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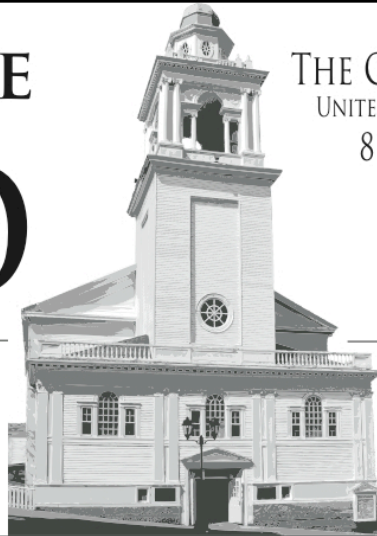
# THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL  
8 TOWN SQUARE, PLYMOUTH,  
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Volume LXXX, No. 9

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

March 7, 2010

Dear Friends:

Not long ago I announced that I would be retiring in the not too distant future. I didn't give a date for that event for several reasons. I wanted to speak with our Area Minister and the Advisory Board and our Board of Trustees before setting an exact date. I have met with the Area Minister and last Tuesday night with our boards. At that Tuesday meeting it was mutually and unanimously agreed that I would retire at the end of 2010. That is a relatively long period of time, but it doesn't seem that long to me after being one of your ministers for nearly forty years! The reasons for that time frame are several and I'll share some of them in this letter. I don't plan to be saying "goodbye" for the next ten months. I'll save that for the last couple of months. Until then I'll be doing the work of a pastor.

Kathy and I have talked about the timing of my retirement off and on for a while since I am of that age. The time period agreed to will give us personally an opportunity to get our finances in order and to make some repairs to our house at Bloody Pond. It will also give us time to rid ourselves of many "things" we've accumulated over the years. Kathy doesn't want to move while school is in session. The time span agreed to will allow us to move out of the parsonage in a more or less leisurely fashion.

This timing will also give the church opportunity to consider what it will do with the parsonage which is a lovely asset to the church, but in great need of repair and improvements.

There are other reasons for setting the end of this year as the target date, but I can share those with you another time.

The decision to retire has not been an easy one. I love what I do and am in pretty good health. The church has to think in terms of long-term ministry and I wouldn't be able to fit into those plans at my age. This can be an exciting time for the church and I hope it will be for us, as well. We have come a long way together and there have been many milestones we have reached together. I'm thinking about what I will do without the joys and even the challenges of pastoral duties, but I want to study, maybe teach for a while and, if means allow, do some travelling. I probably won't have difficulty filling up my days. Among other things, I may plant a garden again.

With the time frame indicated we'll all have time to share together and I like that. I am not naïve, though, and I know that I will feel the pain of the separation when it comes. But, I am not going to dwell upon that now. I'm going to be a pastor until the end of this year. I want these to be the happiest days of my long ministry. I shall love you forever.

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

**Mar 7:** Morning worship, 10:00am, Rev. Gary L. Marks preaching. The Junior Choir will sing. The Cherub Choir will rehearse after morning worship. The Introduction to the Bible Class will meet from 11:30am-12:30pm in the JRC Conference Room.

**Mar 8:** Rev. Marks will be in the church office at 9:30am. Monday Meals of Hospitality at 11am in Allerton Hall.

**Mar 9:** Rev. Marks will conduct a service of worship at The Newfield House at 10am. He will be in the church office following that service.

**Mar 10:** Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. Soup, Salad, Bread Supper in Allerton Hall at 6:00pm to be followed by a Lenten Service in the sanctuary from 7:00-7:30pm.

**Mar 11:** Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Membership and Evangelism Committee will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

**Mar 12:** Rev. Marks will be in the office at 9:30am. The Guild will meet at 1pm in Allerton Hall.

**Mar 13:** Boy Scouts Pinewood Derby.

#### Coming Events:

Mar 14: The Fourth Sunday in Lent. One Great Hour of Sharing.

Mar 17: St. Patrick's Day. Soup Supper/Lenten Service 6:30-7:30pm.

Mar 21: The Fifth Sunday in Lent (the Spring Equinox). Time and Talent Auction/Luncheon after church.

Mar 23: Organ Concert in the sanctuary, 7:30pm.

### **N O T E S**

We thank **Marna Blomberg** for being worship leader on February 28<sup>th</sup>.

**We wish to thank all who contributed to the service of celebration for Sheldon Peavey** on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Those include Kelley DePasqua, Terry Runnels, Michael Eaton and members of The Church of the Pilgrimage Sanctuary Choir. The Collation which followed the service was festive and extremely well done. We thank Jenny Healy who organized the event, and all who helped Jenny and provided a delightful and delicious luncheon.

We were sorry to hear of the death of **James Peterson**. Our prayers are with his family.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup> Gary attended a meeting of the 2020 Anniversary Committee.

**Mark your Calendar** ... for a Church Council meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup> following morning worship.

According to the Bylaws the **Moderator has appointed** the following people to fill vacancies on the Board of Trustees. Frank Roberts and Ryan Daily to terms both expiring in 2010. Glenda Richards to a term ending in 2013.

**A Note from Gary:** The Advisory Board and I are putting considerable effort into our Wednesday evening Soup Supper and Lenten Services. The simple suppers are delicious and provide a great opportunity for getting together with members of the Pilgrimage family. It is a warm and friendly time over a warm bowl of homemade soup. We hope that you will join us for the suppers. The services are a time for Lenten prayer, reflection and silence. They are designed to be spiritual steps along the Lenten way as we remember and rehearse the most significant events of our faith. Come and join us for these gatherings.

**From Michaela Coombs:** We were able to send over 100 "HUGS" to the children of Haiti. All of those who donated helped bring a smile to a child. God Bless, Michaela Coombs and Spooky

### **Time and Talent Auction/Luncheon**

#### **Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, after church**

Signup on Sunday for the delicious luncheon.

Only \$4 per adult, \$2 per child, max. \$12

Also, please sign up for your donation(s) of time and/or talent. Forms will be available in Allerton Hall after church. Baking or boating, tours or tortellini, poetry or pies, tickets or tea, weeding or window washing, babysitting or brownies, weekend getaways or watercolors. Don't hide your light under a bushel! Your church needs YOU!

For more information, please contact Judy Mitchell at 508-746-3959.

### **Lent/Easter dates to remember**

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.

March 1, 2010

Dear Friends:

At the February 23, 2010 meeting of the Advisory Board, the Board accepted Rev. Gary Marks' requested retirement date of December 31, 2010. While this date sounds like a long way off, we know that there is much planning and action that must happen in the next ten months to ensure a smooth transition for everyone. Part of the reason for this letter is to inform you of the next steps that occur in the transition of Pastoral leadership in a UCC church. We know you will have many questions about the process, and we hope that keeping you informed along the way will help reduce some of the anxiety and concern that naturally arises when a long-term pastor leaves the Church.

First on our minds is who will be our next Pastor! Experts have advised us, and we agree that it is a good practice to hire an Intentional Interim Pastor for a defined period of time (1 to 3 years) after a pastor leaves. It allows for a sort-of "cooling off" period to allow the Church to get used to the idea that Gary is no longer our Pastor. It also gives the Church time to reflect and engage in self-study, so that we can better know who we are as a Church and what our mission for ministry is before we begin to search for our next settled pastor.

I have already been in contact with Rev. Dale Hempen, our UCC Area Minister, who will help guide the Advisory Board through the process of searching for an Interim Pastor to fill the role beginning in January, 2011. A search team will be formed in the next two months. They will meet with potential candidates and help advise the Board on the most appropriate match for the Interim Pastor. The search process for an Interim is not as involved as that for a permanent Pastor, and we expect that we will have little difficulty filling the position in the time frame we have been given.

Another important consideration is how we give proper recognition to both Gary and Kathy for their 40 years of service to our Church! How do we say thank you and goodbye to these two who have been such an important part of our lives for so long? We have begun to think of the timing and magnitude of a proper *Celebration of Thanksgiving*, and we believe that Thanksgiving (mid-November) is a most appropriate time, given Gary's stature as a Pilgrim Scholar and the importance of the Thanksgiving story in our Church.

More details on a formal celebration will be made available as plans unfold. In the meantime, one of the best ways we can honor Gary's service is to continue to cherish him as our pastor, and to continue to walk with him on his journey, sharing with him the same grace he has shared with us for 40 years. In many ways, a pastor is always preparing us to say goodbye by teaching us and equipping us for our own ministry. What a gift to Rev. Gary it must be to see the explosion of ministry we have all created in our Church!

There are many other details that will certainly demand our attention moving forward. We will do our best to keep everyone informed of the process. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any one of the Deacons if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours Truly,

Trace Sears  
Chair, Advisory Board

"I don't know how to pray." "I used to feel like God was listening, but I don't seem to be able to sense anything holy anymore." "I need a minute to think about God this Lent but I just can't seem to find the time." If you relate to those phrases, please consider attending a retreat on *Exploring the Ways of Prayer* led by Rev. Rosemary MacKay on **Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>** from 8:30-3pm. We apologize for the short notice, but this was planned at the last minute in response to requests from Church members, so we hope you can participate! Please let Jess Hague know if you are interested by March 14<sup>th</sup>. There will be a small fee of \$25 to cover materials and lunch, and if cost is a concern, please let Jess know as there are scholarship funds available.

Interested in learning new spiritual practices? Wishing you had time to deepen your understanding of how you already live your faith in your everyday life? Unsure of what spiritual practices are? Just looking for something to do? Jessica Hague will be leading a small group in a 5-week study on Spiritual Practices that will be held after Church beginning April 11. We'll learn, discuss, practice, and reflect on those activities that allow us to "create openings in our lives where the grace, mercy, and presence of God may be made known to us" (Craig Dykstra). All are welcome, but Jess asks you note the following:

- To allow time for the group to grow in relationship to one another as well as learn about spiritual practices, Jess is asking participants to commit to at least 4 of the 5 sessions.
- To allow space for all to be heard (listening is a spiritual practice), there will be a limit in the group size. If there is extensive interest, more groups will be formed!

If you are interested, please contact Jess ASAP in person at Church, via e-mail at [jessica.hague@gmail.com](mailto:jessica.hague@gmail.com), or by calling her at 508-728-1760. Guest lecturers may include **Jenny Healy**, so if you've always wanted to know what makes her bread so special, contact Jess today!



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SUNDAY WORSHIP – 10:00 AM  
CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



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