
THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

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

May 2, 2010

Dear Friends:

One of the most respected writers in Christian spirituality of the last generation is Henri J. Nouwen. A few seasons ago I led an adult study group using his book as a guide. It is entitled Life of the Beloved. In another of his books I found a quotation which I think appropriate as we ponder life in what is still the Eastertide season. Nouwen passed this life a couple of years ago. The following quotation is from his book, Bread for the Journey.

“...we often confuse unconditional love with unconditional approval. God loves us without conditions but does not approve of every human behavior. God doesn't approve of betrayal, violence, hatred, suspicion and all other expressions of evil, because they all contradict the love God wants to instill in the human heart. Evil is the absence of God's love. Evil does not belong to God.”

“God's unconditional love means that God continues to love us even when we say or think evil things. God continues to wait for us as a loving parent waits for the return of a lost child. It is important for us to hold on to the truth that God never gives up loving us even when God is saddened by what we do. That truth will help us return to God's ever present love.”

I find this to be an insightful and beautiful way of expressing God's love for all of us while God does not approve of all the things we do. In the quotation I've cited Nouwen clearly and keenly observes that evil does not belong to God, that it is antithetical to God's love. Nouwen does not try to explain evil (no one has ever done that with any great success), but affirms that God continues, with unending compassion, to love even those who are involved with evil. Skillfully, with a spiritually sensitive heart, he expresses that the unconditional love of God does not mean that God unconditionally approves of all that we do when we are in league with evil causes.

The world needs to hear this truth which is garnered from the biblical tradition and by a deep probing of the heart and soul through prayer, study and by seeking to understand a divine love which will not let us go. The world, you and I, need to hear that we are loved, but that we have great need to repent of the way by which we are complicit with evil.

Henri Nouwen was a contemplative. That is, he spent a great deal of his life in solitude and prayer away from the world where evil seems ever to be making inroads against the unconditional love of God as we profess it in our Christian faith. I believe we all need to make time to savor the sweet love of God. It is surely better than going with the drift of evil and forget that there is a God who loves us. Nouwen believed, as I do, that what is most personal is also most universal. To know of God's love personally means that we can and will and work for it to be the universal state of things.

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

May 2: Morning Worship 10am, Deacon Trace Sears preaching. The Junior Choir will sing. Spring Clean-Up Day. Confirmation Meeting after worship. The Cherub Choir will rehearse.

May 3: Gary will be in the church office at 9:30am.

May 4: Gary will be in the church office at 9:30am.

May 5: Gary will be in the office at 9:30am. Missions will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room. Choir Rehearsal at 7:30pm.

May 6: Gary will be in the office at 9:30am. The CE Committee will meet at 7pm in the JRC Conference Room.

May 7: Gary will be in the office at 9:30am. Shellie Souza is taking a vacation day.

Coming Events:

May 9: Mother's Day.

May 11: Shellie Souza will be attending an office administrators seminar at the Mass Conference Center in Framingham. She will not be in the office.

May 12: Gary will give a lecture on John Robinson and the Covenant to the Lothrop Society in Brewster.

May 16: The Annual Meeting of The Church of the Pilgrimage will be held following morning worship.

N O T E S

Gail Mason is now recuperating at the rehabilitation center (RHCI) in Sandwich. She is doing well after surgery at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

On April 18, 2010 **Lucia Bache Schaefer** was baptized by Rev. Paul Sinn during the morning worship service. Lucia is the daughter of Abia (Saunders and Joseph Schaefer).

On April 25, 2010 the following children were baptized during the morning worship service: **Sophia Anne Lynn**, daughter of Terence Lynn and Heidi Herrick-Lynn; and **Jaan August Hunter**, son of Chad and Kadi (Viise) Hunter.

On May 1, 2010 Rev. Marks conducted a memorial service in the church sanctuary for **Elaine L. Sampson**.

For those wishing to have a **2010 first-quarter contribution statement**, please call the church office 508-746-3026 or email office@8townsquare.org.

In a note from **Dottie Sturtevant** for the Easter Lily: What a lovely surprise! Every day it changes. We will plant it out in the yard. Thank you. Love you, Dottie Sturtevant

Earth Day Celebration (Spring Clean Up Day)

Come one, come all and celebrate Earth Day at church. We will be cleaning up and maintaining our little corner of the earth on May 2nd after church. There are many jobs to do for all ages and abilities. This was a big success last fall and hundreds if not thousands of dollars were saved by using all the skills of the

congregation instead of contracting out the work. So lets keep a good thing going and spruce up the church for spring. Pizza and soda will be provided.

2nd Grade Bibles

We're working on gathering a comprehensive list of this year's 2nd graders who will be receiving a Bible on Church School Sunday (June 13th). However, we want to be sure no one is left out—so parents, please either e-mail me at scmacoombs@netscape.net or there will be a sign up in your child's classroom. Please indicate the spelling of your child's name as you would have it appear on her or his Bible.

Also, if for some reason your child already completed 2nd grade but never received a 2nd Grade Bible from our church and would like one, please let me know.

Thank You. Susan Coombs, Co-chair CE

NOTICE

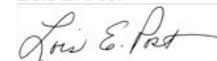
In accordance with the Bylaws of The Church of the Pilgrimage, the 2010 Annual Business Meeting will be held on May 16, 2010, following the Service of Worship.

The Purpose of the Meeting shall be:

1. To receive Reports of all Boards, Committees and Officers.
2. The election of Officers, Board and Committee Members.

All Church Members are urged to attend this important Meeting.

Lois E. Post



Clerk

Gary thanks all who contributed food for a collation following the memorial service on April 24th for Jean Richter. Jean was Bill Richter's mother. The Richter family was very appreciative for the loving consideration shown to them by the church during a difficult time. In recent months there have been a number of collations (receptions) held in Allerton Hall. They have all been lovely and Gary receives many favorable responses from those who have lost loved ones regarding all of you who give so lavishly of your time. God bless you all and thank you!

We want to include all pertinent information about your group, board or committee in **the Herald**. People like to be informed about what is happening in the congregation. The Herald is our main resource for communication within the church family. Please make use of it. If you have items for inclusion in the Herald, please have them available to Shellie in the church office by noon on the Tuesday prior to the Sunday in which you'd like them to appear.



Heifer International Month

On Sunday, May 2, we will begin the Heifer campaign for the purchase of an Ark -\$5000. Over the past 30 years our congregation had given more than \$50,000 to provide farm animals for people in need around the world. Jill Howard's beautiful quilts will again be on sale, with all proceeds going to purchase goats for Heifer. These make beautiful Mother's day gifts. Come to the coffee hour on Sunday to make your pledge. The Church School children will be given Ark banks and Animal Cards and each class will be working on a special animal.



School Kits

A huge thanks to the Church School and other members of our congregation for preparing 75 School Kits which will be sent to Church World Service to distribute to

children around the world who suffer from poverty or the result of a disaster. A great job. Thanks to the teachers, students and all who participated.

Help Wanted---Summer Tours

Al Hoyt is planning on organizing the summer open house at the Church Starting in June and going through Labor Day. The plan is to have the Church open to visitors Wednesday through Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. We are looking for 7 or 8 volunteers who would like to take a day each week or fill in for regular guides. If 8 folks volunteer, we can rotate the schedule to keep folks from having to do too much. Being an open house guide is a lot of fun. You meet people from all over the world and have a chance to talk about our beautiful and historic Church. Please consider volunteering. Training will be provided for all who are interested. If you are willing to help please contact Al Hoyt at aphoyt@comcast.net or 508-224-9507

New Member Class

May 23rd will be the date of the first of three New Member Classes. The classes will be held on three successive Sundays, thus the last class will be on June 6th. New members will be received into the church on June 20th. A number of people have indicated a desire to unite with our congregation. If you are interested in attending the classes, please let the church office know. If you know of someone who should be contacted by the church regarding membership, please let us know that, as well. The classes will be one hour in length, 11:30am-12:30pm, and will be held in the JRC Conference Room. If there are children of parents who wish to attend, childcare will be provided.

Beacon Hospice—Grief Support Programs

Pre-registration is required for all of our workshops and support groups. For more information and to pre-register, please call Scott A. Ciosek, M. Div., Beacon Hospice, Bereavement Coordinator, 32 Resnik Road, Suite 3, Plymouth, MA 02360. 508-747-7222 or sciosek@beaconhospice.com.

- Coping with the Loss of a Spouse Support Group: 8-week support group for anyone who has lost a spouse or life partner. Thursday evening-6pm-Plymouth, MA. Begins May 6, 29010.
- Younger Spouses and Partners Support Group: 8-week support group for those in their 20's, 30's and 40's who have lost a spouse or significant life partner. Thursday evenings-7pm-Plymouth, MA. Begins July 15, 2010.
- "Coping with Grief" Support Group: 8-week general grief support group for anyone who has lost a loved one. Tuesday mornings-9:30am-Hanover, MA. Begins June 22, 2010.
- Support Group for the Unemployed: 8-week support group to address the grief associated with job loss with a focus on staying hopeful on the journey. Friday mornings-10am-Plymouth, MA. Begins June 4, 2010.

Sunday
Worship,
10:00am



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PLYMOUTH, MA 02360

SUNDAY WORSHIP - 10:00 AM
CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



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