



FROM OUR PASTOR

As our Annual Meeting approaches, and I reflected on the various things we've done together in my Pastor's Report, I feel excited. We've had a great year so far. It's been a year of transitions, of beginnings and endings, but I sense excitement and hope when we're together on Sunday mornings and when we perform the business of the church as the body of Christ.

When we are trying to be the Church in 2012, too often we hear solely about the decline of Mainline Protestant churches, our denomination, the UCC included. We hear, or at least I do in my ministerial circles, that our pews are empty, our people are not committing (by joining our churches and/or financially contributing to the mission of our churches), and the whole institutional church can feel a little lack luster. We live in an age where people proclaim that they are spiritual but not religious—where many people doubt the merits of organized religion in the first place. Actually, in a 2009 Gallup Poll, Massachusetts was listed as the third least religious state in the country.¹ And I often wonder what to do with information like that. Truthfully, I read all of these statistics and have conversations with people, and I start to feel a little overwhelmed. What should being the Church in 2012 even look like?

But then I see all of you in worship on Sunday mornings, and I take heart. We are doing something important together—we are worshiping God as a gathered community and we are trying to live out our faiths day by day. We have a particular faith perspective at Pilgrim Church and in the United Church of Christ, of radical hospitality and loving God by loving others that I believe our world desperately needs to hear, maybe now more than ever. This is important and good and noteworthy and worth celebrating, and there is so much life here at Pilgrim Church!

We are a church committed to mission and helping people all around the world. We are a church with open doors and open hearts, and that's shown by welcoming people when they come into our church and having a smile on our faces when we are trying to get people to buy one more pumpkin or book to support Honduras or sign the guest book so we can send them a letter of welcome even if they just wanted to stop in for the day.

Maybe people would look at the statistics and not see much difference, but you'll notice in the Annual Report that our attendance has gone up, from 98 people in worship on average last year to 109 people this year. Who cares, some may think, that's only 11 more people. But I think that for a church our size, that's saying something. On Christmas Eve there were 313 people here, and that's also worth celebrating. I don't want to steal anyone's thunder by announcing our Stewardship numbers as of right now, but we did remarkably well. Pilgrims supported the church with generous hearts, and you all were truly cheerful givers. The point is, we have a lot to be thankful for and celebrate as we go into our Annual Meeting on February 5th.

See you in church.

Grace and Peace,
Lauren

¹ http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles_of_faith/2009/01/massachusetts_a.html



CONFIRMATION

On **Sunday February 5th** from **2-3:30 pm** we'll explore the **UCC Statement of Faith** (Session 7 in our books) and begin to think about our own Statements of Faith. What do we have to say about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Church?

Ash Wednesday (which marks the start of Lent) is on **February 22nd** this year, and we will help with the service, which begins at 7:30 pm. More details to come about this wonderful worship experience!

And on **February 26th** from **2-4 pm** we'll learn about the **5 Major World Religions** (Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam) in a nutshell, of course. What do you already know about these religions and what do you have questions about? See you then.



Lenten WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Lent is fast approaching, and we have a number of contemplative, moving, and inspiring special services we'll offer throughout this holy season of the church year. Easter Sunday will be even more meaningful if we journey with Jesus and the disciples through Lent and the events of Holy Week together.

Ash 
Wednesday

Wednesday February 22nd Ash

Wednesday—7:30 pm. Ash

Wednesday marks the start of Lent, and this service will be led

by our Confirmation Class.

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return."

Wednesday March 7th Vespers Service—7:30

pm. David and Lauren will offer a Tenebrae service. (*Tenebrae* in Latin means "shadows")

Wednesday March 28th Vespers Service—7:30

pm. Our second Lenten Tenebrae service to prepare us for Holy Week.



Sunday April 1st Palm Sunday—

10:30 am. Jesus is welcomed into Jerusalem by the people of the city with waving palms and cries of "*Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!*" (John 12:13)



MAUNDY
Thursday

Thursday April 5th Maundy

Thursday—7:30 pm. Maundy

Thursday marks the night Jesus washed the disciples' feet, and in so doing, gave them a new commandment, "*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.*" (John 13: 34) Maundy Thursday is also the night of the Last Supper and ends with the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Communion will be served this night.)



Friday April 6th Good Friday—7:30

pm. Jesus' journey to the cross, from the time of his arrest and trial to his crucifixion, are the events that help us observe Good Friday. Good Friday is also historically the day that the Church intercedes for the world, knowing that sin and death are not the end of our story or God's story.

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43)



ADULT EDUCATION: HALLELUJAH! THE BIBLE AND HANDEL'S MESSIAH PART 2

David and Lauren will be continuing this year's Adult Education course (exploring the Bible and Handel's *Messiah*) during Lent. David will offer his section on Thursday mornings at 11 am in the sunroom and Lauren's section will be Sunday evenings at 7 pm at the parsonage (26 Douglas Rd.)

Lauren- Sundays, 7 pm, Parsonage

February 26 "Behold the Lamb of God"
March 4:" ""He Trusted in God"
March 11 "Who is the King of Glory?"
March 19 "I Know that my Redeemer Liveth"
March 25 "Why do the Nations Rage?"
April 1 (Palm Sunday) "Worthy is the Lamb"

David - Thursdays, 11 am, Sunroom

March 1 "Behold the Lamb of God"
March 8:" ""He Trusted in God"
March 15 "Who is the King of Glory?"
March 22 "I Know that my Redeemer Liveth"
March 29 "Why do the Nations Rage?"
April 5 (Maundy Thursday) "Worthy is the Lamb"

If you were not able to take part during Advent, but would like to attend the Lenten sessions, YOU ARE VERY WELCOME TO JOIN US! There are a few extra books (\$10 each), and we can always order more. Please sign up by **Monday February 13th** and let Diane know which section you will be attending and whether or not you need us to order a book for you. For more information, please speak with Lauren or David.

From the Minister 
of Education

Although there are many reasons families choose to bring their children to Pilgrim to learn about God, I suspect one important reason is that the members of Pilgrim consistently support the program so that it is the best it can be! Children are extremely important at Pilgrim and it shows! On **Children's Sunday, February 12th**, you will have the opportunity to convey to our children and their families just how vital they are to the life of our church. This is the one day when we highlight our children in worship and express our gratitude to their teachers. I want to extend an invitation to all members, especially those who do not have children or grandchildren in our program, to come to worship and show your love for our children. Help us to let them know how much they mean to us!



**JOIN THE CHOIR FOR
HANDEL'S MESSIAH**

This year, Pilgrim's Chancel Choir has followed a block schedule – everyone is invited to join the choir for a six-week block in preparation for a performance of a larger choral work during Sunday worship. The third block starts with rehearsals on Thursday, February 9, at 7:30pm and Sunday, February 12, at 9:15am. Choose whichever time works best for you, but plan to take part as the choir prepares selections from the Lent section of Handel's Messiah for a Special Music Sunday on March 18. For more information, contact David Mislin at (617) 223-1270 or david.mislin@gmail.com.

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING

To all Pilgrim Church Members and Friends. Pursuant to our Bylaws, Article VII, Paragraph 2, you are invited to a Congregational Meeting of the Church on Sunday, February 5, 2012 11:45 am following the Service.

Agenda

- 1) Congregational approval of minutes of prior meetings.
- 2) Presentation of written committee reports, distributed in advance of this meeting
- 3) Presentation and adoption of the fiscal budget for 2011
- 4) Any other pertinent matters that may arise
- 5) Necrology, remarks, and a prayer by the pastor.

Everyone is invited to attend; only members may vote. Child care will be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Saradjian
Clerk

HOW HOMELESSNESS HURTS CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND HOW YOU CAN HELP

*Eighth Annual Interfaith Homelessness Forum
Sunday, March 11, 2012, 3:00-5:00pm, Trinity
Episcopal Church, 81 Elm St., Concord*

Family homelessness remains a severe problem in Massachusetts. Over 42,000 families sought state housing assistance in the year ending July 2011, 30% more than in 2010. Expectant women experiencing homelessness are 30% more likely to deliver pre-term and 50% more likely to have low-weight babies. Children living without permanent housing are 70% more likely to have developmental delays and 50% more likely to be in poor health than children who enjoy stable housing.

Learn what we can do to protect children's health by sustaining the state's successful Homelessness Prevention Program NOW AT RISK due to limits in state budget funding.

Speakers will be Dr. Megan Sandel, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health at Boston Medical Center and a nationally recognized expert on housing and child health; Robert Pulster, Associate Director, Department of Housing Stabilization, Mass. Department of Housing and Community Development; a formerly homeless mother; and a panel of area state legislators. The forum, organized by the Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, is free and open to all.



Securities Transfers to Pilgrim Church

Below is the information you need to electronically transfer securities to the church. In addition, please notify Derek Gardiner, the Church Collector, of the transfer so that he can properly credit your giving account. (Derek can be reached via email at derek.gardiner.02420@gmail.com).

*Receiving Firm: National Financial
Services LLC / Fidelity Investments*

DTC Number: 0226

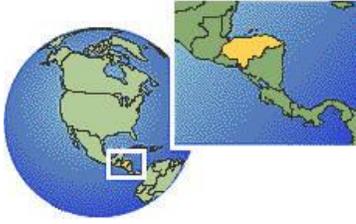
*For the benefit of: Pilgrim Congregational
Church*

For final credit to: Z46242756

Zambia Mission News



Ruth Hickox and Tom Murphy were invited to participate as representatives of Communities Without Borders in an alternative gift fair sponsored by the First Unitarian Society in Newton. Ruth's dolls were a great hit accounting for about 1/3 of the proceeds to CWB, and about 7% of the proceeds of the fair. This \$355 will be allocated to our future pledge to CWB. A big round of applause goes to Ruth who continues to bring in funding for our Zambia mission work.



HONDURAS HAPPENINGS

On January 30th I will be returning to Honduras for a six week visit. Tom, Claire and Don Moir will be joining me on February 11th, and my son Ricky and his friend, Laua Sierra, will be arriving on February 19th. We're really looking forward to sharing the Honduran experience with others and learning from their insight and perspectives.

We will be working collaboratively in medical clinics in Flores, nearby La Paz and in the mountains with a large group of volunteers from Michigan. Also, we will be hosting a dentist from Florida who will be conducting four days of dental clinics in our home.

The Honduran Support Group just approved designating the funds we received from "The Longest Night" service to be used for improvements to the public hospital in Comayagua. This hospital is in deplorable condition...structurally it is falling apart, and it lacks basic medical equipment. Our initial concentration will be in the neonatal ward where 6,000 babies (including ones from Flores) are delivered each year.

Tom and I look forward to meeting with representatives from PLAN Honduras and Flores' water committee to get an update on the technical study of the water project which is currently under way.

We look forward to seeing patients who are currently being treated within country, and the others who are waiting our arrival. Certainly, we appreciate your continued prayers and support. You're in my thoughts as I pack many donations which you have generously provided...

Thank you all.

Emily



(Honduran public hospital where funds will be spent)



PILGRIM ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

Are we ready to do the Carbon Fast again? I wasn't until I read of some successful actions by the group **350.org**.

Bill McKibben, leader of **350.org**, is determined to protect our environment. And President Jim Antal of the MA Conference of the UCC is solidly behind Bill. With actions over the summer and fall, they have delayed or perhaps stopped the development of another oil pipeline across fragile ecosystems of the United States to Texas refineries. We can be grateful to people who risked and endured arrest or surrounded the White House in peaceful dissent.

These successful actions made me wonder what we can do to share in the work of energy conservation and ecosystem preservation? Jim Antal has the answer: another carbon fast. It was encouraging last year to find out how many people at Pilgrim took the fast seriously and made changes. With Lauren's encouragement, we will provide the opportunity to do it again. Stay tuned for more information, or if you can't wait, you can sign up now at www.macucc.org/carbonfast and receive carbon fast tips each day during Lent. Lent begins

on Ash Wednesday, February 22, and the tips will begin at that time.



Pilgrim Church Book Sale 2012!!

The 2012 Pilgrim Book Sale will be on two weekends. On **Saturday April 28th and Saturday May 5th** we will be welcoming the community in for the book sale. **On Sunday April 29th and Sunday May 6th** we will be offering books for sale to the congregation during Coffee Hour.

We will be accepting new or slightly used Books, DVDs, and CDs. We will be grateful to receive non-fiction books **other than text books**, novels, children's books, recipe books, travel books less than 5 years old, hobby books, reference books, etc.

From March 1st through Sun. April 22nd you may leave them on the 2nd level near the elevator.

The proceeds of this year's sale will be dedicated to creating improvements in the Labor and Delivery/ Gynecology room of the Hospital Santa Teresa in Comayagua, Honduras the nearest hospital to Flores.

In just that department (which is essentially one room) of the hospital there are falling ceiling tiles, exposed wires, blood stained floors, crowded conditions with no privacy, and virtually no medical equipment. For example, what passes for an incubator is a tiny bed with a desk lamp over it to provide heat. With your help, a big difference can be created in this one room of one hospital!

If you have any questions please contact Sandy Gardiner at sandra.gardiner@verizon.net.



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED!

Please let Susan Carabbio know (s.carabbio@comcast.net) if you are able to help and host coffee hour. This is such a wonderful way to help out and is really fun and easy!

NO BIBLE STUDY 2/14

Please Note: There will be **no Bible Study on Tuesday, February 14th**.



How Homelessness Hurts Children's Health and How You Can Help

Eighth Annual Forum on Family Homelessness
Sunday, March 11, 2012, 3:00-5:00 PM
Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm St., Concord.

Sponsors: Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries (CMM), and Horizons for Homeless Children.
Co-sponsors: Episcopal City Mission and UU Mass Action Network

Family homelessness remains at very high levels in Mass. due to the continued difficult economy, including record foreclosures. Over 42,000 families sought state housing assistance in the year ending July 2011 - 30% more than in 2010. Currently, over 2000 families are in shelters nightly plus more than 1300 families are still in motels, placing at great risk the health of families and children.

This year's Forum focuses on the impact of homelessness on children's health.

- Expectant women experiencing homelessness are 30% more likely to have pre-term deliveries, and 50% more likely to deliver low weight infants.
- Children in housing insecurity are 50% more likely to be in poor health, and 70% more at risk of developmental problems.

Learn How We Can Advocate to Protect Children's Health by Sustaining the state's Successful Homelessness Prevention Program, NOW AT RISK due to limits on State Funding

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Megan Sandel, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Public Health at Boston Medical Center *and* a nationally recognized expert on housing and child health



SPEAKERS:

- **Robert Pulster**, Associate Director, Department of Housing Stabilization, Mass. Department of Housing and Community Development
- *A formerly homeless woman* who experienced health problems for herself and her children.
- *State legislators from our area districts* will comment on the issues in a panel discussion.

Dr. Megan Sandel will speak on the effects of homelessness and severe housing insecurity on the health, nutrition, and early childhood development of homeless children.

Robert Pulster will tell us of the progress and needs of the state's shelter reform program.

Sixteen homelessness prevention organizations will also attend: browse their information and displays. For more information about the Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness, contact Carl Miller, Coordinator, at NormanCMiller@comcast.net or 978-369-3755; visit the Advocacy Network & CMM on line www.coopmet.org.

Tentative schedule

Youth Group SCHEDULE Spring 2012

Dana's Contact Information: Pilgrimyouthmin@gmail.com and 631-255-5020 (cell)

Sunday, January 15	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group
Sunday, January 29	4PM to 7:30PM – Snow tubing at Nashoba Valley!!
Sunday, February 5	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group
Thursday, February 9	3:30PM to 6PM – Bristol Lodge
Sunday, February 19	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group (Start of February break!)
Sunday, March 11	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group
Saturday thru Sunday March 24 - 25	Lock-In!!! (Details to follow! Youth will be doing Coffee hour!)
Sunday, April 1	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group
Sunday, April 15	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group (Spring break!)
Tuesday, April 24	5PM to 8:30 – Cradles to Crayons (Youth will be provided dinner)
Sunday, May 6	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group
Saturday, May 19	The Big Day of Serving (Nashua, New Hampshire) Details, TBA
Sunday, May 20	4PM to 6PM – Youth Group (debrief after The Big Day of Serving)
***** June dates are still tentative*****	
Sunday, June 3	4PM – 6PM – Youth Group
Weekend of June 10	Final Youth Group fellowship event! This will be something AWESOME!!!
Sunday, June 17	4PM to 7PM – Final Youth Group Party! (note: extra hour!)

***Some details of events still TBD: Service and Fellowship project details will always be announced as soon as possible and generally well over a month in advance, as to allow parents to plan their schedules more accordingly. Please note though that the date (ie. Week of, etc) will always be when I'll plan the project for. Some things might change though, but I'll always try to give as much notice as possible!

<h1>February 2012</h1>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 7:30 p CWB Meeting 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship/Communion 11:45 a Annual Meeting 2:00 p Confirmation 4:00 p Youth Group	6	7 11:00 a Bible Study	8 7:30 p Membership Mtg.	9 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	10	11
12 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship/Children's Sunday 11:45 a Committee Fair	13 Lauren on Vacation This Week 7:30 p F&A Mtg.	14 No Bible Study	15	16 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	17	18
19 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 4:00 p Youth Group	20 President's Day - Office Closed	21 11:00 a Bible Study	22 Ash Wednesday 10:00 a Staff Meeting 7:30 p Ash Wednesday Service	23 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	24 Deadline for PP Articles	25
26 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 2:00 p Confirmation	27 7:00 p Council Mtg.	28 11:00 a Bible Study	29			