

## **A Message from our Senior Minister Emeritus Rev. Dennis Knight**

Dear Friends,

Pakachoag Church has a tradition of being an incubator organization. This congregation has spawned any number of enterprises that continue to serve the Central Massachusetts area and beyond. Every spring, the Church becomes a literal incubator, not by intent but by circumstance. The building's proximity to open land, and our ample grounds, serve to summon birds to our eaves and abutting shrubbery and trees where they build nests to raise their young.

Nesting birds are territorial creatures. It is a fierce world in which they exist, and any other creature is perceived as a threat. There is a robin occupying the tree on the south side of the Great Hall, at the organ end, who found itself confronted with one such "enemy." Our organist, Randy Bloom, became aware of a repetitive thudding noise one day in that room, and upon investigation, realized that the robin inhabiting that tree was repeatedly swooping into the window. Apparently, the bird could see a reflection in the glass panes, and perceived its own image as that of another bird. The "attacks" on the glass were attempts to ward off the perceived danger this other creature posed.



Concern came upon us who joined Randy, as we watched that bird flail against an imaginary foe, for we realized that it could literally pound itself to death. Eventually we covered that window with paper, so to dispel the reflection and thereby keep the bird from harming itself.

That robin saw a shadow in a window, and turned that into a false reality. In so doing it put itself in jeopardy. There are times when people, with far more rational capacity than birds, do exactly the same thing. Sometimes people create imaginary foes in their minds, and then react to those self-creations with the same ferocity the robin did.

More than half a century ago, Joseph McCarthy, a United States Senator, set the United States ablaze with contrived fears about communism. He convened session after session of a Senate committee, before which he brought countless public figures whose reputations and livelihoods were scourged by the taint of their presumed communist affiliations. Accusation alone was enough to bring some people down. It was a dark time in American politics, and all the more so because the agitation was grounded in contrived and imagined enemies. Yet a good portion of the country's population embraced the fear stirred up by McCarthy. Like the robin that was responding to deep, primal instincts, otherwise rational persons were willing to dash reason against a shadow, and thereby inflict harm.

These many decades later, we can readily identify elements of hysteria in the machinations of Joe McCarthy. In moments when suspension of reason is upon us, however, the irrational seems rational, and hysteria seems like the norm. At those times, we become as the robin in our responses, reactive without governance.

The Church is called to help restore rational discourse when it has been sundered, as it often is, by shadows that we confuse with reality. Bigotry, prejudice, self-interest, or a whole host of "isms," including classism, sexism, militarism, or racism, create "false positive" reactions that serve to confuse the line between perception and actuality. In today's society, issues of immigration, gay rights, health care, economic justice,

sustainable living, can serve as flash points that trigger impulsive, atavistic, and potentially destructive, responses from whole bodies of people.

Through its advocacy for inclusivity and promotion of justice issues, the Church can help still the frenzy of social thrashing brought about when one segment of society is unable or unwilling to accept as valid the needs, longings, and standing of other segments of society. Just as we put a blind against the windows to protect a robin from destructive behavior, so it is for the Church collectively to step forward and offer protection for those whose lives and well-being are put at risk by others yet, who see in the shadows of differences a false foe whom they seek to subdue, constrain, or undermine.

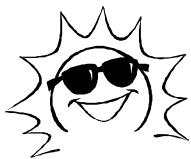


## DURING JULY AND AUGUST

**Office Hours:** Carolyn, our church administrative secretary, will be away from the office July 6-10 and thereafter on Mondays and Tuesdays during the months of July and August.

**Worship Services:** Informal summer worship services will be held every Sunday at 10:00 AM during July and August with the exception of July 5<sup>th</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup> when we will have no worship services.

**Fellowship Hour:** We do continue to have Coffee Hour after church throughout the summer. The summer is a great opportunity for someone who might be busy with other church responsibilities during the regular season or for someone to try it for the first time. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board for the summer months.



# Happy Birthday!

July 4	Arlene Schwager
July 8	Ture Carlson
July 17	Cathy Blanchard
July 20	Al Esposito
July 25	Catie Vickers
July 31	Alexis Wilson

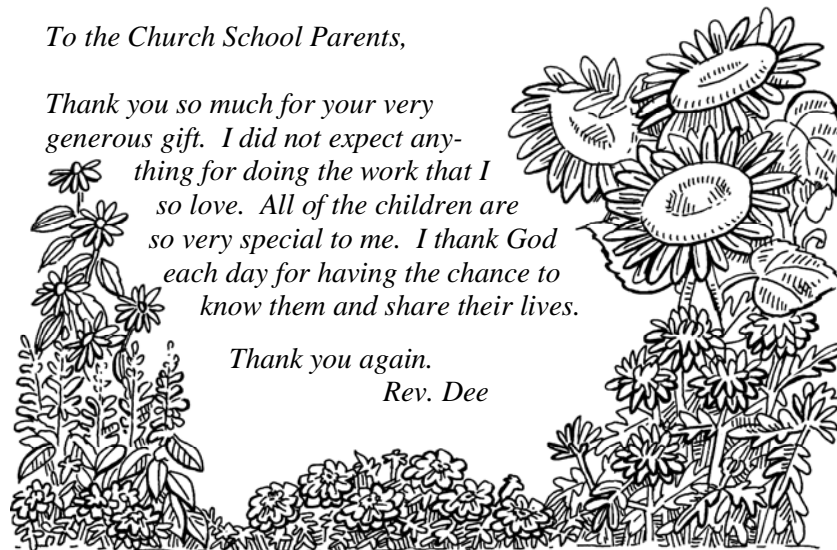
August 3	Craig Carlson
August 3	Nathan Taylor
August 17	Arline Rayner
August 21	Sue Hubbard
August 26	Isabella Connery



*To the Church School Parents,*

*Thank you so much for your very generous gift. I did not expect anything for doing the work that I so love. All of the children are so very special to me. I thank God each day for having the chance to know them and share their lives.*

*Thank you again.  
Rev. Dee*



## HOSTING IHN FAMILIES

It's that time again – time to start planning for our **host week July 26 through August 2**. We will be host to several homeless families (up to 15 people all together) for that week. Our responsibility is to provide them with companionship, shelter and food for the week. There is a calendar on the bulletin board with the various needs. Please take the time and add your name to where you can best help out. This is a very important part of our community outreach and an extremely gratifying experience for anyone who participates. Please feel free to contact Chottsie Cote at 774-239-3574 with any questions, concerns or suggestions.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO ...

*Travis Hintlian*, a recent graduate of Auburn High School. Travis is the son of Michelle Heron and John Hintlian.

*Brandin Taylor Bigwood*, son of Rebecca and Edward Bigwood was baptized on Sunday, June 28. Godparents are Kimberly Bettencourt and Peter Bigwood.

Also baptized was *Alyssa Renee Gervasi*, daughter of Tricia and Gaspare Gervasi. Godparents are Danielle Watkins and Sebastiano Gervasi.

We offer their parents and family our warmest congratulations.

## Dash by David Stebbins

For everything there is a season. I didn't really "forget" my agreement to write an article for the *Messenger*. If truth be told, I didn't really know of what I should write!!! ME!!! Of all people at a loss for words! So I think I feel the Holy Spirit prompting my heart to NOT write an "article" per say, but this should be a time for sharing ... simply sharing.

If the on-start of this doesn't seem to quite connect to the ending in logical train of thought, it 's OK. I often do that on a continuing basis. This moment of sharing all started as I recall some of the cliché, or witty sayings through the years in varying Christian arenas ... many of which have been seen on bumper stickers like: "Honk if you love Jesus" or "Don't take Christ out of Christmas" (which would make it, Xmas). And one of my personal favorites which I'm sure some of you have heard at one time or another: "Jesus loves you! .(but I'm His favorite!)"

A more recent saying that comes to mind is about how we use the word "love". I LOVE my house. I LOVE my new car! I LOVE the outfit I just got. Etc. All this LOVE going around, and all it really boils down to is this. We really appreciate something so much, or enjoy something so much, that the word LOVE just sort of floats off the tongue like honey.

But isn't love a word that has a much better use, meaning, and application that this? I think so. (Forgive me if this sounds "preachy"... it's not intentional) But the GREATEST Commandment is this ... "Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your strength. And the second law is likened unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Against these two hand ALL the Law and the Prophets."

We often unintentionally voice a misplacement simply because of common, acceptable language. Which brings me to a most recent quip I've learned (and believe it or not, it was not from televangelist!). It goes something like this: "We spend too much time loving things and using people, when we should be using things and loving people."

I heard a story of a man and his son visiting a grave site of a departed loved one. On the marker it gave the date of birth and the date of death of the person. These dates were separated by a dash (-). That dash, according to the story, represents all the span of time in that person's life that took place between the two dates. Here comes the part of this "article" that I hope fits together with all this sharing ... somehow.

Thank you all for being in my dash and making very significant contributions to the quality of caring, sharing, and loving ... not just to me, but as I see it demonstrated in hospitality, spiritual life of our church and your inclusivity. You are not just a gathering of people to share, you are an on-going dash in so many lives that have come in and out of our doors. In smiles, laughter, tears, sorrow and in great times of joy, we hear it EVERY Sunday morning beginning with "Good morning. Welcome to Pakachoag Community Church. We are an open and affirming congregation of UCC." In closing now (before I go on too long) thank you for being in my dash and for making it more wonderful. God Bless you.

Have something for the Messenger? Please send it to [PakMessenger@charter.net](mailto:PakMessenger@charter.net) no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publishing.

**Deadline for the September newsletter is August 15 .**

## What's cookin' Pakachoag?

### We are ...

Thanks to all who submitted your tasty family recipes. **Here's a peek at one of the recipes from our upcoming recipe book...**

#### Spiced Pineapple Relish

Linnea Eldridge

20 oz can chunk pineapple, undrained

¼ cup cider vinegar

12 whole cloves

¼ cup sugar

Grated peel of 1 lemon

3 - 3" cinnamon sticks

A week ahead, combine all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate.

Makes 3 cups.



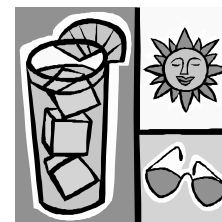
### SUMMER FUN FEST

A Family Fun Day with food, games, and activities

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 8**

**12 Noon to 3:00 PM**

More details will be available on our  
website: [www.pakachoag.org](http://www.pakachoag.org)



## Minutes from the Informational Church meeting on June 7, 2009

Jeff LaBonte convened the group.

Discussion included the following items:

**No Church scheduled on July 5** (4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend) and September 6 (Labor Day weekend). It was agreed that this needed to be publicized.

**Yard Sale scheduled for September 19.** Even though there had been discussion of a spring yard sale and some people were very interested, there needs to be time for publicity and organization. There will be discussions with the Music School and the Auburn District Nurses to coordinate a large community event in the fall.

**Presentation after church** on June 28 for all members, but, in particular, parents of children involved in the Sunday School Program. This is to discuss a new Sunday School curriculum being looked at for the children.

**Interfaith Hospitality Network:** The date for our program is July 26 through August 2. Volunteers are needed for meals and evening programs (sign up sheet is on the church bulletin board). There is a Family Ministry event on July 29 with IHN guests invited to participate.

Tentative dates for our **Family Ministry programs** are July 15, July 29, August 8 and August 26. August 8 is planned to be a Summer Fun Fest event for the community. The fourth date (August 26) will occur if the first three are successful.

This is a community outreach in place of the Vacation Bible School. There was discussion of the elimination of the VBS this year. There were comments both in support of continuing with VBS and other comments about trying a new venue since resources and money is limited.

Submitted by  
*Ellen Gaboury*, Clerk  
Pakachoag Church

## Girlfriends by Lynn Blanchard

My mom has always told me how important it is to have girlfriends. Sisters, close friends, neighbors, women from your church or work are all an important part of your sanity, and growth. The neighborhood my 6 siblings and I grew up in was far from a “modern neighborhood”. Most of the women in the area were, what we have come to know as, “stay at home mothers”. They married the one man they would spend their lives with, raised their children, took care of their homes, sewed clothes for their families, and made a hot meal for the family to share when dad came home from a long day at work.

Okay, so, no, I’m not THAT old, but the neighborhood I grew up in was like another time; “the woods of Worcester” as we called it. No busses in the area, and most people didn’t want to drive on the, at times, nearly impassable dirt roads. All the families had been there for generations. All of us kids grew up with the children of our parents friends. Most families had only one car (if that) so the only time the women left the house was on weekends when the family would go out. It could be easy for them to feel isolated and alone. So how, you may ask, did these women stay sane? We’ll that’s where mom’s secret comes in. “No matter how wonderful your marriage is, you need girlfriends!”

I think she had a couple of lessons in this.

**#1 Be your own person.** As much as you love your sweetie, you both need some space. Have your own interests, and your own thoughts.

**#2 Have people (i.e. girlfriends) you can talk to.** Get together and talk about the kids, about health issues, about the similar situation you are in. Learn from one another, help one another grow, and maintain the feeling, the truth, that you are not alone.

Friday, we had one of our “Women’s Night Out”. For those of you who attended, you can understand where I’m coming from. For those of you who didn’t, let me try to explain the magic of the evening. The formula is a simple one. The women of the church (and of course extended church family) come together for an evening event, beginning with a pot luck meal. The women (and sometimes Dennis) share our individual talents, and love with creative and delicious dishes. Sometimes the dishes are sweet, sometimes savory and occasionally even spicy. We offer fellowship to one another and offer our own stories. Then, no matter the “theme” of the evening, it’s always more about sharing with one another than anything else. We discuss the topic, we learn from one another, and come together in sisterhood.

This past Friday, Marilyn led the group. After our dinner, she told us about Reiki. She led us in a guided meditation, and we learned of her experiences as an RN and a Reiki practitioner. We found a way to relate to her experiences. Each of us had different points of view, and used different language, but no matter the words we used, we were on the same path.

I understand there aren’t too many places like the neighborhood I grew up in left in our modern world. I’m not saying if it’s a good thing or not, it’s not for me to say. But it was how I grew up. My life now is very different from that of my parents at my age, but I believe my mom’s words of wisdom still hold true. There is an undeniable power in “girlfriends”, whether they are male or female, old or young, so long as they are people you can relate to, learn from, and grow because of.

***“... I have seen that in any great undertaking it is not enough for a man to depend simply upon himself.”***

*Lone Man, Tenton Sioux, Late 19 century*

## MONTH OF JULY



<i>Week of ...</i>		
<b>July 5</b>		<b>NO WORSHIP SERVICE</b>
July 6	6:30-8:00 PM	PCMS Theory Class
July 8	9:30 AM	PCMS Summer Sampler Class (FH)
July 11	9:00 AM	PCMS Music Class (FH)
<i>Week of ...</i>		
<b>July 12</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service with Communion</b>
	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Coffee Hour (HR)</b>
July 13	6:30-8:00 PM	PCMS Theory Class
July 15	9:30 AM	PCMS Summer Sampler Class (FH)
July 15	9:00 AM-3:00 PM	Mass Care Meeting (HR)
<b>July 15</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>	<b>Family Ministry - Cookout and games</b>
July 17	10:00 AM-2:00 PM	InterValley Project Meeting (HR)
July 18	9:00 AM	PCMS Music Class (FH)
<i>Week of ...</i>		
<b>July 19</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service with Communion</b>
	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Coffee Hour (HR)</b>
July 20	6:30-8:00 PM	PCMS Theory Class
July 22	9:30 AM	PCMS Summer Sampler Class (FH)
July 25	9:00 AM	PCMS Music Class (FH)
July 25	5:00-8:00 PM	Team USA Spaghetti Supper (GH)
<i>Week of ...</i>		
<b>July 26</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Worship Service with Communion</b>
	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Coffee Hour (HR)</b>
<b>July 26-August 2</b>	<b>evenings</b>	<b>Interfaith Hospitality Network Week</b>
July 27	6:30-8:00 PM	PCMS Theory Class
July 29	9:30 AM	PCMS Summer Sampler Class (FH)
<b>July 29</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>	<b>Family Ministry - Cookout and Games</b>

MONTH OF AUGUST



<i>Week of ...</i>		
August 2	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Worship Service with Communion Coffee Hour (HR)
August 2-7	9:00 AM-3:00 PM	PCMS Music/Drama Class (FH)
August 8	11:00 AM	PCMS Music Show (GH)
August 8	12 Noon-3:00 PM	Family Ministry – Summer Fun Fest
 <i>Week of ...</i>		
August 9	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Worship Service Coffee Hour (HR)
 <i>Week of ...</i>		
August 16	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Worship Service Coffee Hour (HR)
August 19	9:00 AM-2:00 PM	Mass Care Meeting (HR)
 <i>Week of ...</i>		
August 23	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Worship Service Coffee Hour (HR)
August 26	5:30 PM	Family Ministry - Cookout and games (pending)
 <i>Week of ...</i>		
August 30	10:00 AM 11:00 AM	Worship Service Coffee Hour (HR)

PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO worship service on September 6.

HR – Hex Room  
 FH – Fellowship Hall  
 GH – Great Hall  
 Dates and times are subject to change.