

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

AUGUST 2020

2020: A Summer for a New Vision

August's Theme: "The Lessons in the Garden"
Sundays at 10:00 AM

August 2nd: "Home: The Vision & the Reality"

August 9th: "Gardens Teach Hope"

August 16th: "Humility"

August 23rd: "Patience"

August 30th: "Generosity"

**View on Facebook Live or any time on
www.pcchp.org or on YouTube**



Often, in life, our best ideas are not our own exactly. They evolve. They come to us. They happen in our midst. The best thing we can do is let them evolve, and try not to get in the way. Sometimes the hardest moments in history also provide fertile soil for new initiative, new ministries and new ideas. At Pilgrim Church we have been fortunate to be witnesses of a worship experience that began as an expedience and has grown to something new. It reminds us of the wisdom of the Apostle Paul when he proclaimed that God can indeed work through all things for good.

This week in Church Council I presented a report on our online worship services and the ministry I see evolving even now. Something in this moment has made many people eager to seek out a service that can help them cope with the uncertainty. They have time to search for a service in a church like ours that they may never visit in person. Our services have reached into thousands of homes from Virginia and Pennsylvania to New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Many hundreds of views have been recorded over the last week.

We did not plan to have an online ministry. We started hoping to stay connected to you here on Cape Cod. But now that this ministry has expanded we are grateful and humbled by it. This week after reading my report, (see page 3), the Church Council voted unanimously to support this new Online Ministry wholeheartedly. While we don't know exactly where God is leading us we are pleased to tell you we are now receiving letters from people who are watching weekly. I am very grateful to our camera crew - Matt Scinto, Ann Tucker, Becky Sullivan and Al Eaton. Our music tech for every service has been Peggy O'Connor.

Here, on page 3, is the story of how this new ministry evolved. Where it goes, only God knows. We will keep you posted.

Rev. Susan

Online Worship Report

When we stopped having in-person worship in March our last public service in the sanctuary was held on March 8, 2020. It happened to be a concert with a local folk singer. Then, on March 15 we announced at the end of the week that the coronavirus COVID 19 had become a public health concern and possibly a crisis in Boston and New York. Our denomination and state government was urging churches not to hold worship services in person. With advice from Deacons we decided to suspend public worship.

Building on the strength of a 3-year habit of televising our worship services on Facebook Live we quickly suspended worship and began to create a service for Facebook that people could watch from home. We realized from the beginning that this service would be very different from our regular services. Over the next month, we created a service for people to view online. To appeal to people sitting at home in front of a computer we decided to shorten many aspects of the service.



When the pandemic spread to Massachusetts we were in the middle of Lent and doing a mid-week Prayer Service. Because of the pandemic, we decided to continue the prayer service every week into the summer as well. (It includes 2 readings, a prayer, a scripture passage and several quiet hymns.)

During May we polled the congregation about whether they were pleased with the online worship options. From the survey we heard from 57 family units in our congregation. Of that group 26 families said that they were watching worship weekly.

There was a general level of satisfaction with the worship services. We believe that the strength and satisfaction of the audience for these online worship experiences had an impact on the survey results. It revealed that most of our members were not interested in returning to the sanctuary until there is a vaccine for the virus. That conclusion might change and we plan to continue asking for your ideas and input. For now, at least, there still seems to be fairly widespread approval of the online worship services and enthusiasm for them.

From Facebook statistics we also learned that there was a larger than expected audience for our services from April through June. Facebook indicates that most Sunday services attract an audience of 260 - 30, depending on the Sunday. More recently we have "boosted" the services on Facebook. Boosting is a system for paid advertising where a customer pays Facebook to promote the service. You can choose what geography, age range or economic status you want in your audience. By boosting four services so far we have had a chance to reach as many as 8,000 - 9,000 for each service over the course of a month of boosting. (It costs \$100 to boost a service for a month.) Facebook provides data about who is watching, in what locations, in which age groups etc. We are just starting to evaluate this data.

Don't Do this Alone!



There are many ways to stay involved...

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Worship...



2020: A Summer for New Visions

For the rest of the summer our sermons will continue to focus on the lessons we are learning in this time of adversity. No one really learns in times of ease, but sadly, it takes true adversity to teach us the most precious pieces of wisdom in our lives. The Bible was written about people whose faith was founded originally in the midst of a time of true adversity, a journey through a literal wilderness. But for most of us it is the wilderness trips we take that open doors to new understanding about life and faith. This summer our sermons have focused on the lessons of this pandemic, i.e. how to find real community, how to shape a more just society, and how to imagine the future.

Challenges like this pandemic offer vision and hope if you look closely enough. Every wilderness experience opens our eyes to new questions, new insights and new hope for the future.

Sermons for August: The Lessons in the Garden



All summer the sermons are focused on the lessons we are learning together from this pandemic. We are looking at the things we can learn as we shelter in our homes. In July the sermon series was about Home. In August the sermons will have a Garden theme. Lessons we are learning from the pandemic line up with the lessons you learn in the garden.

Worship...

August 2nd: Home: "The Vision and the Reality" (*Luke 4:14-30*)



What do we do when home was not a happy place? How do we reconcile our real experiences or challenge with society's images of some ideal home life? How do we navigate all these mixed feelings when we are forced to live in cramped quarters together with our families for extended period of time? Let's talk about how much we all want a home where we feel safe and loved and how hard it can be to go home when bad memories make it hard to be at peace when we are at home. Jesus' experience of going home to Nazareth holds wisdom for us as we navigate our own homecomings.

August 9th: "Gardens Teach Hope"
(*Genesis 2 Garden of Eden*)



When you plant seeds you take a leap of faith. We humans are people of hope and whatever we have to face we hold onto hope in good and bad times. The Bible story begins with stories of Creation that tell of God's hope for us. As a species we are born bathed in God's hope for us and for the future. It's an important reminder of this core strength in human beings, **Hope**.

Worship...

August 16th: "Humility" (*Matthew 13:3-9 Parable of the Soil*)



So much about life and gardens humbles us. Despite our dreams and plans we grow to see that we cannot control the outcomes of so much that we plant in earnest hope. Part of living a good life is being resilient when we are humbled by the changes in life we cannot control.

August 23: "Patience" (*Matthew 13:24-30 Parable of the Weeds*)



Life is complicated and messy. Blessings are so often bundled up with challenges. We only thrive when we learn to accept it all in one bundle. Jesus teaches us how to find the grace to do that.

Worship...

August 30th: "Generosity" (*Ruth 2, Harvest for All*)



When Ruth became a widow she had to glean in the fields to survive but the Israelites planned for those who had less and made sure that everyone with a field to harvest would take care of those with less. What does the Bible teach us about how to ensure that all people have a chance to prosper? And how can those lessons shape our lives right now?

And don't forget the mid-week pause to refresh



Our prayer worship will continue to be held on Wednesdays at 6 PM. As with all services, you may attend at the actual time via Facebook or at any time on our website - www.pcchp.org, or via YouTube.

Services can be viewed live on Facebook Live, or at any time on our website (pcchp.org) or YouTube. Written transcripts and audio CDs are also available. Contact Val at 203-464-4470 or office@pcchp.org to receive either in the mail.

Engage...

...in fellowship after Sunday services



Rev. Susan hosts a ZOOM coffee hour at 11:00 AM after Sunday's 10:00 AM worship. You can participate via your computer or phone. Call her directly if you would like to join in (xxx-xxx-xxxx).

Connect...

...join a POD



Pilgrim Outreach Districts are a fun way to stay in touch. Each POD has a captain who will be sure you are informed and included. To join, contact Val 203-464-4470 or office@pcchp.org. (P.S. You don't need a computer!)

Minister ...

...by singing to our shut-ins



Our newest ministry during this pandemic was launched two weeks ago. We spread the word that we needed singers to serenade our members who are quarantined at home, and 13 of you responded. We are a rain or shine group, and on July 17th seven singers sang under umbrellas for Marjorie Welsh. We were truly were 'singin' in the rain'. Next week we will be singing for Nancy Clapp. Anyone who would like to join in should contact Val (203-464-4470 or office@pcchp.org). The group sings twice a month, and always wears masks, . All are welcome.



Enrich...

...by joining a study group



Doug Wheeler's ZOOM group will continue to study the Psalms through the end of August. Join them every other Tuesday (8/11 & 8/25) @ 9 AM. Contact Doug at drwccdm@gmail.com.



"The Road we Make" -- Part Two.

Based on Brian McLaren's book "We Make the Road by Walking," Revs. Peggy O'Connor and Ed Farrell-Starbuck will continue their ZOOM discussion group on Sundays at 4 PM. Call Val @ 203-464-4470 or email office@pcchp.org to find out how to acquire the book and/or sign up.

Support...

...by shopping at our yard sales



The two sales this summer have yielded over \$2,000! Please drop by our next sale to check out our new bargains! (Late August date soon to be announced.)



...by making a donation to help us continue to improve the quality of our online services. (Specifics will be posted on our website soon!)

Share memories...



In her July 24th EBLAST message, Rev. Susan mentioned that the antique table in the hallway outside of the sanctuary was donated to Rev. Monbleau by Mr. and Mrs. Davenport West. During the winter months, the Wests resided in New York City in the famed Dakota Apartments (aka home of John Lennon and Yoko Ono). But throughout the summer, their hearts belonged to Harwich Port, where they faithfully attended Pilgrim Church. Here are Karin Larson's memories of the Wests on Neel Road.

Childhood memories of the Wests on Neel Rd., By Karin Larson

I particularly remember that the Wests had a cute wooden station wagon that they used when they were on Neel Road! The pine lot we now own had a log cabin owned by the NY seamstress to Wests. She originally had our house, but then had a log cabin built when my mother bought #93. We purchased the log cabin after she died & we summered there, renting our main house until early 60's when we switched to renting the cabin. (We experienced the horror of a fire in 2002 when plumber didn't correctly clean floor furnace piping! Fortunately there were no renters at time.)

I never knew in the years the Wests were here that they attended Pilgrim. Was much younger then! Now I'll think of them, and fond summer memories in Harwich Port whenever I pass by the table & chairs. (My mother & I attended an auction of their estate furnishings managed by their son. Bids came in even from Europe!)



Please do share your memories and old photos. We hope to make this a monthly feature. Contact Val @203-464-4470 or office@pcchp.org.

Share memories...



Anticipate...

...the return of music to the sanctuary



CCCO August Update

Dear friends,

Thanks for hanging in there with us the past few months as we tried to make our April Season Finale happen. Even if the restrictions on indoor gatherings were lifted, we still would not feel comfortable putting on a live concert and are concerned about the safety of our audience members, musicians, and volunteers. As of right now, we will be once again postponing our August 23rd *Toward the Sea* concert and will make a determination in the next few months about when we can properly reschedule this concert. If you purchased individual tickets for this event we will be in touch.

The GOOD NEWS is that we are finding a way to play music for you all and are putting the finishing touches on premiering a virtual concert. We plan on sharing the details of this event in the next week, so stay tuned!

Thank you for your kind notes and support during this pandemic. It is a difficult time for music organizations but we are constantly adapting and will be sharing the talents of our great CCCO crew with you soon!

Be well,
Matt Scinto

Donate...

Why I give to Pilgrim Church

At Pilgrim Congregational Church, we often talk about our love for the church and for each other. This is why we chose Pilgrim, and why we support it. I sometimes wonder, if I were a visitor or I were new to the church, what would I be thinking? 'I'm glad you guys love each other, but what about me? What's here for me?'

I offer a brief and completely objective list of reasons that I choose to support Pilgrim Church.

I support Pilgrim Church because of the preaching -- intelligent and well-delivered, at the same time it touches your soul. If you didn't know already, Rev. Susan has written a book about preaching!

I support Pilgrim Church because of the music program -- I've visited a lot of churches, and I believe our music program is one of the finest on the Cape. And now we have our own orchestra!

I support Pilgrim Church because of our outreach and mission work, there's an opportunity for everyone to get involved!

I support Pilgrim Church because we have opportunities to learn -- like our Sunday lunches and our Lenten programs.

And yes, I support Pilgrim Church because we care about, and care for each other. We are commissioning the congregation to carry on the ministry of the open and Affirming movement, and we have inaugurated our Caring Ministries program to care for individual members.

Pilgrim Church is the whole package, and I urge you to support this church as I do.



Thank you all for your continued generous support of Pilgrim Church.

Loving and Using Your Bible...

In loving memory of Nicki Palmer

Test yourself:

Name all 12 of Jesus' disciples -- why is that difficult to do?

Lectio Divina:

Psalm 63:7-8



More to the Story:

Open up the book of *Proverbs*, pick any three proverbs and connect them to your own life.

Personal Notes...

We received a note from long-time member and volunteer, Barby Worrest, thanking everyone for their friendship and support during her transition to her new off-Cape residence, New Horizons. She would love to hear from you!

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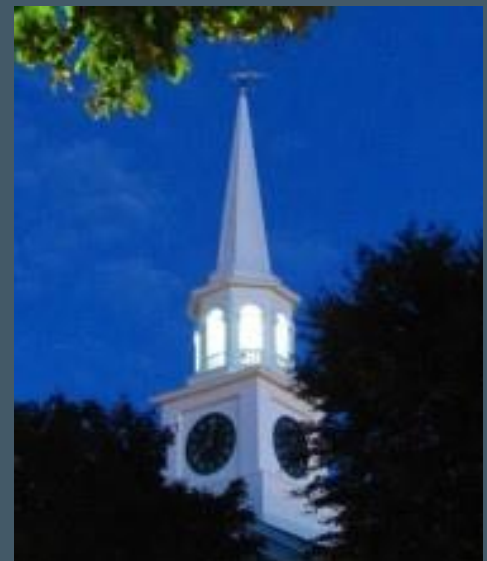
...from the office

The office is open remotely from Monday through Friday from 9am to 2 pm. The best way to contact Val is at 203-464-4470 or office@pcchp.org.

Happy Birthday!



August 01: Faith Preston
August 04: Dona Webber
August 05: Jane Babb
August 08: Rose Hemeon
August 08: Keith Sachs
August 09: William Hopkins
August 12: Lucy Mawn
August 13: Baird Eaton
August 15: Izzy Thompson
August 17: Valerie Petersen
August 24: JoAnne Clancy
August 30: Beverly Nightingale



Steeple Lightings

August 3 — in memory of my dear friend, Hope Page, on her birthday (from Barbara Wellnitz)

August 5 — in celebration of my granddaughter Ayla Wellnitz's 17th birthday

Please continue to remember your loved ones by lighting the steeple in their honor.

Contact office@pcchp.org

Pilgrim Church IN THE MEDIA!

Cape Cod Times:

January 19 - **MATTERS OF FAITH: Do we want to live in a world of quid pro quo?**

<https://www.capecodtimes.com/opinion/20200119/matters-of-faith-do-we-want-to-live-in-world-of-quid-pro-quo>

February 2 - **MATTERS OF FAITH: My way or the highway: Living in a partisan world**

<https://www.capecodtimes.com/news/20200202/matters-of-faith-my-way-or-highway-living-in-partisan-world>

February 17 - **MATTERS OF FAITH: Honesty, integrity bedrock virtues of our Nation**

<https://www.capecodtimes.com/opinion/20190217/matters-of-faith-honesty-integrity-bedrock-virtues-of-our-nation>

February 27 - **"On the Mark" Ashes to Go**

April 5, 2020 - **Churches, Synagogues, Mosques Nonessential? Hardly.**

<https://www.capecodtimes.com/opinion/20200405/churches-synagogues-mosques-nonessential-hardly>

May 3 - **MATTERS OF FAITH: Year of Wonder**

BEST BETS & CapeCodOnline: David Roth worship service. Watch for other events!

Cape Cod Chronicle: April 23 p. 43 "Pilgrim Kids Program"

Arts Council Online Listings: David Roth Worship Service. Watch for other events!

SPOTLIGHT - So. NE Conference, United Church of Christ: June 9, 2020 "Afterschool Program Goes Online." "<https://www.sneucc.org/news?topic=15182>



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