

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER EMERITUS

Rev. Dennis R. Knight

Dear Friends,

The National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, is currently hosting an exhibit entitled, "Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul." The exhibit features 228 objects that span some 2,400 years of cultural history in a region that for centuries was at a crossroads on a trading route between Asia and the West known as the Silk Road. These artifacts are all immensely significant. They collectively represent the heritage of a proud and highly civilized people.

These objects were believed to be permanently lost as a result of now twenty five years of armed conflict in Afghanistan. About twenty years ago, however, a small group of dedicated leaders caused the items to be sealed and stored for safe keeping in the Presidential Palace in Kabul, and then swore themselves to secrecy about their existence. These leaders maintained their silence about this collection until it was deemed safe to unearth it. The unveiling of such treasures served as a life-giving spiritual infusion to a nation that had been ravaged by civil strife. It recreated a sense of a lost identity for a body of people whose cultural roots appeared severed, and with that their sense of nationhood. As the National Museum website states, "the works belong to the National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul, whose motto is 'A nation stays alive when its culture stays alive.'"

History and cultural identity function in the same way that the keel and ballast on a sailboat do. A sailboat needs weight deep in the water and a penetrating center board to provide stability in the face of stresses on the boat. The greater the external force of the wind, the more the counterbalance of the keel comes into play. Without it, the boat would capsize.

Without an understanding of its roots, without an understanding of its identity and organizing principles, any political or social organization is going to collapse on itself under stress, the way a sailboat without a keel would flip over in a strong wind. That is the reason why, for example, the Constitution is such a vital document in American life. It is the repository

of the core values of our national ways. Remove the Constitution, and the government would give way. The principles articulated in the Magna Carta have served much the same function in English political life for nearly a millennium.

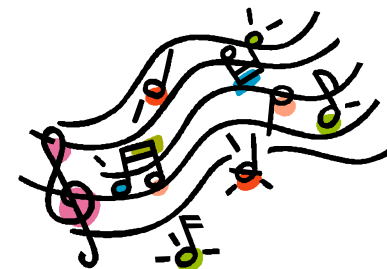
Pakachoag Church is at a transitional time in its history. As we look to the Fall, and the start of a new program year, I am reminded of how important it is that we continually connect with and reaffirm our core values. Pakachoag is anchored in principles and values older even than those 228 Afghani objects on display in the National Gallery, and millennia older than the United States Constitution or the Magna Carta. Without an understanding of the deep roots that underlie and define this community, without an understanding of the deep roots that shape us as a gathered and named community of faith, we would be without direction and doomed to founder, as the sailboat without a keel founders.

Conversely, if we do root ourselves in our traditions, and lay hold of the stability that comes from a profound and penetrating understanding of how we came into being, and what conduct befits our call as a Christian community, then we can raise our sails high and press onward into open seas without fear of the journey. However tempest tossed the passage may become, we will possess the assurance that comes to those whose values and faith are deeply set, and we will be imbued with the confidence to gain the distant shore.

WORSHIP MUSIC

Guest organists during September and the beginning of October will be:

- September 7, 14 and October 5 – Randy Bloom
- September 21 – Barclay Wood (see article on page 3)
- September 28 and October 12 – Charles Davis



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Blair Coté | 1 |
| Michelle Carlson | 12 |
| Sadie Connery | 14 |
| Roland Nelson | 20 |
| Michelle Heron | 23 |
| Pam Langevin | 24 |
| Karen Stallonis | 28 |

ATTENTION COOKS

We are planning a church cookbook for our fall fundraiser. We know there are some wonderful cooks out there; we've sampled many of the delicious offerings. So please gather up those fabulous recipes (as many as you'd like) and send them on over. We would like to have all **recipes received by September 28**, so we can put the book together and have it ready for a release party before the holidays (more to come on that). Also, if you could send along a photo of your signature dish, that would be great. Please e-mail your recipes to Cathy Blanchard at cjb756@charter.net.



RALLY DAY AND PICNIC

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over and September is at hand. We will kick off the fall season on **September 7** with Rally Day and the church picnic. Join us this day for a time of re-connecting to your church family. Please bring your registration form(s) with you on the 7th. We will celebrate with a picnic after service. Bring along something to share for lunch. We will cook hot dogs on the grill.



VBS 2008 - RAINFOREST ADVENTURE

"Rainforest adventure, a tree top Bible blast. Rainforest adventure living life together in Christ. Every tree in the forest will join in the chorus and sing to the Lord. It's a rainforest adventure, a tree top Bible blast."

Truly this year's Vacation Bible School was all this and more! For three evenings, 43 children and adults gathered at Pakachoag to sing to the Lord and live life together in Christ. We enjoyed delicious food and fellowship. We came together to worship, to sing, and learn about the rainforest and our stewardship of God's creation by enjoying puppet performances. We made fun crafts and listened to Bible stories, and we sang in the Great Hall, in the classrooms, driving to and from the church. Some even said they were singing in their sleep. All of this fun and learning could not have taken place without the dedication of some special folks.

A great **BIG thank you** to ...

- *Cathy and Lynn Blanchard* and *Kathy Papineau* for leading the crafts.
- *Rev. Dennis Knight* and *Chottsie Coté* for leading Bible study and Bible storytelling.
- *Allyn Phelps* and *Jeff LaBonte* for providing us with music. We also thank *Rich McPherson* for also playing guitar the final evening.
- *Sydney Bailey, Paige Bailey, Jaime Bailey* and *Lillian McPherson* for being our Junior Counselors and to *Sydney, Paige* and *Jaime* for performing at our puppet shows.
- *Neile Connery* for baking a delicious dessert for the final evening.
- *Carolyn Krest*, our chef and program administrator. Her support every year is phenomenal.
- I would also like to thank two men behind the scenes: *Greg Gadbois* for building our puppet theater and *Manny Hernandez*, our church custodian for keeping our space clean and safe.

Members of Pakachoag Church, you are awesome! AND Rev. Dee Scott, Minister of Education and Director of Rainforest Adventure. THANK YOU!!

OPPORTUNITIES AT OUR CHURCH

Church Yard Sale

Saturday, September 13
8:00 AM – 12:00 Noon (rain or shine)

We are in need of items to sell! Please drop items **no later** than Wednesday, September 10th. Bring items down to Fellowship Hall. **NO** stuffed animals or encyclopedias, please. Any questions or **if you want to help out**, contact Carolyn in our church office.



Musical Sunday



Pakachoag looks forward to a Service of Music to be led by guest musician Barclay Wood on **Sunday, September 21**. "Barry" was the Organist and Choir Director at the First Baptist Church in Worcester for forty years. He is also a recitalist and teacher of national repute. We look forward to hearing Barry, both as an organist and as a narrator. He will be offering a range of sacred music from various periods and traditions, and with emphasis on organ, as well as providing background and insight into how this music relates to Christian worship.

Women's Night Out

Not sure that to do with all those pictures you took this summer? We have the answer. Why not make a summer scrapbook. Join us on **Friday night, September 26** at 6:00 PM for dinner and scrapbooking with Lynn Blanchard. A flyer will be sent soon with a list of basic supplies and a dinner sign up. Join us for this night of fun and fellowship.



Family Ministry Activity

Let's pick apples on **Sunday, September 28**. Bring along a picnic lunch to Keown Orchards in Sutton where we will enjoy a fall afternoon. More information will be listed in the Sunday bulletins and on the bulletin board at the church.

Blessing of the Animals Service

On **Sunday, October 5** we will once again hold a Blessing of the Animals Service in the Memorial Garden at 2:00 PM. All animals and their owners are invited to attend. Please spread the word to your neighbors and friends.



YOUR THOUGHTFULNESS IS MUCH APPRECIATED

"We thank everyone for all the well wishes, prayers and support we received during Bob's recent hospitalization and recuperation."

Bob Bertrand and Carolyn Kreft

WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

Many thanks to our lay worship leaders this summer: *Cathy Blanchard, Lynn Blanchard, Peter Herman, Marilyn Kulesa, and David Stebbins.*



SHOW, DON'T TELL

by Lynn Blanchard - Chair, Spiritual Life Board

*I desire to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart. Psalm 40:8*

There are many people out there preaching about love, forgiveness and unity. Good people with all the best intentions. There are people who speak much louder with their actions when they offer their lives to good works, and dedication to making the world around them a better place. They strive to help others, to be someone people can count on, and to live God's law and word. Sometimes I wonder if I am doing enough, if I could listen more, if I am worthy of the love God bestows on me.

I am thankful for the everyday miracles in my life. For the people who surround me with love. For my cheerleaders, for my support, and for my shoulders to cry on, I know I am so blessed.

When I was just a baby, I was very sick. I was in and out of the hospital for nearly two years. My mother feared I wouldn't survive long enough to be baptized in the church. So in an act of faith, she blessed me herself in the bathtub, washing me in the waters of God's love. She asked him to watch over me, and if it was my time, to take me into his arms and welcome me to his heavenly kingdom.

When I was eight years old, I chose to be baptized in the church. Not because I feared I might not survive, but because I knew it was where I belonged, and it would be my conscious choice to say, "Yes, Lord, I want to stand with you". I was filled with the Holy Spirit and alive in God's love for me and the world I lived in.

I've spoken about dark times in my life, when God sent messengers to help me find my way. A man entered my life a complete stranger at the time. He offered a job, a helping hand, and a way back to my faith. I've told you about a co worker, in seeing my need, offered a reassuring word and a listening ear. Once more, I shared of a woman with the power to lift my spirits and help me reach for my dreams, even to dream again. All people in my life, who were once strangers, yet through faith and trusting in the quiet whispers of God, helped to shape my life and put me back on the path I am meant to walk.

They each made the choice to not only preach the word of God, but to live it.

In one of my writing classes, I learned an important lesson, not only about writing fiction stories, but about life in general. The lesson is, **Don't tell, show**. So I invite you to show people what being a Christian is, by your actions and deeds, rather than telling them. Stop and listen to the quiet whisper of God's word, speaking to your very soul. You can give light to someone in darkness, help someone lost find their way, and give hope to someone lost in despair. Not for our glory, but for the glory of God.

Be one of God's many miracles for someone today.

SENDING OUR GOOD WISHES ...

Pakachoag Church members and friends want to wish Paulo Gomes congratulations and good luck as he continues his musical studies. Paulo has moved to Houston, TX where he will start his Doctoral Program at the University of Houston. If you want to send along your wishes, his new email address is maestropaulogomes@gmail.com.

CONGRATULATIONS

Brooke Jacquelyn Witcher, daughter of Toni and Thad Witcher was baptized on Sunday, August 17. Godparents are Veronica and Scott Trotto. We welcome Brooke to the body of the Christian Church and offer her parents and family our warmest congratulations.

GOODBYE AND BEST OF LUCK TO YOU

Peter Herman is beginning a Master of Divinity program this month at Union Seminary in New York City. Our warmest embrace goes with him on he pursues preparation for ordained ministry. The following was part of his message to the congregation on Sunday, August 17th.

"Not too long ago, you welcomed a stranger into your family on an Easter morning. I almost snuck out after service too, but Reverend Dee called