



# Pilgrims' Progress



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

**August's Progress Deadline is  
Saturday, July 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 Our Pastor**

Dear Friends,

If you read the editorial and letter pages of *The Providence Journal* recently, you might have noticed a lot of letters about faith and churches. There are always those whose fear of people of other religious beliefs show forth, but I've been thinking about how often Christians raise concerns about our own faith.

A recent letter declared that by about 2050 there will be no Roman Catholic priests left in Rhode Island because so few men are entering their priesthood. I don't know if that is accurate or not, but I do know that within our own denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, there are a great number of pastors who will be retiring and not sufficient people becoming pastors. We might be facing the same problem the Roman Church is having.

In one of the letters to the editor, the author wrote that Jesus only ordained men and therefore, to be faithful to Jesus, only men can serve as priests. I think the author had it wrong. While there is no place in the New Testament that says Jesus ordained anyone, there are stories of the time Jesus sent the twelve apostles out to preach his message to others. And there is another time Jesus sent seventy people out to do the same. These

seventy people were not all male, there must have been women among them.

And then there is the first apostle sent to proclaim the good news of the resurrection: Mary Magdalene. If anyone can be considered an apostle (a word that means "sent"), Mary must be included among them.

One of the reasons Christians were considered suspect in the Roman world following Jesus was that these early Christians did not follow the social norms of the day. Women and men had equal standing in the early church. This was radical stuff! But remember what Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians, a church that thought that keeping the Old Testament traditions and festivals was necessary to be true to God: *Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law {Old Testament requirements} until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.*

-Galatians 3:23-29.

To follow Jesus is to no longer see dividing lines between humans, all those things which we use to make ourselves seem special have no place in how we view life. In fact, we see the whole human family to be sisters and brothers.

And to take that one step further, we see one another in the priesthood of all believers. Every one of us stands before God with opportunities to serve God and equal opportunities to serve one another.

In hope,



**Pastoral Acts:**

**Baptisms:**

Sullivan John Greene  
Ellora Grace Hendrickson

**Funerals:**

Raymond Arey  
Dorothy Graf  
Joseph C. Carle, Sr.  
Arthur Osborne III  
Arthur & Nanci McMahan  
Grace Morse Scott  
John B. Mayall\*  
Marjorie A. Lacoursiere



Every year the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) calls on its congregations to

hold a Sunday in which the congregation does something to serve its neighbors. Pilgrim Church will observe this day on Sunday, September 17, 2017. But we need your help to do it. If you know of projects that we might do in our communities, please let Pastor Kohl know. Send them by email or writing (he forgets a lot!) to be shared with our congregation council.

In the past we have made sandwiches for CrossRoads in Providence, helped clean part of Oakland Beach, and sang for folks in a memory unit at a local assisted living facility. Since this is a project of our whole congregation, share your ideas.

**Altar Flower Dedications**

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.

**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.

**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.

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



## Adult Classes

I don't want to sound like a wet blanket, but soon it will be September. Our Sunday School and Confirmation programs are being developed for the coming school year, but our adult classes still need to be identified and shaped. So, I will ask you to let me know what you might be interested in studying. Here are a few possibilities:

Because it is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the posting of Luther's 95 theses for debate regarding the sale of indulgences, we might continue considering Luther's impact on us as a community of Christians. We could use a new 7-session course on *The Small Catechism*. You hear me talk about it a lot in classes and sermons; this might be a way to meet or re-meet the Catechism.

We could spend time reading and discussing some book or section or type of literature in the Bible. Let me know which book or topic you might want to know more about.

How about an open discussion about some part of our life together: why do we do what we do in worship or as we come to the Bible?

Is there a book you would like to read together?

Any other ideas are welcome.

The reason why we have adult education is because, as we grow, our questions and ways of seeing things grow. None of us learned everything we needed to know to be mature, adult followers of Jesus. But another important reason to study together is that we learn from one another and our faith journeys in life. To put that another way, again, as I have often said, "We are all theologians."

Education becomes a way for fellowship which helps us to grow as a community of Christians.

Please give this some thought and prayer and let me know what you would find helpful, faith-building, and a blessing for your future.

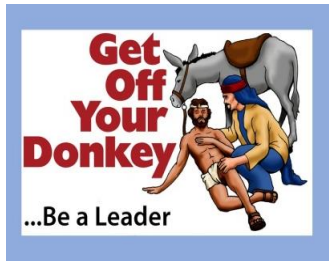
~ Pastor Kohl

**The Property Committee** is emptying the trophy case next to the entrance to the Christian Life Center. The trophies will be put on a table in the Christian Life Center and anyone who would like one is free to take it. **We would like to solicit some creative volunteers from the congregation to take ownership of the case** with new displays. Examples could include PLC memorabilia/photos, Reformation 500 year anniversary, church seasons/holidays (e.g. Pentecost, Advent). Please contact Susan Simundson if you are interested in taking on this project.

**Coming in October: a reprise of the Life of Luther**, a lighthearted look at the story of the reformer. So, if you are interested in taking part as an actor, stage designer, lights or sound, or cooking for this delightful dinner theater, please let Mary Brinson know. It will be a lot of fun and a good opportunity to learn more about this man whose name is on the signs in front of the church.



The **Coffee Hour Committee** is looking for a member(s) or family to make, serve, and host the coffee hour after the Sunday service. You would only be required to do this once a month and would be trained on how to do this. If interested, please contact Janet & Roy Wagner at 737-7871. Thank you for your consideration!



The New England Synod Assembly was held on Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10, in Springfield, Massachusetts. Voting members from Pilgrim Church were Lisa and Mike Ferry who were elected at our annual meeting in January. A few items of business were discussed, but much of the assembly centered on workshops or information sessions about issues congregations or individuals are facing or are curious about.

One item of decision was that we would be a "Sanctuary Synod." Here are the resolutions that came from this discussion:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we as the New England Synod of the ELCA declare ourselves to be a Sanctuary Synod in opposition to policies of massive deportation of undocumented immigrants.

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod, as a Sanctuary Synod, coordinate and draw upon resources from local and national sanctuary movements as well as immigrant rights groups such as LIRS, the Matthew 25 Movement, Sanctuary Not Deportation, the Southwest California Synod, etc., in order to enhance our efforts in education, organizing, advocacy and direct actions to promote the safety and well-being of the undocumented community and, be it further

RESOLVED that the congregations, institutions and ministries of the New England Synod be encouraged to become sanctuary communities providing refuge and pastoral support for those at risk of deportation as well as advocacy in defense of immigrant rights and, be it further

RESOLVED that the New England Synod assist in equipping our congregations, institutions and ministries to engage in these expressions of sanctuary, appropriate to local contexts, capacity and discernment.

RESOLVED that the New England Synod calls upon the Congress of the United States to create and adopt a pathway to citizenship for all lawful and undocumented immigrants now living in the United States.

Another important item which took lengthy conversation was the "Compensation Guidelines for Rostered Leaders." This document is designed to help congregations shape fair compensation for ordained and consecrated (deacons) workers in their care. A detailed copy of this approved document is available upon request from our church office.

If you have more questions, please contact Lisa or Mike Ferry or Pastor Kohl.

The next *Unmindful Negligence* discussion will be held on Thursday, September 14, at 7:00 p.m.



**Dear Friends and Members of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,**

There are times when it would be a great help to be able to be in touch with our members quickly. I would like to have the structure to do a group mailing to all members. Please email the church office with your email address to be able to include you in keeping current with what is happening at or involving Pilgrim Church. Even if we already have your email address, please respond to this notice. That will help us stay current and know that you would like to be included in a group mailing. To help make it a bit easier for us, please use "group mailing" as the subject of your email. Please send your information to [pastor@pilgrimlutheranri.org](mailto:pastor@pilgrimlutheranri.org). Many thanks!  
-- Pastor Kohl

