

The Crier



Pilgrim Congregational Church of Taunton
45 Broadway, Taunton, MA 02780, Phone: 508-822-1472

Sharing Christ's Love through Worship, Fellowship, and Missions in the Congregational Way.

Worship Service Sunday 10:00 A.M.
Contemporary Worship Service Saturday 6:30 P.M.

Easter is fast approaching and, while I love the hope that Easter brings of a warmer time of year, I also love its message. It is a wonderful opportunity for reflecting on a quintessential message of faith, hope and love in our Lord. One of my favorite portions of the Easter story is after Christ has risen. He begins appearing to those who knew Him best on earth to share the good news of his resurrection. One such story is that of Mary who, while heartbroken, visits the tomb of Christ (John 20:11-16):

"11But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping... 13They [two angels present] asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him." 14At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. 15"Woman," he said, "why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." 16Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means teacher).

So many individuals in our society are like Mary; they can't stop weeping for sorrow, and they can't visibly see Jesus. These individuals find it hard to see hope, even when it is near, due to the constant annoyance of physical need or the very real emotional and mental blockades that are so often imposed by hopelessness.

However, the good news is that, through small gifts of compassion, we can act as Jesus' strong, commanding and yet loving voice to Mary (or a little child in Haiti, a battered mother in Taunton, or a homeless man in Boston) saying "Christ (your hope) is near."

As we offer our gifts to Missions this Easter season, let us do so with a determination to not let another soul weep any longer because of hopelessness. Know that your gift might be the one that provides hope for someone desperately in need. Take time today, through your giving, to spread the Easter message that, though the pain of Good Friday is indeed very real, the darkest hour is always just before dawn and Easter Sunday is sure to come.

Blessings,

-Rae

Rev. Raefield(Rae) Perteet, Interim Pastor

INTRODUCTION Of RAEFIELD (RAE) PERTEET

Hello, my name is Raefield Perteet and, for those of you who are not yet aware, I am your newly elected Interim Minister here at Pilgrim Congregational Church. I have so far been enjoying my worship and fellowship with the individuals, families and the larger family of Pilgrim. What has been particularly enjoyable for me is being able to hear the wonderful and diverse stories that have led so many of you to join in fellowship with Pilgrim.

As one writer has said, “Journeys, like artists, are born and not made. A thousand differing circumstances contribute to them...” in spite of how rocky some of the journeys to this point may have been one may agree with Teresa of Avila that, “The feeling still remains that God is (in our lives) on the journey too.” Regardless of how direct or varied the set of circumstances that led you here may have been I for one am elated that your journeys have rested here at Pilgrim. I have enjoyed meeting many of you and look forward to seeing and meeting others. I am excitedly looking forward to our mutual journey together.

My personal journey leading me to Pilgrim is no different than many of yours – it is a conspiring of seemingly random events so impossible that, in the end, it may only be Divine Providence. I would like to take a moment to share parts of that journey with you.

I grew up in the church. Some of my earliest memories are of long weekend drives with family, as my father (a Minister) would preach at various churches around Michigan. While it is not uncommon for individuals who are exposed to the complexities of church at an early age to eventually pull away in an attempt to obtain the alluring and elusive concept of freedom apart from God, I was not repelled by immersion into the church but instead my faith was deepened. At an early age, I learned to love and embrace the nuances of real authentic worship. To sit in a pew and observe individuals interact with God through via sermonic presentation and worship, for me was fascinating. Over time, church became meaningful to me and I began to develop my own personal relationship with God distinct from my family.

With such involvement in the church and devotion to God, as one might expect, I was called early to the ministry. I was eighteen years old when I heard God’s call to the ministry, and served faithfully in my church as a minister for 3 years. In the summer of 2003, I became an ordained elder of the Church of God in Christ.

Since my original call into ministry, three aspects of my personal journey have contributed significantly to arriving here at Pilgrim. The first of these is my educational background, second is a composite of various relational experiences I have had, and the third is a continued call into the ministry.

I received a Bachelors Degree in Management from Oral Roberts University (ORU) and, while I was there, also minored in Old Testament theology / Hebraic studies. ORU became the impetus for a personal desire to cultivate broader worship experiences with various faith communities. I found out that the underlying connectivity which unites all associations and denominational faiths is a deep love and commitment to God and Christian community. It is, in part, this desire to experience Christian fellowship and worship with the larger body of Christ which pushed me to continue with my religious studies.

After ORU, for a year and a half I served alongside my father (now a Pastor) in ministry at Vessels of Life Church in Lansing, MI. Before leaving Michigan, I was offered a position as Co-pastor of a church there. However, I felt that, in order to reach a broader audience of people and widen my understanding of the Gospel, I would benefit from continued studies. I decided to do this at Boston University, largely as a result of becoming acquainted (at ORU) with the life and works of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (also a graduate of BU) His teachings and commitment to serving others became an inspiration to me. While studying at BU, I was able to obtain a Masters Degree in Theological Studies and, along the way, was also privileged to take courses at Harvard Divinity and Andover Newton Theological Seminary. All of which has helped to broaden my understanding of how to engage in true ecumenical dialogue.

The second important aspect of my journey is characterized by the rich experiences that I have had. My heart has found comfort in serving those in need so, for three years, I found the wonderful pleasure of being able to serve and direct others to serve the homeless shelters in downtown Tulsa, OK. Since then, I have served individuals in ministry in a wide capacity, from painting youth shelters in Vladivostok, Russia to preaching in their prisons, to youth seminars in Canada, and various freelance and worship experiences in churches all across America. What I have learned is that God is the same in Seoul, Korea as He is in Louisville, Kentucky. And that no matter where we are as Christians, what binds us together is, the love we “share one to another.” (John 13:35)

The last important aspect of the journey that has led me here is a continuation of God’s personal call in my life to go out and, through service, spread His message of truth to those in need of His loving touch. This past May, after finishing my studies at Boston University, I felt called to re-enter the full time ministry. In the process of discerning where God would direct me to serve, I found a wonderful small community of Christian believers at Pilgrim Congregational Church. Coming in for the first time it just felt right and after meeting with the Deacons and other members, I felt a longing to worship with you more. I was heavily struck by the quality of community I found here at Pilgrim. I later learned that, like any journey, Pilgrim’s was not without a few bumps in the road, but the church’s strength and unity has been impressive testimony to me.

As you well know after discussion and discerning on your own part, it is at this point that our paths have joined. I thank God that they did. From this point onward, I pray that you are as excited as I in having the privilege to continue the next phase of our Christian journeys together. Regardless of how frayed our past, I echo the words of Mordecai to Queen Esther (Esther 4:14b): “perhaps [each of us] were born for such a time as this.” It is not the pains of the past nor the fears of the present that matter but, with hopeful heart, we can look together towards a bright future. And Pilgrim with God continuing the Journey with us our next steps are sure to be some of our best ones.

Blessings,

-Rae

Rev. Raefield(Rae) Perteet

Board of Education

Susan Orsini (Co-Chair) Beth Czepiel, Nancy Witherell, Lynne McIntyre, Sue Keogh

The Board of Ed is looking for volunteers to help with Saturday's Children's Church and Sunday School. No experience necessary, just a love for children.

Mission News

Board of Missions: Lisa Wezowicz and Greta Ferreira, co-chairs, Judy Sylvester, Jenny McNee, Kris Maher, Maria Coutts, Jim Ritchie –Treasurer

Ongoing Collections:

We have a new collection box to put your Box Tops for Education in. The box is on the shelf under our bulletin board. Box tops can be found on General Mills and Betty Crocker products. Remember to bring in Campbell's Labels for Education, aluminum can tabs, Shaw's receipts and used ink cartridges. We will donate all these items to organizations that use the money raised from them to fund their programs.

We are no longer collecting used eyeglasses. Two places that you may take your used glasses to are Eyecare-Eyewear at 45 Cohannet St., Taunton (508) 824-4100) and Vision Works Express on Rt. 44 at the Shaw's Plaza in Raynham (508-822-8692).

Don't throw away paper and cardboard used at church!!! WE have a recycling bin in the office.

The bottle and can drive to benefit local charities has begun. Please bring in returnable bottles and cans (no glass please) to place in our trash can in Fellowship Hall. This month's collection will benefit the Winslow's Animal Sanctuary in Norton – a home for abused and neglected animals.

Food Donations

Please bring in food items for the food pantry box and for the emergency food supply cabinet. Any non-perishable food item is welcome. Items specifically needed for the emergency food supply are items for children, such as cereal, kid's pasta, graham crackers, boxed macaroni and cheese, peanut butter and jelly, apple sauce and canned soups.

American Red Cross

Thank you to anyone who gave blood during the American Red Cross blood drive on Wed. February 124th. A big thanks to all the volunteers who helped with the registration of donors and at the snack table.

Missions has donated \$1000.00 to the American Red Cross for Haiti relief.

Thank you for all those who helped deliver Valentine baskets to the shut-ins.

Board of Deacons

Peter Witherell (Chairperson), Carol Ritchie (Vice Chairperson), Steve Kosta (Secretary), Charlene Sisson (Treasurer), Bob Hunt, Shirley Ragusa, Lynne McIntyre, Deborah Cozzens.

Reminder: *The loose money offering on Communion Sunday is given to the Deacons Fund to help the local poor.*

February 15, 2010

From the Deacons...

Based on the results of a Deacons' questionnaire handed out in January, to which 45 people responded, a motion was made at our Annual Meeting (January 17) to offer our Interim Minister position to Raefield Perteet. As you will recall, we were hoping to be able to make such an offering to one of the guest ministers who provided pulpit supply over the past four months. After having Rae with us for a total of six weekends (12 services) and discussion at the Annual Meeting, it was finally decided that our Interim Minister offer to him would: a) be for an unspecified amount of time, b) not preclude him from eligibility for our settled Pastor position, c) provide a monthly salary that was within our planned budget, and d) be contingent upon background checks. Rae has accepted our offer and essentially began his Interim Ministry with us on February 2. We have completed the NACCC background check but – surprise, surprise – the State of Massachusetts has yet to provide us with the results of theirs. Since the NACCC check looked to be the more comprehensive of the two we conducted, no real “surprises” are expected from the State, and we welcome Rae to our congregation.

On January 31, our Pastor Emeritus, Rev. Dr. Fred Elder began leading a series of membership classes (four total) for new members, and Rae is one of four officially attending that class, so we are off to a good start. I use the word “officially” because a number of other church members (including me) have also been attending the classes. Given the interest, it seems increasingly appropriate that we should offer a 3-part seminar on “Congregationalism” in March. Along the lines of the membership classes, but exploring in greater depth, we will begin by looking at how Congregationalism got started, in general, and at our church in particular. In the second part, we will take a detailed look at our own church history and how our expression of Congregationalism has evolved. Finally, in the third session we will look at our future, based on what the past can teach us and what the present brings us. Let's face it, since adopting our mission statement “Sharing Christ's love through worship, fellowship and missions in the Congregational way”, a great deal has been said about “worship, fellowship and missions” (check out the brochures as you enter the side door), but the “Congregational way” part of the statement hasn't received so much attention. We haven't set exact times yet for the 3-part seminar, as we are looking for input from all Saturday and Sunday worshippers who would like to attend. My own thought is that the evening of March 7 (Sunday) or 8 (Monday) might be a good starting point, but let us know.

In closing, the Deacons fondly remember Honorary Deacon-for-Life Peg Rhodes, who passed away on January 26, and whose memorial service was held at our church on February 6. Like so many others of the Rhodes family over the years, her life and dedication to our church were truly inspirational.

*Respectfully submitted,
Peter Witherell
Chairman, Board of Deacons*

Elizabeth Pole News

Elizabeth Pole Society

Arlene Pimenta gave the Quilt Ladies the 12 squares which make up the top of this year's quilt. In honor of her generosity we have named the Quilt – Arlene's Gift. We have enjoyed putting together and are now ready to start quilting. Come join us on Wednesdays as we quilt away!

We will be having the special quilt drawing for "Arlene's Gift" on Palm Sunday, Sunday, March 28th. If interested, please contact the church.

Book Group

The Women's Book Group is reading "The Elegance of the Hedge Hog by Muriel Barbery. They will have a discussion on March 4 of the above book, followed by a luncheon at a local restaurant.

Upcoming Events

The E. Pole Society will be holding a tea on Saturday, May 8th at 1:00 p.m.

More information will follow. Save the date!

Greater Taunton Clergy Association Ecumenical Lenten Services 2010

The Greater Taunton Clergy Association follows a long tradition with Ecumenical services on Thursday evenings during the season of Lent. This year the theme for the services will be "Repentance and Forgiveness". The services are held in a different church each week, with the preacher coming from another area church. The public is cordially invited to attend these services as make our spiritual journey through the season of Lent.

The evening begins with a pot luck supper at 6:30 PM. Those attending are asked to bring a dish to share, as well as their own place setting.

The service is held at 7:30 PM. An offering will be received at each service to benefit the work of Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and the St. Francis Samaritan House Shelter.

Date	Host Church	Preacher
Feb. 18	First Cong. Ch. of Raynham	Rev. Dr. Ernest L. Vermont
Feb. 25	Memorial Methodist Church	Rev. Dr. Joel Parke
Mar. 4	Holy Family in E. Taunton	Rev. Barry Kimbrough
Mar. 11	Pilgrim Congregational Ch.	Rev. James Tilbe
Mar. 18	Union Congregational Church	Rev. Teresa Fernandes
Mar. 25	Baptist Church of All Nations	Pastor Edna Isaac

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An Ecumenical Good Friday Service will be held at St. Thomas Episcopal Church on April 2 from Noon – 1:00 PM followed by light lunch of clam chowder and hot cross buns.

THANK YOU!!!

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the students of Bristol Plymouth Technical High School's electrical program, along with their instructors for all of their hard work in repairing and updating our facility.

March Coffee Hour

<i>March 7</i>	<i>Volunteer</i>
<i>March 14</i>	<i>Board of Missions</i>
<i>March 21</i>	<i>Board of Deacons</i>
<i>March 28</i>	<i>Board of Managers</i>

CRIER DEADLINE FOR APRIL INFORMATION

Kindly note that the DEADLINE for submitting information for the APRIL Crier is March 15, 2010.

Fellowship Groups

Fellowship is one of the backbones of the Christian life as well as our Congregational tradition. This fall you are invited to check out one of the many wonderful, warm, and inviting groups here at Pilgrim. We all have different worship and fellowship needs, so we encourage you to find a group that is right for you!



Fellowship Group	Place	Time	Contact Person / Additional Information
Christian Meditation	Chapel	Wed. 6 – 7 pm	Sylvia Thornton (508-947-3160)
Elizabeth Pole Society	Parlor	Wed. 10 – 11:30 am	Carol Ritchie (508-824-5011)
Bible Study	Parlor	Thurs. 10-11:00 am	Barbara Hunt (508) 822-0683
Contemporary Worship Team	Parlor	Wed. 7 – 8:30 pm	Dan LeBrun (508-837-9482)
Pilgrim Choir	Fellowship Hall	Tues. 7 – 8:30 pm	Jim Moore (508-285-6699) <i>Now Meeting</i>
Men's Breakfast	Fellowship Hall	Wed. 8 – 9 am	Bob McIntyre (508-824-9871)

BIBLE STUDY

“I thoroughly believe in a university education for both men and women; but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible.”
William Lyon Phelps

Bible Study meets on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome!

REMINDER

Reminder about Event Planning:

We have many different groups and activities taking place at the church each week. If you have an event (big or small) that you are planning, please remember to check first with Dawn Matthews in the church office to avoid any scheduling conflicts. Most events are also now conveniently listed on our website at www.PilgrimCC.net.

Church Office Hours

The Church Office is open **Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm.**

Phone: (508) 822-1472 Email: pilgrimcc@verizon.net

Change of address, telephone number or email; please let us know so we can update our contact information.

In Memoriam

Sympathy is deeply extended to the family of Dorothy Pegram Rhodes, who recently departed life on January 26, 2010. Mrs. Rhodes' memorial service was conducted on Saturday, February 6th with family and friends in attendance to show their love. She was a very active member of the church, having become a member on March 27, 1932, and becoming a Deacon for Life in 2001.

Prayer Concerns

Thanksgiving for:

Children and Youth of Our Church

The life, death, and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ

Men and women serving in the Military today and their families

Prayers for Healing:

Susan Sheperd

Kathy Albert

Emerson Strange

June Moore

Paula North

David Dean

Susan Lee

Carol Murphy

Kristen Peirce

Dick Estes

Donna Perkins

Lynn Singley

Sheila Cook

Judy Sylvester

Fred Elder

Prayers for Comfort

The Family of Sevo Dimitri

Prayers for Loving Guidance:

Our church family, Boards, Committees, Pastor

Prayer for our country and world peace

Our President that God will guide him with his decisions

Missions – local, national, and international

To list a prayer concern or joy, call the church office at (508) 822-1472 or email us at pilgrimcc@verizon.net. All prayer requests will be printed in the Sunday bulletin for one month and once in the Crier. If you need to renew a prayer request, please contact the church office.



Easter Plants
Sunday, April 4, 2010

The cost this year will be Lily \$9.00, Tulip \$7.50, Daffodil \$8.50 each.
Please order your plants by March 29, 2010 deadline.

Fill out the form below and include it with your payment. Checks should be made payable to *Pilgrim Church Flower Committee*.

Your participation in helping to decorate the sanctuary is most appreciated by the Flower Committee.

Order Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Number of plants:

Lily: _____ @ \$9.00 each

Daffodil: _____ @ \$8.50 each

Tulip: _____ @ \$7.50 each

Total Amount \$ _____

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Given by:

Disposition of Plant(s):

_____ I will pick up plant(s) after church.

_____ Flower Committee may deliver to shut in