



Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
April 2017

**May's Progress Deadline is
Saturday, April 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 Friends,

Some of you are aware that I was at Camp Calumet for a week in March. I went to an icon writing retreat. (Icons, the pictures of holy people which are traditional in the Eastern Orthodox Churches, are "written" not painted.) The icon we did was of Julian of Norwich (c.1342-c.1416). She was an anchoress, a person who lived in the same place for most of her life. In fact, Julian spent her life locked in a room attached to the side of a church. She had two windows, one looking out on the world, and the other looking into the church so she could be at mass and receive Holy Communion.

The week got me thinking about anchoresses and anchorites: people who make a commitment to be present at the same location for a long period of time. The commitment of being in place for a long time is not unlike a marriage. In that kind of commitment we grow as individuals through the gifts, as well as the rough times, life brings to us. There is something very important about commitment to people, places, or projects.

On April 15 and 16 we will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord, Easter. In one way Easter can be seen as God's commitment to the human family. On Good Friday the

political and religious authorities thought they had finally gotten rid of this pesky rabbi from Galilee. They crucified Jesus and made sure that he had died. He was placed in a tomb and sealed up there. End of story?

Not at all. This anchorite, Jesus of Nazareth, continued his commitment to the human family. He continued to be present for his followers. And that commitment was not just for the 50 days following the resurrection that he was among his friends about 2000 years ago. Jesus' commitment to be present continued down through the centuries. You see, nothing could bring a wedge between Jesus and his people, not even death or the works of the evil one. The commitment of God to us in Jesus Christ is greater than any other force in the world. As Paul writes in the letter to the Romans: there is nothing in all of the creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:39)

Now that's a commitment we can all trust. It is a promise made by the one who lives through the Holy Spirit among us as the church, the billions of Christians who have lived and served and forgive others. That is where Jesus can be found in our world today.

This month we celebrate the holiest days of our life with God. From April 9 through April 16 we walk with Jesus through the last week of his earthly life, and on Easter Day we celebrate the surprise God had in mind: life with no more death or, as Paul writes to the Corinthians, death is swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15:54)

In this life our time is transitory. We cannot be anchoresses or anchorites in this world. But because of our faithful savior we will come to that place where there is no more

death, no more goodbyes, because death will be no more. Easter is the promise of our home with God. We see it every time we gather with sisters and brothers in worship and discover that Jesus himself is truly present with us in the bread and wine, his body and blood.

In hope,

Paster Kohl

Pastoral Acts:

Funerals:

Ethel Helma Elvira Griffen
Martin Donohue
Donald Peters
Logan James Fulks
Samuel H. Moore
Merrill McElroy*

*Member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Year-to-Date Financial Report:

Income	\$34,867.03
Expenses	\$39,480.25

We are having the annual Sunday School egg hunt and Easter party on

Saturday, April 8, from 10-12. Please bring a goodie to share! Also, there will be plastic eggs in bags in the narthex.



Please return filled eggs to church or bring with you to the party.

The children will be singing an Easter song at the 10:15 service on Easter Sunday!

Holy Week and Easter 2014

This is the central time in the life of the people of God in Jesus. Please make worship a priority during this season. In worship, we both experience and remember all that God has done for our salvation and for our life.

Maundy Thursday, April 13

7:00 p.m. Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 14

12:00 p.m. The Way of the Cross

7:00 p.m. The Way of the Cross

Saturday, April 15

Dusk The Great Vigil of Easter

Followed by a time of fellowship

Easter Day, April 16

The Resurrection of Our Lord

Holy Communion

8:30 a.m. Holy Communion

10:15 a.m. Holy Communion

Altar Flower Dedication

Over the past year, flower dedications have decreased significantly. Did you know that if no one sponsors the altar flowers, the Altar Guild must absorb that expense of \$60/week? We believe those funds could be better spent for our annual college scholarship or to purchase communion supplies, linens or other items used to beautify the altar.

PLEASE consider supporting the altar flowers. The cost is \$30 and the dedication can be in memory of someone or in honor of a birthday, wedding anniversary or another special accomplishment.

Envelopes are available in the narthex. If you have any questions about flower dedication, please contact Pat Frazier at 941-7656.

Worship Postures and Gestures

As Lutherans we are people of the Word. Like most Christians we variously sit and stand at our worship services. We sit to hear God's word being read to us from the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. We also sit as the Pastor expounds upon the day's readings in the sermon, giving insight into how they might speak to us in our daily lives. We sit for the offering, the anthem, and the announcements. We differ from some of our Protestant friends in that we stand for the reading of the Gospel. We stand out of respect, because the Gospel reading is one of the places that Jesus specifically comes into our midst as both teacher and Savior. We also stand to sing, being on our feet when we are able, to praise God with our whole being in song. When people are so moved they might even clap or move to the words and the rhythm. We stand, too, for the singing of the liturgy, not passively, but as active participants actors in the drama of our salvation. We sing for God's mercy for our wrongs. We glorify God with a hymn of praise. We sing "Holy, Holy, Holy" to the One who has come to and for us in the name of the Lord, and we proclaim him the Lamb of God. We stand humbly before God in prayer, echoing the petitions and pleas of the Assisting Minister who leads us, confidently believing that our prayers will be heard and answered.

We do a lot of sitting and standing as Lutherans, but in a gradual return to both our Lutheran and early Christian roots, we have come to appreciate their heritage in a more active way. As Lutherans, we are people shaped by the incarnations of God coming in the person of Jesus to be flesh and blood with us and for us. So bodies are important, not just mind and spirit. We are blessed, even if not equally so, to have senses. Our eyes delight in the worship space itself with its rich vestments and altar paraments, in candles, flowers, and stained glass. Our ears delight in the singing of the choir and the varied tones of the organ. We touch the waters in the font, perhaps making the sign of

the cross across our bodies in remembrance of our baptisms. We greet our neighbor with a handshake or hug, wishing him or her God's peace. We take and taste of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in bread and wine.

We do not worship alone, but in community with our neighbor and with all those who have special roles in the liturgy. We use not only words, but gestures to communicate between ministers and people, ministers and God, people and God, and people and people. Near the beginning of the liturgy, the Pastor spreads out his arms and opens his hands in greeting to the congregation. The congregational response, "and also with you," might also be accompanied by greeting the Pastor back with outstretched arms and upturned palms. This posture is used again for prayer, only this time with arms lifted up. It is an ancient posture representing the words, "let my prayers rise before you as incense." This posture is called by its Latin name-'orans'.

Finally, as a Pilgrim people, we journey, we walk. The choir and special participants in the liturgy process to the front of the worship space, often bowing before the altar as a sign of respect. Bowing may be done in other places in the service, for instance at the Holy, Holy, Holy in gratitude for our God and for the Son God gave for our salvation. And also when the Pastor raises the elements it is appropriate to bow as a sign of humility and thankfulness for God's forgiveness and grace. At the end of the liturgy, the choir, pastor, and others process out of the Church following the processional cross. We in the congregation turn to follow it always keeping our eyes on the cross. It is appropriate during this time to bow and/or make the sign of the cross as the cross passes by. There is a pause at the door for the dismissal which sends us out into the world to love and serve the Lord. Our "thanks be to God" is the Amen that sends us on our way as "little Christs" into the day-to-day living of our week.

The gestures and postures talked about above are not essential to worship life. Luther called these non-essentials “adiaphora” (a Greek word meaning neither essential nor forbidden). However, the use of these things can enhance both individual and communal worship, so that our worship in God’s presence is not through our mind and spirit alone, but through our bodies too, bodies that God wonderfully made and glorified in God’s Son.

--Karin Kohl

The next **Congregation Council meeting** will be held on Thursday, April 20, at 7:00 p.m.

Worship Servers are needed for **Easter Sunday, April 16**. There will be two services – one at 8:30 a.m., the other at 10:15 a.m. The sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board outside the church office. Please volunteer. Thank you.

The Adult Class on **Honoring Our Neighbors’ Faith** meets on Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. We are 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.



Karen Gustafson's book Unmindful Negligence discussion will meet on Thursday, April 6 at 7 PM in the parlor. For April we meet the first Thursday because of Holy Week services.

Altar Guild

The altar guild of our church has the responsibility of preparing our worship spaces for services and delivering altar flowers to our shut-ins. For several years, we have struggled to maintain an adequate membership and although we always welcome new members, there are ways that you can help us without actually committing to regular duty. Here are a few of the opportunities that are available.

***DECORATING:** We will be decorating the church for Easter on Saturday, April 15th, at 10am. Spring plants will be purchased at Yardworks and used to beautify the altar. Please join us to learn a little more about what we do.

***FLOWER DELIVERY:** Each week, after the 9:30am service, we deliver two floral arrangements to shut-in members of our church community. If you would like to help with deliveries, please speak to a guild member after service, as they are closing the altar. It’s a very rewarding task and an opportunity to spread some joy to those who are unable to join us at church.

***PALL:** When a member of our church passes and a funeral service is held at the church, we offer a pall ceremony. A large, embroidered cloth is placed over the casket before it enters the sanctuary and is removed afterwards. This is a wonderful way to honor our members as they leave their earthly home. These events usually take place in the morning on week days, when most of our members are working. The procedure is easy to learn, requires at least 4 people and approximately 2 hours of your time. This is a great way for stay-at-home moms and seniors to contribute to the church.

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.



Pilgrim Church welcomes new members on Sunday, April 9. If you would like to be a part of the ministry we are called to do, please let Pastor Kohl know. Send him an email at pastor@pilgrimlutheranri.org or give him a call with any questions. (401-739-2937).



Sunday, April 9, the kids of our congregation will be hosting a pancake breakfast. The proceeds from this breakfast are planned for the congregation's ministry. A little later this spring, they will host another pancake breakfast to raise money for the Hammonasett Weekend in the fall. These breakfasts are great fellowship and the proceeds all go to help others. Please come and please be generous.

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.



United Lutheran Seminary is the consolidation of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, one seminary on two campuses and offering a new creative competency based curriculum and unprecedented levels of financial aid (full tuition to eligible ELCA full-time students).

There have been two seminaries in Pennsylvania for over a century. The Gettysburg Seminary was founded in 1826 to begin educating pastors for the Lutheran Church in the United States. The founder was Samuel Simon Schmucker. He also began Pennsylvania College (today Gettysburg College) to prepare people for a seminary education.

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia was founded in 1864 by Charles Porterfield Krauth. The Philadelphia Seminary was founded because of teaching at the Gettysburg Seminary which some thought had made too many concessions to American culture, seeking ways to blend Lutheranism with American Protestant Churches. The strong confessional identity of the first pastor to organize a synod in the US, Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, (1711-1787) was the impetus for this seminary's existence.

After years of discussion and several attempts at uniting these two schools, the dream of one seminary has finally come into being. The faculty will be made up of some of the members from the faculties of each of the schools. One of the best features of this new school will be free tuition for members of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) who study for service in the church.