



# Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church  
Warwick, Rhode Island  
December 2013

## From the Pilgrim Staff...



*When this old world drew on toward night,  
You came; but not in splendor bright,  
Not as a monarch, but the child  
Of Mary, blessed mother mild.*

*Creator of the Stars of Night*  
ELW #245 – 9<sup>th</sup> Century Latin hymn

*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>Denis Brunelle</i>	Minister of Music
<i>Elisabeth Remming Vergun</i>	Parish Assistant
<i>Bill Brinson</i>	Treasurer
<i>Beth Fish</i>	Financial Secretary
<i>Adam Kohl</i>	Sexton
<i>Bill Dugan</i>	Webmaster

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**2014 Offering Envelopes will soon be available in the narthex (the hallway outside the church)—please take yours home as soon as possible.**

**Thank you!**

## From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Beginning this month we will spend most of our time for the gospel readings in the Gospel of Matthew. This is the year of Matthew in our three-year cycle of readings called the Revised Common Lectionary.

Did you realize that we Lutherans are not the only ones reading the same parts of scripture on Sundays? People in the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ, the Roman Catholic Church, the Moravian Church, the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church all read the same lessons we do. With such a broad range of Christians hearing the same scripture, we are bound closer to people in other traditions within Christianity than we might think. This is a good reminder that we have more in common than what separates us as followers of Jesus.

While the Gospel of Matthew comes first in the New Testament, it is not the first of the four gospels in our Bible written. That place goes to Mark. We know this because almost all of Mark's writing appears in Matthew's Gospel. In addition to Mark as a source for his gospel, Matthew also uses a collection of sayings by Jesus. Luke also shares most of these. This group of sayings has a name which sounds like it belongs in a James Bond novel: "Q", which stands for the German word *Quelle* which means simply a "source".

Matthew draws heavily on the Hebrew Scriptures to teach about Jesus. He will show us Jesus as a new Moses with his sermon on the mount. He will show us Jesus as the new Israel with his exile to Egypt. There will be five major teaching sections in Matthew's Gospel, just as the Book of Deuteronomy is made up of five "sermons" which tradition tells us were delivered by Moses before the people came into the promised land. Matthew will write several times that this happened to fulfill "what the prophet...said."

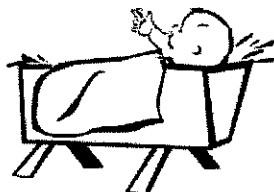
Matthew is one of the two gospels which have stories about Jesus' birth (Luke is the other). In Matthew, the stories center on Joseph rather than Mary. It will be Luke who will tell us the Christmas story including shepherds and a baby in the manger.

Each of our Gospels and all the writings in the New Testament have a political edge to them. As we read Matthew, you may notice that Matthew never uses the words "Kingdom of God". Instead, Matthew refers to Jesus' work and mission as the "Kingdom of Heaven". The Kingdom of Heaven is not a place but it is a lifestyle that stands against the kingdom of this world. The church in Matthew is a community whose life and focus is shaped more by the future than by the past. In fact, Matthew's entire gospel is written with one eye on the past and another eye on the future. Jesus is the hinge on which these two orientations work: he comes from a traditional Jewish background, but brings a new understanding of what God has promised and is up to.

We read Scripture to get a glimpse of God's goals in our world. In faithfully spending time with the Bible our lives change and we grow into being more and more the people of God. As we gather in this year of Matthew we will be shaped by the Holy Spirit to be this community whose life is defined, not by our past but by the future God has in mind. And we come to know this future as we listen to and follow the one Matthew calls "Emmanuel" which means "God is with us". That's a promise we can trust because it has been made real for us in the flesh and blood of Jesus, bread and wine and water, and others who gather with us to listen to Jesus.

Blessings!

*Pastor Kohl*



## Pastoral Acts

### Baptism



Kyler Clinton Dean Stallcup

### Affirmation of Baptism

Alexis Olson



### Marriage



Steven Lessard, Jr. & Jennifer Koussa

### Funerals

Lillian Arel

Carolyn Benoit

Armelia Grueb

Kerri (James) Harrison

James Higgins

Stephan Isaac

William Ryder

Sea Ken "Tom" Woo



## An important reminder from Elisabeth!

Please submit any articles or any other information to be included in the January 2014 *Pilgrims' Progress* as soon as possible. (This includes all Sunday server information.)

Please note that no submissions will be accepted later than Sunday, December 15, 2013.

Send submissions to both [parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org](mailto:parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org) and [eremmingvergun@cox.net](mailto:eremmingvergun@cox.net).

Many thanks!



*Schedule of Services for  
Christmas Eve  
December 24, 2013*

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

## The Prayers of the People

For several months, the Prayers of the People offered at worship have been prepared by people of Pilgrim. Perhaps you have noticed that the petitions are more current to the needs of prayer for the Pilgrim community and its reach into the town and the world beyond. People have been preparing the prayers since we began responding to the petitions by singing, "Lord, listen to your children praying," or "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer."

The prayers are published in "Sundays and Seasons". It is suggested that they may "be adapted or used as appropriate." The Committee of Worship, Music and Arts is inviting the people of Pilgrim to adapt them for Sunday worship and special occasions. Those who prepare the prayers are also invited to pray them during the worship services, in the place of the assisting minister at the lectern, using the microphone.

This is how it works: a copy of the petitions is provided for a particular date several weeks in advance and returned to Pastor Kohl on the Thursday before Sunday so that he may include additional prayers of immediate need. It is convenient to participate in rewriting and adapting the Prayers of the People by signing up for a date on the "Prayers of the People" sheet posted on the worship bulletin board. You will be contacted by either Lois or Donald Williams, and you may also phone them at 783-2316.

### November Council Meeting Summary

#### **Finances (as of October 31, 2013)**

- . Income for General Fund - \$199,885.73  
(This includes \$20,356 from Special Funds)
- . Total income for year - \$228,420.73
- . Expenses against General Fund -  
\$210,299.08
- . Coins for a Cause (October 17)  
To ELCA Philippine Typhoon Relief - \$280

#### **Old Fashioned Church Bazaar**

Thank you to all who worked at or supported our annual church bazaar on November 16 & 17.

#### **Report from Leadership and Structure Workgroup**

An orientation session for all council members in 2013 will be held on weekend before the first council meeting in February (February 15 or 16). The date will be determined by the availability of a facilitator for this session.

## **Pilgrim Advent Celebration**



The Pilgrim choir, soloists, and instrumentalists will be hosting an  
**Advent Celebration on  
Sunday, December 15 at 4:00 p.m.**

The choir and handbell choir from St. Paul will also be sharing their musical gifts with us.

We invite you to join the Pilgrim family as we sing carols and listen to the inspirational music of the season.

A time for refreshments and fellowship will follow in the Christian Life Center.

## 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 place your envelope in the Altar Guild mailbox in the church office.

Christmas Poinsettia envelopes can be found on the small table in the narthex. Please fill out **a separate envelope for each dedication.**

These 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 15, 2012.**

# Thanks

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Thanks to all of you who contributed your time, effort, support, and goodies to the Bazaar here on November 16 and 17. A lot of preparation and behind-the-scenes work goes into a successful event, which this one certainly was. We made over \$2,700!

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.

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

## Church School Christmas Program Sunday, December 15 at the 9:30 service



Please come and enjoy the Church School's Christmas program on Sunday, December 15 during the 9:30 worship service.

### Alter Guild Dates



#### *Christmas Decorating*

Saturday, December 7 at 10:00 a.m.

#### *Christmas Brunch and Meeting*

Sunday, December 8 at 11:45 a.m.

#### *Christmas Dismantling*

Saturday, January 11, 2014 at 10:00 a.m.

### PILGRIM'S CARE TEAM

Specific needs of care can be met by the Pilgrim's Care Team: wheel chair van to worship, transportation for medical appointments, relief for care givers by home sitting for a couple of hours. Persons are ready to assist care givers and people with these needs and others.

The brochure of the Care Team spells out the services offered. Take one from the table in the church hall entrance. Call the church office at 739-2937 for help to your needs.

We Care at Pilgrim.

### New Flower Chart

A new flower chart to replace the old one in the hall outside the church office is in the works. Wendy Brusick, an artist in our congregation, is constructing one that will be fanciful yet functional. The frame is "upcycled" from the decorative top of an old wooden shelf and she is asking your help with the finishing touches. Wendy plans to attach pieces of vintage leaf or flower jewelry to symbolize the different seasons of the calendar year. Costume pins from the 50s and 60s are ideal, but anything newer is fine too. Holiday motifs (Christmas trees, holly, Easter lilies, stars and stripes, hearts and shamrocks) would also be appropriate.

So search those dresser drawers and jewelry boxes for anything fun to share! Perhaps you have a pin that once belonged to a relative that you might not wear but would like to incorporate in this project.

You may drop your donated jewelry off at the church office in the basket marked FLOWER CHART. Please, bring **costume jewelry only**. No precious gold or silver as this will be on public display.

### It's Not Too Late...

...to return your indications of willingness to share your financial support to Pilgrim Lutheran Church in 2014.

Should you need a pledge card, they are available on the table in the narthex.

## Music Ministry at Pilgrim Church

The Church Council has approved a recommendation from the Worship, Music and the Arts committee to purchase a Yamaha digital piano (CVP-609) for the sanctuary. The approval was given with the understanding that the total cost of the piano (\$8,000) would have to be raised through donations and fund raising events. I hope that the following information will be helpful as we continue our "walk by faith" at Pilgrim Church.

When considering such a purchase, \$8,000 may seem to be too costly for such an instrument. However, that price is significantly lower than the retail price (\$15,000) because of the trade-in of our Hyundai piano and a long-time friend of mine who happens to be the Yamaha dealer. This is an exceptional offer.

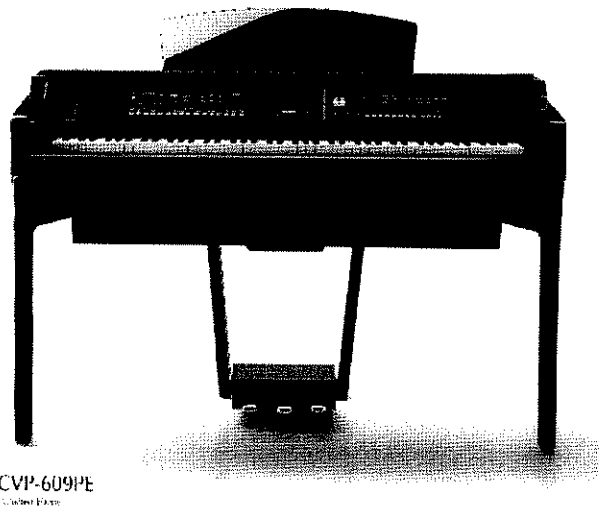
The benefits of including the Yamaha CVP-609 in the worship life of Pilgrim Church are numerous. Here are just a few that we should consider:

- 88 -key Natural Wood keyboard
- Real Grand Piano Expression
- Grand Piano Damper Pedal Control
- 566 Accompaniment Styles (can be used with contemporary worship songs, solos, choir anthem accompaniments, etc.)
- Over 1,000 keyboard, orchestral and percussion digital sounds.
- No Tuning Is Necessary - The CVP-609 is not affected by climate change.
- A Compact Digital Grand Piano - the sound of a grand piano requiring much less space – a major benefit for our liturgical celebrations.

Pilgrim Church is facing a \$25,000 budget deficit. Certainly, eliminating the deficit is of prime importance. However, I would like to share a suggestion regarding fund-raising for the digital grand piano. The piano has 88 keys. If each key were purchased with a \$100 donation we would raise \$8,800. We already have raised close to \$2,000. Each piano key can now be purchased for just over \$68! Maybe we could look at our deficit in a similar manner. We might surprise ourselves at Christmas - no deficit under the tree!!

Peace.

Denis Brunelle



## Sunday Readings – December 2013

*This month we begin church year A in which we will read from the Gospel of Matthew*

### December 1 – First Sunday of Advent

#### Isaiah 2:1–5

The prophet looks to the day when people will gather to be with God, to learn God's ways, and to bring about a time of peace.

#### Romans 13:11–14

Paul writes to the Romans concerning life as Jesus' people. Here he lists characteristics of those who belong to Christ.

#### Matthew 24:36–44

"Be ready" is the theme of this reading. The day of the Son of Man will come unexpectedly. No one knows when that will be except God.

### December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent

#### Isaiah 11:1–10

The age of peace is promised when the one who comes from Jesse's lineage will be ruler over God's people. We live in that age now, contrary to our experiences in the world. The peace we have is with God through Jesus.

#### Romans 15:4–13

"Welcome one another...as Christ welcomed you." With these words Paul sets forth his picture of the church as a community of hospitality. In such welcome of others, Paul says, we are taking part in the plan of God.

#### Matthew 3:1–12

John the baptizer is not an easy guy to like. He lives alone; he eats weird food and wears funny clothing, and calls people to be responsible for their actions.

### December 15 – Third Sunday of Advent

#### Isaiah 35:1–10

The prophet's vision resembles the road from slavery in Egypt to the promised land. This vision is filled with promises of God's action to redeem.

#### James 5:7–10

It's hard to wait, but the writer of James calls us to be patient, just as farmers wait for the crop to be ripe. In our waiting, we are reminded not to grumble about others.

#### Matthew 11:2–11

In prison, John the baptizer has questions about Jesus. Jesus also teaches his followers that John is the one who comes before God's anointed, greater than a prophet, but least in the kingdom of heaven.

### December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

#### Isaiah 7:10–16

God wants to give Ahaz the king a sign of peace that will come as the military threat fades away. Ahaz refuses to ask for a sign, so God decides to give the sign of peace in a child born who will be God's gift and presence among the people.

#### Romans 1:1–7

The beginning of the letter to the Romans sets the themes for the letter: the story of who Jesus is and what his life means for his followers.

#### Matthew 1:18–25

In Matthew's gospel, we read more about Joseph than about Mary in these birth narratives. Joseph's obedience to God's message sets him apart as a righteous and kind man.

### December 29 – First Sunday of Christmas

#### Isaiah 63:7–9

As the church looks back on the Incarnation of God, we read from Isaiah that it is the presence of God, not a messenger, who brings us salvation. This is the truth of the Incarnation: in Jesus we know God with us.

#### Hebrews 2:10–18

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews understands the fullness of Jesus' humanity as he shares our life. As the writer speaks about suffering, the writer also speaks about redemption, the reason God came into the world in Jesus.

#### Matthew 2:13–23

The story of Jesus' humanity continues in this section of Matthew's gospel. Here an angel warns Joseph about the impending disaster of Herod seeking to kill the newborn child. Joseph packs up his family and leaves the country. Jesus and his family become refugees in Egypt. All this is part of the struggle which Jesus came to reveal as a way in which God is at work in our world.

# SERVING in DECEMBER 2013

## GREETERS

December 1 Carl Ostermann  
December 8 Susan Simundson  
December 15 Jason & Courtney Petrarca  
December 22 Allan & Rose Reed  
December 29 Michele Tucci

## ACOLYTES

December 1 Molly Phillips  
December 8 Matt Sangster  
December 15 Andrew McLaughlin  
December 22 Sam Almonte  
December 29 Connor Lowell

## READERS

December 1 Susan Simundson  
December 8 Carl Lozy  
December 15 Laurie Linden  
December 22 Joan Hamblin  
December 29 Mark Cheney

## USHERS

December 1 Scott Chappelle  
Susan Simundson  
Linda Hughes  
Laurie Linden  
December 8 Scott Chappelle  
Ruth Lundin  
Pete Mahoney  
Merrill McElroy  
December 15 Scott Chappelle  
John Merrill  
Rick Nelson  
Carl Ostermann  
December 22 Scott Chappelle  
Jason & Courtney Petrarca  
Allan Reed  
December 29 Scott Chappelle  
Kristen Resendes  
Michele Tucci  
Deb Vilardi

## ALTAR GUILD

December 1 Nancy Derby  
Ginny Smith  
December 8 Nancy Sulmasy  
Betty Wagner  
December 15 Priscilla Angelo  
Mary Brinson  
Pam Himebaugh  
Kate Murphy-Duncan  
December 22 Jennifer Cardillo  
Pat Frazier  
Kitty Johnson  
December 29 Cindy Cote  
Maureen Johnson

## ALTAR FLOWERS

December 1 Joan Schappert and Family  
December 8 Gudrun Gegenbach and Family  
December 15 Available  
December 22 Available  
December 29 Poinsettia Memorial Garden

## ASSISTING MINISTERS

December 1 Tina Carlson  
December 8 Karin Kohl  
December 15 John Carlson  
December 22 Mark Cheney  
December 29 *Needed...please sign up!*

## COUNTERS

December 1 L. Hughes and M. Johnson  
December 8 B. Dugan and L. Linden  
December 15 B. Fish and T. McLaughlin  
December 22 C. Spencer and S. Phillips  
December 29 C. Smith and J. Theroux

## CONFIRMATION DINNERS

### Tuesday Evenings

December 3 No meal *Service/Fellowship*  
December 10 No meal *Caroling*  
December 17 No class  
December 24 No class  
December 31 No class

## COMMUNION ASSISTANTS






*Communion Assistants are needed for the month of November. Sign up on the sheet posted on the office bulletin board if you are able to help.*  
*Many thanks!*



# December 2013

## Pilgrim Lutheran Church

1817 Warwick Avenue Warwick, Rhode Island 02889 (401) 739-2937  
 www.pilgrimlutheranri.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1 Advent 1</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion/First Holy Communion Celebrated 	<b>2</b> 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>3</b> 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation — Service/Fellowship	<b>4</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 7:00 Worship, Music and Arts Meeting	<b>6 PASTOR'S DAY OFF</b> 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>7</b>
<b>8 Advent 2</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion 11:45 Altar Guild Christmas Brunch 	<b>9</b> 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>10</b> 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation — Caroling	<b>11</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b> 7:00 Worship, Music and Arts Meeting	<b>13 PASTOR'S DAY OFF</b> 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>14</b>
<b>15 Advent 3</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Holy Communion and Sunday School Christmas Program 4:00 Advent Celebration Concert <b>Pilgrims' Progress Deadline</b> 	<b>16</b> 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>17</b> 10:00 Pastors' Pericope No Confirmation Class	<b>18</b> 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 10:00 Toiletry Cupboard 7:00 Congregation Council Meeting	<b>20 PASTOR'S DAY OFF</b> 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>21 Thomas, Apostle</b>
<b>22 Advent 4</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion 	<b>23</b> 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>24 The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve</b> 5:00 and 11:00 Candlelight Holy	<b>25 Blessed Christmas!</b> 	<b>26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	<b>27 John, Apostle and Evangelist</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	<b>28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</b>
<b>29 Christmas 1</b> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Holy Communion No Sunday School—see you in church!	<b>30</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	<b>31 New Year's Eve</b> CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	Church Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Church Office Closed December 24, 2013—January 1, 2014 (No evening meetings/events during this time)			