



FROM OUR PASTOR

Welcome to 2012! It was wonderful to be in church on the first day of the year with many of you. It struck me that we all may have our own traditions around the New Year—what we do on New Year's Eve, special foods to eat for good luck on New Year's Day, or resolutions that are important to us. But to be together as a church family and take communion as the body of Christ on January 1, 2012 was special and a new way to ring in the New Year for me. Hopefully you feel that the New Year has begun on a great note too!

I've been thinking about New Year's resolutions. Sometimes they seem to be (unfortunately) the same year after year and many times they feel a little self-centered. It's all about **me** and **me** being a smarter, thinner, cooler, better **me** in 2012. That's okay—but what if our resolutions were more focused on others, on making the world a cooler, better world in 2012 and beyond?

To this end, I would like to give some examples of resolutions (taken from Christina Villa, who is on the staff of the UCC in Cleveland.) Here's what she proposes are ways to improve all of ourselves by contributing to the common good:

- Faithfully call or visit the person you always put off calling or visiting
- Get involved in local politics
- Adopt a shelter animal
- Donate food and clothing when it ISN'T the holidays
- Volunteer
- Leave bigger tips
- Drive a smaller car
- Follow international news
- Join the choir
- Start fewer sentences with "I"
- Refill the ice cube tray, replace the toilet paper roll, and don't take up two parking spaces

I'm sure there's many more that you can think of and I encourage you to do so. Let's start 2012 right by improving all of ourselves not just by focusing on **me, me, me**, but by contributing to the common good of all.

Happy New Year!

Grace and Peace,

Lauren



CONFIRMATION

On **January 8th at 2 PM** we'll cover **Sessions 14 and 15: Guided and Bound by the Holy Spirit** and figure out together what's up with the Holy Spirit anyway. Who and what is the Holy Spirit and what does the Spirit do in the world? Is the Holy Spirit still working in our lives today?

And on **January 22nd** we'll explore **Sessions 16 and 17: The Church, The Body of Christ and Followers of Christ**. This class will focus on the church—what is the church? How do we live together in community when we have both similarities and differences?



On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, I want to thank everyone who has responded so generously to this year's Stewardship Campaign. As of December 18th, we had reached 97% of our pledge goal for 2012 having received 78 pledges

totaling \$193,328. Of those 78 pledges, 13 were from new pledgors, including a first time pledge from the Sunday school. As we head into 2012, we do so knowing that with everyone's cheerful giving, we will be able to continue to fund the operations, programs and activities we all cherish at Pilgrim.

If you haven't had an opportunity to return your pledge form yet, don't worry – it's never too late to pledge and help us reach or even exceed our 2012 pledge goal! If you need a pledge form or would like to speak to someone about the Stewardship Campaign, please contact Suzanne Abair at suzanneabair@verizon.net or 781.652.0166. If you would like to pledge but prefer a paperless option, simply email our Collector, Derek Gardiner, at derek.gardiner@verizon.net indicating the amount of your 2012 pledge.

Suzanne Abair
Chair, Stewardship Committee

From the Minister of Education

NEW YEAR, NEW HABITS

Hold everything! Be sure that Jesus doesn't get packed away with the Christmas ornaments or tossed out altogether with the wrappings and bows! Carry the Prince of Peace right into the New Year by trying something new with your family. Here are a few simple ideas to get you started and remember, if you forget for a day or two or even a week or so, you can always pick it up again. It takes a long time for habits to form.

- Say **grace** at mealtime- this can be as simple as offering gratitude for the blessings of the day
- Include **bedtime prayers** as part of your child's bedtime routine- children can offer up the name of family members and friends for God's blessing
- On his/her birthday, tell your children their **Pageant story**- each member of the family can talk about what they remember about the day the child was born
- Look up and celebrate **baptism** dates- Mark these on the calendar so they don't get passed by (contact the church where children, parents or grandparents were baptized if you don't have the dates)
- Read the adult or children's **Bibles by candlelight**- you could try to do this on a set night such as Sunday evenings
- **Play a Christian cd** over and over again so that family members learn the words by heart
- Borrow some of the wonderful Christian stories from Pilgrim's **children's library**

If you have other family rituals which help you to celebrate Jesus all year long, let me know. May the love of God, the hope of the Incarnation, and the joy of the Holy Spirit be yours in the coming year,

Debra



EQUAL EXCHANGE

Thank you very much to everyone who supported the recent Equal Exchange Products sale. Your generous contributions help support our Fellowship hour, sustainable farming techniques, and small farmers worldwide. If you would like more robust coffee, delicious organic tea, or our very popular chocolate bars, please let Martha Kimball or me know and we will be glad to help you.

Last month, I shared the ways your purchases of coffee help small farmers and the environment. This month, since the chocolate sales were so successful, I wanted to share that you not only helped bring smiles to the ones you love, but also helped the world around us.

Per the UCC website, the chocolate bars are beneficial in multiple ways:

“The chocolate and cocoas are organic. What does that mean?”

The ingredients that go into our chocolate bars and cocoas are farmed sustainably, without harmful pesticides or fertilizers. This is better for farmers, the planet, and for your body.

- In the IITA study of child labor in the African cocoa industry, a serious concern was raised over the common practice of adults, laborers and children applying toxic pesticides in a potentially dangerous manner. Elsewhere it has been noted that safety equipment (gloves, respirators, etc.) is rarely used on African cocoa

farms or made available to laborers. Our farmer partners do not use these toxic pesticides.

- Equal Exchange's organic cocoa is cultivated on small plots, and usually under a shade canopy that preserves critical elements of the native Dominican, Panamanian, and Ecuadorian and Peruvian forests. Biologists have determined that this gentle, chemical free method of farming helps to maintain biodiversity and protect the winter habitat of millions of migratory song birds. For related information, see **The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center website**.
- As a certified organic food, none of our ingredients are genetically modified. Organic certification also ensures that the milk powder is free of rBGH (recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone), an artificial hormone that is often given to cows to increase their milk production.
- Sustainable farming helps fight climate change. Many studies, including one from the United Nations, have documented how conventional (non-organic) farming contributes up to 25% all greenhouse gases from human activity. In contrast, organic agriculture not only emits very few greenhouse gases it can actually pull CO₂ out of the atmosphere.”

By continuing to enjoy the delicious chocolate bars, you get to have a wonderful treat, but also, the church is helped by being able to continue serving our old and new friends during fellowship hour. You are also helping the world and supporting just labor practices. So enjoy the treat guilt free, you did a wonderful thing!



COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED!

Please let Susan Carabbio know (s.carabbio@comcast.net) if you are able to help and host coffee hour. There aren't many folks signed up for most of January and all of February is

open. This is such a wonderful way to help out and is really fun and easy!

Thank you for being such a caring community.

Tom and Emily Collins

REMINDER: The deadline for the February issue of Pilgrim's Progress is



HONDURAS HAPPENINGS

As 2011 comes to an end, we'd like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for your ongoing support and interest in Pilgrim's mission work in Honduras. Members have been actively involved in so many ways including: offering prayers; organizing the yearly book fair; donating school supplies, clothing and financial gifts; coordinating with Plan to bring clean water to Flores, and establishing relationships with Honduran patients.

We look forward to returning to Honduras in the beginning of the New Year, and having Claire and Don Moir join us in February. Currently we are involved with four children who have significant health problems (two with cancer, one with a heart problem and one with a lymphatic malformation). Undoubtedly, there will be many more waiting for our arrival. We will be hosting a dentist for a four day clinic in our home, and will be working with a medical/construction team from Michigan.

One goal for next year will be to assist the public hospital in Comayagua with improving their neonatal ward. There are over 6,000 babies born each year at this hospital and they lack basic equipment, and the structure itself is in deplorable condition. Making necessary improvements will help save lives.



Each Sunday an individual/s or family provides a flower arrangement for the altar at Pilgrim Church. These are often given to commemorate a special occasion, in memory or honor of relatives, or a celebration. Truly it is your choice. Donors simply sign up for a date and decide on the commemorative words which will be printed in the bulletin. You then pay Pilgrim directly (\$45). The rest is taken care of. Dates still available for the year are:

JANUARY 29
FEBRUARY 12 & 26
MARCH 11, 18 & 25
APRIL 1, 22 & 29
MAY 13, 20 & 27
JUNE 10, 17 & 24

Contact Ruth (Litchfield) Hickox 781-862-9565 or ruthhickox@gmail.com.

Pilgrim's Progress

January 1, 2012 - Volume 54, Number 1

January 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's Day 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship/Communion/Carol Sing	2 Office Reopens	3 11:00 a Bible Study	4 7:30 p Worship/Music Meeting	5 12:00 p LICA at Pilgrim 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	6	7 9:00 a De-Greening of Pilgrim 2:00 p Library Reserved
8 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 2:00 p Confirmation	9 7:30 p F&A Mtg.	10 11:00 a Bible Study 7:00 p PNS Committee Mtg.	11 7:30 p Membership Mtg.	12 4:00 p Pilgrim Serves Bristol Lodge 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	13	14
15 Annual Reports Due 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 4:00 p Youth Group	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Church Office Closed	17 11:00 a Bible Study	18 10:00 a Staff Mtg.	19 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	20 Deadline for PP Articles	21
22 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 2:00 p Confirmation 3:00 p Waltham Symphony Orchestra	23 10:00 a Care Mtg. 7:00 p Council Mtg.	24 11:00 a Bible Study	25	26 7:30 p Choir Rehearsal	27	28
29 9:15 a Choir Rehearsal 10:30 a Worship 4:00 p Pilgrim Youth Group Tubing	30	31 11:00 a Bible Study				

