



Pilgrims' Progress



The Monthly News of the People of Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Warwick, Rhode Island
July 2018

**August's Progress Deadline is
Sunday, 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.

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

But I had always taken it for granted, that it would always be there, but a few years ago the gypsy moths chewed up much of its foliage and it did not survive. This summer it is completely bare and has no life in it, so it was time for it to come down. Basically it was not safe to have in our yard. Any branches that broke off would have been heavy enough to kill someone who would have been hit by them.

With the tree out of the yard there will be a whole different landscape. I know more sun will come into the yard and the moss that grows so well will not survive with the light. I also know that our house will be warmer in the summer and probably colder in the winter. Yes, things will be different, but this new landscape must come for the good of all. It's hard to lose an old friend, someone or even something, we assumed would always be there. You know what it is like, as do I, when we lose a loved one or when a friend moves away. Life is different, not necessarily worse, just different. We humans have a way of filling the losses life brings us with other blessings, and that is a part of how God created us. We are resilient and sometimes hopeful about the new that will come into our lives.

So Karin and I are talking about what we will put in the place of our old oak tree friend. I'm thinking a red maple, but that might be too different. Often it is a good thing to go out on a limb (no pun intended) to try something completely different and even out of the ordinary.

From Our Pastor

Dear friends,

It is June 21, the longest day of the year, and I find myself being a little sad. I am surprised at how sad I find the loss of an "old friend." Today we had to have a huge oak tree in the middle of our back yard taken down. The tree was at least 100 years old, and it has always been a part of our yard for the 25 years we have lived at 283 Lippitt Avenue. Our kids had a swing in that tree, that tree provided shade for our family over the years. The tree was there as a part of our daughter's wedding reception held in our yard. There are many memories that this tree brings to me.

Facing life's changes is not always easy. There is something bittersweet about change, saying good bye and realizing the blessings that we had and knowing that something new is on its way can be exciting. With a tree it's relatively easy, with a loved one, a family member, a pet, a close friend, it is not so easy. I think Karin and I (and maybe even our kids and grandkids) will talk a few days or maybe even months before we make our decision about what will be in the place of our old oak tree.

I have pictures of the tree to help me remember it better and more realistically. I know they will help the memories continue about what a gift that old tree was for our family. Knowing our blessings and opening ourselves to the future is what life is about. None of us can do this alone, and we don't need to. There is always someone who will be ready to answer questions we have and give advice in how to proceed in making decisions. All any of us need to do is face the fact that we need someone else to be with us along the way.

In hope,



Pastoral Acts:

Baptisms:

Grant Andrew Provost*
Sawyer Everett Provost*

Confirmations:

Alex Jackson*
Amber Moone*
Alana Resendes*

Funerals:

Ella Fish*
Marissa Napolitano

*Member of Pilgrim Lutheran Church



Congratulations to Caileigh Blackmer, the recipient of this year's Diane Fish Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship has been awarded by our Altar Guild for several years. Caileigh is the daughter of Tracey Lynch and Gary Blackmer. She graduated from Tollgate High School and will attend Emmanuel College in Boston this fall. There she plans to study biology. Caileigh wants to be able to help people through her work. We are all proud of her and wish her well in this next step in her life.



Congratulations Graduates!

On June 17, Daniel Cryan graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Science in biology, honors in marine biology. Congratulations to Dan!

Brandon Jackson graduated on June 21 from Army Basic Training. Congratulations, Brandon, and thank you for your service.

Jacob Resendes graduated from Pilgrim in the beginning of June. He's going to CCRI in the fall. Congratulations, Jacob!

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.



Saturday and Sunday, June 16 and 17, Pastor Kohl was with the people at Temple Ner Tamid in Peabody, Massachusetts at the invitation of Rabbi Perlman and the people of that temple. He preached at the Saturday service and spoke to the people about the Lutheran Church following the meal after the service. Then he spoke again on Sunday following the service that day. It is important for Christians to have relationships with Jewish people (and people of all other faiths) at this time. Having the chance to listen to and speak with people of another faith is always a time of growth.

Misusing the Bible



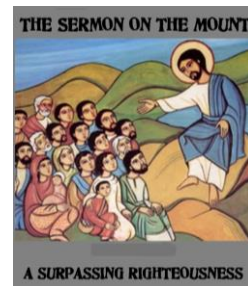
We heard it again in recent days how the Bible can be misused to justify something. This happens often when people pull one sentence or even a few words from the Bible and use that piece as a truth that is supposed to be a solid biblical tenet. Cherry-picking Scripture is misusing the Bible. If the Bible were to be a book of rules, each unrelated to others, that kind of use might be justifiable, but it is not allowing the Bible to be a means for God addressing us.

While Paul does write in Romans 13 that government exists by God's institution, Paul does not see government as above God's purpose, but rather as one tool God uses to bring about God's will. Reading just a little further in Romans, Paul also writes: "Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law." And in another passage in the Book of Acts Peter declares this to the authorities of his day: "We must obey God rather than any human authority." (Acts 5:29).

One of the Reformers, John Calvin wrote, "The human heart is an idol factory." He knows, as did Jesus, how easy it is for us to find something else in which to put our trust and loyalty. I suspect we do this because it puts us in control of who or what is running our lives, and we like to be in control. But by claiming that we decide what will be our god, our idol, we are actually putting ourselves in control. To be honest, just as with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, eating that fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we make lousy gods.

When we look at Scripture in the biggest view possible, we see that the message of the Bible is that the final victory belongs to God and God has a heart of compassion, especially for those who struggle and suffer. God's people are called to never be the reason for the suffering of others. We are called to stand with those with little or no power, the person considered "the other" or even thought of as our enemies. Read Matthew 5:43. It's part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

-Pastor Kohl



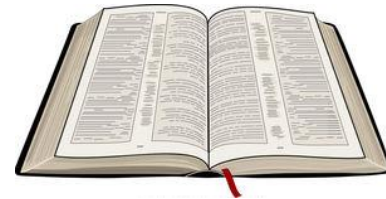
Hospitalized or Needing a Pastoral Visit?

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.

Summer is Here



Please remember the financial need of the congregation does not take time off. Remember to send in your weekly donations to help us through the summer months. You might think about signing up for the *Simply Giving* program in which your donations are drawn from your checking account. Call the church office (401-739-2937) for an application.



New Lectors Welcome

It is that time of year when our schedule of readers (Lectors) is being drawn up for the next year. Let the church office know if you would like to be included as a reader of God's word to the assembly on Sundays.

Communion Classes Continue



There are five students in our communion class this summer. The meetings will continue following the 9:30 services on July 1 and July 15. It's not too late to join. We meet in the parlor. Classes are

brief. Let Pastor Kohl know if you have someone you would like to include in our classes.

All Sundays Throughout 2018 are Available for 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? 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.

Confirmation Classes begin in September



We need to know if your student will be participating in the program in 2018-2019. The program lasts for three years and begins for kids in 7th grade. However, we welcome everyone who wants to learn more about faith and the difference it makes in living. Please let the church office know if you have someone who will begin confirmation preparation in September. Also watch the Sunday bulletin for more information.