

The Spire

January 2018

Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC

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Letters to Gus: You Are Loved

Dear Gus,

Yesterday, you took a nasty spill in the living room. You were wearing socks and your feet slipped right out from under you. You fell face-first—nose-first, really—on to the hard floor. When you sat up, crying, Mom said that your nose looked like it had been flattened. She scooped you up and held you while you wailed and your tears soaked through the shoulder of her t-shirt. After comforting you for a bit, Mom put you up on the counter. She always sits you up there when you're hurt because she can get a better look at you. She looked at your nose and your teeth to make sure that everything was okay, and then she put an ice pack on your nose to keep it from swelling too much. The ice pack was cold and didn't feel good at first, but Mom knows how to take care of you when you're hurt.

Have you ever wondered why Mom and I take care of you? Have you ever thought about why we comfort you when you're hurt or sad, or why we do our best to make sure that you have good, healthy food to eat every day?

I suppose there are two reasons, really.

First, we do our best to take good care of you because God entrusted you to us. When you were born, you couldn't do much for yourself. You couldn't crawl or walk, you couldn't sing or talk. You were just a little lump of warmth that we had to hold and feed and clean. God told us to take good care of you so that you could grow up.

Second, we do our best to take care of you because we love you. We don't love you because of anything you did or because you please us in some way. In fact, you've done several things over the last six years that didn't please us! The love that we have for you has nothing to do with what you do; instead, it has to do with who you are. You're Gus! That's enough. That's all you need to do to be loved: be Gus.



Happy Anniversary

Bob & Shari Sanford 29

Family Game Night Friday, January 12 6-8 p.m.

Hello Fellow Pilgrims,

At this incredible time of change at the church, we have greater opportunities to better connect. When the congregation was surveyed on why we come back to this amazing place, the number one answer was the CONNECTIONS!!



To compliment this desire to have more points of contact, the Fellowship EVENTS Committee is putting on a "Games Night" on January 12th from 6-8pm. Bring a game, bring a dish, bring the family, and bring your connected self.

Letters to Gus: You Are Loved

We love you and take care of you because you're our child, but did you realize that you are also God's child? Remember, I said that God entrusted you to us. That means that God gave you to Mom and me and said: "Here, this is one of my little kids. His name is Gus. Will you please make sure that he grows up strong and healthy, knowing that he's loved?"

We told God, "Okay!"

God loves all of us. In fact, God is love. That's kind of a strange idea, isn't it? God is love. Let me give you a picture to think about and maybe it will help you understand. Whenever we snuggle together in the early morning hours, before Mom and Dad are really ready to get up, and we feel not only the warmth of the blankets, but also the warmth of our hearts, and we smile—that's the Spirit of God right there in between us. God lives inside of us—remember, Jesus said that our bodies are temples or houses for the Holy Spirit—and when we show our love for other people, that's God loving the whole world through us. Pretty great!

The most important thing in the whole world that you need to know is this: You are loved. That's true for everybody, but not everybody really understands that they are loved or feels that they are loved. As your dad, I want to make sure that you know how loved you are. You're a big six-year-old now, and it's time you start really understanding this. So, each week I'm going to write a short letter to you—just like this one—to show you that God loves you and to help you think about what to do with all of that love. Your job will be to read these letters and bring more love into the world!

Does that sound good?

Love,

Dad.

P.S. How's your nose feeling?

See additional blog posts, "Letters to Gus" by Stephen Hebert on our web site that follow up to this one at <http://pilgrimchurch.us/pilgrim-blog/>



Happy Birthday

Gregoire Dabem	1	Angela Grenham	18
Ali Mills	4	Tim Lescalleet	19
Janet Larson	6	Roseline Deninga	20
Parker Lescalleet	6	Lucy Mohn	20
Bob Murphy	6	Kelli Wagner	21
Annie Lindgren	7	Freddie Gillespie	21
Deb Harrison	8	Elizabeth Wetherbee	21
Matt Torilli	8	Erich Ledebuhr	23
Katie Cullen	8	Bonnie Lang	24
Kayden Getchell-Sassone	9	Tanya Tucker	24
Genevieve Mercadante	10	Pat Draper	25
Sue Baust	11	Alyce Henningson	26
Paul Weber	11	Jack Cowern	26
Ashley Speckerman	11	Gracen Huang	26
Cally Altamura	12	James Scharpf	27
Sue Ellen Renfrew	14	Ann Kern	28
John Flanders	15	Alaina Ghetti	28
Sue Snyder	15	Scott Cowen	29
Katherine Hennessy	16	Tom Haugen	29
Bill Landes	16	Nick Haugen	29
Rachel Vicario	17	Lisa Huang	29
Chris Kent	18		

Sr. High Youth Group

January Schedule

7th – Church/Parlor

14th – Church/Parlor

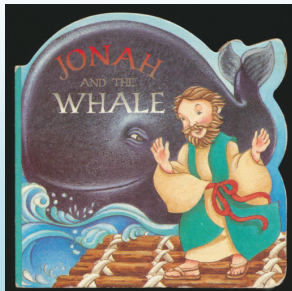
11:30 a.m. – Parent’s Meeting

21st – Church/Parlor

5:30 p.m. – Youth Group Mission Trip Dinner
& Reflections

28th – Church/Parlor

Sunday School Rotation Story for January



Friar Tuck Ministries

Friar Tuck Ministries is an adult group which socializes around the art of making and drinking craft beers. The group is open to both men and women. During 2018 Friar Tuck Ministries will be doing a variety to tours to local breweries. Become a Friar and find the spiritual connections with other Pilgrim Members. For additional information please see Sean Connelly s.connelly@gmail.com or David Qua davidqua17@gmail.com.

Friar Tour Schedule

January 21 @ 12:00 p.m. – Medusa Brewing Co. in Hudson
February 11 @ 1:30 p.m. – Trillium Brewing Co. in Canton
March 17 @ 1:00 p.m. – Flying Dreams Brewing Co. in Worcester
April 14 @ 12:00 p.m. – Start Line Brewing Co. in Hopkinton

Deacons' Corner

Who He Chose

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” (Matthew 4:19)

Jesus calls fishers as his first disciples. I have thought more about this verse than all other verses in the bible combined. Why did Jesus recruit fishers at the start of his ministry? Jesus could have called scholars, Lords, soldiers, farmers, or any other number of other professions. Why fishers for the most important recruitment of human history? Did Jesus call out to Peter and Andrew as they were fishing on a hunch? I reject this idea because it seems unlikely that the Messiah, foretold by prophets like Isaiah, did not have a process in mind. Jesus called fishers for specific reasons or skills they would bring to His purpose. By analyzing the skills of the first people Jesus chose, what can we learn about His ministry?

Fishers are patient. I went fishing for the first time as a boy with my Dad and his friend on Lake Gage in Northeast Indiana. We started early, just as the sun was creeping over the trees, setting out on a small boat. The lake was clear and calm with just us as the only signs of life. As we came to a stop, the first thing I learned was how to properly bait a hook. Then we cast our line into the water, and watched it ripple through the glasslike surface. I was so ready to pull out a blue gill, maybe a perch. At this point, I learned the hard truth about fishing. Fishing is long periods of waiting, waiting some more, a fleeting moment of adrenaline when a fish is hooked and you try to reel it in, followed by a lot more waiting. The activity called fishing is named for the part of the experience you do the least and only if you are lucky. Fishers must be patient people. Jesus understood that changing the world and people would take time and there would be no linear path to acceptance. He sought people who by their profession had to be patient and willing to keep trying until the job was done.

Fishers can sail. Jesus needed to bring his message to the world. At the time, sailing was the solution for reaching a diverse audience and fully spreading his message. Practically, sailing was the only way Jesus and his followers could reach everyone. Beyond practical transport, sailing requires a careful mindset for planning, calculating tides, reading angles, and navigating by stars. When I talk with a sailor, I am always impressed by the preparation required prior to the journey. However, sailors must also be able to improvise. The weather is going to change. A calm wind and flat sea will change to a storm of swirling winds and rolling waves.

During these times, you have to forget the plans and adjust to the environment, creating a new plan along the way. As Jesus considered skills required of His followers, this combination of mobility, meticulous planning, and adaptability would be crucial for bringing a calculated message to people but revising the delivery of that message in fluid situations.

Fisher can tie knots. Being able to tie knots is an absurdly useful skill needed for an adventure. Beyond this, Jesus would need doers. Fishers have rough and calloused hands earned from years of hands on labor. Following Jesus and serving his ministry required significant labor, and Jesus sought disciples who were used to the hands-on grind of lifting, cleaning, building, and occasional knot-tying.

Fishers own a family business. At this time, fishing was an industry built on small family businesses. Families owned and operated their boats, working together to maintain the families' livelihood. Fishing went beyond a job because the effort of one affected all in the family. It was no coincidence that the first disciples were pairs of brothers from family businesses. Jesus built his Church around a family business model. The disciples and close followers, His family, needed to work together and look after each other to spread His word and teachings in a chaotic time.

Fishers can fish. Jesus' followers would need to be fed. Carrying food without spoilage was impractical in these times. By recruiting fishers into His ministry, Jesus brought a food source with him wherever He went. Yes, Jesus fed the 5,000 from a few fish and loaves of bread, but where did those starting fish come from? What do you think the disciples did prior to that sermon?

Fishers used their skills. Christianity was founded on the humble skills of a carpenter and the first followers chosen, fishers. While the skills developed and honed by fishers were ideal for Jesus' budding ministry, there really is nothing unique about the skills fishers brought with them. We each bring specific, and useful, skills that will enrich the lives of others and continue to spread the Word of Jesus and followers. Think of the skills you apply at home and at work. What do you have in common with the first fishers who followed Jesus? How would your skills have complemented fishers' talents? How can you apply your skills to spread Jesus' message and serve Pilgrim, your community, and the World? What skills enable you to be fishers of people?

Faithfully yours,
David Hile

ANNUAL MEETING of
PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Sunday, January 28, 2018

To the Members and Friends of Pilgrim Congregational Church:

The Annual Meeting of Pilgrim Congregational Church will be held on January 28, 2018 immediately following worship in Fellowship Hall. The Meeting will hear and take action on the following articles:

ARTICLE I: To hear the Annual Reports of the Officers and Committees of Pilgrim Congregational Church for 2017.

ARTICLE II: To hear the proposed budget for 2018 as presented by Financial Resources and take action thereon.

ARTICLE III: To hear the proposed slate of Officers and Committees for 2018 as presented and vote thereon.

ARTICLE IV: To hear the proposed changes to the Bylaws and take action thereon.

ARTICLE V: To hear any other business which may regularly come before the meeting.

Attest
Karen Kuchnir
Church Clerk
December 14, 2017

From the Stewardship Committee:

Currently we have raised \$245,000 (100 families) towards our \$400,000 goal, falling far behind where we need to be to sustain a productive future for our congregation and all those we touch and support. This year is critical important as we search for a new pastor and increased pastoral care.

This past year, and for a number of preceding years, we have fallen short of our goal. Our annual efforts while sufficient have not increased year to year in a way that allows us to meet the ever-increasing needs. The quality and timeliness of the care, counsel, and support provided by so many is extraordinary, but the number of those requests is on the rise.

Furthermore, over the past two years, we have experienced many families that have moved out of the area and a number of very loved members who have passed away. The result is that we have lost a significant part of our last generation of givers. We continue to grow as a congregation in terms of number of families and requests for service, but our financial support base is not growing at the same rate. While this discussion is much broader than Stewardship, the changes in our church are felt by Stewardship.

Please email stewardship@pilgrimchurch.us with your pledge amount for 2018 or go to our website to fill out a form www.pilgrimchurch.us/stewardship.



Super Bowl Sub Sale (Front)

Name: _____

Please Support the Youth Mission Trip to New York City
by buying Super Bowl Subs.

Place orders by Sunday, January 28th. Pick up subs after church
on February 4th. All subs are on a six-inch grinder roll and
come with a choice of the following (please indicate your
choice)

	Sub #1	#2	#3	#4
Mayo	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mustard	_____	_____	_____	_____

Pick One Meat and One Cheese:

Ham	_____	_____	_____	_____
Turkey	_____	_____	_____	_____
Salami	_____	_____	_____	_____
Bologna	_____	_____	_____	_____
Italian	_____	_____	_____	_____

American	_____	_____	_____	_____
Provolone	_____	_____	_____	_____
Swiss	_____	_____	_____	_____

Lettuce	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tomato	_____	_____	_____	_____
Onion	_____	_____	_____	_____
Pickle	_____	_____	_____	_____

Coke	_____	_____	_____	_____
Diet Coke	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sprite	_____	_____	_____	_____
Orange	_____	_____	_____	_____

Cookies	_____	_____	_____	_____
Cape Cod	_____	_____	_____	_____
Potato Chins	_____	_____	_____	_____



Super Bowl Sub Sale (Back)

Name: _____

Prices:

Subs - \$7

Soda - \$1

Cape Cod Chips - \$1

Cookies - \$1

Additional order forms are available upon request.

Please submit completed forms to Sarah Hile, or leave forms in
Sarah Hile's box in the church office. Please make checks
payable to Pilgrim Church with PCYG mission trip in the memo
section. Thank you so much for your support!

Number of: Subs _____ Soda _____ Chips _____

Cookies _____ (2 per order)

Total Paid _____

Contact Information

Staff

Minister – Rev. Jonathan Wortmann (508) 485-4847
jwortmann@pilgrimchurch.us

Associate Minister –
Rev. Julie Cedrone (508) 485-4847
jcedrone@pilgrimchurch.us

Minister of Communication – Debbie Rowe
(508) 485-4847 drowe@pilgrimchurch.us

Minister of Music – Grace Choi
(978) 467-5588 graceatpilgrim@gmail.com

Handbell Choir Director – Carla Mason
(508) 579-9263 carlapm@townisp.com

Director of Sr. High Youth Programs –
Sarah Hile (781) 820-7093 sarahjhile19@gmail.com

Officers

Moderator – Cindy Torilli (508) 361-2297
cynthia.torilli@gmail.com

Financial Secretary – Jim Black (765) 994-9065
jtblack25@gmail.com

Treasurer – Sally Vincentsen (508) 786-9566
svincentsen@gmail.com

Asst. Treasurer – Randy Dinjian (617) 620-5248
rdinjian@hanover.com

Clerk – Karen Kuchnir (508) 330-1163
karenkuchnir@yahoo.com

Faith Community Nurse

Sharon Balcom – pilgrimfcn@gmail.com

Upcoming Spires

*Deadline For
Submission of Articles*

January 19 (February)

February 16 (March)

Standing Church Meetings

Church Council	7:30 p.m. – 2 nd Monday of month
Chancel Choir	7:30 p.m. every Thursday
Celestial Singers Choir	11:00 a.m. – Most Sundays
All Souls Choir	11:15 a.m. – Most Sundays
Handbell Choir	7:00 p.m. every Wednesday
Buildings & Grounds	As Scheduled
Christian Education	11:30 a.m. – 2 nd Sunday of month
Diaconate	11:30 a.m. – 2 nd Sunday of month
Fellowship	As Scheduled
IT/AV	8:30 p.m. – 1 st Thurs. of month
Personnel	As Scheduled
Parish Relations	11:30 a.m. – 4 th Sunday of month
Financial Resources	7:00 p.m. – 2 nd Tuesday of month
Music	11:30 a.m. – 3 rd Sunday of month
Outreach	11:30 a.m. – 1 st Sunday of month
Stewardship	As Scheduled

Celebrations & Concerns

Celebrations

Another successful Messiah Concert! This was the 46th performance of selections from Handel's Messiah at Pilgrim Congregational Church.

Concerns

Please keep the following people in your prayers for healing:

Sandy Campbell as she mourns the loss of her husband, Bernie.

The Pirie family as they mourn the loss of Lucille Pirie. Lucille and her husband, Jim Pirie were members of Pilgrim Church in the 70's and 80's.

Janet Beck's father

Pam Chilton

Alethia Dechellis

Verrill Edwardsen

Nicole Napoleon's father

Anne Scharpf's father

Dates to Remember

Tuesday, January 2

5:00 p.m. – Our Father's Table

Tuesdays, January 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30

9:30 a.m. – Yoga Class

Wednesdays, January 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31

7:00 p.m. – Meditation Service

Sundays, January 7 & 21

11:30 a.m. – Confirmation Class

11:30 a.m. – Prayer Shawl Ministry

Sunday, January 7

11:30 a.m. – Christian Values: A Bible Study

Monday, January 8

7:30 p.m. – Council Meeting

Friday, January 12

6:00 p.m. – Family Game Night & Potluck

Sunday, January 14

11:30 a.m. – "500-Reflections on the Reformation"

Monday, January 15

7:30 p.m. – Women's Spirituality Group

Saturday, January 20

6:00 p.m. – Women's Epiphany (Advent) Retreat
(Rescheduled)

Mondays, January 22 & 29

9:30 a.m. – Healthy Living Small Group

Sunday, January 28

11:00 a.m. – Annual Meeting