
THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

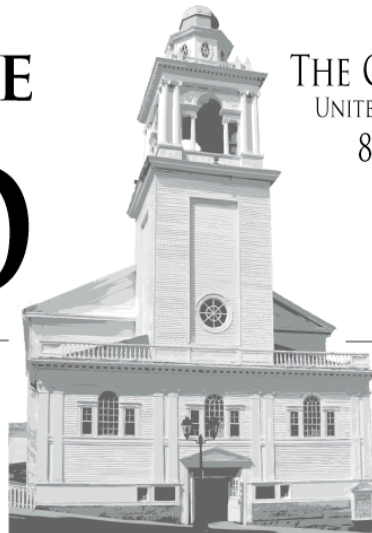
THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
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Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00am-12:00pm

July, 2007

Dear Friends,

For a few years now I've been fascinated by the so-called Desert Fathers and Mothers of early Christianity. During the fourth century A.D. a group of austere Christian men and women retreated to the arid areas of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia and Persia (now Iran) and sought salvation in seclusion, or semi-seclusion, as a kind of protest to both what they thought to be paganism and the nationalization of the Christian faith under Constantine.

The Desert Fathers/Mothers didn't leave a systematic set of writings, indeed they actually left very few writings of any kind! Basically what we have in terms of writing from these early Christian sages are sayings or aphorisms. These short pieces are like proverbs which open the spiritual seeker to a multiplicity of applications of faith to daily life. Those devotional applications are as valid today as they were in the fourth century.

I grew interested in the oft-described "hermits of Egypt" through my study of the early Christians of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Northumbria. Those spiritual pilgrims had access to the sayings of the desert forebears and sought to find a different kind of "desert" in their own places in which to refine their own arduous treks toward salvation. In fact, there are place names in Ireland which are called "deserts."

Of course, we can't replicate in the twenty-first century the kind of Christianity practiced by either the desert monks for the early Celtic Christians. But, we can learn ways to adapt either spiritual insight to our lives today. For my July reflection. I include a desert insight which may stimulate your own faith pilgrimage.

"A brother asked one of the elders: What good thing shall I do, and have life thereby? The old man replied: God alone knows what is good. However, I have heard it said that someone inquired of Father Abbot Nisteros, the friend of Abbot Anthony, asking: What good works shall I do? And then he replied: Not all works are alike. For Scripture says that Abraham was hospitable and God was with him. Elias loved solitary prayer, and God was with him. And David was humble, and God was with him. Therefore, whatever you see your soul to desire according to God, do that thing, and you shall keep your heart safe." (In The Wisdom of the Desert, collected by Thomas Merton).

There is wisdom, to be sure, in this "saying," but it requires discipline to meet its challenge. Faith is about living by discipline amid challenge. It behooves us, as it did earlier Christians in their time, to seek to discern what the soul should desire "according to God" in our time. Meditation upon God's grace and love will eventually inform us about what thing we should do. Such meditation and action will surely keep our hearts safe.

So, during July I pray that we all keep our "hearts safe." I'll see you in August, if not before.

Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary".

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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 CALENDAR

Sunday Morning worship begins at 10am. Coffee Hour follows the morning worship in Allerton Hall. There will be a Craft and Story hour for children each Sunday.

July 1: Rev. Moody, preaching.

July 4: Church Office closed for Independence Day.

July 5: Wedding Rehearsal, 2pm, sanctuary.

July 6: Wedding Rehearsals, 4pm and 5pm, sanctuary.

July 7: Weddings, 2pm and 4:30pm.

July 8: Peter Causton, preaching. Wedding, 4:30pm.

July 14: Wedding, Jon Marks and Joanne Doblecki.

July 15: Rev. Moody, preaching.

July 17: Board of Trustees Meeting, 7pm, JRC.

July 22: Rev. Moody, preaching.

July 26: Wedding Rehearsal, sanctuary.

July 27: Wedding Rehearsal, 6pm, sanctuary.

July 28: Wedding, 4:30pm, sanctuary. Wedding, JD Marks and Betsey Stearns, 6pm, sanctuary.

July 29: Al Hoyt, preaching.

July 22: Church Council Meeting, 11:30am, JRC.

CHURCH RECORD

Hospitalized: Harold Tissot, Toke Fry and Joe Neville recently hospitalized.

Baptism: On June 24, 2007 Mattias Daniel Bruffee, son of Daniel and Sarah Bruffee, was baptized during the Sunday service.

Wedding: On June 22, 2007 Rev. Marks officiated at a marriage service for Oliver Bartholdson and Megan McKinnon in the sanctuary.

JULY FLOWERS

July 1: Flowers given by Tony & Susan Cotta in loving memory of Marion and Gib Van Nest.

July 8: Flowers given by Audrey Birnstein in loving memory of her husband, Robert, her son Jerry, and her daughter, Joanne.

July 15: Flowers given by Alice and Ken Heckman in celebration of their anniversary and in honor of their children and grandchildren.

July 22: Flowers given by Verna and Allen Hoyt in loving memory of our parents.

July 29: Flowers given by Shirley Hoyt in loving memory of Francis Hoyt and Margaret Sherman Perkins.

JULY GREETERS

July 1: Betty and Kristen Sander

July 8: David and Linda Kegel

July 15: John and Nancy Canducci

July 22: Verna and Allen Hoyt

July 29: Everett and Dorothy Lanman

<p>REV. MARKS WILL BE ON VACATION DURING JULY!</p>

FOOD WAREHOUSE

The Food Warehouse is still in need of canned goods, rice, beans, condiments, tuna, peanut butter, bottles of juice. Please continue through the summer months to share in this important mission.

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION GROUP

The Theological Discussion Group will not meet during July. Those who have been attending are asked to complete reading the study/discussion guide, The Phoenix Affirmations.

CELTIC EVENING PRAYER SERVICES

The Wednesday Evening Prayer Services will not be held during July and August. They will continue in September.

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

Because of scheduling issues, Gary was unable to offer a New Member Class during the spring. A class will be offered in the fall. If you wish to become a member of The Church of the Pilgrimage, please phone the church office.

THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

Items for the August issue of the The Pilgrimage Herald must be in the office no later than July 24th. Thank you!

REV. HEATHER MOODY'S JULY OFFICE HOURS

Generally speaking, Rev. Heather will be in the office Wednesday and Friday mornings, beginning at 9:30a.m. Thursdays will be Rev. Heather's sermon preparation day and she will be working from home. On Tuesdays, Rev. Heather will be making home and hospital visits.

PASTORAL CARE NEEDS

Please be sure to contact the church office if you are aware of people you know who are hospitalized. Please also let Rev. Heather know of other pastoral needs of which she may be unaware. Remember, too, that home Communion is available upon request.

KEEPING UP-TO-DATE IN JULY

While there is only one issue of the Herald during the month of July, we will be publishing upcoming events and important announcements every week in our Sunday worship bulletin. Should you have information that did not make it into the Herald that you would like to share with the congregation, contact the church office to have it included in the Sunday bulletin. Email Shellie with your announcement or drop off a copy of your announcement by the Wednesday before the Sunday you would like to have it printed.

“GUEST” PREACHERS IN JULY

This month, we have the special treat of hearing two of our members preach the good news. On July 8th, Peter Causton will preach about how we experience the kingdom of God in our congregation, our community, and our world. Peter serves as a member of our Missions and Outreach Committee. Peter has an interest in preaching and potentially pursuing further studies in theology. On July 29th, Allen Hoyt will preach on the topic “How Can I Help?” Al has served on several different boards and committees of this church and sings in the Sanctuary Choir. Recently retired from serving as Fire Chief for the city of Hanson, Al will be attending Andover Newton Theological School in the fall to pursue a Master of Arts in Christian Education. Both of these members bring a wealth of life experience, creativity, fresh ideas, insights, and enthusiasm to the task of preaching. We are delighted to have an opportunity to hear them break open God’s holy Word in new ways for us.

GOLF TOURNAMENT SIGN-UP

The Annual Church of the Pilgrimage September Golf Tournament will be held Saturday morning, September 22, 2007 at Southers Marsh Golf Course. We welcome corporate and individual hole sponsors (\$100) to make this fundraiser a success. We are taking reservations

immediately for individual and foursomes at \$100/person, which includes greens fees, a cart, gift bag and lunch. Not a golfer? Join us at noon for a delicious baked stuffed chicken meal, and great raffle prizes: \$20/adults, \$10/kids. And everyone can participate by purchasing golf balls for the exciting Helicopter Ball Drop: \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Call Mike Harrington 508-747-2060 or Judy Mitchell 508-746-3959 for more information.

A STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank the members for their generous response to the 2007 Stewardship Campaign, “Giving in Faith for the future.”

To date we have 153 members and friends that have pledged compared to 106 last year. The pledge increase over last year is \$33,025.00 or a 20% increase. Total amount pledged for church operations as of June is \$168,962.00.

The Congregation should be proud for responding so generously.

Thanks Again, The Stewardship Committee

THANKS TO THE JUNE USHERS

I would like to thank the following people who ushered for me in June: Janet Holmes, Kelly Balboni, Nicholas Balboni, Gordon Campbell, Arlene Axford, Shirley Axon, Linda and Al Saunders, Hildegard Schimpf, Suzanne and Sherm Anderson with Benjamin, Pat and Tom Mudgett, Bonnie Peck, Dianne Keller, Sheldon and Barbara Peavey. I appreciate your willingness to assist at such a busy time of year. Janice Lee

SOUTH POND CHAPEL SUMMER HYMN SING

South Pond Chapel was built in the 1870’s as a Union Evangelical church for residents of the village at South Pond in Plymouth; it offered them a place to worship close to their homes and at that time the village at South Pond was a remote part of town.

Since 1959, the Chapel has been a mission of the First Baptist Church of Plymouth, offering a place for people of all denominations to gather to sing their favorite old-time hymns and gospel songs together, and to hear special music. The Chapel is located on Long Pond Road, off exit 5 in Plymouth.

The schedule for the 2007 season is:

- July 8 Rev. Bill Fillebrowne (Chiltonville Cong. Church)
- July 15 Rev. Robert Merritt, Carver (retired)
- July 22 To Be Announced
- July 29 Rev. Robert Stott (Zion Lutheran, Plymouth)
- Aug 5 Rev. Nathan Wood, Brockton (retired)
- Aug 12 Rev. Gary Marks (Church of the Pilgrimage)
- Aug 19 Rev. Dr. Jeff Jones (First Baptist Church of Ply.)
- Aug 16 Rev. Peter Gomes (Harvard) Old Home Day

A NEW START TO WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP

Our first meeting in September will be a retreat at Iris Haven in South Plymouth. The retreat’s purpose is to provide a time for women of the church to get away, reflect and plan a new and revitalized format for our meetings. Please join us if you would like to be a part of this group that wants to plan how Women’s Fellowship can meet the ever-changing needs of our members and our church. Reservations may be made during July by calling the church office before noon. The retreat will be Saturday, September 15th for the minimal cost of \$25.

The Church Office will begin summer hours on Monday, July 2nd. The office will be open Monday through Friday from 9:00am-Noon. Please note that the office will be closed on Wednesday, July 4th in observance of Independence Day.