



Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
July 2016

**August's Progress Deadline:
Friday, July 15th**

Please e-mail submissions to
parishasst@pilgrimlutheranri.org
or place in her mailbox in the church
office. Many thanks.

The Progress deadline is the 15th of every month.

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

I would like to paraphrase a statement I came across that struck me as importantly true. It is from Dr. E. Stanley Jones, a Methodist minister who spent most of his life in India. Stanley said, "The Bible did not become printer's ink; it became 'flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.'" (See below). I would stick a little closer to the Scriptures and change the word "Bible" to "the Word" (as in John's gospel). In other words, the Word did not become printer's ink; he became flesh...

You see, the central truth of our faith is that it is Jesus who shows us most clearly who God is. The printed word is always open to interpretation because it must be translated into other languages. To be honest, even in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek there are variations in the text we have. The printed word cannot be a definitive last word of who God is or what God is up to.

So we trust that God continues to guide us by the presence of the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the Word made flesh. And if you haven't noticed, whenever the Holy Spirit comes up in our creeds we immediately speak about the community of Christ: the Church.

It is in the church that we encounter Christ, in that place where two or three are gathered together in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness proclaimed and made real in relationships in the church. And, just as the cross is carried to the back of the church following our worship, so too we, the church, carry Christ into the world through our daily lives, again practicing and making real forgiveness, concern, and compassion for those in need.

We Lutherans, along with other communities of Christians, know that Jesus is the lens through which we view the entire Bible. Jesus is the one who summarized all that God wants of us in two simple statements: "Love God," and "Love your neighbor." For Jesus that about sums it up.

Dr. Donald Haynes wrote an article for the *Methodist Reporter*. I want to share some of it with you here:

When I was a 20 year old I was a biblical literalist who knew a lot of scripture verses that I would use as weapons to "send you to hell in a New York minute." One day I was given the opportunity to hear Dr. E. Stanley Jones speak. He arguably was the most saintly Methodist of the 20th century, a graduate of Asbury Seminary who spent his life in India. That night, as he spoke, he carried his Bible in his hand. At one point he lifted it into the air and said, "The Bible did not become printer's ink; it became 'flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.'" I did not sleep that night and by the next morning I had surrendered my Bible to God, vowing never to use it again as a weapon, but instead as a lifeline to "rescue the perishing" and to "tell the poor wanderer a savior had died." My evangelistic creed ceased to be a litmus test of belief, but instead a calling to approach every person as a child

of God, knowing them as people "...down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter, feelings lie buried that grace can restore, touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness, chords that were broken can vibrate once more."

I hope that in our life together as a community gathered around the cross we might become a place where kindness is at home and judgment is cast aside, because in our imperfection we might declare a child for whom Jesus died as not worthy of our concern.

The world needs more kindness and understanding. It needs the kind of welcome and regard Jesus shows us for the outcasts and those with whom the world is not comfortable. So we open the doors of Jesus' home and celebrate the love that found each of us, the love that sends each of us out of church to be the church. That's pretty exciting stuff.

In hope,
Pastor Kohl



Pastoral Acts

Marriage:

- Wesley Dean Johnson & Krisztina Moldovan

Funerals:

- Karen Vespia
- Stewart White, Sr.
- Susan Pigeon*
- Robert McFarlane
- James Longley
- Vivian Wilmot
- Beatrice P (Baker) Pajak

The kids in Confirmation will be taking part in the **Synod Youth Gathering** in September. It will be held at Camp Calumet. The cost per attendee is \$78 for room and board for the weekend. We need to know the number who will be going. The kids will be doing some fund raising projects both here at Pilgrim and at St. Paul. Please support them. If you would like to provide scholarship for them, please speak with Pastor Kohl or Tammy McLaughlin.

Congratulations to Allie Murphy



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Alexandra K. Murphy graduated from basic training in Texas. Allie is the daughter of Michelle and Gary Murphy, the sister of Kevin Murphy, and granddaughter of Martha Murphy. Allie graduated from Pilgrim High School in 2010 and earned a Bachelor's degree from Rhode Island College in 2014.

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.

GRADUATION



Congratulations to **Kevin G. Murphy**. Kevin graduated from Pilgrim High School on June 16th. He will study at Community College of Rhode Island this fall.

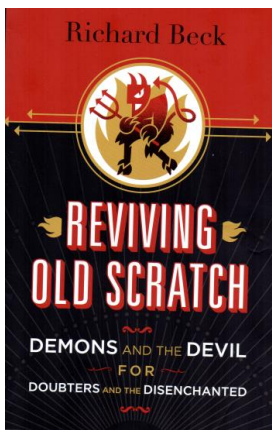
His book has three main sections:

- Part 1: Wickedness in High Places: Spiritual Warfare as Social Justice
- Part 2: To Destroy the Devil's Work: Spiritual Warfare beyond Social Justice
- Part 3: A Great Campaign of Sabotage: Spiritual Warfare for Doubters and the Disenchanted

This is a fresh look at “spiritual warfare” but it is not a trip through mystical or supernatural areas. Beck wants us to consider how our daily lives bring us into conflict with the forces of evil in our world.

The book is published by Fortress Press in their *Theology for the People* group. It is written for all of us to grow from. It might be something you could add to your summer reading list.

~ Pastor Kohl



Reviving Old Scratch: Demons and the Devil for Doubters and the Disenchanted

Richard Beck who wrote this book is a professor of psychology at Abilene Christian University in Texas. His published research work also covers topics as diverse

as the psychology of profanity and why Christian bookstore art is so bad. This, his newest book, gives thought to something Christians often don't bother to think about: the life of evil in our world.

Beck holds a Bible study at a local prison where he first gave thought to how evil controls and even defines the boundaries of life. It was at the prison he learned the name *Old Scratch* for the devil.

Many times Christians think of evil only in institutional manifestation and think of social justice as the main way of encountering evil in our world. Beck expands that understanding.



Congratulations to Lisa Ferry

Lisa was awarded Employee of the Year at Kent County Hospital in May. She is a registered nurse working in Outpatient Infusion. Lisa has worked at Kent Hospital since 1982. Her faith and

concern for others shines through her work as she serves others. Lisa is a member of our choir and adult study group. It's always great to see her smile.