



November 2025

More Truth and Light

“And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” Romans 5:3-5

A couple of weeks ago, I took my mother, and we visited my sister who lives about an hour and half away. It was a warm day, and it was a clear day and as we traveled we noticed many fields of corn and soybeans had been harvested and there were still many farmers working through the day to harvest their crops for the year. As we watched the combined harvest, the corn and beans, we knew that the farmers were filled with new hope, anticipating a grand harvest. Harvest time is a time of anticipation and hoping. We are in that season where hope becomes the prevailing theme in church life as we anticipate Thanksgiving, the season of Advent, Christmas and the New Year. These are days filled with hope and possibility.

In the midst of this time of year, Pilgrim Faith United Church of Christ is anticipating a merger with Salem United Church of Christ that has been named New Hope United Church of Christ. Given the context of our separate and combined ministries over the years, New Hope speaks of something new and even more exciting and impactful than what each of us can do alone. Like the farmer harvesting corn and soybeans, our spirits anticipate something better than what we know in the present. For many of our members, New Hope United Church of Christ will be our new spiritual home. I truly love the name. It speaks of the foundation of Christ’s love and grace that has shaped us in the past and calls us from the present into a hopeful future with new possibilities. Hope is a powerful word that has no ending. It is the energy that moves us, inspires us, and provides for us an open-ended vision that moves us faithfully and confidently into an unknown future. As Paul writes about hope in his letter to the Romans, he says, *‘hope does not disappoint us’ – ‘hope does not put us to shame.’*

In our vote, the name of New Hope won by a large margin. I believe that this was not an accident, but an act of the Holy Spirit. The words *‘new’* and *‘hope’* speak to the aspirations of a people tired of feeling hopeless, eager to be a part of something new, and its very name is an act of resistance to a nation and a world where elected leaders have chosen power over purpose, wealth over people, hatred over kindness, exclusion over inclusion, and division over unity. New Hope proclaims that even so, we will not give up on hope. It will be new every day, and we will not grow weary of doing what is right, what is good, what is faithful, and what is God’s will. The world, our na-

tion, and our community need hope and our new congregation, New Hope, has an opportunity to be the progressive Christian voice in the community of Oak Lawn. We can be the church that can give hope to people, to a community, and to a nation that does not want us to hope. The current elected leaders want us to give up and trust them without our voices, our votes, and to act without accountability to our Constitution and the people of the United States. We can be the voice in this community that boldly proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ and makes it very clear that we must **be** hope when hope is gone.

Imagine, if you will, the day we recognize the death of Jesus, Good Friday. Remember what the disciples did? Peter betrayed Jesus. He said he didn’t know him. Three times he said that. The disciples fled and locked themselves in a room, hiding from the Roman soldiers, afraid that they too would be arrested and crucified. A few who remained, took Jesus off the cross and quickly put him in a tomb where several hopeless disciples would tearfully walk to the tomb to complete the burial ritual of the people of this time. For Peter, the disciples locked in a room, and the women who walked to the tomb on that first Easter morning were hopeless. In fact, the disciples were so hopeless several of them gave up on the way of Jesus and returned to their former vocation, fishing. Even in the midst of their hopelessness, God offered one more surprise – Jesus wasn’t in the tomb. He was gone. An angel asked the women, **“Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but he has risen.” Luke 24:5** The resurrection is hope and hope does not disappoint us. As two congregations become one, let us reflect on the power of our new name and let us be ambassadors of hope in a world that needs hope, needs love, needs acceptance, and needs a different message than what is being heard today. New Hope United Church of Christ. What’s in a name? Everything. Let us believe in the power of hope and let us be hope. This is our call.

With hope and anticipation,

Pastor Dan Gather

Moderator's Article

Hi everyone! I hope you are all enjoying the changing season, the fall weather, and everything that comes with it. I wanted to take a few moments to provide some updates regarding the merger, so everyone is aware:

- At this point, we have had two combined worship services with Salem UCC, the congregation we are intending to merge together, with great turnout. Our next combined service will be at Salem UCC on **Sunday, December 21st.**
- Our transition team with members from both churches have met twice and have taken care of many items, such as a mission statement, vision statement, a vote on the name, a start towards creating a combined constitution, and establishing a timeline for moving. More details on these items can be provided below.
- By this point, both congregations have voted and approved on the mission statement and vision statement, as well as a vote on the name. The votes for the four names are as follows: Oak Lawn Community UCC (7 votes), Hope UCC (13 votes), Faith UCC (15 votes), and New Hope UCC (49 votes). We will be moving forward with the name New Hope and will make sure to provide a spirit that is focused on being inclusive, welcoming to all, and embraces this new hope in our new chapter.
- All final RSVPs for the legacy service on **November 16th** need to be made with the church office by **November 2nd**. This is to guarantee food for the right number of people, as well as any additional snacks or any additional materials. We hope you all can come for this memorable service, and celebration afterwards, too.
- We are still working on finalizing a date with the lawyer, but we are hoping to put a date on the calendar soon, so we can start the legal process of getting all legal paperwork submitted and taken care of for merging. More information to come.
- Pastor Dan is working with contacting and meeting some marketing groups to help promote marketing for the new church. He found a group that looks promising called New Marketing Solutions in Oak Lawn, IL. Once more information becomes available, we will let you know.
- Next, we have some information regarding the shepherd groups. Pastor Steve created these groups to help unite the new "merged congregations" through fellowship, spiritual study, and giving people a place to feel connected. We have posted lists of the different shepherd groups in the Narthex, as well as the name of the host. If you have any questions about where these meetings will happen, or when they will happen, or if you wish to be involved, reach out to Pastor Dan, Kevin, or a leader of one of the four shepherd groups. We hope you can join us for this experience.
- Finally, we are still working on some combined budgets, as well as legacy recommendations. We hope to have this ready for you all in the next two months, but we'll update you when this is ready.

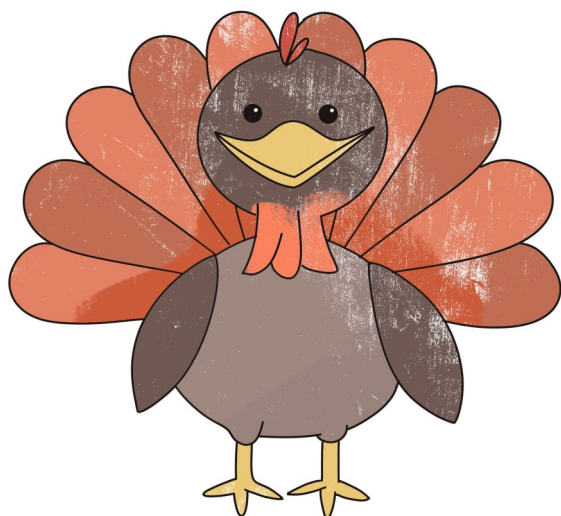
I think this covers everything for now, but as always if you have questions or concerns, reach out to Council/Kevin/Pastor Dan. Together, we can move forward and do great things. Thanks for all that you all do, you are so appreciated, and I am thankful for you all in this time of fall, but always, too. Take care!

Cheers,

Kevin Holt

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF PILGRIM

FAITH! Please join us for a special service of celebration, recognizing the many mission outreach programs that have been a part of Pilgrim Faith over the years. We will celebrate our legacy during worship on Sunday, November 16th and enjoy a meal following the service in Colonial Hall. The Service will feature many of our mission initiatives throughout the years and we'll enjoy some upbeat and powerful music that will lift our spirits as we celebrate the ministry of our congregation. Please join us for this wonderful celebration.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT will take place at Pilgrim Faith UCC on Sunday, December 14th during our morning worship. The Christmas pageant will be based upon an adaptation of Jill Roman Lord's book, entitled, *The Noisy Night*. Please come, choose a character and be a part of this annual tradition. We are looking forward to another day of fun and worship.

Online Giving Now Available

A number of you have asked that we make it possible for you to give your donations through an online option. We are pleased to inform everyone that you can now do that. Simply scan the QR code below with your phone or tablet and you will be directed to our online page where you can make a donation. Thank you!



Remember Our Homebound

Mary Brehm

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

Diane Chapman

16051 S. LaGrange Rd.
Room 254
Orland Park, IL 60467

Linda Aitken

The Pointe at
Kilpatrick
14230 Kilpatrick
Crestwood, IL.
60418

Bob Salvesson

6146 S. Karlov Ave.
Chicago, IL 60629

Donna Twichell

10032 Harnew Rd.
East
Oak Lawn, IL
60453



From the desk of Mary Weierman

***“ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me- the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace”
Acts 20: 24***

As we write this chapter on our lives, what would the title be? What would you focus on?

Would it be focused on the past, or the new task that God has called us to do. Paul and the other apostles go and share the good news that God is here and God wants a relationship with everyone. Focusing on the task (like Paul has) gives the confidence to plainly and simply state that the past life is not the focus; the good news of God’s grace is the focus. When focusing on the task God is calling us to do, he will bless us.

God has continued to bless us while we finish our work here.

September’s numbers

Credits 19,421.

Debets 20,744.

Difference -1,323.

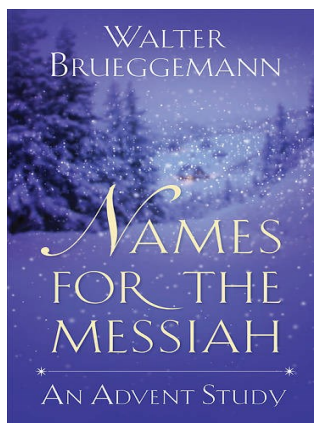
We have moved some money from the savings to our checking to cover the celebration of Pilgrim Faith legacy.

We look forward to God’s calling for our new mission, our new congregation and our new calling to share God’s good news that God wants all of us to love and help each other.

Thank you for giving and may God bless you and guide you.
Mary Weierman



A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING AND GRATITUDE will be hosted by Immanuel United Church of Christ, located at 9815 C. Campbell Ave, Evergreen Park, Illinois. Together Salem UCC, Pilgrim Faith UCC and Immanuel UCC will share in a combined service of joy and gratitude for the many blessings and abundant gifts that we have enjoyed. The worship service will take place on **Sunday, November 23rd and will begin at 6:30 p.m.** A combined choir will be a part of the celebration! Please join us for this special service.



COMBINED ADVENT STUDY! Once again, we will join with members of Salem UCC, Immanuel UCC, and Peace Memorial UCC for an Advent Study. Together we will explore and discuss the book, *“Names for the Messiah: An Advent Study”* by Dr. Walter

Brueggemann. Together we explore the prophet Isaiah names for baby Jesus, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The discussion will take place on Tuesday evenings beginning **November 25th, December 2nd, 9th, and 16th** at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. If you would like to join the study, please let Pastor Dan know by Sunday, November 23rd so that a Zoom link can be sent to you. If you would like to purchase a book, please let Pastor Dan know. The cost per book will be \$13.00. It is an easy read, and I believe we’ll have a good conversation around the titles for Jesus. Join us!

TRUNK OR TREAT WAS A SUCCESS!

We had great weather for our Trunk or Treat and treated over 200 children with our clever cars and lots of candy! A big thank you to all who showed up with their cars, donated candy, and helped with the logistics of the day. Thank you, Dennis and Alexis, for the work you put into making this day fun and safe. You are both wonderful workers and clearly love Halloween. It was also great to fill a wagon of food donations for our food pantry. What a wonderful day. Next year at New Hope United Church of Christ!





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

Sunday Liturgy Leaders

- November 2 Chris Raap
- November 9 Jacques Lopez
- November 16 Kevin Holt
- November 23 Jimmy Werner
- November 30 Keith Stevenson

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

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

Sunday Service Ushers

- November 2 Libby Langevin & Maureen Hutton
- November 9 Brett Arnold
- November 16 TBA
- November 23 Ken Sebastian
- November 30 TBA

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



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

Sunday Coffee Hour Hosts

- November 2 Doreen Lopez & Carol Burke
- November 9 Libby Langevin & Amanda Sullivan
- November 16 Legacy Service
- November 23 Sue Arnold & Pam Cusack
- November 30 Doreen Lopez & Carol Burke

To volunteer, please contact Pam Cusack, Worship and Spiritual Life Team at pamlcusack@gmail.com



MY JOYFUL HEART



Pilgrim Faith will be joining with Salem to buy gifts for needy children this year. There will a list in Colonial Hall during coffee hour if you are interested. If you would like to make a donation instead of shopping yourself, please see me or any member of the Mission Team. The gifts need to be brought to church by Nov. 23rd.



THANKSGIVING TURKEY DRIVE

**on now until November 19, 2025
PILGRIM FAITH FOOD PANTRY**



Help Pilgrim Faith Food Pantry provide Thanksgiving turkeys to the less fortunate. Please drop off turkeys by November 19th. Thank you.

How to Donate:

Turkeys (18 lbs or less) may be dropped off at Pilgrim Faith, 9411 S 51st Ave, Monday thru Friday 10-2 or Saturday 9-12.



November 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon
2 10:00 AM Worship Service	3	4 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon	5	6	7	8 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon
9 10:00 AM Worship Service	10	11 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon	12	13 	14	15 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon
16 10:00 AM Legacy/Worship Service Luncheon to Follow	17	18 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon	19	20	21	22 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon
23 10:00 AM Worship Service 6:30 PM Thanksgiving Svc. Immanuel UCC	24	25 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon	26 	27 Thanksgiving	28	29 Food Pantry 10:00 AM-Noon
30 10:00 AM Worship Service						



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Oak Lawn, IL
Permit No.7

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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



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MONDAY

12:00pm AA 2nd Floor
5:30pm Girl Scouts
7:30pm GA 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
7:00pm Crew Scouts

FRIDAY

12:00pm AA Basement
8:00pm AA 2nd Floor

SATURDAY

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

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