



# Plymouth Church

UNITED CHURCH *of* CHRIST

2860 Coventry Road, Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120  
216.921.3510 • [www.plymouthchurchucc.org](http://www.plymouthchurchucc.org)

**Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe**  
Senior Minister

**Rev. Matthew Bauhof**  
Associate Minister

**James P. Riggs**  
Minister of Music & The Arts

**Leslie Szalay**  
Director of Christian Education

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*"My house is a house of prayer for all people." (Isaiah 56:7) • An Open and Affirming Congregation*

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Dear Members and Friends of Plymouth Church:

To every time there is a season, and it is our duty at this time to tell you that we have reluctantly accepted the resignation of our beloved Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe.

As Shawnthea's enclosed letter to all of us explains, she has answered the call to be Senior Minister of The Peoples Church in East Lansing, Michigan. That this opportunity has found her is no surprise; we can't help being proud. And that it will allow her and her husband, Neil, to live together full-time under the same roof for the first time in eight years is a welcome relief. But it is also undeniably bittersweet. Shawnthea's last day with us will be Sunday, September 29, 2019, and following the service, we will host a Godspeed reception in Fellowship Hall to celebrate her and her family and to tell them all how very much they will be missed.

Few words, and surely none in this letter, can adequately convey to Shawnthea our profound appreciation for her leadership and devotion, faith and guidance, and steadfast love and caring for Plymouth. Since joining us nearly twelve years ago, she has shared with us her unmistakable gift for preaching, teaching and challenging us with things we needed, but did not always care, to hear. She's met our children where they live, walking joyfully, often noisily, with them from baptisms through children's sermons to the Halloween Spooktacular, and, along the way, directing all our sheep, shepherds, and angels in the Christmas Pageant. And time and again, she has blanketed us in singular grace, comfort, and love as we mourned departed family and friends. The truth is we've been blessed to have Shawnthea for as long as we have. Thanks to her efforts, Plymouth has a vibrant, engaged membership, an exceptional staff, and no doubt is a stronger, more diverse, and growing church, where all truly are welcome. We will continue to reap her blessings for a long time to come.

So, too, as there is also a purpose for every time, we can tell you that planning for this transition is underway. Council will be holding a special meeting on Wednesday, July 24. Plymouth's lay leaders and staff already have contacted the UCC for guidance on identifying interim pastoral coverage and ensuring ample staff support. In the coming weeks, we will be sharing this information with you and asking for your input and help as we discern our way into this next stage of Plymouth's life—especially when we begin contemplating a search for a new minister to join Matt in the pulpit. And throughout this process, it will be vitally important that all of us continue to do all the things we daily do to serve Plymouth, our members, and our community.

Change is hard, and it's sad to say farewell to someone who has been (and always will be) an integral part of our Plymouth family. But we know you will join us in wishing Shawnthea and her family God's blessings and good luck as they begin this new chapter in their lives.

Yours in Faith,

Gloria Sturghill  
Council President

Brian Grube  
Council Vice-President