

Pilgrim's Progress February 7, 2017 – Vol. 58 No. 2

As I shared in worship recently, the United Church of Christ has a new curriculum out called ***White Privilege Let's Talk: A Resource for Transformational Dialogue***. Pilgrim Church and Hancock Church will team up as the two UCC congregations in Lexington for this important dialogue. Rev. Paul Shupe, Rev. Barbara Callaghan, Devin Shmueli, and I will each take primary leadership of a class.

We'll meet on four consecutive Wednesdays in March (during the Holy Season of Lent.) Sessions will begin at 7 PM and will last until approximately 8:30 PM. Here are the topics:

- Wednesday March 8 at Hancock: The Spiritual Autobiography Told Through the Lens of Race
- Wednesday March 15 at Hancock: Whiteness as the Norm: Five Loci of Insights on the Binary of Light/Dark and Black/White
- Wednesday March 22 at Pilgrim: The Cash Value of Whiteness or Whiteness as a Tax-Exempt Status
- Wednesday March 29 at Pilgrim: On Becoming an Ally

In order to prepare for this Lenten adult education offering, we are asking for you to engage the curriculum before we even meet! It can be downloaded for free on the UCC website here:
<http://privilege.uccpages.org/#resources>.

Now you'll notice that the curriculum is broken up into Parts One-Four and Chapters within those Parts. If you would rather not read everything cover to cover, we're suggesting that you follow two authors throughout: Rev. John Dorhauer (General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ) and Rev. Traci Blackmon (Acting Executive Minister of the United Church of Christ's Justice and Witness Ministries.) This way, you can hear some reflections in each Part by authors with different perspectives without having to read every word of the 100+ page curriculum. (Though please note that the curriculum is engaging and well-written so if you would like to tackle it all—please do!) By the time we gather together for these sessions, our conversations will be richer if we can all commit to some of the reading.

If you are interested in being part of this important Lenten adult education offering you will need to sign up so that we know approximate numbers and can structure our classes accordingly!

Send me an email by February 24th (pastor@pilgrimcongregational.org) to please let me know if you would like to participate. If your schedule doesn't allow for attending all four sessions that's okay—just do the best you can. Looking forward to hearing from you.

See you in church,

Lauren

LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES

Ash Wednesday: Wednesday March 1

Ash Wednesday is the day the Holy Season of Lent begins--where we use ashes to observe the start of Lent in an intimate service in Pilgrim Hall. This year's service will feature Taize music throughout. *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return."*

Lenten Vespers Services: Save the Date!

During Lent this year, Dan and Rev. Lauren will offer five Lenten Vespers services on Tuesday evenings at 7 PM.

Save the Dates: **Tuesdays March 7, March 14, March 21, March 28, and April 4.**

Vespers is the sunset evening prayer service and is celebrated by Christians throughout the world. Sometimes called "keeping the daily offices" or "observing the divine hours," fixed-hour prayer (alongside honoring the Sabbath and celebrating Communion) is among the oldest and most authentic forms of Christian spiritual practice we have in our tradition. Come to pray, hear beautiful organ pieces, and receive Communion in our candlelit sanctuary. All are welcome, and that means you.

PILGRIM JOYS AND CONCERNS

- Nick Zorn asked for prayers for his Uncle Paul who is battling an aggressive cancer.
- We share in the joy and thanksgiving of Eleanor Smith's 90th birthday!!

A NOTE FROM ELEANOR SMITH

I wanted to thank all of you who have sent me birthday and get well cards, called, given flowers. I appreciate it so much and it means a great deal to me. Also, as of April 1, I will be moving to a new address:

Waltham Crossing
126 Smith St., Room 214
Waltham, MA 02451

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you soon!

Love,
Eleanor



COUNCIL ELECTION BALLOTS



If you are a member of Pilgrim Church and received an election ballot, please return it to the church as soon as possible. According to our bylaws, only ballots received by **February 15th** may be included.

You may put it in the collection plate on Sunday, mail it to the church, or put it in the office mailbox in the mail hutch on the right as you enter the church. Thank you!

DEVIN'S OFFICE HOURS

Due to his new semester schedule, Devin will now be holding open office hours on **Mondays from 5:30-7:00**. Previously, people have just popped in for a visit to talk church business, share stories, consider volunteering with Children's Church, or to have a bit of company. Please feel free to join Devin sometime! If you ever would like to visit him outside of those hours, e-mail him to schedule an alternative at: devin.shmueli@pilgrimcongregational.org!

CHURCH-WIDE BIBLE READING PROJECT

Each week, I will have copies of the Children's Story Bible available for all (and yes, I mean all!) to take home and borrow with a sheet that includes discussion questions and activities to consider during the week as time allows for you and yours. February will be spent focusing on the stories contained in our faith's early family tree in the Hebrew Scriptures. We'll read about Abraham and Sarah, Rebekah and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, as well as Joseph and his brothers. We'll be thinking about their contributions to our faith history and to our world today while reaching out to one another in our Pilgrim community to discuss these connections. We will consider the role of faithfulness in our lives: to God, to our families, and to our friends. We will contemplate the promises we make as well as the promises which are made to us. In March, we'll be thinking about the many, varied escapes from Egypt that have taken place in our scriptures. Questions or requests for stories, please e-mail devin.shmueli@pilgrimcongregational.org!

This week, we are reading about Abraham and Sarah which can be found in the book of Genesis. Our kids are very familiar with them, as we have reviewed their stories on several occasions, Abraham and Sarah are an elderly couple with a unique, miraculous story embedded in a promise and covenant with God that is still important today. We will be reading about Abraham and Sarah from Genesis 15:1-6, 17-18 in the Spark StoryBible which can be found on pages 30-33. While we refer to Abraham by the name changed to from Abram, this story refers to him as Abram still. You can learn more about Sarah and their name changes in the story to follow in the Spark StoryBible on pages 34-37.

Wondering Questions for All

What is God's promise to Abraham? What is the metaphor for family and future? What might a modern promise using metaphors look like? Have you ever made a promise using metaphor like God did in this story? What promises do you make? Pretend you are a reporter, which questions would you ask to God? To Abraham? What about Sarah (Abraham's wife)?

This Week's Challenge

During coffee hour or throughout the week, reach out to another church member or family and talk about the idea of promises. What do they mean? Share promises made to you as well as those you made to others. How might promises help you remain faithful? What have you learned about faithfulness this week?

SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION SESSION

On **March 19th at 1:00** in Pilgrim Hall, we will be hosting four camps for a fun and interactive information session about the local camps connected to our denomination, the United Church of Christ. This hour long information session will include:

- learning some traditional camp songs
- playing traditional camp games
- Snapshots and Q&A with representatives from the UCC camps in New England
- and an opportunity to get more information from each camp during a table session



You'll learn about kids camps, family camps, adult camps, art camps, and so much more. It will be a great time. To get a preview, of the different camps out there visit: <http://www.uccnecamps.org>. Refreshments will be provided!

RETIREMENT INVESTMENT STRATEGIES (WITH EMPHASIS ON THE EARLY ACCUMULATION PHASE) WITH JIM WOOD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH 7:30 - 9 PM

You are working hard now, with many different requirements making demands on your finances. On this evening, think about what your retirement needs are. Are you doing enough with retirement planning now for your future? Is your money growing at the right rate? Have you saved enough to take into account the effects of inflation on your lifestyle, our increased longevity, the uncertainties of the economy and financial markets, and taxes? Join Jim to better understand how to determine where you are and where you want to be in order to retire with financial confidence and peace of mind. Jim Wood is a Pilgrim Church Member and long term resident of Lexington, Massachusetts with interest in Town Governance (25 year Town Meeting member) and with a dedication to improving our environment, is currently a member of the Lexington Tree Committee. For more information or to rsvp, please contact Jim Wood at jamesewoodjr@rcn.com (781) 304-4284, or feel free to just show up that night! All are welcome!

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**Please note that any information and/or advice, either expressed or implied, in any member-sponsored event is solely the responsibility of the instructor.

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THE HEART OF NUBA FEBRUARY 12, 2017 AT 2 PM

The Heart of Nuba <http://www.theheartofnuba.com> is a film, telling the story of Dr. Tom Catena, a graduate of Brown University and its medical school, who has dedicated his life to the care of the Nuban people of Sudan. Single-handedly, Dr. Catena runs the Mother of Mercy Hospital in the Nuba Mountains, caring for those victims of the daily bombings ordered by the Sudanese dictator, President elBashir. This film and Q and A following it will be shown only once on February 12, 2017, at 2 p.m. in Rabb Hall at the Boston Public Library. It is free and open to the public, and sponsored by the MA Coalition to Save Darfur, the Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association, etc.

**SAVE THE DATE!
LET'S GO TO THE THEATRE!**

I propose that we go as a group to see **The Graduate** at the Arlington Friends of the Drama on afternoon of **Sunday, May 21 at 4 pm**. We would meet in Lexington and then carpool because parking can be difficult.

You would deliver a check for \$22 per seat to me by Monday, April 24th. I will purchase a block of seats. The cost is \$20 plus a handling fee for the group. (The seats are non-refundable.)

Questions? Email Sandy Gardiner at sandra.gardiner.02420@gmail.com.



**MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS
COLLECTING SHEETS, BLANKETS, TOWELS ETC.**

For many years we at Pilgrim have tried to help the homeless. We are now making it our mission to collect CLEAN USED OR NEW:

- Sheets
- Blankets
- Towels
- Pillow Cases
- Dish Towels
- Wash cloths, etc.

When it is possible to place a homeless person in a place of their own, they do not come with the basics needed to make it a home. It is our aim first focus on donating the items listed above because this is specifically what they need right now.

When you sort out your linen closet, please place what might be useful to others in a bag. Clearly label the bag: HOMELESS and place it on the shelf in the coat room. I will collect them and deliver Pilgrim Church's donation as soon as I have a carful.

Please email me if you have any questions:
sandra.gardiner.02420@gmail.com.





ALTAR FLOWER DATES AVAILABLE

A new year begins, and there are quite a few open dates available for altar flowers. If you would like to give them, get in touch with Beth Kurth or Diane Blair and get your name on the list! They are a great bargain at \$40 for a beautiful bouquet that you can take home after the service.

LITURGISTS, GREETERS, AND COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED TOO!

Thank you so much to those who participate in our service every week. As we continue through 2017 we need to fill the calendar once again. Please use [this link](#) to sign up to be a liturgist, greeter, or to host coffee hour.

Without all of you, our friendly welcome at the door, beautiful scripture readings during Worship and a delicious cup of coffee afterwards would never happen. Thank you for all you do to keep Pilgrim Church the special place that it is.



NEWS OF UCC SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND'S VOTE

January 24, 2017

Dear Colleagues in the Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences:

We write with joyous hearts to share the news that the Boards of Directors of our three conferences each voted unanimously and enthusiastically at a joint meeting on Saturday to support a resolution that would bring us together in a new Conference of the United Church of Christ!



Guided by the grace of God, we see a new Conference as our means to:

- affirm and strengthen the mission and alignment of our three UCC conferences;
- increase access of local churches to more resources and bear witness to people who have an impulse to make the world a better place;
- create and reimagine the church of the future as a vital organization with a distinct, recognizable voice; and
- increase our prophetic vision, expand beyond today's boundaries, and be the launch pad for a revived and strengthened progressive church in America

We have arrived at this recommendation after a period of discernment and numerous conversations. We believe that God is calling us into a new covenant together. We encourage you to **go to our Conference websites** to see further information and resources. We are including with this letter a copy of the Case Statement and the full text of the Resolution. We encourage you to discuss this proposal in your congregation and to be sure to have a full representation from your church present for our joint Annual Meeting this coming June.

When we gather on June 16 and 17, 2017 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford this resolution will be the basis of decision making by the three respective Conferences. If this resolution is approved by the Conferences then the proposal for the creation of the new Conference would be presented for approval at a joint Annual Meeting in June of 2018.

The Boards stand ready to answer questions, receive comments and speak on behalf of this resolution as we move towards a united mission and ministry. Please feel free to be in touch with us.

In faith,

Mark Engstrom, Chair of Board of Directors, Connecticut Conference
Vard Johnson, Chair of Board of Directors, Massachusetts Conference
George Peters, President, Rhode Island Conference

12th Annual Lexington Choral Festival

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH
★ 3:00 p.m. ★

FREE ADMISSION

Hosted by Hancock Church
1912 Massachusetts Ave, on the Green

Join us for a spectacular afternoon of choral music sung by various faith communities across Lexington: Christian, Jewish, Unitarian, and Hindu!

★ RECEPTION TO FOLLOW ★

Bhakti Center of Lexington
Church of Our Redeemer Episcopal
First Baptist Church
First Parish Unitarian Universalist

Hancock United Church of Christ
Lexington United Methodist Church
Pilgrim Congregational Church
Sacred Heart Catholic Church

St. Brigid Catholic Church
Temple Emunah
Temple Isaiah
Trinity Covenant Church

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

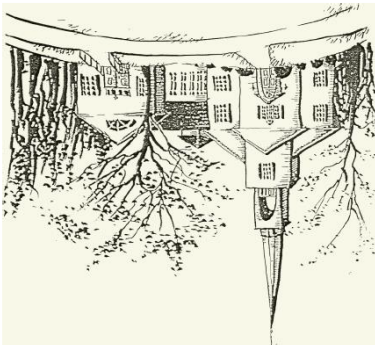
FEBRUARY 7, 2017

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Sunday Worship and Church School - 10:30am
Choir Rehearsals: Thursdays at 7:30pm

Rev. Lauren Lorincz, Pastor
Daniel Schmidt, Director of Music
Davin Shmueli, Director of Christian Education and Youth Ministries
Diane Blair, Church Secretary
Diane Murphy, Nursery Care Provider
Dan Conley, Church Sexton
Leslie Beatrice, Director of Pilgrim Nursery School



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