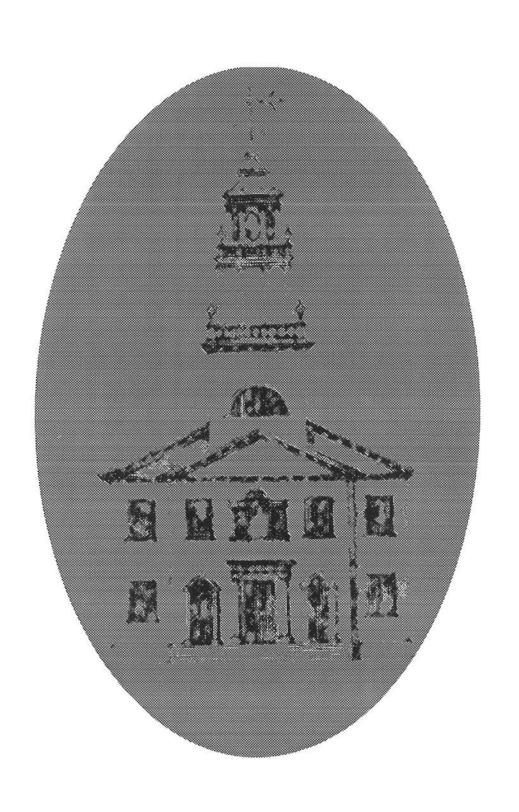
A HISTORY OF PILGRIM CHURCH IN SOUTHBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS

A History
of
Pilgrim Church
in
Southborough, Massachusetts



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in
Southborough, Massachusetts

Wollows

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Quikprint Southborough, Massachusetts

& CONTENTS 1/2

MINTRODUCTION &	
CHAPTER ONE: THE BIRTH OF SOUTHBOROUGH	
CHAPTER TWO: THE BEGINNING OF PILGRIM CHURCH: 1823-1850	
CHAPTER THREE: 1850-1875	
CHAPTER FOUR: COVENANT OBLIGATIONS	
CHAPTER FIVE: 1875-1900	
CHAPTER SIX: MARTHA NEWTON NORTH MISSIONARY	
CHAPTER SEVEN: 1886 - 1900	
THE PILGRIM CHURCH SANCTUARY	38
CHAPTER EIGHT: THE EARLY MINISTERS OF PILGRIM CHURCH 1832 – 1906	
CHAPTER NINE: 1900 – 1926	45
CHAPTER TEN: FAYVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH FIRE	51
CHAPTER ELEVEN: 1917 - 1926	55
CHAPTER TWELVE: 1927 – 1937	59
CHAPTER THIRTEEN: LADIES OF THE QUILT	63
CHAPTER FOURTEEN: JOHN HILL	69
CHAPTER FIFTEEN: THE JOHNSON FAMILY	71
CHAPTER SIXTEEN: 1939 - 1952	73
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: 1952 - 1956	
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: THE 125 TH ANNIVERSARY PRESENTATION	83
S PILGRIM CHURCH FAIRS S	86
CHAPTER NINETEEN: 1957 - 1969	
S FEEDING THE MULTITUDES &	
CHAPTER TWENTY: 1969 - 1979	
& THE CHOIRS OF PILGRIM CHURCH	
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: 1979-1992	
UNAFIER I WENI I-UNE: 19/9-1992	109

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE: INTO THE 21 ST CENTURY 133 APPENDIX 137 APPENDIX II: I 86 I COVENANT & BT-LAWS 141 APPENDIX III: 1894 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 143 APPENDIX IV: COMPARISON OF BT-LAWS - 1861 AND 1894 155 APPENDIX V: 1901 BT-LAWS 160 APPENDIX VI: 1959 BT-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VII: 1966 BT-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1966 BT-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX XII: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX XII: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XII: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BT THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XIII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 221 Soutbville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Mark's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chinese Gospel Church 223	CHAPTER TWENTY	TWO: 1992 -2000		
APPENDIXI: FEB. 17, 1831	CHAPTER TWENTY	THREE: INTO THE 21 ST CENTURY133		
APPENDIX II: 1861 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 143 APPENDIX III: 1894 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 149 APPENDIX IV: COMPARISON OF BT-LAWS - 1861 AND 1894 155 APPENDIX VI: 1901 BT-LAWS 160 APPENDIX VII: 1959 BT-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX XII: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX XI: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Mark's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX	137		
APPENDIX II: 1861 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 143 APPENDIX III: 1894 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 149 APPENDIX IV: COMPARISON OF BT-LAWS 155 APPENDIX VI: 1901 BT-LAWS 160 APPENDIX VII: 1959 BT-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VIII: 1966 BT-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 196 APPENDIX XII: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XII: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Anne's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIXI:	FEB. 17, 1831		
APPENDIX III: 1894 COVENANT & BT-LAWS 149 APPENDIX IV: COMPARISON OF BT-LAWS - 1861 AND 1894 155 APPENDIX V: 1901 BT-LAWS 160 APPENDIX VII: 1959 BT-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VIII: 1967 BT-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX XII: 1968 BT-LAWS 183 APPENDIX XII: 1960 AND SETTION OF 1931 196 APPENDIX XI: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORY - 1956 - 1989 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 To First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX II:	1861 COVENANT & BY-LAWS143		
APPENDIX IV: COMPARISON OF BY-LAWS - 1861 AND 1894 155 APPENDIX V: 1901 BY-LAWS 160 APPENDIX VII: 1959 BY-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VIII: 1967 BY-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BY-LAWS 183 APPENDIX XII: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BYTHE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX III:			
APPENDIX VI: 1959 BY-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VII: 1967 BY-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BY-LAWS 183 APPENDIX IX: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX IV:			
APPENDIX VI: 1959 BY-LAWS 165 APPENDIX VII: 1967 BY-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BY-LAWS 183 APPENDIX IX: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX V:	1901 BY-LAWS		
APPENDIX VII: 1967 BY-LAWS 174 APPENDIX VIII: 1996 BY-LAWS 183 APPENDIX IX: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX VI:			
APPENDIX IX: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BYTHE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX VII:			
APPENDIX IX: CORA NEWTON'S HISTORY - 1931 196 APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX VIII:	1996 BY-LAWS		
APPENDIX X: HISTORY - 1956 202 APPENDIX XI: HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS 205 APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH - 1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIXIX:			
APPENDIX XII: PILGRIM CHURCH-1956 - 1989 212 APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIXX:			
APPENDIX XIII: PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH- 1832-1995 219 APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX XI:	HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY THE REV. DAVID T. CROSS205		
APPENDIX XIV: THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH 220 Fayville Baptist Church 220 The First Community Church 221 Southville Methodist Episcopal Church 221 St. Mark's Church 221 St. Matthew's Church 222 St. Anne's Church 223 The Chapel of the Cross 223	APPENDIX XII:	PILGRIM CHURCH-1956 - 1989212		
Fayville Baptist Church220The First Community Church221Southville Methodist Episcopal Church221St. Mark's Church221St. Matthew's Church222St. Anne's Church223The Chapel of the Cross223	APPENDIX XIII:	PASTORS OF PILGRIM CHURCH - 1832-1995219		
The First Community Church	APPENDIX XIV:	THE PARISHES OF SOUTHBOROUGH220		
The First Community Church	Fayville Baptist	Church		
St. Mark's Church221St. Matthew's Church222St. Anne's Church223The Chapel of the Cross223				
St. Mark's Church221St. Matthew's Church222St. Anne's Church223The Chapel of the Cross223	Southville Meth	odist Episcopal Church		
St. Anne's Church	St. Mark's Chur	<i>-</i> b		
The Chapel of the Cross	St. Matthew's C.	burch		
	St. Anne's Churc	b223		
	The Chapel of th	e Cross		

& Introduction &

It is with grateful thanks that I acknowledge the research and collecting of material done by Marjory Taylor and the Reverend David T. Cross for their draft of the history of Pilgrim Church up through 1956. Marjory was Church Clerk for twelve years between 1957 and 1973, and I found this draft in the office files when I became Clerk in 1977. Marjory had researched all the records, had taken notes and written part of the story. She passed her work on to Rev. Cross who intended to write a full history of Pilgrim Church. Together they had transcribed most of it but they never got it organized and into final manuscript form before Rev. Cross left Pilgrim Church. When I retired as Clerk in 1995 I took on the new office of Church Historian and have used their draft and notes as the basis for this history.

The early members of the church kept scanty records of the life of Pilgrim Church. I have been fortunate in being better able to fill out the years since 1956 due to the increase in the amount of recorded information that is now kept by the church. Technology has yielded an abundance of paper work! This history incorporates the words of those who have passed though this house of worship on their journeys of faith.



Marjory Taylor 1984



Rev. David T. Cross

I would like to thank the following for their assistance in completing this history: Kay Allen (Southborough Historical Society), Carol Bogardus (for her memory albums), Marion Cookman, Maria Cutts, Barbara Dumont, Barbara (Cowles) Dumont, Robert Dumont, Hazel Foote, Eleanor (Onthank) Hamel, Norma (Smith) Hastings, Betty (Johnson) Lange, Kathi Lengel, Rev. Arthur T. Lutton, Dorothy (Blood) Mauch, Peter Park, Robert Rynning, Betsy Southard, Marjorie Spurr, Jeffrey Watkins, Robert Wilbur, Judy Williams, those who listened and gave aid in so many ways, and to those who wrote Committee Reports over the years.

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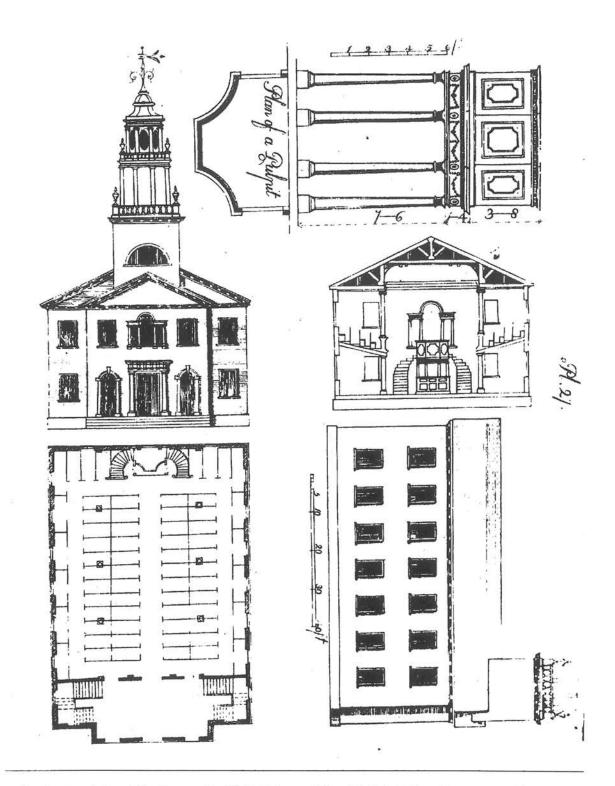
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Chapter One: The Birth of Southborough &

The Town of Southborough was incorporated in 1727. Fifty families residing in the southerly part of Marlborough, then known as Cow Commons or "Stony Brook", petitioned the General Court for incorporation as a separate town by the name of Southborough. They gave as their reason for seeking incorporation that Divine Providence, which appoints the bounds and habitations of all men, had so ordered their lives that they were at too great a distance from the place of public worship. They, as well as their aged and infirm, their women and little ones, could not comfortably endure the necessary travel that they were forced into in order to worship. "Considering that it is but a point of Christian duty and charity to compassionate the circumstances of such," they noted that they had obtained a vote of the Town of Marlborough in their favor to be set off as a separate town. The site known as the "holy hill" was chosen "to the west of the Brigham home, adjacent to the burial ground already in use" for a meetinghouse/church in 1730. Three acres of land surrounding the Meeting House and surveyed by William Ward were set apart "for accommodations for a meeting house, for a burying place, and for a training field forever." Land was also set apart for the use of the minister.

This first Meeting House fell into disrepair in the early 1800's and was torn down and sold for scrap. A new Meeting House was erected on the same site for a cost of almost \$8,000.00. The sum of \$77.00 had been raised for the building and \$2500.00 through the sale of pews. December 17, 1806 saw the dedication of the new town parish church with its "bell calling folks to worship."². In the American Antiquarian Society Library in Worcester is a book published in 1797 by Asher Benjamin entitled *The Country Builders Assistant*. On the flyleaf of this book is the name "Moses Newton Southborough," and on the next page is the inscription "Moses Newton's architect 1809." Moses Newton was the first clerk of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society. The book contains a diagram for a meeting house very similar to the outline structure of the meeting house in Southborough, including the galleries, the high pulpit and the box pews. Asher Benjamin designed 35-40 buildings showing an "elegance of detail and lightness of proportion in the orders characteristic of the Federal Style." Asher Benjamin's designs were also used for the Old South Congregational Meeting House in Windsor, Vermont in 1798, the West Church in Boston in 1806 and the African-American Meeting House, Boston in 1805.



Benjamin, Asher. *The Country Builder's Assistant*. New York: DaCapo Press, 1972. Plate 27. Courtesy, American Antiquarian Society

Chapter Two: The Beginning of Pilgrim Church: 1823-1850 &

By 1820 Southborough had grown to a population of 1,030 people. In 1823 "there came to our town a young man by the name of Alfred Gibbs to teach in the brick schoolhouse at the western end of town. He was an energetic sort of a fellow possessing deep convictions, and truly consecrated but lacking somewhat in judgment." He created quite a sensation in town by reading the Bible and offering prayer at his school, the first time such a practice had occurred in this area. His novel departure caused opposition and he left town before the close of the year, but not before he had kindled a fire.

At this time John Chamberlain and Josiah Johnson went to see the pastor of the church at the center, Jereboam Parker or Priest Parker as he was commonly called, and requested of him that meetings for conference and prayer be scheduled at the church. Parker had studied the tenets of Unitarian belief and preached those beliefs in the Town Church. A division had been growing in the church since 1821. Their request was complied with only to the extent that three or four meetings were held during the summers of 1828 and 1829, with Gabriel Parker (for whom Parkerville Road was named) and John Chamberlain about the only ones besides the minister who took part in the gatherings.

Until 1827 all of the inhabitants of the Towns in Massachusetts had to pay an assessed fee for the support of the Gospel at the Parish Church, even though they still had the right to organize other churches. In 1827 the General Court changed that law so that



they were now free to pay for the support of only the Church of their choice.

On Wednesday, October 30, 1830, a preaching service was held at the home of Peter Fay at I Chestnut Hill Road. "The Rev. George Trask of Framingham preached to 150 newly awakened people". Following this meeting, there were several other meetings at people's homes, which climaxed in the organization of the Pilgrim Church of Christ in Southborough on

February 17, 1831. This organization, in effect, represented a division of the Parish Church into what we would now call Unitarian and Trinitarian (Evangelical) congregations.

"With snow three feet deep and a tremendous fall of rain all the preceding day and night, [and] still raining on the 17th" the Evangelical Churches of Westborough, Waltham, Framingham, East Sudbury and Berlin were each represented by a pastor and a delegate at a council to organize Pilgrim Church. The moderator opened the meeting of the council by looking to

God for light and direction. After hearing the reasons from the persons who sent the letter missive why they wished to be organized into a Church of Christ on the principles of the Gospel, a committee was appointed to confer with the Rev. Mr. Parker on the subject under consideration. It was resolved that a committee was to be appointed to prepare the articles of faith and also a form of covenant to be adopted by the church if they see fit.

"After examination of the candidates, it was resolved that in the judgment of this council the following individuals,

Samuel Perry Lucy Chamberlain Maryanne R. Fay Willard Chamberlain Sophia Chamberlain Susan Johnson Henry F. Johnson Hannah F. Fay Harriet Fay

Henry Collins Rowena Works
Webster Johnson Polly Collins

are suitable persons to be organized into a Church of Christ. Resolved that the articles of faith and covenant prepared by the committee be satisfactory and in our opinion scriptural; that they be presented for the consideration of the candidates. The articles of faith and covenant were accordingly read to the candidates and were unanimously consented to by them."

The articles of faith printed in the 1861 Book of Bylaws are presumably identical with those of 1831. They included a summary of the beliefs about God, as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; of man and his sin, and the work of Jesus Christ. They spoke of the church. The terms of membership are a creditable profession of faith in Christ, and of that holiness which is wrought by the renewing grace of God; and that habitual communion with God, and conscientious attendance upon public, family, and secret worship, and the habitual practice of righteousness, temperance, sobriety, sincerity, truth, are essential to Christian character. That none but members of the church in regular standing have a right to partake of the Lord's Supper; and that they and their households are subject to baptism."

According to the Covenant of 1861 any persons who would join themselves to this Church of Christ and in uniting submit to the goals of ecclesiastical government and discipline which it had adopted, were addressed as follows:

"We, then, affectionately receive you as members of the visible church of Christ in full communion, and entitled to all its privileges. We welcome you to this fellowship with us in the blessings of the gospel; and on our part engage to watch over you, and discharge towards you all appropriate duties, as becometh saints."

"And now, beloved in the Lord, let it be impressed upon your minds, that you have come under solemn obligations from which you can never escape. Wherever you go, these vows will be

upon you. They will follow you to the bar of God; they will abide upon you to eternity. You can never again be as you have been; but henceforth you must be the servants of God."

"May the Lord guide and preserve you blameless until death, and at last receive both you and us to that world where love, and obedience, and joy shall be forever perfect. Amen."

At first, services were held in the Perley Whipple House at the northeast corner of Main Street and Route 85, a partition between two rooms being removed. At the end of the first year the membership numbered eleven men and thirty women. On Thursday, September 15, 1831, in the Whipple House, a meeting was held for the organization of The Pilgrim Evangelical Society. The Society could legally hold property, negotiate with the Town and with the Parish Society, and pay the bills for Pilgrim Church. The object was "that we may the better treat with the old Society, respecting the preaching of the Gospel, and, if necessary we may procure and maintain [for] ourselves and our children and others who may be disposed to unite with us, faithful evangelical instruction, but we will drop our separate existence whenever the old Society will agree to have the Gospel faithfully preached according to our understanding of it". 12

Thus, the Pilgrim Evangelical Society was formed while unsuccessful attempts were made by the Pilgrim Church people to join with the Parish Church in the use of its building and the calling of the same minister by both groups. We can imagine the tension between these two groups as we read between the lines of "A History of the Middlesex South Conference of Congregational Churches and Ministers."

"Some of the saddest things in connection with these divisions between Unitarians and Trinitarians were the sundering of long-standing social relations, loss of business through boycotting, the shortening of life through anxiety and distress; houses were divided, fathers and sons could not see things from the same standpoint, and daughters rose up against their mothers."

The members from the Parish Church in Southborough, who organized themselves into Pilgrim Church, were undoubtedly well aware of the personal sacrifice involved in such a move, but were willing to back their convictions with decisive action. Upon its organization Pilgrim Church received help from the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society for five or six years. They immediately joined the Middlesex South Conference and formed a Sabbath school under the direction of a Rev. Whittlesey. Shortly thereafter, a call was issued to the Rev. Walter Follett who subsequently was installed as first pastor of Pilgrim Church, and stayed until 1837.

In the year 1834 the Society pledged full payment of \$4,110.39 for the cost of building a "lower meeting house", which was erected on the north side of Main Street, 1,000 feet east of the Parish Church building. (In the approximate position of the current gazebo in front of the fire station.) The money was raised by sale of deeds to the pews in the lower

meeting house. The members of the Church showed that they were willing to follow their convictions with financial support by paying up all of the pew deeds by 1839. Those who owned pew deeds were also assessed for insurance and repairs to the building in accordance with the value of their pew. The members of the Society were assessed for the operating expenses of the Church and Society.



¹⁴In the year 1834, Southborough accepted the state legislation that had disestablished Parish Churches, setting them on their own apart from tax support. The people who were using the Town Meeting House for worship also had to organize themselves into a religious society in order to hold property and carry on the financial affairs of the church. That group, which became known as the Unitarian Society, was given title to the building that was

originally erected for town meetings and public worship, and to the common lands around the building, with the exception of the burying ground. The Town had to find another place in which to hold its meetings. In the records of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society we find matters relating to the ringing of the bell for town meetings, therefore we believe the town meetings were held in the lower Meeting House of Pilgrim Church until 1839. A request by the Town for the lower Meeting House to be used as a high school in 1837 was refused. Two years later, in 1839, the Unitarian Society deeded to the Town, for the purposes of a Town House and a high school, a certain parcel of land in the common land held by that Society. The Southborough Town Hall was then built in 1840.

When Pilgrim Church of Christ was organized there were several social organizations in town, which give us some idea of what was going on in the minds of the people of Southborough at that time. A Farmer's Club was organized prior to 1810 for the encouragement of better farming and husbandry. The Baptist Church in Fayville was started in the early 1820's. A Young Men's Lyceum was organized for debating in 1824. A Good Templar's organization was established in 1826, and the Southborough Franklin Institute was organized on January 1, 1828. The purpose of the Institute was "to instruct and enlighten the illiterate; to promote useful knowledge; and to soften the passions and ameliorate, in every manner, the conditions of the present or future generations".

In the first half of the 19th century housewives gathered for spinning, quilting, and knitting bees for the afternoon, and after an afternoon's work the men would join the women and would all have supper together. ¹⁶ In 1840 we find the Young Men's Lyceum of Southborough debating the question of whether ladies should have the right to vote in public meetings. The Ladies' Domestic Missionary Society of Pilgrim Church was formed in 1847. The place of ladies in Pilgrim Church in its early years was similar to their place in society at that time. Only Polly Collins among all the women of the church owned a deed to a pew in the Lower Meeting House on Main Street. Just after she bought that pew deed the call to the 1835 Annual Meeting of the Society specified that only male members were to be notified of church meetings.

The influence of the Civil War modified this situation. Two hundred nineteen men from Southborough fought in the war. Seventeen did not return. While they were gone, the women took on a much more significant role in the undertakings of the Church and Society, as they did in the town. A Soldier's Aid Society was formed for the community. We find in 1861 that the warrant for the Annual Meeting of the Society said, "notify and warn the members of the Society." The barriers to full voting privileges for women in both Church and Society were gradually being overcome by the recognition of their contribution to the life of the Church and the community.

Moses Sawin

In 1832, Moses Sawin and his family sold their mill in Natick and moved to Southborough, purchasing the Peter Bent Mill on Stony Brook. Moses left Natick because many of his neighbors disagreed with his Abolitionist views.¹⁷ At that time in Pilgrim Church it was the practice for members to give personal witness from the pews during worship. In the year 1839 Moses Sawin gave his testimony, which was not well received in that Orthodox atmosphere. Brother Sawin not only presented his views but also asked those present to testify against slavery. A Special Meeting was subsequently held, and a Committee established to study the matter. The report of that committee was accepted in part by a Church Meeting as follows:

"That the Church make the whole subject of slavery a special subject of prayer to God. That He would in His Holy Providence open the way by which this great evil may be removed from our beloved country. That the oppressive yoke might be broken, and liberty, civil, religious, and universal liberty may be enjoyed by the sable sons of Africa, not only in America but throughout the world."

As far as Moses Sawin was concerned not enough must have occurred at the church in following years in the support of Abolition. A meeting in April of 1843 again sets a

committee with the task of reporting to the congregation on the matter of anti-slavery. This time Brother Sawin was a member of the committee. The report was accepted and further "conversation" followed. Nothing appears to have resulted from this "conversation." As the records show, however, in 1846 the church spent considerable time and effort in trying to persuade Moses to return to the flock. Eventually he was "Excommunicated from its Christian watch, communion and fellowship" for failing to attend the Communion Table for one year. He reconciled with the congregation prior to the death of his wife Mary in 1852 and became an agent in the Underground Railway movement in Southborough. A by-law, adopted in 1861 by Pilgrim Church, expressed "no sympathy with American slavery."

Deacon Peter Fay recalled at the Semi-Centennial, "In 1842 we had our greatest revival here." The records of the church show that in 1842 nineteen men joined the church and twenty-five women. This was interesting in light of the fact that the church had no settled pastor during this period.

"Of the large number who joined this band - three were desirous of baptism by immersion. We had no pastor. I went to Marlborough to consult Mr. Day but he shrank from service. From thence I called on old Dr. Bates in Northborough and he at once consented to perform the rite. In March several hundred people gathered at Sawin's Millpond and after the ice, which was a foot thick, had been cut the three were baptized, changing their raiment at Deacon Parker's house. This incident made some trouble with the Baptist minister in Fayville who claimed that the baptism should have been performed by one who himself had been immersed."

The Town of Southborough had changed in appearance in the twenty-five years since Alfred Gibbs had come to teach in the brick schoolhouse at the western end of the town. The Boston and Worcester Railroad was laid down through Southville in about 1835.²² In Fayville there were two stores, a tavern, a blacksmith shop, a wheelwright, a shoemaker, and a post office. Several factories were built in Southborough, particularly in Southville, utilizing the waterpower of the streams. After the railroad came, a gristmill, and a boot and shoe mill were built and, toward 1850, the Sanford Mill in Cordaville (named for Cordelia Sanford). There were thirty-one industries in town, yet the town still led all other Massachusetts towns but one in fruit production in the mid-nineteenth century.²³

In those years Pilgrim Church not only had been born but had thrived. The people had organized a church and a Sabbath school, and through their Society had built a Meeting House. They had gained new members on the basis of their affirmation of the need for evangelical teaching, and the preaching of the Word of God according to their understanding of it.²⁴

Chapter Three: 1850-1875 &

As the second half of the nineteenth century began the town of Southborough had farms, butchers, and blacksmiths. It had "6 grist mills, 3 saw mills, 6 boot and shoe factories, 3 cotton and wool factories, 3 tanneries, 2 sash and blind factories, 2 brick kilns, a brush factory, a peg mill, a flour mill, 1 currier shop, a bonnet factory, a carriage factory and a cordage factory." The Agricultural Branch Railroad came to Southborough.

We find that Pilgrim Church was growing stronger. In 1852 the Church decided to receive voluntary offerings from non-members who were worshipping with them. The Sabbath school included two hundred fifty people, both children and adults. The annual budget in 1855, of \$100.00, plus the cost for the pastor, was raised largely by a self-imposed "tax" on the owners of pews, pro-rated according to the original appraisal and the sale price of the pews. The Church was no longer receiving help from the Massachusetts Missionary Society. It was quite the opposite. In 1855 the Church gave a total of \$93.92 to the Massachusetts Home Missionary Society, the Tract Society, the Bible Society, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

In 1855 a committee of five was chosen by the Pilgrim Society "to see what would be the expense of repairing their meeting house and how they could obtain the old meeting house and what would be the expense of repairing it." On June 22, 1857, a meeting was called to hear the following report from a committee of the Unitarian Society:

"The Unitarian Society offers to convey to the Pilgrim Evangelical Society their meeting house and privileges thereunto belonging reserving the bell only on condition that there be not less than \$4,000.00 expended in repairing said meeting house."

One might wonder how it came to be that in Southborough, instead of maintaining two buildings as the people of many surrounding towns had done, one for the Unitarians and one for the Evangelical or Trinitarian Church, the Unitarians sold their building to Pilgrim Church. As Pilgrim Church and the Baptist Church had grown stronger, the Unitarian Society had been dwindling in number, until only a few meetings were being held in their building. We find the deed recorded in the Worcester County Public Records for the sale by the First Parish to the Pilgrim Evangelical Society dated September 1857 reads in part as follows:

"The First Parish in the Town of Southborough sends greetings. Whereas the meeting house belonging to the said parish has become greatly dilapidated and is not in a fit condition to be used and occupied as a place of public worship, and whereas by reason of removals from the town and withdrawal of members and from other causes it is impracticable for said parish to

raise the necessary money for the repairing of said meeting house or to support a minister of the Gospel to preach in said meeting house,....."

A committee of fifteen was then chosen "to do every and all acts required in altering, repairing and completely finishing the Unitarian meeting house for public worship." Although we would like to know more fully what transpired at these meetings and what finally happened to the bell, our record is almost bare.

"Southborough December 7, 1857. The Pilgrim Evangelical Society met agreeably to notice and proceeded to business. Article 1 chose Gabriel Parker as moderator. Article 2 voted that the repairing committee of the old meeting house be authorized to take the bell on the Pilgrim Society's meeting house to pay for the new bell bought by the said committee for the newly repaired meeting house. Voted to reconsider the above vote. Voted that the Committee remove the bell from the old house whenever they may think best. Voted to dissolve this meeting. Josiah Johnson, Clerk of said Society."

The First Parish Records mention the bell also:

"Now therefore know Ye that the said First Parish in the Town of Southborough in consideration of the premises and of five dollars to them paid by the said Pilgrim Evangelical Society the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, do hereby bargain, sell and quitclaim to the same Pilgrim Evangelical Society, their successors and assigns forever in fee simple the said Meeting House and Common Land of the said First Parish with all the rights, easements, privileges and appurtenances to the same belonging, to be held, occupied and improved by the said Pilgrim Evangelical Society for the like uses and purposes for which the said land was originally granted to the said First Parish, but it is not intended to include in this conveyance that part of the Common Land originally granted to the said Parish which is now occupied and used as a Burial Ground, nor that part which has heretofore been granted to the Town of Southborough for the purpose of a Town House, nor the bell in said Meeting House, which the said Parish reserve the right to take down and remove at its pleasure." ¹²⁷

In August 1859, Pilgrim Church, through its Evangelical Society, voted to quitclaim to the Town a portion of the common lands just north of the horse sheds for the location of a schoolhouse and playground. The Church reserved the right to pass around the sheds for making repairs, providing that if the building ceased to be occupied for educational purposes it should revert back to the Society. When the Town House burned in 1869, Pilgrim Church gave to the Town land further south for the erection of a larger town house. The building was completely renovated inside and an elevator was added in 1996.

The lower Meeting House and the land on which it stood were sold at public auction in 1859 to Henry H. Peters a member of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society. Mr. Peters gave the

building and the land to the town for use as a High School that was then named Peters High School. That building was used as a High School up through the end of the century.

The newly repaired church was dedicated on the 24th of February 1858. At this time the committee responsible for repairing the Meeting House reported \$10,300.00 as the expense incurred in the repairs. This sum was raised by the sale of pews as had been done for the former meeting house. These repairs included a twenty foot extension on the building; the addition of a steeple with a new bell; and the removal of the box pews, the old pulpit, and the galleries. There was no provision for heat in the upstairs part of the Meeting House at that time. During the Civil War era a grating was cut in the floor to allow heat to come up from downstairs. Up until that time, members had brought their own footstoves to church.

In 1858 an organ was placed in the back of the sanctuary under the steeple. Up until 1858 a leading singer, a bass viol, and a Seraphine (a stringed instrument) had led the music. Along with the leading singer there was probably a quartet to lead the congregation in singing. The organ was built by Simmons and Willcox of Boston and was a "tracker action" organ. The inner workings of wire, leather and wooden strips carried the impulse from the keys to the valves on the organ pipes. A hand pump provided the power for the organ!

The first minister in the newly dedicated Meeting House was the Rev. William J. Breed, who worked among his people for five years. As Mrs. Cora Newton wrote for the Hundredth Anniversary of the Church:

"They were a very devoted people. Their church was first and foremost in their lives. Sunday was a holy day beginning Saturday night and ending Monday morning.... I know of one member who would not allow her family to travel the highway on Sunday except to go to church three times. Perhaps you have heard about the little girl who was told at Sunday school that Heaven was one long Sunday. She said she hoped she'd never get there as she could hardly get through one Sunday a week."

Indications of the state of church life in this period are found in the Bylaws of 1861 of which we quote three.

"Traveling on the Sabbath, for purposes of business or pleasure, is deemed a breach of the Fourth Commandment, and also of that part of our Covenant which binds us to observe the Sabbath, and promote its sanctification."

"Theatrical and circus performances, balls and dancing parties, are considered of evil and demoralizing tendency, and any indulgence in these amusements, or others of like character, is deemed a breach of Covenant obligations, and must be treated accordingly."

"This church can have no sympathy with American Slavery, but will do all in its power, by prayer and effort, to remove it from our beloved land."

The introduction to the 1861 Bylaws²⁸ gives provision both for flexibility and for firmness of conviction:

"Whereas, not only uniformity of faith, but uniformity of practice is highly desirable on the part of all members of any branch of the Church of Christ; and whereas, different views may prevail as to the respective duties of its officers and members, or as to the morality or immorality of certain practices not especially forbidden in our Articles of Faith and Covenant, therefore, Resolved, That the following rules and regulations are hereby adopted for the government of the church."

The rights of the individual to follow his conscience, were a later development, they were not recognized at this time. It was a freedom for the congregation to set its own standards and a binding limitation on individual conduct for church members. Churches of the 1800's certainly had a greater sense of discipline imposed by the congregation as a whole upon individual members than we do today. The church appointed a standing committee. This was a manifestation of early Trinitarian churches in their zeal to reform the church. They would have it be a purified Church of Christ, as it had been with the churches in New England from 1620 to 1650, and as they felt it had been in the time of the New Testament. The committee had one duty among several:

"...to take cognizance of any and all such cases as may come to their knowledge among the members of the church, which may seem to demand faithful Christian or disciplinary action, and, if possible, to adjust the same on Gospel principles....They are hereby empowered to call the supposed offender or offenders before them.....If their efforts are unavailing, it shall be their duty to bring the case in due season before the church; provided always, that by imposing this duty upon the Committee, it is not designed to release individual members from covenant obligations of watching over each other in brotherly love, or from using all scriptural means for reclaiming a wandering member."

There was provision for the calling of a church meeting for the trial or excommunication of members.

Chapter Four: Covenant Obligations &

The members of Pilgrim Church took their duties to their brothers and sisters in faith very seriously. They watched over each other both physically and morally. The following excerpts from the early records of Pilgrim Church attest to their zeal in the pursuit of these beliefs.

Here we look at three examples of meetings that involved the excommunication of members.²⁹

On December 26, 1856 the Church met to hear a letter sent to the Pilgrim Church by a certain lady, requesting that the Church erase her name from the Church records. The Church voted that Brother Gabriel Parker and Brother Webster Johnson visit the lady and her brother, and make a report at the next church meeting. On January 2, 1857 Pilgrim Church met and heard the report of the committee and voted that the sister and brother both be excommunicated from Pilgrim Church for denying the Divinity of Christ, and Divine Revelation as being the word of God.

A much lengthier process involved Doctor Henry F. Johnson.

In May of 1857, we find Pilgrim Church brought charges against the Doctor for untruthfulness and unchristian conduct. The charges arose from his handling of his late father's estate. Reference was made during the meeting to a door having been broken down and curtains taken down. The case with its subsequent meetings continued for three years through August of 1860. There were charges, counter charges and the resulting "vote of said church Monday eve. Sept. 19th Dr. Henry F. Johnson is henceforth excluded from its membership." Needless to say, Doctor Johnson took exception to that finding and requested first an Exparte Council and later a Mutual Council of representatives from seven Eastern Massachusetts Churches meeting with nine representatives of Pilgrim Church.

The final result was that the Mutual Council "...consider[s] the church, while intending no injustice has erred in several particulars. Conceiving itself aggrieved by the conduct of Dr. Johnson, its members do not seem to have exhibited that tender and affectionate spirit imperatively required by the Law of Christ. ... The evidence does not seem to justify the extent of wrong alleged. Nor does the severe sentence itself seem to be proportionate, nor that suitable delay was left for repentance after condemnation. Dr. Johnson has been, at least very imprudent and severe in many of the remarks he has made in respect to the Pastor, and one or more of the members of the church. Mutual confessions of their faults ought to be made and in connection therewith, the Parties restored to their former relations."

These results were duly reported back to the church, but Dr. Johnson was then suspended from membership for two months and given the chance to "give satisfaction" to its members in order to be restored to membership. We find in the records that "whereas Dr Johnson has taken no notice whatever of the action of said church, but has further treated the church with contempt by applying for admission into a Sister Church while under discipline with us...is hereby excommunicated from the Pilgrim Church."

This was the end of a long and obviously emotional trial. Dr. Henry F. Johnson does not appear again in the records of Pilgrim Church, Southborough. However, the

records neglect to state that the good Doctor and his wife had moved and were no longer residents of Southborough!

A less extreme case involved two sisters of the Church and some rumors being passed among the ladies of the town. On July 10, 1838 a special church meeting met to try to understand what was the cause of some difficulties existing between Sister Polly Nichols and Sister Ann Maria Collins. It appears that sister Nichols had circulated some gossip injurious to the character of Sister Collins. It appears likewise, that Sister Collins had been imprudent in some of her conduct.

On July 13 Sister Nichols presented to the Church the following communication in writing:

"Mrs. Nichols wishes to confess and acknowledge that she has spoken to Mrs. Peter Fay and Mrs. Elisha Johnson respecting the reports which she had heard of the conduct of Miss Maria Collins. For this she confesses that she has done wrong and desires to ask forgiveness of God, of her, and of this church. She also acknowledges and confesses that she has not felt towards Maria Collins, as it becometh one sister in the church to feel towards another. For this she desires to be humble and ask forgiveness.

But she wishes to say that she was not aware that she was taking a wrong course when she mentioned the subject to Mrs. Johnson. She did it with a view to have the Church Committee look into the matter, as she supposed it was their duty. But she now perceives that she was neglecting her own duty, she ought either to have had a solemn interview with Maria Collins herself, or not to have reported the stories.

She wishes also to say that when she reported these stories she did not then, nor does she now, give full credit to them as being true; but did then and does still believe that some of the conduct of Miss Collins had given occasion to the world to speak lightly of her character, and through her to wound the cause of Christ.

For all that I have felt and said, and done amiss, contrary to the rules of the Gospel, wounding to the cause of Christ, and to this church, and injurious to the spiritual welfare of Miss Collins, I desire to humble myself before God, this Church, and Miss Collins, and ask to be forgiven.

This I do freely, and conscientiously, as in view of that solemn tribunal where the secrets of all hearts will be made manifest.

Polly Nichols

The church voted to accept the above acknowledgment of imprudence.

Sister Ann Maria Collins also acknowledged that she had been imprudent in some of her conduct, and requested the church to forgive her. The church voted to accept her acknowledgment.

The care of other members of the Church has always been of vital importance to the outreach of the people of Pilgrim Church. The case of Brother Salmon Sibley is one of many found in the early church records. The Sibley Family obviously was not physically or financially in the best of condition. The Church lent a helping hand on an on going basis as seen by these entries from the Treasurer's Records:

Sept. 13 1859: To Widow L. Woods for services rendered to S. Sibley and Wife, from April 1 to Sept. nursing \$34.00

November 6 1859: Contribution of the church and Society for the Benefit of Salmon Sibley and Wife - \$30.21

Nov. 15, 1859: To Mrs. Woods for nursing S. Sibley and Wife from Sept. 1 to Nov. 15.1859-\$24.00

Store Bill for shroud etc. - \$64 Dec. 7, 1859: To Russell Flagg for burying Mrs. Sibley \$10.50

On March 2, 1860 Pilgrim Church took under consideration the case of Brother Salmon Sibley. They vote to choose a committee of Three to examine his circumstances, and report at a future Meeting.

Chapter Five: 1875-1900 ↔

By 1875 Pilgrim Church was well aware of its need for a parsonage. In that year the Church "gratefully accepted the offer of Rev. Dr. Andrew J. Bigelow that he would supply the pulpit for one year if desired, for \$1,000, and at the close of the year would give that money for a parsonage for the Pilgrim Evangelical Society." We find, from Mrs. Newton's historical essay, that Dr. Bigelow not only gave back the \$1,000 salary which they paid him, but also, after his year as Pastor of the Church, and retiring from the ministry he continued to live in



Southborough. He bought a house in Southborough, served as Superintendent of Schools, and gave more than \$1,400 to the Society. There are evidences of continuing generosity on his part until his death some years later. His wife continued as a Sunday school teacher until a few years before her death in 1918. The parsonage was built in 1876 on land purchased from Joseph Burnett at 22 Main Street.

Another minister, in some contrast to Dr. Bigelow, was called in 1876 and became the first one to occupy the new parsonage. This was the Rev. Henry M. Holmes. In his letter (he had been offered a salary of \$1,000, the use of the parsonage and its land) he says, "I could wish the salary a little larger but am fully willing to trust myself in the hands of the people. The present burden on them is a mighty consideration with me." This burden undoubtedly was in part due to the construction of the new parsonage. This was the first year for pledge cards and envelopes for the offering. The Ladies Home Missionary Society and the Sunday school both contributed heavily to the building fund, suggesting that the church was not a source of enough funds for these new needs. Some years later, when the stable was to be built for the parsonage some of the men in the Church gathered together and volunteered their labor to dig the cellar hole and to build the stone wall to support the building.

The church during this period was concerned not only with financial problems. There were discussions as to whether we should hire a minister jointly with the Southville Community Church. In 1876 the Church decided to no longer use fermented wine in the Communion service. Pitchers and cups had been used in the early years. The Communion service consisted of passing these large cups from person to person in the pews so that everyone drank from a common cup, rather than from individual glasses. The reason for the

congregation taking Communion seated in the pews seems due to their conviction that at



the Last Supper the Apostles were seated around a common table not kneeling or standing. The Communion service was purchased in 1854 for \$52.50 and used until 1896.

In this period Mrs. Newton

tells us of William Crouch who "sat in a pew half way down the middle aisle one Sunday. He had a bottle of cider in his pocket and as it felt the warmth it began to work. The cork came out and so did the cider. The pew in front carried the stain for a number of years."

In 1880 we find that although the women had paid for the painting of the parsonage Deacon Fay had to report that to the meeting of the Society for them as they were still apparently not full participating members of the Society. Then in 1888 we find that Lucy Newton was elected to the Soliciting Committee of the Society. This is the first record we have of a woman formally being included in the directing of church life.

In researching the history of the church a program for the Semi-centennial celebration was found that Mrs. Cora I. Newton had preserved. It was published by the short-lived Southborough Press, Stillman B. Pratt, Publisher, Charles Hovey, Editor.³⁰ The description of the Semi-Centennial gathered for the newspaper articles of the time, starts as follows:

"On Thursday, February 17, 1881, was celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the organization of the Pilgrim Evangelical Church, Southborough."

"The audience room of the House of Worship was elaborately trimmed for the occasion with evergreen encircling the two arches over the desk and organ. (Front and back) Flowering plants were arranged in artistic profusion, with the word "Welcome" surmounting all. Rich banners with gold letters, "Ask of the days that are past" and "United in Love," were at either end of the broad aisle.

"On either side of the altar were shields listing the 13 original Members of 1831 and the ten pastors to 1881. It was 10:30 o'clock before the people had gathered from Southborough and all the neighboring towns, many driving over in sleighs."

Dinner was served at noon to about 250 people and the afternoon was devoted to greetings from neighboring Churches and from men who had long known the Church. Dr. Andrew Bigelow "spoke of the deep interest he had always felt in this Southborough church, as well as in the schools of the Town, over whose interests he had watched for six years. He hoped God would pour out His Spirit here."

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SH-EVENUAL

Pilgrim Church

SOUTHBORD, MASS.

REPUBLISHED FROM THE SOUTHBOOK PRESS.

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"Rev. Luther Angier, over three score and ten, was introduced as one of the boys of the family". Mr. Angier said, "On this spot I was baptized as an infant, though I do not remember it. Yonder in the old square box pew was our family seat. (Note: He is referring to the old square box pew in the Church building before Pilgrim Church was formed and before the renovation of the 1850's.) Thus he bridged the time between the Parish Church and the return to that same building by children of parish Church members.

"In the old Church there were deep galleries on three sides. I see Priest Parker walking up the broad aisle with great deliberation, and pass up the winding stairs into the high pulpit. He was a man of 6 feet, weighing 250 pounds. When he visited the town school, Dolly Ball the teacher, and the scholars, stood until he had taken his seat amid the bowing of the boys and the sweet little curtsies of the girls. Good old manners were those!"

"In this house there was no stove then. People came long distances through the snow with their footstoves. What a clatter there was when the seats went down after the singing. My first Sunday school verses were recited to Deacon Parker and I remember it now. Why don't your children commit the Scriptures to memory?"

"I joined the Church when I was thirteen, standing in this broad aisle. In those days men could sell rum and get drunk and nothing was said by the church, and yet there were saintly men who remained in the old order after the new Church was organized in the Whipple House. Of such was John Chamberlain, who used to ride to Andover to bring students here to preach, and who generously gave his time and money for the cause. God has greatly blessed this Church in the past and it has not yet seen its best days."

"He said that Dr. Bigelow lived where his mother was born, and on that place stood Grandfather Parker's Blacksmith Shop, where in Revolutionary days silver coin was made upon his anvil. This church has produced many noble sons and daughters. Quoting from Mr. Parker's Centennial Sermon he said that he believed that Priest Parker was a regenerated man."

"Rev. W. K. Davey of the Fayville Baptist Church³¹ had always felt that this Church was a great help to our little Society. The sight of your spire from my study window has always encouraged me, for I felt that we had faithful friends here who loved the same Christ. We Baptists are called a pretty strict sect, and yet the Baptists and Congregationalists affiliate closer than any other denominations because we agree so nearly in all the great issues of the Gospels, and in other matters we agree to disagree."

The Rev. S. E. Eastman spoke for the mother Church at Marlborough, noting "the early ministers who were so angular in their presentation of Calvinistic Doctrines."

The Rev. Mr. LeBosquet "recommended the little Southville Church to the sympathy of this people."³²

Deacon Peter Fay was here introduced as a man who knew more about Southborough history than anyone else. He complained "that his nose and mouth were making too close connections, since he had had his teeth out and it troubled him to talk". Yet it was he who described the 1842 revival and gave the description of the three who were baptized by immersion in the river after the ice had been cut.

The evening entertainment closing the events of the day included more than the social feature bringing friends together.

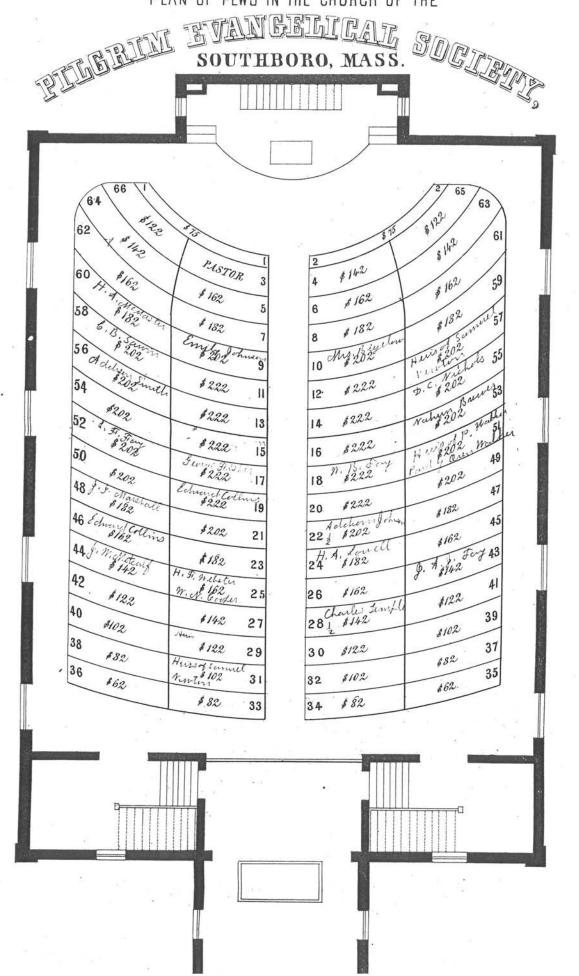
"There was introduced in a quiet way a company of singers in the costume of the olden times, under the direction of H. A. McMaster and was the means of giving some of the older people some lively recollection of former days. Such tunes as "Rainbow", "Sherbourne", New Jerusalem", "Northfield", and "Auld Lang Syne" cannot be listened to without awakening some enthusiasm, and when the Rev. Messrs. Angier and Dr. Love were called out, their remarks came with a spirit that was quickened by the memories of the past. The full audience appreciated both the singing and the speaking."

Included in this printed description of the Semi-Centennial of the Pilgrim Church was a reference to some of the letters written to the Church at the time of the Semi-Centennial.

One from Walter Follett in Hannibal, Missouri (written in 1872 just before his death) had comments about the ministers of the western region: "coarse, uneducated western men, who have succeeded in getting good, refined, intelligent, eastern young ladies for wives, who have come here as teachers or in eastern families. But this will be well for the next generation", he says, " for a good wife and a good mother is sure to give character to the family." After expressing his love of New England, his best wishes and hopes for Pilgrim Church, "Believe me my dear friends, we do not regret being here. God is here. Jesus is here, there are good people here, and we are looking forward to a better country' than the east or the west."

James S. Parker of Shopiere, Wisconsin regretted his inability to be present at the anniversary. "Six of us living in this place, once were connected with that Church, and we remember its early history with great interest, feeling the good influences we received there grow with our growth and strengthen as we live, in fact the N. E. Churches are exerting an untold and wonderful amount of influence for good in the western states."

PLAN OF PEWS IN THE CHURCH OF THE



Chapter Six: Martha Newton North Missionary &

In a delightful letter from Mrs. Arthur W. White (Hoyette North), dated July 22, 1957 from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma a great deal was learned about Mrs. White's mother - Martha Newton North. From the anniversary program of Pilgrim Congregational Church in Oklahoma City we learn

"...Martha O. North, was for years a worker in South Africa with Dr. Andrew Murray. She assisted in founding the Methodist Training School for Missionaries in Chicago, and worked with Dwight L. Moody. Mrs. North was the first school teacher in Oklahoma City in June of 1889, and was one of the organizers of Pilgrim Congregational Church in 1889."

"Martha Chamberlain Newton North was born in Southborough, Massachusetts June 18, 1850 the youngest child of Samuel Newton and Sophia Chamberlain Newton and a sister of Albro Newton, Cora's husband. She was the granddaughter of Moses Newton, the first clerk of Pilgrim Church and its architect as well as the builder of his own home in Southborough when he was married."

Martha's Grandfather Chamberlain was one of the 13 charter members of Pilgrim Church. Martha spent her first year of high school at the Peters High School.

"When she was 16-1/2 she started to the Normal School in Framingham, Massachusetts about five miles away. She went to and from school each day by train. A light colored Negro girl from South Carolina was attending the Normal School, and Martha helped her with her lessons each day before train time. This girl later taught in Charleston, South Carolina."

Graduating from Framingham Normal School in 1869 and unaware of her reputation and high standing, afraid no one would want her as a teacher, Martha finally mustered up courage to apply for a position in a nearby town. She received 18 letters asking her to teach in different schools, but finally accepted the one she had applied for, at a pay of \$9.00 a week, the usual amount paid to a young and inexperienced teacher.

"After a year of teaching Martha read the life of Mary Lyon which inspired her to attend Mount Holyoke Seminary at South Hadley. She graduated in 1875 at the head of her class.

"The Rev. Andrew Murray a Methodist Missionary and educator from England came to America to find teachers to take to South Africa. Martha heard him at Mount Holyoke and in 1877 with other teachers who had been chosen sailed with the Rev. Murray for Cape Town, South Africa. Their work was in Cape Colony."

""Martha is credited with starting a boarding school and graded school in Swellendam. She then went back to Huguenot Seminary at Wellington and had charge of that school as principal for several years...she started a Normal School in connection with Huguenot Seminary and after five years in Africa traveled rather extensively in other countries before returning to America. The following year Martha went to Chicago and helped to found the Methodist Training School for Missionaries there.

"The Congregational Board then insisted that she work for her own denomination. They sent her to Alabama to assist in development of schools among the mountain whites and to help the needy. While in Alabama she met Lyman Hoyt North of Torrington, Connecticut who was temporarily in Alabama dealing in lumber. They were married in 1889. Martha and her husband visited their relatives in Massachusetts and Connecticut and then went to Oklahoma City as planned, eager to be pioneers and to have a part in building up a new country. They arrived three weeks after the historic opening of Oklahoma to white settlement, April 22, 1889. They built a comfortable four room house which was also used as the first schoolhouse in the city."

"Following are excerpts from the original, well worn, crisp, yellow pages of the daily newspaper of 1889, on file in the Oklahoma State Historical Society building in Oklahoma City."

"As previously announced, Mrs. North will open her school September 9th in the Methodist Tabernacle. [This was a tent on her lawn.] Whatever instruction is required to meet the present demands of the pupils will be arranged for. The regular tuition will be \$1.00 per month for a single pupil and 75¢ if more than one is received from the same family. Any unable to pay will be welcomed free."

Another item from the Daily Times indicates that Mrs. North organized the first study or literary society under the Chautauqua Program.

"Mr. and Mrs. North were not only interested in the educational development of the new city but also took active and leading parts in the religious and Church affairs and the civic advancement. Mr. North's name appears many times on various committees, councils, resolutions and numerous legal documents, etc. Mr. North with Mr. Tompkins canvassed the city for Baptists, called the first meeting and organized the first Baptist Church with eleven charter members. Mr. North was the first Clerk, and one of two deacons."

"Mrs. North was busy finding Congregationalists. When seven others were found they began humble meetings and organized Pilgrim Church in Oklahoma City November 26, 1889 'In the parlor of Mrs. Brown's boarding house.' [The members of the Pilgrim Congregational Church and of the Harrison Avenue Church realized that mutual benefit to Congregationalism would be derived through a merger and this was consummated in April of 1924. We presume that Martha saw with her experience a

Baptist Church and a Congregational Church in the same town as being acceptable in the sight of the Lord. *J*"

"Martha Newton North stood out in culture, Christian devotion, eager to share what she had with rich or poor, white or colored. She helped the neighbor college students with their problems in higher mathematics or nursed a poor indigent person in sickness. She radiated kindness, gentility, honesty, sincerity, love, patience, integrity, and all the other attributes known to be fine human qualities. It is impossible to describe such a one. Words are inadequate. She died March 10, 1923. Like Job of old she never doubted God."

While Pilgrim Church certainly can not take full credit for the training of Martha Newton North it is certain that Mrs. North has brought honor to the Church into which she was born and in which she received the first years of training toward Christian maturity. We can admire Martha Newton North as one of those who carried the influence of eastern churches to the western frontier.

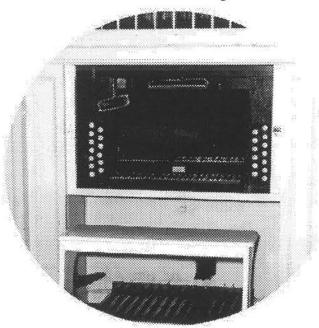
Chapter Seven: 1886 - 1900 &

A fter her description of the Semi-Centennial Mrs. Albro Newton tells us of well attended prayer meetings Sunday evenings at that time.

"All the boys and girls were right there and after service one could see the boys waiting in the vestibule for the one girl they wished to escort home. Most of us lived a long walk from the Church but that was no draw back. It was said the Sunday evening meeting was a matrimonial bureau. That's where I got my husband."

She noted that at this time the Church sponsored many social activities in the town. They held socials, "entertainments" and concerts that everybody was interested in attending. From the official records of the Society we find only a meager account of these social activities. We find the earliest written record of men working together to save the Church the expense of hiring labor occurs in 1886, when the Society voted to build a stable at the parsonage. They thought "men enough would volunteer to dig and stone the cellar." There was a Strawberry Festival on June 8, 1883 and the first Parish Dinner (this possibly in connection with the Annual Meeting) in 1887.

Concern for the building was shown in 1887 and authorization was given "to remove



such pews as needed in order to set the organ in the rear of the pulpit, and bring the pulpit forward from its present position. It was voted to grant permission to individuals to build a water closet in the rear and in connection with the Meeting House."

Miss Jessie Works was organist at Pilgrim Church from 1889 to 1897 during the time that the organ was moved from the back of the sanctuary to the front. This made it necessary to put an extension on the platform at the front, remove two pews and place a new pulpit on the platform. Jessie's parents

were George and Eliza Works. George and Eliza formed a quartet with Charles Works and Miss Emma Works. George played the cornet and formed a duet with a Negro by the name of R. Jackson. George Works, a veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic was remembered as marching in the Memorial Day parades from the Depot to the Cemetery and then to the Town Hall.

This was a time of growing social awareness and concern for the Church. There was a sense of strength and integrity in the Church. It was also a time of controversy with the Town. It seems that the Town Fathers wanted to enclose the Common in front of the Church with a fence. The Church fathers didn't like the idea of enclosing land that they felt belonged to God with a fence made with human hands. After the Town officials erected the fence, it was removed after dark one evening. Newspaper articles describing the event tell of the height of the controversy, the heat that it generated and of the fact that this fence was put up in broad daylight and removed in the dark. The land around the Church building has often been a subject of question and controversy between the Church and the Town.

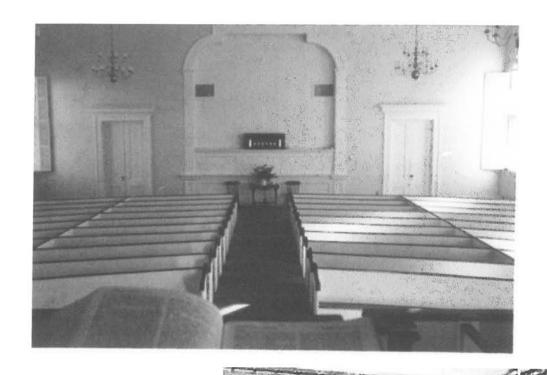
The population of Southborough in 1870 was 2,133.³³ From 1870 to 1898 Southborough was a boomtown with many factories in operation. The end of the nineteenth century brought the building of the dam in Fayville by the Boston Water Department (later the Metropolitan District Commission). The Department took 2,000 acres for its reservoir system. Mills, gristmills, and more than 60 farms and homes were razed, more than 20 moved. Factories that had depended on waterpower from the river had to be closed. In 1898 a large shoe factory in Fayville burned to the ground.

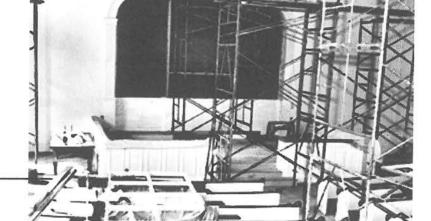
The dam itself was built largely by hand labor. Negroes were brought from the south, along with Irish and Italian immigrants to do the work. Tenements were created in Southville, Cordaville and Fayville to house the workers. Usually these were factories that were converted for the purpose. A Police force of twenty-five members was considered necessary to keep order in the tenements and boarding houses in which the workers were housed.

A new high school was built in back of the old Peters High School in 1897. The original Pilgrim Church Lower Meeting House was moved to School Street where it became first a manual training building, then a place for social meetings and dances, then a print shop, and finally a storehouse for Deerfoot Farms' milk bottles. It was destroyed by fire in 1926.³⁴ Among those in the last class to graduate from the old Peters High School building were Mrs. Esther (Nourse) Watkins, Miss McQuarrie, Ruth McMaster, Robert Buck, Elizabeth Lincoln and Eva Brewer. These may have been the class of 1900.

Reviewing the history of Pilgrim Church in Southborough showed how similar our situation was to the situation of other Congregational Churches throughout Massachusetts. In most towns of eastern Massachusetts there was a Unitarian departure in which the leadership of the Churches became Unitarian in their thinking causing a small group of Trinitarian conviction to withdraw from the Parish Church and build their own Meeting House. In many instances we now visit towns with both a Unitarian Church and a Congregational (Trinitarian) Church. In Southborough we saw the Trinitarian group

become stronger as the Unitarian group became less numerous. An understanding of this early history of the Church building and the land around it makes one wonder what happened to change the situation shortly after 1900.

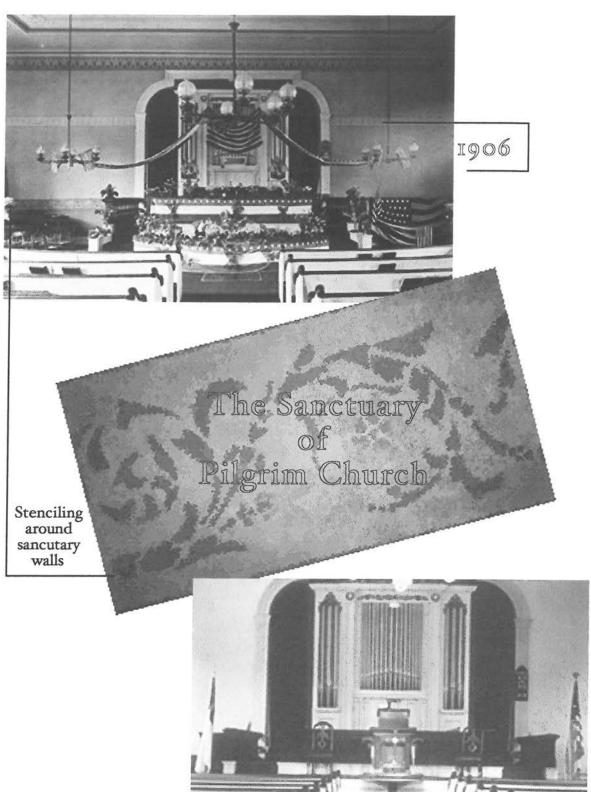




1990 Renovation



Easter 2001





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Chapter Eight: The Early Ministers of Pilgrim Church 1832 – 1906 &

alter Follett the first settled minister of the Church (June, 1832 - August, 1837), was a man of exceptional scholarship, a perfect gentleman, earnest, energetic, looking to the financial interests of the Society, tender hearted and consecrated to his work. He was faithful to reprove sin throughout the Town, such as gathering grain on the Sabbath, an act not uncommon at the time. As a preacher he was good and practical, and faithful to the needs of his people - many of his sermons had a decided revival stamp. "As energetic and uncompromising as he was in Holy things, he was equally so in secular. He was an enthusiastic lover of a good horse and a good garden, of both of which he kept a specimen." Mr. Follett married while in Southborough and "was a man of very tender affection to his family, and on his return from an absence would kiss his wife, a matter of considerable scandal to some harsh Puritanical natures. In all he was a gift from God; just the man for the place, to make friends for the new Society and build it up, which he faithfully did in his Pastorate of five years." 35

Jacob Cummings (March 1838 - March 1841), although an exceptionally fine scholar, was not blessed with the winning and genial manner of his predecessor. His unfortunately cold exterior did not tend to win friends among outsiders or children, yet underneath it all was a warm heart and an earnest piety. His sermons were of a doctrinal nature, although when asked if he could not preach more on the love of God, he produced an unforgettable masterpiece depicting the infinite love of God. "Consistent with his old school theology were his views upon religious work. He did not believe in revivals, and was afraid of having too many meetings." He showed great interest in the schools and did much for their improvement. "The effects of Mr. Cummings thorough preaching were seen in the year following his departure," when 44 were received into membership.³⁶

Alanson Rawson (1844-1852) was a praying man and referred to as the "one-armed preacher." He kept the Church in a praying, revival state all the while; sermons were solemn and practical. "His genial bearing, his excellent judgment, his tender heart, his love of fun, his sharpness in repartee made him a favorite among the people both of the Church and of the Town." Mr. Rawson had taken his theological training after having been in business. Although he remained in Southborough for nine years he was never installed as Pastor of the Church much to the distress of the other ministers in the Association and the Churches in the Conference. Two of his four children were buried in the "new cemetery" in Southborough. It was during this period that the Ladies Society was formed with Mrs. Rawson taking an active part.

David M. Elwood (August, M-June, 1856) "was a very active man, a good sermonizer and had considerable power in the pulpit, though at times he seemed pretty severe." Children in Church

were to him no disturbance though they might make some noise. "During one service when a child 'climbed up and commenced riding the back of a pew' he said he wondered if they had ever seen a child before, and commended the parents for bringing it rather than for themselves staying at home."³⁸

Elisha D. Bates (November, 1856 - August, 1857) came directly from the Seminary at Andover and was ordained here in January 1857. He made an exceptionally fine appearance at his Examination but is described as being extremely nervous. He remained only until August as no parsonage or boarding place had been found for him. In his farewell communication he said in part "When I came to labor here in the vineyard of the Lord, I did not expect nor calculate to live in the air, but to live in an earthly tabernacle made with human hands, as you and others do." There was no parsonage at that time, and the leadership of the church was decidedly lax in obtaining lodgings for their pastor.

William J. Breed (February, 1858 - March, 1863) was the first minister in the present Church building, being installed in June of 1858. He is described as a talented and spiritual pastor, preaching with great power, tender hearted and remarkably good at funerals. Testimonies of his preaching state that "he was the best minister ever in this pulpit." (While here he was obviously the first and only pastor in the new pulpit!) "It seems as if he would convert the whole Town." The good effects of his preaching were seen in the two-year interval between him and his successor. While Nathan Campfield was serving as supply minister (nine months) thirteen were received into membership as compared to only ten during the five years of Mr. Breed's stay.⁴⁰

John Colby (1865 - March 1873) began his eight year pastorate in 1865. The Colbys loved children. In fact they loved everyone. The Church was always filled. Mrs. Colby is remembered as a teacher in the Primary Department of Sunday school and Mrs. Newton vividly recalled her first party - given for the Primary Class by the Colbys in their home. The Colbys were enthusiastic "callers" and welcome in every home. Well-attended neighborhood prayer meetings were held during this time.⁴¹

Andrew J. Bigelow (March, 1874 - March, 1875) is noted particularly for this generosity in giving back his \$1,000 salary toward the construction of a parsonage. Rev. Bigelow prepared for college at Amherst Academy under the care of the Rev. Ward Cotton and graduated from Amherst College in 1838. He taught school at Rochester, Massachusetts (where his older half-brother was minister) and in 1841 was ordained a minister at South Dartmouth. He then served at West Needham, Wellesley, West Hampton and Medfield. He had the pastorate of his native Town of Boylston from 1866 to 1873. He retired then from his ministerial work and moved to Southborough where he died September 23, 1882. He was active in the cause of education and served on the school committee in Southborough. Although we know much of their generosity we know little personally about

the Bigelows. Susie (Brewer) Smith remembered Mrs. Bigelow seated in one of the front pews of the Church with an old-fashioned ear trumpet. A sign of Mrs. Bigelow's faithfulness is contained in the letters that she wrote to the Church for their Annual Meetings when she could not attend due to the infirmities of her age.⁴²

Henry M. Holmes (1875 - November 1878), with his family, was the first to occupy the new parsonage at 22 Main Street. He was recalled as a dignified and scholarly man. Mrs. Holmes was a noted singer and while here served as a member of the "Singing Committee."

Archibald L. Love (1879 - 1883) came to Southborough as a young man just married. This was his first church. He was full of fire and ambition, no different from those who preceded him. People wondered what he would do or say next. On better acquaintance his labors began to bear fruit with both young and old, and many united with the Church. Rev. Love was here four years and we are indebted to him for the accounts of the early ministers that he drew together at the time of the Semi-Centennial in 1881.

Of Mr. J. E. Wheeler (1883-1885) all that we know is that he occupied the pulpit.

The Rev. Daniel E. Adams came to our pulpit in 1885. "He entered into the work of the Town serving on the School Committee as well as in the Church, and was most welcome in every home." Rev. Adams was strict in his observance of the Sabbath rules. He was a striking man with sharp features. During Rev. Adams pastorate the first Parish Dinner was held in 1887 and regular dinners continued until 1902. It gathered in everybody, sort of an old home day. After staying with us seven years he retired in 1892 and moved to Wellesley. He had a daughter Mary who, much to the delight of our members, married the next Pastor, Rev. Martin F. Mevis. How could we help but welcome him, when we knew and loved her so well.

Rev. Mevis was tall, dark and soft spoken and kept a cow on his lawn! They labored for twelve years facing all the ups and downs of a small country Church. They collected the funds to buy a piano in 1896. The education of these two men, Rev. Adams and Rev. Mevis, was a generation apart - spanning the Civil War. By the time Rev. Mevis was in Seminary, any of the basic assumptions and heartfelt convictions of the orthodox Trinitarian group had become rigid, and subject to scientific criticism. Thus the young Rev. Mevis, preaching on the basis of his training, was forced to question and attack some of the main emphases of the preaching of his father-in-law. At this time the Trinitarian Seminaries were beginning to accept and use the criticisms originally stated by the Unitarians in a different day.

Chapter Nine: 1900 - 1926 &

A Pilgrim Church and the Pilgrim Evangelical Society entered the Twentieth Century under the pastorate of Rev. Martin Mevis there was considerable outreach to youth and growth in the Sunday School. We look to this period, specifically to 1901, for the legal joining of Pilgrim Church and Pilgrim Evangelical Society as Pilgrim Congregational Church Incorporated.

The population of Southborough in 1901 was close to 3,000. During this time the Church was undergoing the change in viewpoint as described under the contrast between Revs. Adams and Mevis. This change undoubtedly caused the difficult financial period. In 1903 the Church closed during the month of August - a common practice until the coming of Rev. Ralph Reynolds in 1948. Many of the families in the Church were experiencing financial difficulties as they moved from their farms and jobs to new locations because of the building of the Fayville Dam and the loss of several factories due to fires. But the Church, in 1905, reported a solvent balance of \$72.00. The Church Sexton at that time was also the Town Lamplighter. Rev. Mevis resigned in June of 1906.

On the Fourth of July in those days children in the Town chose the highly visible Church building for some fun. Now a flag is raised on an island in the middle of the Reservoir in Fayville, but then,

"The bell in the Pilgrim Church steeple was a popular target for practical jokers. From a position in a tree some yards distant, it could be rung on the first minute of the Fourth by shots from a hunting rifle. This was frowned upon, however, so one year a group of local boys strung a rope from the bell to a nearby pine tree, and from there, well-hidden, they rang and rang the bell, waking everyone in the central part of town." 43

The Rev. Dempster D. Gorton was Pastor from 1906 to 1908. He was large, rugged, forceful, and well liked throughout the whole town. He received \$600 per year plus the use of the parsonage. At this time Pilgrim Church was yoked with the Second Congregational Church in Southville⁴⁴ from which he also received \$200 per year for serving as their pastor.

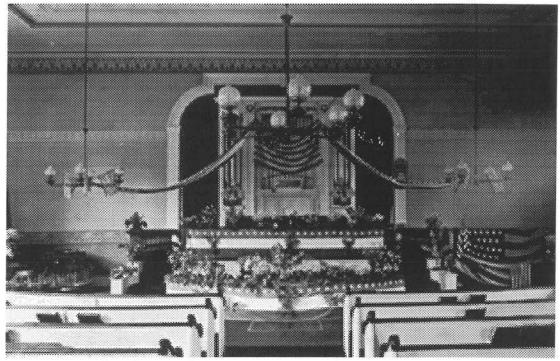
During his pastorate the newly incorporated Church agreed to an indenture from the Town which is very confusing to us at this time.⁴⁵ St. Mark's Church wanted to extend its Chancel into the land between their building and the Town Hall as well as relocate their hedge.⁴⁶ To do this they found that they had to get a deed to the land from both the Town and the Church.

At that time the indenture was made between the Church and the Town. The Town gave a quitclaim to the Church for the parcel of land on which the Church building rests plus a margin of approximately six feet around the building. The Church then gave a

quitclaim of its rights to all the land behind the two buildings to the north, the cemetery to the east, and the Common between the buildings and Main Street. The Town on its part agreed to maintain horse sheds suitable for twelve teams for the use of the inhabitants of the Town and for the use of the Church people. The Town also agreed to maintain the lands immediately around the Church building.

The reason for this indenture is difficult for us to find. It may be that the Church was finding it impossible to maintain the lands in the areas surrounding the Town Hall and the Church Building, including the cemetery. Certainly the Townspeople would want their common lands to be well maintained. We find that the cemetery had gone to the Town at the time that the Unitarians sold their land and the Church building to the Pilgrim Church Society. Perhaps the Pilgrim Church people in 1907 were unaware of the history of these arrangements.

There was a further stipulation that if the church ceased to be used as a House of Worship, all right to it would go back to the Town. This we find very hard to understand, in light of the fact that the Trinitarian group, the old Pilgrim Church, acting through its society had purchased this land along with the Church building for a considerable sum of money. They had invested a great deal of their savings in the refurbishing of the House of Worship and the maintenance of it and its grounds for their worship. That the Church must have been in dire financial straits during this period of 1906 to 1908 seems to be



without question. Why else would they enter into such an agreement, without anticipating possible future growth in size, and consequently need for space. No other reason than a

failing of courage and resources could have brought the inheritors of this beautiful setting to surrender it to the control of the Town.

It's interesting to note that in 1907 the Sunday school was making great strides in growth and winning recognition for the largest gain in members of any school in the conference. At the same time, adult membership decreased, until in 1909 there were only "ten males and forty females" on the rolls.

Mrs. Newton's cryptic comment about Rev. Gorton is quite interesting. "Rev. Dempster Gorton took Rev. M. F. Mevis' place in 190(6). He was here two years and nothing eventful happened during his stay." After leaving Pilgrim Church, he became a Chaplain in the Army.

Some picture of the life of Pilgrim Church in the first years of the twentieth century can be gained from the comments of the Rev. Arden M. Rockwood, Pastor from October 1908 to February 1913. In accepting his first call, Rev. Rockwood said,

"I shall depend upon you for help and cooperation. My idea of a true Church is not merely a business organization for the support of preaching, nor a society for pleasant companionship, of the elect one with another, but the banding together of those who are seeking the highest things in an organization to help and encourage one another and to increase our efficiency in doing the work of Christ."

His aim as Pastor would be to watch for ways to bring the higher life into the community. He would make plans so that every member of the Church, as well as others who were willing, would have a share in the service of Christ, and become acquainted with the adherence of the Church. He concludes, "This work of making character, no matter where it is, is a work which requires perfect sincerity, tact, wisdom, and love. I can not do it alone, you can not do it alone. We must help one another, and we must pray for one another."

Rev. and Mrs. Rockwood were received into Church membership on December 27, 1908 from the Highland Congregational Church of Portland, Oregon. The membership of the Church at that time was 24 males and 25 females. Henry A. McMaster was Clerk of the Church.

In his acceptance of the Church's unanimous invitation to remain a second year the Rev. Rockwood, in November of 1909, pointed out three things which he felt the Church should be doing. He felt that in working with young people the adults should show more interest in and faith in the Church, thereby communicating this faith in the Church to the younger people. (The Pilgrim Youth Fellowship was founded in 1910.) Secondly, he felt there should be confidence in the work of the Church toward the community and a feeling of brotherhood should show itself in the social life of the Church. Thirdly, he looked for people to exhibit a spirit of devoted attendance at service, loyally and prayerfully with a readiness to make sacrifices. In summary, the Church should be the union of hearts in

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unselfish service. Here he suggested perhaps a new idea: that people plan to give so much every Sunday whether they could or could not come to Church instead of giving so much each time they attended. He noted that the Church had to plan for its expenses.

In his response for the third year, Rev. Rockwood asked the people to put the Church first in their plans for work and service, noting that half-hearted devotion would accomplish little. The fourth year's response was a request that people "talk up the Church, not in the spirit of apology but in the spirit of service, feeling that our Church has a mission and that strength will come in the performance of it."

In his letter accepting the call to his fifth and final year with the Church Rev. Rockwood brought to the attention of the Church how important it was "for the work of the Church and for our growth in Christian character, that everyone should have a part in this work and that we should hold fast to our promise, to pray and labor for its edification and fruitfulness, to help in sustaining its worship, its activities and its charities, and to live together in Christian fellowship." We note that toward the end of Rev. Rockwood's ministry he shows some impatience, as well as satisfaction, with his attempts to get more people involved in the spirit of service that he felt the members of the Church should display to the community. His ministry in Southborough came to an end in December of 1912 due to his failing eyesight. His doctor's orders were that he should take up work on a farm in order to forestall a relapse in the trouble that he was having with his vision. He noted the great pleasure and joy he would have remembering his years together with the Church. He concluded, "As I leave you let me repeat what I have said so many times, that there is a work for this Church if we are up to our opportunities; but this work can only be done by subordinating our own desires and purposes to the great motive of the Christ life, and each in his own way working out the Christ spirit with those about us."

The Rev. Mr. Rockwood is remembered as a tall, thin man looking something like Ichabod Crane, a good organizer and certainly we would add, from these comments in his letters to the Church, a man of true Christian spirit.

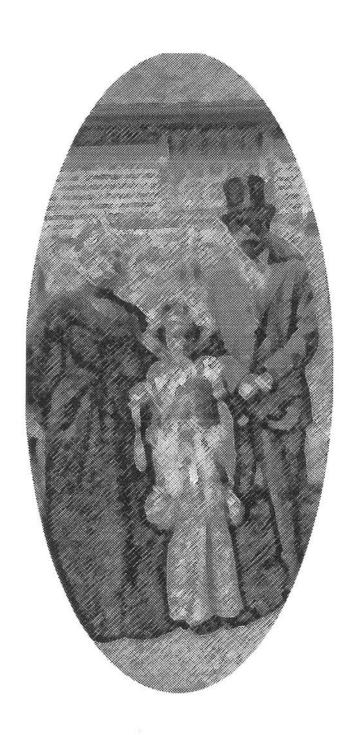
Shortly after Mr. Rockwood left, when the Churches were considering a call to the Rev. S. Carlyle Schaeffer who was serving another Church, we find this note in the Church records: "The matter of changing the time of any of the Church Services was left to the Church. This committee was then instructed not to change the time of beginning the morning service." However, we know little of Rev. Schaeffer, who concluded his pastorate on April 1, 1914.

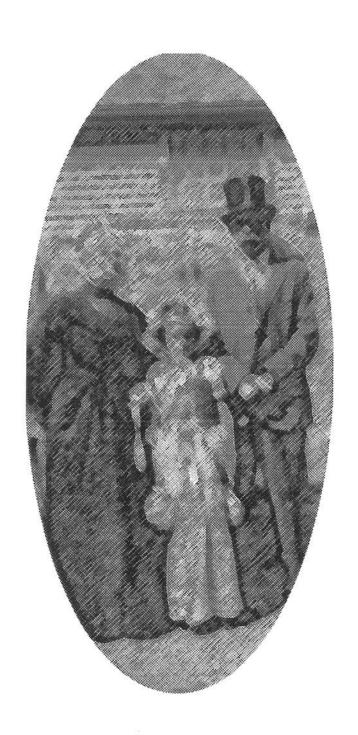
On September 20th of that year the Church voted to extend a call to the Rev. William F. Slade. We assume that the Rev. Slade was to be minister only at Pilgrim Church, the yoke arrangement with Southville having been concluded during 1914. The Rev. Slade filled the Church at morning and evening services with his evangelical and revival style of preaching. The Pilgrim Church Young Peoples Fellowship met separately in member's

homes. We see the following names as having met in these young people's meetings - Ward, Flagg, Gould, Stivers, Hutt, Brewer, Sawin, McMaster, Fletcher, Young, Lincoln, Onthank, Hosmer, Smith. We wonder how many of this group married others within the group.

Mr. Slade has been described as using an evangelistic, emotional approach in reaching people and certainly he gathered many together in Pilgrim Church during his stay. The Rev. Slade's brother, the Rev. Milton Slade married Harriet Hosmer, daughter of Irving S. and Nellie C. Hosmer and a sister of Arthur and Sylvester Hosmer. During his pastorate, at the Annual Meeting in 1915, the Church voted "to revise Article VII of the By-Laws, by striking out the words 'who have attained the age of 21 years', so as to read 'only resident members in full and regular standing are entitled to vote." In other words the Church extended the right to vote to young people under 21 years of age.

In 1915, again during the pastorate of Rev. Slade, ladies were elected to the "Calling Committee." In 1916 the By-Laws were amended. Baptized children were to be given a certificate that recognized them to be in visible covenant with God and under the special care and supervision of the Church of which they were to be considered members by virtue of their parents' consecration. In 1917 the Church voted to pay the telephone rental for the parsonage phone.





Chapter Ten: Fayville Baptist Church Fire &

During the Rev. Slade's pastorate there was a tremendous fire in Fayville. A fictionalized account of the Fayville tragedy printed in the "Peters Piper" of the fall of 1951 was written by and loaned by member Dorothy Blood Mauch.



The time was a Wednesday in the middle of May 1915. At this time the trolley cars ran along what is now Route 9 and what was then a dirt road. At the intersection of Central Street and Route 9 were Frank Wright's General Store and the Post Office.

"I was just putting some cookies in the oven, when I heard the fire bells. Forgetting the cookies, I ran out of the house, and saw a terrible sight! Ed Bigelow's little Paint Shop was on fire. Terrified, I watched the high wind spread the fire to the Baptist Church, the firemen fruitlessly trying to control the fires with their inadequate equipment and water supply. From there the fire spread to the old Smith house. People were so terrified they were running around with wet blankets to put out the sparks. Soon fire equipment from neighboring towns, including Boston came but could do no good. I then saw a spark land on my own roof, watched it ignite, hoping upon hope that some of the St. Mark's boys would arrive in time to put the sparks out on my roof too. Knowing it was too late, I ran into the house, intending to save some important things. I was so excited that all I saved were my two daughters hair ribbons, and my son's and husband's best clothes. As I tearfully watched my fourteen room home burn to the ground, I only wished that the fire could have spared my baby chicks. In all seventeen homes were on fire at once. The terrible fire was finally stopped on O'Leary's porch. For the rest of the day, the Townspeople were busy finding shelter for the homeless people and providing food for cows that were let out of the neighboring burned barns."

On May 16, 1915 Pilgrim Church wrote to the Fayville Baptist Church as follows:

"Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Greetings:

At a meeting of the Pilgrim Congregational Church, we the undersigned committee were appointed to convey to you fraternal greetings. We deeply sympathize with you in the loss of your Church building...for seventy years it had stood as a bulwark for righteousness...and now the spire no longer points heavenward, the bell no more peals out its glad invitation, the beautiful organ never more resounds in praise of our Father, God. You do well to grieve over your loss for a time. We would suffer with you, sharing your burden of grief, as fellow workers in the Master's vineyard, and fellow travelers to His promised rest. We gladly place at your disposal our Church edifice and its equipment. All that we have is yours for the asking. Not only would we place at your service our material instruments of worship and work. Pastor and people stand ready to assist you in every way possible in your endeavors for Christ and the Church. Grateful that the time has come when denominations are separated by flower gardens and no more by stone walls, we are praying for the dawning of the day when there shall be but one universal Church of Christ, and all of His followers shall present a united front to the forces that make for evil. We have thought that perchance the time has come to express to you our desire for spiritual unity. In Church government we are in entire agreement, and in doctrine there are no serious barriers. It would seem that some basis of federation could easily be devised whereby the Kingdom of God in our midst would be advanced...Beloved, we have opened our hearts to you as friends and neighbors. First of all, accept our Christian love and sympathy; then use us according to the desire of your hearts. In your hour of trial may you find in God real wisdom for every decision, and sufficient grace for all your ministry."

> Edward F. Collins, Clerk Mrs. Aaron W. Hosmer Mrs. Mary E. McMaster Mrs. Christina Duncan William F. Slade, Pastor

R. Albro Newton Walter A. Hutt Leonard A. Hardy Ellwood W. Ward

The people of the Fayville Church apparently did not accept the offer of union, but they showed a warm response to the spirit in which Pilgrim Church's letter was written.

"Your kind and sympathetic letter came to us like a refreshing summer shower on parched ground. It seemed that there was nothing lacking in your words of encouragement and love. We do not know just what is in the future for us, and can only take one step at a time, prayerfully, trusting that it may be in the right direction. We have long loved the members of

your Church and this expression of Christian love and sympathy has drawn us towards you in a way that we can never forget. Thanking you again for your offers of assistance, we are your fellow workers for Christ. Written by request of members of Fayville Baptist Church Mrs. H. P. King, Clerk."

The relationship between these two Churches was always cordial and joint programs were held from time to time, but they did not take any positive steps toward a union of the two congregations. Mr. Slade left Pilgrim Church to assume a Chaplaincy at Atlanta University in 1917.

Chapter Eleven: 1917 - 1926 &

The Rev. Homer S. Baumgardner was the minister at Pilgrim Church from November 1917 to April of 1918. During his stay the By-Laws were changed to name a Prudential Committee to replace the Executive and Finance Committees. The Annual Meeting was changed from the first to the second Thursday in January. Mr. Baumgardner left for war services as a Chaplain in April of 1918. We note a motion adopted at the April 14, 1918 meeting of the Church:

"The Prudential Committee recommends that in view of the patriotic response of our Pastor, Rev. Homer S. Baumgardner, to the call of our country for volunteer workers in the army of regularly ordained clergymen, that we the Pilgrim Congregational Society do hereby wish him God's speed and success among the soldier boys of our great army."

During World War I members Sylvester I. Hosmer, Walter A. Hutt, and William H. Onthank are known to have been in the Army. Others from Pilgrim Church who served our country during World War I were:

Osgood R. Flagg James E. Giffin Theo G. Flagg Earl A Gould James T. Harris, Jr. Clarence G. Hosmer Harold G. Jennison Borden Schrader William F. Slade

The Rev. James H. Peardon who followed Rev. Bomgardner, was a liberal gentleman and a scholar but not much of a pusher. You might say that he worked more quietly than Mr. Slade had. His teen-age son, who died here, was buried in the Southborough Rural Cemetery.

The Rev. John J. Lockett who arrived in 1920 was an English sort of a man - large and short. He had a wonderful, jolly personality; he loved to barter and to argue; and he always had a good answer. In 1920 the Treasurer's Report showed a deficit, which was referred to the Ladies Home Missionary Society, and we can assume that they in their usual grand fashion solved the problem. There were at that time also a Pilgrim Girls Club and a Pilgrim Boys Club.

In 1922 a vote of thanks was given to Mr. Albert Hutt and Mrs. Albro Newton for new cement steps given by them to the Church for the front entryway. Mr. Hutt was well known for the wonderful way he handled his cane. It was certainly unfortunate the day that he lost the cane through the cracks in the front steps. However, he redeemed the situation with the gift of new cement steps. Mr. Hutt had been a great worker in the grange, as well

as a member of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts. He was known as "the wit of the House."

It was in 1922 that Raymond Lincoln made a suitable case for the old Communion service, which still stands on the shelf at the back of the Sanctuary. The parsonage and its stable were painted white - one coat of paint given by Mr. Harry Young and the other purchased from him. Mr. Young had bought Harry McMaster's Store at 14 Main Street and built a new store at that location in 1912. In 1925, shortly before Rev. Lockett left the ministry of Pilgrim Church, his daughter Edith married Clarence Hosmer. Rev. Lockett had very successfully held together the youth that had been gathered together by Rev. Slade and ministered to by Rev. Baumgardner and Rev. Peardon. At the end of Rev. Lockett's ministry some problem seems to have developed in the parish so that the Church evidenced a note of uncertainty and some sense of a lack of unity.

During the years 1900 to 1925 Southborough was mainly a residential town with many large estates. People either lived on the estates or worked on them. The Deerfoot Farms, located along the south side of Stony Brook from Deerfoot Road toward the west, were thriving with both meat processing and dairy farming reaching a high point during this period. Some of the well-known estates in town at this time were the Lindsay Farm, the Choate houses, the Sears Estate, the Kidder Estate, the Burnett Estates, the Leland Estate, and the Harrington Estate. Undoubtedly many old landmarks of the town along Main Street were removed for the building of these large estates. It was said that at the turn of the century there were so many Newton and Fay families in town that a person would very likely be either a Newton or a Fay. Families with large estates supplanted these families in the period of 1900-1925.

The Trowbridge-Brigham House and the Congregational Church had been built in the same year, 1806. The Brigham House was the home of Mrs. Fairbanks and her daughter; it was bought by Mr. William White of Boston in April 1905 and taken down and a new house built in its place. ⁴⁷ Charles Choate Sr. built the Estate at 2 Chestnut Hill Road. He later moved to the northwest corner of Sears Road and Main Street. After World War I, Mr. Charles F. Choate Jr. gave the building now known as the Community House to the newly organized Village Society. The Society was organized to maintain these quarters for the American Legion and for other civic uses. The Rev. John J. Lockett was the first President of the Village Society when it was incorporated.

Pilgrim Church ended the first quarter of the twentieth century in a state of confusion and with a shortage of financial assets. Despite Rev. Lockett's apparent popularity in the community, there was considerable evidence of a lack of unity in the Church. After Rev. Lockett's resignation some favored hiring a student pastor and there

were several suggestions for raising money to afford a full time pastor. The Church does not seem to have been able to come to a united conviction as to which way to turn.

There were many Church meetings held to deal with problems of repairs to the Church building and to deal with the problems of raising the money for a new minister. There was much discussion as to what kind of minister the Church should have. It finally led to a decision to call a full time pastor. In October of 1926 the Church issued a call to a Mr. Beers who preached as a candidate and continued to do so off and on until he finally declined the call in December of 1926.

Chapter Twelve: 1927-1937 &

Starting in January 1927 there was a succession of candidates and pulpit supplies. A call to the Rev. H. H. French D. D., whom we can assume to be an older man, in March of 1927, was declined if his acceptance meant occupancy of the parsonage. It seems that Rev. French was a retired minister living in the area. Through this period there seems to have been a lack of funds for the Church work. Few attended the Church meetings, although the Sunday school was doing well. The Church closed for the summer.

In May 1927 the Church issued a call to the Rev. Dr. Henry E. Oxnard who accepted. Dr. Oxnard had not only received training to become a minister, but prior to that had graduated from Harvard Law School, having graduated from Harvard College in the Class of 1886. He came to Pilgrim Church in May of 1927. Attendance at Church picked up readily when he came, but never quite returned to the strength that it had during Rev. Slade's pastorate. Rev. Oxnard has been described as "the salt of the earth." He was gentle and scholarly, a little apt to preach over the heads of the congregation, and he lacked some of the organizational ability and emotional fervor of earlier men. He engaged in helpful legal work part of the time. Although he was personally quite disciplined, he was a little too gentle with the Church.

His generosity is typified by the fact that if money was not available to pay his salary he was willing to forgo it until funds were available. He was exceptionally well liked by the young people, who delighted in his personality, which seemed to hold them together. We notice that during this period Henry Young, the Smith daughters - Caroline and Norma (Hastings), Ruth Young (Beach), Betty Johnson (Lange), the Woodward boys - John and Richard, and Esther Bogart were in the young people's group. Rev. Oxnard was elected Pastor Emeritus when he resigned after more than ten years of service in our Church. During this ten year period he helped the Church celebrate its 100th Anniversary, the programs of which we still have in the collection given to us by Mrs. Newton. Mrs. Oxnard who was organist for several years, had a record of eight years of perfect attendance in Sunday school.

The effects of the Great Depression were felt in Southborough and in Pilgrim Church during the ministry of Rev. Oxnard. It was during this period that the Boston and Worcester Turnpike was constructed through the middle of town, the most modern paved highway of its time. The Public Works Administration worked on the old records of the Town. Many of the factories in Southborough closed due to financial setbacks.

During the 1930's Mrs. William Pinkham was "putting life into the Sunday school." Although attendance rose with Rev. Oxnard's service to the Church, incoming funds during

this period did not increase. These were hard times for everyone and the congregation, faced with the discouragement of maintaining a large plant for such a small group of faithful people, dwindled again before he left.

It's interesting to read the list of needs noted in the program written in preparation for the 100th Anniversary of Pilgrim Church. They appear again and again over the years on many plans.

- 1 repairing the roof
- 2- freshening the interior with paint
- 3 remodeling the setting of the pulpit according to a plan of our late honored Clerk, Ellwood W. Ward
- 4 an electric pump for the organ (Until now it was pumped manually.)
- 5 50 chairs for the Sunday school
- 6 a new furnace
- 7 kitchen and sanitary adjustments to the new town water
- 8 clearing the financial slate

Sponsors for the 100th Anniversary were:

Church Committee- Deacons Walter B. Brewer and Erwin L. Smith

Deaconesses - Mrs. Mabel V. Lincoln, Mrs. Erwin L. Smith, Mrs. Harry B. Spurr,

Mrs. Cora I. Newton

Pastor - Henry E. Oxnard

The installation of an electric pump for the organ meant other changes to the organ as well. The Frazee Organ Company rebuilt the old organ using many of the old pipes with new electro-pneumatic chests. There was now a detached electric console with five ranks of pipes. The Gemshorn pipes had a soft tone; the Viola da Gamba had a string tone; the Gedecht and Bourdon had a flute tone; the Drapson had the pipe organ tone; and the Oboe had the reed tone. There were five unison ranks, 5 octave ranks and 5 diapason.

A Men's Club was formed several times during the history of the Church, and we find that in the 1930's it was again organized. We find in their records:

"Events leading to the formation. In the spring of 1932 a year after the Church's celebration of its 100th Anniversary a movement was started with the aid of William A. Dermon to bring the men of the parish together as a Church Club. Some 60 men attended in Church Vestry and Hon. Edwin O. Childs, ex-Mayor of Newton, gave an inspiring address encouraging the idea and extolling the function of the Church in the community and in building worthwhile character. The times however did not seem to favor the complete organization in

the face of the depression. In fact it was not until the spring of 1935 that the men awoke to a new enthusiasm for the project. Several men's Annual Meetings of the neighborhood conventions, in which a dozen or more of our men (fathers and sons) participated, gave increasing impetus to the formation of a Men's Club of our own. Then, in the early part of 1935, the Men's Club of Southville, under the leadership of the Rev. Pemberton, challenged our men to an indoor baseball game. We accepted the challenge and invited them to meet us the first week in June. This was successfully undertaken and our men provided an excellent collation for 80 present, Henry Rice furnishing the strawberries. The first game was a successful one for our side concluding with a score of 4-3 in our favor climaxed by a straight bull's eye by Herbert Banfill bringing in two runs. The summer season approached and the Church people scattered, but in the fall on the invitation of the Southville club a goodly number of men attended their meeting. In November a meeting was called in the vestry of the Church for fathers and sons and about 20 responded. It was decided to organize a Church Men's Club, and the following officers were chosen: Scott Carpenter, Pres.; Herbert Banfill, Vice-Pres.; John Hill Sec'y - Treas. Several meetings were held after this at the home of the President and preparations were made for the debut of the Club with a supper to be given on Thursday, February 20, 1936 in the Church vestry to be followed by an entertainment. This was successfully carried out with an attendance of 101 men and boys. The supper was cooked and served under the able direction of Harry W. Sawin, Harry McMaster, and Henry C. Rice. At the conclusion of the supper those present signed their tickets, thus automatically enrolling them as members of the Club. The Pastor, Rev. H. E. Oxnard gave a short address. The U. S. Navy Dept. of Springfield, Massachusetts sponsored the entertainment, which consisted of three reels of Naval Activities. Respectfully submitted, John Hill, Secretary."

A Constitution and By-Laws were accepted in which the purpose of the Men's Club "shall be to promote fellowship of the men of our Church and parish, to bring fathers and sons into closer relationship, and to cultivate loyalty to the Church and Christian religion in the community."



Chapter Thirteen: Ladies of the Quilt & The Ladies Home Missionary Society of Pilgrim Congregational Church



The family of Arthur and Myrtle Scott lived in Southborough from 1925 through 1930, through the years of the Great Depression, when they moved to Illinois where Mr. Scott accepted a position to manage a factory. While in Southborough, Mr. Scott served as the Church Auditor for Pilgrim Church. Myrtle Scott taught Sunday school as well as took part in the activities

of the Ladies' Home Missionary Society, the precursor to Women's Fellowship. There were monthly Church Suppers, Silver Teas and work for charities.

A quilt was made during the first year that the Rev. Oxnard was here. It was given to the Scott family as a remembrance of Pilgrim Church when they moved. These are the ladies who made that quilt.

Cora Newton joined Pilgrim Church on July 2, 1911. She served on the Prudential Committee in 1927; as Collector in 1930; and on the Church Committee in 1930. She lived in the large white house next to the Southborough Medical Center at 15 Main Street. She lived in one side and had a small gift shop in the front parlor.

Mrs. E.E. Richards probably lived in Fayville. Mrs. Ruth Slade lived on Oak Hill Road.

Mrs. Eliza Bacon was the wife of Doctor James Lowell Bacon. They lived on Latisquama Road and whenever children became ill at school, they would walk to Dr. Bacon's house to be checked.

Nellie L. Howard was the invalid sister of Cora Newton. I've been told the sisters were very competitive!



Herbert B. Howard also lived at 15 Main Street and cared for his invalid sister until she died. He was also the town druggist, having his shop on the corner of East Main Street and Boston Road.

Mrs. John Tillock is thought to have lived at 8 Lynnbrook Road. Winthrop Rogers Ranney joined the church January 2, 1916. Mabel F. Ranney was probably his wife.

Mrs. Joseph (Alice) Taylor joined Pilgrim Church on November 5, 1922. She was the mother of Hazel Foote.

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Staples lived in the house at 24 Main Street. Mr. Staples taught at one of the Fay School. They had two children, Fred and Betsy.

Ruth E. Newton is thought to have lived at 101 Cordaville Road just before you turn onto Framingham Road in the large house with the porch. She is said to have become a recluse after being disappointed in matters of the heart! She was very fond of a

certain gentleman, who unfortunately married another lady!

Violet Schrader and her family lived at 12 Main Street before moving to California. Mr. Schrader was a volunteer in the Southborough Fire Department. Their daughter's name was Mildred.

Mrs. Harry (Agnes) Young joined Pilgrim Church on January 8, 1928 from the Congregational Church in Matinicus, Me. She lived on Latisquama Road. Her husband, along with his brother-in-law Jack Hill, ran Young's Store, which was located in the building at 14 Main Street. The Hill Memorial Table in our sanctuary at the foot of the aisle was built in memory of Jack Hill.

Mrs. James (Lexie for Alexiana) Johnson was the mother of ten children including Betty (Lange), Ralph (Bea's Husband), Norman, Sereno, and Gordon (husband of Dorothy). The Johnson Family Farm was at 120 Northborough Road. Mrs. Johnson always made



delicious cakes for the church suppers! Betty Lange can remember her mother working on the quilt. Betty was a friend of Lalia Scott. She attended Lalia's birthday party in June, the year the quilt was made. Unfortunately, she contracted scarlet fever that day brought it home and the entire Johnson family came down with it. Her 3-year-old brother subsequently died from the fever. The scarlet fever epidemic is referred to in our church service records,

"July 1st. Children's Day postponed from June 10th on acct. of children's sickness."

The Hiram Collins family lived at 9 Latisquama Road after their original home and farm were moved because of the creation of the MDC Reservoir.

Mrs. William Pinkham was the Director of the Ladies Home Missionary Society as well as the head of the Sunday school Department for many years. Betty (Johnson) Lange has "fond" memories of teaching Sunday school under her! The family used to live at 196 Cordaville Road.

Mrs. James (Marion Esther) Robbins joined Pilgrim Church on June 15, 1924. She served as a Deaconess in 1926. She lived on Boston Road near the Fayville Dam, as Mr. Robbins was the Chief Engineer at the Dam. She was in the same bridge group as Dottie Mauch's mother and passed away in 1998 at more than 100 years of age.

Mrs. Fred (Susie) Ingalls joined the church on June 13, 1915 from the Congregational Church, South Bridgeston, ME. Norma (Smith) Hastings believes she had something to do with one of the private schools in town.

Mrs. Chester (Mary) Gray or Molly as she was better known, joined the church on January 6, 1924 from the Fayville Baptist Church. The family lived on the southeast corner of Oak Hill Road and Turnpike Road. She served as a Deaconess and left Pilgrim Church on November 12, 1950.

Mrs. Earl (Charlotte) Russell lived on Oak Hill Road and is remembered as having belonged to the Grange in town. Mr. Russell also worked on the Fayville Dam.



Mrs. Isabelle (Bell) L. Onthank joined Pilgrim Church in July 1898. The family lived at the corner of White Bagley Road and Turnpike Road. The house was one of those taken for the building of the reservoir system. Their house had been the first meeting place of the Southborough Baptists of which the family had long been members. They moved to 224 Boston Road

Mrs. Richard (Mabel E.) Lincoln joined the church in 1920. She served on the Program Committee for the Ladies Home Missionary Society. The family lived upstairs in what is now the Donald Morris

Funeral Home on Main Street across from the church. She was the great-grandmother of Dottie Mauch and Ed Blood.

Mrs. Walter (Sarah Cordelia Fletcher) Brewer joined the church in 1921. The family lived on Boston Road near the Fayville Dam. She was the Aunt of Norma (Smith) Hastings and mother of Walter Brewer Jr.

Mrs. Nellie Hosmer joined Pilgrim Church on November 1, 1914 from the First Baptist Church Framingham. She lived on Boston Road near the Onthank house. Her sons,

Arthur and Sylvester and their wives were very active in Pilgrim Church during their lives. She was a member of the Ladies Home Missionary Society Program Committee.

Mrs. Sara Carruthers served as a Deaconess in 1925. The family lived on the south side of Main Street near Fay School. The house is thought to have burned down.

Mrs. Frank Metcalf joined the church on February 17, 1919 from the Central Congregational Church in Jamaica Plain, MA. The family lived in the stucco Fay School House at 56 Main Street. Mr. Metcalf was chauffeur to Mr. Kidder at the Kidder Estates. The daughter was church organist on the old hand pump organ!

Mrs. William (Vesta) Dermon or Louise, as she was called joined Pilgrim Church in December 1920 from Plymouth Congregational Church, Framingham and left April 4, 1954. They lived at 11 Latisquama Road.

Susie (Brewer) Smith joined the church July 26, 1908. Her husband, Erwin Smith, had come to Southborough from Lowell with his father when his mother died. They lived at 43 Richards Road at the time he worked for the railroad. When the Fayville Dam was built, he got a job working on the dam. In order to be closer to the job he took rooms in the house of Naomi Brewer. It was there that he met and eventually married the daughter of the household, Susie

Brewer. She was the mother of Norma Hastings.

Mrs. Charles (Esther Nourse)
Watkins was Treasurer of the Home Missionary Society and
on the Flower Committee. The family lived at 2 Park Street.
Esther Watkins was the mother of Earle Watkins and the
grandmother of Jeff Watkins.

Mrs. Arthur (Myrtle) Scott joined the church on January 8, 1928 from the First Baptist Church, Natick and withdrew in 1930. She died in 1950. Lalia Scott Riley returned to Pilgrim Church the quilt which she found in a box of her

mother's former possessions when she moved in 1999. The family belonged to Pilgrim Church from 1925 to 1930 when her father accepted a position to manage a factory in Illinois. She tells me her mother "was a well known storyteller of her time. She taught Sunday school in [Pilgrim] Church and made delicious dishes for refreshments and suppers at the church. Her children "believe the quilt was a parting gift to [their] mother when [they] moved away."

Lalia Scott was 10 when the quilt was made.



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Chapter Fourteen: John Hill &

With the coming of Marshall Eck to be pastor of Pilgrim Church in September of 1937, we again find a rather complete change in the ministry of Pilgrim Church. In contrast with the Rev. Oxnard who retired when he left Pilgrim Church, Marshall Eck was a student at Andover Newton when he came to Southborough part time. He succeeded in gathering together many young people. We learn that he was most diplomatic and concerned with the elderly as well as with the youth. Very thorough in his planning of all that he did, Marshall Eck laid the foundations for the future life of Pilgrim Church.

A Kupples Klub was organized during the pastorate of Rev. Eck. The Kupples Klub began in the Church for Church members but later opened its doors to welcome people of other churches to participate in its programs. As the agenda and the membership became broader and the group faced the issue of smoking or not smoking in the Church building, it moved to hold its meetings at the Community House. Thus it became a community group rather than specifically a Church sponsored organization. Through its history the Kupples Klub consisted largely of Pilgrim Church members.

For Rev. Eck's stay in Southborough, the parsonage was remodeled into a two-family house, and remained so until 1956. That following winter he married Miss Doris Gray of Belmont. The church intended to use the income from the rental of the upstairs apartment for the maintenance of the parsonage. When the parsonage was remodeled a furnace was added for the upstairs apartment; the downstairs apartment continuing to be heated by the furnace that had been installed as a "gift of a friend" in 1902.

The hurricane of 1938, as well as blowing over most of the beautiful trees in town, particularly in the cemetery, caused considerable damage to the steeple of the Church. The steeple was tipped several degrees out of plumb, causing church services to be held at the Community House for several months until temporary repairs were made.⁴⁸ The steeple has needed repair numerous times since then.

The first residents in the parsonage apartment were Mr. and Mrs. John Hill and their daughter, Barbara. Mr. Hill came to Southborough to work in the store owned by his brother-in-law, Harry Young. After working many years as a clerk in the store, Mr. Hill decided that he preferred carpentry to selling and delivering groceries, and went into business for himself as a builder of houses. He became one of the leading carpenters in town, being honored for the thoroughness, quality and speed of his work.

Pilgrim Church is indebted to Mr. Hill for many hours of constructive work repairing and remodeling the Church. He finished the room at the back of the Vestry to

serve as a storage closet for the Sunday school. He placed new underpinning and flooring in the kitchen and front room of the Vestry and in the Steeple Room. He reconstructed the steeple room from a dingy storage space to a beautiful class and meeting room. The Town honored Mr. Hill by electing him as a Selectman.

John Hill represented the ideals of Pilgrim Church. He demonstrated his faithfulness to the life of the Church through his service as an officer in the Men's Club, on the Prudential Committee, the Church Committee, as a Deacon and in many other ways. He carried the life of righteousness for which the Church stands into the life of the community as a Selectman. Mr. Hill's honesty and intuitive sense of right and wrong were well recognized throughout the town of Southborough. The Church certainly was strengthened by his and his family's presence. (Mrs. Helen Hill was a Deaconess for some years, and an officer in the Women's Fellowship, a Superintendent in the Sunday school and a teacher of the kindergarten children of the Town.) The Hill Memorial Table at the rear of the Sanctuary is dedicated to the memory of John Hill.

The Hills, the Youngs, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Woodward, and Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Smith are families who were active in the life of the Church. They faithfully served the life of their Church through the war years and the subsequent years of transition as many new families moved to town and began to make their gift of ideas and service to the Church. The Hosmer and the Johnson families go further back in the history of the Church and also remained active contributors to its life.

Chapter Fifteen: The Johnson Family &

The Johnson Family is the only family in Pilgrim Church that has been involved in the life of Pilgrim Church since the original 13 members founded the church in 1831.

William and Elizabeth Johnson came to America from England in 1634 and settled in Charlestown, Massachusetts. Their third son, Jonathan, settled in Marlboro as a blacksmith. In early New England a home lot and all of its accruing rights and privileges were set apart for the blacksmith. This home lot was of a size equal to that of the minister. In 1669 Jonathan received his home lot under the condition that he did the town's work and lived on the land for at least 7 years. The land and its privileges would then pass to his heirs and assigns forever.

That first home lot was south of the old Marlboro Common. Jonathan prospered as a blacksmith and purchased home lots and other land whenever he was able. It was customary to invest surplus funds in land. He accumulated 32 acres on the Assabet River, a large interest in the Stony Brook and Sudbury River meadows, the three corner meadow near Deerfoot meadow, a meadow near Pine Hill and a lot in Crane meadow, as well as cedar swamps. In total he bought 263 acres within the cow commons and 348 outside of the cow commons. When he passed away he and his sons owned the Marlboro homestead as well as farms and homesteads in the southern part of Marlboro. In the Johnson family, the oldest son would be given a good trade or a farm independent of the family homestead. The youngest son who married would stay at home and take over the family homestead. Thus the original Johnson lands were divided and added to over the years.

William Johnson courageously moved away from the common lands of Marlboro to an area that his father owned 3 miles distant. The meadows in the area were free from underbrush and mostly clear of trees and surrounded by an "amphitheater" of trees. He settled here in 1688 to raise 12 children and build the first gristmill in the vicinity with John Matthews. His son Isaac took over the homestead after he married and became a miller.

Isaac was a Selectman in Southborough in 1771 and 1781 as well as a member of the Worcester County Convention in 1781. His son Elisha took over the homestead and gristmill. He was followed by Nathan Loomis Johnson and Dr. Henry F. Johnson (one of the founders of Pilgrim Church at 18 years of age) and then by Addison Fay Johnson. Addison's son, James Brigham Johnson had 12 children. The names of some of those children were still connected to the life of Pilgrim Church during the 20th century: Sereno, Gordon, Gordon's wife Dorothy, Norman, Ralph, Ralph's wife Bea, and Myrtle (Betty Lange).

The Johnsons have always been hard working, thrifty, typical New England farmers. More importantly, they possessed the characteristic of "scrupulous fidelity. Their honor was as good as deed or bond." 49

Chapter Sixteen: 1939 - 1952 &

the Robbins family

Many other families were vital participants in the life of Pilgrim Church through out the first half of the Twentieth Century. These included: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Watkins; Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Taylor; Harry Bailey; Mr. and Mrs. Francis Bigelow; Mr. and Mrs. Alton Spurr; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rice; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Banfill; and Charles B. Sawin. We also would like to note the generosity of Dr. Howard C. Newton whose mother, Cora, was the collector of much of the historical information related to the Church that he donated to our archives. Some who were also active workers for Pilgrim Church were:

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Mr. and Mrs. Ed Collins			Walter Hutt	the Ruggles family
the Schnares	27		Miss Nellie Howard	the Stivers family
the Wards	4	*	Mrs. Lamprey (organist)	the Pearce family
the Wells Family			the Harry Spurrs	Harry Bailey's Family
the Brewers			the Kidders	the Arthur Scotts
the Onthanks			the Uhlmans	the Earl Russells
Chester Gray & Fan	nily		the George Burgesses	

the Pinkhams

Christian Westphalen (1939 – 1941) was ordained after he came to serve Pilgrim Church. He was described as being tall, blonde, handsome, and a good preacher. However, the people do not seem to have responded to him as far as building up a united group for the work of the Church. He left the Church to serve as an army Chaplain in World War II and later entered professionally into theatrical work. At the time of the 125th Anniversary he was Assistant to the President of Adelphi College, Garden City, New York.

Those members of Pilgrim Church who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II were:

Toron during world war if were.					
Gordon L. Bailey	÷	Raymond W. Pethich	Earle Q. Watkins		
Harold E. Deering	٠.	Newell W. Pinkham	John M. Woodward		
Wendell F. Bennett		Arnold E. Pond, Sr.	Richard G. Woodward		
Harold D. Elkins, Jr.		Arnold E. Pond, Jr.	Henry H. Young		
Frederick Claflin Jr.		Richard F. Pond	Robert L Renaud		
Ellwood K. Gould .		Roscoe E. Twombly	Robert C. Gray		
Carl E. Headberg		Ellwood W. Ward	Ralph L. Moore		
Chester N. Lange		Avis M. Watkins			

The Rev. Edward W. W. Lewis, who came in October 1941, had a BS Degree from Ohio University, an MA from Ohio and Harvard, and a Bachelor of Divinity from Andover Newton. He later received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Elon College. He served the Church until September of 1943 when he became Pastor of the Central Park Church in New York City. He taught at Fay School as well as at St. Mark's School while he was here. He was certainly an organizer, a go-getter, and had a lot of new ideas, which the



Church was not quite ready to accept. He stimulated the Church to see the need for more financial support for its programs. In 1942, during the pastorate of Rev. Lewis, the Sanctuary was redecorated as a memorial to the Newton family through the beneficence of Mrs. Cora I. Newton. The Christian and American Flags were given in loving memory of Harry W. Young by his sisters Miss Ada and Miss Alena Young of Rockland, Maine. The resurgence of interest in the Church may be seen in a report toward the end of Rev. Lewis's ministry that the Church property was in excellent condition except for the west side of the Church roof, which had been damaged during the hurricane of 1938. There was even a balance in the Treasury. In 1956 he was Minister of the United Congregational Church in Norwich, Connecticut.

Starting in November of 1943 the Rev. Melbourne Baltzer served the Church. He came as an older man and brought his sister with him, as he was a widower. He did not seem to establish a good rapport with the Church as a whole, and left in August of 1945.

In September of 1945, after serving as a Chaplain in the Navy, the Rev. Quentin Leisher came to the Church with a long-range vision. The Church could not catch his vision, although he tried very hard to get the people to envision a long range view of what they could accomplish. He stimulated the holding of evening programs with guest speakers from Boston, among whom were Dr. William Stidger and Dr. Emery Buck. The Church and people of the town responded readily to this new program. Unfortunately, after a short time interest returned to a state of apathy. There was a core of dedicated people trying to work with the



minister in educating a larger circle of people to new types of Church programs. Rev. Leisher played a clarinet and even played solos during the Church service. It has been remarked by some that the Church "at this time seemed to want a high salaried man but they were able to pay only \$2,000 a year." The 1946 Prudential Committee Report shows that the bills were paid with the help of the Ladies Home Missionary Society and Mrs. Newton. Rev. Leisher, having served for a while in the special gifts section of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions went on to do public relations work for the Girl Scouts on a national level.

Here we would like to quote from a talk given by Mr. Erwin Smith at the 125th Anniversary of Pilgrim Church: "During Mr. Leisher's pastorate he outlined in one of his reports the goals for the Church. Among them was a new social program, trying for new members, repairs for the Church building, pledges to keep the budget, Men's Club, and the religious Education program. I think Mr. Leisher really realized the need we had for just such an outline and such a program. I must confess that I for one, and I think I can speak for many of us here, didn't grasp the real need for this program. But as we look at it today, we see it in an entirely different light."

In January of 1948 Mr. Ralph Reynolds, a student at Andover Newton Theological School, came to serve Pilgrim Church part time. It was during his pastorate in Pilgrim Church that Rev. Reynolds was ordained as a Baptist Minister by the Fayville Baptist Church in the Pilgrim Church building. Quoting again from Mr. Smith's talk at the 125th Anniversary: "Mr. Reynolds came to us next. He brought a good deal of Vim, Vigor, and Vitality, and such it was. He was more interested in Pilgrim Church, in seeing it advance, in seeing it go forward, seeing it become a real Christian force in the community. I'm afraid that we were rather slow to accept some of his thinking. He started things along differently. He took it step by step, but he thought one day that it would be rather nice if the Deacons would occasionally sit on the platform with him on Sunday. It would put a little closer tie to the pastor and the congregation. We agreed, and next time he thought it

would be nice for the lay people to be up on the platform occasionally. The next thing we knew we were reading the responsive Reading. Then we were taking the Scripture lesson. The next thing we knew, Mr. Reynolds went on vacation and the Deacons were keeping the Church open by conducting the morning service."

During the Rev. Reynolds stay with us he stimulated the creation of a "Pilgrim's Progress" newsletter for all the members of the Church. He organized many groups and committees, stimulating the Church to plan ahead and to try new things. In 1948 a new set of By-Laws was drawn up creating a Christian Education Committee and an Executive Council. The Executive Council was created to set the different parts of the Church program apart. It was to free them for concentration of effort in their specialized fields, and also to draw these different phases together for the sharing of goals and mutual support. Rev. Reynolds also formed a Music Committee while he was here. In 1948 the Church voted 5-4 in favor of the union of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Rev. Reynolds liked to put his hand to the manual work of the Church, delighting to get inside the organ and work on it, trying to make it function correctly. He was an organist, himself, and knew the organ inside out. As Mr. Smith said, it was nothing to come into the Church on a Saturday afternoon and see the organ pipes spread out carefully all over the Church. Rev. Reynolds would be inside the organ chamber repairing one of the old wooden mechanisms that had fallen apart. He was eager to see this work done and was willing to do it himself. He was not afraid to get his hands dirty doing the work of the Church. His repairs to the organ indicated that the hundred year old musical instrument was in need of constant attention and repair. His wife was an accomplished musician in her own right and directed the Choir during his pastorate.

At the time he was here, Rev. Reynolds was studying for a Doctorate at Andover Newton and was teaching a religion course at Wellesley College. He must have moved at top speed all the time in order to accomplish all the things in which he was interested. He took a great deal of interest in the discussion regarding the new grammar/junior high school (the Albert E. Woodward School) around 1950, and entered into this problem facing the Town with as much zeal as he displayed in facing the problems of the Church.

Chapter Seventeen: 1952 - 1956 &

Before he left, Rev. Reynolds stimulated the leaders of the Church to organize a Planning Committee to draw up an extremely well founded long range "Plan of Advance" for the renovation of the Church building, improvements to the parsonage, and the structure of the life of the Church.

This "Plan for Advance" was published during the second year of Rev. Reynolds' pastorate for the members and friends of the Church and was sponsored by Raymond M. Dumont, Eugene S. Howe, Robert E. Hastings, Frederick McCobb, Everett D. Cookson, Erwin L. Smith, John Hill and Donald Blood. It was dated September 26, 1949. The objectives were:

- I The spiritual revitalization of our community
- 2 A complete survey of our parish
- 3 An average Sunday morning attendance of 75 for October
- 4 A Church School enrollment of 65 by October 31st
- 5 A program of leadership training for all departments of our church
- 6 An enlarged program of character building and community service

Under this "Plan for Advance" there was a series of special Sundays with sermon topics announced, laymen and youth participating in the services. Special meetings were held during the month of October: a Women's meeting, a Council night, a Men's meeting, films for children, and a Church Family Night. Supplementary plans of Advance were also put out in November and December. In 1950 we note action by the Church for the first Union Lenten and Thanksgiving Services with the other Churches in Southborough.

The Planning Committee was created following the Annual Church Meeting in January of 1951.

"A motion was made for the Moderator to appoint a committee of seven men to make a study and lay out a long range plan for bringing the physical equipment and facilities of the Church up to a proper state, the committee to report to a future Church meeting. After some discussion of the need for repairing and remodeling the Church properties, the motion was passed."

The Moderator, Eugene Howe, appointed the following committee: William Blount, Everett Cookson, Raymond Dumont, John Hill, Eugene Howe, Howard Merrill and Roger Poole, with Erwin Smith an honorary member. Philip Beals was subsequently elected to replace William Blount and Alton Spurr elected to replace Howard Merrill. The Prudential Committee was made a part of the Planning Committee in August of 1954, at the meeting when a new mortgage was authorized for the parsonage. It was on the basis of this

groundwork that the Church was able to accomplish so much in successive steps during the 1950's. Rev. Reynolds accepted a call to serve the Baptist Church in Derry, NH in the fall of 1952 and later was Assistant Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Medford, Massachusetts.

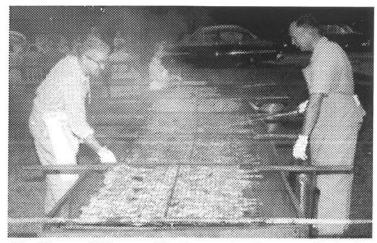
From November of 1952 until January of 1953, the Church was without a settled minister. At the Annual Meeting of January 1953 David Cross, a student at Andover Newton Theological School, was called to serve Pilgrim Church as a resident minister. He was at this time a part time student at the school. Although almost shy, he was a caring, loving minister who visited his flock. He could be found in the large homes of town or in Sereno Johnson's barn. When sensing discord between two members of his flock, those members would find themselves ushering together on Sunday morning. Under Rev. Cross's encouragement of the lay leaders of the Church to continue the programs already started, building upon foundations already laid, the program of the Church grew in scope over subsequent years as he attracted many new people to the church even though he was not a strong preacher. He took an active part in the Worcester Area Council of Churches, and recruited leadership to implement diversified programs of education, mission and stewardship. His wife Mimi helped sow the seeds for a ministry of music at Pilgrim Church as well as create the illustrations for *Pilgrim Pantry*, the cookbook prepared by the Women's Fellowship for the 125th Anniversary celebration.

Rev. Cross' "love of history and historical accuracy prompted him to promote the high pulpit and consider the work as reconstruction rather than renovation. He was responsible for the institution of complete record keeping by committees. He instigated the action to recover the land surrounding the church from the town and located the early records in the Town Hall Safe." ⁵⁰

The Planning Committee managed to outline its work in several stages and accomplished quite a bit in the next few years. In 1953 there was a Steeple Fund Drive, including an appeal to members and friends of the Church who had moved out of Town in recent years. This drive was successful and the money from it, combined with other money, totaled \$2,500.00. The money was expended to repair the Steeple so that the bell could be rung again, and to fix the entryway so that it would not only be safe, but attractive. Some of the money used for this work was from the insurance for the hurricane damage to the building. Hours of volunteer labor and quantities of donated materials aided the work done by the Planning Committee.

"A newly awakened interest in the Men's Club was apparent in 1950 and the group became a vital part of the life of the church again. The contributions of the men working through this group were invaluable in maintaining and improving our buildings, as well as their important work in the United Church Canvass. Their social contributions by way of Children's Christmas Parties, and Fred McCobb's famous Chicken Barbecues became highlights in our Church calendar."

In 1953 the Men's Club, under the leadership of Bob Brown, painted the vestry, redecorated the parsonage apartment for the Minister, and painted the outside of the parsonage. When Bob Brown's house was blown down in the June 9, 1953 tornado the Men's Club helped Bob rebuild on the



same location. Davco Farm, owned by Ray and Eleanor Davis, received a great deal of storm damage, with Penny Davis being severely injured. Rev. Cross served on the Town Committee for Tornado Relief during the year following the tornado.

In 1954, the Church authorized a new mortgage. Money in excess of \$10,000 was borrowed from the Marlborough Savings Bank to pay off the old mortgage and to make available funds for further improvements. An oil furnace was placed in the Church with automatic thermostatic forced warm air heat. The work building the foundation for the furnace and fireproofing the old coal bin was done by the Men's Club. At the same time two new toilets were placed in the other coal bin, and the old furnaces were taken out (gravity warm air heat).

Thus an era came to an end. The era of volunteer firemen who came in the early morning hours of Sunday or during the day on Saturday, to build up the fires in the old furnaces. There had been rare but exciting times when the furnace occasionally got red hot. It got hot enough to scorch the surrounding woodwork. An inexperienced volunteer would stoke up the furnace with coke and leave the door open not realizing what would happen. There were times when the angry language of the volunteer emanating from the furnace room could be heard throughout the Sunday school.

With the mortgage money and the parsonage mortgage money, the Planning Committee was able to hire John Hill. It had been discovered that the two main stairways leading to the Sanctuary were not supported from below, but were actually hanging from the second floor, because of the rotting out of the underpinning that had been placed to support these stairways. Mr. Hill repaired the underpinning in the front part of the Church

building, placed a safety exit at the rear of the building, and put new floors in the kitchen and kindergarten rooms.

In 1955 there was a "Paint Pilgrim Church Fund" created under the leadership of Wally Goodnow. With this money, raised not only from members and active participants in the Church, but also from our friends and neighbors in Southborough, the exterior of the Church was painted with two fresh coats of white paint, both for the sake of the visual aspect and the preservation of the building. The Ladies Home Missionary Society bought new drapes for the vestry. In 1956, using a small amount of money left from those funds, the Planning Committee again hired Mr. Hill to redecorate the Steeple Room. He put in a false ceiling, new flooring, and generally improved that room, so that it became an attractive room for classes and committee meetings. The windows in the Church were repaired at this time and, with repair money from the budget of the Church, new water pipes were placed in the parsonage to replace some that had almost given away and were plugged with rust.

It's interesting that at this time, when the Church was taking on new obligations in the form of a debt on the parsonage the Church also voted to set aside more money than ever before for regular repairs and maintenance of the Church and parsonage out of its regular budget. Increases like this were undoubtedly made possible by the use of the new system of every member canvass. This included the training of our laymen by the Worcester Council of Churches in their United Church Canvass. It was through Mr. Eugene Howe's influence that the Church adopted the Worcester Council of Churches program for the every member canvass. It was also through his leadership, in the late 1940's, that several nearby business firms contributed towards the reconstruction work. The money was used largely for repairs to the roof of the Church. During this same period Pilgrim Church expressed concern for the building of new Churches in new communities by making a contribution to the Church Building Loan Fund of the National Fellowship of Congregational Christian Churches in the amount of \$872 over a three-year period.

In 1956, still under the aegis of the Planning Committee, now supplemented by the Prudential Committee, the Men's Club painted the kindergarten room, and new lights were installed there. The Ladies Home Missionary Society gave a new hot water heater to the Church, and Frederick Claflin, Sr. gave a new gas stove. In this same year dedicated builder John Hill was again called upon by the Planning Committee to transform what had been an old fashioned "two holer" into a bright and useful storage closet for the Sunday school. When this work was done evidence of the old stairway that had at one time gone from the vestry up behind the pulpit into the Sanctuary was discovered.

In the spring of 1956, Mr. and Mrs. Robert (Norma) Hastings bought their own house in Marlborough, leaving the upstairs apartment in the parsonage vacant. In the

summer of 1956 the Church voted that it seemed appropriate that the parsonage be turned into a single family residence and the minister and his family be given full use of the house.

In the years 1950 -1956 the Church, as well as repairing its own plant, was beginning to catch a greater vision of its mission in the community and in the world. We see specific increases in the Christian World Mission pledge as part of the budget of the Church and increases in family pledges to our Christian World Mission. A program was adopted at Thanksgiving giving food to the Hillside School in Marlborough instead of to the Home for Little Wanderers in Boston. The pupils of the Hillside School were invited to be guests in our homes as well as at Sunday school and Church on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. There was an increased emphasis on the Share our Surplus and One Great Hour of Sharing programs of the relief and reconstruction arms of the World Council of Churches.

We see members of our Church taking an active part in the Congregational Association. The Erwin Smiths, Robert Hastings and Donald Whites attended Association Meetings. Mrs. Ruth Leslie was a leader in the Middlesex-Mendon District Department of Women's Work. Mrs. Norma Hastings was an officer in that group; Miss Rosemary Poole was president of the Middlesex-Mendon Association Pilgrim Fellowship. We see the Pilgrim Fellowship participating wholeheartedly in the Work Day for Christ to raise money for Christian Missions and enthusiastically going about Southborough to sing Christmas Carols outside the homes of shut-ins. Under the leadership of Nancy Sealy they towed a rowboat around the town to collect clothing and money for the relief of people stricken with the flooding subsequent to the hurricanes of 1955.

At the beginning of this six-year period, the Ladies Home Missionary Society gave annual gifts to the Church. They paid the mortgage and taxes on the parsonage, furnished volunteer baby-sitting during the morning worship service, as well as furnished flowers for the altar during these services. Flora Gilson and Barbara Dumont spent many hours decorating the church through the seasons of the year. The Ladies had an Annual Fair in November followed by a dinner to raise funds for the Church. In 1956 what had been an annual turkey dinner was "renovated" into a Smorgasbord for variety, with some degree of success. The Men's Club, after sponsoring an outdoor chicken Barbecue in connection with the "Paint Pilgrim Church Fund," undertook this as an annual springtime project with a great deal of success and delight for all who attended. They underwent a somewhat critical self-evaluation during the year of Jim Cookman's presidency. During these years they sponsored a Christmas Party for the children of the Church, which was later expanded to a family Christmas Party with the help of the Women's Fellowship and other leaders in the Church. The Education Committee sponsored a Vacation Bible School for three years during the summer.

The Church was greatly honored by the large number of its High School students who became officers in the Rainbow Girls fraternal organization. The Church was also full of pride because of the high academic standing of David Quarton who remained faithfully a member of Pilgrim Church while studying at St. Mark's School. After graduating from Hamilton College, with his mother receiving a degree from Framingham State Teachers' College the same year, David went on to study at Johns Hopkins Medical School with plans to go into Medical Missions. He was under care of the Middlesex-Mendon Association for this plan.

The Sunday school, under the leadership of Superintendent Everett Stephens, enlisted new teachers, enrolled more pupils, and furnished intensive training for the teachers. He found new lights and tables (the latter through the generosity of Luther Hooper and Roger Davenport), organized new classes upstairs, and acquired more visual aids: a record player, loud speaker and microphone, and a projector.

Chapter Eighteen: The 125th Anniversary Presentation &

Its. David (Marjory) Taylor and the Rev. David Cross spent countless hours researching available Church records to produce a comprehensive history of the church for presentation at the time of the 125th Anniversary. The gala weekend of mid-September in 1956 approached. All was in readiness. The Ladies Home Missionary Society was preparing to serve a scrumptious tea on Saturday afternoon, September 15. Peter Kehew and the Youth Fellowship were ready to guide people through historical displays on the



Town and the Church. The Men's Club was readying another of their soon to become famous chicken barbecues as Saturday evening fare. Sunday worship was to feature three favorite ministers. First, the Rev. Henry Oxnard, retired and living in West Acton, who had served as minister of Pilgrim Church at the time of the 100th Anniversary. The Rev. Marshall Eck then ministering to Trinity Church in Northborough, who was our minister in the late '30's; and the Rev. David Cross, then the current minister of Pilgrim Church. These were the three stages of man -youth, middle and old age - symbolic of the legacy

of Pilgrim Church. What could go awry!

Less than two weeks before the gala celebration was to occur those who had painstakingly searched every available written and printed word concerning the preceding 125 years learned, with no little dismay, that they had literally been working in the dark. More than a year's scrutiny, reading between the lines, bemoaning the almost total lack of theological understanding and Christian compassion in the early records of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society produced only scant material for an historical compilation. The eventful day, one to humble "new comers" (as only new comers can be humbled in a New England community), Grammie Hosmer, one of the elder members of the church, quietly rocked through the minister's visit. At the conclusion of his enthusiastic description of the coming events, she quietly asked why we were celebrating the anniversary in September when the church was organized in February.

True enough, Pilgrim Church was organized on February 16, 1831 while the fiscal body, the Pilgrim Evangelical Society whose records they had researched, came into being the following September. Further conversation revealed that the early records were musting

away in the Town Hall vault where they had been placed for safe keeping either by her son Arthur Hosmer or by Jack Hill, who both had been Selectmen!⁵² The records were retrieved. The 125th Anniversary celebration resulted in numerous other gifts of early memorabilia from private collections.

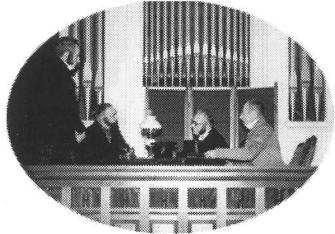
Culled from the records was a dramatic presentation of scenes from the history of



Pilgrim Church written by Marjory Taylor and directed by Mrs. Robert Dickson. Scene one was the forming of the Church at the Perley Whipple House. Scene two presented Polly Collins seeking admission to take part in a meeting of the Church in 1834. Scene three found the audience in the midst of the preparation of a

Church Supper to raise the money to pay for the parsonage. The final scene showed the mid-night dismantling of the fence around the Town Common by "persons unknown." Those taking part in the production included Mrs. Howard Merrill, Mrs. Harlan (Ruth Young) Beach, Mrs. Robert (Betty) Lange, Mrs. John (Dorothy) Craig, and Meredith Hosmer as well as Harlan Beach, Robert Dickson, Jr., Everett Stephens, Alton Spurr, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hastings, Howard Merrill, Robert Lange, John Craig, and Wallace Paton Jr.

The dramatic scenes were followed by summaries of the history of the Church from 1901 - 1931 by Rev. Cross and from 1931 - 1956 by Mr. Erwin Smith. The Church was delighted to have Rev. Oxnard return for the 125th Anniversary and to hear from him words of inspirational greeting. It was delightful too for the Rev.



David Cross to discover that his grandfather had been a classmate and close friend of the Rev. Oxnard at Harvard!

The following day the Church service was a melding of the old and the new. The Rev. Marshall Eck preached the sermon, with the Rev. Henry Oxnard and the Rev. David

Cross leading the worship service. It was an event filled weekend to commemorate the life and accomplishments of Pilgrim Church and its members. As Erwin Smith stated in his inventory of the progress of Pilgrim Church: "This progress has been made possible by all of those who have given of their time, labor, and resources, that many of these goals might be realized. There are still many things to accomplish, many goals to strive for, but above all, we should strive to keep our Church a Christian Church that is a ministering force in this community.

With this uppermost thought, our closing thought will be this: 'Oh God, may we have faith to our tradition old And all new light thou sendest within our souls enfold."

Madeline Hooper, Agnes Young, Helen Hill, Mrs. Howard Merrill

The Fairs of Pilgrim Church



1973 - Jacquie McClelland, Stephanie Fisher, Shari & Barabara Sanford



1976 - Muriel Thompson, Marge Carpenter, Judy Langord, Shirley Owen

Heritage Day
Women's Fellowship
Table
Linda Crawford,
Maria Cutts,
Cheryl Mercer,
Rebecca Bogardus



Chapter Nineteen: 1957 - 1969 &

The church at this time was trying to solve the problem of how to broaden the church family and encourage greater participation. New directions are indicated in the minutes of the Annual Meeting of January 13, 1957 where we find:

"Whereas the church sees the Town growing, with itself a part of this growth - and probably future need for more space for educational, worship and social programs, and the parking of cars;

And whereas the Church was once the rightful owner of the land north of the Church, and the Town was supposed to maintain the sheds there for church use;

And whereas in the not too distant future the land in question may be used by the Town for purposes which would make erection of a building there by the Church difficult if not impossible

Be it voted that Pilgrim Congregational Church finds a reasonable need for some land north of the present structure, and hereby authorizes its moderator to appoint a Committee of seven...to investigate the title of said land and negotiate with the Town and its Selectmen, to the end that legal right be secured for use of the needed land north of the church as soon as feasible...'53

This meeting also heard Hazel Hosmer report for the Music Committee that, in the opinion of our organ tuner "our ancient instrument can never be permanently repaired." (At this point in time, the music committee was driving the organist, Mrs. Pomfret, back and forth from her home in Hudson, until she could purchase a car.) Also, in response to Robert Dumont's urgent appeal for relief for the Hungarian Refugees, "it [is] voted that Pilgrim Church of Southborough will sponsor refugees when the opportunity arises; but only as the requirement of work, housing and money are available."

In June of 1957 a Special Meeting requested that the minister send, on behalf of the church, a word of greeting to the Uniting General Synod in Cleveland on June 25th. That day marked the merger of the Congregational and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches. The spirit of the occasion is captured in the story told by Norma (Smith) Hastings who was a delegate to the Uniting Synod. Norma told of lengthy meetings sparked by oratory and debate and climaxed by the vote to accept the Covenant. As soon as the result of the vote was known, those assembled spontaneously rose to their feet and broke into song – "Praise God from all blessings flow."

ORGAN CONTRACT 10 Livel St. OL 3 - 6 2 20

THIS AGREEMENT made this

20 th

day of Pecember 1957, by and between

FRAZEE OBGAN COMPANY of South Natick, Massachusetts, bereinafter called the SELLER and

Congregational Church, Southboro, Massachusetts

hereinafter called the BUYER, in consideration of the premises and of the mutual covenants herein contained:-

WITNESSETH.

THAT the Seller agrees to supply an organ in accordance with the specifications and details hereto annexed and a part of this agreement, and to erect the same in

Congregational Church, Southboro, Massachusetts

ready for use on or about the 1st day of Ne 12 by 1955, subject, however to strikes and

THAT the Seller warrants the completed organ to be free from defects in either material or workmanship and agrees to replace or repair at its, the Seller's election any such defective parts at its own expense, within five years of date of completion of said Organ, provided, however, that failure of the parts is not due to lack of proper lubrication, and provided that the Seller, its agents or servants, has had exclusive control of the servicing of the said Organ and provided that notice in writing has been given the Seller by the Buyer within the prescribed period. This warranty is not as be construed as to include tuning or ordinary care of the said Organ but the Seller does agree to make all adjustments at its own expense for a period of party of from the date of the completion thereof, exclusive of tuning.

TRAT in consideration of the above, the Buyer agrees to pay the Seller the sum of

Five Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$5500.)

1

THE REAL PROPERTY.

upon the signing of the contract; [15 payment #650. when the organ is ready

THAT the Buyer agrees to build at its own expense such foundations, floors, platforms and adequate enclosures for the said pipes and parts as may be required by the Seller and do all cutting of floors, partitions or other parts of the building should any be necessary and keep organ chamber and organ parts as free as possible from dust, to provide all assessment heat, light and power, and such conditions of quiet as is necessary for the proper tone regulation and tuning of said Organ.

THAT the Buyer agrees to provide and install at its, the Buyer's, expense the foundation and enclosures for the blawer and its starting switch and to provide remote control starting switch where size of blower or local requirements assessitate same and to provide and install the wind conductors connecting blower, organ reservoirs and chests and all assessary switches for the operation of the blower and any lights desired in the organ chamber or on the console and de all electric wiring in connection with same, including two rectifier, where seemesting rectifier, console and other these of organ, and agrees to provide proper space for ten volt organ cables.

TEAT the Buyer will fully insure the organ or the parts thereof and assume all risk against loss or damage by size, water, flood, lightning hurricane or tornado as soon as the said Organ or the parts thereof shall be delivered on property owned by or under the control of the Buyer, for the benefit of the parties hereto, as their interests may appear, and will notify the Seller that said policy is in force.

THAT the title to and ownership of the said Organ shall continue to vest in the Seller until such time as the agreed price shall have been fully paid and the Buyer agrees not to use the organ until this contract has been fulfilled.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals on the day, month and year first written.

Witness:

Stan & Sour

Continue to the state of

FRAZEE ORGAN COMPANY

As the Frazee Pipe Organ was in desperate need of renovation the Planning Committee also recommended that the entire sanctuary be renovated. The problems with the organ were temporarily resolved with the reconstruction of the sanctuary in 1958. The platform was lowered by half its height. Central steps were installed in the platform. Seating was provided for the choir on both sides. The organ console was moved to the right side among the choir stalls while the pipes were hidden behind a screen. A raised central pulpit and a communion table were built. The focal point of the sanctuary became a large wooden cross that was located on the screen in front of the organ pipes. A campaign would need to raise \$60,000 over three years to accomplish all of this as well as paint and modernize the lighting and wiring in the sanctuary.

Nearing the completion of this reconstruction effort the church was saddened to receive the resignation of the Rev. David Cross in order to relocate in the San Francisco area near his wife Mimi's parents. Rev. Cross had admirably fulfilled his charge as minister and teacher. He had increased both membership and attendance, laid the foundations for a vital church school, provoked a social conscience, laid the groundwork for ecumenical involvement and been friend to both old and young. He had done this using the strengths of a handful of church members who were determined that Pilgrim Church would not succumb, and the careful planning sparked by his predecessor.

The qualifications which the church outlined as essential for the person who would succeed Rev. Cross prompted those who were part of the Pulpit Committee to jest that the new man would have to be able to walk on water. Was it coincidence that on the coldest weekend of January 1959, with the reservoir solidly frozen, Joseph Williamson arrived to preach as a candidate for the pulpit? Mr. Williamson was a brilliant, energetic, enthusiastic extrovert and totally committed to his Christian understanding. He had an active interest in young people and firmly believed that evangelism was an integral part of his ministry. His sermons were solid, well prepared and



delivered with the skills of a polished orator. He had been reared in the Nazarene Church, his father being President of the Nazarene Theological Seminary. Mr. Williamson rejected the authoritarianism of the Nazarene Church and came to endorse the basic democracy that is inherent in the Congregational system of governance. He was a social activist and had participated in the Selma, Alabama demonstration.

The first change after Mr. Williamson's arrival was the hiring of a church secretary. It was no longer the responsibility of the minister to type and mimeograph the Sunday bulletins! There was a major revision of the by-laws in 1959. Mrs. Pomfret resigned as Church Organist and Sidney B. Smith was hired to replace her with Dean Davis as Choir Director and 150 new blue hymnals! The Music Committee started to consider the possibility of hiring a combination organist and choir director.

Perhaps the next years should be viewed in light of the challenge which Rev. Williamson offered the church in his first annual report in January 1960.

"Pilgrim Church must face the future with three aims. First, she must be sensitive herself to the changing community of which she is a part, and reach with evangelical concern to minister to its people. Second, she must begin a program of expansion as soon as this is financially feasible. A parish hall is a drastic need. Third, she must call her people to a new level of dedication, that therein we may all 'grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ'."

Although the church was far behind its minister in recognizing the changing community that it served, they were already involved in planning for an expanded facility. Before we move ahead in time, two votes of that same meeting should be noted.

"The motion that the church go on record thanking Mrs. Frank Leslie and Mr. Erwin Smith for their many years of faithful service as Treasurer and Collector, was given resounding endorsement by the minister and former Prudential Committee members who have received such patient help from Mrs. Leslie, then unanimously adopted."

"The motion that Mr. Smith, in view of his many years of faithful service to Pilgrim Church, be elected a deacon emeritus of the Church carried unanimously. Mr. Smith is the first person so honored by the Church."

Those privileged to have known Ruth Leslie and Erwin Smith could attest that this recognition was highly deserved.

The records of this period show a most active church school with enrollment of nearly 175 young persons. Average attendance on Sunday mornings was well over 120 in classes for kindergarten through the twelve grades. There were 20 students in the high school group. Arrangements were made to use space in the Town Hall for the older high school class. Even with this borrowed space, four classes met in the lower hall, two in the sanctuary and one class in each of the small halls at the entrance to the sanctuary. Morale remained high. Teachers for the older classes were predominantly male. The Pilgrim Fellowship included the total high school population and reached many beyond the church fellowship. Adults were engaged in serious study of a variety of topics which ranged from books of the Bible, careful scrutiny of the theology of the United Church of Christ through

the newly developed curriculum and entered the "Honest to God" debate. Outreach efforts from Pilgrim Church found paths to Jordan, Africa, Mexico, Vietnam, Hungary, and Algeria.

With the increasing demands of Rev. Williamson's post graduate program the church authorized the hiring of an assistant to work with youth. Rev. Williamson offered to pay one-half of the cost through a reduction in his own salary. Thus William Arthur Zeckhausen came into our life for one year and offered a new perspective to the educational process of the church. Mr. Zeckhausen gave a new tone to the study groups that had been meeting



regularly under Rev. Williamson. Rev. Williamson was a teacher and preacher, Mr. Zeckhausen was a student and counselor, which led to interesting discussions on a variety of topics ranging from *Catcher in the Rye* to Paul Tillich.

Years of planning and negotiation were brought to the Annual Meeting of January 11, 1962 when Philip Beals, Chairman, reported for the Building Committee and presented preliminary plans for a new, one-story addition to cost approximately \$80,000. In addition, the plans proposed renovation of the vestry at a cost of approximately \$10,000, and \$10,000 for architects' fees. These costs could be covered by a mortgage of one-half of the proposed amount on a twenty-year basis if \$50,000 was secured by pledges over a three-year period. The Committee further recommended that our own members conduct the capital fund drive that began with an anonymous gift of \$2,500.00.

So began a year that saw a successful capital fund drive under the direction of David Taylor, the ordination of Mr. Zeckhausen, and the construction of a new building. The



building committee had visited other churches that had recently built additions. Roland Messier of Southborough drew the final plans. Plans began to be formulated for a meaningful way to dedicate the new building. An ominous note appears at the Annual Meeting of 1963 when Elaine Beals reported that once again the organ was "giving us quite a bit of minor but most annoying trouble". In response the church voted

"That the sum of \$4.67 (the balance representing the interest on the old organ fund) be transferred to a savings account and be used to establish a fund for the future replacement of the organ console."

The resignation of Sidney B. Smith may or may not have been connected to the problems with the organ. Muriel Booth of Whitinsville now became our combined organist and choir director. At this time there were 23 young people in the junior choir. Women's Fellowship now provided baby-sitting for the youngest in our church during services. Youth Fellowship had been doing it on a volunteer basis up until now, but someone more permanent was needed! Bea Johnson had been helping her daughter Joanne with the children and now became "Grandmother" to at least two generations of countless children passing through her care. Mrs. Johnson continued in her role until her retirement in October 1999. Although she received a small donation from Women's Fellowship to do her task, that small amount always found its way back to the work of the Church.

The parish hall addition was dedicated on June 16, 1963. We now had a church office, Pastor's sturdy, two large classrooms with accordion dividers, a large social hall with a stage and tracks for moveable dividers as well as storage closets, a large kitchen and two new restrooms. This day also marked the occasion of the first visit of the Rev. Donald Simpson, our newly appointed Area Minister for the Middlesex-Mendon Association. This was the beginning of a long and meaningful relationship. The joy of our splendid new building was soon tempered with the resignation of Rev. Williamson late in 1963 to allow him to devote more time to the completion of his doctoral degree.

"A testimony joining those of the past to us of the present who envision the future."

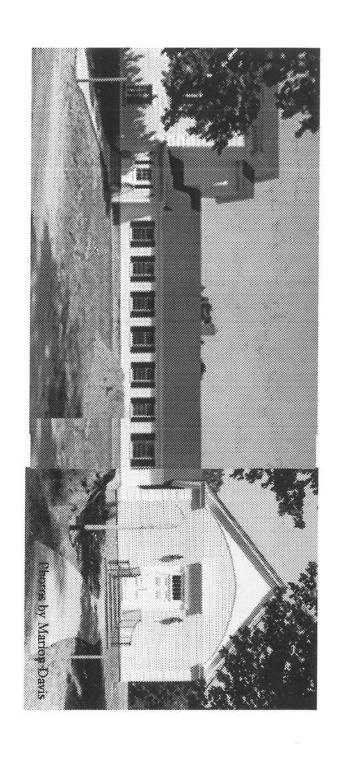


Senior Deacon, Erwin Smith



Rev. Joseph C. Williamson

The Pilgrim Church
United Church of Christ
Southborough, Massachusetts
cordially invites you to attend the
Service of Dedication
and
Open House
for
The Parish House Addition
on Sunday, June 16, 1963
Service of Dedication 10:00 a.m.
Open House 3.00 · 5.00 p.m.



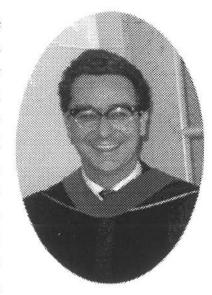
Parish Hall - Dedicated June 16, 1963

Pilgrim Church speedily extended a call to the Rev. Mr. Richard Rodes who took up residence in the parsonage in mid-December of 1963. Mr. Rodes had attended Lebanon Valley College, United Theological Seminary, Oberlin, Union Theological Seminary, Princeton and the University of Geneva. He had been ordained in the United Brethren Church and came to us from Cleveland, Ohio. He was in quest of a "greater range of theological search" by moving to the United Church of Christ. Mr. Rodes brought to the church a commitment to fulfill the role of pastor, a belief in the value of counseling and a conservative theology. He had "leanings toward participative, ethical, relational, intellectually responsible, liberal religion."54Membership increased dramatically as those who had not appreciated the liberalism of the previous years sought to become a part of the fellowship. This highlighting of our differing theological interpretations resulted in a sharply divided church. Rev. Rodes became discouraged with "the negative attitude of some and told the Council that he would minister to the whole church not just a few; that the pastoral and preaching decisions rested with the minister."55 In April of 1964 the church was deeply in debt with a growing budget deficit. After two special church meetings as a result of a request "that he submit his resignation" Pilgrim Church saw Rev. Rodes leaving the community six months after his arrival. Rev. Rodes went on to attain professional standing in the Unitarian Association in Boston. There were some ecclesiastical wounds that were deep and would take thoughtful prayer and time to heal. The moderator appointed six members to a Stewardship Committee to work with the Board of Trustees to help remedy the financial situation.

In January of 1965 a saddened church voted, for the first time in its history to dedicate a page in our permanent record to a departed member. This page recognized Raymond Dumont as an outstanding steward, deacon, teacher and friend.

One might expect that, with the parsonage vacant for well over a year, all would have been in readiness for a new minister and his family. Not so. With a call extended to the Rev. Arthur T. Lutton on April 25, 1965 refurbishing the parsonage began. With the moving van expected the next morning the last of the work, a final coat of floor surfacing, was applied during the late evening hours of a sultry June night. The volunteer painters, paper hangers, cleaners and odd jobbers breathed a sigh of relief and went home to fall exhausted into their beds. In the early hours of the following morning Southborough was visited by a heavy thunderstorm. The ever-watchful Chairman of the Trustees, wakened by the first drop of rain, left his comfortable bed and went to the parsonage to close the windows against any rain damage. The excessive humidity had delayed the floor drying and, for quite some period of time, one could easily follow in this Trustee's footsteps - at least through the parsonage.

The church once again responded to the challenges offered by a new minister. Rev. Lutton was a graduate of Fitchburg State College and Andover Newton. He had also studied theater arts at Emerson and Tufts. Rev. Lutton was a skilled teacher, quick witted and a true thespian. He was a skilled preacher and church attendance increased, for a period of time two Sunday morning worship services were conducted. The Annual Meeting of 1966 showed receipts from members for the three-year Parish Hall Building Fund totaled \$58,507. A sum in excess of that hoped for four years earlier but one that still left the church with a significant mortgage on the building.



Rev. Lutton's words to the church at this time could apply to any year.

"A church always ought to take a critical look at its busyness since activity is not necessarily a measure of achievement and success is not necessarily a measure of Christian commitment and mission. All too frequently a church awakens to the realization that it is doing a great job at oiling and polishing the machinery but has forgotten to use the machine to do the task for which it was built."

Under Rev. Lutton we came to realize that true social action meant giving of ourselves. He served in the community as Chaplain of the Masonic Lodge and of the Fire Department. His tenure at Pilgrim Church saw much activity with the youth of both the church and the town. The Church became the sponsor for Cub Scout Pack I and Boy Scout Troop I. The church and its Youth Action Committee sought to pursue goals of service through educational and community functions. It helped form the "Teen Canteen" in Southborough as well as the Ecumenical "Cocu" House in the basement of St. Mark's Rectory. The first World Day of Prayer was sponsored by Women's Fellowship. The start of the ecumenical movement had Rev. Lutton teaching at the Ecumenical Institute in Boston. During this period, Women's Fellowship helped establish the Southborough Senior Citizen's Club.

By unanimous vote of the church at the Annual Meeting of June 11, 1968, a second memorial page was dedicated to the memory of Alton B. Spurr "who served his church [and community] faithfully until his death on November 24, 1967." Mr. Spurr had served as Moderator, on the Planning Committee, Parish Hall Building Committee, Prudential Committee, and Trustees as well as Town Selectman and Assessor.

Rev. Lutton imparted words of wisdom in the 1968 Annual Report: "No minister, or lack of a minister, can decide whether a church will be a church." Rev. Lutton was blessed with a family of five children. Unfortunately, the salary that we could extend to a pastor was not enough to meet the expenses of raising five children. Some in the church objected to his teaching part time or having a part -time job in order to supplement his income. Rev. Lutton tendered his resignation in order to return to the business world. He maintained his credentials and his desire to minister to the world.

Feeding the Multitudes at Pilgrim Church

1956 -Walter, Walter Jr.& Charlotte Brewer, Jane Higgiston, Dale Cookson



Fred & Scott McCobb, Howard Merrill

The Chicken Barbecue!

1986 - John Kissida, Bill Landes, Bill Mc Ivor, Dick Knorr, Alex Cedrone, Elven Riggles

1983

Chapter Twenty: 1969 - 1979 &

Following the resignation of Rev. Lutton a call was extended to the Rev. Paul D. (Fagg)⁵⁶ Sanderson in June of 1969. Rev. Sanderson was a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and Andover Newton as well as having done clinical training at Boston City Hospital and working towards his S.T.M. at Andover Newton. He came to Pilgrim Church from the South Congregational Church in Andover where he was serving as Associate Minister. He was a quiet, reserved minister with a deep interest in a clinical pastoral ministry. He was an effective preacher with an inherent concern for the individual.



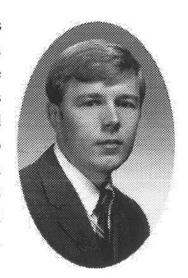
There had been problems in finding church school teachers when the time of Sunday School was changed to coincide with the Church service. Church school attendance increased significantly when the time was changed from Sunday morning to weekday evening sessions. Rev. Sanderson's continuing study in Clinical Pastoral Education brought a new dimension of pastoral counseling to members and friends. The church was undergoing a critical financial period with the \$6,705 annual mortgage payment causing the adoption of deficit budgets. In the early 1970's a payment of "interest only" was negotiated with the bank for a twelve-month period. The restructuring of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ as presented by Area Minister Donald Simpson moved us from the Middlesex-Mendon Association to the Central Association. On a town wide basis, the first Heritage Day Celebration was observed on Columbus Day weekend and the United Parishes of Southborough was formed to find ways to work together to the mutual benefit

of all.

Muriel Booth left Pilgrim Church in 1971. How little we realized that we were entering a period of a genuine ministry of music when Allen Langord came to us as our new Director of Music. His talents as organist were surpassed only by his ability to coax a volunteer choir to near professional standards. The organ was rewired and relocated so that the choir could see the director. Our worship services were greatly enhanced, the concerts and special music became bright spots for the whole community. Over the following years we heard in our sanctuary Vivaldi's "Gloria", Haydn's

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"Lord Nelson Mass", Mozart's "Requiem", Handel's "Messiah", Bruchner's "Te Deum", Rossini's "Stabat Mater", Bach's "Cantata", Mozart's "Missa Brevis, Faure's "Requiem" and others.

In June of 1972 Marjorie Spurr was recognized for her many years of service as a deaconess "before, during and since serving the church in that official capacity" and elected the first Deaconess Emeritus in our history.

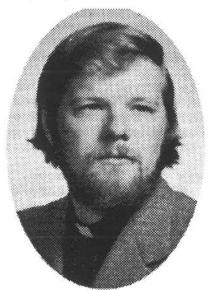
International events became of vast importance in the existence of the people of Southborough and the life of Pilgrim Church. The escalation of the war in Vietnam drew the United Church of Christ into draft counseling services and emergency ministry for those involved in the emigration of U.S. citizens of draft age to Canada. Much discussion was provoked in the churches at that time. The U.C.C. felt they were providing responsible education from a view other than the hard core military or that of extreme protest groups. The people of Pilgrim Church donated needed items for the people of South Vietnam that were taken there by Lt. Bowes. There was a wide range of opinion in the church on the matter of our involvement in Southeast Asia. October 15, 1969 found the doors of Pilgrim Church open to all for a day of reflection and meditation. There were brief worship services and Rev. Sanderson was available to speak and pray with any who felt the need. Pilgrim Church voted unanimously to "start procedures that would lead to a special ministry for returning veterans."

Congress to make January 15, the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., a national holiday. August 1970 found the church sponsoring a ham and bean supper to raise funds for the Pakistan Relief Fund. The question arose in Church Council as to when it is permissible for the minister to advocate that members vote to promote social welfare legislation as it relates to local affairs. This related to the construction of a Senior Citizens Housing complex on Boston Road. During this period the youth of the church were exploring world and personal issues outside the "nest" of Southborough. There were many stimulating programs and discussion groups for them. Adult education was active with monthly discussion groups and potluck suppers with challenging presentations. Women's Fellowship had a baby shower for Rev. Sanderson's wife Darlene prior to the birth of their first son, Corey.

In June of 1972 Rev. Sanderson resigned to accept a position as chaplain at the State Mental Hospital at Foxborough, Massachusetts.

During the interim period the Senior Deacon, David Taylor received a call late one Saturday evening from Arthur Hosmer who had found a bat in the sanctuary!

"He volunteered to get rid of the bat if Dave would come and help him with the chore. Dave arrived at the church and found Arthur armed with a fire hook on the end of a long pole. Together they proceeded to the sanctuary and found the bat hiding high up in the right front corner of the church clinging to the semi-ornate plaster molding. Arthur, having been a fireman for many years, elected to wield the pole. Soon the bat was dislodged along with several pieces of plaster from the molding. Dave and Arthur disposed of the bat, cleaned up the plaster shards but...one [could] still see the gouge in the molding made during that escapade [for several years]."57



A call was extended to the Rev. Richard A. Fisher December 10, 1972. Rev. Fisher was a graduate of American University and Duke University Divinity School and came to us from the Hampden United Methodist Church in Baltimore, Maryland. He felt that the role of a minister was "to help people find a way to continue the ministry of Jesus in their own community." He was a social activist and during his ministry social action and mission conscience were again heightened. Many meaningful study groups were held during his ministry. The annual chicken barbecues were started again with the proceeds designated for missions.

December 17, 1972 saw the first performance of

Handel's "Messiah" in our sanctuary. The first of many years of a Christmas tradition for Pilgrim Church as well as the town of Southborough with a 34 member chorus, 4 major soloists and a 20 piece orchestra. Gloria Capone, a recent graduate of Algonquin High School and a resident of Southborough, was the soprano soloist for this first production. Twenty-eight English Handbells became a part of our music program on June 10, 1973.

January 27, 1973 saw the end of the war in Vietnam. As he had done to celebrate the conclusion of both World War I and World War II Arthur Hosmer proclaimed the good news and gave thanks by pealing the church bell with the aid of the Board of Trustees and the Boy Scouts of Troop 1. Rev. Fisher helped the Church Council set up long-range priorities and committee responsibilities.

With the new Parish Hall had come an increased emphasis on Christian Education. Personal and financial commitments to outreach programs had grown. Pilgrim Church helped establish the Triborough Pastoral Counseling Center and the first Ecumenical Vacation Bible School under the direction of Sandy Samuels. Tuesday evening church school classes moved back to Sunday mornings because of disciplinary problems and Rev. Marvin Derby, the Interim Pastor after Rev. Sanderson, had instituted Children's Sermons as an integral part of our Sunday worship. During Mr. Fisher's ministry emphasis was placed

on the American Indian Cottage Industry through study groups as well as church school programs and lessons. A controversial informational series on Amnesty was also held.

In June of 1973, the church voted that "our good friend Dave Taylor be made a Deacon Emeritus in recognition of his many years of service to Pilgrim Church." Six months later the church reaffirmed a century old vote and unanimously defeated a motion that the "elements be changed from Bread and Grape Juice to Bread and Wine."

Rev. Fisher resigned in January 1975 to "serve the best interests both of myself and the church." Miles Weaver moved a "vote of confidence and appreciation of the congregation for the work of Rev. Fisher."

The church took two significant financial actions during the interim period between Rev. Fisher's resignation and the calling of the Rev. Dr. Thomas A. Hunt as minister in September of 1975. During the last 5 years the annual income of the church had risen steadily so that on February 10, 1975 the final payment of the parish hall mortgage was made. Truly a time for rejoicing! Remarks made at the dedication of the building twelve years earlier seemed as appropriate on this occasion.

"...So the pilgrim is to go forward in faith...This place is not made for hiding. But our going forward in faith is possible only when it is 'in faith.' The object of our faith, however, is neither our building nor ourselves, but the living God. It is under His mandate that we have done this task, and it is under His promised providence that we shall go forward."

In June of this same year, due to increased maintenance costs, the Trustees were authorized to sell the parsonage, thus ending the era of providing a home for our ministers as they come to serve in Southborough. The proceeds from the sale of the parsonage, \$41,560.00, allowed for the creation of an Endowment Fund for the first time in the history of Pilgrim Church. It empowered the Pulpit Committee to offer living quarters other than a parsonage to a candidate by way of a "returnable down payment" which was known as a "Shared Appreciation Mortgage" on his own home. This amount would be returned to the church along with a percentage of the appreciation on the Pastor's home at time of its sale or within a reasonable time frame if the Pastor left Pilgrim Church but retained ownership of the house. An Investment Board was then established to be responsible for the "investment of the Church's Permanent Endowment Fund."

Continuing its involvement in world affairs, Pilgrim Church, under the leadership of the Couples' Club, undertook the sponsorship of a Vietnamese family. The Council voted its agreement on condition that there be employment available before a request was filed with the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service to sponsor a family. Data General Corporation promised employment for the father on arrival and an apartment was secured for them on the corner of East Main Street and Boston Road. The Dung Nguyen Family

arrived in Southborough in November 1975. Nguyen (Peter) Dung, his wife Li (Lynn), their son Lam (Francis) and her sister Tuyet settled in and were cared for by the people of Pilgrim

Church. Since that time they have had three more children and bought their own home in Southborough.

Dr. Hunt was a graduate of Colby and had been in the business world for 14 years before studying for his graduate theology degrees at Andover Newton. He had particular training in pastoral counseling and clinical education, and was the Protestant Chaplain at Worcester City Hospital. Dr. Hunt and his wife Susan chose to remain in their home in Sherborn during his ministry at Pilgrim Church. Dr. Hunt brought a new dimension to life and worship in Pilgrim Church. He was a trustworthy, direct, very personal, sincere minister, a believer in "hands on healing." Dr. Hunt



brought to Pilgrim Church the skill of calming pastoral counseling, the desire to minister to people where they were. His sermons were often directed toward social issues and getting our own lives right with God. He not only had a true sense of what the roles of church committees should be but also a deep passion for personally doing what he could to make the world a better place in which to live. He will be loved and long remembered by

members, friends and the community touched by his genuine

ministry.

With the desire to improve the Christian Education program, the church authorized a part time position of Director of Religious Education/Secretary. Barbara Cowles was chosen to fill the position. The position was "secretary (4-6 hours per week) and someone to evaluate the new educational materials, recruit and train teaching staff, coordinate the education program of the church." It was felt the position would give

some stability to the ongoing education program of the church. Barbara continued in the position until 1978 when the church split the position, hiring Alice Goodwin Brown as Christian Education Director and Joan Franks as Church Secretary.

Under the leadership of Pilgrim Church the Southborough Youth Center was established "to meet individual, inter-personal and family needs of the young people and to provide actual intervention in breaking the cycle of hostility and disruption which is counter productive for

wholesome community living." The town aided financially with setting up the program that continues to this day.

Southborough had many events celebrating the Bicentennial of our country in 1976. The United Parishes of Southborough sponsored a Bicentennial Common Liturgy. This very

special Communion Service was presided over by both Dr. Hunt and Father Philip "Pat" Fantenoceto of St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church jointly serving communion to all those present on the Town Common. A Bicentennial Worship Service was also held in our sanctuary with all of the participants and many in the congregation dressed in appropriate costume. A ham and bean dinner in Fellowship Hall followed the



service. The Southborough Company of Minute and Militia ably assisted us during the evening's festivities. During the service Dr. Hunt served as Pastor, Bruce Donath lined the hymns and Robert Dumont was the Censor. There was even an usher with the requisite feather on a pole to awaken anyone who dared to doze during the Pastor's sermon!

That year gave rise to the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service and it was in that year that Jack Hill made the first Advent Wreath that is used during worship services during Advent. "The Advent Wreath Song" was introduced to our Advent worship services by its composers Steve Claffin and Steve Boise.

"The Advent Wreath Song"
Written by Barbara (Cowles) Dumont
First Performed on Guitar by:
Steve Claflin and Steve Boise

Light the Advent candle one.

Now the waiting has begun.

We have started on our way,

Time to think of Christmas Day.

Light the Advent candle two.

Think of us, the people who
Are in need of that great light.

That will come on Christmas night.

Light the Advent candle three, Think of what it means to be Giving of ourselves today, Showing love in some small way.

Light the Advent candle four. Think of how, like many more, We feel good when we receive, Gifts of love to fill our need.

Chorus: Candle, candle, burning bright, Shining in the cold winter night. Candle, candle burning bright, Fill our hearts with Christmas light. During this period the Church Building Improvement Fund was created resulting in pledges of over \$33,000 which allowed for the redecoration of the sanctuary. Additional permanent pews were added to accommodate the choir, oak flooring and carpeting was installed from the front door through to the sanctuary. The pews were removed and refinished, the interior of the sanctuary painted, as well as the exterior of the main building and heating controls put in place. The "Pilgrim Hymnal" came to reside in our pews. The decision to sell our ancient organ was finalized and a new electronic organ was installed. The



music ministry of Pilgrim Church rose to new heights with the installation of an Allen Electronic Organ Model 903-3 Custom in 1979. The organ had 300 IBM cards that produced the sounds of 253 musical instruments. The sanctuary resounded with concerts of Handel's

"Messiah," the Faure "Requiem", Bach's "Cantata" and more. The Pilgrim Church Choir also produced its first "Christmas Record."

Dr. Hunt stressed faith enrichment and evangelism while he was here sensing what he saw as a spiritual apathy in the church. Groups were formed for adult education centering on personal faith development, parenting, and marriage enrichment. It was at this time that two Koinonia groups were started. Dr. Hunt resigned in June of 1979 to return to the specialized ministry of counseling and chaplaincy at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester as Director of the Department of Pastoral Care.

In 1988 Pilgrim Church as part of its Outreach Program supported Dr. Hunt when he



undertook a cross-country walk to raise \$30,000 for the area homeless. He took a leave of absence from his position at University of Massachusetts Medical Center and started from Seattle, Washington in April passing through Southborough the day he finished his walk. He was greeted at White's Corner by a contingent of Pilgrim Church members including Barbara Cowles, Rev. Jim Pirie and Diane Lytle.



1976 - Miles Weaver, Millie Blood, Sue Day, Carol Bogardus, Evans Cheeseman, Shirley Owen, Muriel Thompson, Bruce Donath, Dick Knorr

The Choirs of Pilgrim Church



1980 - Allen Langord Directing *The Messiah*



2001 - Jan Short, Erika Sisson, Bev Worters, Mindy Parsons, Shirley Owen, Joan Clark Marty Larson, Sarah Cheeseman, Joan Pflug, Debbie Wilson, Sabra Upjohn, June Parsons, Bob Flot, Brent Kern, Art Sisson
Bill Harrington, Evans Cheeseman, Paul Renfrew, Bob Rynning, Bob Worters



2000 Bell Choir - Amy Sibley, Kate Leist, Molly Lengel, Emily Leist, Rebecca Bogardus, Sam Martinborough, Stephen Coldwell, Keene Southard, Janet Derby, George Davey, Cindy Torilli



1965 - Wendy Clark, Susan Stone, Melanie Bogardus, Cindy Tebbetts, Laura Lee, Debra Bogardus Gail Wilbur, Laura Lauer, Steve Park, Dave Park, Steve Dunnett, Ginny Banks Muriel Booth, Chris Lutton, Nancy Beals, Bob Lee, Sandy Ludington, Mrs. Arthur Lutton



1985 - Jennifer Myers, Greg Stoddard, Rebecca Chapman, Jeff Linnell, Mindy Parsons, Ben Douglas, Christopher Kastner, Rebecca Coldwell, Kevin Sturgeon, Denaire Kissida, Stephanie Snow, Jason Carlin, Jeff Hanson

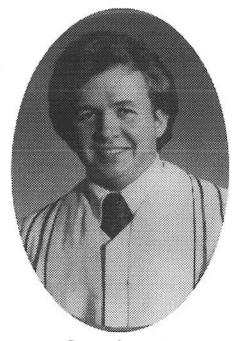


2001 - Jacqueline Ferri, Katie Hill, Melanie Wagner, Sarah Crothers, C. A. & K. Kuchner Christopher Schoener, Mark Rotermund, Lee Ann Rowley, S. Foder, Andrew Warfield, Lucy Ulfelder, Brittany Kern

Chapter Twenty-One: 1979-1992 &

call was extended to the Rev. Craig Reynolds in September of 1979. Rev. Reynolds

University as well as a Masters Degree in Theology from Boston University. He came to Southborough from the First United Church of Hilo, Hawaii. Rev. Reynolds arrived at Pilgrim Church seeking to be a communicator, a counselor and an agent of change helping us to take the word of the Gospel and translate it into our daily living. Rev. Reynolds was a gentle shepherd and a peacemaker, a listener and a worker in jeans and cowboy boots. He was capable and caring in his one to one counseling and someone to whom the family was the heart of his ministry. Family was not limited to blood relatives, family included the members of Pilgrim Church and the



community of Southborough as well as the surrounding towns. Caring for each other meant not just prayers on Sunday morning but daily spiritual and physical care. The Covenant was rewritten while he was minister, and we were meant to covenant with each other in the traditional sense of the word. Rev. Reynolds, with his wife Carol and their 3-year-old son Jesse, became the first minister to own his own home in Southborough at 22 Clifford Street.

Rev. Reynolds' vision for Pilgrim Church was one in which no one was excluded, where diversity was celebrated.⁵⁹ He was a dramatic storyteller and preacher who connected Christian faith to daily life through his understanding of the dynamics of church liturgy and his encouragement of involvement in the social needs of our community. He was a strong presence in the United Parishes of Southborough. During his ministry Pilgrim Church built strong outreach, church school and youth programs as well as strengthened its financial foundation.

One of Rev. Reynolds' strengths was his ability to relate on a personal basis to those with whom he came in contact. We have an historic edifice as the home for our church family and word spread of the personal manner in which Rev. Reynolds conducted the wedding ceremony. Pilgrim Church soon became known as "The Wedding Church", the alternative to the usually fully scheduled Martha Mary Chapel at the Wayside Inn in Sudbury. During his first year, Rev. Reynolds conducted only five wedding ceremonies but later there was one year in which he conducted twenty-seven wedding services! Although

many of those couples were not members of Pilgrim Church some of them later returned to the "Church on the Hill" to have their children baptized and to become members.

One of Rev. Reynolds' characteristics was his total involvement with all aspects of the life of Pilgrim Church. It was not out of the ordinary to find him shoveling the snow off the walk, sweeping the floor in Fellowship Hall or watering the poinsettias at Christmas. He reminds us of that other Rev. Reynolds who was here in the late 1940's and was known to take the organ apart to repair it.

Christian Education activities expanded along with the growing number of students. Programs were diverse and successful, largely due to the devotion of staff and members who unselfishly gave of their time. There were teachers such as Diane Lytle who taught for over 15 years; Bea Johnson and her "Cheerios" was a guardian to the children of this church in the Cradle Room every Sunday; and Myra Claflin gave so many hours to the children of the church school and its programs. She was responsible for the reincarnation of the Mitten Tree as a project for the church school at Christmas. When originally set up in 1960, the mittens went to the Home for Little Wanderers and later to an Indian Reservation.

The growing educational needs of the church led to an increase in the hours required for Christian Education Director Alice Goodwin Brown. She also directed the Youth Choir. Under the direction of Rev. Reynolds and Alice Goodwin Brown Christmas Eve Services were held at 7 and 11, with the Church school presenting a Christmas Pageant at the 7 P.M.



service. The newest baby in the church took the part of the Baby Jesus with his/her parents as Mary and Joseph. Alice Goodwin Brown requested our sponsorship for her ordination in January of 1980 and left us in September of 1980 to accept a position at First Church in Cambridge. The youth of the church had two groups, one for junior high and one for senior high.

1984 saw the arrival of Elven W. Riggles a student at Andover Newton Theological School, as our new Director of Christian Education. Pilgrim Church had gone from a deficit budget in 1981 to actually having a surplus left at the end of the year 1983. There was tremendous growth in church members and church school. The decision was made to establish the position of Associate

Minister. The job description was for 20-25 hours a week and incorporated the areas of Christian Education, Youth Fellowship and visitation with parishioners. Elven Riggles was called as the first Associate Minister in July of 1984. At the same time he was called as the

Minister at the First Community Church and was ordained at Pilgrim Church on December 2, 1984. He shared his days between the two congregations as many ministers have done over the years.

The growth of the youth in the church led to a vigorous, active Youth Fellowship and a Vacation Bible School each summer. The Youth Fellowship was geared toward three areas: events encouraging fellowship and personal growth, events dealing with mission and outreach, and fund raising events.

Among the many diverse programs held during those years for the youth of our church one was "Boston by Night." Sensing the social isolation of the youth in Southborough, a bedroom community, from the reality of life for those in the city, Rev. Reynolds and another parent took a small group of the youth to experience life at night in Boston. Leaving Southborough at 11 P.M. among their stops were the emergency room of a hospital, a police precinct station house, the all night flower stand at Faneuil Hall Marketplace, conversations with Boston cab drivers, and observing the life between midnight and dawn on city streets.

Rev. Riggles was married in Pilgrim Church in July of 1988 to Jill Seldon, the organist at First Community Church who often participated in the musical presentations at Pilgrim Church. The Church became completely wrapped up in Bridal Showers and Wedding Receptions, with Women's Fellowship putting on the reception held at the Community House. Rev. Riggles left Pilgrim Church in January 1990 to become the Pastor of the United Church of Durham, Connecticut.

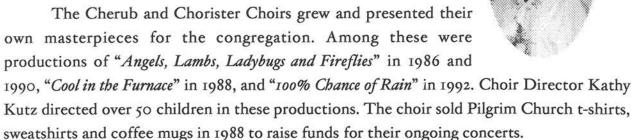
Music continued to be a major element in the ministry of Pilgrim Church during these years both with our own members and with music from other corners of the world. There was a Chorister Choir and a Cherub Choir directed by Christa Kastner with Michael Kastner directing the Senior and Youth Handbell Choirs. The "Messiah" continued as a Christmas tradition with the addition of the "Requiem" by either Faure or Mozart being performed at Easter.

On July 24th and 25th of 1980 the forty-four voice Danpei Youth Choir of The United Church of Christ, Sokehs, Ponape, Marshall Islands visited Pilgrim Church. They were on an extended tour of the United States and were quartered in Fellowship Hall while preparing for concerts in Weston, Lexington and Concord. The concerts were of spirited Gospel music in the Micronesian style as well as ancient games and dances. Women's Fellowship and the Southborough Rotary Club provided meals for the members of the choir. Carol and Pat Bogardus, members of Pilgrim Church, had lived on Kwajalein, Micronesia for several years. In June of 1985 The Salt Lake City Handbell Choir visited Southborough, performing in our sanctuary and sleeping in Fellowship Hall! One member of

the choir, former member Ann Janacek's son, had lived in Southborough before the family moved to Salt Lake City.

In October of 1985 Allen Langord resigned as Music Director of Pilgrim Church and was replaced on Easter 1986 by Kathy Kutz, a member of our own choir. In 1986 the music of our services was enhanced by the gift of a Grand Piano to our sanctuary through Gifts in

Memory of David Hudson and James Cookman. The gift of music was presented by many connected to our congregation over the years including Dan Chernewski, Michelle Landes, Jill Seldon, Ann Gamble, Johanna McIvor, Roger Mann, Michael and Christa Kastner, Marjorie Carpenter, Erika Sisson, Lana and Jim Myers, and so many more.



One of the major Outreach programs started during these years was the Adopt-A-Child program. Started with the Evangelical Congregational Church in Westboro in 1984 the goal was to provide Christmas presents for needy children through the Department of Social Services office The program was later expanded to include providing supplies for the children to start school in September.

The initiation of winter retreats at the Campion Center in Weston was in January 1984 under the sponsorship of the Board of Deacons and led by the Rev. James Keegan. Easter programs were greatly expanded by Rev. Reynolds. In addition to two services on Easter Sunday and an Ecumenical Sunrise Service and Breakfast, there were Shrove Tuesday Pancake Suppers, Seder Services, and Tennebrae Services on Maundy Thursday, with the church being open to all on Good Friday for prayer and meditation.

As in the past the ladies of the church provided support and tangible aid to the daily life of the church. Many Church projects were funded through the efforts of the women of the Church at the popular Church Fairs always held on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Among the many items purchased with the proceeds by Women's Fellowship were: a new copier for the church office, storm windows for the Parish Hall, the renovation of the parlor and the minister's office, tables for Fellowship Hall, curtains for the classrooms, and a refrigerator and a freezer for the kitchen. In 1985 Women's Fellowship established a scholarship fund which presented scholarships to high school graduates of Pilgrim Church

every year. The Bake-and-Freeze Program of Women's Fellowship provided many meals when emergencies arose for families with illness or bereavement.

Two names were added to the distinguished list of Deacons Emeritus, Ruth and Miles Weaver. Among the many people devoted to Pilgrim Church were Gwen Forrester and Ellie Stoddard who decorated the sanctuary so beautifully each year for Christmas. The artistic presentations for posters, pamphlets, fliers and stationary through the years from Charlie Forrester and Jeff Watkins were truly works of art. The exertion of Steve Pflug on behalf of Outreach not only at the Food Pantry but wherever needed was done quietly and faithfully and he was presented with The Haystack Award by the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ.

One way Pilgrim Church tried reaching out to those in need during Rev. Reynolds years at Pilgrim Church was through a program that was being tried in the United Church of Christ at that time. We attempted to institute the staff position of Parish Nurse. The purpose of the position was seen as a "creative way to attend to the physical, emotional, spiritual needs of our members." It included health assessment and referral services as well as education programs, emotional reassurance, and the presence of a health facility liaison. Jan Sturgeon, a member of Pilgrim Church and a registered Nurse, was the first and only Parish Nurse. The program proved to be much more time consuming than had originally been thought and the job description too broad for the hours and compensation available.

As the War in Vietnam had impacted upon our lives in the late 60's and the 1970's, February 1991 saw the Persian Gulf War being addressed by a resolution of a Church Meeting. The members of Pilgrim Church declared that it "will serve no beneficial purpose...to adopt any particular political or public policy regarding the conduct of this war..." It was recommended that "the church encourage individual prayer...find ways to demonstrate Christian Spirit through activities which are applicable to this crisis..."

Major expansion was done to the minister's office and the Secretary's office was created from one classroom, along with space for the Director of Christian Education and the Choir Director. The growth in the membership of the church brought about another new personnel position, that of Church Administrator/Church Secretary. Joan Franks held the position until she left for another job in November 1987. Taking over the position at that time was member Lynn Carlin, who stayed in the position until she left in August 1992. "High Tech" arrived in the church office in 1988 with a MacPlus computer and printer. Paula Haskell and then Debbie Herrick succeeded as Church Administrators.

In 1979 Robert and Alice Lebewohl gifted the Church a parcel of property in Ashland but the carrying fees for the parcel of land created a drain on the Endowment Fund. The Church was a non-taxable institution, but there were sewer betterment fees and

property taxes that had to be paid as long as the Church was not actively using the property. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees was authorized to sell the property in June of 1983 with the proceeds, \$28,000.00 going into the Endowment Fund.

The focus of the church in 1981 was to be a "Generation Bridge". The church sought to promote programs of awareness for and between the elderly and the young of the church. The activities that it offered led to many new and innovative programs that impacted the life of the church. A Prayer Chain was established in which news of grave concerns, illness and celebration among the congregation could be passed along for prayer and meditation. Harvey Bigelow built a handicapped ramp on the side of the building by the Pastor's Office as well as installed two paved "Handicapped" spaces for parking. Trustee William Linnell took on the task of creating an opening in the back wall of the sanctuary where the organ pipes had originally been to now be used as an access for a video camera. This allowed those who were elderly or handicapped and could not climb the stairs to the sanctuary to view the service from the comfort of the minister's office. Those who were not able to get out could view the videotapes at home. The Generation Bridge Committee was dissolved in 1983 when these projects were completed.

Sitting in our sanctuary became more comfortable in 1985 with the arrival of pew cushions! In 1989 Pilgrim Church became one of the contributing members for Our Father's Table in Marlboro. We joined with 13 other churches in the area in helping to feed the homeless, with our church providing the meal two nights per month at the start and later one night each month. The continuing success of this program was in large part due to devoted members such as Joan Anderson, Barbara Cowles, Sue Thompson and Sue Snyder who gave of their time to coordinate the preparation and serving of the meals. When the Southborough Food Pantry was established in 1991, the United Parishes of Southborough chose Pilgrim Church as its location. What started in a small closet across from the Pastor's Study eventually moved to a larger closet at the back of Fellowship Hall that was easily accessible from the outside.

During January of 1990 the entire congregation moved for Sunday worship while our sanctuary was being painted. For several weeks we worshipped together in the Gothic charm of the St. Mark's School Chapel. While we were worshipping at St. Mark's we lost a dear member of our Pilgrim Church Family, Janice Hickey. In her memory a Memorial Garden was established on the East Side of the church "to represent the beauty of the love we shared with other departed loved ones." Members of our church family donated the memorial plantings which Trudi Bessom set in place.

A tradition in Pilgrim Church began during the 1980's. Several families in town had been spending one weekend a year, just after the start of school, at a YMCA Camp in

Wolfeboro, New Hampshire. Some members of our own church were among these families. In 1986, an invitation to Camp Belknap was extended to all families in Pilgrim Church from the Lay Life and Work Committee. When Camp Belknap was not available in 1999 the weekend was moved to Camp Takodah in Winchester, New Hampshire. It was a weekend for fun, relaxation and fellowship among the cabins and pines along the shore of Lake Winnipesaukee in New Hampshire for many years even when the location had to be changed. It left memories of campfires with people of all ages singing and laughing together. It left memories of services together under God's pines and of communion shared on a dock at night under a starry firmament.

The 150th Anniversary

The 150th Anniversary Celebration of Pilgrim Church was begun on October 4, 1981, World Wide Communion Sunday. J. Stanley Sheppard, Music Director of St. Mark's Church, composed an anthem in honor of the Anniversary and dedicated it to the Pilgrim Church Choir and their director Allen Langord: "Christ Hath A Garden" which was first performed during the Sunday morning worship service.

Wollows

"Christ Hath A Garden"

Isaac Watts

J. S. Sheppard

Christ Hath A Garden walled around,
A paradise of fruitful ground,
Chosen by love and fenced by grace

From out the world's wide wilderness, Like trees of spice his servants stand, There planted by his mighty hand; By Eden's gracious streams that flow To feed their beauty where they grow.

Awake, awake, o wind of heav'n,
And bear their sweetest perfume through the air;
Sit up, o south, the boughs that bloom
Till the beloved Master come;
That he may come, and linger yet
Among the trees that he hath set;
That he may walk amid the springing green,
Amid the springing green.



Three former ministers, the Rev. Thomas Hunt, the Rev. Paul Sanderson, and the Rev. Richard Rodes joined with us in worship that morning. In the Rev. Reynolds sermon that morning he told the congregation:

"If we can respect the past, then we can learn from it.... Life requires us not only to know our history, but to appreciate it." The Rev. Rodes felt that "the rekindled memories of so many positive experiences together in such a short span of months in 1964 make us glad to be alive and glad for our creative time together then and [now].

"The Rev. Joseph Williamson wrote, "This is an important milestone in your life. As such it enables you to look to the past for strength and wisdom, as well as to look to the future for vision and inspiration.

The Rev. David Cross wrote from San Francisco that he was "grateful for...[our] moving on and continuing to grow in faith, in witness, in service after {he} left."

That evening the Pilgrim Church Choir, along with soloists Erika Sisson and Keith Kibler and a full orchestra, performed Brahms' "A German Requiem".

A hymn-sing of favorite hymns in the Protestant Tradition was held on October 25, Reformation Sunday. The Women's Fellowship held their "Pilgrim's Progress" Fair on November 21. The celebrations concluded on Thanksgiving Sunday with a special service. In celebration of the Anniversary the Women's Fellowship of Pilgrim Church published the "Pilgrim's Pride" Cookbook and sold a 150th Anniversary Plate.

A major revision of the Church Covenant was undertaken by the Board of Deacons resulting in a new covenant that was accepted by the Annual Meeting of the church on January 27, 1985.

"This church looks to the word of God in the Scriptures and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to achieve its creative and redemptive work in the world. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of his/her own conscience, under the enlightenment of the spirit in which this church interprets the Word of God:

We believe in God the Father, our creator; in Jesus Christ, God's Son, our redeemer and Lord; and in the Holy Spirit, God's presence in our lives. Believing this, we covenant with God and with one another

- -to follow Jesus Christ as the only head of the church;
- -to grow in our understanding of the will of God;
- -to live according to Christ's teachings;
- -to share with others the news of God's redeeming love;
- -to be accepting, caring, forgiving members in our community of Christian faith."

Rev. Craig Reynolds left as Pastor of Pilgrim Church on March 31, 1992 to return to Makawao Union Church on Maui. This was the church in which he and his wife Carol had first worshipped together as teen-agers more than 25 years before as delegates from their separate churches in Illinois and Kansas! Rev. Reynolds had been an Associate Minister on Maui following graduate school. He served Pilgrim Church for almost thirteen years, longer than any other Pastor in the 160-year history of the Church.

When Rev. Reynolds left there were 361 active members in Pilgrim Church with 156 Stewardship Pledges. Of these 261 had joined the church during his tenure as Pastor with attendance increasing by 60%. The Church Endowment Fund had grown from \$63,000 to \$152,000. His resignation was accepted by Deacon Warren Pettingell "with grace and understanding, grateful and heartfelt thanks...for all that he has done for Pilgrim Church...in making Pilgrim Church a place of sanctity, solace, divine comfort, hope and good cheer. [We accept it] with great love and much reluctance."

A Pulpit Search Committee of ten members was established to find a Pastor who would lead Pilgrim Church into the 21st Century. For the year after the Rev. Reynolds left, the Rev. Dr. Harry R. Flad served as Interim Minister



The Children of Pilgrim Church

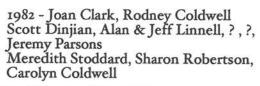
1962 - Everett Stephens' Sunday School Class with Ginny Wilbur



1976 - Women's Fellowship Operetta



1977 - The angels await







The Children of Pilgrim Church

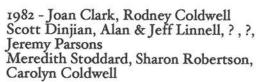
1962 - Everett Stephens' Sunday School Class with Ginny Wilbur



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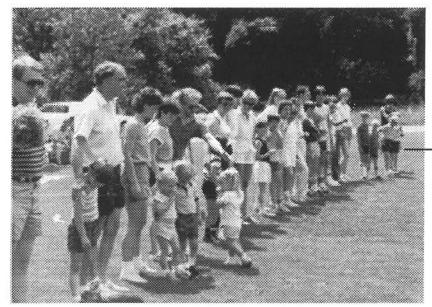
1977 - The angels await



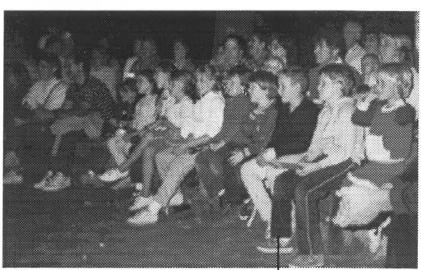




1984 - Junior Bell Choir Pizza Party -Nancy Robertson, Amy Conary, Amy Lytle, Kari Robinson, Julie Lytle, Susan Jenks, Robin Snyder, Mike Sturgeon



1985 - Davco Farm Family Picnic



1986 - Campfire at Camp Belknap Lake Winnipausaukee, New Hampshire



1986 "Angels, Lambs, Ladybugs and Fireflies"



1999 - The 3rd Wiseman Kristen Forrester, Meredith Cormack, Mollie Lengel, Emily Peck Renee & Rachel Mercer, Rebecca Flot, Amanda Locke, Kate Peck, Ryan Landes



2000 - Heifer Project Deborah Rowley, Christina & Ben Etherdige

2001 - Lenten Baskets Elizabeth Carter, Sarah McHenry, Matt Willis, Lane Southard, Matthew Rowley, Danny Kolk



Chapter Twenty-Two: 1992 -2000 &

The 1990's found Southborough at the intersection of 3 major highways, with housing developments filling its once open spaces. The farms and orchards of Southborough had vanished. It was a town with an expanding population, a burgeoning school population, and technological business firms outlining the residential areas. Southborough had become an affluent suburb of "Metrowest" Boston. Homes were often large and usually out of the price range of those older and younger people who wanted to continue living in the town in which they had grown up.

On June 6, 1993 Pilgrim Church voted to call the Rev. Dr. David L. Fountain as its new settled Pastor. The Rev. Fountain came to us from the First Congregational Church of Longmont, Colorado where he had been Lead Minister. He was a graduate of Northern Arizona University, Colorado College and had received his Doctorate from Harvard University. He had served as Associate Minister of the Memorial Church at Harvard, Director of Adult Education at Old South Church, Boston and Associate Minister at the First Congregational Church, Greenwich, Connecticut.



The Rev. Fountain was highly energetic, intelligent, well read and a challenging thinker. While he sought to challenge the members of the congregation to stretch their minds and examine their faith journey, at the same time he was searching for his own spiritual identity. He had a strong interest in adult education and felt his ministry should challenge us to understand our faith. At one time, leading the congregation in examining their faith journey, Rev. Fountain met with a small group of members who had been raised in the Roman Catholic tradition to discuss their journey in the Congregational Church. The meeting progressed for several hours even as a major snow storm raged outside the church!

Shortly after Rev. Fountain came to Southborough a controversy arose concerning his ministry and its strategic direction. As Rev. Fountain had some difficulty in dealing with common understanding and interpersonal skills a Parish Relations Committee consisting of three members was formed in December of 1993 to complement the activities of the Diaconate as well as other standing committees of the church. The goal of the Committee

was to provide a safe and confidential forum for communication and reflection by both the members of the church and the Pastor. In the late spring of 1997 "recognizing the depth of our difficulties, we reached out to the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ for help and guidance." We were looking for "an environment that [was] an example of community building, communication, collaboration and consensus building." On the recommendation of the Rev. Dr. Robert Johnson a Negotiation/Mediation Team met and deliberated with the Rev. Fountain. As a result of the negotiations, Rev. Fountain left the ministry of Pilgrim Church in June of 1998.

"Sometimes passing successfully through difficulties makes us all the stronger." The lay leadership became stronger and as a Congregational Church Pilgrim Church learned to deal with disagreement and face its problems in the midst of a dichotomy of attitudes, theologies

and perceived needs among its members. The devotion of the lay leadership under Dana Crawford and then Dan Leist was key to the survival of Pilgrim Church.

Jonathan Goodell had been hired as Director of Christian Education in October 1992. Mr. Goodell had a Masters of Divinity degree from Andover Newton Theological School and had served ten years as a college chaplain at Tufts and MIT. Mr. Goodell supervised Christian Education and Pilgrim Church later took him on an "In-Care" status. He then also preached, assisted with



the sacraments, aided in visitations, assisted in general administrative work and worked with the Central Association. He remained with us through June of 1995 when he was ordained

in Pilgrim Church. He then accepted a position at the Congregational Church of Lynnfield, Massachusetts.

Following Jonathan as student minister was Chris Dodge, a

September 1994 to June of 1995 who coordinated the Youth program. At that time Karen Nell Smith came on board. Karen Nell had been here previously as a

representative from the MACUCC. She stayed as an Assistant Minister and Youth Director until September 1997 when she left to accept an In-Care position at another church. David



Jadlocki, a second year Ministry Student at Boston University followed Karen Nell as Youth Minister. Chris George followed him in 2001.



It became clear that some formal board had to be created in order to deal with the continuing commitment of Pilgrim Church to the training of Youth and Assistant Ministers. In 1994 the Church Council voted to establish the Teaching Parish Committee and became affiliated with the Field Education Program of the Andover Newton Theological School. This committee of church members was to facilitate and oversee the pastoral training of each student "in the field."

As an extension of this concept Cheryl Mercer enrolled in the lengthy Andover Newton Theological School Field Education Program and became certified to serve as the field supervisor for student ministers.

The period of the 1990's saw increasing numbers of children entering our Church school as increasing numbers of professional families settled in Southborough to raise their children in the suburbs. Space for Sunday school classes became tight and by the end of the 1990's creative programming became a necessity to accommodate the seventy-five to one hundred children attending on a regular basis. One of these creative programs was run by Corinne Dupuis and John Dicken and was called the Food and Faith Series. During each session they taught children about the relationship of healthy food, faith and worship. "Pilgrim Church Cooks" aprons were in the corridors each Sunday along with the delicious aromas of their projects!

The whole Sunday school still became involved in the yearly production of the Christmas Pageant each Christmas Eve at 7:00 in the sanctuary. For many years the angels and shepherds were cared for and coaxed up the stairs by Sue Ellen and Paul Renfrew. The children helped the Outreach Committee with many mission projects including the collections for UNICEF, and the assembly of Lenten Baskets with needed items for those living in shelters and under the care of emergency services. With a new Church school curriculum using rotating workshops, a computer lab was introduced to Church school.

Discussions and education began with the Diaconate and the membership on the question of Communion and Children. Our Student Ministers as well as many devoted volunteers led the children of the 1990's. Among those without whom the Church school might not have succeeded as well were Myra Claflin, Dan Leist, and Kathi Lengel with their loyal teachers. Devotion and creativity were the by-words for Pilgrim Church Sunday school in the 1990's. Sadly, 1999 saw the retirement of Bea Johnson from the Cradle Room. After trying to find other volunteers, Pilgrim Church hired a paid child care provider for the Cradle Room.

The Youth Group was ably directed over the years when there was no student minister by a number of volunteers: Buddy Thorpe, Laura Langord, the Wagners, the

Schmitts, and Cheryl Mercer. Among the many programs were retreats to the Warner Farm in the Berkshires, camping, Super Bowl Sub Sandwich fundraisers, Haunted Houses for the children of the town, and the Tot Team. The Tot Team youth offered child care services one Saturday a month and for meetings and functions. One-third of the money that they earned was used to purchase new toys for the Church School rooms for younger children.

The music programs of Pilgrim Church continued to thrive and open the church up to the larger community. Children's choirs grew under the direction of many talented, faithful volunteers through the 1990's. At one time 40 children sang in the several choirs under the leadership of such people as Cindy Bechtel, Michele Landes, Barbara Porter, Lynda Thomas, Sarah Phaneuf, Sarah Cheeseman, Grae Rollins, Kelli Wagner, and Betsy Southard as well as many helpful mothers. March of 1994 saw the reestablishment of the Handbell Choir with ten members and the hiring of Samuel Martinborough as Director. Sam, a director with wit, charm, enthusiasm and amazing musical talent was a teacher of music at South Lancaster Academy. He served as Director of our Handbells until he left in 2000 to pursue a career in the theater.



Kathy Kutz resigned as our organist in June of 1993. George Davey became our permanent organist in December 1993. George had been Choirmaster at Christ Episcopal Church, Rochdale, Massachusetts as well as an organ instructor at Atlantic Union College. He held a Bachelors Degree in Music from Atlantic Union as well as a Masters of Sacred Music from Boston University. He had extensive choral experience and had toured internationally as an accompanist. He had a deep spiritual commitment to the ministry of Music. He was an extraordinarily gifted individual with energy, enthusiasm and ingenuity. Under his direction the sanctuary vibrated yearly with the music of Handel's

"Messiah" directed by Mr. Davey or by Maestro Toshimasa Francis Wada, Conductor of the Thayer Symphony Orchestra. We heard Schubert's "Mass in G," Mozart's "Requiem," and John Rutter's "Gloria" with the Boston Temple Choir accompanied by the Huntington Brass Ensemble from the New England Conservatory. We heard the Atlantic Union College Black Christian Union Gospel Choir under the direction of Conrad Roach, the Flatbush Seventh Day Adventist Church Choir joining us in our "Messiah" Concert, and the Praise and Worship Choir from Norfolk, Massachusetts. We heard a trumpet recital by Richard Given as well as musical contributions by many member and guest vocal and instrumental

soloists during our worship hour. The musical horizons of the choir were expanded to new techniques.

In 1995 "The New Century Hymnal," published by the United Church of Christ, came to Pilgrim Church as a gift from a member of the church. "The New Century Hymnal" included a diversity of musical styles and cultures as well as inclusive language. It represented a significant change in the church hymnal. The inclusive language was controversial as it related to changes in the text of seasonal and familiar hymns. After meetings of introduction and much discussion it was decided to use "The New Century Hymnal" in conjunction with the older "Pilgrim Hymnal" for worship services. Controversy continued on the issues of the theology of the language of the hymns and the manner in which the hymnal had first been presented to the congregation. The two hymnals continued to be used in tandem in varying combinations. One of the basic goals being to use hymns that were not rephrasing of older hymns.

During the 1990's many new programs found life at Pilgrim Church as Christian Outreach continued to be a major priority with the family of Pilgrim Church. In years when the budget was difficult to fund, the Outreach Committee became creative in ways in which all in the church could contribute to Outreach programs both financially and physically. In April of 1993 the Pilgrim Church family reached out to the people of Leisure City, Florida. In the wake of the devastating Hurricane Andrew, a group of youth and adults from Pilgrim Church joined with Habitat for Humanity to help rebuild homes in Florida. The crew included Joan and Steve Pflug, Liz Renfrew, Mindy Parsons, Millie and Ed Blood, Jan Short, Barbara Cowles, Chet Jacobson and Greg Stoddard. Their expenses were helped along by the sale of paper "bricks" by the Outreach Committee.

Our Father's Table, a meal for the homeless of the area, at Immaculate Conception Church and later First Baptist Church in Marlborough continued to receive our culinary assistance and serving skills each month. Members aided at the Worcester County Food Bank sorting donated food items. The popular Adopt-A-Child Christmas Program and September back-to-school drives for children through the Department of Social Services continued. The Southborough Food Pantry was still housed in Pilgrim Church.

A new project emerged with the Heifer Project. Coordinating with Church school, money was earned, saved and donated to buy farm animals for people around the globe who needed them and would pass along any offspring to others in need. Animals were shown during Children's Sermons and visited with in Fellowship Hall. The Heifer Project was a program that could be enjoyed by all ages!



Another new Outreach project was the Steeple Coffeehouse. July of 1996 brought Kelli and Joe Wagner forward with the concept for a coffeehouse produced in Fellowship Hall one Saturday night each month as a venue for New England and touring folk music artists. (Joe's sister Jennie Avila was a regular performer.) Gary Kavanaugh was coordinator along with Jeff Watkins providing all graphics arts materials and a lot of manual labor. All after expenses proceeds from the Coffeehouse performances went to Outreach projects. The Royal Family Kids Camp, Daybreak House, Sylvia's Haven, Abbey's House, Worcester County Food Bank, the Brain Tumor Society (in memory of late Southborough Town Administrator John Lundblad), Our Father's Table in Marlborough, the Walk for Hunger, and Camp Sunshine as well as many other regional and local charities were among the projects to receive funds.

A major accomplishment of the 1990's was the revision of the Church By-Laws. The Church Council appointed an ad-hoc committee to review the existing By-laws and to address the current governance needs of Pilgrim Church. The six-member committee held their first meeting in February 1994. Evans Cheeseman, Marjorie Coldwell, Richard Jennings, Steven Pflug, Roger Rosenquist and Doug Sahs met with Rev. Fountain twice a month to work on the appointed task. The main principles which they felt should be addressed were: "providing for lay empowerment, forming an integrated governing platform, defining simple and direct directives, enabling the growth of ministry and outreach, offering clarity of language, forming an integrated and cohesive document, and focusing on the future." The committee researched the existing By-Laws of 18 other churches that had the same demographics as Pilgrim Church. They met with all the boards and committees of the church as well as held open meetings for input from the members of the congregation. They presented the draft of the Revised By-laws to the Church on November 19, 1995 and they were voted acceptance by a Special Church Meeting on January 14, 1996. 63

An Annual Operating Plan to be formed by the Church Council at the beginning of each year setting out the goals of Pilgrim Church for the year to come now became a part of the By-Laws. The Board of Trustees was divided into three committees with more focus on the tasks at hand. These three new committees were the Buildings and Grounds Committee, the Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee. A Church Historian was added to the list of Church Officers. The Church Council looked forward "to keep expanding our ministries, to continue reaching out beyond our walls and touching those in need of our assistance to spread God's Good News." 64

A Service of Remembrance was added to the church year during the Christmas season in 1993. The Service was for those who had lost loved ones. The service honored these loved ones through the sharing of scripture, the lighting of candles, and the sharing of heartfelt memories and prayer.

Social programs had difficulties maintaining an interested, active membership during the 1990's. Men's Club had become very active helping with the Church Fair, as well as providing an Annual Roast Beef Dinner which funded High School Scholarships for the youth of Pilgrim Church. Women's Fellowship lost its leadership core. Karen Nell Smith tried to help the women of the church reactivate it while she was here. Some smaller Church Fairs were held as well as some luncheons. Despite the heroic efforts of people such as Cheryl Mercer, Beth El-Massih and Storm McGuire Women's Fellowship never really revived. The programs that had raised so many funds and provided so many needed items for Pilgrim Church were no longer available. The new Church Fellowship Committee provided a yearly Progressive Supper in November, a Week-end Retreat for families in September, a Cinco de Mayo Progressive Supper in May in conjunction with the Steeple Coffeehouse, and an Annual Golf Tournament started in May 1999 as the result of a suggestion by Karl Craig.

During the weekend of April 24-25, 1999 the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ celebrated its 200th Anniversary with celebrations in Worcester, Massachusetts attended by representatives of all of the Churches in the state. A bus full of members from Pilgrim Church was there.

During the 1990's Pilgrim Church faced financial difficulties. The reserve funds were depleted in order to cover expenses. The steeple and the roof of the sanctuary needed to have major repairs. The oil burner in the Church building ceased to function. Pledge units decreased. The Church budgets were first cut and then level funded. The Investment Committee made the decision to move the Endowment Funds from Certificates of Deposits to higher interest producing stock and bond funds.

"Periods characterized by a transition of pastoral leadership are very special ones." Through the years there have been many Interim Ministers who meant much to the family of Pilgrim Church. An Interim Pastor leaves fond memories in the hearts of members with whom he had contact. There have been many over the years at Pilgrim Church, some who have had to deal with special situations in the life of the church when they arrive at our door. There was the Rev. Ernest "Bud" Croy and his "Cottage Churches." There was the Rev. Marvin Derby, the gentle educator and minister. There was the Rev. Allen Keedy and his yearly winter sojourns in Antiqua. There was the Rev. Keith Mann and his open, caring manner. There

was the Rev. Dr. Harry Flad with his genuine concern for the life of Pilgrim Church and his instigation of our Habitat for Humanity trek. The church has generally been at its strongest during interim periods when the members have to step forth and take charge.

The Rev. Dr. A. Rand Peabody was chosen to be our Interim Pastor when The Rev. Dr. David Fountain left. Rev. Peabody had been very successful in dealing with conflicted congregations in other churches. He proceeded with grace and calm to minister to the Family of Pilgrim Church. Healing did take place. Membership again increased and people came together in harmony again. Commitment reasserted itself and pledges increased, as did the funding of the annual budget. The church parlor was renovated under the direction of Charlie Baumann and a Capital Fund Campaign, "Aspire, Rise and Sing" was undertaken at a time not generally looked upon as favorable for a positive return by the United Church of Christ. Pilgrim Church undertook the Capital Fund Campaign to raise \$685,000 and an extra mile donation of \$200,000 to support a full list of Capital Projects.

"[T]he goals of our capital campaign represent[ed] both the traditions and the possibilities of our church and ministries. We look[ed]to:

- * make major structural repairs to our historic Steeple
- undertake construction to make our building accessible to all members of our community
- replace our organ
- install room dividers in Fellowship Hall to increase our classroom space
- complete many other repairs and restorations to our church building
- * reach out to our wider community with a donation to the Gift and Promise capital campaign of the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC
- * if we can meet the Second Story Challenge, we will also raise the roof and build new classroom and meeting space over the classroom wing of our building."

Pilgrim Church surprised everyone by committing to give \$842,000.00.

As of December 31, 2000 Pilgrim Church had 314 active members with an operating budget of \$251,000.00.

Wollow

"Aspire, Rise and Sing"

Robert Louis Rynning Rand Peabody ENERGIZER, Irr. George Davey, 2000

Shining church, burning bright,
Holy beacon in the night:
Aspire, Thy Pilgrims, seek our Father's light
To chart our course and sharpen our sight.

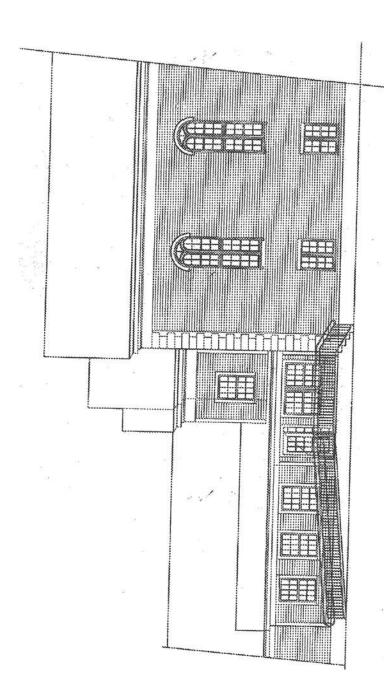
Steeple spire, standing tall,
Sacred place for one and all:
Arise, Thy Pilgrims, heed our dear Christ's call,
Unlatch our doors and welcome in all.

Holy One, love instill,
Here upon our little hill:
Sing forth, we Pilgrims, to the Spirit thrill!
Ring truth aloud, our fellowship fill.

Refrain:

Let us aspire, rise, and sing.
Aspire to the call of God.
Rise up, O Pilgrims of the Way,
Sing out your songs of faith today,
In Christ we love and grow and pray.





WEST ELEVATION

Chapter Twenty-three: Into the 21st Century &

Onathan Wortmann as a candidate for Pastor of Pilgrim Church. The Rev. Mr. Wortmann was Associate Pastor of the Southport Congregational Church, Southport, Connecticut. He was a graduate of Carleton College, Minnesota, and had a Masters of Divinity Degree from Harvard Divinity School. He had been a Chaplain at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston as well as Youth Director of the First Church in Somerville, Massachusetts. He had even filled in for three Sundays during the summer of 1993 at Pilgrim Church!

The search Committee "found Jon to be bright, articulate, and most of all committed to God's work.... with an energy and enthusiasm for God's work that was immediately apparent. Jon burn[ed] with the desire to lead a church as we recognize[d] our need to employ a settled pastor." He assumed his duties at Pilgrim Church on April 3, 2001. He became the forty-first Pastor of Pilgrim Church of Christ in Southborough.

Almost immediately he found that the Pilgrim Church sanctuary is open to all. When entering the sanctuary on one of his first Saturdays to "practice" for the next day what should he find but a gray cat that had obviously been there for some time perched on the organ bench. In trying to



remove the cat from the sanctuary Rev. Wortmann caused it to take refuge inside the electronic organ. By the time the cat was finally removed with the aid of a member of the choir and a bowl of spilt milk there were several stray tufts of gray fur adhering to the inner workings of the computerized organ.

Rev. Wortmann came to a Church of 314 members, a Sunday school of almost 100 Children, and a community of 9,000 and all growing!

As we worship in our historic colonial building we appreciate the legacy left by those who have gone before us. Many Pastors have served Pilgrim Church. Since Nathan Stone came to the First Church of Southborough, each pastor has brought with him his individual "strengths and weaknesses, theological stance, and perception of Christian witness in Pilgrim Church...giving the church uniqueness at that point in time." "We know that these men

Pilgrim Church through wars and disasters of nature, through periods of prosperity and national depression, they have helped to alleviate personal grief, and enriched the lives of their congregations. Because of them countless numbers of men and women have been inspired to seek the joys of serving their God and their Church, as well as their fellowmen." Underlying this has been the covenant nature of the people of Pilgrim Church which continues from one pastor to the next, from one generation to the next.

"The History of Pilgrim Church is a history of families." Family names such as::

Bogardus / Flot Newton / Spurr
Carpenter / Herrick Onthank / Long

Coldwell Short

Craig / Dumont / McGuire Taylor / Foote
Johnson Upjohn / Leist

Kallander / Hill Watkins

Lincoln / Blood / Mauch

These are multigenerational Pilgrim Church families. Three or more generations of these families have worshipped and worked in Pilgrim Church. Seated in our pews on a given Sunday can be found four generations of a family sitting next to someone who has just moved to Southborough and is searching for their own church family and home.

"There is no way of estimating the many hours of thought and labor that have been contributed by the members and friends of the Church, and without which we could not hope to survive. The strength of Pilgrim Church is in a direct ratio to the amount of willing service by lay people in the life of the Church." Many members of Pilgrim Church have already been mentioned. There have been so many more. A listing of almost the entire membership of Pilgrim Church would be needed at this point in our history. There are those names appear frequently on Church Boards and Committees and as Officers. There are those who perform quiet acts of kindness every day without any formal recognition. They are all part of the Family and the History of Pilgrim Church, Southborough, Massachusetts.

This rich heritage serves as the foundation upon which we will build in the future. This is not a place meant for hiding, but for journeying forward 'in faith.' The object of faith is neither our Church building nor ourselves, but the living God. It is under the promise of God's providence that we shall go forward.

We will move forward in faith into the twenty-first century.



Wollow

Index

SHOWNSHO

	Resson Trudi
I	Bessom, Trudi
100% Chance of Rain112	Bigelow 104
100th Anniversary59, 60, 83, 212	Ed51
125th Anniversary .73, 75, 78, 83, 84, 202, 212, 213	Francis73
150th Anniversary115	Harvey114
	Mabel220
\boldsymbol{A}	Nancy
Abolition 15	Biscardi, Rev. Pasquale222
Adopt-A-Child112, 127	Blood
Advent Candle	Donald77
Advent Wreath104	Ed65, 127
Allen, Kay7	Millie107. 127
Allen Electronic Organ106	Blount, William77
American Indian Cottage Industry101	Board of Benevolence171
American Legion56	Board of Christian Education170, 179
American Legion56 Anderson, Joan114, 127	Board of Christian Stewardship 180
Andover Newton69, 74, 75, 76, 78, 96, 99, 103,	Board of Outreach180
110, 124, 125, 221	Board of Trustees95, 128, 170, 180
Angels, Lambs, Ladybugs and Fireflies112, 121	Bogardus134
Anger R ev. Raymond223	Carol7, 107, 111
Annual Meeting15, 35, 49, 55, 78, 87, 91, 96, 117,	Debra108
145, 151, 155, 163, 167, 176, 186	Melanie108
Annual Operating Plan128	Pat
Aspire, Rise and Sing131	Rebecca
Atlantic Union College Black Christian Union	Tony240
Gospel Choir126	Bogart, Esther
В	Boise, Steve
Ţ.,	Booth, Muriel
Bacon	Boston and Worcester Railroad
Eliza H197	Boston and Worcester Turnpike59, 210
James Lowell, Doctor63	Boston by NightIII
Mrs. Eliza63	Boy Scout Troop 1
Bailey	Charlotte
Gordon L	Dexter
Harry	Eva
Bakanas, Rev. John222 Bake-and-Freeze13	Mrs. Walter (Sarah Cordelia Fletcher) 65
Baldwin, Abraham C142	Naomi
	Walter B. Sr60, 98
Ball, Dolly28 Banfill, Herbert61, 73	Walter Jr
Banks, Ginny	Brown, Bob79
Baptist Church	Buck
Beach	Dr. Emery75
Harlan84	Mrs. Charles
Mrs. Harlan (Ruth Young)59	Robert36
Beals	Buildings and Grounds Committee128, 191
Elaine91, 215	Burgess, George73
Nancy108	Burnett
Philip	Estates 56
Bechtel, Cindy126	Family Chapel221
Beers, Mr57	Joseph
Benjamin, Asher9	Burton, Ellen & Buddy240
The Country Builder's Assistant8	By-laws
The Country Builder's Assistant10	186112, 20, 145, 155, 207
Bennett, Wendell F73	1894 151, 155
	1901160

1948	Claflin,
1959165	Frederick Jr 73
1967174	Frederick Sr80
1996128	Myra 110, 125
Comparison of 1861 and 1894155	Steve104, 105
1-1-20	Clark
C	Joan 107, 119
Camp Belknap115, 120	Wendy108
Camp Takodah115	Clifford, Captain198
Cande, Jim240	Cocu House96
Capone, Gloria101	Coldwell
Carlin	Carolyn119
Jason108	Marjorie128
Lynn113	Rebecca
Carpenter	Rodney119
	Stephen
Marjorie	Collins
	Ann Maria22
Carter, Elizabeth	Edward F52, 73
Cassidy, Rev. William	Henry F
Cedrone, Alex	
Central Association99	Hiram64 Mrs. Dennis198
Chamberlain Enhance and Lydia	Polly12, 15, 84, 141, 143, 150
Ephraim and Lydia198	William - 29
John11, 28, 198	William
Lucy12, 141, 143, 150	
Sophia12, 141, 143, 150	Communion Case
Willard12, 141, 143, 150, 198	Community House
Chaney, Rev. John222	Confession of Faith
Chapel of the Cross223	1861146
Chapman, Rebecca108	1894
Cheeseman	Constitution
Evans	1861144
Sarah107, 126	1894
Cheney, Rev222	Cookman
Chernewski, Dan	James
Chicken Barbecue98:	Marion7
Children's Sermon101	Cookson
Childs, Edwin O	Dale98
Chinese Gospel Church223	Everett
Choate	Cool in the Furnace
Charles F. Jr56	Cooper200
Charles Sr56	Mrs. S. J
Choate House56	Cordaville
Christ Hath A Garden116	Cormack, Meredith
Christian Education Committee76, 163, 191	Cotton, Rev. Ward42
Christian World Mission81	Couples' Club
Church Administrator113	Covenant
Church Building Improvement Fund 106	186112, 148
Church Clerk7, 161, 168, 178, 189	1959165
Church Committee70, 160, 161	1967175
Church Council	1985117
Church Fair 112, 117, 129	1996184
Church Historian128	Cow Commons9
Church Land	Cowles, Barbara7, 103, 114, 127, 217
Church Officers161, 168, 189	Craig134
Church School167, 177	John
Cinco de Mayo129	Karl129
Civil War 15, 19, 43, 200	Mrs. John84

Crawford	$m{E}$
Dana124	Eagan, Father222
Linda86	Eastman, Rev. S. E. 28
	Elkins, Harold D. Jr
Creed	Fl. Massib Both (Mosarra)
1894152	El-Massih, Beth (Meserve)
Cross, Mimi	Emery, Moses
Crothers, Sarah108	Endowment Fund102, 113, 118, 180, 192
Crouch	Esty, Alexander
Augusta200	Etherdige
Mrs. Alden198	Ben121
William26, 198	Christina121
Cub Scout Pack 196	Evangelical and Reformed Church76
Cutts, Maria7, 86	Executive Council76, 163
D	\boldsymbol{F}
	Fairbanks, Joseph198
Danpei Youth Choir111	Fantenoceto, Father Pat 104
Davco Farm79	Fay56
Davco Farm Family Picnic	Francis B
Davenport, Roger82	Hannah F 12, 141, 143, 150
Davey	Harriet 12, 141, 143, 150
George107, 126	John A. J
Rev. W. K28	Jonas
Davis	Mary Ann R 12, 141, 143, 150
Bill240	PeterII, 16, 26, 29, 144, 149, 150, 198, 200,
Dean90	202, 208
Penny79	Samuel
Ray and Eleanor79	Fay School
Day	Fayville
Sue107	Fayville Baptist Church14, 28, 51, 65, 75, 205,
Deacons170, 179, 191	209, 220
Deerfoot Farms	
Deering, Harold E73	Fayville Dam
Delegates172, 194	Fayville Town Hall
Derby, Janet107	Fellowship Committee
Dermon, Mrs. William (Vesta) (Louise) 66	Ferri, Jacqueline 108
Dicken, John	Finance Committee
Dickson	Financial Countries Committee
Mrs. Robert84 Robert Jr84	Financial Secretary169, 179, 190
Robert Jr84	Finneran, Rev. William T. 222
Dinjian, Scott119	First Baptist Society of Southborough220
Director of Christian Education110, 113, 124,	First Community Church
178, 217	Federated Church, Southville Community
Director of Music	Church, Second Congregational Church
Director of Religious Education/Secretary 103	First Parish Church
Donath, Bruce	FISH
Douglas, Ben108	Fisher
Driscoll, Rev. Daniel223	Francis144, 150, 198
Dumont	Stephanie
Barbara	Fitzgerald's General Store222
Raymond M 77, 95	Flagg
Robert	Dana198
Duncan	Lalla
Christina52	Osgood R55
Mrs. William200	Theo G
Dunnett. Steve	Fletcher
Dupuis, Corinne125	Fletcher
Ø1	Bob
	200107

Rebecca121	Harris, Rev. Edward G	222
Flynn, Rev. James B223	Harris, James T., Jr	55
Foder, S108	Haskell, Paula	
Food and Faith Series125	Hastings	•
Food Pantry113, 114	Norma (Smith)7, 59, 65, 6	6, 80, 81, 84,
Foote	87, 213	, , , ,
Hazel	Robert	. 77. 80. 81. 84
11a2ci/, 04	Hayden, Frank	108
Formester	Headberg, Carl E	72
Forrester Charlie	Heifer Project	/3
Gwen113	Heritage Day	
Kristen121	Herrick	
Framingham Normal School31	Debbie	
Franks, Joan103, 113	Hickey, Janice	
Frazee	Higgiston, Jane	
Organ Company60	Hill	
Organ Contract - 195788	Barbara	69, 210
Pipe Organ	John 61, 64, 69, 77, 79, 80	, 84, 104, 210
	Katie	108
\boldsymbol{G}	Mrs. John (Helen)	69
Gamble, Ann	Mrs. John (Helen)	
Generation Bridge	Hill Memorial Table	64, 70
George, Chris124	Hillside School	
Gibbs, Alfred	Historian	
	History of Pilgrim Church	
Gibson, Mrs. Klebes200	1861	T 42
Giffin, James E55		10
Gilson, Flora81	1894	
Given, Richard126.	1931	
Gloria126	1956	
Goll, Rev. H. Eugene222	1981	
Good Templar's14	History of the County of Worcest	erSee
Goodell, Jonathan124	Peter Whitney	
Goodnow, Wally80	Home for Little Wanderers	81, 110
Goodwin Brown, Alice 103, 110, 217	Hooper	
Gould49	Luther	
Earl A55	Madeline	86
Ellwood K	Hosmer	49, 70
Marion200, 201	Aaron	
Gray	Arthur 49, 66, 73, 84	
Doris	Clarence	
Mrs. Chester (Mary)65	Grammie	
Robert C	Harriet	
Gridley, Oliver	Hazel	
	Irving	
Guy, Rev. Norman221	Meredith	49, 55, 209
H	MrsAaron W	04
Habitat for Humanity127, 130	Nellie	49, 65, 209
Hahn, John221	Sylvester	49, 55, 66
Hamel, Eleanor (Onthank)7	Howard	,
Handbell Choir107	Herbert B	
Handbells101, 126	Nellie	63, 73, 200
Hanson, Jeff108	Howe, Eugene S.	77, 80
Hardy, Leonard A52	Howes, Seth	197
Harrington	Hubley, Rev. Paul	223
Bill	Hudson, David	112
Bishop Timothy223	Hunt, Susan	103
Moody220	Hurricane of 1938	69
Harrington Fetate 76	Hutt	
Harrington Estate56	~~***	47, /3

Albert 55	Kidder73
Walter A52, 55	Estate56
Hyde, Mrs. Solomon198, 200	King
I	Mrs. H. P53
	Rev.Martin Luther Jr.,
Ingalls	Kissida
Faith217	Denaire108
Mrs. Fred (Susie)65	John98
Investment Board180	Knorr, Dick
Investment Committee 192	Kolk, Danny
<i>J</i> .	Kuchner108
•	Kupples Klub69
Jackson, R 35	Kutz, Kathy112, 126
Jacobson, Chet127	$oldsymbol{L}$
Jadlocki, David124	
Janacek, Ann112	Ladies Missionary Society
Jenks, Susan120	Domestic15, 208
Jennings, Richard128	Home25, 55, 63, 65, 66, 75, 80, 81, 83, 197,
Jennison, Harold G55	204, 208, 212
Johnson70, 71, 134	Lameyer, Rev. Elizabeth222
Addison Fay71	Lamphry, Mary Sawin201
Bea64, 92, 110, 125	Lamprey73
Daniel198	Landes
Dorothy	Aaron240
Elisha71	Bill98
Gordon64, 71	Michele112, 126
Henry F12, 21, 71, 141, 143, 150	Ryan121
Isaac71	Lange
James Brigham71	Betty (Johnson)7, 59, 64, 65, 71, 84
Jonathan71	Chester N
Josiah · II 18	Robert84
Josiah	Langord
Mrs. Elisha22	Allen99, 107, 112, 115, 217
Mrs. Iamos (Lovio)	Indy 99, 107, 112, 113, 217
Mrs. James (Lexie)	Judy
Nathan L71, 198	Larson, Martha
Norman	Laison, Wattha
Raipin	Lauer, Laura 108
Rev. Dr. Robert124	Lay Life and Work Committee
Sereno	Lebewohl, Robert and Alice
Susan12, 141	LeBosquet, Rev. John28, 221
Susannah143, 150	Lee
Webster	Bob108
William	Laura108
William and Elizabeth71	Leist134
K .	Dan124, 125
· ·	Emily107
Kallander 134	Kate107
Kastner	Leland Estate56
Christa111, 112	Lengel
Christopher108	Kathi
Michael112	Molly107, 121
Kavanaugh, Gary 128	Leslie, Ruth
Keegan, Rev. James,112	Light, Ambrose198
Kehew, Peter83	Lincoln 49, 134
Kern	Elizabeth36
Brent107	Mabel E60, 65
Brittany 108	Raymond56
Kibler, Keith117	Lindsay Farm56
(

T:	D
Linnell	Renee
Alan119	Merrill
Jeff108, 119	Howard77, 84, 98
William114	Mrs. Howard84
Lister, Rev. Craig222	Messiah 100, 106, 111, 126
Locke, Amanda121	Messier, Roland91
Lonergan, Rev. Thomas222	Metcalf, Mrs. Frank
Long134	Middlesex South Conference of
Lower Meeting House13, 16, 18, 36, 203, 206,	Congregational Churches13
207	Middlesex-Mendon Association81, 82, 92, 99,
Ludington, Sandy108	172
Lutton	1/2
Chris	Ministers
Mrs. Arthur (Betty)108	Adams, Daniel E43, 150, 199, 219
Lytle	Angier, Luther28
Amy	Ballard, J219
Julie120	Baltzer, Melbourne O 74, 219
M	Bates, Elisha Dickinson42, 144, 150, 197,
M	219
Mann, Roger112	Baumgardner, Homer S55, 199, 219
Marlborough Savings Bank79, 210	Bigelow, Dr. Andrew J25, 26, 42, 150, 198,
Martinborough, Samuel	203, 208, 219
Mass in G	Black, F. H199
Massachusetts Home Missionary Society 13	Breed, William J 19, 42, 144, 150, 197, 219
	Compfield Nother
Massachusetts Missionary Society17, 206	Campfield, Nathan 42, 219
Matthews, John71	Colby, John
Mauch134	Cross, David T7, 78, 83, 84, 85, 89, 117, 155,
Dorothy	205, 212, 214, 219
Mc Ivor, Bill98	Cummings, Jacob 41, 144, 150, 196, 219
McClelland, Jacquie86	Eck, Marshall 69, 83, 84, 210, 212, 219
McCobb	Elwood, David M 41, 144, 150, 197, 219
Fred	Fisher, Richard A101, 217, 219
Scott98	Follett, Walter13, 29, 41, 144, 150, 196,
McGuire	203, 219
Storm (Dumont)129	Fountain, Dr. David L 123, 128, 130, 219
McHenry, Sarah121	French, H. H., D. D59
McIvor	Gorton, Dempster D45, 47, 199, 219
Johanna112	Holmes, H. M25, 43, 150, 198, 219
McMaster 49	Hunt, Dr. Thomas A102, 103, 106, 117, 217,
Clinton200	219
D. W. C150	Leisher, Quentin75, 219
Family198.	Lewis, Edward W. W 74, 210, 219
Harry56, 6i, 208	Lockett, John J 55, 56, 199, 210, 219
Henry A29, 47, 150	Love, Archibald L 43, 150, 198, 219, 220
Mary E52	Lutton, Arthur T 7, 95, 97, 216, 219
Mr. & Mrs. Austin200	Mevis, Martin F43, 45, 47, 150, 199, 209,
Ruth36	219
	Oxnard, Dr. Henry E59, 60, 61, 63, 69,
McQuarrie36	
Meeting House	83, 84, 200, 210, 212, 219
Members-At-Large188	Parker, Jereboam11, 12, 28, 141, 150, 196
Membership146, 151, 160, 166, 175, 184	Peardon, James H55, 199, 219
Associate176, 185	Rawson, Alanson 41, 144, 150, 196, 219
Memorial Garden114	Reynolds, Craig A., 109, 117, 118, 218, 219, 240
Men's Club60, 70, 75, 78, 81, 83, 129, 204,	Reynolds, Ralph45, 75, 77, 78, 210, 219
210, 212	Rockwood, Arden M 47, 48, 199, 219
Mercer	Rodes, Richard R 95, 117, 215, 219
Cheryl	Sanderson, Paul D99, 117, 216, 219
Rachel	Schaeffer, S. Carlyle
121	40, 219

Slade, William F48, 52, 55, 199, 209, 219	Organ9, 35, 60, 66, 87, 91, 99, 106, 130, 197,
Stafford, Dr219	203, 207, 209, 211, 213, 215, 218
Stone, Nathan 133, 150, 196	Organist
Westphalen, Christian38, 73, 219	Booth, Muriel92
Wheeler, J. E	Davey, George126
Williamson, Joseph C 89, 92, 93, 117, 214,	Kutz, Kathy112
219	Lamprey, Mrs73
Wortmann, Jonathan39, 133, 219	Langord, Allen99
Ministers Associate	Metcalf66
Riggles, Elven A	Oxnard, Mrs59
Ministers Interim	Pomfret, Mrs
Croy, Ernest129	Smith, Sydney B90
Derby, Marvin101, 129	Works, Jessie35
Flad, Dr. Harry R118, 130	Organization of Pilgrim Church141
Keedy, Allen129	Our Father's Table114, 127
Mann, Keith 129	Outreach Committee
Peabody, Dr. A. Rand	Owen, Shirley
Wheeler, J. E	Oxnard, Mrs
Moderator163, 169, 179, 189	Oxidatu, 1411559
Moody Dwight I	P
Moody, Dwight L31	Deine Dilenier Claud E. I. D. 1
Moore, Ralph L	Paint Pilgrim Church Fund 80, 81, 210
Mount Holyoke Seminary31	Pakistan Relief Fund100
Murray, Dr. Andrew31	Parish Church
Music Committee 76, 162, 172, 181, 192	Parish Hall
Myers Jennifer108	Parish Nurse
■ (A) A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A A	Parish Relations Committee123, 193
Jim112	Park
Lana112	Dave108
<i>N</i>	Peter7
Sold A .	Steve108
Newton	Parker
Albro31, 52	Gabriel
Cora9, 25, 26, 35, 42, 47, 55, 60, 63, 74, 75,	James S
196, 200, 207, 210	Parmenter, Warren198
Howard C73, 207	Parsonage25, 26, 35, 42, 43, 45, 49, 56, 59, 69,
Lucy26, 200	77, 79, 80, 81, 84, 95, 102, 197, 198, 203, 208,
Martha C See North, Martha (Newton)	209, 210, 216, 217
Mary198	Parsons
Moses 9, 31	Jeremy119
Robert A200	June
Ruth E64	Mindy107, 108, 127
Samuel31, 198, 200	Pastor 161, 168, 178, 188
Sophia200	Paton, Wallace Jr84
Sophia Chamberlain31	Pearce73
Nguyen, Dung (Peter)102	Pearson, Rev. Dr. Roy221
Nichole	Peck
Horace198	Emily121
Polly22	Kate
Nominating Committee171, 181, 192	Pemberton, Rev. Prentiss
North, Lyman Hoyt32	Perley Whipple House
North, Martha (Newton)31	Permanent Funds
	Perry, Samuel
0	Persian Gulf War
O'Donoghue, Rev. Brendan 223	Personnel Committee
One Great Hour of Sharing81	Peter Bent Mill
Onthank	Peter Fay House 196
Mrs. Isabelle (Bell) L	Peters, Henry H
William55	2 0.010, 110.11, 1110
vi man	

Peters High School19, 31, 36, 202, 206, 207,	Richards, Mrs. E.E63
221, 222, 223	Riley, Lalia (Scott)
Pethich, Raymond W73	Rivers, Benjamin203
Pettingell, Warren118	Roach, Conrad126
Pew Cushions	Robbins 73
1 CW Odditions	Mrs. James (Marion Esther)
Pflug	Robert's Rules of Order
	Robertson
Joan	
Steve	Nancy120
Phaneuf, Sarah126	Sharon119
Pierce, Rev. Joshua222	Robinson, Kari
Pike, Sullivan198	Rockwood
Pilgrim Church	Elisha142
Öklahoma City32	Ezekiel198
Pilgrim Church Ćooks 125.	Rollins, Grae126
Pilgrim Church Fairs86	Rosenquist, Roger128
Pilgrim Evangelical Society9, 13, 14, 17, 18,	Rotermund, Mark108
25, 45, 83, 202, 203, 206, 207, 213, 222	Rowley
Pilgrim Hymnal106, 127	Deborah121
Pilgrim Pantry78	Lee Ann
Pilgrim's Progress	Matthew121
Pinkham73, 210	Ruggles
Mrs. William (Esther)59, 65	Russell
Newell W73	Earl
Planning Committee	Mrs. Earl (Charlotte) 65
Diaming Cubcommittee	Rynning, Bob
Planning Subcommittee:	Rymmig, 6007, 107
Pomfret, Mrs87, 90	S
Pond	0.1 D
Arnold E. Sr. & Jr73.	Sahs, Doug128
Richard F73	Salt Lake City Handbell Choir
Poole	Samuels, Sandy101
Roger	Sanctuary
Rosemary81	190646
Porter, Barbara126	Photographs
Powell, W. S150	Sanderson, Darlene 100
Praise and Worship Choir126	Sanford
Prayer Chain114	Barbara86
Progressive Supper129	Shari86
Prudential Committee55, 70, 77, 162	Sanford Mill16
	Sanford, Cordelia16, 206
2	Sawin
Quarton, David82	Charles B73, 200
Quorum	Harry W
Quorum10/, 100	Moses15, 200, 207
R	Schmitt Dich & Innifer
n : 1	Schmitt, Rich & Jennifer 126
Rainbow Girls82	Schnare
Ranney, Mabel F64	Schoener, Christopher
Redican, Rev. John F	Schrader
Renaud, Robert L73	Borden55
Renfrew	Violet64
Liz127	Scott
Paul107, 125	Arthur and Myrtle63
Suellen 125	Sealy, Nancy81
Requiem100, 106, 111, 117, 126	Sears Estate56
Reynolds	Second Congregational Church in Southville
Carol109, 118	45
Jesse 109	Seldon, Jill
Rice, Henry 61, 73	Semi-Annual Meetings 167
20100, 2201117	10/

Semi-Centennial 16, 26, 29, 35, 43, 209, 220 Senior Citizen's Club 96 Service of Remembrance 129 Share our Surplus 81 Shared Appreciation Mortgage 102 Sheppard, J. Stanley 115, 116 Short 134 Jan 107, 127 Sibley Amy (Conary) 107, 120 Salmon 22, 208 Simmons and Willcox 19 Simpson, Rev. Donald 92, 99, 215 Sisson Art 107 Erika 107, 112, 117 Slade Mrs. Ruth 63 Rev. Milton 49 Slavery 15, 146, 207 Smith 49 Carolyn 59 Erwin 60, 66, 70, 75, 77, 81, 84, 85, 90, 93, 200, 214 Karen Nell 124, 129 Mrs. Erwin L 60 Sidney B 90, 92 Susie (Brewer) 43, 66 Snow, Stephanie 108 Snyder 108 Robin <	Standing Com Staples, Frede Steeple Coffe Steeple Fund Stephens, Eve Stevens, F. J. Stewardship C Stidger, Dr. W Stivers Stockwell, Per Stoddard Ellie Greg Meredith Stone, Susan Stony Brook Sturgeon Jan Kevin Mike Superintender T Taylor Taylor Taylor Marjory Marjory Marjory Mrs. Joseph Teaching Paris Tebbetts, Cinc Teen Canteen Temple Mr. & Mrs. Mrs. Charle The New Cent The Third Wi Thomas, Lynd Thompson Daniel Muriel Sue The Third Wi Thompson Daniel Muriel Sue Town Hall 35, 215 Town House Town Meeting Trask, Rev. Ge Treasurer Assistant Triborough Pa Trinitarian Trowbridge-Br
Marjorie	
St. Anne's Church	
St. Bernard's Lodge	Trowbridge-Br
St. Mark's Church 45, 96, 115, 221	Twombly, Rose
St. Mark's School51, 74, 82, 114, 208, 222	i wombiy, icos
St. Wark's School51, 74, 82, 114, 208, 222	
St. Matthew's Church222	

Standing Committee
Staples, Frederick
Steeple Coffeehouse
Steeple Fund Drive78
Stephens, Everett82, 84, 119
Stevens, F. I.
Stewardship Committee
Stidger, Dr. William
Stivers
Stockwell, Pearl221
Stoddard
Ellie 113
Greg
Meredith
Stone, Susan
Stony Brook
Sturgeon
Jan 113
Kevin108
Mike120
Superintendent of Church School . 168, 178, 190
T
T. 1.
Taylor134
David91, 100, 102, 217
Emory198
Marjory 7, 83, 84, 202, 210, 212
Mrs. Joseph (Alice) 64
Teaching Parish Committee
Tebbetts, Cindy
Teen Canteen96
Temple
Mr. & Mrs. Charles198
Mrs. Charles
Mrs. Charles
The New Century Hymnal127
The Third Wiseman
Thomas, Lynda126
Thompson
Daniel198
Muriel86, 107
Sue
Thorpe, Buddy
Tillock, Mrs. John
Torilli Cindy 107
Tot Toom
Town Hall 25 45 46 50 94 00 205 200 250
Tot Team126 Town Hall35, 45, 46, 78, 84, 90, 207, 208, 213,
215
Town House
Town House
Town House14, 18 Town Meeting House14 Trask, Rev. George11, 141, 149, 196, 202, 205
Town House

United Church of Christ90, 95, 99, 100,	James
111, 113, 124, 127, 129, 130, 183, 194, 215	Judy7
United Parishes of Southborough99, 104,	Willis, Matt121
109, 114, 223	Willson, Hubbard
Uniting General Synod - 195787, 213	Wilson
Upjohn134	Debbie107
Sabra107	Herbert 222
V	Wilson's Hall222
· .	Women's Fellowship63, 70, 81, 92, 96, 100,
Vacation Bible School81, 101, 111	111, 112, 117, 129
Vietnam War100, 113, 217	Women's Fellowship Operetta119
Village Society56, 210	Women's Fellowship
170 300	Woodward
W .	Albert70, 76
Wada, Toshimasa Francis126	John59, 73
	Richard G59, 73
Wagner	Worcester Area Council of Churches78, 80,
Joe125, 128	
Kelli126, 128	Worcester County Food Bank127
Melanie108	
Walker, Peter198	Works
Ward49, 73, 200	Charles35
Artemas197	Eliza35
Ellwood W52, 60, 200	Emma35
William9	George35, 150, 200
Warfield, Andrew108	Jessie35
Watkins 134	Rachel201
Avis M73	Rowena 12, 141, 143, 150
Earle Q66, 73	World Council of Churches81, 165, 175
Jeff7, 66, 113, 128	World Day of Prayer96
Mrs. Charles (Esther)36, 66, 73, 86	World Wide Communion Sunday115
Weaver	Worters
Miles102, 107, 113	Bev107
Ruth113	Bob107
Webster, Horace198	Wright, Most Rev. John222
Wells	Wright's General Store51
Wheeler, Rev. A. E	The second of th
Whipple, Perley141, 149, 196, 202	Υ
	Voung
White Dendal	Young 49
White, Donald81	Ada & Alena74
Whitney, Peter205	Agnes64, 86
Whittemore, Marshall198	Harry56, 69, 74, 210
Whittlesey, Rev	Henry59, 73
Wilbur	Young Men's Lyceum14
Gail108	Youth Fellowship47, 48, 81, 83, 90, 92, 111,
Robert7	191, 204, 215
Virginia119	Z
William, Caleb198	
Williams	Zeckhausen, William A91, 215

S FOOTNOTES &

¹ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), pg.43.

² Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E.

Randall Publisher (1990), pg.110.

³ Upjohn, Everard M., Benjamin, Asher. The Country Builder's Assistant. New York: DaCapo Press, 1972, pg. v.

⁴ From an Address given in 1881 by the Rev. A. L. Love at the Semi-Centennial of Pilgrim Church.

Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E.

Randall Publisher (1990), pg. 123.

⁶ From an address given in 1881 by the Rev. A. L. Love, at the Semi-Centennial of Pilgrim Church.

⁷ From the Hundredth Anniversary Program of the Church:

Merriam, John M. Sketches of Framingham (1950), pg. 106 In quoting from Mr. Josiah Temple's History of Framingham that Dr. David Kellogg had been the minister of the First Parish Church in Framingham since 1778. He was then (1830) seventy-eight years old. He had witnessed the division of his flock into First Parish Church and Hollis Church. His assistant, Rev. George Trask was called as a

"Colleague Pastor" of the Hollis Church. Rev. Trask was "a radical reformer, a lecturer on temperance, a delegate in 1834 to the Anti-Slavery Convention, and particularly active as an Anti-Tobacconist."

Quoted from newspaper reports of 1881 Semi-Centennial Program.

⁹ From the Record of the Organization of Pilgrim Church of Christ, a book discovered by Mr. Ellwood W. Ward of Framingham, once the Clerk of Pilgrim Church, and returned to the archives of the church at the time of the 125th Anniversary.

¹⁰ See Appendix ii.

"Confession of Faith and Covenant of the Pilgrim Church, Southborough, Mass., together with A List of Members, &c. Boston: Wright & Potter Printers (1861).

¹² Records of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society.

¹³ Whiting, Rev. Elbridge Cutler, "One Hundred Years of Christian Fellowship 1828-1928," an historical address delivered at the Centennial meeting of the Middlesex South Association of Congregational Churches and Ministers, at Grace Congregational Church, Framingham, on Tuesday, October 16, 1928.

¹⁴ Photo Courtesy of the Southborough Historical Society

15 See Appendix xiv.

16"Peter's Piper", Fall 1951.

17 17 Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), p.134.

Records of Pilgrim Church.

19 Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), p 158.

20 1861 By-laws of Pilgrim Church.

²¹ From unidentified newspaper reports of 1881 Semi-Centennial Program.

²² Southville was an area between the Southborough line and Hopkinton known as Fiddle Neck until 1727. Fiddle Neck had originally been a grant to Thomas Mayhew from the General Court in 1643. Mayhew, a merchant of Medford and Watertown, also received a grant on Martha's Vineyard, where he preached to the Indians for thirtythree years. Fiddle Neck was taken into Southborough at the time of its incorporation in 1727. Thus the area of Southborough extended southerly from the line that had been drawn as the southern border of Marlborough, down to the Sudbury River, and it was in this small strip of land shaped like a fiddle neck that the Boston and Worcester Railroad was laid. It was also in this narrow strip of land that many of the factories of Southville and Cordaville were built, as well as many homes.

²³" Peters High School, Script. March 1938.

²⁴ Love, D.D., Rev. W. D. (father of the pastor) addressing the Semi-Centennial in 1881. This was a belief in a strict interpretation and adherence to the New Testament as a whole and a belief in the evangelization of the whole world. It also included the cure of souls, the increase of piety, and help for the needy. Belief in the divine inspiration of Bible reading resulted in good fruit. Success to them was dependent upon revivals at home and missionary labor abroad. "Men need the preaching of doctrines that crowd them with the necessity of regeneration. The religion of negation never results in revivals or in the building up of religious interests. You members of the Pilgrim Church hold on your way rejoicing drawing nearer to God. Be evangelical in your life as well as in doctrine."

²⁵ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E.

Randall Publisher (1990), Pg. 153.

Records of the Pilgrim Evangelical Society.
 Records of the First Parish of Southborough.

²⁸ Copies of these By-laws were preserved by Mrs. Cora Newton and entrusted to the Church by Dr. Howard Newton at the time of the Hundred Twenty-Fifth Anniversary. The full text may be found in Appendix ii.

²⁹ From The Records of Pilgrim Church, Southborough: 1831-1899.

³⁰ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), Pg. 202.

³¹ See Appendix xiv. ³² See Appendix xiv.

³³ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), Pg.195.

³⁴ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), Pg. 251.

³⁵ From an Address: "Reminiscences" delivered by Mrs. Cora I. Newton at the Centennial Exercises of Pilgrim Church on February 17, 1931.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

³⁹ Records of Pilgrim Church.

⁴⁰ From the Semi-Centennial Program. ⁴¹ Newton, Mrs. Cora. Written History.

⁴² Bigelow, John A.. *History of Worcester County*, Marlboro and Lewis & Co, (1889). John Thomas Cotton, a son of Rev. Ward Cotton of Boylston, as well as Cotton's sister, Mrs. Hannah S. P. Whitney, were established in Southborough before Rev. Andrew Bigelow went to Boylston in retirement. The Rev. Dr. Bigelow was not entirely among strangers when he first came to Southborough. Rev. Bigelow was the eleventh of fifteen children of his father Andrew Sr. of Boylston, who had nine by his first wife and six by his second. Two of Andrew's older half-brothers were ministers. Jonathan graduated from Brown and Andover Theological and served in Maine, New Haven and Rochester, Massachusetts before moving to Ohio. His older brother Asabel graduated from Harvard in 1823 and from Andover Theological. He was ordained at Walpole and then went to Hancock, N. H. There is no indication of any great monetary resources in Andrew's family. It is presumed that his Father was a prosperous farmer in Boylston but anyone preparing for the ministry had the courage to secure their education in spite of lack of funds.

Andrew Bigelow's Aunt, his father's sister Mary Bigelow, married Dr. Joseph Dix of Worcester. Their daughter Dorothy Lynde Dix, who was born April 1802 in Maine, was

one of America's most famous women. (She lived in Southborough for a time.) She spent her life in the amelioration of the conditions of confinement of the insane and in jail reform. She spent time during the Civil War in charge of nurses. Although her biographers attribute the unusual talents and dedication to the Dix family, "but what of her three Bigelow first cousins. Would not such dedication to human betterment indicate that she might have been influenced by the Bigelow 'lares and penates'?" (Look in Lewis 1889 History of Worcester County under Boylston for a picture of Rev. Andrew Bigelow.)

⁴³ Noble, Richard E., Fences of Stone: A History of Southborough. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall Publisher (1990), pg.256.

44 See Appendix xiv.

45 Marjory Taylor and David Cross wrote the original history in 1958.

46 See Appendix xiv.

⁴⁷ Quoting from Old Houses of Southborough.

⁴⁸ Irwin Smith at the 125th Anniversary Celebration.
 ⁴⁹ Johnson. Sketch of the Johnson, Family Gathering held at Southboro, Mass. June 26, 1878.

Marlboro: Pratt Brothers, Franklin Press (1878). Johnson, Geo. H. Johnson, Our Family Record. (1926). Both donated by Myrtle Elizabeth Johnson Lange.

50 Marjory Taylor, April 26, 2001.

⁵¹Thanks were extended to Mr. LeRoy Craig of the Marlboro Savings Bank in helping us secure a new mortgage on the parsonage.

52 Letter from Marjory Taylor, June 12, 1997. 53 On March 10, 1958 the Town of Southborough voted to give land to Pilgrim Church for the purpose of building a Parish Hall according to a plan submitted to the Town Meeting. We received the land to 70' ± from the Historical Society Building and 145' in from Common Street thence in a straight line south to the corner of the original building. The transfer was recorded at the Worcester Registry of Deeds – Plan Book 253-9 December 30, 1960. The final Boundary Line Agreement was recorded January 22, 1962 in Book 4257-1.

54 From Rev. Richard R. Rodes' Letter to Rev. Craig Reynolds, October 7, 1981.

55 Church Council Notes March 6, 1964.

⁵⁶ Paul Fagg later legally changed his name to Paul Sanderson.

57 Letter from Marjory Taylor, September 6, 1997.

58 Pulpit Committee Pamphlet.

⁵⁹ Sermon "The Steeple on the Common," Craig Reynolds, February 23, 1992.

60 The Pilgrim Church Profile, February 12, 2000. 61 The Diaconate Report, 1997 Annual Report.

62 Ibid.

⁶³ See Appendix xlvii.

64 Dan Leist, Moderator's Report, 1999 Annual Report-

65 Rev. Harry Flad, Report of the Interim Pastor, 1992 Annual Report, pg. 1. 66 Dan Leist: Letter to the Friends of Pilgrim Church, March 10, 2000.

⁶⁷ Search Committee Brochure, January 5, 2001.

68 Marjory Taylor, September 6, 1997.

69 "History of Pilgrim Congregational Church, Southborough, Massachusetts," Mrs. David Taylor, September 15, 1956.

Jeff Watkins, September 30, 1993.

⁷¹ Ĭbid.

Pilgrim Church Etc.

Rev. Craig Reynolds, Tony and Pat Bogardus



Ellen and Buddy Burton





Jim Cande

Aaron Landes





Deb Herrick & Bill Davis