



# Pilgrims' Progress



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

## OUR STAFF

### **Pastor**

The Rev. Dennis Kohl

### **Minister of Music**

Denis Brunelle

### **Treasurer**

Bill Brinson

### **Financial Secretary**

Beth Fish

### **Sexton**

Adam Kohl

### **Parish Assistant**

Laurie Connors

## **September Pilgrims' Progress Deadline: Tuesday, September 15th**

Please e-mail submissions to  
[parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org](mailto:parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org)  
or place in her mailbox in the church  
office. Many thanks.

*The Progress deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.*



## From the Pastor

Dear Fellow Pilgrims:

Peace is something we long for in our world, in our country, in our lives. And yet, it is so elusive, almost to the point that we might not know what peace is anymore.

Internationally terrorist groups seek to impose one ideology upon others by force or violence. Nationally we see a government that accomplishes little by cooperation and compromise, the path of progress in the past. In our own hearts we long for an end to bothers and troubles, pain and grief. Life is not easy.

One of the factors that destroys community is our need to always be right, to have things our way, to exhibit some kind of control over situations. Theologically we call this *self-justification*. It is the original sin; Adam and Eve wanting to be like God, wanting to be in control, thinking that with the knowledge of good and evil they were promised by the deceitful one they would no longer need God. They thought they could shift the boundaries of reality, create their own world, and make their "moral universe" bigger to make their actions seem OK in their own minds. It came as excuses: *it was her fault* Adam said. *It was the serpent's fault* Eve said. Somehow they thought they could make their disobedience to God seem like it was OK, something they had no control over.

In his writing on Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* (you can read it in Matthew 5-7) Martin Luther wrote this: *[Human beings] have been carrying on their mischief and violence under*

*the lovely and excellent pretext and cover of doing it for the sake of righteousness... They put up such a good front and use such beautiful words that they think even God himself will not know any better.* We humans deceive ourselves with self-justification.

But in Romans 8:33 Paul writes *It is God who justifies.* God is the one who declares us just or innocent. We cannot do this for ourselves, no matter how convoluted or complicated the path by which we come to our excuses.

Paul is doing two things with this statement: he is telling us about God who has a heart for the limitation of our humanity, and he is speaking the truth that we cannot and do not have to justify ourselves. His simple reminder *It is God who justifies* teaches us about God's grace and our need for that grace and goodness.

One of the practical implications of this is coming to terms with the fact that we will mess things up; it is part of being human. And we may mess things up in our own thinking about ourselves, in our families, in our country, throughout the world. None of what is happening around us should come as a surprise to any of us.

But that does not mean that it has to be this way because God wants to bless us with peace and life, with joy and hope. God calls us to listen, not only to learn facts, but to try to come to know the other person's way of seeing the world, of how they think, of what they fear, and what their joys are. This is how all sorts of communities are built.

Getting beyond thinking of our self as the definition of truth is essential for peace in our lives. Knowing we do not define or control other people's lives is a great gift of peace. Recognizing that we also bring our brokenness to relationships can help us live better with others. Owning up to our

mistakes, acknowledging our limitation as humans, these things are a path to peace.

One of the reasons we begin every service with a time of confession or the Sacrament of Baptism is our way of publicly stating that we are not perfect, but we trust that our God still loves us. So we come to God for forgiveness and find peace with God and reconciliation with others around us.

Because God has created all that is we come with open minds and hearts, with open ears and eyes to new understanding. This new understanding we call faith.

In hope,

Pastor Kohl

#### Pastoral Acts

Baptism:

Jason Edward Jarvis, III

Funerals:

Robert Thomson

Mabel Engelhardt

**The Pilgrim Lutheran prayer chain** is seeking new members. It is a rewarding way to be of service to others. There are no meetings, and praying is done on your schedule. Please consider this ministry. Call Joan Hamblin at 781-3752 or the church at 739-2937, if you would like be part of this important ministry.

#### Altar Guild Meeting

There will be a meeting of the Altar Guild on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, after the 9:30 a.m. service. All members are encouraged to attend.

## Confirmation 2015-2016



Confirmation is a rite in our tradition in which we try to help people choose to live as followers of Jesus. At Pilgrim Church we teach youth in **7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades** about our Faith and even ask our teenagers to think about difficult issues they are facing or will face. We also hold classes together with youth from St. Paul Church in Warwick (on Greenwich Ave) and Bethany Church in Cranston (on Rolfe Square). There are usually between 15 and 20 kids in the classes. We have a community of adults who work with our children. Having an adult in life that is there for us because they know we are important is a gift every kid needs.

This year our first gathering for Confirmation Orientation will be on **Monday, September 21, at 7:00PM**. This is for students and adults/family members. Please call the church office and let us know you will be here (401-739-2937). That evening we will ask everybody to help us out with providing supper for the kids when they gather for classes. We will also ask adults to be people who share highs and lows with their family every night and bless their kids before they go to bed. We will show you how to do this.

Classes and other activities are planned for Tuesday evenings, not Monday as the orientation session will be. We will give you a schedule and let you know of any changes that might happen throughout the time of our classes.

So if you have a family member in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grades, please come. All are welcome at Pilgrim Church. If your kids have a friend who might like to come along, please let them know we would love that.

We will do our best for your children/teenagers/kids; and we welcome your input in any way we can do a better job of helping them become people of faith. Oh, and by the way, most kids love coming to confirmation classes and often come back even after they are confirmed.



**September 13 at 9:15** will be the first gathering of our **Sunday School** for this program year. In Baptism parents and sponsors promised to teach the faith to their children. Sunday School is one of the ways we help families do this. Our Sunday School begins at 9:15 with Pastor Kohl and then goes to individual class groups. It is for children who are three years old through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Kids have fun, learn about our loving God in Jesus, and learn about the fellowship of Christians. All children are welcome. Let us know if your child is coming by calling the church office (401-739-2937). If you want to be part of the team, let Pastor Kohl know. Many thanks to Bethany Gallucci, Kristen Resendes, and Colleen Healey for their care for our kids!

### For the first 6 months of 2015:

Total expenses	125,029
Donations/Pledged Income	109,988
Deficit	(\$15,041)

**Please consider donating additional funds** to cover our general expenses.

## Hospitalized or Needing a Pastoral Visit?

Please have a family member call us at 401-739-2937 to speak to Pastor Kohl, or to leave information with the office or on the church's voicemail. Be sure to leave your name, the name of the person who needs a visit, which hospital and room number if possible, and a contact telephone number.

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.

### **Martin Luther Pilgrimage**

October 12-22, 2016

Plans for the Journey to sites important in the life of Martin Luther are coming along. In 2017 Christians will celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther's posting the 95 Theses (points for a debate) about forgiveness. We will go to these places in 2016 to avoid the crowds of the following year. (Although with Oktoberfest that month there will be plenty of excitement in Germany).

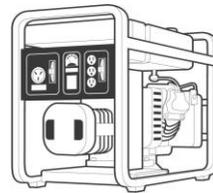
The cost for the pilgrimage is \$3,669 (double occupancy) or \$4,169 (single room). This price includes airfare, hotels, entrance to all places of interest, 14 meals (9 breakfasts and 5 dinners), transportation to and from airports, and all transportation in Germany. All the hotels are at least 4-star rated.

A brochure will be available soon. If you want more information now, please check with Pastor or Karin or contact Val Mellow at East Side Travel (401) 724-3111. An evening of information and questions and answers will be held at Pilgrim Church on Sunday, October 18, 2015 at 5 PM.



### **Pilgrim's Discretionary Fund**

While the requests for fuel assistance are not plentiful in the summer, other needs continue to come to our pastor from people within our congregation and beyond our congregation. Please consider making a donation to the discretionary fund, perhaps in memory of someone or to honor an event. You can make your check payable to Pilgrim Lutheran Church, but be sure to mark it for the "Discretionary Fund." Many thanks!



### **Electricity and Lost Food**

It doesn't happen very often, but when the church loses electricity for a day or two, we also lose a lot of food which we could give to people if we had power in the building. Maybe a generator would be the solution to this problem. If you have a spare one or would like to help us buy one, please let the church office know by calling 401-739-2937. Thanks for considering this for the people who rely on Pilgrim Church to provide their food each week.

Congratulations to Tyler Phillips on being selected as the recipient of the 2015 Altar Guild Diane Fish Memorial Scholarship. Tyler is a lifelong member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church and the son of Linda and Steven Phillips. He plans to attend The University of Rhode Island in the Fall, majoring in Geology. May every blessing be yours as you graduate High School and embark on your College journey.



There are still many dates available for flower dedications. Please sign up to support the Altar Guild. There are flower envelopes in the narthex. A \$30 donation is suggested. Place the envelope, with dedication information and donation, in the Altar Guild mailbox. Thank you.

### **Hometown Nazareth: Where Jesus was a Kid**

Was the theme of our Bible School this summer. It was five days of fun for both students and leaders. We learned that Jesus and the kids of today have much in common. We learned about Jesus as a kid. We learned about his family, his name, his home, his church, and his service to others. Jesus and our kids have all these things in common.

The people who helped make this a great time for the kids were organized by Pam Himebaugh with the assistance of several people. Many thanks go to all who supported this program with prayers or donations. Workers at the school included: Bonnie Donohue, Rachel Goding, Karin Kohl, Carole Laurent, Stephany Laurent, Andrew McLaughlin, Valerie Parmenter, Linda Phillips, Jan Rouillard, Connor Safford, Kerri Sangster, Matthew Sangster, Paul Sangster, and Jennifer Thran. It was a blessing to see people sharing their gifts for ministry to our children.

#### Rabbi Perlman invitation:

**Lunch and Learn** – This wonderful opportunity is open to the public and will focus on the Jewish Bible “Parshat Hashavua” (the weekly Torah Portion). Our first WBCJC deli lunch meeting will be on Thursday, September 3, at the Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

1817 Warwick Ave, Warwick, RI Noon – 1:00pm. The cost is \$8.00 per person - the deli will be kosher - the study priceless! Vegetarian option available on request. Please RSVP by August 31 ([www.wbcjc.org](http://www.wbcjc.org)). The location of the Lunch and Learn study will move between Pilgrim Lutheran Church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church and St. Timothy's Catholic Church and our own WBCJC home at Tamarisk. Look for updates monthly.

The **opportunity** is offered for persons **to be readers of the scripture** at the 9:30 worship hour. If you hear the call to read God's word at worship, the next schedule is being prepared, and additional youth and adults are welcome to be included in the weekly rotation. The new schedule will be ready the first week in September, and it will begin with the readings for the first Sunday of October. If interested, you are invited call Donald Williams at 783-2316 to be included.

### **Looking for Team Pilgrim**

The American Parkinson's Disease Association  
Rhode Island Chapter  
Race, Walk & Roll  
Saturday, September 12, 2015  
At Goddard State Park  
We walk to honor Bruce Belvin.  
Contact Laurie Linden if you would like to join Team Pilgrim. [lalinden1@verizon.net](mailto:lalinden1@verizon.net) or 941-3302.



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Get out the yellow tee-shirts: **God's Work, Our Hands Sunday** is September 13. If you have ideas of how we might serve the community, please contact Mary Brinson at (401) 467-6517 or [mbrinson627@aol.com](mailto:mbrinson627@aol.com).

