

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

January 2012

From the Pastor



When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God. Leviticus 19: 9-10

The writer of Leviticus articulates a central truth of Jewish and Christian faith and practice: we are created to be faithful stewards of the resources God sets before us. In the life of ancient Israel, agriculture was the principle measure of wealth and well-being. Some enjoyed abundant wealth, others lived with sufficient resources to survive, and others struggled on the margins of the community with very little. So the Law of Moses has this word: you shall leave a portion of your produce for the poor and the alien residing among you.

The intent is clear. God shares out of divine abundance the blessings of the harvest and calls the people of God to do the same. To acknowledge that all we have flows from God is the foundational idea of Christian stewardship. There is a practical issue as well: a community that cares for its poor and its weaker members ensures its own well-being as well. Leviticus articulates a theological truth; but an economic and social one as well. So foundational to God's idea of the economic life of creation is this idea that it is repeated almost verbatim a few chapters later (Leviticus 23: 22). The emphasis on being faithful in the use of our resources rises to the level of a biblical imperative. We are created and called to share what we have in the service of all God's people.

Over the last few months, the Board of Trustees and the Church Council turned their attention to this very issue with discussions on how we might faithfully use our church's endowment to extend the reach of our mission into the world. Our church's endowment is valued at just over \$400,000. It is not currently used for anything. It is common practice among endowed churches and non-profit organizations to draw 5% of the value of an endowment to fund operating costs, special projects, capital campaigns or a variety of other programs.

Council has considered a plan that would draw 5% of the value of the endowment each year to support both a Mission Fund and a Capital Fund. The Mission Fund would allow us to accrue over the course of two or three years a sizeable amount of money that could be given in support of one or more larger projects; while the Capital Fund would allow us to

meet the larger maintenance needs of our beautiful church for generations to come. We will be inviting the church to discuss this and to offer its vote at our Annual Budget Meeting at the end of January.

So imagine this: at its current level, the endowment would allow us to draw approximately \$20,000 per year. Half would go into the Capital Fund, the other half into the Mission Fund. At the end of every three-year cycle, we would have approximately \$30,000 in each fund to take care of capital improvements to Pilgrim Church and to fund some truly extraordinary mission programs as well. The Capital Fund would alleviate the need to burden the yearly operating budget with extraordinary maintenance items. The Mission Fund would allow us to think creatively and faithfully about how best we might use our resources to support communities here in our neighborhoods or throughout the world. It would allow Pilgrim Church to tell some truly wonderful stories about faithful giving and faithful stewardship well into the future.

As I mentioned, we will be bringing this to a vote by the congregation at the Annual Meeting on January 29th. I look forward to the discussion, and I wish you God's blessing and peace in the New Year.

Peace to you all,
Todd

TO ALL MEMBERS OF PILGRIM CHURCH:

In accordance with Article III, Sec. E (2) of the By-Laws of Pilgrim Church, the Annual Budget Meeting will be held Sunday, January 29, 2012 following the worship service. This meeting is open to all members for the purpose of approving the annual budget.

Heidi MacLaren, Clerk



Ministry of Caring

Pilgrim Church is a congregation of loving and generous people. We are all striving to live as Jesus taught and to share God's love with our neighbors. People often say that they want to help others but don't always know what to do. Can you visit somebody? Help with rides? Pray? Write cards or notes? Prepare and deliver meals? There are so many ways that we can reach out to each other. Come to a meeting after Church on January 22nd in the library. We will be talking about various ways that you can participate in caring for your fellow church members. Contact Rev. Parks if you have any questions (781-934-6591 ext. 103).

Our Music Ministry

As I write this the Music ministry is busy working its magic with the many Advent and Christmas songs to be sung, some old, some new. By the time you read this we will have sung our joyful tunes – so I want to take the time NOW to thank the many people who make the Music ministry at Pilgrim run smoothly and sweetly. Robin Kelley has faithfully accompanied every rehearsal for Junior Choir and Chancel Choir, and played on Sundays for the Junior Choir. We simply couldn't have done it without her!! The "playing of the merry organ" was done magnificently by Larry Mynatt and Priscilla Wonkka. I couldn't have asked for more wonderful musical collaborators – thank you both.



To our many singers – no worship is more meaningful to me than when we raise our voices together in praise of Him. You all gave so generously of your time and talent, and I can tell from our rehearsals that the last Sundays of Advent and our beloved Christmas Eve services will be meaningful and moving. Our Taize services quieted my soul – I can't thank you enough for that gift. Lastly, to Debby Jewell and Carol Cybulska – two more loving and talented colleagues I have never had. Our ministry grows because it is watered by their grace and love. Thank you both.

A happy New Year to all and if your New Year's resolution involves music, please know there is always a place for you. God bless!

Beth



Koinonia's first meeting in the New Year is Monday, January 9, 7:00 PM at the home of Helen Barrow. Please call her if you need directions.



Uganda Rural Fund

Dan Hall and Chris Blake collected donations for the Uganda Rural Fund in December to provide solar lamps and school books for the children of Hope Academy. Hope was started in 2008 as a school for orphans and has grown to an enrollment of 165, many of whom cannot study at night due to a simple lack of safe lighting. If you were not able to participate and still wish to make a donation, funds can be sent to: Uganda Rural Fund USA, Inc., P.O. Box 388, West Springfield, MA 01090-0388. Checks should be payable to Uganda Rural Fund with a notation that your gift is for the solar lamps and textbook fund for Hope Academy. Dan, Chris and the Board of Christian Outreach thank everyone who has supported this important mission.

Winter Bible study



We sing about it, read about it hear about it and hope that we will experience it. But what is so amazing about grace? Especially God's grace? Join us for four Wednesday evenings this winter – January 18, 25, February 1 and 8 – for Bible study, discussion and some fellowship. We'll start at 7:30 PM looking at what the Bible has to teach us and share some of our own experiences as we learn more about the gift of God's grace. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Parks.

Take a look at some upcoming Men's Group plans . . .

| Month | Proposed Speaker |
|--------------|---|
| January | Chaplain at Plymouth Correctional |
| February | Island Creek Oysters (Philanthropic Programs) |
| March | Harpoon |
| April | Imam |
| May | Duxbury Historical/Patrick Brown |

If you have any questions or suggestions, contact Bob Mustard (rmustard@comcast.net).



Gatherings for Prospective Members of Pilgrim Church

At the Pilgrim Church, we celebrate that wonderful sense of hospitality offered by the United Church of Christ: *No matter who you are or where you find yourself on the journey of faith, you are welcome here.*

For those of you who have worshipped with us, participated and supported our mission work and shared our fellowship; but who have not yet formally joined our congregation, the Ministers and the Board of Deacons invite you to join us in the new year to talk and explore together formal membership in our family of faith at the Pilgrim Church.

We hope to begin with a breakfast hosted by the Board of Deacons on Saturday, March 3rd, at 9:30 AM in the Vestry. More information will be coming as the time approaches; but we wanted anyone interested in learning more about our common life to mark their calendars ahead of time.

If your schedule cannot accommodate a Saturday morning meeting, not to worry. If you are interested in membership, we are certainly willing to make a time convenient for you to discuss it. Please feel free to contact Rev. Todd Vetter or Rev. Eloise Parks, and we would be happy to set up a time to meet with you.



January Church School News

Thank you to all of the children who participated in the Christmas Pageant and to all of the adults who helped. A special thank you to Angelique Kania who directed the pageant. She does such a fabulous job!

In the month of January we will start learning about The Ten Commandments in our rotations. The 7th and 8th grade class will continue with the Nooma Video series in the library. The high school class will continue to meet the second Sunday of the month with Rev. Vetter or Rev. Parks in the Youth Room.

I hope all of our church families had a wonderful Christmas! It is a new year and we are grateful for the new families that have started attending Pilgrim. Sunday mornings are filled with laughter and fellowship as we learn more together about the Bible and its great stories.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns! Happy 2012! I am thrilled to be on the journey with you all. There is joy in the journey!

Peace,
Emily J. Kellar, Church School Superintendant

It's time to clean out the Lost & Found



You may not be aware that the Church has a lost and found area located in the office hallway. It's currently holding items unclaimed over a couple of years; so it's time to either toss them or find them a new home.

Throughout January lost and found items will be left in a box outside the secretary's office. Please stop by and see if any of these items might belong to you. At the end of the month we'll remove any leftover items and our new collection will begin!

Tuesday evening Ladies Bible Study resumes



To all the women of Pilgrim, Save the Date!! Tuesday evening Ladies Bible Study is returning, January 17th. To get the group rolling again, we will start with a 6-week series based on the work of Donald Miller, a gifted and best selling author. More info to follow!

PARISH POST

Prayers of Healing Mary Kennedy Salvas – Denis Walsh



Prayers of Comfort and Solace

For the family and friends of Esther Walker, Evelyn Walker's mother. A memorial service will be held at Pilgrim Church on Saturday, January 7th, at 2pm (note the change in time).

For the family and friends of Rev. John W. Estes, Jr. senior pastor of Pilgrim Church from 1951-1963.

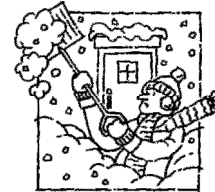
For the family and friends of Elsie Jane Brown, Janet Ritch's mother.

For the family and friends of Konrad Gesner, Betsey Hunter's step-grandfather.

For the family and friends of Gordon Steele, Marge Bishop's brother.

For the family and friends of Hans Jensen, son of Ruth and Soren Jensen.

Weather Alerts



Pilgrim Church's intention is to always be open for worship. In the event of extreme weather conditions, however, delays may occur. At such times, we hope that each person will use their discretion about coming as we do not want anyone to risk their safety. With a fair amount of winter weather ahead of us, we'd like to remind everyone that any change to the worship schedule is immediately posted to our church voicemail (781-934-6591) and on our website's home page (pilgrimchurchofduxbury.org), as well as by tuning in to WATD (95.9) or to WBZ's (channel 4) storm center.



Happy Birthday wishes this month to:

Terri Clark – January 5 Diana Cybulska – January 8 Brody Zisko – January 8
Lynn Walker – January 10 John MacLaren – January 17
Bob Warrington – January 18 Ada Moss – January 26 Kelsey DeWolf – January 29

Our warmest wishes for a very happy birthday! Do you have a name to add? Email Terri Clark at tlclark@pilgrimchurchofduxbury.org or call 781-934-6591 ext. 100. We'd love to include you.