



Pilgrim Church

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

From the Desk of Pastor John

"I don't do church."

It's a common response when you ask someone, "Hey! Why don't you join me one Sunday for worship?"

Before we go any further, let's just go ahead and clear one thing up: the reason they "don't do church" has nothing to do with worship styles.

These individuals often have a picture in their minds of what "church" is ... and it's not pretty. To them, "church" is somewhere you go to get the latest gossip disguised as prayer requests that divulge too much information.* It's a place where you will be looked at funny for wearing the wrong clothes. It's where you go to sit on a stiff, uncomfortable pew for an hour (if you're lucky, it's just an hour!) while someone with a microphone gives you detailed instructions about getting on God's "good side" and tells you how you're doing it all wrong.

And you're supposed to show up and smile through it, or someone might realize you don't have it all together and condemn you to the eternal barbecue downstairs.

That sounds harsh, I know. But I've heard it, and I get it. I've met too many people who have been broken by the church; they've been led to feel shame and guilt for who they are instead of being loved by God and his people. For them, the gospel was NOT Good News, and church was NOT a place of welcome, comfort, and solidarity with other believers.

To use one of my favorite southern colloquialisms, "Something just ain't right with that!"

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

But what if we changed the narrative?

What if we painted a different picture of the Church, one that looks nothing like the one in their minds?

What if we set our minds to creating a different type of "Church," a new type of sacred community that looks a whole lot more like Jesus than those who "don't do church" would expect?

When we look to Christ, we see what we are to be about: love. This shouldn't come as a shocker to anyone. Christ was all about loving others. In love, He welcomed all, including tax collectors and sinners, and broke bread with those who felt alienated and rejected by the holier-than-thou members of their community. He comforted the hurting and looked upon people not with judgment, but with grace.

He created a sacred community anchored in love.

A sacred community where there is grace, inclusion, encouragement, and a sense of belonging.

His sacred community was one in which those who "don't do church," because they have been hurt by a congregation or turned off by what they witnessed, would find something different, something that they need - a place of healing, rest, growth, and yes, love.

A sacred community where all experienced the Good News.

Simply put, love is to be the foundation on which our sacred community, Christ's Church, is to be built!

A church built up and braced by Christ's love? Now that is one beautiful, gospel-living, grace-filled church!

When we are back in our newly-restored sanctuary, we will begin a new chapter at Pilgrim. In the meantime, we can begin to draft how we want that chapter to be written.

Let's start with a simple question:

"What kind of sacred community do we want to be?"

Blessings, Pastor John

*Please share your prayer requests; it's important to pray for one another! However, please do so with respect for the privacy of the person for whom you are requesting prayer. A safe practice is to only share what information is necessary and in line with the person's wishes.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Him." - John 3:16-17

Pilgrim United Church of Christ

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Bell Choir Director:
Russ Whittaker

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Cynthia Poudrette
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Ian Recovery



It's all joy!

We have entered into work with a local company, 8:18 Renovation and Restoration to be our general contractor. Their construction industry journey began long before 2004, and since then, they have been constructing buildings, custom homes and projects with expertise and precision.

8:18 Renovation and Restoration is a Christian Based business. They are a reputable company who is dedicated to providing outstanding customer service and delivering reliable, timely results. (And they have already proved that in these first few weeks!) 8:18 Renovation and Restoration's core values revolve around their faith, placing people at the center of their focus, and employing common-sense practices. They offer a comprehensive range of services, including building repairs, custom home remodels, rebuilds, and the latest home remodeling trends with a commitment to delivering exceptional value at a fair and competitive price.

The rebuilding of Pilgrim Church is underway!

Also, our siding is almost complete! A few more weeks as we wait for a delivery.

One year after Hurricane Ian, Pilgrims gathered with prayers, hymn lyrics, poems and verses to commit the campus on Rampart Blvd to God. What a reunion of Pilgrims gathered in the Sanctuary and Community Center walls!

Eileen Murray shared this verse with Pastor John. Isaiah 43:16, 18, 19a, from The Message version: "This is what God says, the God who builds a road right through the ocean, who carves a path through pounding waves... 'Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it?'"

Lord, open our eyes that we may see.





Ministry & Outreach

Joyful Noise Learning Center

September brought picture day! We also had parent conferences. A big Thank You to all the parents who took time out of their busy schedules to attend our parent-teacher conferences.

Monday, October 16, the classes are closed for a Teacher Work Day.

October 31, 9:30 a.m. is the Character Parade where each class picks a book and dresses up to match.

Cynthia Poudrette, Director

Property and Grounds Committee

Pray for our Property and Grounds Committee as we work with our Contractor, Punta Gorda's own, 8:18 Renovation & Restoration, as they obtain the required Charlotte County Permits, obtain supplies, and begin restoration work on our Community Center and Sanctuary. Soon you will see them utilizing their worksite and storage areas in the parking lot.

Our Property and Grounds Committee has moved chairs, restored our signage lamps, and have mowed a path for the engineer inspecting our water retention lake for the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Our Property and Grounds Committee is also in the process of obtaining shade trees for our school.

Dave Wilson, Secretary

Women's Fellowship

Sunday, October 8

Women's Sunday

Make your plans to be at worship on Sunday for this special day. The worship planning includes songs written by women, all women liturgist and a gift for all women in attendance.

Calling all women,

On Thursday, October 19, the study of "Seasons of Our Lives" will continue. Monthly meetings are held at 10:00 a.m. in the Library. This month we will share our decade stories of ages 20-30. We will build on Rick Warren's book as we examine how our unique spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences (our SHAPE) equips us for service at Pilgrim Church and in our community. We will go to Lunch at the Bistro 502 at the Suncoast Technical College Culinary Arts program in North Port.

Save the Date

Thursday, December 7, for our annual Christmas Party and Luncheon at Der Dutchman in Sarasota.

Annual Gathering of the Florida Conference

Lift in prayer the hearts and travel of the UCC Pastors from across Florida as they gather October 12-14.

This year's theme is "Dancing in the Dark: We Shall Prophesy!" (Acts 2:17-20).

Missions

Anyone interested in the Missions and Outreach of Pilgrim Church is invited to the **Monthly Meeting**, Monday, October 9, at 7:00 p.m. in the Church Office.

Food Pantry Thanksgiving Baskets

October 1621, the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims of Plymouth, Massachusetts, gathered to give thanks to God. Although they had their struggles in the new land with stormy weather, illnesses, and poor harvest, they were grateful. Pilgrims of Pilgrim Church have and are experiencing the same struggles: weather, illnesses, and high food prices. With thanksgiving, our challenge to Pilgrim Church is to prepare 35 Thanksgiving Food Baskets including a \$25 Winn Dixie gift card.

Items* needed in the baskets

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| •Mashed Potatoes | •Cranberry Sauce |
| •Stuffing Mix | •Fruit Cocktail |
| •Yams | •Jello |
| •Can Corn | •Gravy |
| •Can Green Beans | •\$25 Winn Dixie Gift Card |

*only these items please. We want to ensure that the baskets are identical.

All requests** for these baskets must be received no later than November 14. All food item donations are needed by November 15, so we have time to pick up any items needed to make up the identical baskets on November 17. Distribution of the baskets will be on November 20.

Little Free Food Pantry is for those in need of dry goods and for those who desire to give. Take what you need, give what you can.

PBJ Sandwich Makers meets monthly to assemble 200 PBJs! Join us Thursday, October 19, 9:15 a.m. in the Conference Room and make some Pilgrim friends as you prepare comfort food sandwiches that feed the homeless. Donations of jam are appreciated.

October's Mission of the Month, Young Life, is a mission devoted to introducing adolescents to Jesus Christ and helping them grow in their faith. Join us Sunday, October 15 to hear from the local Charlotte County representative.

September Weekly Missions Giving

9/3 \$200 9/10 \$10 9/17 \$160

** see form for basket request

Pilgrim Church 2023 Thanksgiving Baskets

Order Form

If you or a family you know would benefit from items to prepare a traditional Thanksgiving dinner, please complete this form. Return the form no later than noon on **Tuesday, November 14**. We will strive to fulfill each request.

Baskets will be available Monday, November 20, 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

The individual picking up groceries for the family must present ID that matches this form.

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL PICKING UP MEAL

Tear here turn in portion below, save top for reminder

Pilgrim Church 2023 Thanksgiving Baskets

Order Form

Baskets will be available Monday, November 20, 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

The individual picking up the groceries for the family must present ID that matches this form.

NAME OF FAMILY

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL PICKING UP MEAL

of ADULTS _____ # of CHILDREN _____

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE: _____

FOOD PANTRY TEAM USE

PACKED INITIALS: _____

PICKED UP INITIALS: _____

Ministry & Outreach cont.

Adult Bible Study

Sundays at 10:15 a.m.

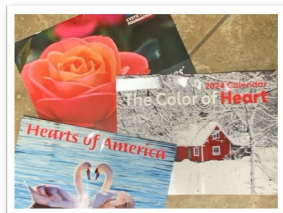
Build your discipleship on Sunday mornings by staying after worship for Bible Study. Currently, we are concluding the book of Acts. The format is a class discussion of verse-by-verse chapters that include historical context, Old Testament references, and group insight into relevance for today. Won't you join our small group this Fall?

Prayer Partners

Weekly prayer meetings continue by phone at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays. To join us call Jacque at 941-258-2597.

Calendars

Do you received calendars in the mail that you don't need? We will be happy to collect those and share with Pilgrims who may need a calendar. Any extra calendars we will share with our Joyful Noise Learning Center as the photos are excellent for art projects.



Worship Sundays 9:00 a.m.
at Kings Gate Club house!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 2:00 p.m.
October 3, 17

Prayer shawls on hand will be blessed at worship on Sunday, October 8.

Please see Pastor John after worship or in the Church Office to pick up a prayer shawl to give to someone whom it would be of comfort.

We gather to make prayer shawls each month on the first Tuesday and third Tuesday at 2:00 in the afternoon! Inexperienced? We'll teach you! Already crochet or knit, come fellowship! Visit to learn more about this ministry!

Can't attend but want to participate? Patterns and even prayer shawl prayer guides are available in the Church Office and on the welcome table.

Alcoholics Anonymous®



Women's Group Meeting
Mondays 7:00 p.m.

At Pilgrim Church Conference Room



Narcotics Anonymous

Meeting
Thursdays 7:00 p.m.

At Pilgrim Church Conference Room

Love Your Neighbor

October Birthdays

1	Susan Anderson
4	Savinia Krueger
7	Shirley Donohue
9	Sidoney Johnston
20	Valerie Forge
21	Ray Gaddie
29	Joe Beaudreau
29	Lorraine O'Keefe
29	Vickie Rhoe
30	Stephen Warne-Emard

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

Pilgrim Prayer List

Hurricane Recovery Ian/Idalia
Bert Scott - homebound
Savina Krueger - cancer
John Krueger - Parkinson's
Fred Ripley - health
Sidoney Johnston - homebound
John Hames - homebound
Lorraine O'Keefe - cancer
Bill Wolf - Fawcett
Russ Whittaker - health
Joe Beaudreau - health
Cheryl Gerry - health
Rosaleen - peace

Danny Wineland - health
Ron - health
Joyce Faber - health
Valerie Stern - cancer
Jane Beaudreau - health
Pat Wheatcroft - cancer
Barb & Don - health
Felicia Garrod - health
Martin & Margie Heckler - cancer
Larry - health
Karen - health
Danielle - health
Gail Brete - health

October Ideas to Love Your Neighbors

- ♦ Make a point to attend worship on Sunday, October 1. It's World Communion Sunday! Invite a friend.
- ♦ Share some pumpkin spice!
- ♦ Watch for and share your Glory Sightings! It's a great way to share the Gospel without being "preachy".
- ♦ Send a fall card to those homebound or on the church prayer list.
- ♦ Make a treat for someone you know who is a caregiver.
- ♦ Share BOGO items with the Little Food Pantry Box.

PILGRIM

Parish
In
Love with
God,
Reality
In
Motion.

-Lurlyne Murray,
member since 2015

Learn and Grow

Word Find

U C C W E L L O V E G L O R J
 B J A M E S S I Y F J L O H U
 A P F R E V L J O B O R I I D
 P R I G H T E O U S N E S S G
 T A R I I H D E J E A B E E E
 I Y S V S E A L C A H T E A S
 Z U T E T S C H B R E A K A R
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BUT
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 BAPTIZE
 BEAUTY
 BREAD
 BREAK
 CARE

DISPLAY
 EVANGELIZE
 JAMES
 JEREMIAH
 JESUS
 JOB
 JOEL
 JOHN
 JONAH
 JOSHUA
 JOY
 JUDE
 JUDGES

LOVE
 MISSION
 REVIVAL
 PRAISE
 PRAY
 PREPARE
 PROVIDE
 UNITY
 WEALTH

October Trivia

The Church's Task

New Testament

1. "We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be ..." 2 Thessalonians 1:12
2. "This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are ..." Ephesians 3:6
3. "Therefore go and ..." Matthew 28:19
4. "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true ..." Phil 4:8-9
5. "But grow in the grace and ..." 2 Peter 3:18
6. "They devoted themselves to ..." Acts 2:42
7. "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and ..." John 15:16

Old Testament

1. "Honor the Lord with your ..." Proverbs 3:9-10
2. "Teach us to number our ..." Psalm 90:12
3. "Love the Lord your God with all ..." Deuteronomy 6:5
4. "Ascribe to the Lord the glory ..." 1 Chronicles 16:29
5. "Praise be to the name of God ..." Daniel 2:20
6. "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and ..." Psalm 100:4
7. "You shall have no..." Exodus 20:3

Lectionary Readings

In preparation for Worship read ahead and ponder! Just note, while Pastor John typically follows the lectionary, there are times the Spirit moves him to cover different passages in his Sunday sermons.

Season after Pentecost Year A	First reading and Psalm	Alternate First reading and Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Proper 21 (26) Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost October 1, 2023	<u>Exodus 17:1-7</u> <u>Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16</u>	<u>Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32</u> <u>Psalm 25:1-9</u>	<u>Philippians 2:1-13</u>	<u>Matthew 21:23-32</u>
Proper 22 (27) Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost October 8, 2023	<u>Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20</u> <u>Psalm 19</u>	<u>Isaiah 5:1-7</u> <u>Psalm 80:7-15</u>	<u>Philippians 3:4b-14</u>	<u>Matthew 21:33-46</u>
Proper 23 (28) Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost October 15, 2023	<u>Exodus 32:1-14</u> <u>Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23</u>	<u>Isaiah 25:1-9</u> <u>Psalm 23</u>	<u>Philippians 4:1-9</u>	<u>Matthew 22:1-14</u>
Proper 24 (29) Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost October 22, 2023	<u>Exodus 33:12-23</u> <u>Psalm 99</u>	<u>Isaiah 45:1-7</u> <u>Psalm 96:1-9, (10-13)</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 1:1-10</u>	<u>Matthew 22:15-22</u>
Proper 25 (30) Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost October 29, 2023	<u>Deuteronomy 34:1-12</u> <u>Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17</u>	<u>Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18</u> <u>Psalm 1</u>	<u>1 Thessalonians 2:1-8</u>	<u>Matthew 22:34-46</u>

Pope Francis' Five Finger Prayer

THUMB- Colossians 4:2 Pray for those closest to you, closest to your heart, your loved ones.

POINTER FINGER - 1 Thessalonians 5:25 Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to point the way to others. Always keep them in your prayers.

MIDDLE FINGER - 1 Timothy 2:1-2 This "tallest" finger reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority. They need God's guidance.

RING FINGER - James 5:15 This is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need your prayers. Pray for those who are weak or in pain.

LITTLE FINGER - Philippians 4:6 Pray for ourselves. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective, and also you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way.



October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 World Communion Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult & Youth Bible Study	2 7:00pm AA - Women	3 2:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry	4 10:00am Prayer Partners 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	5 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	6	7
8 Women's Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult & Youth Bible Study	9 7:00pm Missions Meeting 7:00pm AA - Women	10	11 10:00am Prayer Partners	12 2023 FL UCC Annual Gathering 6:30pm Property and Grounds Committee 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	13 2023 FL UCC Annual Gathering	14 2023 FL UCC Annual Gathering
15 9:00am Worship 10:15am Youth Bible Study	16 JN Teacher Work Day 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting 7:00pm AA - Women	17 Prayer Shawl Ministry	18 Newsletter Article Deadline 10:00am Prayer Partners	19 9:15am PBJ Sandwich Makers 10:00am Pilgrim Women's Fellowship 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	20	21
22 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult & Youth Bible Study	23 7:00pm AA - Women	24 7:00pm Council Meeting	25 10:00am Prayer Partners	26 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	27	28
29 9:00am Worship 10:15am Adult & Youth Bible Study	30 7:00pm AA - Women	31 9:30am JN Character Parade				

“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11