
Annual Meeting

The Pilgrim Congregational Church family has the privilege of gathering this coming Sunday to participate in its forty-seventh annual meeting. To say that attending another meeting is a privilege might seem counter-intuitive. We are more likely to regard attending “just another meeting” as an obligation or duty rather than a privilege. Many of us are “meetinged to death;” at work, at school, in the soccer league, the PTA, and the service organization. We don’t need another meeting. A good friend of mine who spent his career as a university administrator told me once that, “When I die I hope it is in a committee meeting so the transition won’t be so extreme.” Meetings aren’t anyone’s favorite pastime.

In the days immediately following the emergence of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, whenever the early church met, it was to devote themselves “to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.” (Acts 2: 42) Throughout the ensuing 15 centuries the complexities of carrying on the ministries of compassion and mercy and justice that give the church its identity gave rise to complex organizational structures and practices. The Reformation happened in part as a reaction against the hierarchy and top-down authority of the Roman Church. The rise of denominations has been in large measure a result of widely diverse ideas about how to structure the church to do its ministry. Churches who have chosen the congregational (small ‘c’) form of church governance place priority on preserving the autonomy of each congregation from top-down control, and on the equality of each individual within the congregation. The opportunity to have one’s views on any issue heard, and taken seriously, forms the bedrock of congregational church governance. The role of At-Large members to an elected Forum, to serve as a conduit of the views of the membership is also an important, and usually under-utilized, feature of this form of church governance.

In this season of transition the voice of every individual member of the Pilgrim Congregational family is needed at this year’s annual meeting. The decisions the membership makes and the direction it chooses to take will have an immediate and far-reaching impact on the future of this congregation. I strongly encourage every member to seize the opportunity to mold and participate in that future by attending the annual meeting this Sunday.

Having said this, I regret to say that as a credentialed pastor in the Evangelical Covenant Church I will be attending a different meeting this weekend and through Wednesday of next week. I will be attending our denomination’s Midwinter Conference in Chicago. Please know that I will be holding up Pilgrim Congregational Church in prayer as you meet on Sunday.

God Bless You,

Pastor Jack

A Word
from
Pastor Jack



*Lord, help us to
trust in You
with all our
hearts, and to not
depend on our
own wisdom or
understanding.
We pray that in
all our ways, we
will acknowledge
You and seek
Your will, so
that You will
direct our paths
and make them
straight and plain
before us.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

