

PILGRIMS PROGRESS JANUARY 2010
PILGRIM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
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REV. SALLY BALMER, M.DIV., PASTOR AND TEACHER

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE



A 19th century Father Time with [Baby New Year](#)



Detail of Father Time in the Rotunda Clock (1896) by John Flanagan, Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.



Father Time in [Fountain of Time](#)

A History of the New Year

A move from March to January

The celebration of the new year on January 1st is a relatively new phenomenon. The earliest recording of a new year celebration is believed to have been in Mesopotamia, c. 2000 B.C. and was celebrated around the time of the [vernal equinox](#), in mid-March. A variety of other dates tied to the seasons were also used by various ancient cultures. The Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Persians began their new year with the fall equinox, and the Greeks celebrated it on the [winter solstice](#).

Early Roman Calendar: March 1st Rings in the New Year

The early [Roman calendar](#) designated March 1 as the new year. The calendar had just ten months, beginning with March. That the new year once began with the month of March is still reflected in some of the [names of the months](#). September through December, our ninth through twelfth months, were originally positioned as the seventh through tenth months (septem is Latin for "seven," octo is "eight," novem is "nine," and decem is "ten.")

January Joins the Calendar

The first time the new year was celebrated on January 1st was in Rome in 153 B.C. (In fact, the month of January did not even exist until around 700 B.C., when the second king of Rome, [Numa Pontilius](#), added the months of January and February.) The new year was moved from March to January because that was the beginning of the civil year, the month that the two newly elected [Roman consuls](#)—the highest

officials in the Roman republic—began their one-year tenure. But this new year date was not always strictly and widely observed, and the new year was still sometimes celebrated on March 1.

Julian Calendar: January 1st Officially Instituted as the New Year

In 46 B.C. [Julius Caesar](#) introduced a new, solar-based calendar that was a vast improvement on the ancient Roman calendar, which was a lunar system that had become wildly inaccurate over the years. The [Julian calendar](#) decreed that the new year would occur with January 1, and within the Roman world, January 1 became the consistently observed start of the new year.

Middle Ages: January 1st Abolished

In medieval Europe, however, the celebrations accompanying the new year were considered pagan and unchristian like, and in 567 the Council of Tours abolished January 1 as the beginning of the year. At various times and in various places throughout medieval Christian Europe, the new year was celebrated on Dec. 25, the birth of Jesus; March 1; March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation; and Easter.

Gregorian Calendar: January 1st Restored

In 1582, the [Gregorian calendar](#) reform restored January 1 as [new year's day](#). Although most Catholic countries adopted the Gregorian calendar almost immediately, it was only [gradually adopted](#) among Protestant countries. The British, for example, did not adopt the reformed calendar until 1752. Until then, the British Empire—and their American colonies—still celebrated the new year in March.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

PILGRIM WILL HAVE ITS ANNUAL MEETING ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 24 AFTER THE MORNING SERVICE. THIS IS A POTLUCK WITH ALL ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND. AT THIS MEETING WE WILL DISCUSS THE UPCOMING YEAR, ELECT NEW OFFICERS AND CHURCH COUNCIL, AND HAVE THE ANNUAL “STICKER AWARDS”. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

A MESSAGE FROM SALLY

Here we are in 2010. Already! And none too soon, I am told by those quite ready to leave 2009 behind.

The appeal of a fresh start is often accompanied by notions of resolutions. However realistic or naively hopeful, the thought of making some yearned-for changes arises among many of us. Count me in; I like a time of reflection and an inspiration as simple as changing the calendar.

When it comes to our liturgical year, however, we're not "done." The first of our "seasons" begins with the Advent-Christmas-(and now) Epiphany cycle. We've watched the "coming of the light," celebrated the birth of God's Light in Jesus, and now, embarking on a journey that follows a star, we mark the coming of wise ones who offer gifts and are led by a dream. It's as if we are being shown that the best of stories-for-us doesn't end with focussing on one individual. Rather, we are given glimpses of how the Light is upon us and with us-- inspiring, guiding, helping. We start to "see," to perceive...differently. Epiphany involves *revelation*, a revealing of what once was covered, hidden, or difficult to see.

This year, I have goals and hopes that seek all kinds of revelations. On a personal note, I ascribe to psychiatrist C.G. Jung's comment that "self knowledge is more important than self fulfillment." While working out the details of Jung's insight requires many practices, one thing I will say is....thank you! For your wonderfully generous cash Christmas gift. You see, I have noticed that I am becoming more of an observer (as my last redundant half-sentence indicates)--so a portion will go toward a nice little pair of compact binoculars for those birding-while-out moments. (One could say I am aiming for even more "revelation"...in feathers!) Seriously, and again: thank you for your humbling generosity.

This year I look to the "revealing" of who we will be as we shift into the freshness of new members and changes in leadership on our Church Council. Mark your calendars now for Covenanting Sunday and our Annual Meeting and Potluck: **Sunday, January 24th**. Bring something tasty to eat, along with your good spirits for the annual "sticker awards." I want to particularly note we will need to slather our gratitude on Bill Malcomson for serving as our skilled and dedicated Moderator for the past three years. Also, do let me know if you'd like to covenant with Pilgrim, I'd be happy to tell you more.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I want to link us with the magi, the "wise ones" of epiphany. They show us that the ways of revelation and light--whether embarking on a journey or listening to a dream-- are far from passive. I think they engaged qualities I have come to consider the "big three" for all kinds of leadership: *imagination, empathy, and courage*. I'll be weaving these into my Sundays messages throughout the month. Further, my hope is that I, and we, will use these qualities to help reveal the strength of our faith-journey, the uniqueness of our gifts, and the encouragement to be all God calls us to be.

I consider myself most blessed to be with you on this journey of faith-and-life. Looking forward to 2010--

Sally

POCKETS

Pockets in a feller's trousers are both
bane and blessing,
serving well as a repository,
short or long term,
for a miscellany of treasures
collected over the course of a day:
sometimes even a lifetime.

Pockets provide the unpracticed swain
a place to stuff his hands
as one toe scribes an arc in the dust
while he gazes upon
the most beautiful girl in the world.

A pocket can serve as a time portal
when it holds a 40-year old scout knife,
a lucky stone rubbed smooth as satin
from frequent use,
or a cracked, but still serviceable,
stained leather wallet
that came as a gift from one of the kids.

Packed chockablock,
pockets can make a man's pants too heavy,
and cause them to slide
unceremoniously to half staff;
even to a hapless wearer's ankles.

Though I'm not saying exactly why,
I've taken to wearing suspenders.

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Dear Friends,

A few days ago I sent this to the Chesterton Tribune's Voice of the People and it was printed today. Therefore, I am sending it out with the hope that it will be widely shared and hopefully appear in Letters to the Editor. I will add Eisenhower's comments(I was limited to 400 words) and add another political comment on a proposed Bill, by Rep. Dave Obey to be named, Share the Sacrifice Act of 2010. I am surprised that I have not heard of it sooner.

Howard R. Christofersen, MD 300 N Mineral Springs Rd. Porter, IN. 46304-9788 Phone 219 242 1303

398 word version

This jewel of information comes by way of TruthOut Dec. 15 :Rinaldo Brutoco, Copenhagen: A Bigger Opportunity Than Climate Change. Brutoco is president of The

World Business Academy and a few weeks after 9/11 came out with a plan(The Wisdom of Two Generals, By Rinaldo Brutoco Pct/ 1.2001 on the subject of Global Reconstruction) that to combat the threat of terrorism a program patterned after the Marshall plan funded by the wealthy nations and giving support to the developing nations should be developed taking money away from the military to finance it. I fully support his idea. Think how different the world situation would be now if President Bush had followed that suggestion!! I think that we all should pass this idea on to our contacts, our local newspapers, Senators and Congress men and President Obama.

To further stimulate your interest, here are a couple of paragraphs:

"The World Business Academy has long studied and articulated the necessity of a complete global reconstruction along the lines of the post-war Marshall Plan, but larger..... The Academy is convinced that such a Marshall Plan, if done on a global scale, would not only dramatically lower terrorism, but would reduce the birth rate and the human population, increase living standards globally and raise the industrial countries to a level of affluence that few have dreamed of. At the same time, such a plan would recognize six basic human rights as the birthright of every man, woman and child in the world: (1) freedom from hunger; (2) access to adequate clean, potable water; (3) access to adequate shelter; (4) access to adequate clothing; (5) access to adequate medical care; and (6) access to adequate levels of education, regardless of gender. These are fundamental human rights. It is long past the time when every civilized government in the world committed to them. The best news is that the process of making these rights a reality will actually make all of human society richer, not poorer."....

From the very beginning, I have said that to stop terrorism one must correct the causes that breed the fanatics. Osama said he started the attack on the US because of our military bases on ground holy to Islam. Let us close them down.

The Marshall plan did wonders. True enough, Germany still had many functioning factories and many educated and skilled workers. Obviously one of the first needs would be education for all including women.

That is the 398 words: the article also included wisdom from the second General:"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. "

Now material from which I hope to write my next Voice of the People. Another item that is a month old and I just heard about it now.

WASHINGTON D.C. – Nov. 19 Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI), the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Congressman John Murtha (D-PA), the Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Congressman John Larson (D-CT), the Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, and eight other Democratic Members introduced legislation today that would end the practice of paying for the war in Afghanistan with borrowed money by imposing a war surtax beginning in 2011.

"For the last year, as we've struggled to pass healthcare reform, we've been told that we have to pay for the bill – and the cost over the next decade will be about a trillion dollars. Now the President is being asked to consider an enlarged counterinsurgency effort in Afghanistan, which proponents tell us will take at least a decade and would also cost about a trillion dollars. But unlike the healthcare bill, that would not be paid for. We believe that's wrong," said Obey, Murtha and Larson. "Regardless of whether one

favors the war or not, if it is to be fought, it ought to be paid for."

"The only people who've paid any price for our military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan are our military families," they added. "We believe that if this war is to be fought, it's only fair that everyone share the burden. That's why we are offering legislation to impose a graduated surtax so that the cost of the war is not borrowed."

" Working on the principal that if the President and the nation decide that the war is important enough to fight, then it ought to be important enough to pay for, the Share the Sacrifice Act of 2010 requires the President to set the surtax so that it fully pays for the previous year's war cost. "

Thank you Dave Obey!! I have been saying for some time that WWII was paid for in a relatively few years by a super tax on the rich. It was a graduated tax and Google will bring up that in 1994 a tax of 94% applied to income over \$200,000. Reflecting back on those years, I cannot recall any one complaining of hardship from taxation, The war was soon paid for and the economy boomed. And for those of you who disparately want to reduce the high salaries of bank executives , here is a net that would catch them, too! If you find this interesting and worth considering, Please pass it on.

Thank you, Howard R. Christofersen, MD 300 Mineral Springs, Rd., Porter, IN 46304-9788

Pilgrim United Church of Christ Council Meeting

Dec. 13th, 2009

Bill Malcomson called the meeting to order at 11:40 am, Sunday, Dec. 13th 2009, in the lower level of the Pilgrim Church. Present were Bill Malcomson, Densley Palmer, Malcolm and Paula Taylor, Bob and Tammy Schofield, Lynn Christofersen, Nelle Jacobson, Jim Meyers, Joan Bissel, Nancy Chapman. Anna Torgersen and Tom Miller.

We had a full agenda. We skipped the usual opening discussion.

- 1. Opening meditation--** Sally read an Advent Redux: Where watch the shepherds...
- 2. Financial Secretary--** Elaine was absent, but much the same information is included in Treasurer's Report.
- 3. Treasurer--** Lynn reported on expenditures through November 2009. The good news is we ended with cash in the bank. That said, we're going to turn around and pay two big bills: insurance, and medical pension. We are running about \$266 a month behind what we hoped to bring in this year. We are still obligated, and intend, to support Community Alliance (\$750), and the Shelter (\$1500).
- 4. Pastor Sally--** She is thrilled with after-church discussion of renovation, the hedgehog

concept (apologies from your recorder for not remembering what that is), what our resources and strengths are, and how they intersect. Sally praised World Aides Day observance, with music by John Fahey and others, which made that event meaningful and inspiring. Sally is looking forward to seeing things evolve. All concurred that today's Baptism of Tierney and Kelly was fabulous, and Bob S. was appreciated for finding baptismal cards on the Internet just for the occasion.

5. Nominating committee report-- Barb Davis, Jim Gleason, Sally and Bill M. met and nominated officers for 2010. Moderator will be Tom Miller. Elaine will remain as Financial Secretary, as will Malcolm as Recording Secretary. Sonia Barrantes will take over as Treasurer. Kyle Davis will be Auditor. Council Members At Large will be Nelle Jacobson, Anna Torgersen and Bill Malcomson. Patti Santangelo will stay in Outreach. Jim Meyer will continue as Webmaster. Bob & Tammy Schofield will take care of Membership. We still needed someone to do the bulletins for each Sunday service. Paula, being a good Catholic, raised her hand, and said she would volunteer. The Council voted unanimously (save one abstention) to approve these nominations.

The Council will be looking at the possibility of changing the meeting schedule to every other month in 2010.

6. Recommendation regarding a Long-Range Planning Committee-- Nancy Chapman, it was noted, asked this morning, "Can we dissolve the Renovation Committee?" and yes, it was agreed that that committee has completed the tasks it was formed to do. Bill offered to chair the Long-Range Planning Committee. Denny, can you please press the 'Redux' button?

7. Clarification of worship planning for 2010. Denny clarified some things: Preaching and leading through the Worship and Teaching Committee. Right now it is ad hoc and unofficial. In terms of accountability, it should maybe become "Official," since the committee is spending church funds. It needs a group officially to carry out the worship life of the congregation, working in conjunction with Sally. A policy issue like this requires a change in bylaws, and an approval of the whole congregation. Paula is welcomed and they are still looking for more people. The W.C. works on behalf of the council, but somewhat anonymously, and, as Joan noted, do their job so well, that the congregation at large is not aware that it happens. Jim M. suggested a name change to Liturgy ("the Work of the People") and Celebration might show how it extends beyond Sunday. Bill said, "Sounds like this is a work in progress."

8. Decision on date of annual meeting and agenda for same--Suggested 1/24/10 Annual meeting, our next, and Bill's final meeting as moderator, will contact all necessary folk to compile an annual report. Your Recorder confesses to a momentary brain fade and cannot recall if a final decision for that meeting was nailed down. Stay tuned.

9. Webmaster's update-- Jim would like to meet with any interested parties to talk about what goes on the website. Should we include newsletters from other churches? Electronic newsletters? It was discussed and decided that this was not necessary. The current important pages include Mission Statement, Moderator's page, Outreach page, Current events page. Some of these need up dating. Jim noted that he is happy to keep screening emails, some from African countries, soliciting money so we can claim an inheritance due us (ha-ha). Nelle

suggested adding a Children's page, and photos. That will happen.

10. Membership-- Bob said we would publish a new directory about February, with changes and additions. Bob will be contacting all the listed people and see how they would like to be listed. "C&E Christians," for example (Your naïve recorder had to ask what this meant, and was told it stood for those parishioners who come only on Christmas and Easter). This directory is a resource, not a register of an exclusive club. Bob does have a list of who is registered as a member of the church. The Wells are interested in becoming members. Stay tuned.

11. Budget for 2010—Lynn noted some changes: Operation income will now be aside from missions or occasional contribution for specific things. Everything else stayed pretty much the same as 2009. Jim suggests that we keep the large mission allotments commitments in half (Shelter Project and Community Alliance), and make a special pitch for the balance. This suggestion was approved by consensus. Tom moved, and Bill seconded, that the 2010 budget to be approved to be sent to the congregation for final approval.

12. Other—Building: Roof cleaning is scheduled for Wednesday. That moss is history. Childrens: We still need an assistant; if anyone can think of a candidate, let Nelle know. Lynn Suggested going back to B'hai for possible candidates. "It is what it is," noted someone. How Zen.

A suggestion was posed for a special gift for Tatiana for Christmas, should we maybe ask for special donations? Janet will get that going. Jim voiced for all of us our thanks for Bill's two years of leadership. Bill objected that he really lead for three years, but Jim was willing to thank him for two. Bill extended his thanks for spiritual leadership to Sally. And the council said "Amen!"

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 pm.

Happy Holidays, Everyone!

Respectfully Submitted,
Malcolm Taylor
P.U.C.C. Recording Secretary

Introduction of Immigration Reform Bill Jump Starts Reform Talks Going into 2010

December 15, 2009

Washington D.C. - Today, Congressman Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) introduced the [Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009](#) (CIR ASAP), in the House of Representatives. The 87 original co-sponsors of the bill include members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Black Caucus, Asian Pacific American Caucus, and Progressive Caucus.

The necessity of comprehensive immigration reform stems from a long-neglected immigration system that has failed to keep up with our nation's changing needs, resulting in breakdowns that have crippled our ability to regulate immigration adequately, protect our borders, reunite families, and foster economic opportunity.

The CIR ASAP bill includes many of the elements necessary to bring our immigration system in tune with the current social and economic demands of our nation including, family reunification, restoration of judicial discretion, a generous legalization program, sensible law enforcement, and creative, if untested, answers to future immigration flows.

"Our current immigration system fails to reflect the realities of 21st century America, and CIR ASAP begins to deal with these failings and sets us on a path towards enacting fair and humane immigration policies," said Mary Giovagnoli, Director of the Immigration Policy Center. "We need to move forward, even in tough economic times, if we wish to ensure the future growth and prosperity of our nation. Introduction of this bill jump starts the New Year, providing a vehicle for other lawmakers to react to and build upon. We expect many more proposals in the Senate and House in the coming months and urge lawmakers to make this a fact-based debate with the goal of passing reform in 2010."

"While the Gutierrez bill doesn't have all the answers, it begins the dialogue in Congress," said Ben Johnson, Executive Director of the American Immigration Council. "The bill reflects the political realities within the House of Representatives, and as such does not include some of the necessary reforms for ensuring economic prosperity which Gutierrez has long supported. It is clear that what makes good policy does not always make good politics. However, the bill makes a significant contribution to restoring due process and discretion to the immigration system, and serves as a starting point for bringing more voices to the table."

Resources:

- [Summary of the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act of 2009](#) (IPC Fact Check, December 15, 2009)
- [Comprehensive Immigration Reform: A Primer](#) (IPC Fact Check, June 24, 2009)

Welcome to Earth Ministry



Earth Ministry is a non-profit organization committed to engaging the Christian community in environmental stewardship. We work in partnership with individuals and congregations to respond to this great moral challenge through education, individual and congregational lifestyle choices, and organizing for social change through environmental advocacy.

While Earth Ministry is rooted in the Christian tradition, we actively engage all religious communities on climate and energy issues through Washington Interfaith Power & Light. Our programs and resources are in use across the US and Canada and available to all.

News



[2010 Washington State Environmental Priorities](#)

This year, the three priorities chosen by the Coalition reflect our basic Christian values: nurturing life and human health, protecting the living water of our state, and supporting the common good.



[Bishop Says Climate Change is a Spiritual Matter](#)

Lutheran (ELCA) Bishop Wm Chris Boerger published an Op-Ed in the Bellingham Herald expressing his concern over climate change from a spiritual perspective. Click title to read the Op-Ed.



[IPL Honored by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon](#)

Interfaith Power & Light was honored for its commitment to faith in action at an international gathering at Windsor Castle in England. This landmark event was hosted by the Alliance for Religions and Conservation, the United Nations, and HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.



[Free Religious Study Guides and DVD of National Parks Film Clips](#)

Earth Ministry is pleased to announce the release of two free religious study guides and a DVD of clips to accompany Ken Burns' stunning new film: The National Parks: America's Best Idea.



[Free Wildlife in a Warming World DVD Available to Churches](#)

A new short film, "Irreversible, Irreplaceable", is available to churches for free through Earth Ministry/WAIPL and features beautiful images of threatened species and interviews with religious, scientific, and environmental leaders. This video is ideal for adult forums and church services, especially a Blessing of the Animals service. Contact Earth Ministry to receive a free copy.

Events

[Legislative Workshop](#) Jan 09, 2010

Seattle Pacific University, Gwinn Commons, in Seattle

This annual event is your opportunity to be involved as the state's leading conservation groups prepare for the upcoming legislative session. You'll hear from legislators, environmental lobbyists, and others regarding the community's Environmental Priorities. This event supports the Environmental Priorities Coalition.

[Environmental Lobby Day](#) Jan 26, 2010

United Churches of Olympia, 110 East 11th Ave

Join the state's leading conservation groups and hundreds of citizen lobbyists to push for the passage of the Environmental Priorities legislative package. Lobby Day is a great way to get involved, learn more, and connect with hundreds of others.

[Faith Advocacy Day](#) Feb 16, 2010

United Churches and State Capitol, Olympia, WA

This event, sponsored by Earth Ministry, the Washington Association of Churches, the Lutheran Public Policy Office, and several other religious organizations, brings people of faith from all over Washington to Olympia for a day to advocate for a unified social justice agenda.