

## SUNDAY AT PLYMOUTH

10:30 am Sunday, February 23, 2025

Worship in the Sanctuary or Online

*Seventh Sunday after Epiphany*

Genesis 2:4-8

“Such a Dirty God”

Rev. Jermell Witherspoon

9 am Choir Rehearsal, Hildebrand Hall

11:30 am Coffee Hour

1 pm Community Resource Fair, Hildebrand Hall

*Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has recently announced an end to their long-standing policy of not entering places of worship on enforcement operations. We have no information that ICE is planning such action in Seattle, but if for any reason you are concerned about the possibility, we encourage you to worship with us online.*

Members and Visitors in the church building can access Plymouth Guest wi-fi network using password: peaceonearth.

Find links to video stream and worship bulletin and participate online at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](https://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

The Plymouth *Herald* is published every week. Deadline is **Monday, 10 am**, for Wednesday publication.



PO Box 21368  
Seattle, Washington 98111

Return Service Requested

## OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH...

All who live in fear of expedited removal, detention, or deportation., Ahmed Black (Nephew of Michael & Elizabeth Gordon), Wendy Carpenter (Friend of Jocelyn Coit-Durland), Diane Folkert (Mother and Mother-in-Law of Alex & Ara Lawrence), Louis Ford (Friend of Karen Clark), Eleanor Fordyce, Elvis Gordon (Brother of Michael and Elizabeth Gordon), Floyd Gossett, Carrie Gossett (Mother of Floyd Gossett), Kay Heekin (Mother-in-Law of Kate Forrester), Allie James (Friend of Dawn Bennett), Julie (Friend of Karen Clark), William Chapman Nyaho, Shaniece (Friend of Karen Clark), **Richard Paul (Dad of Beth Paul-Russell), Raymond & Ann Stanhope (Parents of Elizabeth & Michael Gordon)**, Patricia Valentine, Gevan Woodke (Friend of Karen Clark)

Our hearts are with Pete Poletti and family on the one-year anniversary of the passing of Debbie Poletti.

*bold=newly added. Names will remain on list for 6 weeks unless requested.*

If you have personal concerns, you may contact a minister or member of the Pastoral Care Team by calling the pastoral care line, **206-639-7739**, checked daily.



Amanda Gorman  
The youngest inaugural poet in US history

*Whether you are a seeker, skeptic, believer or somewhere in between on life's journey, you are welcome here. We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in worship and service of Plymouth Church UCC.*



## WELCOME, LIBERATION UCC



Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown

I am overjoyed to welcome Liberation to Plymouth Church! We are blessed to share our building and ministry as we embark together on this exciting journey. Liberation celebrated their first worship service at Plymouth, and will gather every first and third Sunday in Hildebrand Hall at 2:45 pm.

We also look forward to the times we will come together in shared worship, fostering a stronger sense of community and mutual support. This Sunday, we are especially honored to have Rev. Jermell Witherspoon preaching, and we anticipate a service filled with the spirit and gracious fellowship. At 1 pm this coming Sunday, Liberation is sponsoring a Black Health and Wellness Community Roundtable and Resource Fair. Come for lunch and conversation.

God is doing a wonderful thing in growing us and our connections as we strive to be radically inclusive. Collaborating with the powerful ministry of Liberation is another step following the way of Jesus and affirming what it means to be open and affirming. Together, we can work towards building our faith, making a difference in the lives of those around us.

Welcome Liberation! —Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown

## MEET REV. JERMELL WITHERSPOON



Rev. Jermell Witherspoon

Rev. Jermell Witherspoon is a native Seattleite and a dedicated servant leader who has pastored throughout the Washington area for over a decade.

Passionate about sharing the unwavering, unfailing, and inclusive love of God, Pastor Jermell strives to embody and extend this love, starting with his own community

and radiating outward. Pastor Jermell's heart for ministry and his vision for a just and inclusive world continues to inspire and draw others into a deeper relationship with God and community. Help welcome Rev. Witherspoon this Sunday.

## WE REMEMBER

February 19 is a significant date for the Japanese American community. On this day in 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which gave the U.S. Army authority to remove civilians from military zones on the West Coast during WWII, leading to the forced incarceration of some 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry, who had to abandon everything to be sent to concentration camps in remote regions of the country.

No Japanese Americans were ever charged, much less convicted, of espionage or sabotage, yet they were targeted, and imprisoned simply for having the “face of the enemy.” Every February, the Japanese American community commemorates EO9066 as a reminder of the fragility of civil liberties in times of crisis, and the importance of remaining vigilant in protecting the rights and freedoms of all.



Day of Remembrance: February 19

## COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR THIS SUNDAY



The Publication of Plymouth Church Seattle  
1217 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101  
206.622.4865 [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](https://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org)

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RELIGIOUS GROUPS CHALLENGE ICE



The Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ is among more than two dozen religious groups suing the Department of Homeland Security in response to a policy change that offers greater leeway for immigration enforcement in “sensitive locations,” including houses of worship.

The plaintiffs in the lawsuit, who include a broad range of Christian and Jewish denominations and regional bodies, “have come together to file this suit because their scripture, teaching, and traditions offer irrefutable unanimity on their religious obligation to embrace and serve the refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants in their midst without regard to documentation or legal status,” said Kelsi Corkran, lead counsel for the plaintiffs from the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection.

The lawsuit, *Mennonite Church USA et al. v. United States Department of Homeland Security et al.*, was filed on February 11 in federal district court in Washington, D.C. It names ways that churches and synagogues have already begun to experience the impact of the recent reversal of the “sensitive locations” policy, which previously restricted Immigration and Customs Enforcement from conducting immigration raids, arrests, and other enforcement actions at houses of worship. Several have noted decreases in attendance at worship and in services to the community, with congregants conveying fear about potential immigration action.

This lawsuit is one of three filed by faith organizations against federal agencies in recent weeks as a response to policy changes by the Trump Administration. A coalition of Quaker meetings filed a similar lawsuit to prevent immigration agents from performing arrests and searches in houses of worship on Jan. 27. And on Feb. 10, Church World Service — of which the UCC is a covenant member — joined with other refugee-serving agencies and individuals to sue the Trump Administration for suspending refugee resettlement and stopping federal funding for refugee services organizations.

Some have reached out to the National Ministries wondering why the UCC as a denomination is not among those named in the lawsuit. UCC General Minister and President, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, said that General Synod’s participation was discussed with the organizers of the lawsuit, and the ultimate decision was made to look toward providing the General Synod’s perspective in an amicus brief at the appropriate time in the litigation.

*This is an excerpt of a longer article. Read full article at UCC.org.*

CELEBRATE LUNAR NEW YEAR

The Lunar New Year Celebration highlights each zodiac animal and celebrates the year’s symbolism in the historic Chinatown/ International District. The festivities feature traditional dragon and lion dances, martial arts demonstrations, Japanese Taiko drumming, and other cultural performances.



Join the festivities February 22.

This year marks the transition to the Year of the Snake, and will be publicly celebrated in the International District from 11 am–4 pm Saturday, February 22.

Hungry visitors can enjoy our food walk, sampling a wide variety of dishes from local businesses. With family-friendly activities, arts and crafts vendors, and cultural exhibits, the event offers something for everyone. Visit [SeattleChinatownID.com](http://SeattleChinatownID.com) to learn more.

ORBIT AND ORACLE



Hear The Esoterics in concert at 8 pm Saturday, March 8 at Plymouth UCC, performing *Orbit and Oracle: A Reimagining of Ancient Astronomical Legends*. German composer Michael Ostrzyga is hosted in Seattle by The Esoterics for a concert of astronomical proportion!

More information and tickets at [TheEsoterics.org](http://TheEsoterics.org).

FREE MEDICAL CLINIC

A four-day clinic, April 24–27 at Seattle Center, provides FREE dental, vision, medical, and social services to more than 3,000 people who struggle to access and/ or afford care each year. All are welcome. As a low-barrier clinic, patients do not need any form of documentation or proof of income, insurance, or immigration status to receive care. Patients do not need to be residents of Seattle or King County. Interpreters are available.



April 24-27 at Seattle Center.

Learn more at [SeattleCenter.org/skccclinic/patients](http://SeattleCenter.org/skccclinic/patients).

FILL THE JAR

When the Rev. Seth Wispelwey began his podcast “Fill the Jar,” he said he wanted to show people that they were not alone. The minister for Economic Justice with the United Church of Christ, said of the podcast, “It’s not an information dump of inside language of economics, but something I hope will give people nourishment and sustenance in their day-to-day lives.”



Rev. Seth Wispelwey

In his latest episode, found on the UCC Channel on Spotify, Wispelwey interviewed the Rev. Michael Neuroth, Director of the UCC’s Office of Public Policy and Advocacy. Located on Capitol Hill, the office is in the thick of things in the nation’s capitol. Link to listen to this podast and other UCC podcasts in the news article at [PlymouthChurchSeattle.org](http://PlymouthChurchSeattle.org).

PLANTING SEEDS OF HOPE



The United Church of Christ is again conducting a Climate Hope Art Contest. The theme this year is “Planting Seeds of Hope.” UCC children and youth are invited to draw, paint, or color works of art that bring this theme to life.

A fitting scripture to spark the imagination is Matthew 13:31–32 in which Jesus declares, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

Art submissions will be accepted from February 2 to March 14. Visit [UCC.org](http://UCC.org) to learn more and submit artwork.

PRAYERS FOR PEACE

United Church of Christ General Minister and President Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson welcomes all to participate in an interactive season of prayer. The People’s Prayers for Peace Initiative is an open invitation to read and write prayers, posted daily at [UCC.org](http://UCC.org). Share prayers at [UCC.org/Peoples-Prayers-For-Peace](http://UCC.org/Peoples-Prayers-For-Peace).



BLACK HISTORY: THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF SANKOFA

Celebrations of Black History Month originated as a corrective to the absence of people of African descent in American cultural historical education. At Join the Movement, we honor Black History Month as an intentional opportunity to engage in the antiracist practice of *Sankofa*. From the Akan people of Ghana, *Sankofa* means “to go back and get it.” *Sankofa* implies that the quest for knowledge is based on critical examination and patient investigation. It is not enough to simply learn about Black History; we must also bring that history forward and ask what it means — how it changes us — today.



Looking back, moving forward

*“...we are called in each moment to the life-changing sacred work of bringing history forward.”*

In this era, where cultural historical education is increasingly targeted by those seeking to maintain the systems and structures of white supremacy, we cannot underestimate the importance of our *Sankofa* antiracism practices. As Christians, our scriptures are filled with *Sankofa* invitations like, “Remember that you were slaves in Egypt,” and “Do this in remembrance of me.” Just as our Holy Communion celebrations invite us to go back and get the radical practices of Jesus so that our lives might be shaped by the kindom vision in the present, so, too, we are called in each moment to the life-changing sacred work of bringing history forward.

In Mississippi during the summer of 1964, an incredible intergenerational movement unfolded that would give rise to life-long activism for many participants. As violence aimed at squelching the civil rights struggle in Mississippi increased, organizers established Freedom Schools to register disenfranchised voters of African descent. The curriculum, aimed at middle-and high-school aged children, was designed to empower students to think and act politically and give expression to their experiences creatively.

This Black History Month, we invite you into the antiracist spiritual practice of *Sankofa*, offering the opportunity for all to “go back and get” the wisdom from the Freedom Schools for building an intergenerational movement toward racial justice here and now. The *Sankofa* symbol is a mythical bird with its feet planted forward and its head turned backwards. Thus, the Akan believe the past serves as a guide for the future. As this forward march proceeds, the knowledge of the past must never be forgotten. Read more and get involved with Join The Movement at [JoinTheMovementUCC.org](http://JoinTheMovementUCC.org).