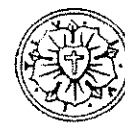




Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
January 2015

From the Pastor

Dear Friends of Christ,

January 1 is commemorated in the church as *The Name of Jesus*. The first reading for that day is Numbers 6:22-27. This reading contains the blessing with which most of our liturgies end:

*The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace
and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and
give you peace.*

They are beautiful words to end a time together in God's presence, but they are also beautiful words as we stand once again at the beginning of a new year.

We ask God's blessing with these words. We see the word "bless" around us often. But what does it mean to be blessed? A blessing always involves a change. It might be a perception that changes, it might be a purpose that changes, it might be behavior that changes. But to be blessed is to change. For us this is asking for a deeper awareness of God's presence around us in life. What happens on Sunday is that we are sent out with new eyes, more and more aware of the gifts God gives and the signs that no matter what happens we have a God who seeks to enrich us.

When we ask God to keep us, we are asking for God to be with us. In the *Small Catechism*, Luther describes the work of God the creator as preserving, providing, and protecting. This is what it means to be kept by God: preserved by God, provided for by God, and protected by God.

When we ask for God's face to shine on us it will be with grace and mercy. Jesus is the one who shows us that unexpected gifts and

OUR STAFF

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**2015 Offering Envelopes are available in the narthex—please take yours home as soon as possible.
Thank you!**

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 25, 2015
immediately following
the 9:30 service

(See page 3 for more information)

Please note that committee annual reports are due in the office no later than Sunday, January 11. Thanks!

blessings come from God, not because we are so good, but because God is so good.

In fact the goodness of God is the basis for our faith as the followers of Jesus.

Finally, we ask for God's peace to rest upon us. What our world needs as we come into 2015 is **peace**. There is no doubt about that. Certainly we seek peace as an end to the violence that marks our world. Wars and power struggles, economic injustices, and ignoring the immorality of leaders are so common in our world that we almost accept them as par for the course. And we might think that we can do nothing about such things.

But we have been blessed by God, not just for our own comfort, but to be blessings to others. This means the change that blessings bring to us will shape our lives in the coming year.

So what does all this mean? There is a saying: *If you want peace, work for justice.* As the people of God we are called not just to look out for ourselves, but also to look out for those whose voices are lost in the world around us. Seeking peace calls us to seek a better life for people who are different from us: race, language, gender identity, educational abilities, economic differences. This list can go on. But Jesus takes it a step further. Jesus calls us to love even our enemies.

How much safer our world would be if power were turned into service, if we sought to follow Jesus more intentionally.

In the face of what feels like overwhelming turmoil there is something we can do: seek to be people of peace, who carry out the blessing with which we end our time together on Sunday mornings. No one of us can do this alone. We need others. That's a major reason why the church gathers every Sunday. We come together not only to be reminded of whose we are, but also to remind one another who we are: the children of God.

If you have any new year resolutions for 2015, you might include this journey to peace among them. Try reading the Bible every day and listening for who God is and what God is up to in the stories and teachings there. Keep a list

of people for whom you pray. Set some time aside every day for quiet time to do this. If you have children in your house, share the highs and lows of the day with them. Then pray for one another. This will teach them your love and bind your family more closely together and closer to God.

As God's pilgrim people, we are always on the go—changing, thinking, seeking new ideas and places to serve. I have a saying on the wall in my office. It was a gift from an Episcopal priest. She gave it to me when I was installed as your pastor over 20 years ago. It is from the writings of Martin Luther:

This life therefore is not righteousness but growth in righteousness, not health but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be but we are growing toward it. The process is not yet finished but it is going on. This is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being purified.

With prayers for strength and peace for the journey,

Pastor Kohl

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms



Felix James Dancause

Marriages

Joseph Meenagh, Jr. & Michelle Cavaco



Funerals



Mary E. Bromley
Dorothy Martinelli
Virginia Medeiros
Earl West, Sr.
Millie Wicklund

PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH'S ANNUAL MEETING TO BE HELD SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

The Annual Meeting of Pilgrim Lutheran Church will be held on

**Sunday, January 25
following the 9:30 service.**

This is the meeting in which we elect people to serve the congregation on our Congregation Council and several committees: The Nominating, Scholarship, and Memorial Committees, as well as voting members of our annual synod assembly which will be held in June. It is also at this meeting that a budget for ministry for 2015 will be put into place.

All active confirmed members of the congregation are encouraged and expected to be present at this meeting as these decisions are made.

Please note that committee Annual Reports are due in the office no later than Sunday, January 11 for inclusion in the 2014 report booklet.

Many thanks!



WONDERING "WEATHER" OR NOT THERE'S CHURCH?



In case of emergency road conditions, the postponing of Sunday services will be announced on television WJAR Channel 10.

Information will also be available on our website at www.pilgrimlutheranri.org and the outgoing voice mail greeting when you call the church office, including a time that services will be rescheduled.

Happy and safe winter travels to all!

February Pilgrims' Progress Deadline: Thursday, January 15!

Please e-mail submissions to Elisabeth at both parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org and eremmingvergun@cox.net or place in her mailbox in the church office. Many thanks.



A message from the Altar Guild...



It's time to plan ahead! The Altar Guild is accepting requests for Altar Flowers for 2015. What a wonderful way for you to honor your family and loved ones by remembering anniversaries and special occasions throughout the year.

Flower envelopes can be found on the table in the narthex. For each request, we ask for a \$30 donation. Once completed, envelopes may be placed in the offering plate or dropped off to the church office with your donation.

The flowers will be distributed after the late service each week to those that are ill, shut-in, or celebrating a special occasion at the discretion of the Pastor.

Thank you!

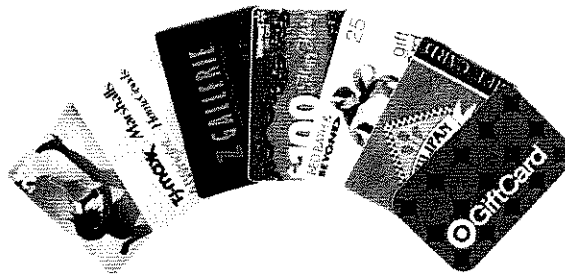
The Pilgrim Lutheran Church Altar Guild

Hospitalized or Needing a Pastoral Visit?

Please have a family member call the church at 401-739-2937. There is also voice mail to leave a message if no one is in the office when you call. Be sure to leave your name, the name of the person who needs or wants a visit, and a contact number in case Pastor Kohl needs more information. If someone is in a hospital, be sure to tell us at which hospital, along with any other information you may have, such as a room number, etc.

Sunday mornings are busy times here at Pilgrim, and it's possible that verbal requests may not be remembered. If you think of a need, please fill out one of the pew cards and place it in the offering plate, or leave a note for Pastor Kohl in his mailbox in the office.

Gift Cards for Sale After Church Services



Convenient Gift Cards for most grocery stores, dozens of retail stores, and coffee and sandwich shops are available for purchase after both services on Sundays.

The church receives between a 3 and 15 percent discount by purchasing these cards in bulk, and the money (a few thousand at last count) is deposited into the general account of the church.

Along with the regular gift card program, Thrivent Financial has provided us with a seed-grant of \$250 to be used to purchase grocery gift cards for those in need. If you would like to help out, you can purchase a gift card in any denomination to benefit this ministry. These donated cards will be given to Pastor Kohl and Karin to disburse to those in need as they see fit.

Thank you,
Carolyn and Bruce Vittner

Pledge cards should be back at church by now, but we will welcome any that you may have overlooked returning. If you need a blank pledge card, please call the church office at 739-2937, and we will be glad to mail one to you. They are also available in the narthex (main hallway) outside the sanctuary (main worship room). You may put it in the offering plate or mail it to the church. Thanks!

SERVING in JANUARY 2015

GREETERS

January 4 Michelle Tucci
January 11 Bonnie Abols
January 18 Bill Dugan
January 25 Susan Simundson

READERS

January 4 Carl Lozy
January 11 David Hall
January 18 Mary Brinson
January 25 Joan Hamblin

ALTAR GUILD

January 4 Joanne Lozy
Susan Simundson
January 11 Pat Frazier
Maureen Johnson
January 18 Mary Brinson
Pam Himebaugh
January 25 Jennifer Cardillo
Cindy Cote

ASSISTING MINISTERS

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

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

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

ALTAR FLOWERS

All January dates are currently available.

USHERS

January 4 Scott Chappelle
Roy Wagner
Bruce & Carolyn Vittner
January 11 Scott Chappelle
Lou Cardillo
Cindy Cote
Renee Woodward
January 18 Scott Chappelle
Bonnie Donahue
Jo-Anne Doyle
Bill Dugan
January 25 Scott Chappelle
Ron Fish
Pam Himebaugh
Susan Horsch

ACOLYTES

January 4 Cory Olson
January 11 Jack O'Hara
January 18 Ryan Vuz
January 25 Mackenzie Blackmer

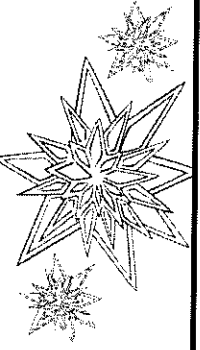
COUNTERS

January 4 Marie Grist and Beth Fish
January 11 Cindy Cote, Maureen Johnson,
and Chris Spencer
January 18 Valerie Parmenter and Beth Fish
January 25 Laurie Linden and Beth Fish

CONFIRMATION DINNERS

Tuesday Evenings

January 6 Lopez/Kohl Families
January 13 **No meal** Staff Meeting/No kids
January 20 Jared Hardy
January 27 **No meal** Service/Fellowship



January 2015

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Church Office Hours Tuesday—Friday 10:00 a.m.— 4:30 p.m.				1 NEW YEAR'S DAY CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	2 PK'S DAY OFF 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	3
4 Christmas 2 8:00 Holy Communion 9:15 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion	5 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	6 <i>The Epiphany of Our Lord</i> 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation - Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature	7 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	8 7:00 Worship, Music & Arts	9 PK'S DAY OFF 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	10 10:00 Altar Guild Christmas Dismantling
11 <i>The Baptism of Our Lord</i> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:15 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion Annual Reports submission deadline	12 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	13 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 1:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 Confirmation—Staff Meeting/No Kids	14 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	15 PILGRIMS' PROGRESS DEADLINE 10:00 Toiletry Cupboard	16 PK'S DAY OFF 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	17
18 <i>Second Sunday after the Epiphany</i> FAMILY SUNDAY 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Holy Communion	19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	20 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 6:30 Confirmation - Overview of Hebrew Scriptures	21 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	22	23 PK'S DAY OFF 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	24 <i>St. Timothy, Pastor and Confessor</i>
25 <i>Third Sunday after the Epiphany</i> 8:00 Holy Communion 9:15 Sunday School 9:30 Holy Communion 10:45 Congregation Annual Meeting	26 <i>Conversion of Paul</i> 7:00 Bible Study 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	27 10:00 Pastors' Pericope 1:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:30 Confirmation - Service/Fellowship	28 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	29	30 PK'S DAY OFF 7:00 Narcotics Anonymous	31

I recall this image from my home congregation: A banner depicting Mary and Jesus in the manger and the backlit silhouette of the cross cast over this scene. It was jarring. The cross on Christmas? I didn't like it.

Christmas can carry so much emotional freight. We must be merry and filled with good cheer. We are driven to get everything perfect by the stroke of midnight on Christmas Eve. We are filled with wistful longing. But what are we longing for?

We long for peace, love and a place to belong. We want to know that someone cares. We want the assurance that all of this means something. And, we try to bring that all about in the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

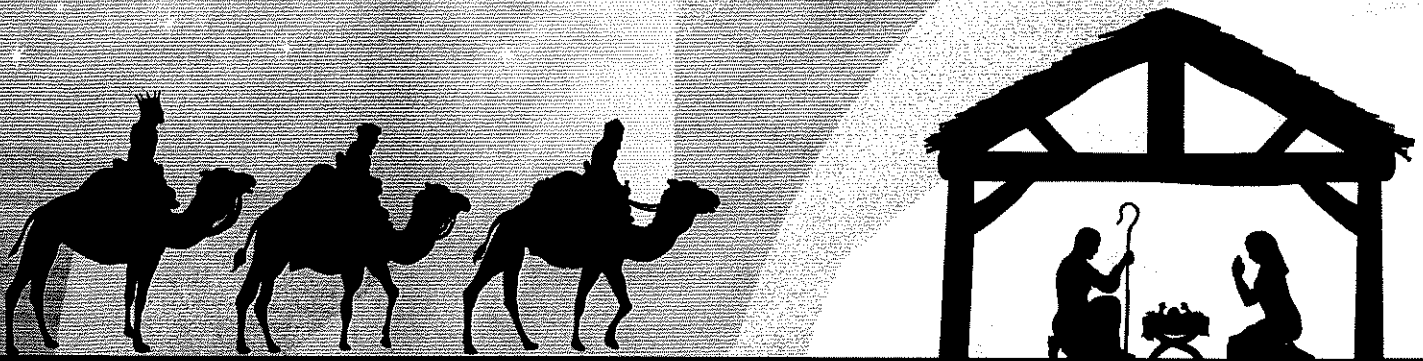
The hope of Christmas was fulfilled on Good Friday. The cross is part of Christmas. "Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you" (What Child Is This?). The cross is *the* Christmas gift, where all of our Christmas glorias are realized in Jesus' glorification on the cross.

We don't have to get everything completely right. We can't. That's God's work and it has been done. So, good Christian friends, rejoice!

Peace,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

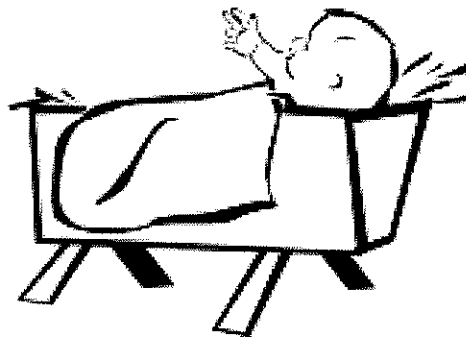


Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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

Dated Material

January 2015



And the Word became flesh and lived among us...

John 1:14

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