

2024 Senior High Dean's Letter

Hello and thank you for joining us for Senior High week at Pilgrim Lodge! We are your excited returning deans, Andrew and Mairaine, and we hope this letter finds you well. Come join us in being part of the continuing legacy of Senior High!

Important Details:

- When do I arrive: Between 2-3 PM on Sunday, July 14
- When do I leave: Between 9:30-10:30 on Saturday July 20 (families are welcome to attend our Closing Circle at 9:30 AM)
- Summer Mission: Each year PL has a different Mission, this year it is Maine Seacoast Mission: <https://seacoastmission.org>. We'll have a presentation during the week and at that time we often collect an offering either with dollars or with items. If you would like to participate here are some ideas of what you could bring to help:
 - Clothing items (socks, mittens, hats, coats)
 - Non-perishable food items (pasta, tuna, peanut butter, jelly, etc)
 - Games, cards, crayons, play dough, matchbox cars
 - Personal hygiene items (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, etc)
 - Monetary gifts or gift cards (gas stations, walmart, etc.)

Who are we?



Andrew Hunter teaches high school history at the Chewonki Foundation in Wiscasset, Maine. He enjoys reading informational plaques, taking baby Phoebe (named after the bird) on walks, and watching the Celtics win the Finals. He is a longtime Pilgrim Lodge camper and (still) thinks “Waltzing with Bears” is the greatest song in the PL songbook. Look for him in a canoe or identifying species in a spare moment.



Mairaine Kettell is the minister at Old South Church in Farmington, Maine. She spends her free time knitting, exploring, reading, and spending time with her family. She is a long time camper at Pilgrim Lodge and has served as a counselor, dean, and fill in staff. Mairaine credits Pilgrim Lodge with fostering her call to ministry which includes being as creative and silly as possible. Feel free to join her for a chat.

Andrew and Mairaine are both members of the Pilgrim Lodge Leadership Team.

Who are Senior High campers?

They are upperclassmen who carry on treasured traditions. They are younger-now-older siblings, relatives, or friends who grew up with stories of Senior High and are eager to make their own memories. They are first time campers who bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to the community. They are musicians, artists, athletes and nature-lovers. They are, in short, everyone you can imagine! Above all, they are passionate and thoughtful about the issues of the world, and they are fierce friends who know how to show up for one another. Whether you've been to Pilgrim Lodge a hundred times or this is your first time joining us, we are so ready to welcome you with a seat at the table and a place in the choir. Here, you are a part of the family!

What can you expect at Senior High?

At Senior High you will find a group of inspiring teens and caring adults who share the same radical idea: that a robust community built on thick relationships can be built in a week, and that through the power of community transformative growth is possible. To that end, authenticity is key, which means developing a space in which everyone feels a sense of belonging and can show up fully as themselves. Not only does this honor each person's diverse individuality, but enables greater collective strength. And we have some seriously awesome campers and volunteer counselors and deans!

If community is the goal, what are the means? Well, the wisdom of PL teaches us that nothing builds relationships and connections like ice cream cones and silly songs about yodeling Austrians! This summer we will engage with one another through fun games and activities, sleepy midday bunk times, and dress up dinners. We will cultivate connections with the natural world through swimming, boating, and time in the woods. And we hope to activate the mind and heart with quiet reflection, meaningful conversation, and spiritual fellowship. In particular, this summer's chapel and family group curriculum is all about what it means to be in relationship with one another.

Part of building such a grounded community means being present in the moment, and all campers will go without cell phones for the week of camp. But don't worry, you can still send regular mail and can receive letters and printed emails as well throughout the week (your families can set this up through UltraCamp). We hope this week is a chance to do something different and embrace face-to-face, intimate, and intentional relationships. Reject the FOMO and bring other ways to connect with your fellow campers and counselors! Knitting circle on the Lodge porch? Schooling some fools with your favorite board game? Leading an interest group with a sport of your choice?

Your packing should reflect these various activities. We encourage you to bring things that are important to some aspect of yourself, maybe an instrument, favorite pastime, or craft. In addition, you should, of course, plan on bringing clothes that can get dirty, swimming gear, and the clothes you feel most comfortable in, whatever that means for you. Don't

forget clothes for our “fancy dinner” later in the week and any goofy outfits! And if this is your first time coming to camp, please check out the [packing list](#) (page 8), which contains some other essential and nice-to-have items at camp.

As we have the past two years, we will be sharing Pilgrim Lodge with the Middler Spirit (middle school age) camp. This has been a lot of fun, including both good-natured competition (who won capture the flag on the island?) and meaningful collaboration. Who knows what this year will bring? In sharing the space, we try to strike the balance of being good neighbors, working together, but also retaining the unique identity of our own community. So while we will, for instance, eat meals at the same time and share Option Time Activities, for the most part the camps will operate separately. However, we are in the incredible position to be role models for the next generation of Senior High, and inspire them to dream big (and get jealous) of our awesome community.

That last point brings us to an important opportunity for this summer. As with every week of camp at Pilgrim Lodge, on the last evening we will have a talent show / coffeehouse / open-mic night! Everyone should feel invited to use this opportunity to share a poem, song, skit etc. However, we wanted to extend a special invitation to our post grads (folks who just graduated high school): “senior speeches.” Last year’s post grads revived this Senior High tradition of reflecting on their summer(s) at camp, and offering any advice they would give to underclassmen. This is a true capstone experience to a camp career of any length, and are excited to hear from this year’s crew.

We can’t wait to learn and grow with you as we share the best week of the summer!!

Best wishes,
Andrew and Marraine