



PILGRIM CHURCH



December 2019



"Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child." --Luke 2

If you're always in a hurry to get "THERE", you will always miss "HERE".

That's a spiritual lesson I've had to re-learn far too often in this life: the habit we humans

sometimes have of being is such a rush to get somewhere, to go somewhere, to get through something, to get on with whatever we are doing: that we lose the gift of now. Miss whatever is happening in our human travels at a given moment because we are so focused on the place of arrival.

We so want to arrive that we can miss the journey.

This summer, to end my sabbatical, I undertook a 14 state, 10 day, 2,103 mile road trip, to take in five minor league baseball games and visit with friends along the way. It was an epic trip but what I tried to do as I was traveling from place to place so many days--from the Green Mountains of northern Vermont to the cities of southern Connecticut, from the 'burbs of Baltimore to the hills of Asheville, North Carolina, from the hardscrabble streets of Dayton, Ohio to the academic enclave of Ithaca--I tried my best to enjoy the places in between. To not just push to get somewhere.

I found a beautiful arts center in Paducah, Kentucky. A quiet main street to stroll in Bath, New York. A hidden ice cream store in Maryland on a steamy August night. But I had to slow down and pay attention and be where I was to discover these hidden gems.

If we are in a hurry to get to December 25th, to Christmas, we may just miss the beauty and the quiet and the holy patience of Advent. In Latin Advent means a coming, an approach, an arrival. Advent then is our journey, not our running to the end of the month. Advent asks us to slow down. To look for the birth of God in our world that so much needs some of Jesus' gentleness and mercy and vulnerability as a child.

Advent invites us, like Mary and Joseph, to make our way home to God but to be wise and measured in that trip. To watch and to trust God comes--but not quite yet. To go at the pace of our feet or our hearts and not just the pace of a culture that cannot get to Christmas fast enough.

Our Advent theme is thus: Journey to Bethlehem. It should be quite a road trip. Let's go.

Peace,

Pastor John

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

BY ANDY MEYER, MODERATOR

I just spoke with my parents. they have recently moved out of Colorado, from their beloved mountain home, to Nashville TN, where they will be closer to my brother's family and two awesome granddaughters. I am very excited to report that they are settled, happy and feeling very secure. My dad has started a little job with my brother's company, and my mother has busied herself setting up a beautiful new home on a quiet cul-de-sac. The idea is that they can live there as long as they like, as renters, and when they need additional care, there are countless options available nearby.

The unhappy part is that as recently as August, when we, as a family, discussed the possibility of their moving very much in this manner, it was met with such resistance. We are talking tears. My mother did not like the idea of moving, and certainly not the idea of moving twice. They were basically dead set against the idea.

But they contacted a broker, my brother found them a very nice, affordable house in Tennessee, and it all fell almost perfectly into place.

Now the interesting part to me is the idea of having such a strong, deeply-held, emotional opinion about something, only to find out that it is basically 100% the opposite of what turns out to be a best-case scenario. It makes me wonder...do I hold onto any opinions, thoughts, ideas as strongly? I probably do. Yes, I am sure that I do. Are any of them completely wrong? Yes, possibly. Probably. And if that is the case, how am I supposed to make any decisions about anything? The simple question I always try to consider....what if I am wrong?

It's a very good question to ask oneself. It keeps a person humble and allows for more opportunities to listen to others rather than trying to change people's minds. I find it quite useful to challenge my own thoughts and opinions regularly by simply asking myself - what if none of that is correct or true?

So how do I make decisions if I am doubting myself all the time? Well, of course, I just do the best I can. I find that I give a matter a good deal of thought, try to be as reasonable as possible, and, as always, I involve God. The church bulletin back page two weeks ago quoted one of my favorite passages: Philippians 4: 6. Paul writes: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* That is the secret to me. Involve God, ask for help. Be grateful for your blessings. And HE will lead the way.

May God bless you all.

Andy Meyer
Moderator

DEACON'S CORNER

BY DAN GEARY

Why is the Poinsettia the official flower of Christmas?

When it comes to the Christmas season what color comes to mind for you? **If you're like me, it'd be red, mostly for Santa's suit. But for many it'd be red because of Poinsettias. Even our Pilgrim Church is decorated with them. They make bright, festive decorations during winter months but they're native to Southern Mexico, and they're actually colorful leaves, not flowers. So why do we consider them the official Christmas flowers anyway?**



The reason we associate poinsettias with the holidays comes from an old Mexican legend. **A young girl named Pepita was sad that she didn't have a gift to leave for the baby Jesus at Christmas Eve services.** Her cousin tried to comfort her and said that Jesus would love any present from her, even the smallest one. With no money to buy a real gift, Pepita picked a bouquet of weeds that she walked past on the way to church. (Other versions of the story say an angel came to her and instructed her to pick the plants.) When she got there, she left the weeds at the bottom of the nativity scene. All of a sudden, the weeds transformed into beautiful red flowers.

From that day on, they became known as "Flores de Noche Buena," or "Flowers of the Holy Night."

These were actually brought to the America by the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico, Joel **Roberts Poinsett, in the early 1800's. They caught on as a traditional holiday decoration long after when TV studios across the country started using the mon the sets of holiday specials.** Now poinsettias are among the most popular plants sold in the U.S.

Know someone who would like to receive our Newsletter but **isn't on-line?**

Contact Kathleen White in our office, she will be happy to mail one out.

admin@pilgrimsherborn.org

or call at (508) 655-1667



MIRACLE ON 25 SOUTH MAIN STREET — Dec. 8th, 2019!

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.” - Matthew 25:35

Many thanks to all who have volunteered with this wonderful church-wide community opportunity. There are still spots available if you can help out. Call the church office to sign up, (508) 655-1667 or email admin@pilgrimsherborn.org.

On December 8th, 2019 Pilgrim Church will host our 5th annual Miracle at 25 South Main Street food-packing event that provides low cost, nutritious meals at just 25 cents per serving. Boxes of these shelf stable meals will be delivered to food pantries in the greater Boston area.

Hunger affects every community. In The United States, 1 in 7 individuals suffer from hunger. Nearly 400,000 households in Massachusetts do not know where their next meal is coming from. There are thousands of families struggling to keep food on their tables every day right here in our own back yard. Pilgrim Church wants to help!

In 2015 we hosted our first event. End Hunger NE (now called The Outreach Program <https://outreachprogram.org>) came to Pilgrim Church and it was a booming success! We hoped for 80 volunteers and 150 came. We challenged ourselves to make 25,000 meals, and we ended up with funding for almost 40,000. 2016 and 2017 saw equal outpourings of volunteer support. Perhaps the greatest gift was that people of all ages worked together to make it happen.

One station of 10-12 volunteers can pack 2,000 meals each hour. With your help, we will package and donate 30,000 meals on that day. Again this year we have decided to commit to 30,000 for that day, and will not be fundraising for additional meals on site.

Please join us to make 2019 equally as wonderful for our congregation and the people we serve. **It's a wonderful day** of goodwill, community and purposeful work for our neighbors in need.



DID YOU KNOW...

You can now read the Pilgrim Church Parish Board meeting minutes online and learn more about what goes on at Pilgrim Church through the monthly reports of the committee members. Visit our website and look for the "Read & Listen" button at the top! You will also find a link to our weekly sermon, our past eWords and our monthly Newsletters. Have fun - take a look!

HANDS TO WORK, HEARTS TO GOD



We still have openings for volunteers to fill in the HTWHTG Sunday Service sign-up through January, and beyond! We are especially in need of coffee hour hosts in December and January, and a few lay leaders.

If you would like to help you can sign up anytime online by clicking [HERE](#) to get to our HTWHTG schedule. Or you can call the office at (508) 655-1667 or email Janet at DCM@PilgrimSherborn.org and she will be happy to help you!

Poinsettias



If you wish to order a poinsettia as a memorial to a loved one or as an expression of your own Christmas spirit, now is the time to do so.

The plants are available at \$15.00 each. They will decorate the sanctuary through the 10pm Christmas Eve worship service.

Send this form along with your check (payable to Pilgrim Church) to the church office:

PO Box 322, Sherborn, MA 01770

Please contact Elmore Alexander at 267-980-4652 or elmore.alexander@bridgew.edu if you have any questions.

Orders must be received by Sunday, December 16.

I wish to order _____ poinsettias at \$15.00 each.

Enclosed is my check for a total of \$_____.

I wish to have the message in the bulletin read:

From: _____

After the 10:00 pm service on Christmas Eve, congregants are invited to take their poinsettias home or give to someone who will enjoy them through the holidays.

Our Advent Services & and Christmas Offerings:

- DEC 1 10:00 am ~ Worship in Peace
- DEC 8 10:00 am ~ Worship in Hope
11:00 am ~ The Miracle on 25 S. Main Street event, Assembling
30,000 meals for the hungry
- DEC 11 7:00 pm ~ Adult Advent; Writing our Way to Bethlehem (Wed)
- DEC 13 4:00 pm ~ The First Christmas Story (Fri). A story and crafts for families with young children
- DEC 15 10:00 am ~ Worship in Joy, & the Celebration of the Nativity
4:00 pm ~ Intergenerational Christmas Caroling
- DEC 22 10:00 am ~ **Worship in Love & Children's Christmas Tableau** For all ages, the young and young at heart!
11:30 am ~ **Quiet Christmas, a service to mark the Gift of God's Light**



Christmas Eve Services:

- DEC 24 4:00 pm ~ Early Service for Children and Families
7:30 pm ~ Service Led by our Senior Youth Group
10:00 pm ~ Traditional Lessons and Carols

Volunteers needed for *Pine Street Inn* women's shelter set for Sunday, December 29. We leave Pilgrim Church at 3:45pm. Interested in helping? Contact Sarah O'Connell at sajwight@gmail.com.



2019 October Clothing Drive

The Clothing Drive Mission Ministry would like to thank everyone who donated all of the outstanding clothing for the needy in our area. Your generosity was remarkable and we appreciate that you show respect for the recipients by donating only clothes that are clean and in excellent condition. We also loved that many of you presorted, folded and labeled the clothing into bags for us. This made our evening of sorting much easier and more fun. We want to thank Diane Anderson, her wonderful group of Senior Youth and Advisors and our generous adult volunteers who did a fabulous job sorting, folding and packing clothes into 50 bags and many pieces of hanging interview clothing. We also thank the super volunteers who carried bags and distributed all of these bags of clothing to:

A Place to Turn- Natick, MA

A Place to Turn provides emergency food and clothing to neighbors in the metrowest community.

Serenity Shelter- recently moved from Hopkinton, MA to Framingham, MA

Serenity House offers substance abuse treatment and is a halfway house for residential long-term treatment (more than 30 days).

M.E.A.D.O.W.S. Program- Ashland, MA

The MEADOWS program offers shelter to 8 woman for up to 6 months and assistance with dvocacy, counseling, meals, medical care, clothing and an after care program.

Shadows- Ashland, MA

The Shadows shelter offers shelter to 10 women for up to 60 days. They offer assistance with advocacy, counseling, meals, clothing, nursing care and limited transportation.

Solutions at Work and the Children's Clothing Exchange- Cambridge, MA

SolutionsWear provides free interview-appropriate clothing for men and women. This includes candidates in job-training programs in Cambridge and Somerville, residents of Cambridge and Somerville shelters who are looking for work or housing and men and women recently released from prison needing clothing for court appearances, or looking for jobs and housing.

Family Promise is coming to Pilgrim Church — January 12 through January 25!



Sign-ups for the many jobs available during those two weeks began December 1st and there are still many opportunities. We will be in Fellowship Hall again on December 15th, but if you already know dates you would like to fill, feel free to contact Jennifer Searle (JenniferRSearle@gmail.com) or Janet Walsh (JanetPBWalsh@gmail.com) ahead of time!

SACRED ARTS

BY DAVID TIEDMAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR



Choir to present Fauré's *Requiem*

In January, 2020, the Chancel Choir will begin rehearsing the Fauré *Requiem*, one of the most beautiful requiems ever written, for presentation on Good Friday, April 10, 2020. *Anyone who would like to participate in this event is welcome to come and sing.* The choir will be accompanied by an orchestra of strings, organ and harp. Rehearsals for the *Requiem* will run from 7:30 to about 8:15 on Thursday nights, beginning January 9th.

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) wrote the *Requiem in the 1880's*. A 'first version' – there ended up being several – was completed in early 1888 and it was first performed on January 16th of that year at the Church of the Madeleine, Paris, the occasion being a funeral. It contained five movements, Fauré's intent being a 'petit Requiem', as he put it. His choir at the Madeleine was small, probably no more than 20 or 30 voices. This version contained five movements. In 1893 Fauré added two more movements, perhaps for grander occasions. In 1900 a third version, orchestrated for a large orchestra, was published. The intent apparently was to turn it into a concert work – large chorus, large orchestra. Such was the norm for many works; in the 19th and early 20th century, Handel's *Messiah* was often performed with a chorus in the hundreds and a large orchestra. Fauré's publisher had asked that the composer prepare a 'version symphonique'.

In 1983 the British composer, John Rutter, researched and prepared an edition that adheres to the original 1888 and 1893 versions, relying mainly on organ and choir with a small string ensemble and harp. This resembles what Fauré's original idea was: a small requiem (in numbers of performers), suitable for church use. And it is in a church where it is most successfully performed; a concert hall loses the intimacy that is so much a part of this beautiful work.

On December 15th Pilgrim Church will dedicate its new outdoor Nativity Set. As part of the celebration, Sacred Arts is sponsoring a Family Creche display in Fellowship Hall. The Congregation is invited to bring a favorite creche anytime during the week of December 8-14, along with a short paragraph telling why it is important to you or your family. All sets will be carefully stored and then set up on Saturday, December 14th. Sets may be taken home after the Coffee Hour on Sunday, December 15th. For more information, see the November newsletter or speak to a Sacred Arts committee member: Judy Cranshaw, Beth Villa, Chris Winterfeldt, Kay Dunlap, Carol Powell Morse, Nan Vaida, Steve Solomon, or Bart Morse.



Oberammergau Passion Play Trip



The trip to Southern Germany and Northeastern Italy planned around the Oberammergau Passion Play is fast approaching. Although sponsored by Pilgrim Church, anyone may register for the trip, scheduled for May 13-24, 2020; the cost is \$4998 per person, double occupancy. A Land-Only price and single-supplement price are available. The price includes airfare, hotels, transportation, guides, entrance fees, all breakfasts, three dinners, ticket for the Passion Play, and all tips, including bus drivers and the tour guide. Not included are lunches, remaining **dinners and whatever trinkets and souvenirs you can't live with-**

out. The tour leaves Boston on May 13 for Munich, Germany. The performance date for the Passion Play is Sunday, May 17. The return flight will be from Milan, Italy, to Boston. Brochures are available in the church narthex and the church office, and for further information, please contact David Tiedman, tour coordinator, at 508-655-1667.

An initial payment of \$1800 per person was due by November 15. After that, late registrants may be subject to a higher price. Travel insurance is available. Should you wish to, you can plan a pre- or post- trip extension on your own. You can notify the tour company in writing and they will schedule your airline tickets accordingly. There may be an extra fee for this.

The Oberammergau Passion Play originated in the 17th century as a pledge to God by the people of Oberammergau to perform the Passion every 10 years if they could be spared from the plague. With few interruptions – 1940, for example, because of WW II – it has been done every 10 years since then. Only residents of Oberammergau can be in the play; rehearsals begin at least a year in advance, and it is an honor to be in the cast. From May to October about 100 performances are done and performances are generally sold out, as the play has become world-famous. **Passion Plays recount the final week of Christ's** life on earth – Holy Week. In the United States, there is one done in the Black Hills of South Dakota every summer that has become well known; there may be others around the country. None have attained the fame of the Oberammergau play.



Angel Tree Success Story

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped out; once again we are grateful and inspired by your generosity towards our Angel Tree program. Over the last several weeks we have collected, sorted and will be transporting dozens of Angel Tree bags filled with toys and warm clothing to children in need this holiday season. Thank You!



Christian Education

By Angie Johnson, Director of Christian Education

Prepare for the Christmas Tableau

Some years ago Pilgrim Church created a simple Children's Christmas Tableau that was full of meaning and low on stress – no lines to learn, no costumes to make, and only one rehearsal. The tradition continues with this year's tableau during the 10am worship service on Sunday, December 22.

Kids will be divided into groups to play the following roles: Stars; Animals, Angels; Shepherds; and Wise Persons. We are currently holding an open casting for a Baby Jesus. If anyone has or knows of a baby let us know.

We strongly encourage all children and their families to participate in this story that is so dear to our faith. The tableau is a sweet reminder of how quickly childhood passes – the little ones are awestruck, the older children mix shy smiles with mischievous grins, and the parents are blinking and sniffing.

Rehearsal: Sunday, December 15, 11:15-11:45am in the sanctuary. Parents must select a costume in Room 10 during the rehearsal.

Volunteers needed to direct traffic during the rehearsal and the tableau itself. Also need volunteers to hand out costumes and help with dressing. Please email Angie at ce@pilgrimsherborn.org if you can help.



Church school takes a holiday

Church School will not meet on December 29.

Thank you to...

...Barbara Ambos for her calligraphy of the third grade Bibles.

And

...Chuckie Blaney for her continued dedication as our church friend and donut hero!



YOUTH MINISTRY

BY REV. DIANE ANDERSON

KINDNESS CLUB

In November the Kindness Club had a wonderful service trip to the Brighton Allston Food Pantry where they helped distribute Thanksgiving meal groceries to those in need. Thank you to all of the parents and advisors who helped with this wonderful day!



KC members also helped with Red Cup Sunday at church by handing out red cups to everyone after the worship service. People are asked to collect change in the cups and then return them to church on December 8th. The change will help support the Miracle on 25 S. Main St. service event. This is a church-wide intergenerational event in which we all work together to package hundreds of meals which will be sent to local food pantries.



The Kindness Club decorated gingerbread houses this month which were sold after worship on December 1st. The money raised will be used to purchase Walmart gift cards to donate to Family Promise who will distribute them to families in need so they can buy holiday gifts for their children.

YOUTH MINISTRY

BY REV. DIANE ANDERSON

SENIOR YOUTH GROUP

November was a busy month for Senior Youth Group! We sorted donated clothing during our annual Missions Clothing Drive Meeting. Thank you to our wonderful advisor, Kathy Somerville, who organizes this church-wide clothing drive every year and thank you to all of the church members who donated clothing. The clothes were delivered to multiple shelters in the Metrowest area.



Senior Youth Group had its kick-off Work Camp Orientation meeting in November as well. We discussed this year's trip to The Blue Theology Mission Station in California and members were given their Work Camp applications to fill out. The turnout for this meeting was great and we are expecting a great group of 2020 Work Campers!



Senior Youth Group also had its first ever Friendsgiving Dinner! Members were able to invite their friends for a big Thanksgiving-like potluck feast. What a great evening of food, fun and fellowship!

In December the group will be busy preparing the 7:30 Christmas Eve service which Senior Youth Group leads every year. This is always such a beautiful service ending with each member lighting a candle and sharing a hope for the world.



Stewardship By Peter Liffiton

The many “WAYS” of Stewardship Vol. 2

Last month we told you the five “WAYS” you could **MAKE** a pledge for the 2020 Campaign.

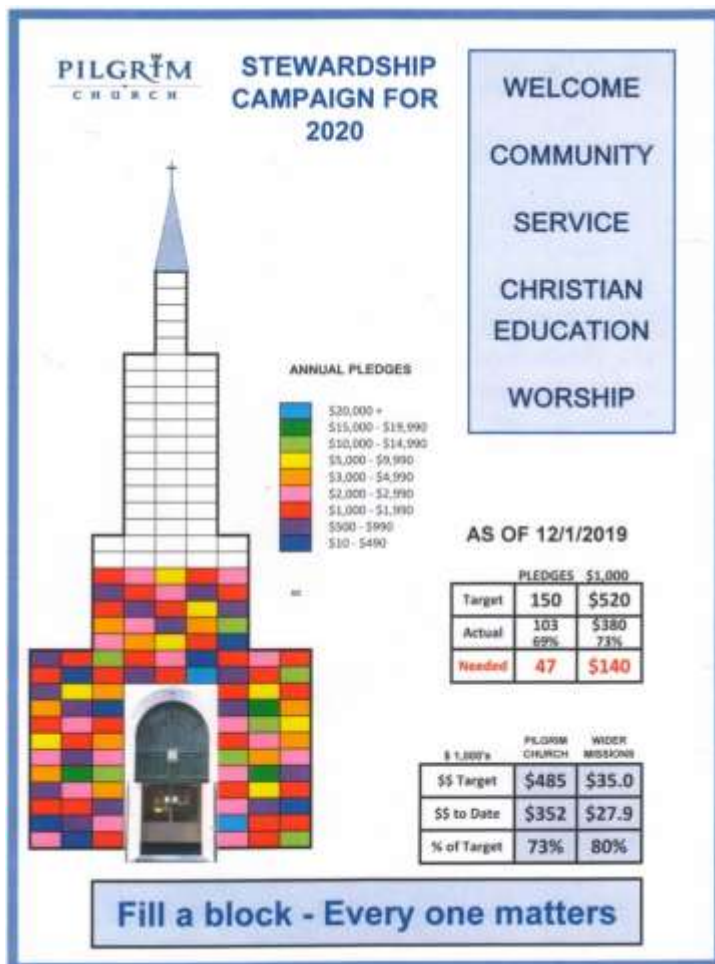
Remember these?

1. Make an on-line pledge at PilgrimSherborn.org
2. Use the pledge card you received in the mail
3. Use a pledge card found in your pew
4. Send an e-mail to the church office
5. Call the church office

And we promised that this month we would tell you many “WAYS” to **FULLILL** your pledge.

So here they are.

1. [On line at PilgrimSherborn.org](http://PilgrimSherborn.org) – On the website, you can make single payments or schedule regular payments directly from your checking account
2. [Personal checks](#) mailed in or placed in the offering plate
3. Regular giving [using numbered church envelopes](#)
4. [Gifts of appreciated securities](#)
5. For those over 70 ½ - fully tax deductible [Qualified Charitable Distributions \(QCD's\)](#) from your traditional IRA



To be credited to your pledge and qualify for a charitable gift tax deduction, all donors must be able to be identified. If donating securities, please notify the church office. Direct transfers of securities most often do not include the name of the person who ordered the transfer. Likewise, with a QCD, the check for funds from your traditional IRA must be made out to Pilgrim Church and might not identify the name of the person making the donation.

Pilgrim Church only succeeds with the help of everyone. If you have already pledged, thank you. If you are among those “yet-to-pledge” folks, please give thoughtful consideration to all that the church means to you and all the good that we as a church community can accomplish. Then pledge generously and joyfully.

Thank you,

The Stewardship Committee:

Matt Beudet, Kevin Flynn, Peter Liffiton, Carole Marple, Steve Solomon, Kitty Sturgis

**Pilgrim Church UCC, Happenings (Ministries & Small Groups),
Special Services, Holidays in United States**

Dec 2019 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Advent 10am - Sunday- 11:30am - Angel 6pm - Kindness 8:45pm - Senior	2 7pm - Metrowest	3 10am - Staff 7pm - Boy	4 8:30am - Bible 8pm - AA	5 12pm - COA 8:15pm - Handbe 7:30pm - Chance	6	7 10am - Girls
8 Advent 10am - Sunday- 11am - Miracle 11:30am - 2020 8:45pm - Senior	9 7:30pm - Scout	10 8:45am - Caring 10am - Staff 7pm - Boy	11 8:30am - Bible 7pm - Adult 8pm - AA	12 12pm - COA 8:15pm - Handbe 7:30pm - Chance	13 4pm - The First	14
15 Advent Celebration of Tableau 10am - Sunday- 4pm - Intergener 6pm - Kindness 8:45pm - Senior	16	17 10am - Staff 7pm - Boy 7pm - Parish	18 8:30am - Bible 8pm - AA	19 12pm - COA 8:15pm - Handbe 7:30pm - Chance	20	21
22 Advent Pilgrim Church 10am - Sunday- 11:30am - Quiet 8:45pm - Senior	23	24 Christmas Eve 4pm - Family 7:30pm - Youth 10pm - Tradition	25 Christmas Day 8pm - AA	26 12pm - COA	27	28
29 10am - Sunday 3:45pm - Pine 3:45pm - Pine 6pm - Kindness 8:45pm - Senior	30	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day 8pm - AA	2 12pm - COA 8:15pm - Handbe 7:30pm - Chance	3	4

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25 South Main St.
P.O. Box 322
Sherborn, MA 01770

Phone: 508-655-1667
Fax: 508-655-7997
E-mail: admin@pilgrimsherborn.org

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.PILGRIMSHERBORN.ORG

Massachusetts Conference Website
www.macucc.org

United Church of Christ Website
www.ucc.org

For Pastor John's column in the DS Press:
www.townonline.com/dover/news/lifestyle

POSTMASTER: ADDRESS
CORRECTION REQUESTED

Pilgrim Church Newsletter

Reverend John F. Hudson, Senior Pastor
pastorjohn@pilgrimsherborn.org

Kathleen White, Church Administrator
admin@pilgrimsherborn.org

Janet Walsh, Congregational Ministry
dcm@pilgrimsherborn.org

Angie Johnson, Christian Education
ce@pilgrimsherborn.org

David Tiedman, Music
davetiedman@pilgrimsherborn.org

Rev. Diane Anderson, Minister to Youth
pastordiane@pilgrimsherborn.org

Shelley Mueller, Assistant Treasurer
finance@pilgrimsherborn.org

This is a monthly publication. Please submit comments, articles to the church administrator by email or written copy. Submissions will be edited for length and clarity.

Articles for the NEXT issue are due by the 15th of the month.