

From Your Minister...

Tackling the Tough Issues . . .

A few weeks ago Trinn and I saw the controversial, Oscar nominated film "Brokeback Mountain." While the setting is the Wyoming Rockies during the 1960's the movie gradually transcends its parameters and speaks courageously and directly to the current cultural/religious debate about same gender relationships. Currently the topic of gay/lesbian civil rights (a state issue) and sacred blessing (a church issue) is at the very epicenter of our public discourse . . . and our private kitchen tables.

Last Sunday evening over twenty people from our congregation gathered in the Narthex to talk about same gender partnerships. I hosted this dialogue with a little trepidation knowing that we have a variety of views within our Church, and that our denomination has spoken very forthrightly on the issue. In fact last July at the General Synod meeting of the United Church of Christ a resolution was passed in support of gay marriage. As you may know, this is a non-binding statement, since every local United Church of Christ operates with complete autonomy. Nevertheless, this was a strong statement that has empowered some and embittered others. For most of us, it has prompted some critical thinking and raised many questions. In our discussion we examined the biblical references to homosexuality (which I'll gladly share with you) and wondered what Jesus might have to say about it . . . had he mentioned it!

I am very heartened to tell you that the conversation we had was so loving and caring. Most of the people in attendance were very open to same gender partnerships, though clearly others were searching and uncertain. Personally I am advocate for both gay rights and gay unions, though I'm not convinced that the word "marriage" is helpful. I believe the attempt to re-construe this ancient word has alienated many who otherwise would be supportive of same gender sacred unions. At any rate, it is a bit of a moot issue at the moment given the fact that we don't have legalized gay marriage (and I don't suspect we will anytime soon). Incidentally, the proposal banning gay marriage that may come before Wisconsin this fall has significant negative implications for heterosexual non-married unions as well.

Tragically, some UCC congregations have become split over this issue. Fortunately, we have had no significant backlash here at Pilgrim. My firm conviction is that Christians can respectfully disagree, and that we need to take great care not to allow any single issue to become so dominating, indeed so disproportionately focused upon, that it undermines our greater calling to live centered in the love of Christ.

I hope this will be the first of many conversations we're calling "Tackling the Tough Issues." My thought is that we might offer a fall, winter and spring opportunity for dialogue. Other possible subjects might include: Evolution and Intelligent Design, Abortion, War and the Just War Theory, Euthanasia, the Death Penalty, etc. As always I welcome your feedback and your ideas.

With deep gratitude for the compassion of Jesus in the midst of our congregation,

Franz

Season of Lent



The season of Lent begins on March 1st with an Ash Wednesday service and imposition of ashes. Lent is a time of spiritual reflection and personal discipline.

For forty days (based on Jesus' forty days in the wilderness) we prepare for the events of Holy Week through a more serious and dedicated focus on our faith. Perhaps you will want to do some personal "giving up" or "taking on" as a sign of spiritual discipline. Join us on Ash Wednesday for this meaningful start to the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday - March 1st

Potluck 6:00pm † Worship 7:00 - 7:45pm

A sign-up for the supper is on the bulletin board. Please bring a dish to pass. If you can't make the potluck, feel free to simply come for the service of ashes. Child care will be provided.

"From dust you came and unto dust you shall return."

Lenten Devotionals

"The Sanctuary for Lent 2006," through daily devotional readings from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday will help you experience the stories of biblical people of faith. *They are available on the table outside of the office.* Please take one for your family and allow it to be a meaningful and inspirational resource for Lent.

Lenten Suppers and Services

5:45 Gathering † 6:00 Dinner † 7:00 Service

Again this year, Pilgrim is participating in a pulpit exchange on Wednesday evenings (following supper in Kalweit Hall). Dinner will be served at 6:00. Meals will be provided by church teams, and donations will be taken with proceeds going toward *One Great Hour of Sharing*.

- March 8** 6:00 Lasagna provided by the Outreach Team.
7:00 Worship led by Rev. Michael Matheny of St. John UCC, Germantown.
- March 15** 6:00 Chili provided by Children's Ministry and Property & Grounds Teams.
7:00 Worship led by Rev. Jane Terry of Our Saviour's UCC in Germantown.
- March 22** 6:00 Sloppy Joes provided by Missions and A.C.E. teams. St. Peters UCC, Saukville are our guests.
7:00 Worship led by Rev. Don Ellerman of St. Peters UCC, Saukville.
- March 29** 6:00 Brats & Burgers provided by the Church Council.
7:00 Worship led by Dr. Lorrie Wenzel of Faith UCC in Slinger.
- April 5** 6:00 Hot Ham/Turkey Sandwiches provided by Finance & Staff Relations Teams.
7:00 Worship led by Rev. John Tschudy of St. John's UCC in Slinger.

Each evening there will be child care and peanut butter & jelly sandwiches for the picky eaters!

Holy Week Schedule

- April 9** Palm Sunday, distribution of Palms, 8:00 & 10:30
April 13 Maundy Thursday, Seder Meal, 7:00pm
April 14 Good Friday, Service of the Cross 7:00pm
April 16 Easter
Sunrise Matins -- a brief Communion Liturgy, 6:30-7:00am
Breakfast, 7:00 - 8:00am
Easter Worship, 8:00am
Breakfast, 9:00-10:15am
Easter Worship, 10:30am

Child care will be available during all services except the Sunrise Matins.

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS



“Jesus”

A Children's Midweek Lenten Program

Kids ages 4 through 4th grade are invited to join us in Kalweit Hall for a six-week adventure learning about Jesus' death and resurrection. Easter themed stories, crafts, games and music will help us discover ways to share God's powerful love with those around us.

March 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, and April 5th
6:45 – 7:45 p.m.

(During Wednesday evening Lenten Worship)

Key Bible verse:

*“Dear Friends, since God so loved us,
we also ought to love one another.” 1 John 4:11*

A Sign-up Sheet Is Posted on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex

*(Childcare Will Be Provided for Infants – 3 Years of Age
During the Lenten Services.)*

TREASURE SEEKERS

A 2006 Vacation Bible Experience
where you will find out what God's greatest treasure is.

July 17th - 21st

Watch for more details next month.

Mission News



One Great Hour of Sharing

“When was it that we saw you...thirsty?” *Matthew 25:37*

Access to clean water is the theme of One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) this year. Since 1949, American churches of many denominations have joined together in support of OGHS. By doing so, we say “yes” to clean drinking water, food, and other life-sustaining necessities for those who lack the means to obtain them independently.

At Pilgrim Church, we will kick off our OGHS campaign on Sunday, March 12th, and will continue to collect through Easter Sunday. The official OGHS Sunday is March 26. Last year, we easily exceeded our goal of \$3000 and 200 participants. This year we are hoping to raise \$3500 from 225 participants. So watch for the OGHS envelopes at church and for the fish banks the children will be bringing home. Each participant counts, no matter what the gift!

Please contact Michelle Pedersen (375-2359) with any questions regarding OGHS.

Welcome Back Costa Rica Mission Participants!

We welcome back of our Mission Trip who traveled to San Jose, Costa Rica. The group completed work at a low-income daycare facility. The projects included building a concrete fence, remodeling bathroom and painting. Kathy Ellenbecker created beautiful wall murals. A huge thank you to our mission team consisting of: Kathy & Harry Ellenbecker, Bert & Jimmy Faase, Franz Rigert, Candy Shoop, Pam Holloway, Steve Knier, Jenifer Schulz, Bill Sinner and Fred Yopps.

Pilgrim is tentatively planning a fall trip to Honduras to work on the construction of a community center. A 2007 adult trip to Backbay Mission in Mississippi is in the works.

Fun Setters - Miller Park Tour

The Funsetters will head to Miller Park on Monday, May 1 for a tour of Miller Park. The group will depart Pilgrim Church at 9:30 a.m. for a 70 minute walking tour (wheelchair accessible). Experience the magnificence of Miller Park while enjoying a tour that includes the dugout, luxury suites, clubhouse, press box, Bob Uecker's broadcast booth, The .300 Club and other behind-the-scenes attractions. Lunch will follow at Friday's (at the Park). Cost for the tour is \$3 for seniors or \$6 for adults (payable at the park). Lunch is extra. A sign up will be posted. Contact Heidi if you have questions.

Women's Lunch-Out

When: Sunday, April 9

Time: Depart 11:50am from church

Where: Café Bella

Who: All Pilgrim women are invited? *A sign-up will be posted soon.*

Pilgrim Roller Skating Day

Pilgrim Church will be sponsoring a skating party at Skateland on Sunday, April 2. We have the rink rented for our group from 4:15-6:15 p.m. Cost to skate is \$4, which includes regular roller skates. In-line skates (roller blades) are extra. There is no charge for those wishing to watch skaters. A concession stand will be available for refreshments and snacks. Bring the whole family for a rolling afternoon of F-U-N!

Pilgrim Campout

Mark your calendars. The Pilgrim camping weekend will be August 17-20 at Peninsula State Park in Door County. A sign up will be posted in early summer.



Nameplates to Replace Nametags

We are hoping to convert from our current nametags to magnetic, engraved nametags. Don Deetjen of Recognition Specialists is working with us to make the transition. Although most tags will be magnetic, clip and pin options will also be available. We are still determining the cost, design and storing options for the new nametags. Stay tuned to upcoming newsletters for more information.



PCY News

This month we will begin collecting toys for our toy drive to benefit Sojourner Truth House in Milwaukee. This is a shelter for women and children fleeing situations of domestic violence. PCY will be meeting at church on Sunday, March 5th at 6:00pm for a Pizza and Planning meeting to get this project off the ground. See you then!

Also, the Easter breakfast will be here before we know it! Don't forget that youth who wish to benefit from the funds raised will need to participate in the fund-raising effort. Parent helpers are always needed, too! If you can't make it to the breakfast Sunday morning, there is plenty to do to help with planning beforehand. Contact Kris Sauer with questions.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation: Don't forget that Confirmands are required to attend Wednesday evening worship services in lieu of class during Lent. *See you there!*

ADULT EDUCATION

Last month a group of 11 Pilgrim members traveled to Costa Rica on a mission trip. Come on Sunday morning, March 12th to hear about their adventures and see some pictures! The presentation will begin at 9:15 in the Narthex.



Pilgrim Kid's Club

**Kid's Club is going to the Betty Brinn Museum
and the Milwaukee County Zoo.**

What: March Kid's Club Outing

When: Saturday, March 4th at 9:30am

Where: Betty Brinn Children's Museum – downtown Milwaukee

The museum has a good website www.bbcmkids.org. It should be a fun time. We will meet at church at 9:30am or you can meet us at the museum at 10:15am.

What: April Kid's Club Outing

When: Sunday, April 2nd at 11:30am

Where: Milwaukee County Zoo – Family FREE Day

Please contact Sue Meinecke at 375-9480 or semeinecke@ameritech.net if you have any questions. Even though Kid's Club is geared to kids under 5, we welcome families with kids of any age.



MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, March 11, at 7:30am. Larry Jackson will share some insight into his profession in security at the main Milwaukee Post Office. Join us for a hearty breakfast, good conversation, and an informative presentation by Larry. *Please use the sign-up sheet in the Narthex.*

Pilgrim Thanks...

- ... Mary Davies for leading us in worship on February 5th.
- ... Ron Wildasin, Jeanne Weber, Lisa Pease and Ellen Knier, for leading us in worship on February 12th.
- ... the members of our Adult Mission Team for representing Pilgrim so graciously to the people in Costa Rica.
- ... the Men's Breakfast Group for purchasing a hammer drill for use by the Property & Grounds Committee.
- ... the volunteers who delivered Valentines to special Pilgrim's from the Voyager Class.

In our Prayers...

- ... Carol Proctor, who will undergo colon surgery on February 28th.
- ... Scott Schowalter, recovering from shoulder surgery.
- ... The cousin (Gary) and father (Steve) of Stephenie Strieff-Process, both of whom are recovering from surgeries.
- ... Joe McCaughey, who is home following rehabilitation after hip surgery.
- ... John and Betty Ferris, at Cedar Gardens and Cedar Springs respectively.
- ... The brother of Rick Ziebell, who fell in a mountain climbing mishap.

Our Sympathy is Extended to...

- ... Richard Brown & family, upon the death of Shirley beloved member of Pilgrim who died from cancer February 21st in North Carolina.

Congratulations and God's Blessings to...

- ... Jeff & Michelle (Hilkert) Thompson and proud grandmother, Elaine Hilkert, on the birth of triplets February 14th – Nolin Rudolph (5 lbs. 5 oz., 18 -1/4 in, Madison Michelle (4 lbs. 10 oz., 17 in.) and Maxwell Jeffrey (3 lbs. 14 oz., 17 in.). They live near Detroit, Michigan.
- ... Carson Edward Mappes, grandson of Ruth, who was baptized on February 19th. Robb & Kim Mappes, and children, belong to a church in the Madison area.
- ... Jenna Mae Isaacson, daughter of Joe & Tracie, who will be baptized on February 26th.
- ... Dave & Melissa Francek, are the proud parents of a baby boy, Logan David Ronald Francek, born February 21st weighing 7 lbs 6 oz and measuring 21 ½ inches. Proud great-grandfather is Paul Kasberger.
- ... Blair & Jenny Bandow, who celebrate the birth of their son, Drew Nathaniel, born January 28th weighing 8 lb. 14 oz., measuring 21 in.



Dear Pilgrim Family:

Thank you all for the phone calls, cards, hugs and words of support that I have received during the couple of weeks since I found out that I need to have the surgery that is now rescheduled to February 28th.

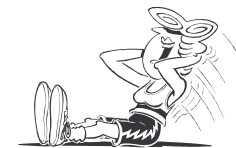
Carol Proctor

Dear Pilgrim Family and Friends,

I want to say "Thank You" for all your cards of well wishes, your visits and telephone calls and for keeping me in your thoughts and prayers during and following my recent hip replacement surgery. All is going very well.

Elnore Merchen

LENTEN LIFESTYLE CHALLENGE



Our Lifestyle Challenge which was a huge success last year will return in March. This is a 12-week Weight Loss Challenge with cash prizes to go to the top two people with the biggest percentage of weight loss.

Classes start on Monday, March 6th at 6:00pm
and will run until May 22nd.

For privacy reasons you will weigh yourself each week and only report to us the total loss for that week. Last year our group lost over 150 pounds all together.

This is a diet program designed for both men and women.

What a great time to shed a few pounds before summer!

There will be a one-time fee of \$10 per person.

For more information, please contact Peggy Mayer at 375-2854.

A sign-up is posted on the Narthex bulletin board.

FINANCIAL REVIEW - 2005



African-American UCC Church Planted

A few years ago Mount Tabor UCC, located on Sherman Blvd. in Milwaukee, closed its doors. Out of the generosity of that congregation, which gifted the building to our Association, a new ministry is springing forth. The

Rev. Wanda Washington, an African-American UCC minister who comes from the staff of Trinity UCC in Chicago, has come to found a new congregation.

Our Association and prayers are with Rev. Washington in this exciting, diversifying endeavor.

Environmental Concerns

The time it takes for rubbish to decompose

Paper takes 2-5 weeks	Orange peel takes 6 months	Milk cartons take 5 years
Cigarette filter tips take 10-12 years	Plastic bags take 10-20 years	Leather shoes take 25-40 years
Nylon cloth takes 30-40 years	Plastic containers take 50-80 years	Aluminum cans take 80 years
Tin cans take 100 years	Plastic drink bottles take 450 years	Glass bottles take 500 years

Styrofoam (foam cups, food containers and packages) never decompose.

Jan Svoboda

Environmental Chair

The best vitamin for a Christian is B-1.

One of the important indicators of a “healthy” Church is the financial support, pledged by its members, to underwrite the expenses of the Church. It would be nice, in an ideal situation, if the pledged income met, or exceeded, all of the Annual Budget and all pledged income was actually received. However, as we all know, we don’t live in an ideal world. Not all members make a pledge, members come and members go and many factors change that can, and does, impact how our members/families are able to financially support their Church. The statistics for Pilgrim Church are as follows and you can make your own judgment as to how “healthy” you think we are.

In 2005, 63.0% of our members/families made a pledge. In 2006, this number is 63.6%. In a way, that may be “OK”, provided that the other members make contributions. We are fortunate that, for Pilgrim, this is so in many cases. As a general rule, it is good if 90-95% of all pledged income is actually received. For 2005, our number was 89.0%. According to the reports from our computer software, the amount pledged for 2005 was \$188,448 of which \$167,624 was received. However, almost \$7,000 of this amount was from members who actually contributed more than what they had pledged. This reduced the difference to \$20,824.

In 2005, we received \$182,932 in contributions for the “Stewardship” (Adult Envelopes) Fund. The non-pledged income support, from members who were given envelopes, was \$15,308, which helped us get closer to the budgeted amount. We received “loose cash” in the amount of \$5,452 and miscellaneous income (for bulletins, from dividends, reimbursement for the cost of the envelopes, for rebates and other reimbursements and from our Church School) of \$4,331. This, together with the reimbursement for the use of our facility of \$9,989 meant that our total income was \$202,705. This put us at \$17,295 less than the proposed budget.

Looking at the financial data, 2005 appears to have been a somewhat difficult year for many members. Let us hope and pray that 2006 will be much better one for everyone, financially speaking, especially as the Capital Campaign comes to an end and we move to face the much bigger increase, for 2007, to handle the new mortgage. Remember, only \$214,461 of the \$240,000 Budget for 2006 has been pledged. If we, again, only receive 89%, will you still believe we are a financially “healthy” Church?

Ed Proctor

Finance Deacon

Interfaith Caregivers

April 23rd is Interfaith's High Tea. We are in need of Garden Art and specialty items to auction off. If you would like to donate please see Warner Schafer or Linda Yopps.

Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County 2005 At a Glance

During the year 2005, Interfaith Caregivers volunteers contributed 4,672 hours and logged 35,686 miles performing various tasks for receivers including:

- . transportation
- . help with shopping and running errands
- . housekeeping
- . yard work
- . visiting to alleviate loneliness
- . help with paperwork and bill-paying



Volunteer service hours and miles divided by areas served:

Cedarburg/Grafton:	1,837 hours, 9,421 miles
Mequon/Thiensville:	1,234 hours, 11,850 miles
Port Washington/Saukville:	1,601 hours, 14,415 miles

Volunteers also contributed 800 hours to providing respite care, enabling caregivers to leave their homes to keep appointments, attending social and religious events, and enjoying a break from care giving, assured that their loved one was safe with a caring volunteer in their absence.

133 new receivers contacted Interfaith Caregivers during 2005 to request assistance in addition to the current clients already being served.

63 new volunteers joined Interfaith Caregivers during 2005.

Memorial Fund Purchase

Perhaps you have noticed our new front railing. It was purchased through a generous gift from Marji Groth with the balance coming from Memorial Funds.

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR "GETTING ON WITH PEOPLE"

1. Speak to people – there is nothing as nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. Smile at people – it takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 to smile.
3. Call people by name – the sweetest music to anyone's ears is the sound of ones own name.
4. Be friendly and helpful – if you would have friends, be friendly.
5. Be cordial – speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. Be genuinely interested in people – you can like most people if you try.
7. Be generous with praise, cautious with criticism.
8. Be considerate of the feelings of others. It will be appreciated.
9. Be thoughtful of the opinions of others. There are 3 sides of a controversy – yours, the other person's and the right one!
10. Be alert to give service – what counts most in life is what you do for others.

– *Seasider Magazine* of the Le Fevre Peninsula Parish of the
Uniting Church in Australia

Scripture Readers for March

	8:00		10:30
5	Al Pfeiffer	5	Chris Kline
12	Jean Weber	12	Scott Lone
19	Ed Proctor	19	Rick Flood
26	Mary Beuscher	26	Mary Davies



March Sunday Treats

- 5** Diane Nauta and Linda Yopps
- 12** Mary Beuscher and Kathy Monroe
- 19** Donna Van Ryzin and Jean Weber
- 26** Kraus family and Kim Godejohn

Address Change

Chris & Amy Leidel
 1127 Knollwood Drive
 Grafton, WI 53024



COMING IN MARCH

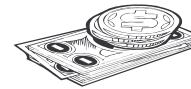
Coming in March.....a PCY-sponsored toy drive to benefit children living in the Sojourner Truth House, a Milwaukee shelter for women and children who have left situations of domestic violence. All types of toys are needed for children of all ages....though since Spring is around the corner, outdoor toys will be especially needed. (e.g. jump ropes, balls, bubbles, etc). Both new and gently used toys are welcome.

Flowers and Bulletins for March

<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Bulletins</u>
5 Mary Johnson	5 Dave & Sue Harvey
12 -----	12 -----
19 -----	19 -----
26 Rachel Goldberg	26 -----

Please consider signing up for flowers or bulletins

*Please call the office to indicate
 what you would like printed in the bulletin.*



FINANCIAL REPORT

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Cash Balance - Begin. of Period	\$ 36,971	\$ 36,971
General Fund Cash Receipts	32,586	32,586
Building Fund Cash Receipts	16,628	16,628
Cash Disbursements	(32,166)	(32,166)
Loan Payments	<u>(20,000)</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>
Cash Balance - Jan 31, 2006	\$34,019	\$ 34,019

OFFICE HOURS

Franz Rigert - 8:30 - 5:00 Tuesday - Friday
 Saturday mornings and Evenings by appointment

Diane Weber - 8:30 - 12:00 Tuesday-Friday
Heidi Jenkins - 9:00 - 12:30 Tuesday & Thursday

Ellen Knier - 9:30-1:30 Tuesday & Friday

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WEB page - www.pilgrimuccgrafton.org

Please submit April articles by March 20th