



Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
December 2011

From Pastor Kohl

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

In December, the church enters a time of waiting. It is a quiet time for us, a time for reflection and silence, a time for prayer and attention to our inner lives. And yet, the world around us goes crazy with busyness and activity, with expectations and anticipations fueled by advertising. December may well be the period when being a follower of Jesus and living in the world brings us into greatest conflict.

This year we are engaging our congregation in a four-week intergenerational program during the 9:00 a.m. Sunday School time to share ideas or ways of being more intentional about how we celebrate the birth of Christ. We are thinking about worshipping fully (not just on Sundays), spending less, giving more, and loving all. In other words we are considering how our inner life and "outer" life might be more in harmony with each other. This kind of integrity of outer and inner life is path to peace and gratitude.

And I know that this is also a challenge for most of us. The world around us calls us not to "miss out on the fun", or pack everyday with activity, or don't disappoint our family and friends. And in doing this we are often led to do things that we may chose to do for the wrong reasons.

But there is another danger we need to be aware of: convenience. I know it is not listed in the Bible as a deadly sin, but it is, in fact, a deadly sin. Here is why: we begin to do what is convenient and then we begin to think and act as if our comfort or our convenience is what life is all about. We think that following Jesus is more of a spectator sport than a team effort. We begin to believe that what we do, how we live, and following our own desires is what life is all about. And over time, we fall into the trap of convenience, of being the center of our world, of not considering the communities in which we live. As long as we have our share of time or

From the Pilgrim Staff...



*Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
Praises voicing, greet the morrow;
Christ the child was born for you!
Christ the child was born for you!*

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
ELW #276/Polish carol*

*Warmest wishes to our Pilgrim Family
for a blessed Christmas and a
New Year filled with peace and joy.*

<i>The Rev. Dennis Kohl</i>	Pastor
<i>The Rev. Robert Harris</i>	Associate Pastor
<i>Denis Brunelle</i>	Minister of Music
<i>Elisabeth Remming Vergun</i>	Parish Assistant
<i>Bill Brinson</i>	Treasurer
<i>Muriel Linden</i>	Financial Secretary
<i>Adam Kohl</i>	Sexton

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

FROM PASTOR KOHL	P. 1 - 2
PASTORAL ACTS	P. 2
FROM PASTOR HARRIS	P. 3
CHURCH NOTES	P. 4 - 6
MEET YOUR PILGRIM FAMILY	P. 7
WARNING: ADVENT VIRUS!	P. 8
DECEMBER READINGS	P. 9
DECEMBER SERVERS	P. 10
DECEMBER CALENDAR	P. 11

**2012 Offering Envelopes will soon be available in the narthex (the hallway outside the church)—please take yours home as soon as possible.
Thank you!**

money or power or prestige or satisfaction, or any other thing or relationship that we believe will make us whole, we do not need to consider our neighbors, our families, our friends, our community in Christ.

I don't mean to sound like the Grinch as I write this, but this is a real problem which is causing the breakdown of our society as well as our congregations. It also has produced a loneliness and longing that we feel but often cannot identify.

So, what do we do? One step is in being clear about our priorities. What will give us life that has meaning? There are probably many answers to this question, but one thing I have learned over the years: we cannot have clarity and purpose for living if we ignore our inner life, our spiritual being, our relationship with God that shapes our relationships with the world and with others.

My prayer for this community of Jesus' people is for a reflective and peaceful Advent season, rich in the hope and promise of the God who did not chose the convenient path but instead came among us in the vulnerability of a little baby, the love of one who shared all of our human experiences. This God continues to come to us in words of hope proclaimed, in bread and wine, in water poured, and through sisters and brothers who walk life with us.

With peace and hope,

Paster Kohl



Pastoral Acts

New Members



Ericka Breeden
James Garcia
Kimberly Hermann &
Mallory
Robert McLaughlin
Amanda Richards

Funerals

Barbara Dapont
Martha Rieg



An important reminder from Elisabeth!

Please submit any articles or any other information to be included in the January 2012 *Pilgrims' Progress* as **soon as possible**.
(This includes all Sunday server information.)

Please note that no submissions will be accepted later than December 15, 2011.

Send submissions to both
parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org and
eremmingvergun@cox.net.
Many thanks!

Schedule of Services for

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2012



Candlelight Holy Communion
5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

FROM PASTOR HARRIS

Dear Friends of Christ,

Thanksgiving is on my mind. Even though the Day of Thanksgiving will have passed by the time you read this, as I write, the day is still approaching. So I would like to say thank you. Thank you people of Pilgrim for the many kindnesses you have shown me. Thank you for the gifts of meals, treats, and cookies. Thank you for carrying coffee to me so I do not spill on the floor (I am sure our sexton thanks you as well). Thank you for asking how I am doing. Thank you for being flexible when my body decides not to be. Thank you for your patience. Thank you for bringing me to Pilgrim.

We Christians are of people of thanksgiving. We are a people who thank God. All of the time. At least that is how it should be. We have a God who forgives us. We have a God that loves us. We have a God who claims us and adopts us. We have a God who does not give up on us.

We have a God who became flesh. (See, I got to Christmas.) My favorite word for this event is not Christmas, or Nativity, but rather Incarnation. God takes flesh. The wee babe in the manger is God Incarnate. Thank God! Jesus understands what it means to be human. Jesus, the Son of God knows human joys and sadnesses, and how quickly things can change. We have a God that understands our frailty, a God who understands death. Jesus was disappointed by his friends countless times. But he did not give up on them, or on us. Thank God!

We have a God who comes to us (Advent). Jesus came in flesh 2,000 years ago. Jesus will come again on the last day. Jesus comes to us now in water, word, bread, and wine. Jesus is God with us, Immanuel. Thank God!

Blessings,

Pastor Harris



You're Invited
for the season of Advent



Please join us for a gathering of Intergenerational Sunday School being held on the Sundays during the Advent Season. We will gather in the Christian Life Center on Sunday November 27 and December 4, 11, and 18 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.

Children, parents, grandparents, young people, teens, adults...all are welcome!

Christmas Day Service

Christmas Day is on Sunday this year. We will celebrate one service that morning, as well as on **New Year's Day**, Sunday, January 1, 2012.

The service will be at 9:00 a.m. on both Sundays. Please be sure to take note of this change of our worship time for those two Sundays.



The Warwick Children's Chorus
requests the pleasure of your company for an
evening of beautiful music at its

Christmas Concert

Monday evening

December 12 at 7:00 p.m.

at Pilgrim Lutheran Church



Free admission - Refreshments will be served
following the performance

www.warwickchildrenschorus.com

Save the Date...

On Friday, January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, we have been invited to join the people at Emanuel Lutheran Church for a service of lessons and carols. People from the other Lutheran congregations in the Greater Rhode Island Conference will also be worshipping with the folks of Emanuel.

The service begins at 7:00 p.m. with a bonfire and the tradition of marking the doorway as a blessing for the coming year. Coffee and dessert will follow the service. Please join us!





CASH CARDS MAKE GREAT HOLIDAY GIFTS!

Every Sunday, Cash Cards are available for your purchase in the Christian Life Center after services. Each card you buy is worth the full dollar value, and Pilgrim gets a bonus...a percentage anywhere from 2% to 13%, depending on which card you buy. Currently, some retailers are offering an additional discount by way of a coupon—ask your Cash Card person which stores are offering what.

Why not give a Cash Card as a gift? Cards from Dunkin' Donuts, iTunes, Barnes & Noble, and Bath and Body Works make great teacher gifts and stocking stuffers! You can give someone a card to their favorite place to shop...they'll love you for it, and Pilgrim will, too!

If you have any questions or need more information about using Cash Cards, see Betsy or Frank Canino.

Advent Coin Folders

Advent Coin Folders are available in the narthex at church for any who want to use this discipline as a way of focusing daily attention on God's abundant giving to us. And thank you in advance to all who take up this discipline.

Social Ministry News

The Social Ministry Committee would like to thank the people of Pilgrim for their generous support of Team Pilgrim in the RI Parkinson's Walk. Together with supplemental funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans we were able to raise \$2,195.

Thanks also for your generous donations made to the Operation Smile project. We have reached our goal of \$1,500 as well as a supplemental amount from Thrivent of \$500. During this time of year when we are making pledges to carry on the work of God, it is heartwarming to see us helping children who cannot even give a free smile to others; with the help of many that dream can become a reality!

Because of your support, we are able to reach out to others in times of need! Thank you, Pilgrim Family!

Christmas Poinsettias



The Altar Guild is currently accepting contributions for Christmas Poinsettias. If you would like to make a donation in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, please fill out an envelope (in clear print), enclose

your free will contribution, and place it in the collection plate. You may also send your envelope to the church office to the attention of the Altar Guild. Christmas Poinsettia envelopes can be found in the pews and on the table in the narthex.

The Christmas Poinsettias will decorate our main sanctuary, the chapel, and other areas of the church building throughout the Christmas season.

All Christmas Poinsettia envelopes MUST be received no later than Sunday, December 18, 2011.

It's Not Too Late...

...to return your indications of willingness to share your time, your gifts, and your financial support to Pilgrim Lutheran Church in 2012. If you need either of these forms, please call the church office at 739-2937 or e-mail Elisabeth at parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org.



A Reminder from the Altar Guild....

The Altar Guild sincerely appreciates your thoughtfulness in returning the white plastic flower vases when you receive them with the altar flowers. Please note that the best place for you to leave these vases is on the top shelf above the coat rack outside fellowship hall.

Thank you kindly!



Thanks

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Thanks to all of you who contributed your time, effort, support and goodies to the Bazaar here on November 12 and 13. A lot of preparation and behind-the-scenes work goes into a successful event, which this one certainly was!

Many folks were here on Friday setting up – in addition to all the advance at-home work and coordination that many did in getting ready for this church fundraiser. About \$2,800 was raised!

Thanks again from the Pilgrim Bazaar Team, and peace to all.

Church School Christmas Program Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m.



Be sure to mark your calendar! Please come and enjoy the Church School's Christmas program on Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m.

After the program, everyone is invited to the Christmas party in the Christian Life Center. Please bring sandwiches for your family plus one more person. Please bring a goodie for all to share. Beverages will be provided.

Parents, rehearsal for the program will be on Saturday morning December 17 at 10:00.

Altar Guild News



Christmas Decorating
Saturday, December 3 at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Brunch and Meeting
Sunday, December 4 at 11:45 a.m.

Christmas Dismantling
Saturday, January 7, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

And a note of thanks...

A heartfelt "thank you" to our many wonderful church bazaar bakers. Your delicious baked goods made our bake sale a huge success!

Gratefully,
The Pilgrim Altar Guild

A message from the Altar Guild...



It's time to plan ahead! The Altar Guild is now accepting requests for altar flowers for 2012. What a wonderful way to honor family and loved ones by remembering anniversaries and other special occasions throughout the year.

Flower envelopes can be found on the Altar Guild bulletin board in the hallway outside Pastor Kohl's office. For each request, we ask for a \$30 donation. The flowers will be distributed after the late service each week to those that are ill or to shut-ins at the discretion of the Pastor.

Once completed, envelopes may be placed in the offering plate or dropped off in the Altar Guild mailbox in the church office with your donation.

Thank you!

The Pilgrim Lutheran Church Altar Guild

Meet Your Pilgrim Family



Harry and Theresa Eminger are the nice quiet couple sitting near the back of church most Sundays for the past 33 years. The story of how they met and what they have accomplished in life makes for a very interesting story.

Theresa Barboza grew up in Acushnet, Mass. as a Catholic. Her mother had been divorced so could not take communion, a fact that always bothered Theresa, who graduated from New Bedford H.S. and went to work at the Newport Naval Base Supply Depot.

Harry Eminger's roots went way back in western Pennsylvania as his great grandfather, of German heritage, was born in near Pittsburgh. Harry's parents attended St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Evans City, Pa. and Harry was very active in Sunday school and in the youth group. "I started ushering when I was 12," said Harry who until recently ushered actively at Pilgrim. "Should be time for that gold

watch," said a smiling Harry.

How did this Lutheran from Pennsylvania meet this Portuguese girl from Acushnet? "It was a blind date," said Theresa. A friend of hers who worked at the Newport Naval Base was dating a pilot from Otis AFB in Massachusetts. "She asked me if I wanted to date her friend's roommate. I said no, but she set it up anyway," recalled Theresa. "We hit it off and have been married for 57 years, but the other couple broke up," she added.

After high school Harry attended a drafting school for 18 months and. He then enlisted in the Air Force during the Korean War. He was training to be a gunnery person in B-29's (the same position held by the late Gene Confreda from church), but while he was at a movie at Lowrie AFB in Denver, they stopped the movie and told the enlisted people that they could be officers if they passed a test. "I signed up the next morning at 7 a.m. and passed and completed officer training and was sent to Otis. I became a radar observer on F-94 jets," said Harry whose flight commander was the legendary Chappy James who later became a four-star general.

Harry and Theresa planned to be married after his short tour in Korea. However, soon after the treaty was signed, he was transferred to a base outside of Tokyo, Japan and his tour of duty was extended an extra year. "I asked Theresa if she wanted to come to Japan and get married and she said yes. We got married at the base chapel by an Air Force chaplain (a Lutheran) on December 7, 1954 (thirteen years to the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor)," recalled Harry.

Harry had some health problems and was sent back to the States. Upon recovery, he was reassigned to Otis AFB where their first son, Cole, was born. Harry was discharged in 1956 and the couple moved to central Pennsylvania where Harry used his GI Bill and enrolled at Bucknell University. He had to work odd jobs at college to support his wife and child while attending school, but he managed to earn a degree in mechanical engineering.

He went to work for ACF Industries designing railroad cars and was instrumental in the design of a tankrailroad car that held 30,000 gallons of liquid propane gas and was nicknamed the "pregnant whale."

Harry later worked for Westinghouse and Rockwell International in Penn. before moving to Rhode Island in 1978 to work for Gulf + Western. Before retiring in 1998, he worked for Crosby Valve in Wrentham, MA. Harry holds many patents.

"It was our banker, Pete Mahoney, and our lawyer, Fred Kilguss, who talked us into coming to Pilgrim Lutheran," recalled Theresa and Harry who were building a house in East Greenwich where they still live. "We loved Pastor Bloomquist and our children liked the church as well," said Theresa.

The Emingers have five children, 14 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Cole is an aerospace engineer and lives in California with his wife Sandra and four children. Mark is also an engineer and lives in Warwick with his wife Elizabeth and their three children. Keith is a carpenter and lives in California. Eric, his wife, Lori and their five children live in Scituate. He works at Logan Airport as a mechanic on jets. Their youngest child, Karen, lives in Warwick with her two children.

Theresa attended Butler Community College in Pennsylvania and has held many part-time jobs over the years after her children grew up. She has worked at Bryant University and the University of Rhode Island, A Wish Come True and for several years at the RI Farm Bureau. "We were planning to move back to Pennsylvania, but the children had settled in Rhode Island and we wanted to be near our children and grandchildren," said Theresa who served on the Altar Guild at Pilgrim for many years and is a former directress.

Harry served on the church council. "We both find the people at Pilgrim to be very friendly," said Theresa who commented on how beautiful and festive the church looks during the holiday season.

We are very happy that this young lady from Acushnet and this Air Force lieutenant from western Pennsylvania went out on their blind date. Their experiences over the last, almost 60 years are quite amazing. We are glad they are part of the Pilgrim family.

WARNING: ADVENT VIRUS

Be on the alert for symptoms of inner **Hope, Peace, Joy and Love**. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to this virus and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable condition of conflict in the world.

Some signs and symptoms of **The Advent Virus**:

- A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than on fears based on past experiences.
- An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- A loss of interest in judging other people.
- A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- A loss of interest in conflict.
- A loss of the ability to worry. (This is a very serious symptom.)
- Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- Contented feelings of connectedness with others and nature.
- Frequent attacks of smiling.
- An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
- An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

Please share this warning with all your friends. This virus can and has affected many systems. Some systems have been completely cleaned out because of it.

Author Unknown



Sunday Readings – December 2011

December 4 – The Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11

The prophet's message is one of comfort, but ironically it is also one of judgment. God's comfort cannot come to us without knowing ourselves as those whose lives need to be remodeled along God's lines.

2 Peter 3:8-15a

God's time and our time are two different things. This is what the apostle reminds the readers of this letter. The writer also reminds us that history points to an end, a conclusion. This fact shapes how we live in the present time.

Mark 1:1-8

The very first words of Mark's Gospel tell us that the story of Jesus is the good news (gospel). John calls for preparation through repentance, examining life and making changes which bring peace. His call to do this is because a greater one is coming.

December 11 – Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

This Sunday we hear God's purpose for the creation: it is one of healing and peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

God's purpose is for us to know joy.

John 1:6-8, 19-28

John never points to himself in God's plan. His life and ministry always points to Jesus. In this he sets an example for all followers of Jesus. Our life, like John's, is about Jesus and what is important to him.

December 18 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Here we read God's covenant (promise) to David: one of his household will be the ruler over God's people forever. Christians see this promise fulfilled in Jesus.

Romans 16:25-27

In this song of praise of God, Paul celebrates the compassion of God in Jesus which brings salvation to all people.

Luke 1:26-38

As we prepare to welcome Jesus, we read the story of the annunciation to Mary. Jesus is from God, but born of a human mother. This great mystery is a foundation of our faith: God comes to us as a genuine human.

December 25 – The Nativity of our Lord/Christmas Day

One service at 9 a.m.

Isaiah 52:7-10

Christmas is more than gifts and food. We gather together to hear the great news of God's deep love for us in sending one who will teach us and show us that God's purpose for this world is life and wholeness. Isaiah sees this and rejoices that God's purposes will become reality.

Hebrews 1:1-12

The Letter to the Hebrews traces how God has been at work through the people of Israel, and how God has continued the promises through Jesus. But the writer also proclaims the radical good news of Christmas: God did not send an emissary; God's very being came to earth in Jesus.

John 1:1-14

The beginning of the gospel of John sings of the incarnation: God takes on our human life and comes among us in lowliness, in vulnerability, and in love, all for our salvation. John uses the contrasts of light and darkness to describe this truth: without God we walk in darkness, with God's presence with us in Jesus, we get a clear picture of who God is and who we are.

SERVING in DECEMBER 2011

GREETERS

December 4 Scott Chappelle & Cindy Cote
December 11 Pete & Carole Mahoney
December 18 Allan & Rose Reed
December 25 Earle & Ella Fish

READERS

December 4 Patricia Frazier
December 11 Mary Brinson
December 18 Pam Himebaugh
December 25 Susan Horsch

ALTAR GUILD

December 4 Cindy Cote
Maureen Johnson
December 11 Joanne Lozy
Connie Radican
Susan Simundson
December 18 Nancy Lewis
Ginny Smith
Helen Varin
December 25 Lisa Harrington
Muriel Linden
Debbie Perri

USHERS

December 4 Bill Dugan
Dave Heden
Deb Vilardi
December 11 Elaine Belvin
Joanne Lozy
Allan Reed
December 18 Pam Himebaugh
Linda Hughes
Susan Simundson
December 25 John Gunning
Bruce & Carolyn Vittner
Roy Wagner

ASSISTING MINISTERS - 10:00

December 4 Carl Lozy
December 18 John Carlson

Assisting Ministers are needed for the remainder of the month. Please sign up on the sheet posted on the office bulletin board if you are able to help.

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

December 4 Bill Dugan
December 11 Gayle Sangster
December 18 Tina Carlson
Bill Dugan
December 25 Karin Kohl

Four Communion Assistants are needed at each service. Please sign up on the sheet posted on the office bulletin board if you are able to help.

ALTAR FLOWERS

December 4 Bill and Tom Dugan & Family
Josephine Nelson
December 11 Patricia Frazier
Joan Schappert & Family
December 18 Given with prayers and blessings
for those sick and hospitalized
December 25 Bill and Tom Dugan & Family
Joan Schappert & Family

ACOLYTES

December 4 Jon O'Hara
Kevin Murphy
December 11 Stephen Johnson
Matt Sangster
December 18 Paige Lepore
Beth White
December 25 *Volunteers needed...please see
Pastor Harris if you are interested.*

Please note! Servers for Christmas Eve services at 5:00 and 11:00 are posted on the office bulletin board and will appear in Sunday bulletins in December.



December 2011

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

1817 Warwick Avenue Warwick, Rhode Island 02889 (401) 739-2937

www.pilgrimlutheranri.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Church Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday/9:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Church Office Closed December 24, 2011—January 1, 2012 (No evening events during this time)</p>				1	2 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	3
<p>4 Advent 2 8:00 Holy Communion 9:00 Intergenerational Sunday School 10:00 Holy Communion 11:45 Altar Guild Christmas Brunch</p>	<p>5 5:00 1st Communion Class 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>6 9:30 Pastors' Pericope 11:00 Church Staff Mtg. 6:30 Confirmation — Service/Fellowship</p>	<p>7 3:30 Warwick CC 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	8	9 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	10
<p>11 Advent 3 8:00 Holy Communion 9:00 Intergenerational Sunday School 10:00 Holy Communion</p>	<p>12 5:00 1st Communion Class 7:00 Worship, Music & Arts 7:00 Warwick Children's Choir Christmas Concert 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>13 9:30 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation — Revelation and Apocalyptic</p>	<p>14 3:30 Warwick CC 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>15 Pilgrims' Progress Deadline 7:00 Congregation Council Meeting</p>	16 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	17
<p>18 Advent 4 8:00 Holy Communion 9:00 Intergenerational Sunday School 10:00 Holy Communion 4:00 Sunday School Christmas Program</p>	<p>19 5:00 1st Communion Class 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>20 9:30 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation — Caroling at St. Paul</p>	<p>21 St. Thomas, Apostle No Warwick Children's Chorus 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	22	23	24
<p>25 Blessed Christmas! 9:00 Holy Communion <i>One service only today</i></p> 	<p>26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous</p>	<p>27 St. John, Apostle and Evangelist</p>	<p>28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</p>	29	30	31
CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED THIS WEEK				WINTER BEGINS	7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<p>24 The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve 5:00 and 11:00 Candlelight Holy Communion</p> 
					7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>