As I write this, there is a little less than a week and half left of February. Lent is beginning and spring is coming. I know the snow can still fall in March, but it won’t last very long. Does anyone remember all of the predictions for winter that were given last November for what to expect this winter? Worse than normal, more snow and colder than average were the prognostications for this past season. I think they were wrong. Albeit I am writing this with the benefit of hindsight, but my point is, not that I was right, that how easily some folks will jump on the bandwagon to sing the song, “the world is coming to an end” and “awful things are coming.”

“Yeppers”, there are lots of changes coming for all of us. But whether they are good or bad will be determined by what we do with them. It was George Carlin who said, “Just when I discovered the meaning of life, they changed it.” Truth is life has always been changing. It changes more like a tree grows, though little by little and we never notice until we look back at the picture of what was. Look at old church pictures, there were no trees out front. Some show these cute, little decorative sprouts. Now we have huge maples nearly as tall as the steeple. Change is happening all the time and we never see it.

As people we grow up waiting for the right time. We wait until our children can walk, or they are potty trained, or go to school, or get married. Our calling from God however, is to celebrate and enjoy today. Our invitation is to see the blessing of this moment. When my children were little, my mother-in-law taught me to enjoy every moment. If they were crying, check their diapers and tummy and just love them, because they won’t be that small for very long. Our challenge from God is to appreciate, celebrate and give thanks for every step of life. Some are easier, some are harder, but every step is worth celebrating.

As we grow older, we often think “if only”, but our challenge is to appreciate the moment and not to look back. My mother-in-law often repeated the line that “The good times are over.” Instead of thinking that way, we should celebrate and move forward. The past is gone, it is just a story, but our present and future is living and happening.

See you next Sunday.

Shalom,

Pastor Kirk
Pilgrim United Church of Christ is entering a time of transition with Kyle Kelvington’s last Sunday on April 26th; Marilyn Freeman’s last Sunday on May 31st; and Rev. Kirk W. Bruce’s last Sunday on June 28th.


At the request of Nayiri, a Brief Church Profile has been developed. This profile assists the association in suggesting several Interim/Transitional Pastors, that Pilgrim will select from and then contract with.

Whomever is chosen, he/she will guide Pilgrim through the Transition Process until Pilgrim calls another Pastor. If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact a Council member.

Kelly Gerstenberger, Clerk

Maundy Thursday
April 9, 2020
6:30 p.m. Palestinian Meal, Social Hall
7:30 p.m. Tennebrae Service, Sanctuary
**FAITH FORMATION**

Holy Saturday  
April 11, 2020  
Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

**Candy Collection:** There is also a box in the Social hall for candy—small, individually wrapped pieces that will fit in a plastic egg. We will be filling Easter eggs on April 10.

**Cakes for the Cake Walk:** If you can bake a cake, or purchase a ready made cake for our Easter Egg Hunt Cake Walk on April 11, please let Marilyn Freeman know.

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**Upcoming Children’s Service Projects**

The children are sponsoring two service projects and we need your help.

**Project #1: Items needed for a birthday party!**  
There are children for whom a cake, candles, balloons, and other assorted party paraphernalia is just not financially possible. The kids think that every child should have some birthday party basics. Items to be collected include:

- Cake Mixes, any flavor
- Icing
- Decorating Kits
- Candles
- Balloons
- Party Plates
- Napkins
- Party Favors
- Party Hats
- Gift Bags, medium size to hold the items are needed, too.

Theme based items are welcome—there are MANY themed party items on the market. Keep in mind gender and age, so we can provide a variety of choices. March 15th is the magical date to pack the items for delivery to either Good Neighbors and/or the Women’s Shelter.

**Project #2: Everything Service Dogs!**  
The children will be learning about Service Dogs. Dr. Jane Biehl will be with us on April 26 to tell us about Circle Tail, an organization that trains service dogs. She has an amazing story to share about her adventures with Sita. Items to be collected include:

- Laundry Detergent
- Dish Soap
- Hand Sanitizer
- Bleach (Liquid)
- White Distilled Vinegar
- Apple Cider Vinegar
- Disinfectant Wipes
- Paper Towels
- Trash bags: 13/33/30/35 gallon
- Toilet Paper
- Lamb Based DRY dog & puppy food
- Grain Free DRY dog food
- Dog Biscuits (All Sizes)
- Soft Dog Treats for Training
- Hard chew bones (Nylabone Type, Hard Rubber)
- Canned Pure Pumpkin
- Cat Food/Cat Litter for Resident Cats
- Diamond Naturals All Life Stages Chicken & Rice
- Diamond Naturals Large Breed Adult Chicken & Rice
- Canned (Wet) Puppy Food
- Purina One Sensitive Systems Formula Salmon & Rice
- Metal buckets
- Poop Scoopers
- Pro Vet Logic Kennel Cleaner

Current needs include:

You can check out their website, [https://www.circletail.org/](https://www.circletail.org/)

Collection points for both projects are to be placed in the designated areas of the Social Hall.

Thank you for your generosity!
Faith Focus Lesson Titles
January 26 – April 26

For the next several weeks the focus is learning about each of the twelve disciples, exploring what it means to be a disciple and follow Jesus, and what we can do as modern-day disciples to share God’s love with others.

March 1  Bartholomew/Nathaniel: Missionary to Persia & India with Ms. Shari Jackson
March 8  Thomas: The Questioner with Ms. Shari Jackson
March 15 Matthew (Levi): Changed by God
March 22  Judas: The Betrayer
March 29 Jude/Thaddeus: Compassionate Heart
April 5 Simon the Zealot: Learning Patience – Missionary to Africa
April 12  Easter Egg Hunt/Resurrection Party
April 19  Simon Peter – The Rock – Church Foundation
April 26 We are Disciples, too!

Birthday Party Bags will be packed for delivery.
Circle Tail Presentation by Dr. Jane Biehl
Collected Circle Tail items will be packed for delivery.

Thank you to everyone who saved their Acme Community Cash Back receipts. We turned in $5,216 dollars worth! That translates into about $260.00 that will be used for resources as the Faith Formation Board determines.

INVIATIONS

Tuesdays @ 10:30 a.m.
Led by Rev. Kirk Bruce, this Bible Study reflects on the scriptures for the following Sunday’s scriptures, and is held in the Adult Library. Those that attend usually go to an agreed upon restaurant for lunch.

Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.
This Bible Study will focuses on topics the group decides on with Rev. Kirk Bruce researching the topic. Tea and treats are generally served to enjoy during the study.

MUSIC NEWS

Hand Bell rehearsals Wednesdays from 5:15 to 6:30 p.m. in the Music Room.

Does this speak to you? Donations in any amount are being accepted!

Have questions? See Mark Opritza, Brian Ewart, or John Richards. Thank You!

Just add “MUSIC COMMITTEE” and amount to your offering envelope on the “Other” line.

The Choir will be presenting a Cantata on:

Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020 during the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service.
Thank You!

NOTES

Prayers turned to praise.
My sister’s biopsy was negative.
Thanks to all who kept her in prayer.

Are you looking for ways to serve the church and use your talents and skills?
Are you looking for a way to connect with more members and friends of Pilgrim?

Pilgrim is looking for people to serve on the following Boards and Committees:
Act-It UP! Community Theatre, Diaconate, Evangelism, Faith Formation, Nominating Committee, Pilgrim’s Community Lunch, Stewardship, Trustees.
Interested? Contact Brian Ewart, Mark Opritza, Kathie Richards or Board or Committee Chair.

PILGRIM COMMUNITY LUNCH

Join the Pilgrim Community Lunch Team, on March 14, 2020 @ 10:00 a.m.!
Formerly known as Free Community Lunch!
Lunch is served at 12:00 Noon!

PRAYERS FOR PILGRIMS

The family and friends of Mark Opritza, whose mother passed away on February 20th.
James Carter, a regular visitor to Pilgrim’s Fellowship Hour, died February 19th.
The family & friends of Jackie Wanclovic, whose husband Ron, passed away on February 18th.
The family & friends of Donald Shook, who has passed away.
The family & friends of Jeanne Cundiff, whose memorial service was held on February 15 at Pilgrim.
Young couple with two small children, dealing with cancer.
My 9th great-grandson, Carter, and his Mom & Dad.
My son Jeff with M.S. with medical issues.
To help authorities find still missing women and children.
That it is safe to worship - no matter the faith - anywhere.
The children still separated from their parents at our border.
Our political leaders to have more compassion and sensitivity to others.

STEWARDSHIP

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
March 22, 2020 during 10:30 a.m. Worship

One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the UCC.
THANK YOU’S

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your generous gift and sponsorship ... dated January 31, 2020. As Hope Homes Foundations celebrates our 57th anniversary as a local housing ministry, we are especially grateful for partners like you who are building Hope Homes for the future.

With your contribution, you are positively impacting more than 125 individuals with DD in Summit, Stark, Wayne and Warren counties. Your gift will be put to work immediately to support Hope Homes Foundation’s daily operations and develop new programs and housing opportunities.

We look forward to sharing our accomplishments with you through our quarterly newsletter, website www.hopehomes.org and social media (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn). Thank you!

With warm regards,
Paul Herrera, CEO

Dear Pilgrim United Church of Christ:

The important ongoing support of donors makes an important difference for the children and families we serve. As a donor you are a vital part of our mission, helping to give hope, and healing to the many young people we serve each year.

With this gift you show how much you care about the youth and their needs. Your support is very much appreciated.

Crossroad has a legacy of being a haven of love, understanding, and hope. You have a special place in ensuring this continues.

Thank you all! We would love to bring you a mission moment some time!

Yes, we will travel to you for that! Bless You!

Sincerely,
Kyle Zanker
Chief Development Officer

Liz Bergren
Development Director

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your donation to Chapel Hill Community. Your kindness helps to support the care that empowers the residents to live abundantly. Financial support creates a more fulfilled life for residents where they experience community, wholeness, and peace.

Imagine a world where life in retirement is filled with meaning, purpose and joy. Where society’s older adults are energized and look forward with hope, anticipating a bright future. Once they feel secure in their ability to meet the inevitable changes and challenges that lie ahead, each day brings a new sense of abundance. This is abundant aging. This is what we strive for and what you help make happen.

In this new decade of service, we are comforted knowing supporters like you are standing with us in our mission. We are grateful for your philanthropy on behalf of those we serve at United Church Homes.

With gratitude,
Rev. Beth Long-Higgins
Executive Director, Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging
United Church Homes

TRUSTEES

A Special Offering Envelope (Pink/Red) is included in this Spire!

God has given each of us special gifts and blessings in this life. Let us take the opportunity to use our gifts and blessings to make a difference.

Enclosed in this edition of the Pilgrim Spire is an offering envelope in which you may make a special contribution to the church. You may return it by mail or in the offering plate on Sunday.
Thank you for your generosity!
# Pilgrim United Church of Christ

## March 2020 ~ Calendar

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<td><strong>Communion</strong>&lt;br&gt;9:00 am Choir Rehearsal, HR&lt;br&gt;10:30 am Worship, SA&lt;br&gt;11:30 am Fellowship, SH</td>
<td>10:30 am Bible Study, AL&lt;br&gt;8 pm BHG AA, HR</td>
<td>6:30-8:30 pm AMMS-Dance, SH&lt;br&gt;2-8:30 am WRSS Violin &amp; Cello, AL, CL, CR#28&lt;br&gt;5-6:30 pm Handbell Rehearsal, MR&lt;br&gt;7pm Bible Study, Heritage Room</td>
<td>6:30-8:30 pm Moonlight Serenaders, MR&lt;br&gt;6:30-8:30 pm CS #3186 Den Mtgs., AL, CL, N, AT, CR&lt;br&gt;7-9 pm EA, HR</td>
<td>10am - 12pm Cub Scout Pack #3186 - Committee Mgt., Adult Library&lt;br&gt;Noon - 6:00 pm Akron AA Corrections Committee, SH</td>
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<td>Daylight Savings Time&lt;br&gt;9:00 am Choir Rehearsal, HR&lt;br&gt;10:30 am Worship, SA&lt;br&gt;11:30 am Fellowship, SH&lt;br&gt;11:30 am Healing Srvc, SA&lt;br&gt;11:45 am Stewardship meeting, HR&lt;br&gt;2:45-5:15pm GSTroop#501, AL&lt;br&gt;7:49 pm GS Troop#169, AL</td>
<td>1:30 pm AMMS-TKD #4, SH&lt;br&gt;6:30 pm Diaconate meeting, AL&lt;br&gt;6:30 pm Trustees meeting, HR</td>
<td>1:30 pm AMMS-Dance, SH&lt;br&gt;2-8:30am WRSS Violin &amp; Cello, AL, CL, CR#28&lt;br&gt;5-6:30 pm Handbell Rehearsal, MR&lt;br&gt;7pm Bible Study, Heritage Room</td>
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<td>One Great Hour or Sharing Offering&lt;br&gt;9:00 am Choir Rehearsal, HR&lt;br&gt;10:30 am Worship, SA&lt;br&gt;Rev. Nayiri Karjian, Gen. Assoc. Minister&lt;br&gt;11:30am Fellowship, SH&lt;br&gt;11:30 am Music meeting, RGR&lt;br&gt;11:45 am FF meeting, AL&lt;br&gt;3-5pm GSTroop#101, AL</td>
<td>Spring Break&lt;br&gt;8 pm BHG AA, HR</td>
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**Group Key:**
- AMMS=Absorbtent Minds Montessori School
- AA=Alcoholics Anonymous
- BHG=Broad Highway Group
- CS=Cub Scouts
- EA=Emotions Anonymous
- FF=Faith Formation
- GS=Girl Scouts
- PCL=Pilgrim’s Community Lunch
- WRSS=Western Reserve Suzuki School

**Room Key:**
- AL=Adult Library
- AT=Attic
- C=Classroom
- CL=Children’s Library
- HR=Heritage Room
- K=Kitchen
- MR=Music Room
- N=Nursery
- RGR=Rev. Greene Room
- SA=Sanctuary
- SH=Social Hall

*Photo by [krismcs](https://freeimages.com) from [FreelImages](https://freeimages.com)*
March 2020 The Pilgrim Spire

Sunday Schedule:
10:30 am Worship
Nursery Care available
11:30 am Fellowship

Contact us at:
www.pilgrimcf.org
330.928.4847

Pilgrim United Church of Christ Staff:

Pastor
Rev. Kirk Bruce,
pilgrimpastor@ameritech.net

Faith Formation Director
Marilyn Freeman,
pilgrimce@ameritech.net

Music Director
Kyle Kelvington,
kelvingtonk@gmail.com

Secretary
Kelly Gerstenberger,
pilgrimoffice@ameritech.net

Photo by krismcs from FreeImages.com
indoor garden