



**O**n Sunday, January 18, Pilgrims celebrated the completion of improvements that substantially improve accessibility for persons with mobility limitations. The parking lot entrance to the building has an improved ramp, and wide, power-operated doors. Inside there is unisex, wheel chair accessible, bath room, and an accessible water fountain.

The worship service focused on disability, and included personal statements of faith from Pilgrims with disabilities: **Nancy Lee Head, Marilyn Lutter, and Martin Benton.** **Jan Benton**, Director of the National Catholic Partnership for Disability (and Martin's wife), led a "Litany of Wholeness." There was a dedication of the improve-



## Accessibility Improvements Dedicated and Blessed



ments in the service, after which **Ashley Goff** led worshippers to the new bath room and the new doors for blessings of those places.

Adult education on January 11, 18, and 25 also focused on disability. The series of classes, organized by Marilyn Lutter and **Gerry Hendershot**, included dis-

cussions of the theology of disability and the etiquette of communications between people with and without disabilities, and concluded with a conversation between Pilgrims and **Judy Heumann**, Director of the DC Department of Disability Services. Judy, a polio survivor and wheel chair user, talked about obstacles to worship in synagogues (she is Jewish) and education, both secular and religious. †

## ASH WEDNESDAY

Please join us on February 25, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.  
for Ash Wednesday Service  
and Sacrament of Holy Communion. †

**SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN FEBRUARY****Aging, Spirituality and Creativity***February 1, 8 and 15**Led by Margee Iddings*

**I**t is a fact ... we are all aging!

We wonder if everyone ages in the same way.

We question the process and sometimes fight against it.

We want to find a way to be resilient in our own aging.

Two recent research studies give interesting information about the role of creativity in the aging process. In this class we will look at the results of these studies and explore the role that creativity plays in deepening our spiritual roots as we age. A vibrant spirituality is a worthy goal as we mature into the elder years. What can we as individuals and organizations do to encourage such vibrancy?

- Week #1: Focus on Aging
- Week #2: Focus on Creativity and Spirituality
- Week #3: Focus on the Intersections

Margee Iddings has just had the honor of presenting a similar workshop at the Washington National Cathedral when the Gerontological Society of America and the National Center for Creative Aging held their annual meeting. She is eager to involve Pilgrims in this study to determine the viability of creating a special focus on spirituality and creativity in a congregation's ministry. She would welcome your participation! †

**Food Deserts: Healthy Food Access Issues for Low Income and Vulnerable Populations***February 1, 8 and 15 and 22**Led by Shelly Ver Ploeg*

**S**ome studies suggest that geographical areas with limited access to full-service supermarkets, but with higher concentrations of fast-food restaurants have higher rates of overweight and obesity. Such areas are of concern because it is believed that the lack of healthy food alternatives may result in poor diets and subsequent diet-related health problems. Is the lack of access to healthy foods a problem in some areas of the U.S. or is the market simply responding to individual's preferences for relatively cheap, convenient, tasty and often high-calorie/low-nutrient foods. Do some people have limited access to foods they need for healthy diets and if so, how extensive is the problem and what policy alternatives may be most effective in mitigating the problem of limited access? We will consider each of these questions in a 4-week session on what some have termed "food deserts".

- Session 1: Defining and Scoping the Problem  
In this first session we'll try to have a better understanding about what access to healthy and affordable foods means and how we might consider whether areas lack such access. We will also consider the extent of the problem in the U.S. and in Washington, DC.  
**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:** For one day, or if you are up for the challenge, one whole week, eat only food that you purchased by walking or taking public transportation (either from work or from home). Be ready to describe the food environment in your neighborhood, how much you had to pay for travel expenses, and whether you had to make adjustments to your diet.

**Pilgrims Parents and Kids: Exploring the Labyrinth and Communion for Lent***February 15 and 22**Kids' Sunday School Room**Led by Ashley Goff*

During Lent, Pilgrims experiences communion each week in worship. The kids during Sunday school will walk the labyrinth each Sunday as part of their Sunday school experience. Come to this two week class for Pilgrims and kids of all ages to go more in depth about communion and the labyrinth. †

- Session 2: Public Health Implications
- Session 3: Policy Alternatives (We will also talk about policy alternatives from Can Food Stamps Do More? )
- Session 4: Putting our Faith into Practice—Outreach Opportunities †

## Pilgrims-at-Large and FaceBook Friends

[I asked some 20-somethings in the Pilgrims Diaspora who are on FaceBook to send me updates on their activities. Evans, Emily, and Laura were summer interns at Pilgrims (in different years); Jen was Manager of the Pilgrimage; and Michael joined Pilgrims before he went to Duke for graduate studies in Law and Divinity. ~Gerry Hendershot]

**Evans Ledbetter Presley-McGowan:** "I'm in January session here at San Francisco Theological Seminary, taking Greek, preparing for my 4th semester of Seminary beginning in February. I'm applying for an internship next year."



**Emily Presley-McGowan:** "I'm currently applying to seminary at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA, hoping to complete a Masters of Divinity in a few years. Most exciting on the immediate horizon is the massage therapy training (with a focus on energy healing) that I'll be starting in March. I think about Pilgrims often when I ponder a vision of what an alive and engaged church community can look like!"

**Jen McClurg:** "I am still doing very well at Wesley Theological Seminary and on track to graduate in May, 2009. I continue to be actively involved with my Youth Group and now work with the high school kids. Having been inspired by Pilgrims, I have started making small changes at my church. I have put together a two week Spiritual Formation class on third world poverty that will be presented in March, in conjunction with World Day of Prayer on March 6."

**Laura Pippenger:** "I just moved from St. Louis, MO to Newark, OH. My coursework for the Masters in Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis is complete and I have one semester of fieldwork, left. I am working for an organization in Columbus called Economic and Community Development Institute. They do homeownership and credit counseling, down payment assistance, financial education, and micro-credit loans."



**Michael Oswald:** "I graduated from [Duke with degrees in] law and divinity last May and am now in New York City for a one year clerkship with a federal judge. I actually hope to hear within the next week or so about a number of fellowships that would bring me back to DC!"

✝

## Pilgrims' Corner

## Pilgrims Participate in Inauguration of President Obama

Worshippers entering Pilgrims on January 18, the Sunday before the Inauguration, were greeted by Barack Obama—well, OK; it was a life-size cardboard cut-out *photograph* of Barack Obama. While the church was not officially involved in Inauguration activities, many individual Pilgrims participated, including **Ian Marcellino, James White,** and their daughter **Julin**, pictured here near the Washington Mounument.



Members of the Pilgrims Diaspora, including the **Frale family,** **Mary Ellen Player,** and **Greta Pike,** returned to DC for the festivities (from Milwaukee, New York, and Columbus, respectively), and worshiped at Pilgrims on the 18th. The Fraleys and the **Goff-Glennon family** stayed overnight at the church on January 19 to get a jump on Inauguration Day traffic. **Jeff Krehbiel and daughter Andrea** scored tickets to a restricted area near the West Front of the Capitol through a long-time friend of Jeff who now works for a Michigan Representative—Andrea now interns for the same Representative.

**Jen McClurg** arrived on the National Mall early enough to get some great photos of the sun rising behind the Washington Monument. **Shelly Ver Ploeg** and friends biked to downtown DC and took advantage of a free valet bicycle parking service provided by local volunteers. Jen and Shelly posted photos to Face Book, so "friend" them to see the pics. **Pat Goeldner** joined **Jean Gilpin** and other residents at the Ingleside at Rockcreek retirement community for a gala Inauguration Watch party.

Although they were not at the Inauguration in person, long-time Pilgrims **Gene Stossel, Penny Sandora,** and **Nancy Lee Head** were there in spirit. In the video made by **Shera Jenne** for Pilgrims' centennial in 2003, all three said that the participation of then-Pastor **Randy Taylor** in the Civil Rights Movement was a defining spiritual event for them and for Pilgrims. (Excerpt at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBMTIZ6rgTs&eurl=http://www.churchofthepilgrims.org/aboutus.html>.) It must have been a thrill for them to see the inauguration of the first American President of African descent. ✝

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fax or call in your request to the church office.*

Join us  
on Sundays for  
Worship, 11:00 A.M.

## What’s Going on At the Pilgrimage?

**Matthew Boote, Program Manager**

**W**e have had a very successful start to 2009. January has been a busy month filled with groups that have come to The Pilgrimage many times before and a few groups that we had the joy of hosting for the first time.

Our first order of business as we aim to improve in 2009 has been to focus on the physical space of The Pilgrimage. While we do not offer the ritziest of accommodations, we take pride in the space we provide for Pilgrimage groups; it sets the tone for a group’s experience. As such we have taken inspiration from the recent construction in the church and laid out minor goals of our own.

The Pilgrimage bathrooms are in serious need of upgrading and our kitchen needs some rejuvenation. In the bathrooms we would like to install new ceilings, a new ventilation system, new partitions, possibly add one shower to each bathroom, and upgrade the sinks/vanity areas. Since we have identified the bathrooms as needing the most serious work but we would still like to attend to the kitchen as well, we have decided that taking stock of, replacing, and purchasing new kitchen appliances and amenities will have the largest impact.

The following groups are coming this February. If you see any of The following groups are coming this February. If you see any of them, say hi!them, say hi!

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- 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church of Richmond – Richmond, VA – February 2-6
- Christ Church – Raleigh, NC – February 6-8
- Field School – Washington, DC – February 8-13
- 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Church of Annapolis – Annapolis, MD – February 13-15
- Joint Youth Ministries – Wilton, CT – February 16-21
- Alma College – Alma, MI – February 21-28
- McGill University – Montreal, Quebec, Canada – February 22-27 †