

Pilgrim's Progress

September 2017



Mostly I am a person who looks forward with anticipation. But in this moment, I want to look back. I do so in hopes that it will help us to all look forward with anticipation.

Sometime early in the morning on Monday August 21st, a fairly narrow and yet substantial swath of total darkness slid across our nation from the coast of Oregon to the edge of the ocean in South Carolina. It was caused by a total eclipse of the sun. In each location on that route, the sun slowly disappeared as the moon covered it up, leaving a totally black hole in the sky what had become a night sky. The planets appeared and could be seen clearly...birds became silent...and crickets stopped their chirping. People said it was simultaneously terrifying, incomprehensible and awe inspiring. They reported feeling insignificant, alone, and afraid as well as connected to the universe.

If you were lucky enough to be within the band of “totality” you got to see this but if you only got to see a partial eclipse, you know it was amazing. But what else was it? Was it a religious experience? I mean, once the wow factor was over...what did the eclipse say to you? Did it say anything?

We live in a world where seeing life through a lens of faith is not encouraged and where talking about it is discouraged. But I want to encourage us to do the opposite. I want to encourage us to see our conflict torn world, so filled with anger and hate, so mired in lies and bravado that we can hardly know what is true anymore, through our eyes of faith. For I believe that is it is only through faith that we can understand where we are and where we need to head.

As for myself, after the eclipse, which I saw only partially...I was filled with a peace that I have not felt in a while. I was reminded that this is God’s world and we are God’s people...all of us...and that although we disagree on seemingly everything...in the end God’s light always overcomes the dark. It is how we behave in the dark that is important and that is, in large part based on what we believe...or at least that is what I believe.

Peace and Blessings, Rev. Peggy (I hope to see you in church!)

Update from Church Council Chair, Joan Barrington

Dear Members of Pilgrim Church,

I came across the following verse this summer: "*Behold, I am doing a new thing! Can you not perceive it?*" --*Isaiah 43:19* No doubt God has a time of restoring, regathering, and rebuilding in mind for us!

New Search Committees

Your Church Council made sure search committees were put in place for the following positions: Choir Director/Organist, Visitation Minister, and Youth Leader. These will be interim positions, subject to the arrival and approval of the new Senior Minister. We want for the new Pastor to have the flexibility to assemble his or her own worship and ministry team when he or she arrives. The Choir Director/Organist is chosen and the others will be in place shortly.

Vision & Mission Statement Review

An important role of the Church Council is to review our Vision and Mission Statement periodically and assess the need for an update.

This task piggy-backs the work that the Senior Minister Search Committee (SMSC) is doing. By reviewing the data the SMSC gathers, and gathering other pertinent data to review, Council will craft a new or revised, more fitting Mission Statement for our church. The new or revised Mission Statement would guide what we do and how we operate going forward. Of course, any Mission Statement different from the current one would be brought to the congregation for input and vote.

ONA and Website

We can thank the DeHart's for the other projects of Council right now. Lynn is heading a task force for ONA, which stands for Open and Affirming. It is a process which we undertake to become an officially designated church in the UCC that confirms we are accepting of the LGBTQ community. Don is exploring demands of our website users and working with a developer to make it more user friendly. We also want the capability to incorporate more uses into the website when needs arise. Don has researched the platforms that other thriving churches in the MAUCC conference are using.

COMMUNICATE WITH COUNCIL

Please forward any comment or question to any Council member at anytime.

This IS truly an exciting time to be in this church. I find it simply thrilling, because, Yes! I do perceive a new thing happening wherein Pilgrim Church will be stronger than ever!

Faithfully, Joan Barrington - Council Chair- sixbears@mac.com

Lynne Devnew, Clerk - Lynne.Devnew@gmail.com

Drew Thawley, Member At Large - drewmthawley@yahoo.com

Greg Hunter, Member At Large - greg@hunterdux.com

Heidi Hadley, Chair Trustees - h2hadley@gmail.com

Don DeHart, Co-Chair Deacons - dmdehartjr@gmail.com

Senior Minister Search Committee Update

The Senior Minister Search Committee has been busy this summer. We continue to meet weekly to complete the Pilgrim Church Profile. Below are some highlights of our activity in June and July.



- Analyzed and summarized feedback from the Congregational Visioning Dinner held 6/29
- Identified and reached out to approximately 25 community leaders (i.e. Police Chief, Town Manager, PTA Presidents, principals, school committee members, business owners, church leaders, etc.) to ascertain their feedback on issues within the community today and projected, knowledge/opinion of Pilgrim Church, understanding of where Pilgrim Church can support the community today and in the future.
- Analyzing and summarizing feedback from the community leader interviews.
- Met with Rev. Emily Kellar to better understand how clergy candidates look at the church profile and the search process. She provided valuable interview tips for the Search Committee.
- Pursuing August meetings with the Senior Youth Group and younger families to duplicate the 6/29 Dinner focus group discussion.

If you have not yet had a chance to provide your input to the team, we will be scheduling events in September. More details to follow.

Respectfully submitted, The Senior Minister Search Committee



Outreach Board Update

The Outreach Board is excited to return to work this Fall. Our primary goal is to complete the distribution of funds from the Mission Trust Fund in a manner consistent with the passions of the congregation. The deadline for receipt of Grant Proposals was September 1st. As a Board, we will review, assess, develop a recommendation and seek the approval for the distribution from the congregation in November. We also would like to organize an adult mission trip to support a local organization. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact a member of the Board.

In addition, we look forward to the continuing missions of the Pilgrim Pantry led by Helen Barrow, the Fair Trade Ministry led by Jeff and Judy Jones, and the Pine Street Inn Ministry led by Sandy and Ron Bondlow. If you have any questions about our committee or our programs, please see one of us. Again, thank you for your on-going support!

Steve Schaeffer, Jim Grim, Dan Arkema, Lois Boericke, and Carol Sauer

FAITH AND FICTION

Laura Dunn

Join me for a discussion series of works of fiction that extend the topic of world religion in America. These will be monthly drop-in discussions on Tuesday nights at 7 PM starting in September. You do not need to have been in the previous world religion study group, nor do you need to sign up for the entire series.

I have chosen four works of fiction that reflect the challenges of immigrants or non-Christians assimilating into a largely Christian American culture and a final novel with a Christian protagonist. The works are either literary prize winners or written by prize-winning authors:

Judaism: *Goodbye, Columbus*, stories by Philip Roth

Indian heritage: *Interpreter of Maladies*, stories by Jhumpa Lahiri

Chinese heritage: *A Good Fall*, stories by Ha Jin

Islam: *The Burgess Boys*, a novel by Elizabeth Strout

Christianity: *Gilead* a novel by Marilynne Robinson

We will be discussing Philip Roth's *Goodbye, Columbus, stories* at our first meeting, **Tuesday, September 26th**. Future monthly dates are to be determined. There will be books on reserve at Westwinds before each meeting. **Please email me at laurawalkerdunn@gmail.com if you are interested in the series and want to be included on future email announcements about the program.** All are welcome.

Pine Street Inn

Have you been a volunteer or would be interested in volunteering to serve at Pine Street Inn? Pine Street Inn is a homeless shelter primarily for men but also for women. Our church has been active in serving meals once a month to the men who are guests at the inn. We serve the guests on the fourth Friday of each month. This entails arriving at the Inn by 4:45. Parking is free. Serving begins promptly at 5 and ends immediately at 6. Your responsibility would be to put food on a plate as it moves down the line. The guest picks it up at the end. Others who have served have felt it to be very rewarding. Following are the names of those who have served so far this year. You might want to ask them about their experience. If you would like your name added to my contact list, please email or call me and I would be glad to add your name to my monthly call for help. Also, if you have any questions please call me and I would be so happy to answer any questions you might have. My phone number is 781-934-0616. Or, if you would like your name removed from my list please email or call me.

Thanks again to those of you who have served the guests at Pine Street so far this year. This includes Michael and Karen Barry, Belinda and John MacClaren, Carol and Bob Warrington, Ben and MaryAnn Murphy, Marcy Stanton, Florence Gregg, Steve Schaeffer family, Ted and Carol Sauer, Lindy and Rob Keay, Jean and Scotty Robinson, Helen and Wylie Barrow, Nancy and Ed Wadsworth, Bonnie Armstrong, Kelly Leonard, and Sandy Ford.

Blessings to all of you, Sandy Bondlow



REMINDER: RALLY DAY IS SEPTEMBER 10TH
WORSHIP WILL BE AT 10:00AM
WE RETURN TO OUR REGULAR SCHEDULE



Koinonia will meet on **Monday, September 11th at 2:00pm** at Helen Barrow's home. If you have any questions, please contact Elaine Guilfoyle.

Pilgrim Ringers

The first meeting of the pilgrim ringers will be Wednesday, Sept 13 at 6:30 in the bell room/ Christian education office.

No experience required - call /text Sue Homan (339-832-0034) with any questions. Hope to see you there



Coffee Hour

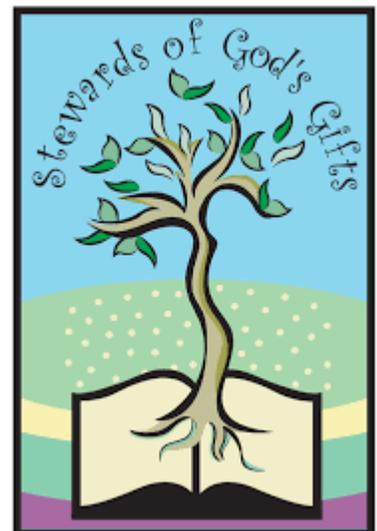
There is a new 2017-18 sign-up chart for hospitality help on the bulletin board in the vestry. "Coffee Hour" begins in September. As always, baked goods are supplied, so all you need to do is set up and make the coffee. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Ritch.

Stewardship Committee

Folks, save the date! Pilgrim Church will host a celebratory luncheon on **Sunday, October 1st**, promptly following the church service to kick off (not the Patriots, though we are cognizant of the 1 pm kickoff!) our 2018 Stewardship Service. We are asking all members to reflect on the Joy of Giving to Pilgrim Church. However, this starts with our joy as a church community. Details to follow!

Go Pilgrim! And Go Pats!

Nancy von Stackelberg
Laura Hoag Hay
Bob Mustard



Church School 2017-2018



Dear Pilgrim Church Families,

It is with great excitement we begin the new Church School year! Our fabulous new Board of Christian education for this year just had our first meeting. Joyful prayers of thanks for the following people who are giving of their time and talents to this board: David Slayter, Chair; Nancy Cooney, Lynn DeHart, Luci Scott and Katie Kane.

We have great plans for a fun and engaging year for our kids! Here are some highlights....

September 10 is Rally Sunday! Back to Church School and a Blessing of the Backpacks!

And to live as Jesus taught, we will be helping others by collecting and organizing school supplies to be donated to the Plymouth Area Coalition, the local shelter that currently houses 13 families. **They are in need of binders, pocket folders, pens, pencils, crayons, markers and notebook dividers. We will bless these too and bring them to families in need!**

Also needed for the Plymouth Area Coalition as the weather gets cooler... COMFORTERS AND TWIN SHEET SETS - gently used are fine. Bring these to church as well and we'll deliver!

So... **Come to Rally Sunday** and register your child and join us for a *Welcome Back* Celebratory Lunch following the service!

In **October**, we will **take a loud offering**. Intrigued? Stay tuned...

In **November**, we will **give thanks and praise**.

And in **December**, the **Christmas Pageant** will be on **Sunday, December 17, during WORSHIP!**

WE NEED YOUR HELP!! As always, we are SO grateful for our Church School teacher volunteers. If you are interested in teaching Sunday school, click on the Sign-up Genius below,

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409054daeab2aa20-teach>

or contact Angelique Kania at angelique.kania@gmail.com

We love seeing your children and helping to guide them to live as Jesus taught.
See you in September!

Peace,
Angelique Kania

Thank you from Rev. Emily J. Kellar

Thank you so very much for everything these past six years! Thank you for the cash gift upon my departure! Thank you for that beautiful cake and balloons! Thank you for the cards and notes! Thank you for all of your support and love!

Whatever you do in the days and years ahead do not leave the Gospel in the pews but bear it out into the world to be the Light in the darkness!

Blessings today and always!

Peace of Jesus the Christ,
Rev. Emily J. Kellar (Rev EK)





A Pilgrim's Reflection

By Laura Walker Dunn

I signed up for deacon duty for the month of January, only later to see that not only were there 5 Sundays in January for which I was responsible for running the morning services, but the first Sunday of my head deacon duties was January 1st! Turns out that New Year's Day service was of special meaning for many of us in the pews.

Rev. Peggy spoke about the recent Christmas season and its powerful story of Christ's birth. She asked us to "use the story to remind ourselves to follow the light of Christ so that we too may be transformed into His faithful people." She wondered, "What would that mean for you? More patient...more kind...more present? Would you change your priorities? Would you buy more or give more? Would you do less of something and more of something else? Would you let go of old hurts and anger? Would you forgive or ask for forgiveness?"

We were provided a piece of paper and an envelope and asked to write down our responses to these questions. On the envelope we wrote our address, sealed the note inside, and dropped it in the offering plate. She promised that we could expect the note in our mail in July, a time that seemed far, far away on that cold, wintry day

My note showed up in my mailbox six months later with the return address "Pilgrim Church". At first I wasn't sure what was in it, even though I had clearly addressed it in my own handwriting. And then I remembered and tore it open, having no clue as to what I had written that New Year's Day six months before.

In an effort to hold myself accountable, I'm sharing my responses:

Things to change-

Unrealistic expectations

Forgive

Accept

What was on my mind at the time? *Unrealistic expectations* of my children picking up the phone more often and asking about my life comes to mind. *Forgive*—probably those same children who infrequently pick up the phone and call me. *Accept*— "accept the things I cannot change" as the Serenity Prayer so powerfully reminds me. The prayer asks God to grant us the serenity to do that. Serenity is not a state I live in. It's why acceptance is on my list to begin with.

Next on my list is

Be less critical. Something I need to pray about and practice mindfully every day. Every day. But most interestingly, my last resolution is

Count my blessings

In truth, that should have been the first thing I wrote down. Because if I do that first, perhaps those other urgent concerns wouldn't even appear on my list.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. —Proverbs 3:5

September 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><u>3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Worship Communion 9:00am</u> 	<p><u>4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Labor Day - office closed</u> 	<p><u>5</u></p>	<p><u>6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Memorial Service 11:00am</u> • <u>Outreach 6:30pm Library</u> • <u>Women's AA 7:00pm Vestry</u> 	<p><u>7</u></p>	<p><u>8</u></p>	<p><u>9</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Parking Lot Use 3-9pm</u>
<p><u>10</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>REGULAR SCHEDULE RESUMES</u> • <u>Worship 10:00am</u> • <u>Baptism 10:00am</u> • <u>RALLY DAY</u> Lunch 11:00 	<p><u>11</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Koinonia 2:00</u> • <u>Search Committee 7:00pm Library</u> • <u>Deacon Mtg 7:00pm</u> 	<p><u>12</u></p>	<p><u>13</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Women's AA 7:00pm Vestry</u> 	<p><u>14</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>PCCP Board 7:00pm Library</u> 	<p><u>15</u></p>	<p><u>16</u></p>
<p><u>17</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Worship 10:00am</u> • <u>Baptism 10:00am</u> 	<p><u>18</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Search Committee 7:00pm Library</u> 	<p><u>19</u></p>	<p><u>20</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Women's AA 7:00pm Vestry</u> 	<p><u>21</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>PCCP Parents Night 6:30pm Sanctuary & classrooms</u> 	<p><u>22</u></p>	<p><u>23</u></p>
<p><u>24</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Worship 10:00am</u> 	<p><u>25</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Search Committee 7:00pm Library</u> 	<p><u>26</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Bookworms 1:30pm Library</u> • <u>Faith & Fiction 7:00pm Parlor</u> 	<p><u>27</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Women's AA 7:00pm Vestry</u> 	<p><u>28</u></p>	<p><u>29</u></p>	<p><u>30</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Pilgrim's Pantry 12-2pm</u>

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