
THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
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Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:00pm

February 14, 2010

Dear Friends:

Happy Valentines Day! Since that day set aside to focus on love falls on a Sunday this year I decided to find out what I could about the saint after whom the day is named. The history of Valentine's Day is murky and couched in legend. Not only is that true, but there were at least three St. Valentines. Beyond that confusing set of circumstances a day set aside to honor and express love had a long history before the dawn of Christianity in the Roman Empire. We do know that mid-February has been for centuries, both Roman and Christian, set aside as a time to celebrate the power and beauty of love.

One story which attracted my attention is about one of the St. Valentines who was a priest in Rome. He was a priest who fell into the disfavor of the Roman emperor Claudius II around 270. According to that legend, Claudius II prohibited marriage for young men, claiming that unmarried men made better soldiers than married men. Valentine, legend holds, continued to perform marriage ceremonies secretly against the emperor's decree. He was eventually apprehended by the Romans and put to death for his performing of marriages.

Another legend about this St. Valentine is that he fell in love with the blind daughter of his jailer. Evidently priests were allowed to marry in 270. Before he was executed he is said to have sent a letter to the jailer's daughter signed, "From your Valentine." The young woman was said to have been cured of her blindness.

One other legend associated with St. Valentine is that he focused on agape (Christian love) and not so much on eros (passionate love). It is said that he was executed for refusing to renounce his faith which called for the "other directed" love found in the New Testament.

I have no idea which of these legends is true, if any of them are. It is good, though, that there is a time set aside to focus on love in all its expressions. Of course, we trivialize love in drippy sentimentality, but true love is the greatest gift we have been given as human beings. There is so much in life that is unlovely, so much which is unloving, that is a good thing to focus upon caring for one another.

Last Sunday my sermon was based on Psalm 138. The spiritual poet called upon all of us to recognize that the steadfast love of God abides forever. Please don't forget to be thankful for the love of God. It is a gift to be loved by God and to honor God by being loving people. It is also a gift, a sublime one, to hear that we are loved, and genuinely to be able to say to another that they are loved and appreciated. Flowers and candy are nice, but love is what the best in life is all about.

Love,

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The Church of the Pilgrimage, UCC is an Open and Affirming Church

Moderator – Allen Hoyt; Treasurer – Verna-Ross Hoyt; 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

Feb 14: Morning worship, 10:00am, Peter Causton preaching. Cherub Choir and Junior Choir will rehearse. There is no Introduction to the Bible Class today.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Feb 15-Presidents' Day: The Church Office will be closed Monday Meals of Hospitality at 11am in Allerton Hall.

Feb 16: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Board of Trustees will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

Feb 17-Ash Wednesday: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. Ash Wednesday Service in the sanctuary, 7pm. The Choir will rehearse at 7:30pm.

Feb 18: Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am.

Feb 19: Rev. Marks will be in the church office at 9:30am. Presentation on immigration by Al Hoyt in Allerton Hall at 6:30pm.

Feb 20: Game Night in Allerton Hall, 4:30-9:00pm.

Coming Events:

Feb 21: The First Sunday in Lent.

Feb 22: Gary will attend a meeting of the 2020 Anniversary Committee.

Feb 23: The Advisory Board will meet at 7:00pm in the JRC Conference Room.

Feb 24: Soup Suppers/Lenten Service in the church building 6:00-7:30pm.

Feb 27: Blue and Gold Banquet in Allerton Hall, 6:00pm.

CHURCH RECORD

In Memoriam: On February 5, 2010 Rev. Marks conducted a graveside service for the infant twins of Phil and Regina Chandler.



The flowers on the communion table are in loving memory of Dorothy and Harold Strassel. Given by the family.

N O T E S

Al Hoyt will be doing a presentation on immigration and its economic effects on February 19, 2010 in Allerton Hall from 6:30-8pm. Mexican and Salvadoran food will be provided.

We thank Marylyn Colburn for being our Lay Worship leader on February 7th, and the Boy Scouts for being ushers and greeters. 2010 marks the 100th Anniversary of the founding of The Boy Scouts of America. For most of the one hundred The Church of the Pilgrimage has sponsored a Boy Scout Troop.

On Sunday, February 14th the **Confirmation class** will travel to Quincy to visit the Islamic Center after morning worship. They will meet again on Sunday, February 21st in the JRC following morning worship.

Yoga with Kim Saunders for 4th and 5th graders on February 21st during Sunday School. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a mat or a beach towel. For questions see Jenny Healy.

The Ash Wednesday Service on February 17th is open to anyone who wants to attend. For those desiring the, ashes will be imposed and there will be a brief Service of Communion.

We are continuing to receive donations for the **Haiti Relief Fund**. All monies received will be sent to our UCC missions agencies and on to Haiti. Those instrumentalities of the UCC know where the relief is most urgently needed.

A note from Gary: I have been heartened by the response of our congregation to the victims of the Haitian earthquake. The more I see and read the more my heart breaks for people in a country that was devastated. Haiti was already the poorest country in the western hemisphere. I saw on the news one night last week that the Haitian government is basically operating out of a small police station which was itself damaged by the quake. It is difficult to imagine such a catastrophic situation! The fact that you have responded as generously as you have in these tough economic times makes me proud to be your pastor. I thank God for you!

Daffodils: It's that time of the year again!

The American Cancer Society annual daffodil drive will be held during coffee hour on February 14th, 21st and 28th. Please donate to this long time church supported fundraiser by purchasing a bouquet or a pot of daffodils. The flowers will be available for pick up after church on March 28th. Thanks!

News from the Music Committee

Italian Organist Luca Massaglia will give an ORGAN RECITAL on our Roche Organ on Tuesday, March 23rd at 7:30 PM. He will be joined by classical saxophonist Isabella Stabio. The two are making their first trip to the United States and have included a stop at The Church of the Pilgrimage on their tour. They will also be playing Trinity Church in Boston later in the week.

The performers are hoping that a generous and friendly member of the Church of the Pilgrimage would be willing to host them on their visit to Plymouth. They would need accommodations on Monday evening, March 22 (they are rehearsing at the church that day) and following the concert on Tuesday evening, March 23rd. They would head to their next performance early Wednesday morning. They say that they could stay in the same room and seem quite enjoyable. You can Google them for more information.

Please contact Kelley DePasqua if you would be willing to host our Italian visitors. kdepasqua@msn.com or 508-801-3491.

Welcoming Visitors

The Membership and Evangelism Committee is asking the cooperation of all the members to help us identify and welcome visitors to our services. We have tried to do this by personally asking visitors to sign our Guest Book at the front door each Sunday, but still miss many people. Therefore, we are returning to Pew Attendance Pads so we will have the necessary information to send letters of welcome to our new visitors. As you pass these pads, please note visitors' names and give them a special welcome.

This Year For Lent: Soup Suppers are Back!

The Deacons are renewing a tradition started a few years back. On Wednesday evenings during Lent, we will have a simple soup supper followed by an evening prayer service. You are invited to join us for food, fellowship, and reflection during the season of Lent. We will gather from 6-7 p.m. for a light supper of soup, salad, and bread. At 7 p.m. Rev. Gary will lead a 30-minute evening Prayer Service in the Sanctuary. The format for the services will range from simple Celtic prayer, to a Service of Healing with music. The suppers are a great opportunity to connect with members of the Church Family (plus you don't have to cook!), and the prayer services will offer and opportunity for spiritual practices and reflection during the season of Lent. More details will follow, but for now, be sure to mark your calendars: The dates are February 24, and March 3, 10, 17, and 24.

Other Lent/Easter dates to remember

February 17, 2010 Ash Wednesday- There will be a service in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m.

March 28, 2010 Palm Sunday- The Deacons will be hosting the annual Palm Sunday Breakfast at 8 a.m.

April 1, 2010 Maundy Thursday – There will be a service in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m.

April 2, 2010 Good Friday – *Walk with Christ*: A service of remembrance will take place. Time TBD.

April 4, 2010 Easter Sunday- Sunrise Service at Cole's Hill.

April 4, 2010 Easter Sunday- Worship Services at 9am and 11am

