



Pilgrims' Progress



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

**January's Progress Deadline:
Thursday, December 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.

From Our Pastor

Dear Fellow Pilgrims:

From time to time I have been asked to serve as a chaplain in the resident camping section at Calumet. I really enjoy that. I think the kids think of me more like a grandfather than a friend, and that's fine with me.

I remember one summer when at the evening worship time I asked the kids what heaven sounded like. At first they looked at me like I had asked them the most stupid question in the world. There is an ancient tradition within the church that the sound of heaven is silence. Then I asked them all to try to be silent for fifteen seconds. And they did. They heard the sound of the lake water lapping outside Luther Hall and they heard sounds of crickets and birds, but in the space there was silence.

The next night I asked them to be silent for 30 seconds and the next night for 45 seconds, and finally we got up to a minute of silence. It was awesome: imagine a few hundred kids from about 7 years old through teenagers in the same building all being silent together. I know it was hard for some of those kids, but I also learned from some of them how much they enjoyed keeping silence.

What about you? Do you find times for silence in your life? I know that I have to be intentional about it. Silence is not something that surrounds us very much anymore. There's always something to listen to or say, there's always some kind of sound that can be a distraction for us. I know keeping silence can be difficult, but it is a discipline worth learning.

There are times in our worship when silence has its place. It is the right thing at times when we need to reflect on our lives, such as in the office of confession and forgiveness. It is the right thing to do following the Eucharist. That is a time to consider the great gift God has just given us. You may notice that a small space of silence is kept before all our prayers. This is so we can find a space to focus on what we are asking for.

I have a hard time keeping silence. In high school I was usually the guy the teachers had to tell to stop talking. So I work on finding and keeping silent. I need to work on keeping my mind from running on to all kinds of ideas and thoughts that seem to have no connection to one another. I've discovered that being intentional about focusing on silence helps me to do it better. When I let those stray thoughts and ideas dissipate rather than trying to force them out of my conscience, this is a way to honor them without giving them a central place in my life and thoughts.

So why bother to be concerned with silence? It is in silence that we may well hear God speaking to us through new understandings about ourselves, both our strengths and our areas for growing. It is in silence that we find refreshment. It is in silence that we come to discern what is most important in our lives.

So I hope that when we keep those periods of silence in worship that they may be blessings for you. And I also hope that they might inspire you to seek a time and place in your daily life for quiet, reflection, and prayer.

Life pulls us many directions. God is calling us all into a closer connection to God, but if all we hear is the noise of life, we will most likely miss that call.

In hope,



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.

We need your help! We're looking for volunteers to serve as Assisting Ministers, Communion Assistants, Ushers, and Greeters. If you are able to help with these important ministries, please sign up on the sheets posted on the bulletin board outside the office or contact the office at 739-2937.

Pastoral Acts:

Funerals:

- Marjorie Lunt
- Phyllis Wheeler*
- Teresa Scarano
- Ruth Bates
- Julie Morris
- Karlheinz "Karl" Rouillier

*Member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church

The next **Congregation Council meeting** will be held on Thursday, December 15, at 7:00 p.m.



2016/2017 Sunday School Schedule of Special Events (Revised):

- December 18 - Christmas Pageant at 9:30 service
- December 25 - Christmas Day (no Sunday School)*
- January 1 - Happy New Year! (no Sunday School)*
- February 19 - Family Sunday*
- April 16 - Easter*
- May 14 - Mother's Day*
- May 28 - Family Sunday*
- June 11 - Church Picnic

*Please bring your children to worship

Thank You

Many thanks to all the people who helped to make the Fall Festival fun and successful.

Christmas at Pilgrim Church 2016



Christmas lasts 12 days and begins on December 24th at sundown. In celebration of Christmas there are some traditional things to be aware of.

Our **Sunday School Pageant** will be presented on **Sunday, December 18, at the 9:30 service**. This is a simple retelling of the ancient story of how God has come among us in vulnerability and gentleness. This service always brings a sense of joy and delight to the whole congregation.

On **Christmas Eve** there will be two services this year. **The first will be at 5:00**. This is a time designed for the young at heart. **The second service will be at 10:00** that evening. The choir will be present at that service. Both these services will include candles as well as Holy Communion.

On **Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25**, we will hold only **one service at 9:00**.

The following **Sunday, January 1, 2017** we will again have **one service at 9:00**. There are some changes in our schedule this year, so please take note of that. And we hope that **Advent** serves as a time of preparation for the joy of knowing that we have a Savior in Jesus Christ.

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is up and waiting for your donations of hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves to help the needy of St. Michael's in Providence to keep warm. Many thanks. – Karin Kohl

The Adult Class on **Honoring Our Neighbors' Faith** meets on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. We will be studying about various denominations of Christians, various world religions, as well as some sects and cults. There will be opportunities for speakers and field trips. The following week's topic will be posted on the church bulletin board.

We need your help:



We need a treasurer. Our good and faithful treasurer, Bill Brinson, has been serving for many years in that office. He has asked to be replaced, and the council would like to honor Bill's request. Our Constitution defines the office of Treasurer as follows:

The treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the congregation; receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the congregation from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such monies in the name of the congregation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with these bylaws and in general perform all of the duties incident to the office of treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the president or by the Congregation Council.

If you or someone you know would be interested in being considered for this position, please let Pastor Kohl or Pete Mahoney know of your interest.

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 send your envelope to the church office to the attention of the Altar Guild. Christmas Poinsettia envelopes can be found in the pews and on the table in the narthex.

The Christmas 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 18.

Altar Flower Dedications

Sunday, December 11, and Sunday, December 18, are 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!

Longest Night Service Wednesday, December 21



Longest Night Service

While Christmas is a time with much joy and happiness for many people, it is not always easy for people having a rough time in life. When we lose a loved-one or face difficulties that seem overwhelming we need to know that we are not alone. Pilgrim Church will host a Longest Night Service for folks who might need to be with others at a hard time in their lives. Literally the longest night of the year in 2016 is December 21, the winter solstice. We will gather with prayer and song and candles to remember or to know that we are not alone in our sadness or struggle. Invite a friend who might be having a rough year. This is a service of hope in the midst of sadness, of fellowship in the midst of loneliness. Following the service we will have a period of refreshment and fellowship. And even if this has been a great year and your life is filled with happiness, come and be a blessing to someone else.



If you're moving, please let us know.
We'd like to keep in touch.