



JANUARY 2024

More Truth and Light

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Lao – Tzu

The holly and the jolly are put away. The Christmas past gave us special memories, a lot of laughter and a feeling – for a time – that all seemed ‘right’ with the world. The warmth of family and friends kept our spirits high, hopeful, and filled with joy. Now, as we stand on the threshold of the New Year, it feels less joyous, less hopeful, and there is a lot of uncertainty in our world today. We don’t know what to expect. Even in our life together, we feel the heavy burden of a smaller congregation, less money, and fewer programs than we once knew. Certainly, this year does give us pause, and probably more than any other time in our life together, we could use a little divine intervention. However, I do believe that God created us as co-creators with God and that together, we can make a difference. What we need is the faith to believe that we can. How then should we embrace this New Year – one day at a time.

I have a friend who has been running for a long time and he would frequently post his runs for the day. He was more of a cross-country runner than a track and field or treadmill runner. I remember seeing that he had run 10 miles and I had commented on his Facebook page that I wanted to be able to do that too. Not long after my comment he responded – one mile at a time. I think that is good advice – one mile at a time. I’m still running one mile at a time, and I haven’t reached 10 miles, but I’m still running. I think his comment is one to reflect upon at the beginning of this New Year. As Lao Tzu once said, ***“the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”*** No, we don’t know what the year holds. Yes, we can speculate, and we may even have a pretty good hunch, but we cannot let the big picture overwhelm us. Instead, we take each day with a little curiosity and a lot of faith, believing that the Holy Spirit will see us through

and guide us to another day. Yes, we must be reasonable, we must be vigilant, but we don’t need to allow the unknown to consume us.

Pilgrim Faith has been on an intentional journey to re-define its purpose, its mission, and its future. The Council and leaders throughout the congregation have been creating space for this kind of discussion to take place. We’ve had five important conversations where a team of people listened to your responses to discern a good way forward. The team leading the discussion has completed their work and have created four possible scenarios for our future church. These four options will be available in the New Year and all of us will have an opportunity to review the steps taken, ask any questions or raise any concerns that may be on your heart, and then we’ll have to make a choice, choosing the path forward that feels reasonable and responsible. Yes, the New Year brings with it much anticipation a lot of uncertainty, but with God’s help and this community working together, we’ll find a way forward that continues the ministry of love and grace that has been a hallmark of this congregation over the years. No matter the choice we make, there will be a journey that will take us to a new place, and it will be okay. The time has come for Pilgrim Faith U.C.C. to take a first step to a new beginning. God is calling us from what we have known to something new and different. None of us are sure what that will be, what it will look like, or how we will do it, but whatever it will be it begins with a single step – one mile at a time. Trusting in the Holy Spirit, we take the first step.

Come, walk with me.

Rev. Daniel Gather



Please let us know *if you would be interested in serving as an usher*, the usher team needs more participants.

Sunday Service Ushers

January 7 Libby Langevin and Maureen Hutton
January 14 Pam and Mike Cusack
January 21 TBA
January 28 TBA

Please contact Pam Cusack, Worship and Spiritual Life Team at pamcusack@gmail.com



MONTHLY MOMENT OF CLIMATE HOPE!

Throughout the Bible, God tells us, “Do not be afraid” but show hope and love in all that we do!

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR THE MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND MISSION will be collecting for the homeless ministry of Advocate United Church of Christ. Throughout the month of December, we’ve been collecting hats, gloves, and scarves. In January they will select a new item. Because of the fire that destroyed, Advocate U.C.C. they’ve reached out to other UCC congregations, especially in Cluster five, to ask for help so they can continue helping the homeless population in our communities. If you have contributed items throughout the month of December, thank you. Watch for more information as to what this ministry team will be collecting in January. There is a basket in the Narthex marked Advocate U.C.C. and you can leave your contribution in it.



THE US SIGNED 3 NEW CLIMATE LAWS ALLOCATING \$514 BILLION TO CUTTING AMERICAN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. ON THE SURFACE, NONE OF THEM APPEAR TO BE ABOUT CLIMATE, BUT “A CLIMATE LAW BY ANY OTHER NAME CAN STILL SAVE THE PLANET,” FRANCK SAYS.

Harvard Chan’s School Of Public Health- Marcy Franck



MAUI RELIEF THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF JANUARY!



The Ministry of Christian Formation and Mission is looking at providing Maui Relief throughout the month of January. This ministry team is working with the Ministry of Worship and Spiritual Life to host a series of coffee hours with the intention to collect a love offering for Maui Relief. Please look for more information about the coffee hours in our weekly bulletins and mail chimp correspondence.



FOR NO PROPHECY WAS EVER PRODUCED BY THE WILL OF MAN, BUT MEN SPOKE FROM GOD AS THEY WERE CARRIED ALONG BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

2 PETER 1:21, ESV

Remember Our Homebound

Mary Brehm

Bridgeview
Healthcare Ctr.
8100 S. Harlem Ave.
Bridgeview, IL 60455

Darlene Wank

10942 S. Oak Ave
Chicago Ridge, IL
60415

Doris Seitz

11237 S. Normandy
Worth, IL 60482

Barbara Dresdem

5133 W. 79th St.
Burbank, IL 60459

Donna Twichell

10032 Harnew Rd.
East
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Linda Aitken

The Pointe at
Kilpatrick
14230 Kilpatrick
Crestwood, IL. 60418

Bob Salveson

6146 S. Karlov Ave.
Chicago, IL 60629



JANUARY PLANS FOR THE LIMITLESS YOUTH GROUP!

Sunday, January 14th 5-7 p.m., Planning Meeting for the Spring. We'll be planning a game night, Easter Egg Hunt, and any other great ideas that you may have! Youth in the Seventh Grade and older are invited to join us for an evening of fun, planning, and pizza! We'll meet at Pilgrim Faith on the third floor in Room #25! Come and share your wonderful ideas!

Sunday, January 21st, 2-4 p.m., Bowling with Salem Youth at Palos Lanes, located at 11025 Southwest Hwy, Palos Hills. The cost will be \$15.00 per person and include shoe rental and two games. Please bring your own money for food and beverages! This is always a great event with our youth. Come! Bring a friend and let's bowl!

Please let us know if you will be joining us to bowl at our meeting on Sunday, January 14th!



Fundraiser for Lahaina, Hawaii



The devastating fires that occurred on August 8, 2023 on the island of Maui (particularly the heavy-hit Lahaina area) have left many people without shelter, food, or any of their belongings. But they feel blessed to have lived through this horrendous experience. It is with the help of the UCC Disaster Ministries that the Hawaiian people are beginning to find a way forward. The Disaster Ministries is there to offer long-term assistance where it is needed most. They partner with dozens of organizations, large and small, for holistic, community-based recovery. According to the Hawai'i Conference UCC, it is expected to be 1.5 - 2 years before rebuilding can begin, and with the damage in Lahaina, they anticipate it will be a 7 to 10 year rebuilding process. We are offering the Pilgrim Faith family a chance to help through the January Coffee Hour of Giving. Join us for a FUN way to help. Each week there will be Hawaiian-themed treats for Coffee Hour and some Hawaiian décor to get you in the spirit of giving! Thanks for whatever you can donate!

LOTS OF FUN WITH THE LIMITLESS YOUTH GROUP THIS WINTER!



Ringling bells for Santa on the Green in Oak Lawn, joining voices and bells with our Musical Christmas Celebration in worship, creating greeting cards for our homebound members, and having a great time with the Salem youth at our Christmas party and Cookie Bake-Off! What a great year we've had so far, and there is more winter fun to come! A special thank you to all our youth who shared their talents with us this winter and to our leaders who have enjoyed leading our youth with all the fun, service, and laughter that we've shared!



COUNCIL NEWS AND DATES!

2024 BUDGET IS BEING PLANNED: The Ministry of Finance and Stewardship is currently working on the budget for 2024. This is an important year for future planning for Pilgrim Faith United Church of Christ and your prayers, support, and participation in this process is important. Please choose to be informed. If you have suggestions, ideas, or have questions, please reach out to Tom Aitken or a member of the Ministry of Finance and Stewardship.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE is doing their work to secure seven members to serve on the Church Council. Each term is one year with a three-year limit and all the officers must run for Council positions each year. This allows for current members to step back if they feel they need to do this, and it allows for new members to step up if you feel you would like to do this. If you are interested in serving as an officer of the congregation, please contact Doreen Lopez or Dennis Healy. All seven positions are open. We are looking for a Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk/Secretary, UCC Delegate, and two members at large.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING. The Council has set the Annual meeting for Pilgrim Faith UCC for Sunday, February 4th following worship. We will elect our officers and vote on the 2024 budget. All members are encouraged to attend this important meeting. If you have items for the agenda or any questions, please contact Daune Sebastian.



Please *let us know if you would be interested in offering a coffee hour.* We are looking for more participants.

Sunday Coffee Hour Hosts

January 7 Daune Sebastian
January 14 Chris Raap
January 21 Kevin Holt
January 28 Jimmy Werner

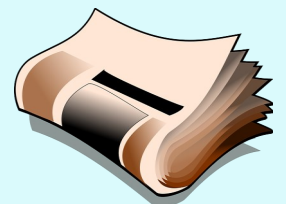


Please contact **Pam Cusack**, Worship and Spiritual Life Team at pamcusack@gmail.com



NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Do you have something to contribute to our monthly newsletter? **The deadline for the February edition is Friday, January 26th.** Please submit any articles or announcements for our monthly newsletter by that date and we will be sure to include it.



PILGRIM FAITH UCC
RECEIPTS - DISBURSEMENTS - NOVEMBER 2023

	Month of NOVEMBER 2023		As of NOVEMBER 30, 2023	
	MONTH Actual	MONTH Budget	YEAR-TO-DATE Actual	YEAR-TO-DATE Budget
Receipts				
Pledges & Non-Pledged Giving	\$ 10,622.00	\$ 6,456.29	\$ 78,858.47	\$ 60,254.91
Total Receipts (all sources)	\$ 17,335.91	\$ 10,076.88	\$ 139,103.71	\$ 94,008.97
Disbursements				
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 10,692.28	\$ 12,178.37	\$ 127,877.15	\$ 122,969.90
Expenses	\$ 6,963.12	\$ 4,322.99	\$ 84,911.84	\$ 80,181.06
Total Disbursements (all expense)	\$ 17,880.99	\$ 16,909.69	\$ 216,196.73	\$ 207,642.59
Net Total	\$ (545.08)	\$ (6,832.81)	\$ (77,093.02)	\$ (113,633.62)


If you want a list of all checks written for the month, send request to finances@pilgrimfaith.org.



**THANK YOU FOR HELPING US
 CREATE CHRISTMAS CARDS**

Gail Siwek and Laura Stanton want to thank the youth, their leaders Alex and Kevin and everyone who helped us make Christmas cards for shut-ins and those sick and in need of cheering up. We lovingly created and mailed 15 cards, and we hope we made Christmas a little brighter for everyone. We couldn't have done it without your help.





Pilgrim Faith
 United Church of Christ

Sunday Nursery Helpers

January 7 Gail Siwek
 January 14 Sue Arnold
 January 21 Daune Sebastian
 January 28 Amanda Sullivan

Dreams

Daniel 1:17

“To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.”

To have someone like the four men or Daniel to come into our little community and share with us the knowledge, wisdom, insight and visions would be great. These five people would give clarity towards the next steps of Pilgrim Faith. Our dreams (if you believe the history behind dreams and dreaming) is a guideline towards the steps God places before us. In other words, our dreams are the GPS of God's plan.

Before teaching, I would not dream (not ones that would be memorable anyway) until Sunday. The community of Pilgrim Faith would awaken the inner part of my brain and allow me to see more than I could before being awake.

This awakening allows me to challenge what others would say, discuss and complain about. Grounding is fading shadows of what God placed before me, I found myself looking at what is God's calling for Pilgrim Faith. Is it a smaller location? Is it renting out locations to keep the sanctuary open? Is it something totally different that no one has dreamt of yet?

One thing that keeps me to Pilgrim Faith is the concept of the congregation having a say in the running, future, administration and events that happen here. Coming from a Catholic background, assisting to set up a Lutheran Church and taking part in a non-denominational service at college - all did not have the say a congregational church has. The only thing was to remove myself from that environment.

We have seen this happen with the changes that Pilgrim Faith has gone through. Instead of the times of ancient times where people would stand and fight, we have become broken and it is easier to walk away than get involved with anything that would take up the time of God and community. But God does not want that. That is not a way of finding God's calling.

I have been thinking about the idea of community, God and spending time in quiet, reflective prayer; I believe that this is needed for everyone regardless if you believe you can do this or not. If God is calling you to do anything, the only way to find out is by spending time with God.

Next year is a changing year. We have had a conversation about the church; we have paid for professionals to find out if building housing for the seniors would be the answer and we have had smaller companies come in to look at the building. While there are millions of ideas on the plate, we need more than ever to talk with God and ask for guidance.

Regardless of the end results, God's plan will come through. We will change, grow and come to know God closer. This is not only a small community, it is a larger community that calls Jesus our Lord and walks as closely as we can with Him.

This next year, I pray that you find the voice of God and find peace in this world.

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:7

God's speed and may God's love cover you and guide you.

Mary Weierman

THANK YOU FOR
supporting the



Here are three ways to support the pantry:

Donate goods or host a food drive

Donations may be dropped off M-F 9am-2pm

Volunteer your time

Please email pffoodpantry.com to volunteer in the pantry!

Make a monetary donation

Scan the QR code, write a check payable to "Pilgrim Faith Food Pantry," or deliver cash donation at the office.



To make an electronic donation:

- 1) Open your smart phone's camera
- 2) Scan the QR code
- 3) Click the link
- 4) Make a donation through PayPal.



COFFEE HOUR ATTENDEES TO CREATE VALENTINES FOR HOMEBOUND

The creation of valentines will be led by Gail Siwek and Laura Stanton during coffee hour on Sunday, January 28. We are asking coffee hour attendees to help us in cheering up homebound members and friends of Pilgrim Faith and those who are sick and otherwise need cheering up. No experience is necessary. Come and have fun with us, and know you are lifting the spirits of someone.



Please let us know *if you would be interested in being a "Stand-by Liturgist"*. Our upcoming liturgists are:

Sunday Liturgy Leaders

January 7 Jacques Lopez
January 14 Kevin Holt
January 21 Rick Wank
January 28 Jimmy Werner

Please contact Pam Cusack, Worship and Spiritual Life Team at pamcusack@gmail.com

WELCOME ZACHARY PEART as our accompanist! Zach is not a new face to most of the members and friends of Pilgrim Faith U.C.C. However, we are excited to introduce Zachary Peart as our Accompanist for our worship services! Zachary (Zach) was born and raised through Pilgrim Faith and has personally felt the love from the congregation, especially during family struggles. The members of Pilgrim Faith U.C.C. have always been welcoming and encouraging of his musical talents. His first performances on piano and oboe happened at Pilgrim Faith. Zach writes that he continues to feel the love of the congregation, enjoyed the retreats and the memories of Pilgrim Faith UCC that he will cherish forever. He is excited to make new memories as he steps into the position of accompanist for Pilgrim Faith U.C.C. Please warmly greet and welcome Zach when you see him.

I AM FILLED
WITH
Hope
AND
Joy.

Romans 15:13



**OAK LAWN PRAYER SERVICE
FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25 AT 7:00PM

**AT CHRIST CENTERED MINISTRIES
9701 49TH AVE, OAK LAWN**

**"YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD ... AND YOUR
NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF" (LUKE 10:27)**

ALL ARE INVITED!

**PLEASE BRING WITH A NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEM OR A
WINTER ARTICLE OF CLOTHING FOR DONATION**





The Pilgrim Faith Food Pantry is hosting a Trivia Night to support our ongoing efforts to stock the shelves and serve our neighbors in need. Bring your own snacks and beverages (may be alcoholic if you choose!) and prepare to test your knowledge! Each team will have 8 people.

When: Saturday, February 3, 2024 7-9pm (Doors will open at 6pm)

Where: Pilgrim Faith United Church of Christ
9411 S. 51st Ave. Oak Lawn, IL 60453



Cost: \$30/person online OR \$40/person at the door (value of a staple bag of groceries)
Tickets include non-alcoholic beverages, trivia with the chance to win a grand prize, & FUN for a good cause!

There will be a silent auction with goods from local businesses.

We are looking forward to a fun evening in support of a great cause!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to **Alyssa** via call/text at 708-822-5351 or pffoodpantry@gmail.com

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	3	4	5	6 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
7 10:00 AM Worship	8	9 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	10	11	12	13 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
14 10:00 AM Worship	15	16 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	17	18	19 	20 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
21 10:00 AM Worship	22	23 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	24	25	26	27 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
28 10:00 AM Worship	29	30 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	31 			



Pilgrim Faith UCC
9411 S. 51st Ave.
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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MONDAY

12:00pm AA 2nd Floor

TUESDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

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

THURSDAY

10:00am AA 2nd Floor

FRIDAY

8:00pm AA 2nd Floor

SATURDAY

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

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