



PASSING IT ON



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PILGRIM LODGE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

DARREN MORGAN

Growing up in York Beach where summers equal a tourist invasion, it's not too hard to believe that Darren Morgan never went to Pilgrim Lodge as a kid. Summer camp wasn't even on his radar, because summers meant work, work, work. It wasn't until Darren entered seminary that he heard about PL and attended a few of the off season camps and opportunities. During seminary, Darren and Mark (then his partner and now his husband) attended Gay Men Together which took place at PL in the spring and in the fall. Darren remembers, "those shoulder seasons were awfully cold, but I was still able to see what a special place it really is. You really do commune with God there. It is phenomenal."



Post-seminary, as the minister for the Brownville Community Church, Darren rallied the kids at church to attend PL. Knowing that church can, at times, feel formal and stuffy, he hoped that kids could come to experience God in a different way, an informal way. "It would be amazing to see them come back from PL and be so exciting and have loved it."

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The list of churches who have pledge is growing!! We recently received word that the First Parish Congregational Church UCC of Saco and The First Congregational Church UCC of Wilton are pledging to the "We Want To Pass It On" campaign. That brings the PL church campaign to 25 pledges from churches. Will your church be next??

MESSAGE FROM THE CAMPAIGN CO-CHAIR

Spring is here and with the melting of the snow, our Building Committee was able to look over the sight of our new Dining Hall. The Committee met at Pilgrim Lodge last week and walked the area. They talked about roads, loading docks, kitchens, ovens, dishwashers and traffic patterns - and even tested some mattresses! Sure is starting to sound real.

We fundraisers did not have to wait for the snow to melt - we have been talking about PL at churches, Association meetings and with individuals.

We can't let the Building Committee get ahead of us. If you haven't made your pledge yet, please do. It's time to pass it on!

Pam Gormley, Co-Chair
Capital Campaign Committee, pgormley@msln.net

PS. How about making a pledge in honor of your mother, father or graduate!

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When he became an associate conference minister six years ago was when he actually started spending time on the boardwalk in the summer as a dean of Rainbow Camp, an adult camp for LGBT folks. One of his favorite parts of Rainbow Camp has been walking the labyrinth in the dark. "It's an incredibly moving experience. With the canopy of trees and the moonlight filtering through and the sounds you hear, it is a very spiritually moving experience."

When asked how one goes from having barely any exposure to PL to deaning, Darren connects it to his call to minister. Prior to becoming an associate conference minister, Darren was a bi-vocational minister (i.e. a minister who worked full time at another job) who had no time for anything extra like being a part of PL. After becoming a full time minister for the conference, there was time to be a part of PL and be involved in its ministry, because it was another way to live out his call.

Even though Darren's involvement in PL is shorter than some of the other folks we've profiled, his support is just as strong. Darren's pledge of \$25,000 to the Pilgrim Lodge Capital Campaign demonstrates his belief in PL's ministry and how strongly he supports this ministry within the Maine Conference. "This is just a small way of showing that I believe in this ministry, and I want others to believe in it too. I hope my gift encourages others to dig deep and give as they are able."

CALLING ALL MAINE CONFERENCE CHURCHES

Who is calling?

Generations of young people and adults seeking know God, themselves and one another more deeply. In a beautiful place. That belongs to each one of us in the Maine Conference.

Why are they calling?

The Pilgrim Lodge "We Want To Pass It On" Capital Campaign is entering its final phase and has reached \$1,436,000 -- a tantalizing \$564,000 from its \$2,000,000 goal!

The great news is that the Coordinating Council of the Maine Conference has extended the campaign until the Annual Meeting of the Conference in October. That means we have six months to reach the goal. The latest church in the Conference to pledge is First Congregational Church UCC in Wilton, ME. They pledged \$5,000 over five years! Thanks so much to Rev. David Smith and key leaders at First Church!

Through April 9th, 22 churches had pledged a total of \$60,865. There are 160 churches in the Maine Conference, so there are still 138 churches still to hear from. If those churches pledged \$2,500 (just \$500 per year for 5 years), the Campaign would reach very close to \$1,800,000. Some will pledge more and some will pledge less, but if the average was \$2,500, our goal of \$2,000,000 would be right around the corner.

A very doable goal. Add to that goal prospective individual and foundation grants, and what do we have? A reachable \$2,000,000 final result. A fully restored Pilgrim Lodge experience with a new dining hall, new accessibility, upgraded infrastructure, new program and gathering space!

It's time to s t r e t c h.

In early May, churches in the Maine Conference will receive a mailing with a case statement, campaign brochures, pledge cards and other materials. We ask that all churches who have not pledged to the Campaign thoughtfully and prayerfully consider what you can do. We will be following up with phone calls to invite you to the next step in supporting Pilgrim Lodge.

If for some reason you don't hear from us, one of our great Pilgrim Lodge volunteers will come to you, bringing the message and answering any questions you may have.

Want to know more? Call Peter Heinrichs, campaign consultant, on his cell at 207-615-2212 or email him at peheinrichs@gmail.com. He'll get the resources you need out to you quickly.



Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PLCapitalCampaign

CHURCH SPOTLIGHT: FIRST PARISH UCC SACO

“First Parish UCC loves PL” is how Kris Galasyn, the Director of Christian Education at this Saco church described her church’s relationship with Pilgrim Lodge. When asked to describe what loving PL (as a church) looked like, Kris said, “When I first got to First Parish in 2004, the camping season had already started. But when the kids came back in September they were all talking about how wonderful PL was. When we got closer to camp time the following year, I noticed that 30-40 people were going - kids, parents, grandparents! You know that recommendation that churches try to send 1 counselor for every 5 campers? We actually do that!” Wow!

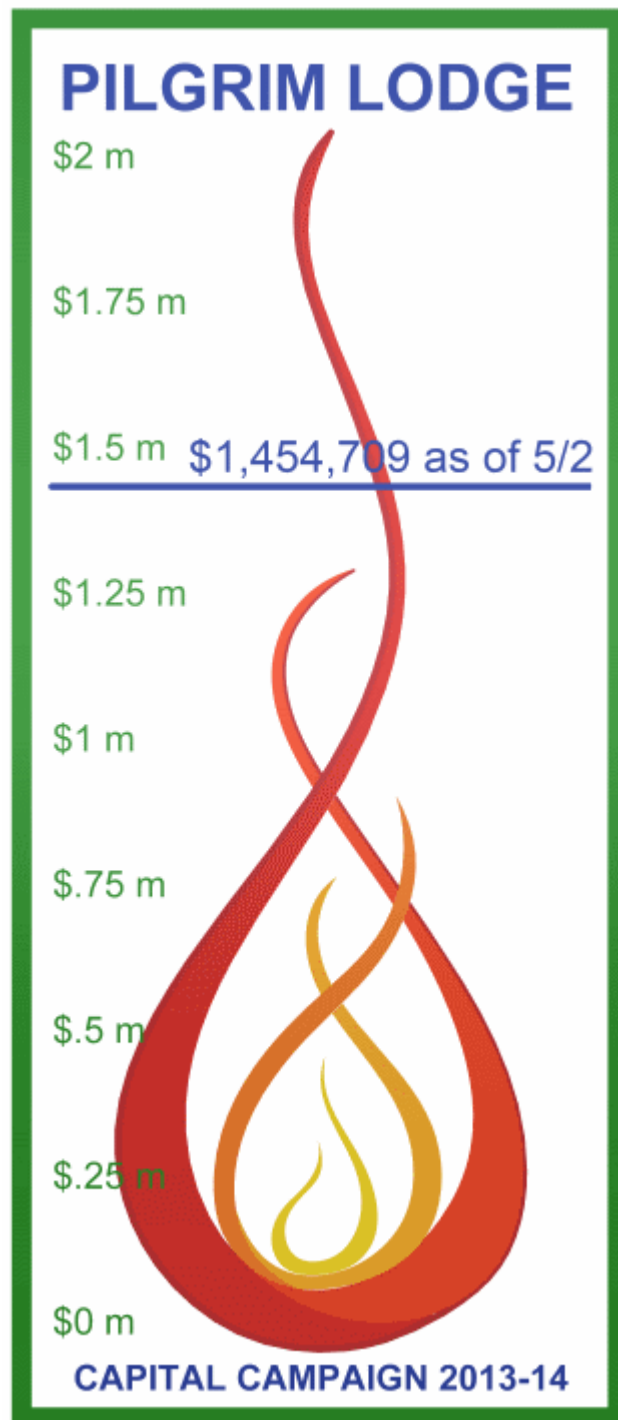
Lots of goodwill and good feelings about PL run through the church. “As soon as registration for Senior High opens up, everyone is clicking to go.” With \$1,000 support per year from both the Women’s Fellowship and Christian Education, every camper - youth or adult - who submits an application gets campership support. Unlike most churches, First Parish has their PL Sunday in September, at the end of the summer, instead of at the beginning since they already have so many people who attend. The fall service is a time of celebration which often includes church members - young campers, teens, grandparents - reflecting on what they got out of their PL experience that summer.

When asked why she thinks there is such a well of support for PL, Kris says she’s never heard any negative feedback. Everyone has a great time and makes new friends, and the older kids get involved in the State Youth Council so they can see their PL friends a few more times a year.

First Parish encourages young families to take their kids to a Day at Camp where both parents and kids can get the feel of it and have fun besides. From there, they are encouraged to go to Faith Foundations which is only a half week. After having experienced ice cream daily, the chapel,



Kris and youth from First Parish at the Alternative Regional Youth Event Pilgrim Lodge 2006



the lake, ice cream, cabin time, and ice cream (did we mention ice cream?), who wouldn’t want to go back? “It’s a really positive experience for everyone.”

Kris believes churches should donate to the PL Capital Campaign because “a pledge to PL is not just a pledge for now, it’s a pledge for future generations.” She loves the pictures of what PL will look like with the expanded facilities and the ability to extend the camping season into cooler months. “There will be so much more we can do with it when we have more than a couple of months of the year. So many more opportunities. It’s a real investment in our future.”