



Did you know Increase Mather...

Increase Mather was the most brilliant Puritan clergyman and public figure of his day. He graduated from Harvard at 17 and earned a master's degree from Trinity College in Ireland. Upon his graduation he was offered a professorship but declined the post. When the Puritan Commonwealth in England was replaced by the Monarchy in 1660 he returned home to become the pastor of Boston's North Church.

While pastor there, he also served as the president of Harvard College. Mather came of age as the leadership of the Bay Colony was passing to the second generation which experienced the most tumultuous and challenging period in its history. It was largely Increase Mather who shepherded the Colony through it, both spiritually and politically. Increase Mather was a prominent participant in the Reforming Synod of 1679-80. Its delegates called for Colony-wide repentance and rededication to Christian zeal and holiness in churches and society.

The Colony faced its greatest political crisis in 1684 when the king revoked its Charter and imposed direct royal rule, which abruptly denied the colonists any voice in their governance. Edmund Andros was sent as the king's governor to enforce royal decrees which the colonists resisted as tyranny. Increase Mather sailed to England in time to witness the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 in which James II was deposed. Mather was able to negotiate a new Charter that restored limited self rule to the Bay Colony. Increase was also a voice of reason that brought an end to the Salem witchcraft trials.

...was a Congregationalist?

Celebrating 400 Years of American Congregationalism
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Call To Worship

L: Precious Lord, take our hands in this hour

C: Lead us on, help us stand

L: We want to walk in the light

C: Of our pilgrim forebears

L: Who lived in the strength of Your Spirit

C: And with the hope of the triumph of the Gospel

Invocation (in unison)

Since the landing of our Pilgrim forebears, our worship has changed – it is less somber, with more music, condensed so often in an hour. What we still share with them in worship, is our constant need for courage to live as Christ would have us live. Come to us, Lord God. Imbue us with the adventurous spirit not only of the Pilgrims of old, but the pilgrims centuries earlier, both of whom gathered regularly on the Lord's day in simple surroundings to worship You with thanks. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard