



THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

The Church of the Pilgrimage,
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Volume LXXIX

February 4, 2007

No. 5

Dear Friends,

There are many exciting things taking place at The Church of the Pilgrimage! Among them is the reception of sixteen new members into our congregation this week (February 4th). There is a Lenten study and services in the plans. There are inspiring mission projects, local and global, in place, working and growing.

In this letter I am going to focus attention on a new adult study opportunity which will begin on February 4th. The first meeting will introduce the book which will be the basis of our study. If it sounds like something in which you'd like to participate, we'll take orders for the book, The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity. The author is Eric Elnes. Elnes is a U.C.C. pastor in Phoenix, Arizona and the co-founder of Cross Walk America, an event which took place beginning on Easter, April 16, 2006. The destination of the walk was Washington D.C. The purpose of the walk was to try to unite progressive Christians nationwide, encourage meaningful discussion, and establish common ground for people of faith.

I've read the book with great interest. The format of the book is simple and straightforward. There are twelve affirmations regarding Christian faith and practice. Each statement is followed by a readable defense of them. It is not difficult reading, yet the great questions regarding faith in the 21st century are discussed from a progressive Christian point of view. The arrangement of the book in twelve chapters based upon the affirmations makes it an ideal source for learning and discussion.

The Phoenix Affirmations notes, as I have for my whole career so far, that being an "evangelical" Christian, so called, is surely not the only way to express our faith. The media often refers to "Christians" as those on the right wing of the faith. They are not the only Christians worthy of that name. There are progressive Christians, in which category I place myself, who are open to new insights into faithful living in our day and time. Affirmation No. 2, for example is; "Listening for God's Word, which comes through daily prayer and meditation, studying the ancient testimonies which we call Scripture, and attending to God's present activity in the world." That's a little like saying, "There is more truth and light to break from God's holy Word," a familiar faith posture to us in the Pilgrim tradition. It is also not unlike the U.C.C.'s God is Still Speaking campaign.

There are eleven other affirmations which deal with peace, justice, ecology, creationism and evolution, et. al. I'm excited about engaging these subjects, and more, with you!

Feel free to attend our first meeting on February 4th at 11:30am in the Robinson Center. It is time that we become downright evangelical about progressive Christianity!

Love,

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Flowers: The pulpit flowers are in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Jenkins and Ruth and Jack Thom. Given by the Thom family. The flowers on the left side are in celebration for the life of Mary Jean Maas. Given by the Bingham-Maas family.

Ushers: Eugene DiFrancesco and Mike Scagliarini.

Greeters: Confirmand Mary Saunders and family.

Church Directory: The Membership and Evangelism Committee has undertaken the task of producing a photo church directory. The schedule for taking the photos is included in this issue of The Herald. This is an "in house" project. There is no obligation, real or implied, to purchase pictures. The goal of the project is to provide a means of our being able to identify one another. Please take advantage of this opportunity to build our sense of community. Also, please contribute information for our church database.

New Member Classes: As one session of New Member Classes has ended, Rev. Marks has begun to think of another series of classes. If you are interested in becoming a member of our church, please speak to Gary or phone the church office to indicate that interest (508-746-3026).

Pastoral Attention: Please let the church office know if you know of someone hospitalized or in need of pastoral care or attention.

New Phone Number: The phone number for Jeff, Judy, Leila, and Austin Donn has changed. The new (Plymouth) number is 774-454-4291.

Guild Meeting: The Guild will meet on Friday, February 9th at 1pm. The program will be a Loretta LaRoche film. All who attend are asked to bring non-perishable food items for the food warehouse.

Clerk – Lois Post; Moderator – Steven Triffletti; Treasurer – Jonathan Porter; Collector – Debra Richters;
Music Director – William B. Richter; Secretary – Shellie McCormack; Sexton – Tony Nightingale;
World Mission Emphasis – Heifer Project International; Church Building Telephone – 508-747-1341

On Our Church Calendar

Sun, Feb. 4: Morning Worship 10am, Rev. Gary L. Marks, preaching- the service will include the reception of new members into the congregation; Directory Photos in Allerton Hall during coffee hour; The first meeting of the newly formed theological discussion group will meet in The Rev. John Robinson Center at 11:30am (please see "notes" for details); Cherub Choir will rehearse; Junior Choir will rehearse at 11:30; Junior High Fellowship, 4-5:30pm, JRC.

Mon, Feb. 5: Women's Fellowship, 7pm, Allerton Hall; Monday Meals of Hospitality, 11:30am, Allerton Hall.

Tue, Feb. 6: Rev. Marks will be in the church office, 9:30am. Rev. Moody will be in the church office from 10am-12pm.

Wed, Feb. 7: Rev. Marks will be in the office, 9:30am; Rev. Moody will be in the church office from 10am-12pm; Evening Prayer Service, 7pm in the sanctuary.

Thurs, Feb. 8: The Stewardship Committee will meet in the Conference Room in the John Robinson Center at 7pm.

Fri, Feb. 9: Rev. Marks will be in the church office, 9:30am. Rev. Moody will be in the church office from 10am-12pm; Women's Guild, 1pm, Allerton Hall.

Sat, Feb. 10: Directory Photos in Allerton Hall from 10-12 and 1-3.

Other Groups Meeting at Our Church

Monday: Aerobics, 9:15-10:15am, Allerton Hall; Pilgrim Festival Chorus, 7-10pm, Sanctuary; Brownie Girl Scouts, 4-5:30, Allerton Hall; Junior Girl Scouts, 6-7pm, Great Hall; Brownie Girl Scouts, 5:30-7:15, Stewart Room (every other week).

Tuesday: Brownie Girl Scouts, 3:30-5:30, Stewart Room; Aerobics, 6:30-7:30pm, Allerton Hall.

Wednesday: Aerobics, 9:15-10:15am, Allerton Hall; Cub Scouts-Boy Scouts, 6:30pm-10:00pm, Great Hall; Daisy Girl Scout Troop, 4-5:30pm, Stewart Room (every other week).

Thursday: Aerobics, 6:30-7:30pm, Allerton Hall; Brownie Girls Scouts, 5:30-6:30, Stewart Room; AA, 7-8pm, Stewart Room.

Friday: Aerobics, 9:15-10:15am, Allerton Hall.

Coming Events:

Feb. 11-The Membership and Evangelism Committee will give everyone an opportunity to meet our new members during the Coffee Hour. We hope you will be present to extend your welcome to those who have joined us in our pilgrimage. The Church Council will meet in The John Robinson Center following the Coffee Hour.

Feb. 14-Wedding in the sanctuary, 5:00pm. Evening Prayer will be held as usual at 7:00pm in the sanctuary.

Feb. 21-ASH WEDNESDAY. There will be a brief service including an informal celebration of Holy Communion, as well as the Imposition of Ashes for those who desire them. The service will be at 7:00pm in the sanctuary.

Feb. 25-Our annual Stewardship Campaign begins. The first in our Lenten series of discussion on practicing our faith will be held.

Feb. 28-Soup Supper and Lenten Service, 6:00pm.

CHURCH RECORD

Hospitalization

- Gail Mason at Jordan Hospital.

Baptism

- On January 28, 2007 Rev. Marks baptized Nathaniel Mason Squillante, son of Amy & Jeffrey Squillante and Patrick Robert Madden, son of Laura & William Madden.

New Baby

- Congratulations to Sarah and Dan Bruffee who are parents of a baby boy, Mattias Daniel, born on January 25, 2007.

Theological Discussion Group

Gary has decided to begin the group by suggesting that a book entitled, The Phoenix Affirmations, by Eric Elnes may be a fruitful way to address issues of faith and theology in our time. The book is based upon twelve affirmations which under gird the emerging church in the twenty-first century. It is the author's belief, and Gary's, that the Great Awakening of the church will come from within churches which are open to the Spirit's reforming activity among us. The emerging church will not come either from the right or left wings of Christianity, but from within churches where people are open to the three great loves of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. They are love of God, love of neighbor, love of self. The book is an ideal source for discussing the theological challenges and underpinnings of emergent Christianity. To get started Gary is calling a first meeting on February 4th following worship at 11:30am in the Robinson Center Conference Room. He will introduce the book and the group will determine the times and frequency of its meetings at that time. This group can be an engaging and exciting way to discuss the future of faith, worship and mission. Join us!

Fun, Fellowship and Homemade Pizza!

Join us for an evening of fun, fellowship and homemade pizza! Saturday, February 24th at 4:00pm. The evening will begin with a scavenger hunt through the church (do you know where the angels are in the sanctuary?). Next will be the eating of homemade pizza and maybe a chance to flip the dough in the air yourself! Followed by a cozy time of curling up in sleeping bags and watching a children's movie (the name of which will be announced at a later date right after we choose one). Space is limited to 50 (at least for this time-we've never done pizza for a crowd this size before). Families are \$5, individuals are \$2. Everyone who comes will be asked to bring something to contribute to the meal as well. To sign up see Jenny or Tom Healy after church on Sunday.

Children's Craft Workshop

Many hands make light work and even little hands can help. We plan to reintroduce a children's table at the Harvest Fair this year, a table covered with the beautiful and creative work of little hands (and run by a few of the bigger ones). To get this project underway, we will be holding a craft workshop on Thursday, February 22 from 10am-12:30pm in Allerton Hall. There will be three stations each geared toward different interests and motor skill levels. Bring a bag lunch and we will break bread together when we are done. All who wish to participate please sign-up after church with Suzanne Anderson or Jenny Healy.

Pastor's Pasta Thank You!

Thank you to all who helped make Pastor's Pasta a successful event for the Pilgrimage Women's Fellowship. What a wonderful work crew we had and a great opportunity for fellowship on Friday night's bread preparation and tortellini making as well as Saturday morning's pasta sauce labors. The division of labor was seamless and made it possible to finish everything by 12:30pm on Saturday. Special thanks to those who helped in the kitchen, prepared bags and baked cookies. The Fellowship realized a profit of over \$900 and will put this money to good use in a variety of charitable ways. My thanks as well, of course, to those who supported our efforts by purchasing dinners.

MISSIONS & OUTREACH NEWS

Monday Meals of Hospitality: Please call coordinator Diane Flood at 508-209-0266 if you could help with one of the Monday Meals for those in need in our community. There are about ten more Monday's remaining. Thank You.

The Plymouth Food Warehouse: The Plymouth Area Food Warehouse relies on food drives and other donations to keep its shelves stocked. We continue to collect non-perishables each week. The following items are needed: canned fruit, baby food (with current dates), ketchup, relish, mustard, soups, coffee, tea, crackers, cereal, juice, peanut butter, jelly, pasta and sauce, and canned tuna and chicken and ham. With each gift we are helping "Our Neighbors in Need."

UCC Equal Exchange Coffee: You are probably aware that fair trade Equal Exchange organic coffee has been served at coffee hour following the service since October. Now you can purchase organic coffee and hot cocoa for home use and gift giving following the service today. Prices are exceptional. This is a project of the Missions Committee and the United Church of Christ.

Gifts of the Heart Kits: Again this year, the Missions and Outreach Committee will be collecting items for Health Kits and Baby Kits. Place any items or complete kits in the boxes labeled and placed on the window sill in Allerton Hall. Church World Service sends these kits to refugees, displaced people and victims of natural disasters. For the contents of each kit, see the description below:

To assemble a Health Kit you will need:

- One hand towel
- One washcloth
- One comb
- One metal nail file or nail clipper with file
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- One tube of toothpaste (4-7 ounces)
- Six Band-Aids

To assemble a Baby Kit you will need:

- Six cloth diapers
- Two shirts
- Two washcloths
- Two gowns or sleepers
- Two diaper pins
- One sweater or sweatshirt
- Two receiving blanket (one can be a knitted blanket)

Knock, Knock

Opportunity is knocking and we hope you will answer. We, the nominating committee, are hoping that you would be willing to take a more active part in this wonderful church by serving on a committee. Please ask Paul Scheid, Pat Mudgett, Kathy Murphy, Diane Harting, Allen Hoyt or Stephanie Gray how you can serve. Any of us would be happy to talk with you and answer any questions.

Happy Anniversary UCC

The 50th Anniversary Party for the United Church of Christ will be in Hartford Connecticut from June 22-26. With the theme "Let It Shine," great plans are being made for a nationwide celebration. Here we are so close and such an important part of the Congregational side of the 1957 merger. Let's not be left out. We are all invited to the main Party event, Worship, Sunday, June 24th. Go to www.ucc.org for your invitation. And now, who would like to brainstorm ways The Church of the Pilgrimage can get involved? Organize a bus from Plymouth, throw a coffee hour birthday party, host a guest speaker. If you want to help "Let It Shine" call the church office. We'll get together ASAP, in the next 2 weeks.

The Women's Fellowship February 5th Meeting

The meeting will have as it's emphasis, "Projects of the Heart." We will welcome Christine Spencer, Diane Flood and Meg Bross as our guest speakers. Christine will show "The Innocence Quilt" she made and explain its role in the ongoing project she began several years ago. Her commitment to the cause of abused children has led her and her quilt to the Massachusetts State House. She will speak about ongoing aspects of her project including the making of a birthday quilt for residents at The Home for Little Wanderers. Meg will give us an update on the Evenings of Hospitality Project and Diane Flood will update us on the success of the Monday Meals of Hospitality at our church. We can be very proud of the variety of programs and the deep commitment to others by so many in our church community. Join us at 7pm, February 5th, in Allerton Hall to learn more about some of the Church's Projects of the Heart. All are invited!

OPEN YOUR HEART...DO YOUR PART!

This year's Church of the Pilgrimage confirmation class needs your help! We are going on Ecclesia Ministries' CityReach Retreat in Boston on March 2-3. We'll be learning about homelessness and handing out food, clothing and toiletries from our congregation to people in need. On Sunday, Feb. 11, we'll place a Giving Tree in our church's Allerton Hall with cards showing the items we need to bring to Boston. We invite you to take one or more of these cards. Please bring your donations to church the following Sundays, Feb. 18 and Feb. 25, or during the week in between. Got questions? Not sure what to donate? Call Jeff Donn at 774-454-3615.

An Open Invitation to the Women's Retreat

Saturday, March 17th from 8:30am-4:00pm at Iris Haven in South Plymouth: The Pilgrimage Women's Fellowship is sponsoring this retreat and invites women of our congregation to join us. There are approximately 10 more available spaces at this daylong first Women's retreat. The retreat topic is "Developing Your Personal Spirituality." The cost of \$25 includes brunch-like morning snacks and a wonderful lunch! Reservations may be made by contacting the church office or calling Kathy Marks at 508-747-3738. The retreat will be hosted and lead by Rev. Rosemary MacKay and Janet Synnott.

Confirmands and Mentors:

We will be having a very important meeting this Sunday, February 4th at 11:45am to discuss and prepare materials for our "Open Your Heart...Do Your Part!" campaign. Please check out our church website to see the announcement about this. The \$25 CityReach Retreat fee was due last Sunday...if you haven't paid it yet, you must bring it with you to our meeting this Sunday.

Junior High Fellowship News and Notes:

Our Junior High Fellowship for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders meets the first and third Sundays of the month from 4-5:30p.m. Our next meeting will be this Sunday, February 4th at 4p.m. Our meeting will include a mini service project—making dessert for our church's Monday Meals of Hospitality, an outreach to those in need here in Plymouth. We hope our Feb. 18th meeting will be at Alley Kat Lanes for some bowling fun. Looking ahead to March, we're planning a movie and pizza night for March 4th. Plans are also underway for a day trip to the City to take place sometime in May. The trip would include travel to Boston on the train, exploring some of the sights and sounds of Boston, and perhaps even a culinary adventure. We invite our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders to be a part of planning this trip.

Senior High Fellowship News

Our January 28th meeting involved a creative challenge/adventure. Our senior highs were given \$25 to go shopping for a meal that they would then prepare for the group. They planned the menu (entrée, vegetable, fruit, dessert and drink), shopped for the ingredients (they came in just under budget at \$24.98!), and returned to the church to cook. The meal was delicious and involved the ideas, labor, and skills of every person. We had a great time, and we even enjoyed the bargain blue (and strangely half-frozen) bug juice! Stay tuned for our next meeting to be held Sunday, March 25th when we gather to make a meal for our guests participating in our week-long Overnights of Hospitality program.

No Children's Communion Service on Feb. 4th

There will *not* be a Children's Communion service this Sunday, February 4th. This is because we will be receiving new members during this Sunday's worship service in the sanctuary. Parents—this means that you will *not* need to bring your children to the John Robinson Center before worship.

Attention 7th & 8th Graders and Parents

We invite our 7th and 8th graders to stay for the entire worship service and receive communion with their parents this Sunday, Feb. 4th. There will not be a 7th & 8th grade Sunday School class for this Sunday only.

Coming Soon:

Lenten Series on Practicing Our Faith

Please check out the flyer in this issue of the Herald. We invite you to order your book and sign up for this special Lenten Series by filling out the sign-up sheet in Allerton Hall after worship or calling the church office (508-746-3026). On Sundays after church we will discuss a Christian practice and on the following Wednesday there will be a soup supper with a worship service incorporating that practice. Here are the Christian practices that will shape our Lenten Series:

Sunday, Feb. 25th & Wed., Feb. 28th: Hospitality
Sunday, March 4th & Wed. March 7th: Discernment
Sunday, March 11th & Wed. March 14: Testimony
Sun., March 18th & Wed. March 21st: Honoring the Body
Sun. March 25th & Wed. March 28th: Healing

Here's the overall schedule:

Sunday Discussion Group(s): 11:30a.m.-12:30p.m.
Wednesdays: Soup Supper 6:00p.m., Worship: 7:00-7:30p.m.

Photo Schedule for 2007 Church Directory

Sunday, February 4	During Coffee Hour
Saturday, February 10	10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm
Saturday, February 11	During Coffee Hour
Sunday, March 4	During Coffee Hour
Tuesday, March 6	Evening 6-8pm

Sunday photos will be taken downstairs in Allerton Hall during coffee hour. Non-Coffee Hour photos will be a combination by appointment and on a drop-in at the John Robinson.

Church Council

The Church Council will meet following worship on February 11th. Every board and committee in the church is expected to have a representative at the meeting. The purpose of the Council is to exchange information and to discuss issues which we have in common as a congregation. The Council is intended to be a communications vehicle among the various boards and committees of the church. Please be sure that your board or committee is represented at the Council meeting.

Pilgrim Association News

At the request of **The Second Church of Plymouth**, Congregational, UCC, the Pilgrim Association will gather for an Ecclesiastical Council on **Sunday, February 25th 2007** at 2:00pm to meet, review the credentials of and hear the faith journey of **The Reverend Ms. Judith C. Medeiros**. The Association will then proceed with the church at 3:00pm to install the Reverend Medeiros as pastor. A reception will follow the installation in the Fellowship Hall.