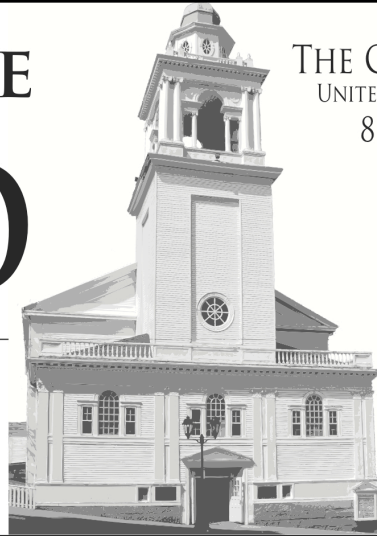

THE PILGRIMAGE HERALD

THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMAGE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
8 TOWN SQUARE, PLYMOUTH,
MASSACHUSETTS 02360
www.8townsquare.org



THE REV. DR. DOUGLAS K. SHOWALTER
INTERIM PASTOR
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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

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Volume LXXXI, No. 6

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

February 6, 2011

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the opportunity to preach this past Sunday. It's always a "blessing" to be able to reflect on the Beatitudes. In teaching and preaching about the Sermon on the Mount, I have sometimes used the analogy that the Beatitudes are something like a political candidate's "stump speech"; that is, they represent a core proclamation that Jesus spoke not just once, but many, many times at different times and in different places. If you don't like the term "stump speech", think "keynote address" or "state of the Kingdom of God".

In his book *The Jesus I Never Knew*, Philip Yancey makes three points about the Beatitudes. First, *the Beatitudes are a genuine promise of hope, spoken with authority by Jesus*. Second, *the Beatitudes are meant to tell us that God views the world through a different lens, that God's values are not the same as many of our human values*. Third, *the Beatitudes work powerfully on the level of psychological reality. Simply put, what succeeds in the kingdom of God actually is best for us in the here and now, too*.

I hope that you heard that first point on Sunday: our hope is in God's movement towards healing and newness, in creation and in the story of our own lives. Even as remembering, nostalgia, and grief can lead us to tears, hope leads us in a new direction. The Jewish psychiatrist Victor Frankl survived life in a concentration camp. He credits his survival to his visualization of the future, constantly imagining that future, never giving up hope for the future he might have. He said, "They could take everything away from me, and ultimately even kill me if they wished, but they couldn't take away one thing: my ability in any and all circumstances to choose how I would respond." He tells the story of one man in the camp who fervently believed that the camp would be liberated by a certain day in 1945. The day came and went with no liberation, and the man literally withdrew into himself, took to his bed, and died in less than three days. That man had lost all hope.

Cynics and skeptics can call Christianity's hope a kind of "pie in the sky bye and bye when we die", but we know better. In the Beatitudes, Jesus calls us to live out our hope day by day, on good days and not so good days, in times of laughter and times of tears. We find purpose, engagement and meaning in the values that Jesus proclaims. Holding onto those values for dear life, and holding on to one another's hands in Christian community, we choose how we respond and we experience the newness that comes to us from God.

The Peace of the Lord be with you,

Mike O'Brien

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 6: Morning Worship at 10am, Al Hoyt will be preaching. Communion will be part of our morning worship. The Junior Choir will sing. The Cherub Choir will not rehearse today. The Confirmation Group will meet this morning. Time and Talent Auction will take place in Allerton Hall after worship. Overnights of Hospitality begins tonight.

Feb 7: Monday Meals of Hospitality in Allerton Hall, 11am. Overnights of Hospitality in Allerton Hall.

Feb 8: Overnights of Hospitality in Allerton Hall.

Feb 9: Choir rehearsal in the sanctuary at 7:30pm. Overnights of Hospitality in Allerton Hall.

Feb 10: Overnights of Hospitality in Allerton Hall.

Feb 11: The Guild will meet at 1pm in Allerton Hall.

Feb 12: Overnights of Hospitality in Allerton Hall.

Feb 13: Morning Worship at 10am, Peter Causton will be preaching. The Junior Choir will rehearse. The Cherub Choir will not rehearse.

Flowers

Notes

We thank **Rev. Michael O'Brien** for being our Preacher and **Trace Sears** for being our Lay Leader on Sunday, January 30.

Thank you to the 4th and 5th graders for hosting coffee hour this past Sunday. They all worked very hard, had a great time and did a beautiful job! A true lesson in hospitality. And they can't wait to do it again. Jenny and Sarah

The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone for their generous financial support of the church. As a result, and with some lower than expected expenses, we were able to break even for FY 2010!

Pastoral Care

For the months of January and February, we have a Minister available on an as-needed basis for church member emergencies, funerals, etc. The Deacons are also available for visits to at-home and hospitalized members. If you are in need of a Pastoral visit or know of someone who is, please contact the church office.

Thank You, January Greeters

We thank the following people for greeting during the month of January:

Jan 2: Rebecca Taylor and Nancy Medeiros

Jan 9: Betsey Randall and Paul MacDonald

Jan 16: Genie and Frank Roberts

Jan 23: Bonnie Peck and Pat Blackmer

Jan 30: Sandie and Dave Moreland

Thank You, January Ushers

We thank the following people for being our ushers during the month of January: Bill & Diane Harting, Ed & Cynthia Marks, Larry & Judy Foster, Deb Motyka-Cheney & Ann Motyka, Dave & Sandie Moreland, Mike & Pam O'Brien, Stephanie Northrop, Andrew Northrop, Julia Blomberg, Jeff & Kara Mallon, Maggie Mallon, and Isabel Mallon.

From the Office

Please note that the **deadline** to have your board or committees **Annual Report** into the church office is April 3, 2011. Mark you calendar!

Got the Winter Blahs?



The Guild invites all the women of the church to a Valentine Tea in Allerton Hall on Friday, February 11 at 1:00pm. Rosalee Sinn will be reciting love poems she has written. Join us for fellowship and refreshments as we celebrate Valentine's Day. Come life you teacup and your spirits. Spring is just around the corner!

Missions Corner

The Missions Committee and the Sunday School are working together to make February "Blanket Month." Missions is requesting donations of new and used blankets to be used by our guests during the overnights of hospitality Feb 6-12 and Feb 27-March 5. These blankets will be presented by the children at church on Sunday, February 6th for a blessing, and put to use that same night. The Sunday School will be making homemade blankets in their classes to be mailed to the Linus Project, an organization that delivers blankets made with love to children in need (see elsewhere in this Herald).

Project Linus

Providing Security Through Blankets



Project Linus is an organization that collects homemade blankets for children who are very ill or have been through some kind of trauma and need a little extra love and security. In Sunday School, during the month of February, we will be making blankets to contribute. I have secured a few volunteers to help in the classrooms to make this happen, but I could still use a few more. If you are willing to spend a Sunday or two during the month of February helping one of the Sunday school classes to work on this project, we would be most grateful. And if you have a sewing machine that travels, all the better (though not a requirement). If you can help us, please call me or email Jenny 508-747-7168 or fremont10@verizon.net.

Pilgrim Association Seminar and Annual Meeting

April 3, 2011-UCC Congregation Church of Norwell
1:45 Gathering Time & Registration
2:00 Redesigning Church: Hear from the Scituate and Norwell churches about their change from a Board/Committee structure to a Ministry Team model and their change in make up and focus on Church Council.
3:45 Break
4:00 Pilgrim Assoc. Meeting & Devotional Service
5:00 Adjourn

Pilgrim Association Mission and Community Concerns Committee

From Spirituality to Activism
(Without Choosing One Over the Other)
March 19, 2011-Christ Church, UCC , Brockton

A major conference, not just on what we need to be doing, but also why. What our spiritual heritage drives us to do to bring justice and healing to a broken world. And not just why we do it, but how. How you and your church can become more engaged in ministry and action in and with that world. For more info:
standuncan@post.harvard.edu.

Transition Corner

January was a busy month at the Church of the Pilgrimage. There is a lot of activity surrounding our missions and outreach, as well as our Christian Education Programs. Many dedicated people are answering the call to serve our neighbors in need, and lots of work goes on to keep our church school program running. We were also blessed with some excellent preaching and music during our usual worship services. Things are moving according to plan for the arrival of our Interim Pastor, Rev. Dr. Doug Showalter, on March 1st. We have a contract in place, he is busy making final plans for his departure from his current church, and he has been in regular communication with the Advisory Board and the Church Office. He attended the Advisory Board's January Meeting, and he will be ready to "hit the ground running" in March. We have already discussed some of our important Pilgrimage Traditions, including our Worship schedule, our music program, and our education program with him, so the transition to his leadership should be fairly seamless.



One way that we can prepare for Rev. Showalter's arrival is to create a book of biographies to help him get to know us better when he arrives.

To this end, during coffee hour in February, we will be make materials available for each member/family/friend of the church to create a simple "scrapbook"-like page which Rev. Showalter can review and refer to as he gets to know us in the coming months. Think of it as a personalized directory, with a little more information about each person. If you cannot make it to Coffee hour this month, we will include a sample page in next week's Herald, and you can create your page at home.

February will be another great month with a full worship schedule and a church-wide focus on missions with Project Linus. We look forward to seeing you in church!

Blankets

by Rosalee Sinn

We swaddle our newborn babies
in a soft blanket to keep them safe and warm

The small child clings to a favorite blanket
to feel loved and secure

Homeless children carry a blanket
as they walk the dusty paths of
their interrupted lives

Young people pull blankets up around them
when sleeping and feel comforted

I pull the down blanket tight around me to
dream and feel at peace.

A man in Haiti wraps a blanket around
a statue of Mother Mary and carries her
to safety after the earthquake

A homeless man unfolds his blanket
to make a bed to keep out the cold
and lies down under a shelter until morning

In times of crises, in times of sadness, in
times when the world seems to be coming
apart, we share blankets, and in doing so
we share love.

One of the last times we were together
my mother was very old, her memory was failing
I laid down to rest and then I felt her touch
As she quietly covered me with a blanket.



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PLYMOUTH, MA 02360

SUNDAY WORSHIP – 10:00 AM
CHILDCARE AVAILABLE



Periodical
Publication
U. S. P. S.
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