

THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

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

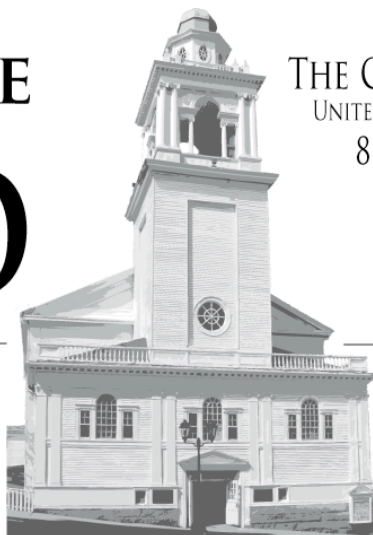
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Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:00pm

June 14, 2009

Dear Friends,

By now you have heard the news that I will be leaving The Church of the Pilgrimage. I know that choosing to cut the Associate Pastor position because of a lack of sufficient funding was a difficult and even painful decision for our congregation to make. You may be feeling frustration or even anger that no other feasible option was available. You may feel upset or worried about the future, wondering just what life will be like at our church with one less pastor. You may feel an uncomfortable sense of guilt that our congregation could not meet the nearly overwhelming financial challenges set before us. You may simply feel sad, grieving the loss of someone you care about. Perhaps you are feeling something else entirely. Loss and change inevitably evoke some kind of reaction within us and it is important that we acknowledge our response. Taking time to honor how and why we feel the way we do will make it possible for us not only to recognize the challenges that lie ahead but also the opportunities and blessings that await us.

I myself feel sad to be saying goodbye to a congregation I have come to cherish deeply. I am immensely grateful for the opportunities for growth that I have experienced, and I am a bit anxious about a somewhat uncertain future. I am also hopeful. It's true that loss and change can feel as stark and bleak as a death. But if our faith can teach us anything, it is that death leads to resurrection. In fact, sometimes death must occur in order for new life to spring forth from that empty tomb. So have hope: our still speaking God who will not abandon us and who makes all things new is at work in The Church of the Pilgrimage doing a new thing. It shall be your challenge to watch and listen for what God is doing, and to open yourself to the gifts that the Holy Spirit will offer. This will mean you may have to take some risks. The new life awaiting this congregation clearly will not be exactly the same as the life you experienced before. As I preached on Pentecost Sunday, the gift of new wine that God offers cannot fit into the old wineskins (see Luke 5:36-38).

Part of my responsibility in this time of transition is to offer clear guidelines for my departure. Having recently attended a required clergy Boundary Awareness Training workshop, I am keenly aware that having a healthy ending is absolutely essential for both me and you. So we will take time to celebrate the work we have done together and we will mark the ending of our relationship as pastor and congregation in worship on June 21st. As of July 1st, I will no longer be the Associate Pastor of The Church of the Pilgrimage. This means that I will not be available to engage in any pastoral duties for any member or friend of the congregation, including home and hospital visits, funerals and memorial services, baptisms, weddings, pastoral care, preaching, or communion. (With the Advisory Board's approval, I am performing the three weddings in July that had been scheduled many months in advance of the congregation's decision to eliminate my position.)

When a pastor leaves, it can be difficult for both the pastor and the congregation to let go, particularly when the future seems uncertain. To help both of us move on, it is necessary for me to cease all contact with the people of The Church of the Pilgrimage for a period of at least 12 months. I know that may seem rather harsh, and you may have some questions about what to do if we see each other at a gas station or the grocery store or anywhere else around town. Expect me to be polite—as a Midwesterner, I can't help smiling and saying hello—but please don't expect to have an extended conversation as we pump gas or pick up a gallon of milk. As challenging as this may be for all of us, I know these guidelines will help us to avoid the kinds of situations that could keep this congregation from embracing the new gifts and the new life that God will surely offer.

Saying goodbye is never easy, but I give thanks for the wonderful relationships we have developed and the meaningful ministry we have done together. Have hope. And may God bless you and fill you with joy.

With grateful thanksgiving,

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

On Our Calendar

June 14: Morning worship 10am, Rev. Heather Moody preaching. Church School Sunday. Graduating Seniors will be recognized during this service. There will be a church family picnic following the service at Pinewood Lodge. Junior Choir will sing.

June 16: The Board of Trustees will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

June 17: The Music Committee will meet at 6:30pm. Last Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm.

Coming Events –

June 20-PFC Concert, 7:30pm.

June 21-Father's Day/Music Appreciation Sunday.

There will be a special Coffee Hour following Morning Worship which will recognize Rev. Heather's 3½ years of ministry at The Church of the Pilgrimage.

June 23-The Advisory Board will meet at 7:00pm.

Office Hours for Rev. Gary L. Marks

June 15-19: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am.

Office Hours for Rev. Heather Moody

June 16, 18, 19: Rev. Moody will be in the office at 10:00am.

Church Record

Hospitalized: Tom Mudgett is now recuperating at home following hospitalization.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Billie Fry. Our sympathies are extended to her family and friend. A service for Billie will be held at a yet to be determined date in August.

Our sympathies are extended to Bea Armstrong whose sister Marjorie Martin died last week in North Carolina.

Flowers: In honor of all June Graduates. Given by Wilbert and Linny Fantoni.

N O T E S**Church Family Picnic at Pinewood Lodge**

Join us on Sunday, June 14th as we gather at the scenic Pinewood Lodge and Campground for our annual church family picnic lunch. Following our Children's Sunday service, we invite you to pack your picnic basket and spend an afternoon of fun and fellowship at Pinewood, courtesy of the Saunder's family. Lake swimming is available (for the bold among us).

Rowboat, canoe and kayak rentals are also available. So come along, enjoy a leisurely picnic lunch as we all say "hello" to summer!

Craft and Story Hour-Please sign-up to do a craft/story hour during the summer! Our curriculum for church school does not continue during the summer months. There is a sign-up sheet on the wall at the back of Allerton Hall. Any questions? Call Sue Coombs 508-224-9319

Important Dates to Remember

June 14: Church School and Graduating Seniors Sunday.

Our children will provide some of the leadership for our regular worship service. We will have a service of recognition and blessing for our graduating high school seniors. We will also recognize the adults who serve as Sunday School Teachers, and we will honor and bless our congregation's new "in care" relationship with Jessica Hague as she pursues a path towards ordained ministry. Church picnic at Pinewood Lodge to follow the worship service.

June 21: Rev. Heather's last Sunday at The Church of the Pilgrimage. Worship will be a celebration of our ministry together over the past 3½ years. This is also Music Appreciation Sunday. Following worship, there will be a reception in Allerton Hall.

Crib Room Sunday, June 14th until September 13th The crib room will not have anyone available to mind your toddlers during the summer Sundays! However, you're welcome to use the room with your "little ones."

Coffee Hour We are in desperate need of coffee hour volunteers. Please see Hildegard Schimpf if you can help. Thank you in advance.

A note of thanks: Thank you for all the cards, meals and well wishes from our church family. I am overwhelmed. I am blessed to be a part of The Church of the Pilgrimage with such loving families and friends for support, comforting words and prayers. You truly can feel the love and the warmth. I am doing well and will be back soon. Yours truly, Tom Mudgett

4th and 5th graders Practice for Church School

Day: Please meet in the Sanctuary at 9:15 to practice our part in the Children's day service. Some of you will have youth choir practice at 9:30 so we only have 15 minutes to practice.

Junior High Church School Practice: Please be at church by 9:30 so you can be in place as ushers and greeters. Those practicing scripture reading can also practice at 9:30.

Harvest Fair News

The Church of The Pilgrimage's annual Harvest Fair is scheduled for Saturday October 24th from 9am - 2pm. As many of you may be aware the Harvest Fair is a \$11,000.00 line item in our churches annual budget. I have heard from a few people that many are suggesting that we try and make the fair more profitable this year to help with the deficit. I love this idea and would welcome any new ideas and new helpers. The Harvest Fair is in desperate need of new blood! We all love our church and want it to continue to succeed and flourish. There are many avenues that we can use help in. The one that is of upmost impotance at this time is the Harvest Fair Raffle. We are in need of someone or several people would make the job much easier, to help with going to local businesses over the summer months and ask for donations. The raffle brings in over \$1500.00 in funds towards the fair. We desperately need help with this. Please consider taking it on? Asking a friend to help you take it on. You can take on part of it and we can find helpers. Another position that is in need of for the Harvest Fair is a co-chair person to help run the fair. This consists of helping make phone calls to people in the church and businesses, helping with new ideas, helping with set up and general organizational skills. We are also in need of crafters for the Holiday table. I would love to see a group that could meet several times in the summer to come up with some fresh ideas and make items to be sold on the Holiday Table.If your crafty this could be right up your alley, and you could set the schedule. Please remember getting involved in the church fair does take some time, but the rewards you get from it are not only rewarding to our church but also to you. Please contact me with any ideas and if you can help at lmcurtin@comcast.net or Laura Curtin 508-746-7761. Thank you!



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