



Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
December 2014

From the Pilgrim Staff...



*Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.*

Go Tell It on the Mountain
ELW #290 – African-American spiritual

*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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**2015 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,

Wow! I cannot believe that we are facing December already. 2014 has flown by and much has happened throughout this year.

As you know the church year begins with Advent, a season of waiting for the birth of Jesus, which is technically known as the Incarnation. That means we know God has come to us in the flesh, fully human as we are and at the same time, God emptied of the glory and majesty of God. (Don't ask me to tell you how that happens. It is a mystery, unexplainable in human logical terms.) At any rate, with Advent the church looks to the future as in Jesus the timelessness of God breaks into our time-bound lives.

The church is a different community of people, unlike any other in the world. The church has been given the assignment of carrying on Jesus' ministry, of being the body of Christ in the world today. That is not news to any of us, I suspect. And so we get together to learn how to live our faith in forgiveness and service, in seeing others as children of God. That's our task, which is what Jesus, through the Holy Spirit in baptism, has called you and me to do.

Many people have noticed that the church throughout our country is not what it was in the 1950's or even into the 1990's. Several factors have caused this to happen: people are busier than they used to be (in spite of "time saving improvements"), there has been a general mistrust of institutions, a consumer mentality that says that if the church does not meet my needs then I don't need it, and the mistrust in clergy among some Christians because of abusive situations. The world around us has changed while the church has continued to preach the Gospel (as we are called to do) but the forms in which Christians have traditionally done that no longer speak the kind of culture our country has become.

One of the watchwords of our tradition is *Ecclesia semper reformanda est*. That's Latin for "the church must **always** be reforming". By that the Reformers meant that while the message remains the same (the Gospel of Jesus Christ), the ways that message is proclaimed need to be constantly examined in light of the culture in which it is being proclaimed.

I know that can be anxiety provoking. Change is not easy for people. But it is the only way for the church to find relevance for the world.

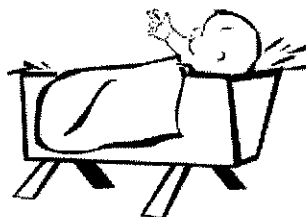
So, what do we do? We pray. We pay attention to our world. We listen to people of all ages. We remind ourselves that the church is not here for any one of us, but it is here for all of us and many others we might think of as strangers. We talk. We share our faith stories. We read Scripture. We intentionally do works of kindness for others. All this might sound like New Year resolutions.

My hope for Pilgrim Lutheran Church is that we might become a community that nourishes one another as it serves the world. Our purpose statement is a summary of all that: *God's purpose for Pilgrim Lutheran Church is to build our relationships with Jesus and to share our gifts with the community.*

So as your pastor I am asking you to share your time, your faith, your understandings of who God is, of your dreams for this community in Christ, your new ideas for ministry we can try for our world. Let's talk. Sunday morning after worship is a good time. We should do this once a month. Watch the bulletin for this to begin in January. Open conversations are the only kind that are helpful. Please share your thoughts with me, but please jot them down...I can be very forgetful.

Wishing you all a blessed Advent, joyous Christmas, and an exciting New Year!

Paster Kohl



Pastoral Acts

Baptism



Giana Lynn Etchells

Marriage

Jenna Hughes & John McElroy, Jr.



Funerals



John Pearson, Sr.
William Salisbury, Jr.

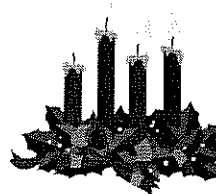
An important reminder from Elisabeth!

Please submit any articles or any other information to be included in the January 2015 *Pilgrims' Progress* as **soon as possible**.
(This includes all Sunday server information.)

Please note that **no submissions will be accepted later than Monday, December 15, 2014.**

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

*Schedule of Services for
Christmas Eve
December 24, 2014*



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



Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Thanks to all of you who contributed your time, effort, support, and goodies to the Bazaar here on November 15 and 16. A lot of preparation and behind-the-scenes work goes into a successful event, which this one certainly was. We made \$2,200!

The rough totals for booths were:

White Elephant	\$ 800
Door Prize Raffle	200
Books, etc.	140
Hand-Knit Work	560
Kitchen	250
Photo Cards	120
"Boutique" (first year!)	130

The Altar Guild's bake sale raised \$300.

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. Special thanks to those who made homemade soups, baked goods, and the beautiful hand-knit pieces.

Bill Brinson

Church School Christmas Program Sunday, December 14 at the 9:30 service



Please come support our youngsters and enjoy the Church School's Christmas program on Sunday, December 14 during the 9:30 worship service.

It's Not Too Late...

...to return your indications of willingness to share your financial support to Pilgrim Lutheran Church in 2015. Should you need a pledge card, they are available on the table in the narthex.

Altar Guild Dates



Christmas Decorating

Saturday, December 6 at 10:00 a.m.

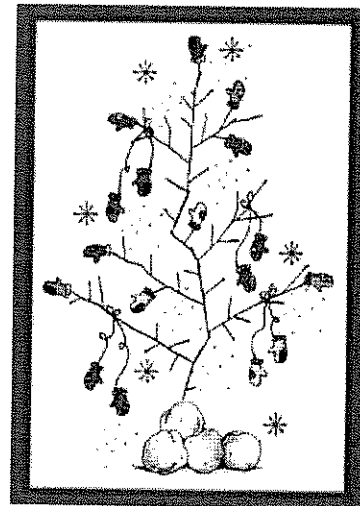
Christmas Brunch and Meeting

Sunday, December 7 at 11:45 a.m.

Christmas Dismantling

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

Pilgrim Mitten Tree Ministry



It is hard to believe, but Christmas is just around the corner. That means it's almost time to set up the mitten tree. We are asking that you help to load the tree's branches with hats, mittens, and scarves for those in need. This year these gifts of warmth will go to the recipients of Pilgrim's food ministry. Thanks in advance for your generosity!

The holidays are a time that we think about special meals, and Pilgrim's food ministry is helping to provide Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for those who might otherwise do without. Meals include a turkey or ham and the accompaniments, as well as a \$10 Stop & Shop gift card. Donations for the above come from many sources: Trader Joe's and Stop & Shop, St. Rita's, Thrivent, and the many and gracious food and monetary gifts that come from members of this congregation. For that the food ministry team gives heartfelt thanks. And we do need your continued support. The number of people who pick up weekly food boxes has grown from about 15 to around 45. And it is not just the down and out who come, but also middle class folks who are struggling too. We make no judgments about who comes or why someone comes to pick up food.

Our Christmas boxes this year will include two small tokens—reminders that it is not us really that gives the food, but God—a God who loves all people and who has shown that love by coming into our world and into our lives to be one with us and to die for us, even through all the tough times. We will be enclosing a small crocheted cross ornament and a Christmas leaflet in each of the boxes this Christmas.

The toiletry pantry has also been growing this past year. We now have about 35 people coming on the third Thursday of the month. We have added coffee and donuts to our time of toiletry distribution, and this has been very much appreciated by those who come—giving them a time of refreshment and fellowship. I am personally grateful to all of you who have rallied to the cause and brought in toothpaste during the past couple of months. The amount that came in was truly amazing!

Thanks go to the many people who help with the food and toiletry ministries on a regular basis—people from Pilgrim and people from outside of this congregation. Your willingness and dedication is what makes this all work. We have begun a Facebook site under the name, 'Pilgrim's Pantry'. We have also begun to talk with other venues about donations, and are in the process of coordinating projects through Thrivent.

Thanks again, and in the words of Tiny Tim, "God bless us every one!"

Karin Kohl



A Different Kind of Christmas Gift

For several years now our church (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) has made available the opportunity to make a gift that would benefit people throughout the world. They are listed in the Good Gifts Catalog. You can find one at church.

But you can also take one of the ornaments at church and make that a gift to someone overseas, or a great way to give a gift to someone who already has everything. Put the ornament around a bottle of wine or use it as a card to let your family or friends know you have made this gift. The gifts range from \$10 up to \$500. Check out the Good Gifts Tree and take along a way to give the holidays a whole different sense. Check may be made payable to Pilgrim Lutheran Church (mark it "Good Gifts" on the memo line), or made out and mailed directly to:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Gifts Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

WARNING: ADVENT VIRUS

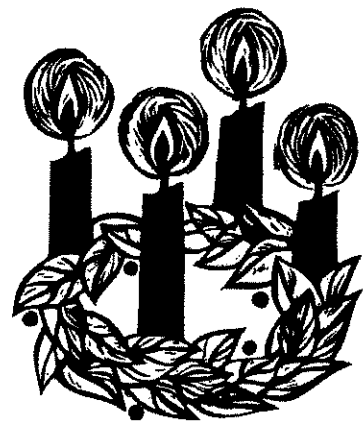
Be on the alert for symptoms of inner **Hope, Peace, Joy and Love**. The hearts of a great many have already been exposed to this virus and it is possible that people everywhere could come down with it in epidemic proportions. This could pose a serious threat to what has, up to now, been a fairly stable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



SERVING in DECEMBER 2014

GREETERS

December 7 Susan Simundson
 December 14 TBA
 December 21 Jason & Courtney Petrarca
 December 28 Allan & Rose Reed

READERS

December 7 Helen Varin
 December 14 Susan Horsch
 December 21 Alexis Valletta
 December 28 Susan Simundson

ALTAR GUILD

December 7 Joanne Lozy
 Susan Simundson
 December 14 Nancy Sulmasy
 Betty Wagner
 December 21 Mary Brinson
 Pam Himebaugh
 December 28 Jennifer Cardillo
 Cindy Cote

ACOLYTES

December 7 Caleigh Blackmer
 December 14 Chris Lopez
 December 21 Connor Lowell
 December 28 Emily Souza

COUNTERS

December 7 Maureen Johnson and Beth Fish
 December 14 Valerie Parmenter and Beth Fish
 December 21 Laurie Linden, Susan Simundson,
 and Beth Fish
 December 28 Chris Spencer and Beth Fish

ASSISTING MINISTERS

December 7 Karin Kohl
 December 14 Linda Hughes
 December 21 John Carlson
 December 28 Mark Cheney

USHERS

December 7 Scott Chappelle
 Ruth Lundin
 Pete Mahoney
 Merrill McElroy
 December 14 Scott Chappelle
 John Merrill
 Rick Nelson
 Roy Wagner
 December 21 Scott Chappelle
 Allan Reed
 Jason & Courtney Petrarca
 December 28 Scott Chappelle
 Kristen Resendes
 Michele Tucci
 Deb Vilardi

ALTAR FLOWERS

December 7 Bill Dugan and Family
 Josephine Nelson
 December 14 John & Tina Carlson
 December 21 Rhode Island Thrivent Chapter
 December 28 Poinsettia Garden

CONFIRMATION DINNERS

Tuesday Evenings

December 9 Tracey Mitchell
 December 16 No meal Caroling at St. Paul
 December 23 No class
 December 30 No class

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

December 7 Bill Dugan and Susan Horsch
 December 14 Bill Dugan and J. & T. Carlson
 December 21 Bill Dugan and Tina Carlson
 December 28 Emily Hughes and Linda Hughes

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


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 2014

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 10:00 Pastors' Pericope	3	4	5 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	6 10:00 Altar Guild Christmas Decorating
	7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	6:30 Confirmation — Staff Meeting/No Kids	6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal		7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	
7 Advent 2 8:00 Holy Communion 9:15 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion 11:45 Altar Guild Christmas Brunch	8 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	9 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 1:00 Shawl Ministry 6:30 Confirmation — Letters and History of the Early Church	10 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	11 10:30 Worship, Music and Arts Meeting	12 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	13
	7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous				7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	
14 Advent 3 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Holy Communion and Sunday School Christmas Program	15 Pilgrims' Progress Deadline 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	16 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation — Caroling at St. Paul	17 6:30 Evening Prayer 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	18 10:00 Toiletry Cupboard 7:00 Congregation Council Meeting	19 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	20 <i>Thomas, Apostle</i>
	7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous				7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	
21 Advent 4 8:00 Holy Communion 9:15 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion WINTER BEGINS	22 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	23 <i>No Confirmation Class</i>	24 The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve 5:00 and 11:00 Candlelight Holy Communion	25 Blessed Christmas! 	26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr	27 John, Apostle and Evangelist
					7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	
28 Christmas I 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Holy Communion <i>No Sunday School—see you in church!</i>	29 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	30 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED <i>No Confirmation Class</i>	31 New Year's Eve		Church Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday 10:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. Church Office Closed December 24, 2014—January 5, 2015 No evening meetings (except N.A.)/events during this time	

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH
1817 Warwick Avenue
Warwick, RI 02889-2238
Phone: 401-739-2937/Fax: 401-732-0735
www.pilgrimlutheranri.org

Dated Material

December 2014



*Do not be afraid; for see
I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people
Luk 2:10*

Congregation Council

Susan Simundson - Interim President

Mary Brinson

Cindy Cote

Bill Dugan

Marie Grist

Linda Hughes

Maureen Johnson

Laurie Linden

Tammy McLaughlin

Valerie Parmenter

Chris Spencer