

The Pilgrim

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH



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Pilgrim Lutheran Church

*An ELCA Congregation
A Reconciling in Christ Congregation*

*A Home for Hungry Minds and Souls
A Caring for Creation Congregation*

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Cover Photo:

*Alex Theship-Rosales (Director of Children, Youth,
and Family Ministries) and children of Pilgrim
at August 19 Cross-Generational Mixer.*

Photo by Carol Tomer.

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Pilgrim Ministry in the Month of September

The Pilgrim COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been posted on the Pilgrim website. The Pilgrim building is currently closed, except for small groups that have applied for use of the building, following safety guidelines.

Please contact the church if you have questions. Meanwhile, our ministries continue!

Sunday Worship in September *About Virtual Worship Gatherings via Zoom*

We look forward to continuing to gather together, at the same time, for worship via Zoom, which will enable us to see each other on the screen, share joys and concerns by typing in the chat section (in morning worship), and stay for “coffee” time following worship. For those unable to attend at 9:30 am, a worship recording will be available later.

Morning Worship/Forum Overview for September

Schedule

9:20 am — Zoom gathering opens, for arriving and pre-worship conversation; Prelude begins around **9:27 am**

9:30 am — Worship via Zoom

10:20 am — Coffee Conversation via Zoom, following worship

10:40 am — Forum via Zoom, on some Sundays

September 6, 9:30 am worship — Cross-Generational worship, led by Pilgrim CYF leaders, Point for Pilgrims for all ages, Blessing of the Devices, Pastor Jen Rome preaching

September 13, 9:30 am worship — A Service of Mercy and Justice, Point for Pilgrims for all ages, Guest preacher: Michele Braley, Program Director, Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice, reflecting on the movie *Just Mercy*

About our guest preacher: Michele Braley is the Program Director for Seward Longfellow Restorative Justice, a position she has held for more than 11 years. In addition to being a restorative conference facilitator, Michele is trained in peacemaking circles and as a facilitator for victim-offender dialogue in crimes of severe violence. She has a Master’s degree in Social Work and is on the adjunct faculty at the University of St. Thomas.

10:40 am — Forum: Reflections on Criminal Justice Reform — led by Minnesota leader Gwen Walz. She writes: My mother, a teacher and church organist, frequently told me that I must do the work in front of me. When I was growing up, I thought that meant the

dinner dishes. It was not! Mom's words have challenged me to look and listen — to ponder and propose — to seek and pray — to build community around the most challenging issues in front of me. As an educator, that began with the Bard Prison Initiative, a college in prison program, and has grown into the work in Minnesota that I believe will bring public and private entities together for criminal justice reform. In the midst of this journey, I will share the work in front of me and reflect on the Lutheran call for reform.

September 20, 9:30 am worship — L.I.G.H.T. Sunday (*Living into God at Home Together*), Ritual of Blessing for L.I.G.H.T. Night leaders, Point for Pilgrims for all ages, Pastor Carol Tomer preaching

10:40 am — Forum: How does God show up in times of devastation? — Join us for a virtual two-part adult forum on this Sunday morning and on another Sunday upcoming (TBD) to explore this and other questions. Loosely based on Walter Bruggemann's book *Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Uncertainty*, Pamela Erwin will lead a discussion of how God, in times of devastation, "calls us into a deeper, more caring, and mutually beneficial relationship with all that is." You may purchase the book if you like but you need not. To focus our discussion, a brief paragraph or two from the book will be sent out in advance in our congregational email to 'prime the pump.'

September 27, 9:30 am worship — A Celebration of Beloved Community, music led by the Pilgrim Jazz Ensemble, Point for Pilgrims for all ages, homily and stories of the Beloved Community

10:40 am — Pilgrim congregational meeting (the re-scheduled meeting from the spring) We meet twice a year to formally, as a congregation, affirm the work of Pilgrim's ministry and mission. In February, we meet to discuss our finances. In the spring, we meet to talk about our shared ministry. This September 27 meeting is our rescheduled spring meeting. As usual in the spring meeting, we will give thanks for leaders who are completing their terms of service and elect new Vestry members for the coming year. We hope you will join in this virtual gathering, as we give thanks for leadership, vision, and all the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation!

Pilgrim Virtual Worship Now Available to Those Without Computers!

You can attend Pilgrim virtual morning worship by telephone. Those wishing to attend these worship gatherings in this way will need the following three pieces of information:

- ❖ Telephone number: **312-626-6799** (this is a Chicago, IL, number, and it will NOT change)
- ❖ Meeting ID: this number will change weekly (usually 11 digits)

❖ **Passcode:** this number will also change weekly (usually 6 digits)

Once you have dialed the telephone number, you will be asked to enter the **Meeting ID** followed by the # (**pound sign**), and then the **Passcode** and **pound sign**. If the gathering has not yet been started by the host, you will be asked to try again later, so please don't call in much before **9:20 am** begins.

The Meeting ID and Passcode will be available in the Saturday congregational emails, for morning worship, and will also be a part of the Pilgrim general voicemail message, available on Thursdays.

Contemplative Evening Worship, Fall 2020

Sunday Night Contemplative Worship at Pilgrim continues this fall, but — as with so many other things in our communities in these days — it will look a little different. These contemplative worship gatherings will happen via Zoom — except for one special evening outdoor gathering in September. Each service will feature the same kind of contemplative word weavings that Pilgrim's Sunday night worship services have been known for since 2002, as well as including some other familiar elements from the past, along with creative new dimensions. Because of copyright matters with poetry shared during these services, these worship services will not be available for viewing later. Here is the overview for September through November:

2nd Sundays, 6:51 pm — *Holden Contemplative Evening Prayer*, followed by coffee conversation — worship via Zoom

4th Sundays, 6:51 pm — *Woven Together in Spirit: Contemplative Worship*, followed by poetry reflections and conversation — worship via Zoom

One special outdoor contemplative worship service, **Sunday, September 20, 6:51 pm**, on the street beside Pilgrim:

Night Light: Outdoor Sunday Evening Contemplative Communion

This will be our first-ever outdoor evening contemplative worship service. The service will be led by some of the evening worship musicians from Celtic and Nordic contemplative services: Dick Hensold, bagpipes; Rachel Jensen, Hardanger Fiddle; Peggy Larson, Nordic shepherd calls and other vocals. This service will include BYO Communion. Please bring your own bread/crackers and grape juice, as well as your own masks and lawn chairs. You are also invited to bring electric candles!

Themes and dates of the upcoming contemplative services:

September 13 — Thy Hand Hath Provided
September 27 — What can I say what can I say
October 11 — As a Child I Danced
October 25 — We Can Do No Other
November 8 — The Fragrance of Prayer
November 22 — It is enough, Lord

Power of Poetry, Power of Spirit

By Mary Weddle,

Evening Community Guiding Team

This summer, Pilgrim evening worshipers have gathered once a month on Zoom for a time of Connection and Comfort through the power of poetry, the gift of sharing our joys and concerns and the grace of each other's presence. Poetry readers Peg Hayes, Thomas Becknell and Joanne Sorenson skillfully chose and read several poems each evening and we had time to share with each other how Spirit was stirred and spoke to us individually and collectively.

As Fall returns, evening worshipers will return to a rhythm of convening on the second and fourth Sunday evenings. Instead of our Celtic and Nordic services, we will gather virtually for Holden Evening Prayer (2nd Sundays) and Woven Together in Spirit, a time of contemplative worship and connection (4th Sundays). Both virtual gatherings will include contemplative word weavings; see the Pilgrim Newsletter for more details. In addition, we will gather in person, for live contemplative communion worship on the pavement next to Pilgrim on **Sunday, September 20 at 6:51 pm!**

Join us as we gratefully continue our tradition of gathering for evening worship, contemplation and spiritual connection.

Pastoral Musings by Pastor Carol

As in every September, we look toward the resuming a full worship schedule, morning and evening, and faith deepening for all ages, all of it taking new shapes: continuing to offer outside ways to connect, as well as our May congregational meeting, via Zoom, after being postponed because of COVID. Our Saint Paul Area Synod is doing the same thing with our annual synod assembly, rescheduled from May, also via Zoom, now on **September 25 & 26**. Watch for news of how you might "attend" the assembly. During the **9-10 am** hour on **September 26**, the assembly will focus on the 50th anniversary of women's ordination in the ELCA, for which I am the panel moderator. And, whereas we had planned to mark this special anniversary at Pilgrim this past May, we look forward to yet marking it in the Pilgrim community.

I'm aware that many people, in the midst of lives filled with virtuality, are longing for embodied faith practices and the embodied connections of

community. You will see in this newsletter a variety of outdoor connections. We are also offering some experiences of embodied meditation.

I think that our most important embodied work in these days is the work and practices of love. Romans 12 is our call, where we read “Let love be genuine.” If we don’t grow in our capacity for love, we become a greater part of the problem in our society. What an important time for taking stock, with the support of community. I believe that this is the Jesus-shaped work that we are called to — for the civil unrest and challenges all around, and also for the daily contours of life, often changed radically because of COVID. There are health challenges and fears, weddings planned and re-conceived, divorces, vocational discernments, changes, and disappointments, so many matters related to school and college, for students, families, teachers and staff, and the journey of aging, adapting, and dying that unfolds, relentlessly, in these days, in all days.

In that spirit, here are some excerpts from my sermon on August 23, at our outdoor service:

In this unprecedented time, we are discovering some of the gifts of life, as if for the first time, as we have been stripped of things we have taken for granted, gifts that have been there all along. And we are also discovering more about the cracks in our society, cracks and deep crevices that have been there all along. On both counts, amazing gifts and deep cracks, I am hoping that we will not go back to the old normal, to simply turn back the clock to early 2020.

I have been feeling the challenges of being apart from all of you, missing the enfleshed gatherings we have known. This is most certainly true! It is quite a time, in so many ways, and it is a time for reflecting on the role of the Christian community. What is church for? And how can those purposes be best served in this time?

John Harvey, friend of Pilgrim and former leader of the Iona Community in Scotland, says that “Community is both about holding you together when you are liable to fall apart, and about keeping you moving.” So, he believes that journey imagery is most appropriate for communities, as we are held together, while keeping moving.

I was visiting with a Pilgrim recently who shared that they had filled up their gas tank this past March and on that one tank of gas, they had been carried through each of these past months and all the way up to Grand Marais in July. Wow! Incredible. What a picture of how life has changed for some of us. That person, a senior, has felt the need to change their life immensely. And I got to thinking: How far do WE yet need to go in these coming months of this extraordinary journey, and how much “gas” is it going to take?

I think of three answers:

- ❖ First: We have a long way to go, because the journey is to a new place we've never been, a new normal.
- ❖ Secondly: We will need each other, to hold us together and also to keep us moving, sharing “gas” and the “electricity” of community and love.
- ❖ And thirdly: Some of our gas and electricity will be our imaginations about the journey ahead, shaped by Jesus and his countercultural way of life.

So, what is the world that Jesus dares us to imagine? Jesus calls us to imagine a world that is in some ways radically different. That is what Jesus did in his life and teaching, in his parables, in his suffering, death, and resurrection: he turned the prevailing ways of life on their head. He taught about people who worked an hour being as valued as those who work a day, about a prodigal son who squandered half the family fortune yet returned home to the warmest of embraces, about people who live hand to mouth being the honored guests at the most amazing feast....

Jesus' description of his mission (in Luke 4: 16-21) was not just for the beginning of his ministry or ours — it's for the whole path, because the Christian life lived in the community that we call the church is both about holding each other — and all God's children —

Continued on page 28...

Pastoral Musings by Pastor Jen

Dear God, what is a parent/caregiver to do? Parents and caregivers, by the time you read this, you most likely will know whether your child will be going to school in person or online. But that does not mean we know what this will be like. At least we know what last spring was like. But what will it be like for us and our children now? No matter how much we love our kids or even how skilled we are at supporting them in their learning, we don't know what effect this will have on us or them. I'm pretty sure that we're going to be even more tired and scattered and strained. I'm pretty sure our mental health will suffer. Not only our own, but our kids' mental health. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE talk with each other about your family's mental health. Text me, call me, email me. I have great referrals for therapists for children, youth, and adults.

And please know that we know how hard it is to get yourselves and your kids connected to church stuff. You are not guilty or a failure in raising your children in faith. Please tell me or Alex or the Children, Youth and Family Ministry Team or Pastor Carol or any of the rest of our caring staff and leaders what it's like for you and your kids. There is no judgment. No guilt. Just love for you parents and caregivers and children and youth doing their best.

Pilgrims who are not caregiving for others right now—WE NEED YOU. We need your empathy. We need your help. Reach out to a parent or caregiver from Pilgrim you know. They may not email or text or call you back right away—that's not the point. The task triage they are doing is incredible. Just show them your love. Ask what they need. Ask what you can pray about for them. Take one thing off their plates. Do something they don't even need to ask for—send or drop off a care package, a card, offer to watch young children play in a fenced-in back yard at a distance with your cell phone in hand, play a game online or on zoom with their kids, go on a socially distanced walk with a youth, sidewalk chalk your love for them on their front walk. You can even ask us what you think they might appreciate. Whatever you can think of because parents and caregivers can barely think right now. Your brain-power and kindness are gifts from God.

God help us. Jesus lead us. Holy Spirit comfort us. Bring us hope from the love we show to each other.

Pastor Jen

P.S. As I'm writing this in the early morning of August 24, I just read that another black father, Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, was shot in the back by police while his children watched. Dear God, what is a parent/caregiver to do? As a white parent, I'm starting by praying and crying saying his name, Jacob Blake, into the spirit filled air around me. What are his children's names? I wish I knew their names so I could say theirs too. Their bodies and maybe even the bodies of their children and grandchildren will carry that trauma. We most certainly will talk about it with each other and with our children and youth. We'll say Jacob Blake's name when we delve into Racial Justice in faith formation this fall. But we can't live, black families cannot live, if we only talk. Dear Pilgrim Mamas and Dads and Grandparents and Aunties and Uncles and Godparents and Caring Adults, what are we going to do?

Alex's Acclimations Here

Hi Pilgrims! It has already been about two months since I joined your community as Director for Children, Youth, and Family Ministries. I have been so thankful for the many kind words and welcomings, the learning I've been invited into, the meetings of many of you virtually (and a few in-person!), and the blessings and challenges of beginning a new journey.

So — what have I been up to? What has my acclimation into the Pilgrim family been like? I'll admit it has been a very unique experience to begin a journey in the midst of a global pandemic! At the same time, the unique opportunities presented from the situation have paved roads for creative and neat ways to meet, work with, and abide with other Pilgrims.

I like to tell my friends and family that the first thing I did on the job was join a Zoom call with two toddlers! These sessions with the PreK kids have been filled with show-and-tell, laughter, and good ol' fun. Throughout
The Pilgrim, September 2020

June and July Pastor Jen, CYF Leaders and myself hosted Zoom check-ins with Pilgrim children and youth in during the week. For Kindergarteners through 2nd grade we had many sharing activities and games, but also spent a couple minutes on each call thinking about the word ‘Kindness’ and how we can share that with others and ourselves. I loved hearing the gentle thoughts and enjoyed the fun of these calls!

With 3rd through 5th graders we shared “highs, lows, and buffalos,” which are joys, concerns, and then something random, unexpected, or just a little bit outstanding that we had experienced recently. It’s always a blast to hear what people share with this question. ☺ Additionally, we spent some time thinking about how God can be a sheltering presence. We shared places that felt like home outdoors, talked about how we feel when we are sheltered and in a homey-like space, and related these experiences to God’s love — which blankets and holds us close. The foundation for these theological chats was Psalm 61:4: *I long to dwell in your tent forever, and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.*

Pathways, both middle and high school, explored “New Ways to Pray” alongside check-ins on our Zooms. I like to think of prayer as a relationship—dynamic and sincere and truly heard and known by God. With this framework, it makes a lot of sense to me to enliven prayer by trying it in different ways. Prayer can and should be both fun and meditative, creative and sincere. We tried a “Dice prayer” where the number rolled corresponded to a prayer-prompt, an “image of Jesus prayer” where youth shared or described an image or depiction of Jesus that was meaningful or stood out to them—and we also tried “Candle Time,” one of my personal favorites. During candle time, space is created for reflection, we are reminded of God’s constant presence among us, and we can ‘light a candle for someone,’ offering a prayer out into the world. At times when we feel overwhelmed, or even just when lighting a candle might be a nice thing to do, the flickering light helps us re-center and reach out.

Outside of Zoom we have had some fun outdoor events such as two “Meet and Greets” where Pilgrims got a chance to see one another (at a distance!) in person and meet the new guy (yours truly). We have also distributed “Let Us Play to the Lord!” activity packages to younger Pilgrims – packets filled with faith-themed fun, and Pathways has done a hammocking evenin’ in the park and an outdoor picnic is on the calendar!

This Fall we will be returning to Zoom for LIGHT Nights – a time of Faith Formation on Wednesday evenings. LIGHT is an acronym for “Living Into God at Home Together” and my goal is to help these virtual gatherings embody just that. We may find ourselves apart this season, we will likely find ourselves at home, and yet we are still very much together! I pray that these meetings—which will be focused on themes of Love, Community, and Racial Justice—will be a sure, shining light amidst the business and uncertainty of our lives this Fall.

In all, I'm having a blast. From the day I began looking into and reading about Pilgrim as I applied to work here, I caught a glimpse into the loving, smart, intentional, and active community you are. I feel very blessed to be learning alongside you. Thank you, and we're in this together as we look towards Autumn!

Alex Theship-Rosales
Dir. Of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Point for Pilgrims

By Katia McDonough, from August 16, 2020

I want to talk today about making mistakes.

Though I am not proud of it, I make mistakes often—okay, probably every single day. One of the mistakes I make is that I don't always listen. I work in a busy clinic and, especially in this COVID era, there is a need to see people quickly and get them on their way. How often as I review the day in my memory do I recall a person who seemed to have more on their mind or heart than I addressed in the visit. Since by this point in the day the individual is gone, what I do is to pray that tomorrow I will do a better job listening so I can correct this mistake.

In the Gospel for today (Matthew 15:10-12, 21-28), we see Jesus make a mistake. It is a good reminder that though Jesus is the One of God, he is fully human as well as fully divine. Though it takes Jesus a little while, he is able to recognize his mistake and change it in the moment, instead of just vowing to do better the next time.

A Canaanite woman has a daughter who is suffering greatly, and this distraught mother is seeking relief from Jesus. When she approaches, the apostles attempt to put her off, saying that Jesus is too busy to see her. She insists on getting to Jesus, who tells her directly that she is not part of the group that he was sent to serve and therefore he cannot help her. She acknowledges that she is outside the Israelite community and then testifies that she and her daughter are still at least worthy of some "scraps" of Jesus' attention. In this moment, we can almost hear Jesus take a deep breath and slap his forehead as he realized his mistake. He starts again by acknowledging that God is clearly alive in this faithful woman and that her faith would heal her daughter.

Jesus took time in the moment to fix his mistake, to truly listen and to learn from the woman. This is what I aspire to—the humility to stop and change my course as often as needed.

In this moment we are talking a lot about a whole series of big mistakes that add up to a thing called Racism. For hundreds of years, the dominant, white group in America has mistreated Black people and Indigenous people and Immigrants. These communities were labeled as outsiders by those in power. Many times did those communities come to

the people in power and say “it cannot be this way—we are suffering.” And many times did the dominant, white, community say “you are not part of us. We don’t have a responsibility for you. We are not going to help.” We are at a time now when everyone is awakened to the truth that we are all one community, responsible for each other. We are nearly united in saying that the situation must change.

The Pilgrim community and the whole American culture is talking about this and will continue to talk about Racism. The work that we want to do is to open our minds and our hearts to the conversation that is going on, to the needs that are being presented. We want to recognize God at work in this and to sort out how we can be the hands and feet and ears and mouths of God in this work. Let’s start by listening to each other. Let’s not continue to make the mistake of shutting anyone out of the conversation. Let’s do it in real time and vow to keep doing it better in each new day. We are responsible for each other.

Our Life Together in Faith

Fall Program: LIGHT Nights – Living Into God at Home Together

Join your Pilgrim family this fall for Living Into God at Home Together (LIGHT) Nights. As we, in community, navigate church and life during a pandemic, LIGHT Nights will be a weekly time for children, youth, and families to virtually share and abide together. LIGHT Nights are our faith formation time this fall.

LIGHT Nights begin at **6:15 pm Wednesday nights**, beginning **Wednesday September 23** – it is a nine-week program with themes of Love, Community, and Racial Justice. Woven into each evening’s discussion and activities will be a New Testament idea, story, or passage. The sessions will begin with a Gathering Group, where we will enter a Zoom call together and join Maggie Priola in a fun, musical convocation! Promptly, we will split into Breakout Groups. These groups will be distinguished by age, not necessarily grade in school; attendees may decide which age group they feel most comfortable joining. Moreover, Children and Youth may attend LIGHT individually, or join alongside adults, caregivers, or parents in their homes. Households may decide on a week-to-week basis how they would like attend Breakout groups.

Schedule for each evening:

6:15-6:25: Gathering Group
Greeting
Maggie leading music

6:25: Breakout Group:
6:25-6:45: Starlights – 3-5 years

6:25-6:50: Flashlights – 5-8 years
6:25-7:00: Spotlights – 8-11 years
6:25-7:15: Middle school Pathways
6:25-7:15: High school Pathways

LIGHT Nights will be a regular space and time to learn from and be with each other. Children, Youth, and Families we are looking forward to seeing you this fall! Please reach out to Alex (alextheshiprosales@pilgrimstpaul.org) with any questions!

Circles of Connection

Geographical Small Groups of Pilgrims Gathering this Fall

As we live into the reality of the coronavirus, we are adapting to a new normal of extended practices of social distancing. And, yet, as we navigate these current days, we long for community. In the meantime, in order to maintain connection and care among Pilgrims, staff have formed groups of Pilgrims of all ages to stay connected to each other based on close geographic proximity. Each group will be invited by small group leaders to meet virtually or at a safe distance outdoors once a month in September, October, and November. During these gatherings the group will Check In (get to know one another better or for the very first time! Find out new things about other Pilgrim's stories), Dig Deep (join in conversation around a short list of discussion topics based on the theme for the month (September: Love; October: Community; November: Racial Justice); and Pray for each other. Look for an email from your small group leader in early September! If you have any questions, please contact Interim Director of Shared Ministry Pamela Erwin or Pastor Jen.

Music Notes, September 2020



By Paul Stever, Music Director

What have musicians been working on this spring and summer at Pilgrim? Below is a little bit more about 3 of the main types of projects we've been working on and are intending to continue this fall. If you're comfortable with the possibility of singing in person in a small group or if you're willing to learn how to use a little technology in order to participate in some virtual projects, I would love to hear from you! Any of the opportunities described below could involve either singing or playing an instrument so please contact me at SteverPaul55@aol.com, send me a Facebook message, or look me up in your directory for a phone conversation.

1. On **Wednesdays at 6-7:30 pm** (switching to a different time on September 23, TBD), we record most of the music for our worship recordings. During the "stay at home" order in Minnesota, our Choral

Scholars did most of the singing, with occasional support from other fabulous choir members. Starting in June, we have been encouraging anyone to come to join our Wednesday night worship recordings, but you have to let me know by 1pm on that Wednesday at the latest (it's great if I can hear from you on Monday or Tuesday or asap), that you will be coming, because we are capping the recording sessions at 10 singers and do occasionally fill up. Please be in touch if you have any questions about safety precautions taken when people are gathered to sing together. We sing standing a minimum of 12 feet apart, as one example.

2. We also have been increasing our experience with “virtual” recordings. In these recordings, one person records their part to start or I make a guide recording to help musicians know when to sing. Musicians who want to be layered into the recording can listen to the first recording with headphones (to insure they play or sing at the same tempo) and then use a separate device to record themselves. Kristo Sween or another Pilgrim friend who has experience and technology available to layer these recordings together then uses software so that everyone is heard at the same time! If you would like to contribute, I can send you a short list of steps for how this works. I'm happy to support you however you would like to be supported in this, including arranging to meet with you to record your singing for you on my phone, if you would feel more comfortable not having to worry too much about the technology part of it. We have a group of about 5-10 singers interested in doing this and will probably try to have a project for us to work on about once a month this fall. A number of instrumentalists are interested in duets or other small groups or in being layered into the hymn recordings, so there are many possibilities for you to add your talents to our recording projects.
3. Pilgrim has been experimenting with all kinds of gatherings via “Zoom.” I have arranged for a few social gatherings of musicians and also had quite a good turnout in July to view one of our old Holden Evening Prayer recordings. Keep an eye out for us to offer more of these opportunities on occasion, or let me know your interest and I can be sure to send you the link to the zoom meeting when these opportunities become available.

If you have other ideas or would like to share your experiences from viewing other church services, please be in touch! We continue to explore new thoughts and ideas for meaningful worship and music experiences in this time, but it takes time and effort to explore each new resource, trying to understand the strengths and limitations of each.



Maggie Priola will be working on some projects involving children and youth this fall and would love to be in touch with you about these as well. She says:

Hello to Pilgrim's young musicians and their caring adults!

As we all know, our life together at Pilgrim will look a bit different this season. This includes some creative changes in how we do music for children and youth! This season, I'll be teaching a music/singing portion of our virtual learning program each week. I'll also be finding new and creative ways to share the music we make together in worship and with the Pilgrim community. I'll be contacting and coordinating with families to record and share their children's talents in worship. All season long, I'll be available as a resource for children, youth, and families to learn music and other creative art forms for our recording and sharing purposes. It's going to be a new adventure, but I know we are ready for it! This will give us an opportunity to share our talents and our hearts with each other like never before. Here's to finding new and innovative ways to share our love for God and one another through music. Feel free to contact me with ideas, inspirations, questions, and concerns — and look out for future updates!

Maggie Priola
maggiepriola19@gmail.com
Children's Choir Director
Pilgrim Lutheran Church

Vestry News

Pilgrim Financial Update Through July 2020

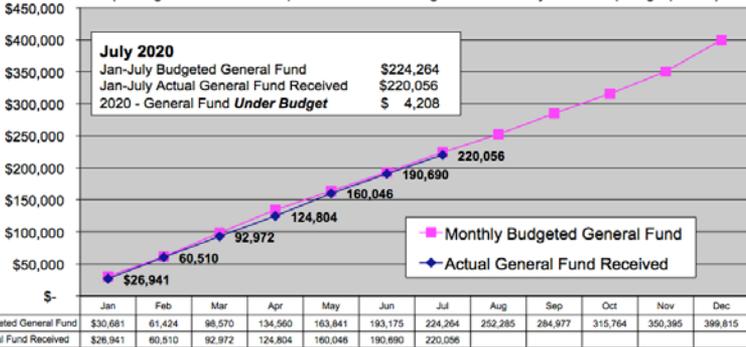
This newsletter finds us over halfway through Pilgrim's financial year, which is a good time to send a quick update and thank you for your generous support. Pilgrim giving through July is slightly short of budget by \$4,208. In a challenging environment, this is particularly good news. To add a little perspective, giving in 2020 is slightly ahead of giving in 2019.

Budgeted expenses through July have been underspent by \$32,840 and overall Pilgrim is operating close to \$30,000 under budget when considering all revenues and expenses. This does not happen without a lot of hard work from Pilgrim Staff, Ministry Teams and Members - Thank You! There is still a long way to go and financial challenges to address, and we'll continue to keep you updated.

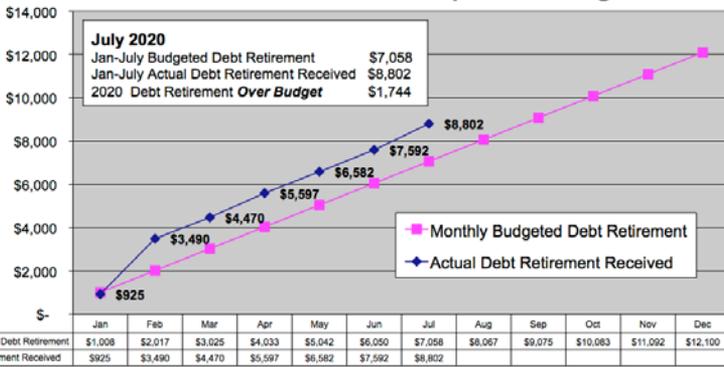
Giving Graphs

2020 General Fund Received Compared to Budget

(Giving that covers multiple months is averaged out monthly over the pledge period)



2020 Debt Retirement Compared to Budget



SMART Team Update

By Stephen Bell-Kemp

The Pilgrim Smart Team has met weekly over the past two months to ensure all upcoming programming is safe yet inclusive for all Pilgrims. The Preparedness Plan, which can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/yxz7mxcl>, has received the Vestry's approval. The plan applies the current state and local health safety guidelines to the Pilgrim community. In the short term, the plan includes guidelines for outdoor worship before Minnesota temperatures begin to drop. The Smart Team strongly encourages Pilgrims to read through the plan and all email announcements for upcoming events because more preparation is required for Pilgrims wanting to attend in person. This includes monitoring your own health and bringing lawn chairs, masks, and (if instructed to) communion supplies. You will note a lack of timelines for future events in the Preparedness Plan. The Smart Team chose to exclude

these items from the plan because the pandemic is everchanging and difficult to predict. As new health and safety guidelines are released, the Smart Team will promptly meet to discuss how the new guidelines will be adopted at Pilgrim. Announcements of changes to the Preparedness Plan will be made to all Pilgrims. The Smart Team is grateful for the grace the Pilgrim community has shown as the Team develops this plan.

Pilgrim Land Acknowledgement Statement

By Penny Bartz

The month of February seems like ages ago, but do you all remember that we had a forum led by Jim Bear Jacobs? The topic was Land Acknowledgement Statements, and Jim Bear gave some fantastic guidance from his perspective as a member of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation, an American Indian tribe located in central Wisconsin. Since that insightful forum, the Pilgrim Advocates for Racial Equity (ARE) Team as well as other Pilgrim members have been diving into the work of researching the history of the native people that were on Pilgrim land before colonialism. Based on this research as well as Jim Bear's experience with writing a LAS, our group has crafted a draft Pilgrim LAS. We feel that acknowledging the horrific impact that colonialism had on native people in the location of Pilgrim Lutheran Church is an important anti-racism step for the Pilgrim congregation. The draft statement has a long and short version, and we envision that Pilgrim would eventually start to incorporate both the verbal reading and/or written form either version depending on the setting (worship, committee meetings, bulletins, etc.).

Long version:

This land is not just this address. Before we came to this land, there was a people whose lives and story claimed this land. Pilgrim Lutheran Church stands on the ancestral homeland of the Dakota people. They were forcibly exiled from their land starting with the treaties of 1837 and 1851 and were nearly exterminated after the 1862 US Dakota war. Today we acknowledge the Dakota people, past and present, for their ongoing story, stewardship and care of this land. We condemn and lament the way colonialism pillaged both the land and the Dakota way of life. Pilgrim Lutheran Church commits to ongoing efforts to recognize, support, and advocate for the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples. Let us take a moment of silence to imagine the sounds of the Dakota people living and flourishing here, before we laid claim to this land.

Short version:

Pilgrim Lutheran Church stands on the ancestral homeland of the Dakota people, who were forcibly exiled from their land starting with the unjust treaties of 1837 and 1851. Today we acknowledge the Dakota people, past and present, for their ongoing story, stewardship and care of this land. We condemn and lament the way colonialism

pillaged both the land and the Dakota way of life. Pilgrim Lutheran Church commits to ongoing efforts to recognize, support, and advocate for the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

If you would like to give any feedback about the statements themselves, about how you would like to see Pilgrim incorporate a LAS into Pilgrim life, or about ideas on how Pilgrim can commit to this work, please email Penny Bartz at pennybartz@gmail.com.

It's Silver Pilgrim Time – Nominate a Pilgrim!

Do you know someone who has been a rock upon which Pilgrim is built? Then please consider nominating this Pilgrim member for the 2020 Silver Pilgrim award. Past winners have served Pilgrim by promoting environmental and economic justice, leading in faith formation, and enriching Pilgrim's community life. There's no end of ways by which your fellow Pilgrims make our church a home for hungry minds and souls, and the Silver Pilgrim award is a wonderful way to recognize that. (If you would like to review who has already received this award in the past, you can find the full list in congregational emails.)

If you know someone who should be recognized, please email your nomination to silverpilgrim2@gmail.com by **October 1**. If you do not have email or have questions, please call the church office. The Silver Pilgrim will most likely be awarded on a Sunday in October.

Education, Service & Fellowship

Meeting One Another on the Journey, Literally!

*Embodied, Centering Ritual To Begin the Day,
Followed by a Local Pilgrimage*

By Pastor Carol Tomer

We are going to continue these outdoor gatherings in September, that we've been calling *Perambulations and Ponderings*. On two Saturdays in September, we'll meet at the corner of West River Parkway and 42nd Street, just across the Ford Parkway Bridge, on the Minneapolis side of the Mississippi River. There's a street called Edmund Boulevard that runs parallel to West River Parkway, that offers us a wide, welcoming way to walk six-feet apart without difficulty, in groups of 3-4 people each.

We will begin our time together with a special time of worship, an embodied, centering ritual to begin the day. Here's what that will include:

- ❖ 5-10 minutes of T'ai Chi Chih, led by Mary Weddle, accredited Tai Chi Chih instructor. She will lead us through these Chinese-rooted meditative movements to circulate the energy in our bodies, to support our centering practices in our daily lives.
- ❖ Prayers of intersectionality
- ❖ Blessing of one another and the whole earth.

For this time of ritual, we'll stand in a circle, with ample space between us, God's beautiful earth under our feet, and lots of space above us! :) Come for the ritual time, stay for the walk. I will be there, at the corner, at **9 am**. If you can't find me that morning, call me at **612-770-9648**.

Here are our upcoming Saturday gatherings (weather permitting, of course):

Saturday, September 12, 9 am

Saturday, September 19, 9 am

Per Minnesota guidelines:

We will spread out, maintaining a six-foot distance except within households. If we exceed being a group of 25 people, we will spread out even more. We are encouraged to wear masks, although it is not required. And we ask that you wash your hands before and after our time together, that you cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing, and that you stay at home if you are sick.

As we move toward autumn, we still have ways to be together outside, in worship and community, in these extraordinary times. I look forward to these special gatherings.

The Christian Journey of Aging

*A Pilgrim Series, Thursdays, 11 am,
Every Other Week, via Zoom, for 75 Minutes*

*An Invitation from
Pastor Carol Tomer and Pamela Erwin*

In these days, we are mindful of daily life that cannot be taken for granted, amidst the risks and unknowns that are re-shaping our lives. We are awakening to new perspectives and new ways of envisioning living in our world. The Christian faith and the Christian community grounds us in God's guidance throughout our lives, as we together explore where God is leading us in this time of life. Aging — something that we do throughout our lives — comes into view even more as our life journey “matures.” You are invited to these gatherings, regardless of age; we are not defining a minimum age for the gatherings. The gatherings will be led by various Pilgrims and staff and supported by a new book titled *Aging*, by theologian William Willimon, which you need not read before or after these gatherings, but is a resource you might appreciate.

- September 24** Aging with Scripture — led by Pamela Erwin
October 8 The Storm of Aging — led by Peter Spuit
October 22 Retiring with God — led by Richard Wintersteen
November 5 Truthful Aging — led by Lois Wintersteen
November 19 With God in the Last Quarter of Life — led by Coralie Hunter and Elizabeth Ankeny
December 3 Aging in Church
December 17 Ending in God — led by Pastor Carol Tomer

Links for the zoom gathering each time will be posted on the Pilgrim website, on the Events During COVID page. Attendance via phone is also an option; contact the Pilgrim office for that information.

We Need to Share Our Stories

Collecting Pilgrim Stories of Hope and Struggle During this Trying Time

*By Elizabeth Madson Ankeny, Jaimie Lucke Hendrikson,
and Thomas Becknell (for the Storytelling Task Force)*

We have stories to tell! As Pilgrims on the journey, we find ourselves in unprecedented times, with new experiences, thoughts and feelings about the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism, economic depression, food and housing insecurity.

We invite you to share your stories of this time of crisis — you can write down your story, take a picture, create an image, sounds, or video. Your story may be many words...or none! We invite Pilgrims of all ages to share — on your own or with others.

Your story needs to be told. It doesn't need to be polished or perfect. It simply needs to be told. So don't worry if it's good enough or important enough — just share it!

Elizabeth is thinking about sharing the story of how her previously underused patio space has become holy ground: as a space for meditation and coffee in the morning, a space for hosting physical distance happy hours with neighbors in the late afternoon and a space to reconnect via face time with grandchildren who live at a distance. What story do you have that needs to be told?

Please use this Google link for sharing your story:
<https://forms.gle/it1NmHzmrds1oDZW9>

T'ai Chi Chih Classes Offered at Pilgrim This Fall

T'ai Chi Chih has been part of our embodied rituals that have preceded our local pilgrimages this summer. And we'll get to continue to experience this meditative practice in these embodied rituals on some Saturdays in

September, as well as in our outdoor contemplative evening worship service on **September 20**. We are aware that some Pilgrims may be interested in learning more about this embodied practice that we've been experiencing.

T'ai Chi Chih® is a gentle, mind-body practice designed to circulate and balance the vital energy of the body to optimize health and well-being. The coupling of simple, repetitive movements with stillness throughout the practice has a potent effect on the circulation and flow of internal energy. T'ai Chi Chih is often described as a moving meditation that calms the mind and emotions, grounds the body, and helps release tension. It is not a martial art, but is a self-care and mindfulness practice. With daily practice, benefits may include improved balance, reduced stress, increased energy, or better concentration. Movements can be modified to accommodate varying levels of physical fitness or coordination. No special clothing or equipment is required, and it can be done standing or seated.

T'ai Chi Chih was developed in 1974 by Justin Stone, an American who mastered and taught an ancient, traditional form of T'ai Chi called T'ai Chi Chuan. He created T'ai Chi Chih after recognizing the need for a simple, gentle and easily learned practice that could provide benefits similar to those obtained from the more complex and challenging traditional forms of T'ai Chi Chuan.

Mary Weddle, who has been graciously leading T'ai Chi Chih in these recent Pilgrim worship gatherings, is active in the Pilgrim evening worship community. She has agreed to offer a three-session series of Pilgrim classes upcoming. She has been practicing T'ai Chi Chih since 2011, became an Accredited Instructor in 2014 and has found the gentle, meditative practice of T'ai Chi Chih to be a useful adjunct in her own contemplative journey. Prior to learning T'ai Chi Chih, Mary studied and practiced T'ai Chi Chuan for 10 years. Mary is also a certified spiritual director.

During these three sessions, you will learn half of the 19 movements and one pose of the T'ai Chi Chih. We'll gather at Pilgrim, outside, wearing masks, behind the Pilgrim office building, **every other Monday, 5-6 pm**. The dates are: **September 28, October 12, and October 26**. If the weather doesn't permit gathering outside, we'll cancel the class.

Book Club News

Date: **Thursday, September 17, 2020** at Judy Tande's. We'll be meeting outdoors, socially-distanced on her patio. Time to be determined.

Book: *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi

We hope you'll join us. Contact **Lynda Hirschboeck** at **651-698-7399** or **hirschbo@gmail.com** if you have questions, or if you'd like the list of books chosen for the upcoming year.

Classics for Pilgrims

Classics for Pilgrims will meet to discuss the book *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy on the **fourth Thursday of September**. The group is planning to hold the discussion via ZOOM on **Thursday, September 24, from 7 to 8:30 pm**.



Please join the discussion whether you have read all or part of the book. Contact **Barbara Taylor (651-699-1095 or bstaylor50@gmail.com)** for a link to the discussion.

College Students and Families

With COVID, each college and each student is finding their way to continue with education this fall. Pilgrim has not forgotten you, college students and families — and we would love to hear what your plans are for now. Are you staying home and continuing online? Are you moving back to campus? For now? For the whole year? What is your contact info (mailing address, email, cell #) so we can connect and support you? Please email Pastor Jen and share what's going on. Pilgrim cares about you!

Virtual More Than Happy Hour

Thursday, September 10, 6-7:15 pm

More Than Happy Hour is a once-a-month space for young adults to gather and talk about life, church, and the world. We focus on a discussion theme. Anyone and everyone is welcome to join, or bring a conversation topic. Pilgrims buys us dinner!

This month, we'll take time for check in as always; then we'll continue exploring how to be an antiracist by reading the memoir *The Yellow House* by Sarah M. Broom. Please contact Pastor Jen if you would like a copy of the book. Even if you haven't read the book you're invited to have dinner, check in, and join the conversation anyways!

In COVID-19 life, we're living up to our name—and this gathering will certainly MORE than happy hour. Pilgrim's Young Adult Innovation grant will pay for your dinner via Door Dash, and then from home, we can enjoy our dinner and talk in Zoom-land. Reach out to Hannah Olson at **hannahdelaine@gmail.com** by **September 7** so we can coordinate for payment for your dinner and Claire Kaiser can send you the Zoom link.

Young Adult Innovation Team Update

By Claire Kaiser

Pilgrim received a generous grant from the Riverside Innovation Hub (RIH) to support innovating new connections with young adults at the intersections of their faith and their public lives. With this support, our RIH young adult group meets monthly (over Zoom in recent months) to share an

evening meal, build relationships, and discuss spirituality. We are currently reading *The Yellow House* by Sarah M. Broom, and exploring themes of place, class, race, and inequality. We will meet via Zoom on **September 10**, and dinner will be provided using DoorDash (see above).

We are also beginning a multi-generational project to create a public art piece near Pilgrim, which will increase visibility in the neighborhood and invite our neighbors into a conversation about what faith means to them. This art will also incorporate themes of race equality, informed by our book club. We are working closely with Public Art Saint Paul to discern how to faithfully carry out this project in this time of social distancing. Pilgrims Michael Jacobsen, Claire Kaiser, Liz Lindgren, Kent Miller, Lizz Sable Stauning, and Sam Tosteson are excited to be your Public Art Team.

Pilgrim Mamas Gathering Virtually

All those who identify themselves as mamas from Pilgrim are invited to a Pilgrim Mamas get together approximately once a month in the later evening. Please contact Kirsten Anderson at **kirsten.m.anderson@me.com** for information.

How To Be a Helper or Be Helped During This Time

In these challenging times, we are equipping Pilgrims in shared ministry and caring for one another. As a part of this commitment, we have a process whereby you can let us know of a need you have, and let us know how you can help to meet a stated need. You can read about it; there's a summary on the Pilgrim website home page, in the quick links section. It's titled, "**Being a Helper — Our New System.**"

Here's a direct link to the document: **<http://tiny.cc/pao3qz>**.

Children, Youth, & Families

Confirmation Sundays 2020 & 2021

We had to postpone Confirmation Sunday last spring; but the confirmation youth and families and staff have set new dates. Current 11th graders will have Confirmation Sunday in virtual worship, **Sunday, October 25, 2020, 9:30 am**. We'll still celebrate with robes and flowers and everything! Current 10th graders will begin their Capstone Confirmation process in early 2021 with Confirmation Sunday scheduled on **May 2, 2021**.

ELCA National Youth Gathering

The ELCA National Youth Gathering leaders determined that for the safety at all, that the youth gathering once planned for the summer of 2021 in Minneapolis will be postponed. The gathering will now be in

Minneapolis **July 24-28, 2022**. We already have these new dates on the Pilgrim calendar, and we are looking forward to it! For more information visit **ELCA.org/Gathering**.

Beyond Pilgrim

By Pastor Carol Tomer

The Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA), a nonprofit organization, uses law and science to protect Minnesota's environment, its natural resources, and the health of its people. It has been my privilege to serve on the board of this organization for over five years. Because Pilgrim Lutheran Church is a Caring for Creation Congregation, I want you to know about a very special 10 days this month, in Minnesota's journey of caring for God's creation.

State of the Environment: Voices Driving Change is an inspiring virtual showcase of people leading the work for a healthy and sustainable future. The series of events taking place over 10 days, **September 15-24**, will elevate the voices of people across Minnesota that are driving change — via a brand new podcast, webinars and virtual events including *Legally Green: LIVE in Your Living Room, Thursday, September 24, 7 pm*, which is the capstone event that will feature guest appearances by an international human rights advocate, wildlife biologist, and youth climate activists. More info at **voicesdrivingchange.org**.

Here are a few of the live online events:

- ❖ MCEA's Year at the Supreme Court
Thursday, September 17, 8 am
- ❖ Making the Connection: The Environment, Race & Justice
Friday, September 18, 8 am
- ❖ Litigating Denial: Attorney General Keith Ellison
Takes on Exxon and Koch
Monday, September 21, 12 noon

Podcasts:

- ❖ In Limbo: The Fight for Public Waters
Wednesday, September 16
- ❖ Climate Solutions: 2020 and Beyond
Friday, September 18
- ❖ All About PolyMet
Wednesday, September 23



Prayer Corner

We pray for God's loving presence for these Pilgrims who need healing, hope, comfort, and care:

Concerns: For our governor and all Minnesota public servants, as they lead and serve our whole state; for our national and international leaders, for wisdom during this pandemic; for the vulnerable in our society, including those suffering with COVID-19, those who are unemployed, those struggling with depression and other mental health issues.

Ongoing Health Concerns: Sheila Hoffman, ongoing recovery after hospitalization for Lyme disease; Mardell Johnson and her family as she faces increasing health difficulties; for Josh Moss' mother, Darlene Moss, and their loved ones, in hospice care for brain cancer; Serena Asta, chronic neurological Lyme disease; Lisa Berg; Lillian Knutson; Mike Regal, Chuck's son, ongoing care following a serious motorcycle accident; Cathy Comeford, sister of Jeanne Comeford, undergoing treatment for cancer; Daniel Leshner, for physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

Births: Rory Anderson, born April 22; Inho Robert McAdory-Kim, born January 31; Hanna Ruby Heggeseth born to Brianna and Paul Heggeseth on January 1, 2020; Maeve McElrath, born to Eileen and Matt McElrath on Sunday, March 24; Margaret (Maggie) Linnea Moore, born to Britt and Tim Moore on March 22; Naomi Anne Weeks, born to Kyle & Rachel Weeks on February 24.

Christian Sympathy: Former Pilgrim member Wilbur Decker died on August 11; Jason Henrikson, on the death of his father, John, on August 3; Karie Johnson, on the death of her uncle, Donald Ostergaard, on July 25; Drew Johnson, on the death of his grandfather, Ted Anderson, on July 17; Lois and Richard Wintersteen, at the death of their granddaughter, Bethany Kennedy, from pancreatic cancer, on July 15; Peter Spuit and family, on the death of Peter's uncle, Mark, who died by suicide the week of May 17; the Heggeseth family, on the death of Paul's uncle and Brianna's great-aunt; family and friends of Jean Hay, former member of Pilgrim, who died on April 21; Caleb Drexler Booth and family, on the death of his uncle, Craig Breimhorst, on April 16, from COVID-19; Craig Goldman, on the death of his sister Carol; Lois and Richard Wintersteen, on the death of Lois' sister Norma on March 31; family and friends of Mary Lou Jacobson, a former member, who died on March 22; Ross Radtke, on the death of his grandmother on February 9; Pastoral Intern Hannah Olson, on the death of her grandmother on November 16; Karen Walker and family on the death of her mother, Pilgrim member Joan Doth, on October 27; Eileen McElrath and family, on the death of her grandmother, Dorothy Ann Tompkins, on October 13; Sharyn Joyce, on the death of husband Bill on October 4; Jean Omodt and Hannah and Nathan, on the death of father/grandfather Ray Omodt on September 12; Catherine Koukol and family on the death of her mother on September 3.

Ministry Partnership: The ministry and people of our sister congregation, Luganga Lutheran Church in Tanzania and Pastor Bimbiga; Pilgrim staff members and Pilgrim lay leaders

In and beyond the congregation: For peace in our world, for healing in our country, for the invisibly ill, for the mentally ill

You are encouraged to send greetings to those you are moved to communicate with. Let us know if you are expecting or adopting a child. If you wish to add or remove a prayer request, please call the church office regarding the Prayer Corner. For prayers during worship, please contact a pastor.

Parochial Report

September Birthdays

Week 1

Matthew Anderson
William Reiley III
Julie Meyer
James Jahnke
Benjamin
Whetstone
Jack Nelson

Week 2

Willa Josephine
Hanson
Catherine Mueller
Lyra Mae
Samuelson
Lydia Nelson
David Harrington

Emily Kahnert
Gabriela Klepp

Week 3

Carol Tomer
Dianne Judd
Beverly Stolp
Ann Dyellig
Solveig Peterson
Adam Reinwald
Anthony Stauning

Week 4

Thomas Becknell
Theo Mardell
Johnson
Suzanne Swanson
Jessica Grams

Vivian Rae Lewis
Sam Stauning
Matt McElrath
Steve Jameson
Malin Moore
Kate Spindler
Thea Jean Hanson
Adelaide Lynn
McElrath

Week 5

(through Oct 5)
Mark Hirschboeck
Mara Mergens
Judith Tande
Nathan Boelke
Samuel Batalden

September Anniversaries

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 Derek Heinecke & Jenny Heinecke | 20 Carl Bussian & Corissa Bussian |
| 5 Jenn Radtke & Ross Radtke | 21 Kyle Weeks & Rachel Weeks |
| 6 Lois Wintersteen & Richard Wintersteen | 23 Dan Spear & Kim Spear |
| 8 Brock Behling & Danielle Behling | 25 Corby Lewis & Kari Lewis |
| 10 Anne Hall & David Harrington | 26 Barbara McCauley & Gary Horejsi |
| 11 James Jahnke & Mary Jahnke | 27 Craig Goldman & Kelli Goldman |
| 18 Christopher Boylan & Kristin Boylan | 30 Eric Hanson & Nicole Helland |



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Looking Ahead

Sunday, October 11, 9:30 am: Marking Indigenous People's Day
(via Zoom)

Sunday, October 11, 6:51 pm: Holden Contemplative Evening Prayer
(via Zoom)

Sunday, October 25, 9:30 am: Reformation Sunday and the Rite of
Confirmation (via Zoom)

Sunday, October 25, 6:51 pm: Woven Together in Spirit:
Contemplative Worship (via Zoom)

Deadline for the October Pilgrim Newsletter

The deadline for sending in materials for the October Pilgrim newsletter is **September 15**. As usual, please send things to **serenapilgrim@gmail.com**.

Shared Ministry Statement

Pilgrim practices "shared ministry," affirming that each member of this community is a minister both within and beyond the walls of the church, which we affirm in baptism. We partner with one another and with the wider ELCA to walk together in this journey of faith. We agree to share the decision-making responsibilities of being a church, as well as the joy of serving in mission, side-by-side. We welcome all to become involved through the use of their abilities, time, and resources. Every program, group, or emphasis within our congregation is sustained by the involvement of the ministers of the Pilgrim community.

...Pastoral Musings by Pastor Carol — Continued from page 9

together when we are liable to fall apart, and about keeping all God's children moving toward the liberation that the gospel proclaims.

We don't know if we are at the beginning of the end of this COVID journey, or the end of the beginning of this COVID journey. But we DO know that Christ is always beckoning us toward new life, for ourselves in our present struggles, and for the whole world that God so loves. Following Jesus is about life made new, life resurrected, a journey toward glory now and everlastingly....

Pastor Carol Tomer