

Pilgrim's Progress January 6, 2015 – Vol. 57 No. 1

FROM THE



PASTOR

Happy New Year! I hope that you all had a wonderful New Year's and perhaps enjoyed fun parties or celebrations with family and friends. It's interesting to hear about celebrations from around the world. In fact, humans have been ringing in the New Year across the world for four millennia, dating back to ancient Babylon!

Many celebrations center around special foods consumed. In Spain and many Spanish-speaking countries, people eat a dozen grapes on New Year's Eve to symbolize their hopes for the months ahead. For some cultures, pigs represent progress and prosperity so pork appears on New Year's tables in Cuba, Austria, Hungary, Portugal, and Germany. Ring shaped cakes and pastries are eaten in the Netherlands, Greece, and Mexico to symbolize that the year has come full circle. My family tradition is to eat pork and sauerkraut for good luck (as many families of Germanic heritage do across the Midwest), and it was wonderful to ring in 2015 in our traditional way with my family in Ohio.

The most iconic tradition in America (not food related!) is probably the ball dropping in New York City's Times Square at the stroke of midnight. The ball has been dropping since 1907—so we've enjoyed this tradition for over 100 years in our country!¹ However you have (or will) mark the start of 2015, I hope that your heart feels ready for the days ahead. Though I am wondering:

- What do you do to ring in the New Year?
- What goals or resolutions are on your mind this year?

Perhaps one of the best aspects of the New Year is a fresh start. It's a moment where the open road lies before us with seemingly endless possibilities and opportunities. The New Year is a time for blue sky thinking—open-minded thinking and creative ideas that are not limited by our current thinking and the familiar confines of “this is the way we've always done it.”

So it's an uplifting time for us as individuals, for our families, and even for the church. We've been meeting new people and seeing new faces in worship, which has been fantastic! In 2015, our new Vitality Committee will redesign our Narthex to be a more welcoming and friendly space to reflect our current congregation. Dan Schmidt has now been with us for one year and Lisa Hulbert will be starting six months on our staff—and we can look forward to all that they bring to our congregation in this year to come. And I'm looking forward to some blue sky thinking on my end too as we continue to discern where God is leading our congregation.

As T.S. Eliot once said, “For last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice.”

See you in Church in 2015!

Lauren

¹ “New Year's,” *The History Channel*, <http://www.history.com/topics/holidays/new-years>

FROM LISA HULBERT

ALTERNATIVE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Church School is back and we are spending 2015 digging deeper into the stories of the Bible. In the following weeks, we will explore Jesus' Baptism on January 11th, Jonah and the Big Fish on January 25th, and Teaching and Healing from the book of Mark on February 1st. Although the text from the Bible itself holds great meaning, sometimes children need an alternative. One of the greatest resources I have found is called Storypath, a website that matches Bible stories with children's literature. These story books are a great way to bring faith formation home.

For the story of Jesus' Baptism you could choose to read *The Pigeon Needs a Bath* for a bed time story. Mo Willems writes about a pigeon who simply refuses to take a bath. After much convincing he plunges in to the bath and loves it. He loves the new experience and how it has changed him for the better. The character of the pigeon reflects the notions we find in the Baptism story in the book of Mark, Chapter 1, verses 4-11.

Sorry! by Trudy Ludwig is a great tool to discuss the Bible stories found in the book of Jonah. Ludwig creates the character of Charlie who thinks simply exclaiming SORRY fixes every problem. Classmate Leena quickly explains that it takes more than "sorry!" to truly apologize. Similar to Charlie, the people of Nineveh must show Jonah they are sorry through their actions not just their words.

Jesus' teaching and healing is a show of confidence, authority and strength by Jesus in the reading from Mark 1:21-28. Jesus' confidence in his ability to be "the Son of God" is evident to all his followers and it strengthens his ability to teach and heal all people. The story *The Sailor Dog* by Margaret Wise Brown echoes Jesus' determination. Scupper has overcome a wrecked ship, sailing through the unknown and being a sailor that happens to be a dog. Scupper knows who he is and is proud in his abilities to sail and explore. Both Jesus and Scupper hold tight to their identity.

For more resources visit
<http://storypath.upsem.edu/>

JOYS AND CONCERNS

- Emily Collins asked for prayers of celebration for Pilgrim Church's support of Shriners Hospitals that enabled her to deliver gifts to both the Springfield and Boston locations.
- Prayers for successful, long-awaited knee replacement surgery on Wednesday for Sylvia Ferrell-Jones.
- Mary Mackie asked for prayers for Kathy Kaufmann whose grandson, Charlie Russell, was born on New Year's Day.
- Prayers for Fred Johnston as he recovers from pneumonia and contemplates where he may settle after rehab.
- We continue to pray for Lisa Hulbert's grandfather as he is recovering from triple bypass surgery and is healing at a rehab facility.
- Sylvia Ferrell-Jones asked for prayers for all of the homeless men, women, and children, especially during the cold weather. Sylvia also asked for prayers for Pastor Lauren's safe return to us.

PLEASE NOTE:



The Chili Luncheon scheduled for January 11th has been cancelled. We will let you know when it has been rescheduled. Thank you to those who volunteered to bring a dish.

MISSION NEWS



BRISTOL LODGE SOUP KITCHEN

This Thursday, **January 8th**, Pilgrim Church will be providing their monthly meal at **Bristol Lodge Soup Kitchen** in Waltham. In addition to food donations, **this month we need help with preparing and serving the meal.** It's roughly a 2 hour commitment -- we meet in Waltham around 4:00 pm and are finished between 5:30 and 6:00 pm. Rides can be arranged. If you are able to go on Thursday or want to donate any of the food items below, please contact Sharon Lawler at: slawler322@aol.com. Donations should be left in the downstairs kitchen at the church by Thursday at 3:00pm. Thank you for your support.

- Tyson Breaded Chicken Tenderloins – 5 bags
- Green Beans – 4 Costco-sized cans
- Corn – 4 Costco-sized cans
- Sliced peaches – 2 Costco-sized cans
- Fresh fruit to add to fruit salad (grapes, bananas, raspberries, blueberries, etc., NO strawberries)
- 2 Costco-sized containers of lettuce mix
- Other salad ingredients – tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers....whatever looks good
- Large bottle of salad dressing
- Bread – 100 slices or rolls
- Soft margarine – 1 lb.
- Milk – 2 gallons
- Juice – 2 gallons
- Desserts: brownies, cookies, cake, etc. -- 6 doz. pieces

Thank you!

Submitted by the Mission Committee

2ND ANNUAL LEXINGTON MLK DAY OF SERVICE MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2015 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

This year the Town of Lexington will commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with its second annual family-friendly day of volunteer activities supporting the underserved.

Events begin at 11:00 am with a Unity Walk from the Minuteman Statue on the Lexington Green to Grace Chapel (59 Worthen Road, Lexington), where presenters, including Lexington literary performer Regie O'Hare Gibson and the [SNAP Sing Along Chorus](#) will share the spirit of Dr. King's legacy and kick off the day's service opportunities.

In addition to the volunteer activities, we are endeavoring to provide food and personal care items for underserved populations in Lexington. Please consider bringing food and personal care items, as requested below, to donate when you come to volunteer. Or, if you are unable to volunteer, we will gladly accept your donations as your service! All items should be dropped off at Grace Chapel between the hours of 9 am and 4 pm.

[Compass for Kids](#) is in need of: toilet paper, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, health and beauty aids.

[The Lexington Food Pantry](#) specifically requests: 5 oz. cans of fruit, 16 oz. cans of stews, chilies, and hashes.

One family-friendly volunteer opportunity is still available: Creating Cards from 1:30-3:30. **Location is Grace Chapel.** Volunteers will design and make Valentine's Day and general greeting cards, which will be distributed to US veterans, hospitalized or nursing home residents, Ronald McDonald House patients and family members. If you are signing up you and your children for this activity, please fill in a volunteer spot for each participant. Use the Comment to specify size of T-shirt of your child. Adults can order T-shirts on the Support Lexington MLK Day page.

Link to sign-up: lexingtonmlk.org



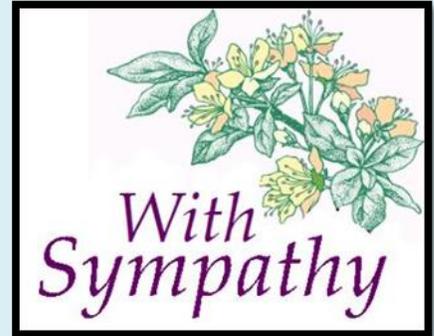
HONDURAS HAPPENINGS

On behalf of Astrid Ordonez and Noel Solano, we would like to thank the Pilgrim community for all your hospitality and support. We'd also like to express our appreciation for the Christmas Eve collection which was designated to Shriners Hospital and The Ray Tye Medical Aid Foundation. These two organizations have provided medical care and financial support to Astrid and Noel for the past nine years.



**SAVE THE DATE!
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST,
AT 11:45 AM.**

Please join us for Pilgrim Church's Annual Meeting. All are welcome, however, only members may vote. Childcare will be provided.



Please note the recent passing of Jim Oberholtzer, a former longtime member of Pilgrim Church. His obituary was published in The Boston Globe on December 21, 2014.

OBERHOLTZER, Dr. James E.
"Jim" Age 72, of Fairport, New York died Dec. 7, 2014 after multiple strokes. Born June 18, 1942 in Elizabethtown, PA, he is predeceased by his parents Menno and Edith. Jim earned a BS in Chemistry from Elizabethtown College and a Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry from Purdue University. While living in Boston he worked for Arthur D. Little and later for Waters Corp. He then moved to Rochester, NY to finish his career at Eastman Kodak. Jim is survived by his wife Jennie, sons Chris and Scott, their wives and five grandchildren. A celebration of Jim's life will be held at Mountain Rise UCC in Fairport, NY on January 17, 2015 at 1:00 p.m., followed by a reception. In lieu of flowers, donations may be given to [Pilgrim Congregational Church](#), 55 Coolidge Ave, Lexington, MA 02420.

Please note: Written remembrances of Jim will be collected and shared with his family, with excerpts to be read in the memorial service. Please send these to: office@mtriseucc.org.

**DEADLINE FOR PILGRIM'S
PROGRESS**

Please note that the deadline for the February issue of Pilgrim's Progress will be January 26th. Thank you!

To access the calendar for Pilgrim Church, please click [here](#). Thank you.



UPDATED COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE 2015

2014 – 2015		Hosts	Hosts
January 11		Hopkins	Hutson
January 18		Mission	
January 25		Munkres	
February 1	Communion	Labbe/Clark	Lawler
February 8		Birthday Sunday	Lisa H
February 15			
February 22		Mason	McClave/Shore
March 1	Communion	Carabbio	Mitchell
March 8		Moir	Morrison
March 15		Munkres	Murphy
March 22		Nuss	O'Brien
March 29		Porter	Ramacciotti-Mahiou
April 5	Communion	Reaske	Rogers/Van Evera