
THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
8 TOWN SQUARE, PLYMOUTH,
MASSACHUSETTS 02360

www.8townsquare.org

THE REVEREND GARY L. MARKS,
SENIOR PASTOR
gmarks@8townsquare.org



CHURCH OFFICE

PHONE: 508-746-3026
FAX: 508-746-4362

office@8townsquare.org

Volume LXXIX, No. 36

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:00pm

December 6, 2009

Dear Friends:

I realize that Thanksgiving is over and only three days after its celebration we were thrust into the First Sunday of Advent. I haven't written a letter here since Thanksgiving and while it is still a recent memory I want to make a few observations about it.

I have come to cherish the Thanksgiving holiday. I have argued that it is rightly viewed as a religious celebration first and a food extravaganza second. Unfortunately, the latter has overwhelmed the former in our time. Of course, many cultures have what are called harvest celebrations, and that was true of England and other countries in Europe. Oriental civilizations have such festivals, too, but I don't know much about them. Thus, there was a purely cultural aspect to the First Thanksgiving in Plymouth in 1621. Yet, the Pilgrims, and other Separatist communities, did not only observe such festivals, but added a decidedly Christian dimension to them as celebrated here in Plymouth. Indeed, the Pilgrims did not participate in the usual Christian feast days, including Christmas and Easter. Rather, when a special blessing was experienced the pastor or civil magistrate called days of thanksgiving. During such days there was feasting and general celebrating, but always in the context of giving thanks to God for blessings received. Thus, days of thanksgiving were the religious holidays of the Pilgrim Way.

There were also penitential days called which were referred to as days of humiliation. These were days when there was fasting, prayer and self-examination before God. They were also days of solemn discernment when a weighty or ponderous decision was to be made by the community or the church.

Thus, in the Pilgrim Way all life was ideally lived within the experience of God's favor, or the experience of the absence of that favor. There was no separation of secular and sacred; they belonged to each other. Life was interpreted literally as a pilgrim's journey while it lasted on earth.

The Pilgrims would not have been able at all to understand Thanksgiving in any other than a religious way. Indeed, the reason they rejected traditional Christian holidays was that they had lost their religious origins and had become mere celebrations which had forgotten the real reasons they were originally designated holy days (holidays). Does this sound contemporary?

As we enter Advent and progress toward Christmas let us remember that is a holy day. The Pilgrims would not have rejected it had it not become something other than a means of praising God for the supreme blessing of God born among us in Bethlehem.

This is food for thought following Thanksgiving and approaching Christmas.

Love,

©The Church of the Pilgrimage in Plymouth, MA Inc., all rights reserved.

Moderator – Allen Hoyt; Treasurer –Elizabeth Hughes Campbell; Clerk – Lois Post; Collector – Tom Mudgett;
Music Director–Kelley DePasqua; Organist – Michael Eaton; Office Manager–Shellie Souza;
World Mission Emphasis–Heifer Project International; Church Building Telephone–508-747-1341

On Our Calendar

Dec 6-Second Sunday of Advent: Morning worship 10:00am,- A Hanging of the Greens Service with Jessica Hague preaching. There will be a business meeting of the congregation following The Service of Worship. The Cherub Choir and Junior Choir will rehearse. There will be a Confirmation meeting.

Dec 7: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. Shellie is taking a vacation day. Monday Meals of Hospitality in Allerton Hall, 11am.

Dec 8: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Stewardship Committee will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

Dec 9: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm.

Dec 10: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Membership and Evangelism Committee will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

Dec 11: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Guild will meet at 1pm in Allerton Hall.

CHURCH RECORD

In Memoriam: On December 4, 2009 Rev. Marks conducted a graveside service for Ruth B. Hayes.

Baptisms: The following children were baptized during the worship service on November 29, 2009: Anna Lena Miraglia, daughter of Suzanne (Fortini) and Paul Miraglia; Javier Charles Rosario, son of Gini (Mann) and Timothy Rosario; Ava Emily Ross-Sinkler, daughter of Kathryn Ross and Robert Sinkler.

Hospitalized: Helen Laine, Jordan Hospital. Recuperating at the Golden Living Center after a hospitalization, Cliff Sampson.

N O T E S

There will not be an issue of the Herald for December 27th and January 3rd because of the holiday schedule.

It's Christmas Bonus time! On Sunday, December 13th and Sunday, December 20th we will be collecting donations for our staff's holiday bonuses. Collectors will be designated and we are asking that all donations be made in cash. Thank you!

Gary thanks the choir and all who helped to make the performance of "**A Pilgrim Canticle**" such a beautiful one. Our Music Director, Kelly DePasqua found time in an extremely busy schedule to produce the service. She is a gift to all of us! I also thank Doug Post for the great posters and bulletin design and Shellie Souza for producing all that. Shellie even retyped the Canticle text for me! Thank you, one and all!

Memorial Poinsettias: Christmas is fast approaching. By your loving purchase of poinsettias, we can enhance the beauty of our church for the Christmas services. Sign up in the lower vestibule following the service for the next two Sundays. There will be an insert listing the donors and those memorialized or honored in the Christmas week Herald. The suggested donation for a poinsettia is \$15, although a donation of any amount is welcome. The flowers may be given to shut-ins, or picked up **after** the Christmas Eve services or the following Sunday. Volunteers will be welcomed to take flowers to shut-ins following the Christmas Sunday service.

We thank **Dianna Budge, Liisa Budge-Johnson** and all who helped with the Thanksgiving Day Open House. Once again it was an event greatly enjoyed by tourists. We thank **Linn and John Peterson** for being hosts and tour guides for the Open House.

The **Advent wreath workshop** after worship was a very nice event. Everyone had a good time making wreaths, cookie decorations and making tree decorations.

We thank **Gina Basler** and her son **Michael Cappola** for leading the Advent Service last Sunday and to Jessica Hague for being worship leader.

It is very important for as many as possible to attend the **business meeting of the church this Sunday, December 6th**. The purpose of the meeting twofold: to act upon the budget for 2010, and to receive the report of the Nominating Committee. Please plan to be present for a meeting which means so much to our church.

The Plymouth Area Interfaith Clergy met at The Church of the Pilgrimage on November 24th.

Gary attended a 2020 Committee meeting on November 30th.

Many thanks to **Nate Moore and Dr. Moore** for again arranging for, providing and administering free flu shots during two Monday Meals sessions in October and November. This is the third year that the Moore's' have generously offered free flu shots. The flu vaccine was in short supply this year, so the shots were especially appreciated by our Monday Meal participants. Many thanks also to **Charlene Moore** for providing socks and various items for our neighbors in need.

Copies of the proposed **2010 budget** are available upon request via email or snail mail. Please call the office.

The Guild will hold their annual Christmas Party on December 11th at 1:00pm in Allerton Hall. This year we will not be exchanging gifts. Instead, if you are able, we will be giving new, unwrapped toys to the Salvation Army. Diane Flood will transport them for us.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to the many hands that made the Advent Wreath workshop happen.

Thank you especially to Nancy Stearns and Betsy Stearns and Ruth Fry for making sure we had all the greens and candles and foam and candle holders we needed. Additional thanks to Phil Ragonetti, Jackie Williamson, and Linda Kegel for providing the other craft activities and to Mal Borsari for all her kitchen help. Lastly for the crew-much appreciation to Barbara Quinn and Kathy Marks for being everywhere and doing anything that needed doing. Many hands do indeed make light work. And one more thank you: to all those who came and participated, making room in their hearts (and their afternoons) for the coming of the Christ child. Jenny

The Hanging of the Greens: On December 6th a service of carols and participation for "Adorning Your House, God" has been planned. Kelley DePasqua found a wonderful program of song and readings. Jessica Hague has coordinated the parts to our Sunday morning service. The Christian Education Committee has helped make the church school children a part of this service. Children and adults participating in the processional should meet in Allerton Hall at 9:45am.

SAVE THE DATE! On Sunday, December 13th, we would invite all ages to join us in Christmas caroling at the Golden Living Center on Obery Street at 1:00pm! We would ask everyone participating to bring a bag lunch to church which we will have following coffee hour and the Cherub and Junior choir rehearsals. We will leave from the church and when we return, we'll join in a time of fellowship in Allerton Hall for refreshments-hot cocoa and popcorn. Please make sure to save the date and plan on joining us! Thank you, Marna Blomberg and Barbara Northrop.

NOTICE

In accordance with the Bylaws of The Church of the Pilgrimage, a Business Meeting will be held on December 6, 2009, following the Service of Worship.

The Purpose of the Meeting shall be:

1. To act upon the 2010 Budget of the Church.

All Church Members are urged to attend this important Meeting.

Lois E. Post



Clerk

Habitat Family Partners

Would you be interested in helping families chosen for a Habitat Home? The Family Partner committee is looking for a couple of new members to our committee. At this point, we are meeting on the first Friday of the month in the a.m. Although two of the current members work, they are free that morning. Saturdays we need to keep free for helping families at the build. We could possibly find another time if necessary, though evenings are a problem as one works in Boston and often is not home before 8 in the evening.

Responsibilities can be general in helping us find the best way of supporting families such as helping with financial management. It can be specific if you take on a family as your special responsibility. With a new family, it includes being in on the selection, keeping track of their sweat equity hours, and helping them at the build, and being supportive in helping them as they transit from being a renter to a home owner. We try to have families get together a couple of times a year and especially when we have added a new family. Our next two houses will likely be in Plymouth and Carver.

If you would like to know more about this, and might possibly be interested in joining us, please call Carol Johnson at 508-746-9701, or talk to me at church about it.

Advent and Christmas Worship Services

Join us for worship each Sunday morning at 10:00 am. The table to the right is a preview of upcoming worship services and other seasonal events at The Church of the Pilgrimage.



Date	Service	Preaching	Worship Leader
December 6 10:00 am	Second Sunday in Advent Hanging the Greens/ Family Worship with Communion No Sunday School	Jessica Hague	Rev. Gary
December 13 10:00 am	Third Sunday in Advent Regular Worship and Sunday School	Rev. Gary	Peter Causton
December 20 10:00 am	Christmas Sunday – Family Worship No Sunday School	Rev. Gary	Jenny Healy
December 24 7:00 pm	Christmas Eve – Family Service Lessons and Carols with Living Crèche	-	Rev. Gary TBA
December 24 11:30 pm	Christmas Eve Midnight Service Lessons and Carols with Communion	-	Rev. Gary Trace Sears
December 27 10:00 am	Regular Worship and Sunday School	Rev. Gary	Diana Budge



THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE
8 TOWN SQUARE,
PLYMOUTH, MA 02360

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 10:00 AM
CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



Periodical
Publication
U. S. P. S.
432820