need to ask myself before I ask the congregation.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Blair

<sup>3</sup>Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth: The Gospel as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairy Tale*, 1st ed (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977). pp. 23-24

## *Come To Supper*

*Wed. September 10th 5:30p*

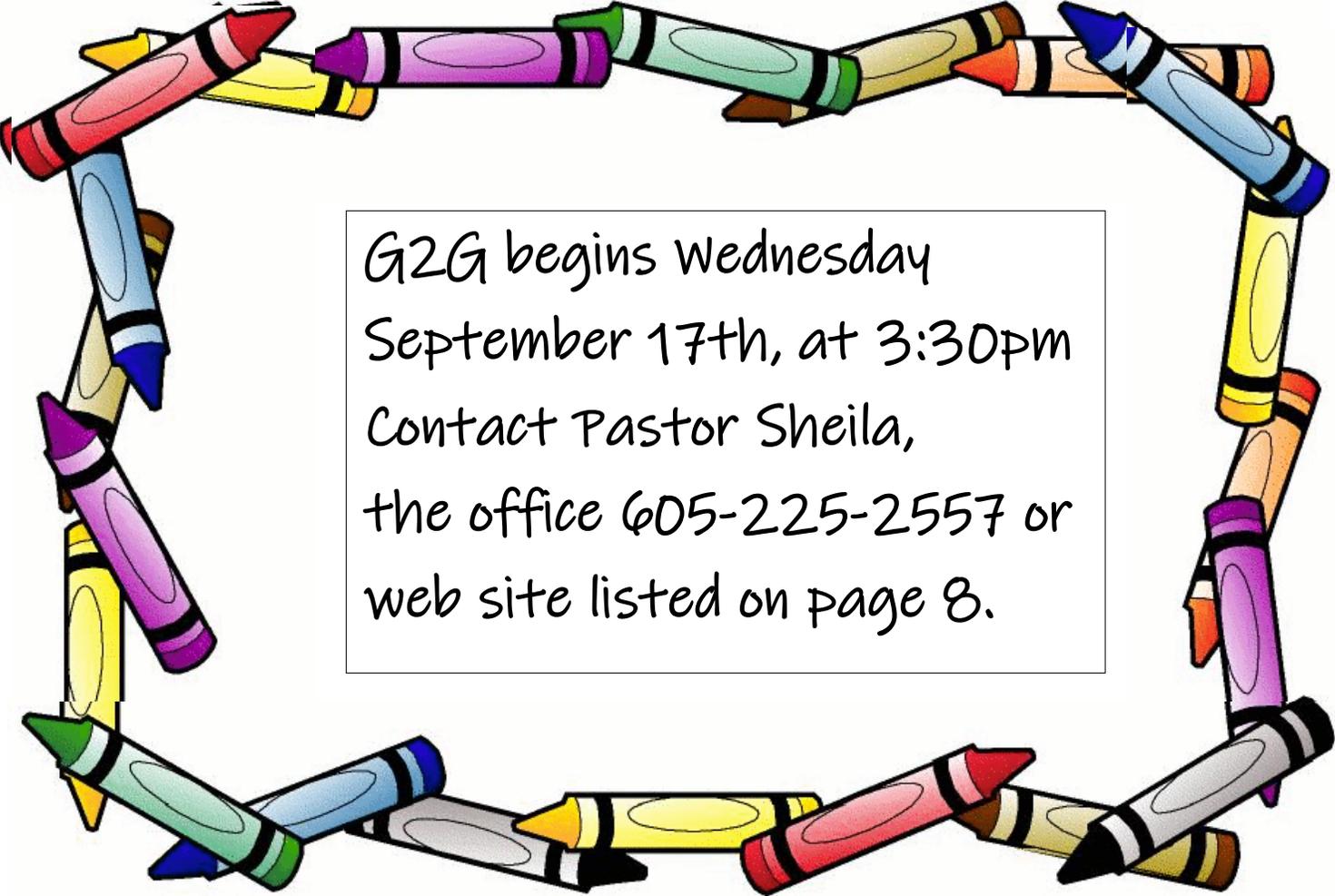
*Hosted by Bosanko's & Tobin's*

*Grilled Hamburgers*

*Pork N Beans*

*Veggie & Dessert*

*Looking forward to some great food and fellowship.*



G2G begins Wednesday  
September 17th, at 3:30pm  
Contact Pastor Sheila,  
the office 605-225-2557 or  
web site listed on page 8.



# Women's Fellowship Annual Bazaar

**Saturday, Nov. 1st  
9a—2p**

**We need volunteers for the following:**

- **Goodies for the Bake Sale**
- **Home made crafts**
- **Pies for the lunch**
- **Volunteer sign-up sheet to help before, during and after the Bazaar**



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• We will be joining Columbia Church for Confirmation this year. Starting date will be middle to end of September.

• Anyone interested contact Pastor Blair or the office 605-225-2557

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PLYMOUTH  
ROCKS  
*Church and Family Life*  
Rev. Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher



G2G will begin Wed, September 17 at 3:30 pm  
All kids age K-5 are invited to join us!  
Registrations available at the church

New church website:  
plymouthaberdeen.com

Don't forget to follow us on:



<https://www.facebook.com/plymouthaberdeen>



<https://www.youtube.com/@PlymouthUCCAberdeen>



<https://www.instagram.com/plymouthuccaberdeen/>



Vacation Bible School was an amazing time of learning about God's Hope, God's Grace, God's Forgiveness and God's Family. We had 24 kids joined by 17 volunteers during our time in Egypt.



Joseph had some incredible stories to share with us!



**A LOOK AHEAD**  
**\*\*\* OCTOBER \*\*\***  
**PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL UCC**

SUNDAY	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship; Communion 11a-Fellowship  World Communion Sunday	6	7	8 3:30p-G2G	9 7p-WF meeting  Wedding Rehearsal	10 Loken/Kraft Wedding 	11
12 Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	13	14 7p-DAV	15 3:30pG2G 5:30p-CTS	16	17	18
19 Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	20	21 6:30p Visioning Team Meeting <u>NEWSLETTER ITEMS DUE</u>	22 3:30pG2G	23	24	25
26 Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	27	28	29 3:30pG2G	30	31 Happy Halloween 	



**THIS MONTH AT PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL  
September 2025**

<b>Mon, Sept 1</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b><u>Sun, Sept 7</u></b>	<b><u>Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u></b> 10a-Worship; communion 11a-Fellowship
<b>Tues, Sept 9</b>	<b>7p-DAV Meeting</b>
<b>Wed, Sept 10</b>	<b>Come to Supper</b> 5:30p
<b>Thur, Sept 11</b>	<b>7p-Women’s Fellowship meeting</b>
<b><u>Sun, Sept 14</u></b>	<b><u>Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u></b> 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship 2p-Bethesda
<b>Tue, Sept 16</b>	<b>Visioning Team Meeting; 6:30p</b> <b>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</b>
<b>Wed, Sept 17</b>	<b>3:30p-G2G BEGINS</b>
<b><u>Sun, Sept 21</u></b>	<b><u>Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u></b> 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship
<b>Mon, Sept 22</b>	<b>Welcome Autum</b>
<b><u>Sun, May 25</u></b>	<b><u>Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u></b> 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship



# Plymouth Congregational Church

## September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 	2	3	4	5	6
7 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship; communion 11a-Fellowship	8	9 DAV-7p	10 CTS-5:30P Bosanko's & Tobin's	11	12	13
14 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship 2p-Bethesda Confirmation	15	16 6:30P- Visioning Meeting	17 G2G- 3:30pm BEGINS	18 <a href="#">Newsletter Deadline</a>	19	20
21 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	22 	23	24 G2G- 3:30pm	25	26	27
28 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost 10a-Worship 11a-Fellowship	29	30				



**PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Aberdeen, SD 57401

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REACHING OUT,  
RENEWING LIVES



Church Staff:

Pastor	Rev. Blair Kirkpatrick
Minister of Church and Family Life	
	Rev. Sheila Apland-Ottenbacher
Secretary	Laura Bunke
Director of Music Ministry	Missy Nguyen
Child Care Attendant	Eloise Appletoft
Custodian	Lois Korf
Facilities Manager	Alan Chapman

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00—2:00, Mon, Wed-Fri.

Phone: (605) 225-2557

Email: [sec.plymouth@midconetwork.com](mailto:sec.plymouth@midconetwork.com)

[www.plymouthaberdeen.com](http://www.plymouthaberdeen.com)

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

**SUNDAY 10:00 AM**

[www.plymouthaberdeen.com](http://www.plymouthaberdeen.com)

