



Pilgrims' Progress



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

**January's Progress Deadline is
Friday, 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.

OUR STAFF

Pastor

The Rev. Dennis Kohl

Minister of Music

Denis Brunelle

Treasurer

Laurie Linden

Financial Secretary

Cindy Cote

Sexton

Adam Kohl

Parish Assistant

Laurie Connors

Actually Advent is a time rich in personalities and in meaning. Advent begins not just four weeks before Christmas but on the Sunday closest to the day of St. Andrew (November 30). Just as he was the first of Jesus' apostles called to ministry, so too he leads the church in its ministry of making real the truth of the good news of forgiveness and welcome we see in the birth of Jesus. Andrew is the brother of Simon Peter.

On December 6 we have what is called the "little Christmas," the day we remember St. Nicholas who died on December 6 in 343. In some traditions that is the day small gifts are given to church in honor of Nicholas, a bishop from Myra in modern day Turkey. Nicholas is considered the patron saint of sailors, merchants, archers, repentant thieves, children, brewers, pawnbrokers and students. In a gruesome tale, Nicholas was credited with restoring life to some children. Consequently he is the figure from whom the modern day Santa Claus evolved.

December 13 is dear to people of Swedish background. It is the day of St. Lucia. She served people with a crown of candles on her head so she could bring food to Christians in hiding in tombs in the darkness. She is remembered for her kindness and willingness to serve those in need.

We also meet John the Baptizer in our Sunday readings. Traditionally he is thought of as Jesus' cousin. His ministry was a call to repentance, to preparing for the coming of God's anointed one, Jesus. He challenges people to think about what is selfish in their lives. He calls us to consider how we can be more generous in our lives. We also meet his mother, Elizabeth, when the Virgin Mary goes to visit her during their mutual pregnancies.

From Our Pastor

Dear Fellow Pilgrims:

I know the world rushes to Christmas. Just look at the stores, drive around your neighborhood at night, put on the radio. Christmas is everywhere, except at church.

While the church might be decorated for the holiday, we still have four Sundays of Advent, a time when people itch to sing Christmas carols at worship and wonder why the Christmas trees are not yet lit. While people want to rush to what is festive (Easter is another holy day that gets rushed), the church knows there is value in waiting, in being patient. And so we keep Advent as a time of quiet remembering and patient waiting for the good news of the Incarnation.

Finally we encounter Mary, the mother of Jesus. She is the one God chose to give flesh to God's Word in the birth of Jesus. Mary was a simple girl, not one of power or attention-getting attributes. But because of her humility and acceptance and trust in God, she becomes the means for salvation to come into the world, and, as Martin Luther often wrote, the example for us of what Christians should be, what the church should be.

So Advent is filled with saints who call us to consider our lives and how we prepare for the gift of grace that Christmas brings. I hope your Advent holds some time for quiet and reflection before we break forth in the joy of the birth of Christ.

By the way, remember this: while Christmas begins at sundown on December 24, it continues for twelve days until January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.

I know, the church does things differently than the world, but it is a difference that enables us to remember that while we are in the world, we are not of the world. As followers of Jesus we walk a different path from others, one that brings life and healing into God's world.

Blessed Advent, joyous Christmas!

Paster Kohl

Pastoral Acts

Baptism:

Finn Ronald Leo Olivera

Marriages:

John Manuel Mello & Karla Marie Andrews
Safford

Funerals:

James T. Doyle*

Dorothy Charlton*

Patricia Ann Cole

Harriet E. Hultenius

Stephen D. Flynn

*Member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Advent and Christmas Services

The season of Advent begins on Sunday, December 3, and runs through Sunday, December 24. The 9:30 services on those days will be Advent services. However, please note, on **December 24** we will hold **only one morning service at 9:00.**

Also on December 24 in the evening we will hold our **first Christmas services at 5:00 and 10:00.** These will both be candlelight services with carols and Holy Communion.

Mitten Tree



The Mitten Tree will be going up in December. We ask for donations of mittens, hats, and scarves. These will benefit the people of St. Michael's Church in South Providence. Thank you for helping people in need to stay warm.

Christmas Boxes

The Food Pantry will be putting together special boxes for Christmas. Any help from the congregation would be greatly appreciated. We also would like special Christmas candy or cookies, candles, and calendars (many charities send them out during this time). Thanks so much.

Inclement weather

As winter comes there may be times when we need to reschedule or cancel services at Pilgrim Church. There are several sources for you to learn about service schedules. We will post changes through the Rhode Island Broadcasters Association. These are the notices you see on TV or hear on the radio. We also will publish any changes on our Facebook page, on our web page (www.pilgrimlutheranri.org) and on the telephone message in the office 401-739-2937.



Longest Night Service

Thursday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.



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 2017 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.

The Altar Guild will be decorating the church for Christmas on Saturday, December 2, at 10:00 a.m.

Confirmation classes for students seventh grade or older began on Tuesday, September 19. If you have questions about the program, please speak with Pastor Kohl or Tammy McLaughlin. Following is the schedule for December.

- December 5 - Class (Meal)
- December 12 - Class (Meal)
- December 19 - Caroling (No Meal)
- December 26 - No School

First Communion Classes begin on Sunday, December 3, after the 9:30 service. There will also be classes on December 10 and December 17. All are welcome.



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 17**.

Save time and money on wrapping paper!



Give a gift you can't wrap to that person who has everything and needs nothing more. Through our church's **Good Gifts** program you can buy a gift in honor of someone and let them know you did it. The list is varied from goats and honey bees to health care to Bibles and churches and fresh water. The good gift tree is up at church, and cards are available to let people know of your gift. Take an ornament and make a gift in honor or memory of your loved ones. Your Christmas gifts can make a world of difference and bring good news to people around the world.

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, December 24, 2017

That is the date for both the **Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve**. The schedule for worship at Pilgrim Church that Sunday will be **one morning service at 9:00 in the morning**. This will focus on the

texts and hymns for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. **In the evening at 5:00 and 10:00** we will celebrate the Incarnation of Christ, Christmas Eve. All services will offer Holy Communion and in the evening there will be candlelighting at both services.

The first Sunday of Christmas, December 31 we will return to our usual schedule of two services at 8:00 in the chapel and at 9:30 in the main church.

Our Sunday School has a special program during the service on December 17 at the 9:30 service. Please plan your worship accordingly.



The 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Church

Be sure to stop by the display case near the Christian Life Center to see the display about the Reformation. In words and pictures you can learn about the people, inventions, and art that brought about our understanding of the grace of God. Many thanks to all who worked on it.

Altar Flower Dedications



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.

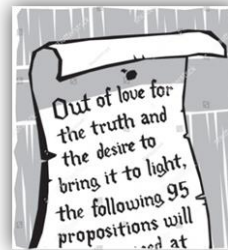
The Diane Fish Memorial Scholarship

The Altar Guild is assembling a committee to select a recipient of the 2018 Diane Fish Memorial Scholarship. We welcome your involvement as a committee member. The group is expected to meet less than four times this Spring before the end of May. If you can help, please contact the Altar Guild through Priscilla Angelo (Pris.Angelo@gmail.com or 401-921-2530).

The 2018 Scholarship application and information regarding the grant will be available in early winter with a May 1 due date; most colleges require students to make their decision of where to attend by May 1. Given higher education trends that impact students, the 2018 qualifications for this scholarship have changed. Pilgrim Lutheran Church men and women of any age may apply if enrolled full time in an accredited institution in the USA or abroad. This includes current high school seniors, former high school graduates anticipating freshman enrollment, and also upper class students currently enrolled in a college. Priority will be given to an applicant who has not received this scholarship in the past.

The Altar Guild wishes to thank again the Fish Family for their generous contribution over many years to support this scholarship in Diane's honor and also the work of the Guild.

Nailing things on churches has been a



Lutheran "thing" for 500 years. Pilgrim Lutheran Church is doing it also. You may have noticed the banner celebrating the 500 years of the Reformation on the front of the church building. These banners were created by Joanne Gunning. We want to tell folks around the city who we are and what's important to us.

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.



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. Many thanks!

~ Pastor Kohl