



PILGRIM

Congregational Church



*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom... Isaiah 35:1*

Dear Pilgrims,

Can you picture it? Can you imagine? Throughout the seven decades of this congregation's life, our members and friends have imagined what is possible through generosity and goodness. We have lived into a vision of a community of hospitality, service, and faith. We continue to look to the future, *imagining together*.

Our ministry and mission are so powerful. Think about just a few recent examples:

- Sunday School service projects that feed 50+ hungry people every month
- Choir, Pickup Choir, Instrumental Music, and hosting the Choir Festival
- Bible Study, coffee groups, crafternoons, and grief groups that bring together dozens of folks every week
- Our Solar Panels and commitment to climate action
- Carols and Cocoa for a Cause and other outreach events
- Our message of love and inclusion that reaches people all over our community

The ministry of our church is possible because of the generous financial and volunteer support of our community, and we are deeply grateful for this generous support. Imagine what we can do together in 2025! As we look forward to a new year of giving, we know that through our shared time, talent, and treasure, we can continue to grow as a church. **We hope you will join us in making a commitment to give this coming year.**

While there are many ways to support the congregation, in the coming weeks we ask everyone to think in a particular and prayerful way about the choices we make with our money in support of the church. If you're new to Pilgrim's stewardship process or would like to talk more, we'll have a light lunch and Q&A after church on October 27. RSVP for the luncheon to Welcome@pilgrimcongregational.org or reach out to any member of the stewardship committee. Our Stewardship Season will culminate in our Pledge Consecration as part of worship on All Saints Sunday, November 3. This year it would be tremendously helpful to receive pledges by this date so we can accurately plan for the year ahead!

Our committee has reviewed the church's narrative budget for 2025 (attached to this message). The gifts of saints past and present have helped Pilgrim Church to be in sound financial condition, and we are so grateful. You will see a slight deficit in the project 2025 budget, assuming the same pledging trajectory as recent years. But! If most pledge units increase their pledge by 5% and a small number of new pledges are received, we can keep our deficit to the same (very small) level of 2024's budget or possibly reach a balanced budget. We can *imagine together!*

God has done and continues to do remarkable things through us and with us – things that matter in our community! Gifts to our congregation help make this possible. We hope you will join us in turning in a commitment form with your estimate of giving for the coming year. **You can pledge online on our website at www.PilgrimCongregational.org > Learning Growing & Caring > Pledging for 2025.**

Thank you for walking alongside us as a part of Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC.

Gratefully,

Your 2025 Stewardship Committee -

David Nuss, Susan Carabbio, Michael Scott-Morton, Dave McClave, Jeff Boehm,
Rev. Reebee Girash



2025 Narrative Budget

TOTAL INCOME: \$321,388 (Pledges, Facilities and Fundraising)

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$330,283

Our expenses represent the costs of making possible all that we do as a congregation. Church Council has received this 2025 budget for review.

Worship and Spiritual Life: \$141,965

Our largest expense is funding our worship and spiritual life. Your pledge provides salary and benefits for our Pastor, Rev. Reebee Girash; our Music Director, Dot Bowe; and Choir Director, Max Evrard. Our music program is extraordinary. Already this fall, we've been inspired by our vibrant Choir, our world-class organ, two famous guest musicians, and the musical offerings of many Pilgrim instrumentalists. Every Sunday the music moves us. This budget category also covers the costs of Care and Fellowship activities. Our ministries of Care make sure that our members know we're loved and we belong. From a Care Committee that wraps folks in need in love, to a new Men's Coffee group where deep friendships are formed, to potlucks and coffee hour, there's a place for each of us.

Christian Education: \$38,770

When asked what members prioritize at Pilgrim, we often hear that nurturing our children and youth is essential for being a welcoming church home. Our children and youth are a gift that we treasure through Sunday School, Service Projects, Confirmation, intergenerational worship, and joyful times together. (We can't wait for this year's Pageant!) We also have Adult Education offerings that deepen our faith, stretch our minds, and help us to grow as Christ's disciples. Your pledge provides salaries for our Director of Educational Ministries, Sarah Jane Fuller; our lead Sunday School Teacher, Izzy Leginsky; and our Nursery Care Provider, April Chung. Your pledge also supports our Church School, Youth Groups, Confirmation, and Adult Education programs and materials.

Church Maintenance and Facilities: \$76,635

The care of our church building and grounds enables us to be a welcoming home for all spiritual seekers. When it comes to the maintenance, repairs, and utilities of our church building, grounds, and the parsonage, your pledge dollars are used to help offset these expenses. Your pledge also covers expenses like snow removal – an expense that can vary widely from year to year in Massachusetts to say the least! Pledging to Pilgrim also provides the salary for our Sexton, Romeo Alves, who cleans and helps maintain our beautiful building week in and week out. This year we've embarked on something very ambitious: a solar installation that will provide our church's electricity for years to come. Many of you have supported that special project. Thank you.

Mission: \$24,418

Mission work helps us put our Christian faith into action. At Pilgrim Church, we support many worthy organizations locally and internationally. We extend our Care beyond the congregation to neighbors in need far and near. Already this year, we've worked in the Interfaith Garden, the Outdoor Church in Cambridge, sent aid to nearby towns dealing with flooding, and provided food to folks in Cambodia. (And a dozen other important projects.) Your pledge also provides financial support to the mission programs of the UCC as Pilgrim remains a 5 for 5 Congregation, giving to all 5 of the UCC's Special Mission Offerings: Our Church's Wider Mission, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. Your pledge makes a difference in the lives of people all over the world, as we live out the intersection of our Christian faith and everyday life.

Administration: \$48,495

Increasingly, our church office has become the hub of so much of what we do at Pilgrim Church. Many of our programs and initiatives go through our church office. Our wonderful Church Administrator, Kim Provo, helps us organize the good work we are about as a congregation, and your pledge provides Kim's salary. It also helps us have the office tools and supplies necessary for our weekly worship bulletins, E-Notes, Zoom and many other expenses that it takes to run a church in 2025. Your generous pledge also covers website maintenance, marketing, insurance costs, and our financial contribution to be a congregation in good standing in the United Church of Christ.