

Discover
Your
Faith

PILGRIM FAITH UCC

9411 S. 51st Avenue, Oak Lawn, IL 60453

www.PilgrimFaith.org

(708) 422-4200

APRIL 2021



The Moderator's Message...

Admittedly, the past year has been a rollercoaster for Pilgrim Faith. We transitioned to virtual services in March; called a new settled pastor in June; undertook an extensive remodeling project in the parsonage over the summer; welcomed Pastor James with outdoor services in September followed by a few weeks of indoor services in October before COVID restrictions tightened forcing us back to virtual worship; and at the end of February, we were faced with Pastor James being placed on administrative leave by the Illinois Conference of the UCC. And yet, with God's help we survive!

I know that many of you are concerned with what is next for Pilgrim Faith UCC. You want to know more about what is happening regarding Pastor James. All I can tell you is that the Illinois Conference of the UCC is providing as much support as possible to our church and is making sure that we have a pastor to lead worship services. But since details of the administrative leave are a personnel issue, the church is not receiving any information currently regarding the leave.

The Associate Minister of the Illinois Conference, Rev. Terill Murff, will meet with the Pilgrim Faith Church Council on April 1 to provide guidance and information as well as answer questions. I will make sure that the congregation receives an update after that meeting.

It has now been a full year since the pandemic caused Pilgrim Faith to change the way it conducts its ministry, but Pilgrim Faith UCC is still serving its members and community. Community groups continue to meet here on a weekly basis, the Pilgrim Faith Food Pantry continues to serve members of the community who are in need, Ivy League Kids meet daily in Colonial Hall, the Pilgrim Faith Food Team continues to serve meals to the homeless, the Boards and committees of the church continue to meet monthly to keep the church running, and the office remains open with the help of Peggy McGinnis who staffs the office currently. And, most importantly, weekly worship services with messages of God's love and hope continue to be available online to current members and members we have yet to meet in person.

I have heard some say that Pilgrim Faith will not be able to survive because of this year's struggles. Pilgrim Faith UCC has always been a church that has exhibited a strong faith that God will show us the way out of any difficulty we may face. In Matthew 17:20 Jesus said to his disciples, *"for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you."*

Have faith, friends.

Thank You, Rev. Hull!

Rev. Blair Hull has been gracious enough to plan and lead worship services at Pilgrim Faith for the past five weeks since Pastor James was placed on administrative leave. Rev. Hull has previously served UCC congregations at the Congregational Church in Deerfield, Illinois; Campbell United Church of Christ in Campbell, California; and Whitewater Congregational UCC in Whitewater, Wisconsin. She recently returned to the Chicago area and is currently seeking a position as an interim minister.

I am incredibly grateful to Rev. Hull for answering the call to lead our worship services on just 48 hours of notice back in February. It has been a pleasure to work with Rev. Hull who has done a masterful job of organizing our services from a distance. She has managed to tailor her weekly messages to give us exactly what we need to hear during this time of transition. At this time, it is not possible to know exactly how much longer Rev. Hull may be with us, so I would like to extend a word of thanks to her for the leadership she has provided our church. Pilgrim Faith Church is better for having heard Rev. Hull's messages.

Charles Martin, Moderator

Annual Easter Offering

Pilgrim Faith will be accepting a special Easter Offering on Sunday, April 4. This special offering is important to our church because sixty cents from each dollar received in the Easter offering will go into the church operating fund, while forty cents from each dollar received will go to the supporting our church's missions. We hope that you will consider contributing to this special offering. Donations should be clearly marked for the *Easter Offering* when sent to the church.

HE IS RISEN!



2021 Holy Week Activities

This year's Holy Week services will be slightly different than those of the past as a safety precaution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though we need to be socially distant from each other, Pilgrim Faith will continue to offer a Maundy Thursday message; however, this year's message will be pre-recorded by Rev. Blair Hull and posted on the church website on Thursday, April 1. A message from Rev. Hull for Good Friday will also be pre-recorded and made available on the church website on Friday, April 2. Although we will not be together in the same room worshipping at the same time, we can all experience these Holy Week activities safely from home.

This year's Easter service will be held on April 4 at 10:00 am via Zoom and Facebook Live. Rev. Blair Hull will lead the service with music provided by Sarah Koehler. Since Easter is the first Sunday of the month, Communion will also be a part of Pilgrim Faith's Easter celebration this year.

The tech team is currently working diligently to see if it will be possible to welcome worshippers into the sanctuary while broadcasting the service live on Zoom and Facebook. If the technological challenges can be overcome, you will be notified by email or through the calling tree to let you know how to sign up to be one of 50 worshippers allowed into the sanctuary on Sunday, April 4.

A graphic with a purple-to-orange gradient background. A large, stylized purple cross is centered. The word "Lenten" is written in a serif font, with the cross acting as the letter "t". Below it, the word "Reflections" is written in the same font, with the cross acting as the letter "l".

Lenten Reflections

During the Lenten season we have shared special messages from Pilgrim Faith UCC members who shared their memories, traditions, or thoughts about what Lent means to them. The March newsletter contained the first Lenten message from member Amanda Sullivan. Below you will find the thoughts shared by a few other Pilgrim Faith members.

Many people give up something like a favorite food or activity for Lent. Others spend more time in self-reflection or give of themselves financially to charities. I've done some of those things sporadically over the years, and some years I must admit that I have done nothing special for Lent. This year I have decided to look at Lent as a season for prayer. I can think of no time when our world has been in more need of prayer with half a million American lives lost to COVID 19, millions suffering the economic damage caused by the pandemic, great political division among people, and increasing social unrest throughout our country.



My goal is to choose one thing to pray about each day during Lent. I will start by praying for a family member in need of emotional support. Even though my relationship with this family member has often been strained, it is time to mend the relationship which can only be done with the help of God. I will also be praying for friends who are struggling right now and those who I see on the street with no means of support. I will pray for those who are receiving food from our pantry and for those who are providing food and volunteer hours at the pantry. I will pray for those I know very well, as well as for those I do not know at all. Most importantly, I will be praying for the peaceful resolution of all those conflicts that currently divide us. My hope is that my prayers will bring me closer to God.

No matter how you choose to celebrate Lent, I hope that Lent has helped you to become more mindful of God's influence in your life.

— Peggy Martin



MESSAGE FROM THE PANDEMIC RESPONSE TEAM

Due to the recent loosening of COVID restrictions in the state of Illinois and the city of Chicago, the Pilgrim Faith Pandemic Response Team met in March to discuss the possibility of re-opening the church sanctuary. The team is proposing that the church re-open using a hybrid approach with a limited number of worshippers in the sanctuary and worship continuing to be streamed on Facebook Live and Zoom for those who want to participate virtually.

The team is suggesting that up to 50 people will be allowed in the sanctuary for services while all others worship virtually. **Those who want to worship in the sanctuary must register on the church website or by calling the church office.** Once 50 worshippers have signed up, other worshippers will be told that they will need to worship virtually for that week. **Those attending worship in person are required to social distance from other family units and must wear masks throughout the time that they are in the church building.**

The tech team is currently working hard to make sure that it is possible for them to provide a good quality production for virtual worshippers and in-person worshippers alike. At the time of this newsletter printing, the team is still unsure whether this hybrid worship service will be possible for Easter Sunday. Therefore, we ask that you watch your weekly email messages from Pilgrim Faith to monitor the situation. If we determine that the sanctuary can re-open for 50 worshippers on Easter Sunday, you will be notified by email or via the calling tree.

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”

Romans 12:12

Blessings from your PF Pandemic Response Team:

Chris Raap

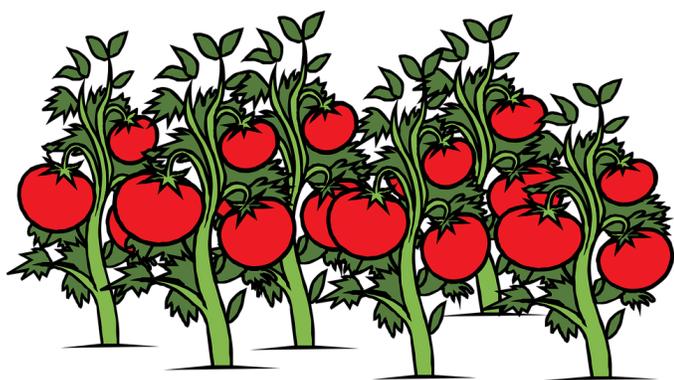
Keith Stevenson

Abby Langevin

Gary Sheehan

Daune Sebastian





PANTRY GARDEN UPDATE

We are getting excited for SPRING! The structure for the garden is mostly completed, and we are anxiously waiting til we can get some plants in around Mother's Day. With this garden, we will be able to help provide FRESH food to families that need help. Thank you to those who have contributed, and if you still want to make a donation just make sure to mark that it is for the Pantry or Specifically for the Pantry Garden. We couldn't be able to help local families without our congregation. Thank you for your continued support!



News from the Trustees

After filing an insurance claim for storm damage to the roof of the Pilgrim Faith steeple, the Trustees have received checks from the insurance company totaling \$57,270.39 which will be used for the repair of the steeple. Because of the insurance coverage, the church will not have to cover much of the cost of the steeple repair. The Trustees are in the process of choosing the shingles that will be used to complete the job and expect the steeple repair job to begin soon.

The next job that the Trustees will tackle is the updating of the six church bathrooms (two on each floor of the church). Trustees are currently consulting with a plumber to get an estimate of the cost of the updates and determine the feasibility of bringing the bathrooms up to ADA standards. The cost of these updates will be covered by funds raised by the Capital Campaign.

Since the Trustees are a small but mighty board, they are welcoming anyone who might like to join their board. Please contact Mary Weierman if you are interested in joining the few, the focused, the Trustees!



Lenten Message

Here is another message provided by
Chris Raap:

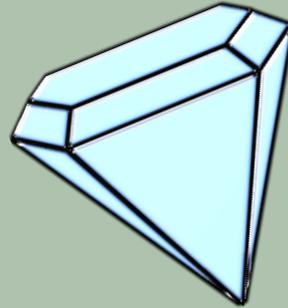
Our family did not really have any specific Lenten traditions that I remember. We didn't give up anything for Lent but emphasized doing something special instead, as we were encouraged to do by the church. What did make Lent special for me was some services we had about 30+ years ago, that still define Lent for me today.



I feel Holy Week is a journey from celebration to deep sadness to joy. The celebration is Jesus entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, which started the journey on a high note. Maundy Thursday was the night I always looked forward to. For some years we had a seder meal, with the traditional bitter herbs, hard-boiled egg, and matzah. The church members attending would be in complete silence the whole time they were in the church. The speakers touched my heart with the blessings and part of the service was washing each other's hands, which I felt showed service to others. It epitomized what Christ is to me, love and service.

The next day we had the Good Friday worship that illustrated the pain that Jesus endured to show his love for mankind. I do not have the words to describe

how I felt after that worship. But I did feel that the joy of the risen Christ on Easter was more intense and meaningful having taken the journey from Palm Sunday to the resurrection.



Fun Facts About April

- ◆ It is the second month of Spring.
- ◆ It is a time of planting and spring cleaning.
- ◆ In the Southern Hemisphere, April is the same as October in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ◆ The diamond of April symbolizes innocence.
- ◆ The Boston Marathon is held during April.
- ◆ In Ancient Rome, the month of April was sacred to the Goddess Venus.
- ◆ April is the month when professional baseball season begins in the United States.





Hurray – Hurray

We are happy to announce that PFUCC has been awarded a second “forgivable loan” under the Federal Payroll Protection Program (PPP). Working again with Kathleen Farrell and Louis Leonardi at Oak Lawn Trust and Savings, Pilgrim Faith received a “loan” of \$27,460.00, the same amount we received with the initial PPP application last year.

The loan requirements are somewhat more restrictive for this second issue. The church, however, qualified under one of the finer qualifying points. The loan is deemed forgivable if the money is used primarily for personnel costs. Other church expenses can be included if our payroll and related expenses do not use the entire amount of the loan. A minimum of 60% of the loan must be used for employee payroll and benefits. Up to 40% can be used for other qualified church expenses such as utilities. The loan is forgiven if our application for loan forgiveness is approved. There is a 24-week window in which the proceeds must be used. Unused proceeds are returned to the bank.



Amazon Smile deposited \$37.77 in the church account for the October – De-

ember 2020 period. Your continued utilization of the Amazon Smile program is greatly appreciated. The church does not get any reporting on who is utilizing the program nor how much any one person is spending. We just get a donation for the total amount accumulated for Pilgrim Faith. Keep up the good work. Tell your friends and relatives to go on to Amazon Smile and select Pilgrim Faith as their non-profit organization of choice. Then make all your Amazon purchases through Amazon Smile!

BEDS Plus Food Team

On Thursday, March 25, the Pilgrim Faith BEDS Plus Food Team provided a hot



meal of Salisbury steak, rice, gravy, and vegetables to 60 homeless BEDS Plus clients.

That makes a total of 200 meals that Pilgrim Faith has provided in the first three months of 2021. In addition to the hot

meals, the team also provides beverages, dessert, breakfast bars, and fruit cups for the BEDS guests.



Thank you so much to all who have contributed either food items or a monetary donation to provide this food to the homeless of the southwest suburbs! Please contact Peggy Martin or Vicki Brooks, if you would like to help or donate money!



LENT

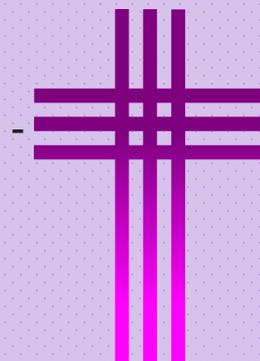
This message for Lent comes from Jacqui Cook:

Growing up Catholic, Lent always meant giving up my favorite TV show (or at least trying to) and a soggy grape jelly sandwich on white bread in my school lunchbox on Fridays. Those 40 days of "sacrifice" ended with a new dress for Easter Sunday Mass, when the church was packed with the faithful of all ages celebrating the Resurrection.

In recent years, I've begun to look at Lent as an opportunity to do something for others, rather than focus on giving something up. Jesus never called on us to give up Diet Coke, but He did very clearly tell us to serve and uplift each other. This year, my Lenten practice includes volunteering at the Advocate COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Oak Lawn. I spend a couple hours every week disinfecting work spaces, welcoming patients and showing them where to go for the shot they've been waiting so long to get. Their joy is palpable - grandparents who can't wait to hug their grandbabies, adult children eager to finally see their elderly parents, health care workers no longer worried about going to work. If I can contribute to that joy by offering a smile (behind my mask), listening to a story or helping get the answer to a question, then maybe I've done a very, very small part in bringing God's Kingdom to life.

I'd like to close with a short prayer from a wonderful new book, *The Rhythm of Prayer*, by Sarah Bessey. It's a good reminder that even in the midst of "doing," there must be time to pause and reflect. We've all been through a lot this past year; let's take a deep breath and look ahead to the promise of Easter and all that God has in store for Pilgrim Faith.

**"God, teach us to pause in this moment, to tuck ourselves into the curve of your slow arm, that we may know the miracle of now."
Micha Boyett**





Created with TheTeachersCorner.net Word Search Maker

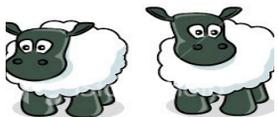
Easter

D F S Z Q R L E U Y N N U B N B I F L L
S L I D O F F A D T L Q X E I K K X U X
F T S O Y N L O L I S Q R L N E G G T P
E F E N U C A E E P X M P C A Q N T T M
Y Q G N U O M Y A G O T Y Y H I J P B N
I C W D N B B B S S M G R I R W U J A H
S P V G Z O S M E X T P C P I P U H S X
C G S Z L M B S U K Z E S K C I H C K K
M O F O U K W P O T S N R Q H V S X E Y
B K F T S C E K Y R A Y H E H G S S T F
C C H O C O L A T E C Y K K G U A Z Q T
X W E B N T P M B W A T N E P G T Q W A
H V M B E L D Y B C F C O I P H S E K V
Z D B Y R F L H I L Q K A H T S K L O M
B D U C K L I N G S K C U N I U Y N V K
A H Y D E P T A E N D D I R B Y S C L M
Y G O J Q H V L D D I V I U B C P K T V
H G A K H O P O Q A L N Y W A X I C Y G
Z W B B E E U P S U F X Y G R V T S V W
O Z Y C S M W T E U R L Y N H W Z Q Z H

BUNNY
DUCKLINGS
BONNET
HOTCROSSBUNS
RABBIT
CHOCOLATE

DAFFODILS
EASTEREGG
HYACINTH
BASKET
CHICKS

LAMBS
IRIS
JELLYBEANS
SPRING
EGGS





REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

MARY BREHM

BRIDGEVIEW HEALTHCARE
8100 S. HARLEM AVE.
BRIDGEVIEW, IL 60455

GRACE PLUHAR

8824 S. 55TH CT.
OAK LAWN, IL 60453

ADA HOOK

404 ROOT ST.
NEW LENOX, IL 60451

RUTH HOOK

APERION CARE
9401 S. RIDGELAND
OAK LAWN, IL 60453

DOLORES TREZISE

15133 ROYAL GEORGIAN RD.
ORLAND PARK, IL 60462

MILDRED HOUSE

CLARENDALE OF MOKENA #2221
21536 S. WOLF RD.
MOKENA, IL 60448

DONNA TWICHELL

10032 HARNEW RD. EAST
OAK LAWN, IL 60453

DARLENE WANK

10942 S. OAK AVE
CHICAGO RIDGE, IL 60415

Calling All Kids!

There is a NEW packet for April ready for you to access and/or pick up at church! The board was so happy to find a resource that helps our kids learn at home about all that Jesus calls us to be! There are some amazing, thought-provoking activities, along with crafts, and snack ideas. So, check out this month's Easter activities, including how to help your kids understand how the Easter Bunny and the Crucifixion and Resurrection connect! Then there are April Fool's Day and Honesty Day, too!

Packets are ready for pickup M-F 9 AM-2 PM, or if you need them delivered, just let the office know.

April Packet- with so many activities!

<https://www.teachsundayschool.com/dl/kmpp/KMPPApril2021-cu8ejcd9wk.pdf>





April 2021



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



To view Sunday worship on Zoom:
Dial 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 811 1497 7543
Passcode: 320513

Maundy Thursday
Pre-recorded
Message posted
on Facebook and
Website

Good Friday
Pre-recorded
Message posted
on Facebook and
Website

Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to
Noon

4
10:00 AM
Easter Worship

COMMUNION

5

6
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to Noon

7

8
CE Board
7:00 pm

Constitution Committee
7:00 pm

9

10
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to
Noon

11
10:00 AM
Worship

12
Mission
7:00 pm

13
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to Noon

Girl Scouts
6:00

14
Deacons
5:00 pm

15
Constitution Committee
7:00 pm

16

17
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to
Noon

18
10:00 AM
Worship

19

20
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to Noon
Trustees
7:30 pm
Newsletter Articles
Due
By End of Day

21
BEDS Meal Donations
Due

Council Meeting
7:00 pm

22
BEDS MEAL

23

24
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to
Noon

25
10:00 AM
Worship

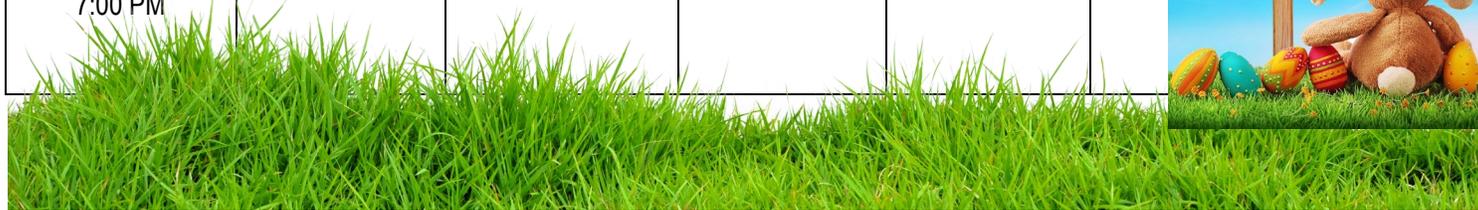
Book Club
7:00 PM

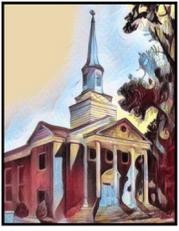
26

27
Food Pantry
10:00 a.m. to Noon

28

29





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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**C
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SATURDAY

10:00am Food Pantry
 10:00am AA 2nd Floor

MONDAY

12:00pm AA 2nd Floor
 7:30pm GA 2nd Floor

TUESDAY

10:00am Food Pantry
 10:00am AA 2nd Floor
 6:00pm Girl Scouts
 7:00pm AA District 6 & 21
*Next meeting March 2021
 (3rd Tues-Every odd mo.)*

WEDNESDAY

10:00am AA 2nd floor
 1:00pm Al-Anon
 6:00pm Boy Scouts
 7:00pm AA 2nd floor

THURSDAY

10:00am AA 2nd Floor
 6:00pm AA *Cancelled*
 7:00pm *BEDS Shelter*
(Discontinued until further notice)

FRIDAY

8:00pm AA 2nd Floor

Pledge Envelopes

If you requested **pledge** envelopes for 2021, your envelopes are available for pickup at the church office. For those who cannot pick them up, please call the office to make mailing arrangements.



— Don Lagerstrom

AA Meeting Update

The Tuesday morning AA meeting is continuing to run on Tuesday mornings at 10:00am. Another long time participant wants to keep it available to those who need it.