



## From the Desk of Pastor John

Control: we all want some degree of it, at least when it comes to our own lives. We want authority and influence over decisions that will affect us. Obviously, control over our bodies, lives, and choices is a given right, a freedom we should be able to execute freely. Decisions regarding our healthcare, where we live, which job we take, and how we manage our household should also be ours to make. After all, we are the ones that will be held accountable and bear the consequences of those choices; therefore, we should have control over them.

Sometimes, though, we don't have control. Every once and a while, a curveball is thrown, and we can't stop it from hitting us. We are affected by the decisions and actions of others, unexpected expenses, health issues, the death of a spouse, the weather (remember Hurricane Ian?!), and simple inconveniences, like a delayed flight while returning home from a long trip. Outside circumstances often make our decisions for us, whether we like it or not.

Losing a sense of control can feel overwhelming and cause distress. We become anxious, because we can no longer predict the future. We may feel helpless and restricted, as if we've lost our sense of autonomy or independence. To lose a sense of control over one's life can be nerve-racking, and even a little scary.

Our response to a loss of control, however, is completely up to us. We may be called to action, especially if lives are negatively affected or a freedom is denied by the decisions of others. Unjust

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## August 2023 Newsletter

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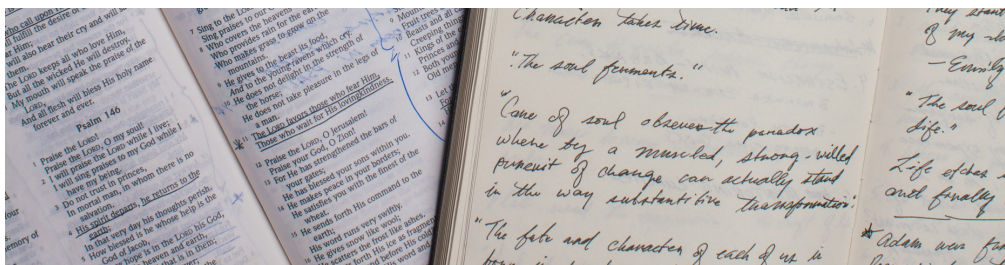
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No matter who you are,  
or where you are  
on life's journey,  
you are welcome here!

situations require us to take a stand, demanding that the situation be corrected (Micah 6:8). In other cases, all we can do is trust God. When rotten luck strikes, we must surrender control and lean into God, knowing that He remains in control and is working to make things right according to His divine plan. We may not understand what is going on or why things happen like they do, but God's faithfulness does not waver; God's love for us does not change.

God's guiding presence is with us through it all!

Here at Pilgrim, as we deal with circumstances beyond our control regarding the restoration process, we are going to trust God. As we continue our search for a new contractor and move forward with restoration, we are trusting in God's goodness and love for us. We are trusting His Holy Spirit to help us discern how to navigate these unfamiliar, difficult waters, and we are trusting that He will provide the finances to cover unexpected costs that accompany this process.

God is good. God is faithful. God is with us and remains in control. Amen.

Blessings,  
Pastor John

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him." Psalm 28:7 (ESV)

## I Dare You

Great advice as seen on Facebook

I would love to give church goers one practical step to improve their Sunday church experience. Arrive 15 minutes before the service, and stay 15 minutes after the service. In 3 weeks, these extra few minutes will change a lot about your experience. Let me give you three things that will change:

1. If you walk through the door of your church 15 minutes before a service, you will find the worship more impactful and your pastor more insightful than ever before. A calm heart is fertile ground. Peace! Anticipation!
2. In those extra minutes you will find new friends. Your experience in church will be dramatically altered if you arrive expecting friends to be there. But you can't build new friendships on the run in a rush to come or go.
3. You will find a place to serve. If you have time to talk with the folks who are serving, you will find out that most people really like serving, and after a few conversations, they will probably ask you to serve with them. Serving offers you the opportunity to be part of the church.

In short, if you struggle to enjoy church, be radical in a really ordinary way. Start your Sunday morning routine 15 minutes earlier, and you will find out your church is actually a pretty great place to hang around.

## Pilgrim United Church of Christ

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*Organist:*  
Cheryl Huber

*Pianist:*  
Maverick Li

*Children's Ministry Director:*  
Jessica Warne

*Bell Choir Director:*  
Russ Whittaker

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*Director of Joyful Noise:*  
Cynthia Poudrette  
[jndirector@pilgrimonline.org](mailto:jndirector@pilgrimonline.org)





## Council Update

Here we are heading into another school year. We will be thinking of all our Joyful Noise teachers and all teachers across our county and country this 2023-2024 school year, wishing them a good school. Thank you teachers and Joyful Noise staff for all you do as Pilgrim's largest mission outreach.

We are still in a state of reconstruction and our church campus still doesn't look "together" as of yet. Since our general contractor stopped working, we have been gathering bids for a new general contractor. These companies are finishing up their bids and Council will look over them and make a final decision.

We are also consulting several attorneys, deciding the best approach to guide us through this complex issue. We have learned that there are outstanding vendors that received partial payments for goods and services; creating an even greater need to seek expert advice.

Building and Grounds Committee presented a 3-Phase Lighting Project to Council to restore our campus lights. The dark campus is unsafe for our congregation members, our Joyful Noise Staff and families, and to those outside missions that still meet on campus. Plus, the darkness is inviting to those looking for trouble who pass us from the street. Our hurricane insurance does not cover anything not physically connected to our buildings. Council and Finance Committee have discussed the different options on how to budget for these expenses. Council approved Phase 1, splitting the cost 80/20 with Joyful Noise (as the other utilities).

Here is the lighting project:

**Phase 1: Lighting the drive.** (The drive going towards Joyful Noise, including the needed repositioning of the basketball court lights.) The five lights, will be solar powered with timers. The lights will be attached to hinged, metal poles that fold down/come out of the ground during named storms.

**TOTAL COST of PHASE 1: \$3437.11 + \$225/hour for the bucket/boom work**

**Phase 2: Existing light pole fixtures.** This phase is to repair and replace the nine poles in the main parking areas that were damaged in the hurricane, including the acorn style fixture atop of them. This price is if nothing additional is required to put the lights on the poles.

**TOTAL COST of PHASE 2: \$4,002.87. Building and Grounds is still gathering estimates for electricians.**

**Phase 3: Lighting the buildings.** This phase will place lights high on the buildings (so people cannot take them down or turn lights out easily), staying lit all night, in specific areas. Other areas may just require motion-sensor lights to provide security.

**TOTAL COST of PHASE 3: still gathering estimates**

Most of the supplies for Phase 1 have been ordered and are onsite.

I know that we are all struggling lately, missing our normal church setting and space. It is hard on us all, especially for those that were here to see Pilgrim Church built. We all feel it and it can overwhelm us sometimes, which is understandable. But remember, church is not just the building we worship in; it is us – you and me, and we will see it open again. Pinky-promise. We are Pilgrim Strong.

If you are curious about what Council, Finance, or Mission discuss at meetings – come check them out. You all have a voice and impact on our church and its future. You all have gifts that are seen by others, but sometimes go unused; and we want to see them used! Please stop in.

Jessica Emard-Warne, Moderator

For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:9

## Ministry & Outreach



### Prayer Shawl Party

Wednesday, August 2, 10:00 a.m.  
Pilgrim Church Conference Room  
Breakfast Pastries and Coffee provided.

Inexperienced? We'll teach you! Already crochet or knit, gather your favorite needle/hook/yarn and come fellowship! Not sure? Join this party to learn more about this ministry, to love one another, to learn to knit/crochet, to create!

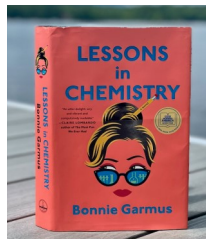
MEN and WOMEN are welcomed!

Please RSVP by making a note on your prayer/registration slip. A \$5 donation appreciated, but not required to cover cost of pastries and supplies.

### Women's Fellowship

Save the date of September 21st for the first study of this year, Seasons of Our Lives. We meet in the Church Library at 10:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of most months. This study is based on the book "Created to Dream: The Six Phases God Uses to Grow Your Faith" by Rick Warren.

Book Club will meet on Thursday, August 17, with dinner at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Pat Smith. The book "Lessons in Chemistry" by Bonnie Garmus is the featured book to review this month.



### Joyful Noise Learning Center

Joyful Noise is gearing up for the new school year! We are fully enrolled and looking forward to all the new students starting on August 14th. Everyone is invited to our Open House on Thursday, August 3rd from 6:00-7:00pm. All the classrooms will be open so that children can meet their teachers and see their classrooms before the first day of school.

Cynthia Poudrette, Director

### Adult Bible Study

Sundays at 10:15 a.m.  
Resumes August 20

Join this small group that meets on Sunday Mornings immediately after the worship service. We currently meet in the lobby of the Kings Gate Clubhouse. We continue in the Book of Acts reviewing verse by verse about 2 chapters per week. Each lesson is a stand alone so you can join anytime.

Sunday classes resume on August 20 immediately after the worship service. We have four more weeks in concluding our study of the ministry of Paul in the early church.

A new study will begin in mid-September as the class studies Paul's letters to the Church of Corinth.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." -**Matthew 28:18-20**





## Love Your Neighbor

### August Birthdays

- 1 Dee Ripley
- 3 Carole Worster
- 4 Jessica Warne-Emard
- 7 Barbara Bluschke, Madeline Warne-Emard
- 9 Wanda Burns
- 10 Izzy Warne-Emard
- 11 Gayle Bratton
- 16 Sherry Moll
- 20 Nettie Wineland
- 29 Jackie Kaminski
- 31 Peggy Kalaf

### August Anniversaries

- 9 Donna & George Yorkston
- 11 Betty & Wilbur Holmes
- 17 Cherry & Joe Gillner
- 17 Sandy & Tom Jones
- 22 Nancy & Kevin Beaver

Did we miss your special date? Please call or email the office, so we may update the records.

### August Ideas to Love Your Neighbors

- ◆ Make a Prayer Shawl!
- ◆ National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day, August 4, make and share this treat!
- ◆ Thank a teacher.
- ◆ Invite a friend to church.
- ◆ Share your favorite Bible Verse on social media.
- ◆ Invite an acquaintance to coffee and get to know them better.
- ◆ Send birthday and anniversary cards.
- ◆ Speak encouraging words to a store clerk.
- ◆ Pack a backpack with school supplies and snacks.
- ◆ Make an apple pie for someone.
- ◆ Join us. Call Jacque Ross (941-258-2597) and be part of the conference call prayer meetings at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday mornings.

## Pilgrim Prayer List

Recovery after Hurricane Ian  
Bert Scott - homebound  
Bill Wolf - homebound  
Savina Krueger - cancer  
John Krueger - Parkinson's  
Fred Ripley - health  
Jim Scott - homebound  
Russ Whittaker - health  
Sidoney Johnston - homebound

John Hames - homebound  
Danny Wineland - health  
Judy Michaels - health  
Hal Linck - cancer  
Kohen - health  
Lorraine O'Keefe - cancer  
Jerry Walsh - health  
Prayer Shawl Ministry  
Felicia Ganod - health

Rick McLemore - cancer  
Daniel Faber - cancer  
Ed Ryan - cancer  
Elaine Pregowski - health  
Martin & Margie Heckler - cancer  
Pat Wheatcroft - cancer  
Joe Beaudreau - health

## August 2023

**Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday**

		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 10:00am Prayer Shawl Party 10:00am Prayer Partners	<b>3</b> 6:00pm Joyful Noise Open House 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9:00am Worship	<b>7</b> 7:00pm AA - Women	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10:00am Prayer Partners	<b>10</b> 6:30pm Buildings & Grounds Ministry 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9:00am Worship	<b>14</b> Joyful Noise 1st day of School 7:00pm AA - Women	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Newsletter Article Deadline 10:00am Prayer Partners	<b>17</b> 9:15am PBJ Sandwich Makers 6:00pm Pilgrm Women Book Club 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult Bible Study	<b>21</b> 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7:00pm AA - Women	<b>22</b> 7:00pm Council Meeting	<b>23</b> 10:00am Prayer Partners	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult Bible Study	<b>28</b> 7:00pm AA - Women	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 10:00am Prayer Partners	<b>31</b> 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous		