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# Pilgrim Faith

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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May 2020



## Dear Friends in Faith,

We have been engaged the 'sheltering in place', if possible, for almost 7 weeks with weeks still to go. This rather strange experience has played out different for all of us in unique ways and with different meaning. My thoughts and prayers are with each of you as I know all our daily routines have been altered in one way or another. We have never experienced anything like this before and, I personally, feel we are still on a steep learning curve of how our lives are being reshaped by this worldwide catastrophe.

The Church Council has asked me to communicate with the entire congregation the existence of our HOPE Fund. This is a fund that is available to members and friends of Pilgrim Faith who are in need financially during difficult times. Clearly, this is one of those times. I realize that you may, indeed, be in such a situation. I also know that most of us have this pride thing going and are hard pressed to ask for support, especially money, when it is needed to make ends meet. We want to assist you. This is how we can do so: 1) please contact me via phone or email (2) the distribution of money from the Hope Fund needs to be affirmed by several people, including the Moderator, Chuck Martin. Your request will be presented anonymously and, (3) on the person writing the check will know the identity of the recipient of funds. (4) All arrangements will be handled through me and will remain confidential.

Secondly, as we enter our third month of the pandemic, there are days when it seems easy to be on information overload. At times, the information appears contradictory. I am also aware, and I say this very carefully, that our sources of the news and information about the trajectory of this virus are varied and, in a few cases, offer vastly different perspectives one same situation. It is true that the steps of mitigation we have taken so far has been 'successful' in preventing the health/medical care system from becoming overwhelmed.

But this does not mean that the virus has gone away, in fact, the actual numbers of those infected continues to go up and may likely increase as we begin to 'reopen'.

We received yesterday, an outline of the stages from the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ which I have yet to fully study. They are closely aligned with those of the Governor. I will be sending this material to the Church Council to study as well as we slowly implement the process at and for Pilgrim Faith. My sense is that returning to worship in person in our sanctuary is still some weeks, if not months, away. May we all remain patient and hopeful for the long haul of coming out to the other side of this experience.

Stay safe and healthy.

SHALOM, *Rev Lark*



## BANK ANGELS

Pilgrim Faith is grateful to have been approved for a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) from the Small Business Administration. The program is designed to help small businesses meet employee payroll and benefit costs; if the funds are used as intended for employee retention, the "loan" is forgiven, and the funds do not have to be repaid. Because, the church qualified for the loan as not-for-profit corporation, Tom Aitken, our treasurer, applied for the program through the Oak Lawn Bank & Trust, which handled the application paperwork and portal management. Kathleen Farrell, Vice-President, and Branch Manager, and Louis Leonardi, Executive Vice-President, provided essential guidance in making our application. The bank was able to award us \$27,460.00 for payroll expenses. THANK YOU!!



**Thank You!**

We would like to thank all the people who helped to make the BEDS season for 2019-2020 a success. The shelter could not run without the assistance countless of **volunteers** who staff shifts, provide food, clean up on Friday mornings, the students from area schools who set up each Thursday, who washed sheets, and the many individuals who donated toiletries, coats, and clothing throughout the season.

As you may know, all the BEDS Plus sites in the west and south suburbs were closed in mid-March due to the Coronavirus threat. BEDS Plus was able to consolidate all the sites by housing about 30 guests at St. Barbara's in Brookfield and by placing families and the employed homeless in motel rooms around the area. By moving quickly to protect BEDS guests, the program successfully kept the virus out of the shelters. At this point **none** of the BEDS guests have become ill with COVID-19. We pray that all remain in good health throughout the coming months.

Thanks to the generosity of many, we currently have no need for additional toiletries for next season. We will, however, need men's and women's jeans and sweatshirts next fall. So, if you are cleaning closets please wash those gently used jeans and sweatshirts, bag them, and hold onto them for us until September when we will once again be stocking the shelves!



## FOOD PANTRY

Earlier this year, the Mission Board realized they wanted to become more supportive of our Food Pantry which Russ Ahner had been faithfully managing for a long time. The pantry's routine has been to be open on Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00 am – Noon. As several members of the board became more involved as volunteers, an idea evolved to change to a Saturday opening rather than Friday as a more available time for some families. In discussing this proposal with Russ Ahner, he indicated that he was not available on Saturdays due to other responsibilities and decided to step back for being involved for now. Leece Nicol and Jacqui Cook are the current coordinators of this significant and timely mission for Pilgrim Faith.



## AMAZON SMILE ☺

Shop on AMAZON Smile, select Pilgrim Faith as your charity of choice. Each transaction you make, AMAZON donates a percentage back to Pilgrim Faith!



## PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

The search committee wants to let the congregation know that we have received over a dozen profiles and have interviewed a handful of candidates. We have narrowed our search to three individuals. We will continue to be in conversation with each of these candidates in the coming weeks before moving forward with a recommendation. With the current predicament of shelter in place and not being able to meet as a congregation to vote on a candidate, we cannot say when an opportunity to vote will take place. We ask for your prayers as we continue this journey together, and we thank you for your continued trust. As new information is available, we will keep you all updated. Blessings, Keith Stevenson

If you would like to make a donation electronically, visit the website [www.PilgrimFaith.org](http://www.PilgrimFaith.org) or scan this code with your phone. →



## STEWARDSHIP

### FUNDS MARCH 2020

#### OPERATING

Received: \$36,476.05

Spent: \$54,331.38

#### MISSION

Received: \$3,751.32

Spent: \$0.00

#### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Pledges \$356,100

Donations Rcv'd \$362,493.75

