

The Spire

February 2018

Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC

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Did Jesus Change? The Parable of the Accidental Potter

There is an interesting piece of mythology that most of us hear or ascribe to at one point in our lives: people don't change. It has a little brother caveat: it is hard to change. And there is a follow-up question any good Congregationalist would wonder: "When is tradition better than change?"

First, we change. We change every day. We were made to change. To survive, we do whatever we have to. To feel better, we make changes. To help those in need, we make radical and often uncomfortable changes. Plus, we get older and our bodies change. We move through different communities, and we take parts of them with us. We see ways to make the world more loving and we do anything we can to make ourselves agents of change.

Second, it is hard to change if we are worried about being comfortable. Watch this video on [human emotion](#). I learned, and I didn't realize this, our reactions, our feelings are of our control. Our emotional response, on the other hand, to the way we feel is completely in our control. We can choose to take change and make it an anxious, painful, depressing experience. Or, it is an adventure, an exciting gift, and a place to be curious and learn. The moment of discomfort with change is always going to be a human experience; what we do with discomfort is God's gift to each person.

Which is where Jesus comes in. He lived in the ocean of human discomfort. He loved people through every kind of change, including his own death. He changed where he lived, how he

(continued)



Happy Anniversary

Reid & Sue Roberts 3
 John & Kathryn Younis 6
 Dick & Pat Draper 12
 Steve & Margaret Hart 12
 Dave & Deb Wilson 15
 Don & Carole Jolie 18
 Ben & Rebecca Lally 26



Happy Birthday

Julie Connelly	4	Chela Ellsworth	15
Janet Jones	4	Jake Krapf	15
Ben Willis	4	Annabel Zaterka	15
Kate Kent	5	Stephen Coldwell	16
Sabrina Ruggles	5	Jacquie McClelland	16
Sally Fodor	5	Sarah Hile	17
Emma McGuire	5	Hilary Ledebuhr	17
Michael Hennessy	6	John Beck	18
Karen Kuchnir	6	Kasey Wagner	19
Preston Cote	7	Riley Coombs	20
Jessica Garcia	7	Joe Dechellis	22
Carl Lindgren	7	Ben Douglas	22
Hannah Lindgren	7	Annie Harrington	22
Shirley Owen	7	Shari Sanford	22
Matt Pietro	7	Darlene Flanders	23
Rowan Moreland	7	Bridgette Dean	23
Beth El-Massih	8	Jacob Qua	23
Zachary Arvantely	8	Jim Denman	24
Courtney Sargent	9	Dan Guilford	25
Justice Huang	11	Jen Champoux	25
Lucy Gardner	12	Adeline Tomaino	25
Sophie Haugen	12	Emily Leist Vatis	27
Sherry Wester	13	Beckie Flot	27
Sophie Cowen	14	Jeanne Kenney	27

Did Jesus Change? (continued)

interacted with people, and the way he taught most weeks. Our faith is a faith of embracing change. Ironically, our tradition as people of faith is as lovers of change.

He never wrote this parable, but if he was before a community in times of change, I think he might have said, "There once was a carpenter who worked with the best wood. He had all the tools he needed and he produced the most exquisite furniture in his region. Then, one day, a storm destroyed all the wood for miles. It destroyed his workshop and broke all his tools. As his family recovered from the storm, his children asked him, 'Father, what will we do?' He looked down, not knowing what to say. And as he looked, he saw the clay beneath his feet. He kneeled and picked up a ball of dirt, still wet from the storm. In front of their eyes he fashioned it into a bowl. He smiled and said to his family, 'God will turn even the ground below our feet into bread.'"

We can change. Change is often painful until we choose to turn it into our next adventure. Our tradition is change. God always gives gifts to those who ask and one of them is new life.

Blog posted by Jon Wortmann on our website www.pilgrimchurch.us on January 17, 2018.

Ash Wednesday Service

February 14, 2018

@ 7:00 p.m.

Deacons' Corner

Think!

What is arguably (I would say inarguably, but let's just say arguably) the greatest invention in the universe? Hint, it's between your ears. Yes, the human brain. The greatest invention in the universe is not on the top of some Himalayan mountain or at the bottom of some molten ocean fissure but right smack dab in the middle of your head. Think about that! Anomalies of all natural anomalies are in your own head. Crazy to think about...yet we don't really like to use it too often. The greatest use of our time is *thinking* but we just don't like to. Being busy is more alluring...but think!? No way, not now. Why is that??

Let's take a step back to ponder that riddle. Why didn't other animals try to evolve a big brain? I mean, if a big brain puts you on top of the world, so to speak, why wouldn't every species try to attain one? Why don't salamanders or deer or fish have huge brains? It's costly and dangerous! Brains involve longer pregnancies, child birth deaths began to sky rocket (too big), and thus the timing of birth had to be perfect to get the large brain out before it got bigger! Then when birthed these large brains needed more time to mature. How many other animals do you see out the window eager to raise teenagers waiting for their brains to become fully ripened? Then, when in full use, brains eat 25% of our energy to operate. "Too costly" the other animals said and that left the brains to you and me.

Deacons' Corner (cont.)

And so, now that we have them, what do we do with them? Mostly, they are in neutral. We get busy or find drama to occupy the brain and avoid thinking. For all of evolution we were terrified of immediate death. If our brain eats up 25% of our energy than thinking is nice...but dangerous. Better to use that energy to survive than thrive. But wait, are you a hunter-gatherer? Me neither. The threat has passed yet the habit remains...we are programmed to avoid thinking because it might kill us. Be free my friend, think, ponder, reflect and know it is the best use of your time because busyness and ignorance is...well, I'll let you *think* of the ending to this sentence.

-Peter Martin

Sr. High Youth Group

February Schedule

4th – 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. –Super Bowl Sub Sale
Mandatory for anyone going to NYC this summer.

11th – Church/Parlor

18th – Church/Parlor

25th – Church/Parlor

Contact Information

Staff

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Upcoming Spires

*Deadline For
Submission of Articles*

March 16 (April)

April 20 (May)

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

Congratulations to Kim Hixson and Matt Floyd on their recent engagement.

Congratulations to Scott Navaroli on the birth of his granddaughter, Braelynn Quin Navaroli born on January 3.

Concerns

Please keep the following people in your prayers for healing:

Jim & Mickey Black as they mourn the loss of Mickey's brother, Charles.

Alethia Dechellis

Pam Chilton

Verrill Edwardson

Nicole Napoleon's father

Nici Hornblower

Reid Roberts

Vi Laptewicz

Anne Scharpf's father

The Parish Relations Committee

The Parish Relations Committee is available as a resource to promote continued wellness within the church. Parishioners, clergy and staff are welcome to attend our monthly meetings to address any issues or concerns. Currently sitting on the committee are Reid Roberts, Sue Snyder and Janet Larson. Please contact any one of us if you would like to discuss any ideas or concerns.

Dates to Remember

Sunday, February 4

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

Sundays, February 4 & 18

11:30 a.m. – Confirmation Class

11:30 a.m. – Prayer Shawl Ministry

Mondays, February 5 & 19

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

Mondays, February 5, 12 & 26

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

Tuesday, February 6

5:00 p.m. – Our Father's Table

Tuesdays, February 6, 13, 20 & 27

9:30 a.m. – Yoga Class

Wednesdays, February 7, 21 & 28

7:00 p.m. – Meditation Service

Sunday, February 11

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

Monday, February 12

7:30 p.m. – Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 14

7:00 p.m. – Ash Wednesday Service