



Pawtucket Church News

October 2011

15 Mammoth Rd., Lowell, MA 01854
Pawtucketcongregationalchurch.org

Interim Pastor,
Rev. Peggy O'Connor

Pumpkin Patch Opens

Thank you, Lumpers!

It seems that the small army of folks who showed up to unload the tractor-trailer of pumpkins has a name: according to the dictionary, they are lumpers. And in this case, they are pumpkin lumpers. A big thank you goes out to Jim McMorrow, son Jonathan and his friend; Bob Sweet and Judy Davidson; Joan Graham and son Russ and grandkids Heather and Tim; Chip Hamblet; Steve Toth and Sarah and friend; Scott and spouse from NA; Matt from AA; three boys from Riverside group home; Nancy Butcher, our intern; Joan Bartlett and Callie and Emily; and Patch Director Maureen Kellet with husband Bill and son Michael. Too late for the work crew but admiring the results were Rev. Peggy, Peter Gunnulfsen and Louisa Varnum. My apologies to anyone whose name I have omitted. There was so much activity that it would be easy to miss some people. Some people also became unrecognizable due to being drenched by the ill-timed rain showers. The fun happens all over again on or about Oct. 10 when the second truck of pumpkins rolls in. Please come and help. Everyone can be a pumpkin lumper. No prior punkin'-chuckin' experience is needed.

Baked Goods Welcome

This is a call to all cooks to bring small bags of cookies and other treats which the Pumpkin Patch will sell for \$1.00 apiece. This profit is all ours, unlike the pumpkin sales. Sorry, but it's too late to buy Helen Wilcox Chervenak's brownies which disappeared quickly on Sunday.



Pumpkin Patch 2011. Note the new UMass Lowell Nanotechnology center rising in the background and the photo-op pumpkins made by the Kellett family.

The pumpkins were delivered a week earlier than last year and the patch opened on September 24. This partnership with Pumpkins USA brings us pumpkins grown in New Mexico on the Navajo reservation. The Native Americans grow them and they are trucked to churches all over the country. The project supplies revenue to the Navajos who have few employment opportunities. The churches who sell the pumpkins have no upfront costs and work on an honor system of reporting sales figures each day. When the sale ends on October 31, any leftover pumpkins can be disposed of as we see fit. Last year we earned \$4000 as our one-third share in the revenue generated. Of course we hope to increase our sales this year. We are hopeful we can do so since local farmers unfortunately had a very poor

year as far as pumpkins are concerned. In the first week we sold \$1000 worth of pumpkins and consider that a slow start due to, first, summer-like weather, then persistent showers. A perfect three-day weekend coming up should bolster our sales. Tentative arrival of the second truck of pumpkins is Oct. 10 at 5 pm. Check with Maureen Kellett for exact delivery time and then plan on coming by to help unload. Many hands make the work lighter. Also invite family and friends to visit our patch for their pumpkin needs. We had a small break-in at the patch one night but then were surprised when a young man with robber's remorse showed up the next day to pay for pumpkins that we didn't even know were missing!

From Rev. Peggy:

It seems like September arrives every year and we are surprised by how busy and hectic it is. Kids go back to school, which means their parents and grandparents are kept busy getting everything ready...all those school supplies and clothes to be purchased! Those who work have to shift gears from the meandering pace of August to the full bore open throttle warp speed of September. And church folks, like us, come back together from our summer sojourns to once again become the body of Christ that is the church. We move back into the sanctuary and leave the informality of summer worship in the chapel.

Then October arrives. The sheer madness of September is replaced by the only slightly more reasonable pace of October. Of course here at PCC October is a busy month. The pumpkins are here and the patch is open every day. And this year we are scheduled to get a second shipment of pumpkins. There is lots and lots to do with the pumpkins. It is all fun but it keeps us busy. At the same time we are starting up our Sunday School and getting back into the swing of the new church year.

It was with all this busyness in mind that I picked the theme for October: Community. It seems to me that the greatest joy of these busy months comes in the reformation of our community of faith. Over the summer every Sunday some people are away. They may be on vacation for a week or two or they may be away for the summer. Either way, our numbers decrease, especially in August, and we miss those not present. Then in September and October we get to see the return of our friends and members. We once again are at full strength. We can look around and see our community on most Sundays and it is a great feeling.

I come to church on Sundays not so much because it is my job but because it is in church that life becomes balanced. It is in worship that my soul finds refreshment and fuel for the week ahead. And much of that comes from the community...from you. If I am tired or discouraged or overwhelmed this community pulls me along to Sunday and worship. And there I am renewed. I hope that you find this at PCC every week as well.

Pastor's Schedule

This year, like last year, I will be in Lowell for a class on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 – 9:15. The fall class runs from October 18 through December 6. If you have a pastoral need or if you would just like to meet for lunch or a cup of coffee let me know and we will make a date! You can reach me by phone at 781 635-2318 or via email at peggy.oconnor1@comcast.net

Your Prayers are Requested

Every Sunday we list the names of people who are in need of our prayers. Please keep them in your hearts; Violet Thompson, Ken Spriggs, Joyce Frazee, Val Gaudette, Phil Cogan, and Elaine Rugeira.

New Tent



Chip, Don and Lily Kinghorn, Wayne Russell working in the patch.

The pumpkin patch has a new heavy-duty tent, needed after winds destroyed two canopies last year. Chip Hamblet and Louisa Varnum spent the bulk of a day at an auction of goods from a rental company, waiting for a chance to bid on the red and white tent with removable sides. It makes the patch look festive and provides shelter from the elements for the patch attendants.

Open Doors

A church should be hospitable and welcoming but lately PCC has been a little too much so. Doors have been left open on several occasions. Cathy Gunnulfsen made up signs for each door reminding those who use the church to check that all doors are locked before they leave. Jim, Chip and Bob Sweet held a door work day to install door closers and fix hinges that weren't working properly. Last month entry codes for groups were changed. It is hoped that all these preventive measures will result in a more secure but still welcoming building.

Fence Chronicles

For as long as most people can remember, the church has been surrounded by a wrought iron fence. However, photos of the early church show a rail fence with stone posts. Does anyone know when the iron

fence was erected and by whom? Check your answer with the one given later in the paragraph. The iron fence has seen many things over the years. Sections by the gate have been flattened by cars several times. The weather took its toll, as did road salt, causing rusting. Over twenty years ago, the students at the vocational school scraped and painted the fence. But lately, it was showing need of immediate attention. Help arrived in the form of some community service volunteers who began to scrape and paint but there was slow progress. Enter the Climate Summer students who stayed at they church for a week last June. In one afternoon, they scraped the entire fence surrounding the church yard. Severe damage to some posts was repaired by Jim McMorrow, Chip Hamblet and Jean Soucy of Mill City Iron Works who donated his time to weld on new braces where they were needed. Another community service volunteer and Chip then finished painting the fence a dark green and it is now looking good except for a few understandable signs of aging such as an occasional bent rod. By the way, Jean Soucy says he helped his grandfather build the fence in the 1950's. Can anyone confirm that? Please email the editor at atlantik92@yahoo.com



Chip and the newly painted fence.

Search Continues

The Search Committee has held six interviews and plans to conduct three more in the next three weeks. We have reviewed 26 applications which came from as near as Greater Lowell and as far away as California. Some candidates withdrew due to finding a position elsewhere. Some felt our salary level and part time position would not work for them. We have watched videotaped sermons and plan to listen to some candidates preach in person. We have met some wonderful people and continue to discern who will be the best fit for us. Please keep the Search Committee and their important work in your prayers.

Worship in October

This month there are five Sundays and three of the five are special services. October 2 is World Communion Sunday and our Communion service will reflect this. The next Sunday, October 9th is Access Sunday and Disabilities Awareness Week. We will celebrate our new accessibility at PCC and our ministry to those for whom church membership is not always a given. In addition Bobby Dean will become a member that day. Last, but not least, we will celebrate All Saints Day on the last Sunday of the month. Don't miss any of these worship experiences!



Our new lift in the front vestibule



*New accessible entrance from the outside.
The banner reads, Jesus didn't reject people. Neither do we.*

Dental Clinic

The clinic will be held in the Sunday school rooms on Oct. 8 and 29 from 9:30-1:30. Free cleanings are offered to those on Mass Health and Medicaid. Others can participate at usual fee rates.

Invitation to Play

A UMass/Lowell professor will be holding an Interplay workshop at the church on Saturday, October 15 from 1-4:30. It's an interesting, unusual organization that uses "play" and creative expression (movement, story-telling, etc.) to "unlock the wisdom of the body" and has a lot of emphasis on community-building. The website is www.interplay.org if you want to know more. Church people are invited to try out the session. Contact Chip or Judy Davidson.

News from Drewniaks in Florida

They are doing great. Joe (Fred) is still working 40 hours a week as a Quality Engineer at KHS USA Inc. They design and build packaging machinery in Sarasota. He and Elaine both miss the cool upcoming seasons and have warm memories of PCC.

News or Comments

Contact Louisa Varnum at PCC or email atlantik92@yahoo.com