



February



Pilgrim's Progress

February 2018

This February: We will celebrate Communion on the 4th, a baptism on the 11th, and start Lent on Ash Wednesday, Feb 14th...an interesting intersection of the Holy and the profane as it is also Valentine's Day.

For those of you who are a bit shaky on church seasons, Lent is 40 days in length, starting on Ash Wednesday and ending on Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Sunday). Technically this is 46 days BUT the 6 Sundays are not counted (every Sunday is a mini Easter and so a day of rejoicing...not fasting. And yes, traditionally Lent is a time of fasting and prayer.

This year, even as we start the season with ashes and end it with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services, I want us to spend the 40 days in between, engaging in a simple spiritual practice. This practice is to say grace before dinner every night...adding lunch would be a bonus...breakfast would be amazing! Doing this one thing, even if it is just once a day, will change your experience of Lent.

The benefit of praying before meals is one of reminding ourselves of God's grace and generosity and remembering to thank God for those things. It also helps us to insert our faith into our daily activities, something that many of mean to do but never seem to be able to do. Here now is your chance!

I hope you will join me at all of our "extra" services during lent, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Each will bring you closer to God, deepen your faith and make Easter Sunday a truly glorious experience.

Blessings,

Peggy

A Note from our Minister of Visitation

Sometimes we wonder, what can we do, what might we do, to embody love and care for others (and ourselves). If we're honest, we might admit to stepping back and shying away from a good idea that seems too much for us to handle. But we also know that there are simple ways for us to bring a smile and a moment of relief to someone we know and even to someone we don't know personally.

If you've wondered about such things, you might consider joining our monthly Prayer Group Meeting (meets on the last Friday of the month) during which we offer prayers and other forms of love and care for folks in our church family who really appreciate being prayed for or receiving a card in the mail wishing them well. Simple gestures of love and assurance.

Or you might even consider joining our Visitation Team, where you spend some time connecting with a church member who might be homebound or handling some challenges in his or her life.

There are many ways to be a gentle giver of Love and Assurance to someone who needs a friend. Think about it, pray about it, and consider joining us in reaching out to someone whose heart will feel lighter knowing they have a friend who is there for them.

Blessings to you all,

Reverend John



Christian Education

Although January started cold and snowy, we were warm and cozy with some heartwarming activities:

- The High School Youth Group helped organize and sort clothes at the Plymouth Area Coalition.
- The Middle School Youth Group got together for a movie night and watched the Blind Side.
- 3Four5 painted some inspirational Kindness Rocks messages.
- The Confirmands participated in the Youth service – then shared a lunch with their Mentors – there were 44 of us all sharing a meal in the Youth and Rainbow Rooms!
- Plans are underway for our mission trip to NYC June 24 – 30.
- And through some amazing artwork, with the help of some FABULOUS church school volunteers, the children have shown us that God keeps his promises to Abraham and Sarah, and to us!

We enter February with more fun plans:

- Super Bowl Mission Trip Fundraiser on after church on February 4!
- High School youth service on February 11, followed by a Confirmation Class
- There will be NO CHURCH SCHOOL ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH.
- Confirmation class on February 25 from 4-5
- High School Youth group on February 25 from 5-6

ALL FAMILIES WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR OUR SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE DINNER ON FEBRUARY 13 AT 6:00.

What is SHROVE TUESDAY, you ask?

So Shrove Tuesday is the last chance to indulge yourself, and to use up the foods that aren't allowed in Lent. Giving up foods: but not wasting them. In the old days there were many foods that observant Christians would not eat during Lent: foods such as meat and fish, fats, eggs, and milky foods. So that no food was wasted, families would have a feast on the shroving Tuesday, and eat up all the foods that wouldn't last the forty days of Lent without going off.

*The need to eat up the fats gave rise to the French name Mardi Gras; meaning Fat Tuesday. Pancakes became associated with Shrove Tuesday as they were a dish that could use up all the eggs, fats and milk in the house with just the addition of flour.**

**Thisischurch.com*

So JOIN US!!! February 13 at 6:00 pm for a delicious pancake dinner!

Help us raise funds for our Mission Trip AND share in some Pilgrim Church Fellowship!

As always, it is SUCH a treat and a pleasure to have your children in Church school. Keep bringing them! We LOVE to see you and them!

Peace and warmth,

Angelique

Pilgrim Church Security Updates

In response to some recent security concerns, the front doors to the church will be locked during the week. We ask that all committees and visitors use the side entrance when coming into and leaving the church during the week.

In addition, we will be locking all classrooms and music rooms. If you are planning a meeting and/or need the use of one of the rooms, be sure to contact the office to make arrangements to have the room unlocked. Thank you for your cooperation.

Adult Christian Education

Join our new

Adult Faith Formation Series

Rummage Sale Time: Facing the Reality of a Changing Church

This winter Rev. Jeff Jones will lead us in a five-session series on the impact of a changing world on the church. The sessions will encourage you to think more deeply on the changes that have taken place in the world in the last 50 years and what it means to be a church in this fast-paced time of change. How will we as Christians adapt to these new realities? Jeff asks us to change the formative questions and embrace the challenges with new paths of openness that will make the reign of God more real in this time and place.

We will meet Wednesday nights at 7 PM in the library January 31, February 7, 14, and March 7, 14. Contact Jeff at jdjones17@comcast.net or Laura Dunn at laurawalkerdunn@gmail.com to join the group or for any questions you may have.

2018 Annual Budget Meeting Overview

The annual budget meeting for Pilgrim Church was held immediately following our worship service on Sunday, January 28, 2018. Bruce Hadley, Pilgrim Church moderator, led the meeting, which Rev. Peggy opened and closed with prayer. The first order of business was an update on the progress of the Senior Minister Search Committee by Mark Barrington. Next, our church treasurer, Jim Garrett, reviewed the budget prepared in concert with the Trustees, led by Heidi Hadley, with the input of all Pilgrim Church boards and committees.

Jim concisely, but thoroughly, reviewed the highlights of this year's budget, instilling confidence in those listening that the proposed budget decisions had been made with great care and to further the ability of the church to effectively live into its mission. For example, all committees were granted their budget requests, the budget reflects the search committee's expectations for calling a new senior minister, and the budget for the Pilgrim Child Care and Preschool had been developed by the PCCP staff with the involvement of both the Trustees and the PCCP board. Jim anticipated our questions and included the answers in his presentation. In recognition of the great work done by those involved, **the approval of the budget was unanimous.**

Lynne Devnew
Pilgrim Church Clerk



Fair Trade News

It's February, the month of Chocolates and **Love** and we begin to hope that winter soon comes to an end. While we still have those snowy cold days, remember to have plenty of **Hot Cocoa Mix** on hand. You can either buy the **Equal Exchange Hot Cocoa Mix** and just add water or you can make your own with **EE Baking Cocoa**, add a few spices, and use the liquid of your choice. This is great for those who are lactose intolerant or vegan. It's gotten rave reviews and we are happy to share the recipe!
I love it with Almond milk!

All our chocolate products will be featured this month. Did you know that chocolate comes from the beans in a large pod that develops from cacao (pronounced co-cow) flowers on the trunk of the tree? Visit the Fair Trade table in the Vestry after church on **February 18** and see what a cacao pod and the beans look like.

All **SERRV** products will be on sale this month at 50% off. We still have lots of lovely items. Help us reduce inventory!

Both of our fair-trade suppliers, SERRV and Equal Exchange, have sent messages of thanks for your support of products made by artisans and grown by farmers. You can read those messages and see what your dollars have helped each company do by visiting the following sites:

SERRV: <http://bit.ly/2nj45kL>

Equal Exchange: <http://bit.ly/2neYqN5>

See you around the Fair Trade Table on **February 18th**,

The Fair Trade Ministry Team



Senior Search Committee

Your Senior Minister Search Committee has had a full schedule of interviews with potential candidates in the month of January! We expect to wrap up “first round” interviews by mid-February and will focus on selecting a small group for secondary interviews. While we expect to receive more ministerial profiles over the coming weeks, the plan is to work towards a final set of candidates in late February into March. The Search Team will keep you informed on how we are progressing towards this plan and we ask for your prayers during this time of discernment.

The Senior Minister Search Committee



Ash Wednesday Service
Wednesday, February 14th
7:00pm

Music Messages ~ Think Spring! Think Sing!

Young Singers:

Rehearsals are beginning soon for our Young Singers in preparation for our Palm Sunday and Easter services. Rehearsals will be in the Parlor off the Vestry following the church services on February 18, 25, and March 4, 11, and 18. We will be singing on Palm Sunday (March 25) at 10:00 am and on Easter Sunday (April 1) at 11:00 am.

Angelique and I are continuing to work on special music presented by our youth. I have met with some of our confirmation class members and presented some vocal options. We hope to have high school students singing the Introit and Anthem for one or two of our upcoming services. If you are in high school, please consider coming and joining in singing music that is a different style from the traditional.

Senior Choir:

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! It's time for our seasonal and “limited engagement” singers to join in celebrating Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem followed by a week of trial and culminating in his joyous resurrection on Easter Sunday. Rehearsals begin Thursday February 8 at 7:00 pm in the choir room to prepare choral music for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday (11:00 am).

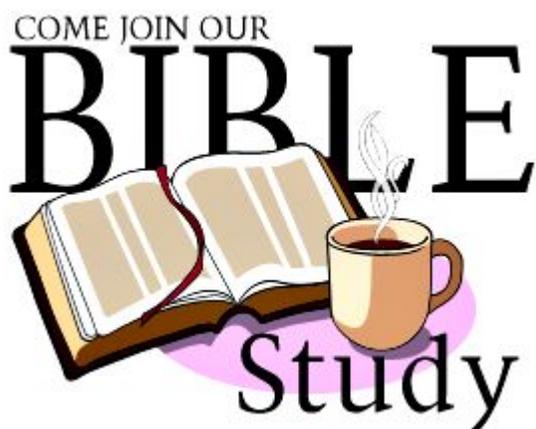
Concert Announcement:

Pilgrim Church is hosting the "Friends in Song" concert in our sanctuary Friday, March 9, 2018, at 7:00 pm. The group has performed here before and includes as members Carol Cybulska and Lynne Hare. This year's concert is entitled "Till All the Seas Gang Dry: Shanties and Celtic Songs". Following the concert, the Music Board is hosting a St. Patrick's theme reception in the Vestry to greet the performers. Come and enjoy the music and the community reception following.

Watch for upcoming flyers about the event!!

Marcia

Marcia Ritschard-Sell, Interim Choir Director/Organist
(music@uccduxbury.org)



Come join the weekly Bible Study **Thursdays at 10:00 AM** in the library, led by Rev. Tom Ritschard-Sell. **This is an ongoing event where you can attend each week or as your schedule allows.**

If you have an interest in discovery of your Faith, discussing the many issues raised about Faith in the Bible, a desire to argue with the Bible or are searching for Faith and how the Bible relates, plan on joining us in this endeavor on Thursdays.

This session we are looking at the Bible with guidance from the book by Edward G. Simmons: ***Talking Back to the Bible A***

Historian's Approach To Bible Study. Some of the chapters include interesting topics entitled: *What the Bible Says; Why Jesus Was Not a Christian; Was Jesus the Samaritan?; Who is the Neighbor?; What to Give Caesar; and even more interesting teases like, Did Jesus Use the Bathroom?*

Super Bowl Party Food

Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser

Who will win is in God and Tom Brady's hands but what we will EAT during the game is in ours!

Please join us **this Sunday February 4th** after the service in the vestry to pick up some **delicious and freshly prepared Super Bowl party staples**. The youth will be prepping the fresh pizzas by hand and we will have subs to go and other party appetizers as well! **All proceeds contribute towards this year's youth mission trip to NYC.**



Support the Youth Mission Trip & pick up all your party food at church and enjoy the game!

Go Patriots!



Connections

By Laura Walker Dunn

Faith?

Recently, the subject of faith and what that means to us Christians has come up in a number of settings at Pilgrim Church. In our Wednesday morning Bible study, we raised the topic of Jesus's divinity. Rev. Tom asked us, "Was Jesus human?" And we were off and running with what that means. Was he divine? Yes, we all agreed. Well then, how much of him was human and how much of him divine? Not surprisingly, we didn't have a definitive answer for that question, one scholars and theologians have been grappling with for centuries.

Which then led us to a discussion of taking things on faith. I mentioned to our group a quote I read years ago that helped me with the concept. Writer Anne Lamott always seems to get right to the heart of the matter. She writes

"the opposite of faith is not doubt, but certainty. Certainty is missing the point entirely. Faith includes noticing the mess, the emptiness and discomfort, and letting it be there until some light returns."

My Tuesday night Faith and Fiction series at the church concluded with a discussion of Marilynne Robinson's acclaimed (and Pulitzer Prize winning) novel *Gilead*. We all agreed it was one of the most moving and beautiful books we'd ever read. In the novel, the main character John Ames is an aging minister with a young wife and child. He has just been diagnosed with a heart condition that means he does not have long to live. In coming to terms with his future, he writes a long letter to his 7-year-old son, initially to write down the family history for the boy. But eventually it becomes more of a meditation.

Here is a passage in the letter where Ames is advising his son:

"So, my advice is this---don't look for proofs. Don't bother with them at all. They are never sufficient to the question, and they are always a little impertinent, I think, because they claim for God a place within our conceptual grasp. And they will likely sound wrong to you even if you convince someone else with them. That is very unsettling over the long term.... I'm not saying never doubt or question. The Lord gave you a mind so that you would make honest use of it. I'm saying you must be sure that the doubts and questions are your own, not, so to speak, the mustache and walking stick that happen to be the fashion of any particular moment."

Such good stuff our discussions. Though we don't solve much, we appreciate learning about and growing our faith. But sometimes, when I feel a need to know rather than accept, I am reminded of a favorite poem by Emily Dickinson:

“Faith” is a fine invention
for gentlemen who see
But Microscopes are prudent
In an Emergency!

After all, I'm human....



February

- 2 Doug Wiley
- 11 Neil Fields
- 11 Dick Wonkka
- 17 Don DeHart
- 27 Chasey Sampson

Prayer Requests

Praise and Prayer List

People listed below need our continual prayers for God's blessing and are not restricted to church members. Names are usually listed for two weeks unless we are notified otherwise.

Prayers of Healing

Ellen Barrett	Priscilla Wonkka	Joan	Anna Cole
David Ryder	Helen	Nancy	Lindsey
Emma	Bob	Bob W	Caggie Houghton
John	Jeannine Ferro	Jason	Walter Baker
Laurie W.	Jill	Barbara Schultz	Betty Ashley
Jim Grim	Stet Howland	Janice Galka	Teagan
Toni Fields	Bill	Nicholas	Barbara Roberts
Jen Henriques-Forker	Bebe Watson	Ross	Elaine Plakias
Margaret	Brandon	Donald Porteus	Jim Pye

Continued next page

Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Physician, look with your gracious favor upon all who are ill. Bless all means used for their recovery. Stretch forth your hand, according to your will, and restore them to health and strength, we pray, that they may live to praise you for your goodness and grace, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Prayers of Support and Safety for those serving our country

David Whitney, Jackson Sinnott, Christian Clapp,
Jeff Warrington, Brian Kelley, Andrew Shea

We pray for Christ's peace to rest upon communities in our country and throughout the world, for all those who serve the cause of peace, for members of our armed services, aid workers, volunteers and missionaries. We pray for Christ's mercy to rest upon refugee communities around the world and for our homeless brothers and sisters in America. We pray for all those persecuted for their faith, for our fellow Christians throughout the world, and for members of other faith traditions as well. May the grace of God rest upon them all.

The Healing Prayer Ministry welcomes your prayer requests. Prayer request cards are available in the pews and in the narthex and may be placed in the wooden prayer box or the Sunday offering when complete.

[Click here for the February 2018 calendar](#)