



Pilgrim Church



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

June 2026

24515 Rampart Boulevard
Port Charlotte, FL 33980
941-629-2633
www.pilgrimonline.org
office@pilgrimonline.org

Office Hours:
Mon - Thurs 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Associate Pastor:
Rev. Ken Ewing

Bridge Pastor:
Rev. Merci Hotckin

Moderator:
Jessica Warne-Emard
jawarne77@gmail.com

Maintenance Technician:
Gene Burnell

Office Administrator:
Cat Foster
office@pilgrimonline.org

Pianist: Shirley Donohue

Children's Ministry Director:
Jessica Warne-Emard

Bell Choir Director:
Russ Whittaker

Joyful Noise Learning Center
941-629-4821
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jndirector@pilgrimonline.org

Signs and Symbols

Revelation 21:1-4

Ewing's Doings

We are all aware of signs and symbols in our lives. However, do we truly understand what each one means? Let me try to help us better understand the importance of signs and symbols.

Signs are objects that contain information or communicate a fact. For instance, a stop sign simply indicates that one needs to stop at a certain point before proceeding. Other signs may point us toward a destination or event. A sign reading "Pizza" points people toward food, particularly pizza, at that location. Signs are important because they inform us of something happening or something we need to know.

Jesus' disciples once asked Him for signs of the end times. Several signs are suggested throughout the Gospels. In Revelation 21:1-4, the disciple John writes that he had a vision of a new heaven, a new earth, and the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. What a beautiful affirmation and promise for the believer!

Symbols, however, are objects that point beyond themselves to a deeper meaning. For instance, to a believer, a white dove is more than simply a bird; it becomes a symbol of peace. In other words, the dove points us toward the greater notion of peace.

For the Christian, the greatest symbol of the faith is the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross is more than two pieces of wood joined together. It becomes a symbol of God's love, sacrifice, and victory over sin and death. For Catholics, the crucifix emphasizes the suffering of Jesus for our sins. For Protestants, the empty cross focuses more on Christ's victory over sin and death through the power of the Resurrection.

Both signs and symbols are very important in our daily lives and in our faith journey. They remind us of God's presence, His promises, and His saving grace.

May you live under God's great signs and symbols. Amen.

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

June Birthdays

4	Al Bluschke
5	Wayne Hoerl, Lesa Sealy
6	Ken Rhoe
7	Dacey Soroka
8	Tony Caniglia
11	Debbie Chambers, Sandy Jones
15	Bertha Cousin
20	Carol Borris
22	Reba Barker, Bill Epps
24	Topher Fraser, Judy Michaels

June Anniversaries

4	Kim & Denny Vought
27	Danny & Jeanette Wineland

Did we miss your special date? Kindly reach out to our office at your earliest convenience. You can contact us by phone or email, and we will be happy to update our records accordingly.

Lectionary Readings

June 7, 2026

- Genesis 12:1-9 and Psalm 33:1-12
- Hosea 5:15-6:6 and Psalm 50:7-15
- Romans 4:13-25
- Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

June 14, 2026

- Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7) and Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
- Exodus 19:2-8a and Psalm 100
- Romans 5:1-8
- Matthew 9:35-10:8, (9-23)

June 21, 2026

- Genesis 21:8-21 and Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
- Jeremiah 20:7-13 and Psalm 69:7-18
- Romans 6:1b-11
- Matthew 10:24-39

June 28, 2026

- Genesis 22:1-14 and Psalm 13
- Jeremiah 28:5-9 and Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18
- Romans 6:12-23
- Matthew 10:40-42

Ideas to Love Your Neighbors

- Invite someone to church or a Bible study
- Write thank-you notes to veterans, teachers, first responders, or caregivers
- Bring items for the Pilgrim food pantry or volunteer at one of our many missions
- Summer is here, host a neighborhood cookout or ice cream social to build community
- Pray intentionally for your neighborhood and local leaders each day

Pilgrim Prayer List

May we faithfully lift one another before the Lord in prayer, trusting in His grace, mercy, and perfect will.

- Hurricane Recovery & Rebuild
- Caregivers - peace & strength
- Pastor Search
- Pilgrim Church & Leaders
- Beverly Weber - hospice
- Savina Krueger - cancer
- John Krueger - health
- Marge Trayner - dementia
- Laine Nipper - health
- Petra Conn - health
- AJ Story - health
- Brenna Young - health
- Peace & Hope
- Dave Wilson - health
- Cherry Gillner - stroke recovery
- Doreen - grief
- Judy Michaels - health
- Jane Harris - health
- Delys Wood - health
- Pat Wheatcroft - hospice
- Cory Williams - cancer
- James Fraser - health
- Joyce Faber - health
- Christopher Fraser - peace
- Josh Fraser - salvation

1 Peter 5:7: Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

Care Group

Weekly Meetings Tuesdays | 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM
Conference Room

Looking for friendship, encouragement, and meaningful conversation? Come join the Care Group as you are able! Together we share support, fellowship, prayer, and caring hearts as we walk through life together.

All are welcome — come as you are and invite a friend!

Pray for Pilgrim Church

- That we would love those with whom we have nothing in common but the gospel.
- That a hunger for studying God's Word and growing in faith would deepen among our members.
- That transparent, meaningful relationships would form as we love one another.
- That giving would be faithful, joyful, consistent, and sacrificial.
- That God would guide and bless the search for the pastor He is calling to lead Pilgrim Church into the future.
- That God would provide a gifted accompanist to enrich and support our worship ministry.
- That the rebuilding of the sanctuary would be completed smoothly and to the glory of God.
- That through every season of transition, Pilgrim Church would remain rooted in faith, hope, and love.

In the Mail

"Thank you for your generous gift to VBA Volunteer Community Clinic. Your generosity allows us to continue our mission of providing no-cost medical, pharmacy & wellness care to those in need in Charlotte County. Thank you so much for your continued support of VBA."

Pilgrim Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will be on Summer Break for June and July.

Looking ahead, the first meeting of the 26-27 session on August 20, 10:00 a.m. in the Library. At this meeting we will plan Women's Sunday.

Over the summer, members will continue to stay in contact with their assigned homebound families.

Adult Bible Study

Sundays | 10:15 a.m. | Coffee Room

Adult Bible Study will meet on Sunday mornings throughout the month of June with an "Off Day" on June 14. Class begins right after the morning service for an hour. We now meet in the Coffee Room just off the sanctuary

Study content continues to be the gospel of Luke. Discussions are led by David and Judi Wilson as the small group together learns about background, meaning, and application of Jesus' ministries.

LIVE TWO ACT STAGE COMEDY

Attention
**HARMONY
HEIGHTS**
Residents!

Pastor Merci will be performing!

JUNE 19+20 at LIFT CHURCH
7PM 1PM+7PM
695 Center Rd, Venice

TICKETS \$15 EACH (No children under 5)
TEXT OR CALL 251.404.4219

Joyful Noise Learning Center

What a whirl-wind this past month has been! So much was completed over the past week alone, hard to imagine that there were three more weeks in the month since the last Council meeting. So I will try my best to give a quick update on all that has happened at the school the past four weeks:

VPK & K/1 Graduation on May 22nd. Our teachers and staff transformed the Community Center for this event, and we pulled out (and filled) every chair! This milestone is always bittersweet at the end of the ceremony as we watch our students leave us for the final time and move on to the public schools in the fall. So proud of all the growth and learning they have achieved; and all the dedication and love the teachers showed over the course of the year.

We had an alligator on our campus last week! He was hanging out under some trees on our playground area in front of the basketball courts.



FWC sent a trapper out to remove him – all seven feet of him! Joyful Noise has seen many different animals on property over the years, but this was the first time for an alligator!

Joyful Noise will be closed on Friday, May 29th for a Teacher Work Day. We are all preparing for our summer students. New students will start the first week in June, for classrooms and summer camp; as our current students in classrooms transition to the next grade up. Teachers will also start preparing for the new school year in the fall throughout the summer.

Summer camp starts June 1st and we are full, full, full with a waiting list! We have so many fun field trips, crafts, activities, and vacation bible school for our campers. This is our biggest summer camp programs to date and we are looking forward to a very fun summer!

Come On Out and Get to Know Our Neighbors!

Deep Creek Civic Association Indoor Craft Fair

The Deep Creek Civic Association is hosting an indoor Craft Fair in our Community Center!

Saturday, June 27 | 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Browse handmade crafts, meet local vendors, and enjoy fellowship with neighbors and friends!

Deep Creek Civic Association Bingo Night

Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship at Bingo Night in the Community Center!

Friday, July 3 | 5:00 p.m.

Bring your friends and neighbors for a great night together!

Little Free Food Pantry

We received a report from Tackle Hunger: Thanks to the efforts of **over 1,300 groups**, the Souper Bowl of Caring raised nearly **\$4,921,349** for food charities nationwide this year. “

For those in need, and for those who wish to give. **Take what you need. Give what you can.** Together, we care for one another.

With children home from school over the summer, many households go through more food than normal. Our pantry is already being used actively we expect this to increase as we get further into the summer break.

If you are donating, please remember:

- Canned or dry/non-perishable items only
- Choose items that won't be affected by rising temperatures

Let's continue to be a blessing to our neighbors through simple acts of love and generosity.

Suggested items are:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Macaroni & Cheese | Canned Pastas |
| Soup | Canned Fruit |
| Dry Rice | Dry Beans |
| Canned Veggies | Tuna/Canned Meat |
| Instant Potatoes | Toiletries |

With Grateful Hearts

Sunday, June 14 | Immediately Following Worship

Please join us for a Reception Honoring Pastor Merci on her last Sunday with us. Come share your love, gratitude, and well wishes as we celebrate Pastor Merci's ministry and time with Pilgrim Church.

Property & Grounds

The property and grounds team is dedicated to providing a safe and welcoming environment for our church and school campus staff and visitors.

This is a summary of our accomplishments for the past month:

Church

- Finished the plumbing in the Sanctuary kitchenette and bathrooms
- Repaired the refrigerator in the Coffee Room
- Made panel supports needed to install the heavy partitions in the Sanctuary bathrooms
- Started the install of the partitions in the Sanctuary bathrooms
- Picked up and installed a new refrigerator that was donated for the kitchenette

School/Community Center

- We also maintained the plantings by the Joyful Noise sign and added some new low maintenance plants
- Removed broken glass top on library table

Find Us On Facebook

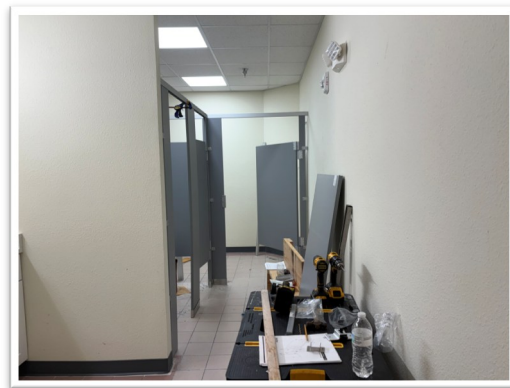
Stay connected with us throughout the week by following our Facebook page: **Pilgrim Church of Port Charlotte**

Use this simple tool to help spread our message — like and share our posts with your friends and neighbors!

Be sure to turn on notifications so you never miss an update, event, or uplifting message from our community.

Around Pilgrim

First Sunday back in the Sanctuary!



Bathrooms are coming together! Thank you Property Team!

VPK Graduation for 2026



Pentecost Sunday at Pilgrim Church!



Learn & Grow

“One Nation Under God”

As America marks 250 years, Christians have an opportunity not only to celebrate history, but to reflect on God’s faithfulness through every generation. From humble church gatherings in colonial towns to modern congregations serving communities across the nation, the story of Christianity in America is woven with prayer, sacrifice, revival, and service.

Throughout America’s history, seasons of spiritual renewal helped shape the nation’s character and communities.

Throughout our nation’s history, God has raised up faithful believers who pointed others toward Christ:

- **The Pilgrims and early settlers** sought freedom to worship God according to conscience.
- **The First Great Awakening** of the 1730s and 1740s called many colonists to personal faith in Christ and renewed devotion to God.
- **George Washington** regularly encouraged prayer, morality, and dependence upon God.
- **Harriet Tubman** trusted God courageously while leading enslaved people to freedom.
- **Christian abolitionists** worked to end slavery, believing every person is created in the image of God.
- **Martin Luther King Jr.** preached the Gospel alongside the call for justice, equality, and love for all people.
- **Billy Graham** proclaimed the Gospel to millions and reminded America of its need for Christ.
- Countless pastors, missionaries, teachers, and faithful church members quietly served their communities with compassion and truth.

America’s Christian story is not one of perfection, but of continual need for repentance, renewal, and grace. In every season—war and peace, prosperity and hardship—God has remained faithful.

During the Cold War, many Americans wanted to emphasize the nation’s spiritual and moral foundations in contrast to atheistic communism. Religious leaders and civic organizations brought the Pledge of Allegiance to Congress requesting to add the phrase “under God” to acknowledge the belief

that human rights and freedoms ultimately come from God rather than government alone.

On June 14, 1954, Congress officially added the words “under God,” and President Eisenhower signed it into law.

The phrase has since become a well-known expression of America’s historical connection between faith, freedom, and national identity.

Today, the Church is still called to be a light. As American Christians, we respond to God’s faithfulness not only with words, but with action:

- By loving our neighbors with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness
- By praying faithfully for our leaders, communities, churches, schools, and nation
- By serving the poor, lonely, sick, veterans, and those in need
- By standing for truth while showing grace and humility
- By seeking justice, mercy, and reconciliation in our communities
- By teaching future generations the truth of God’s Word
- By supporting churches, missions, and ministries that share the Gospel
- By living with integrity in our workplaces, homes, and daily lives
- By boldly proclaiming the hope and salvation found in Jesus Christ alone

As we celebrate 250 years of American history, may we remember that true hope is not found in government, wealth, or power, but in Christ alone.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness throughout America’s history. Forgive us where we have failed to follow Your ways, and renew Your Church with courage, humility, and love. Help us to be people who seek justice, walk in mercy, and share the Gospel boldly. May future generations know Your truth and experience Your grace. Guide our nation and draw us ever closer to You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.



You're invited!



PILGRIM Church Picnic

Hosted by the Care Group

Join us for a fun afternoon of food, fellowship, and celebration!

-  **Fried Chicken**
-  **Coleslaw**
-  **Macaroni Salad**
-  **Watermelon**
-  **Cupcakes!**



Good Food
Great People
Stronger Together!

 **SATURDAY, JULY 4**

 **DOORS OPEN AT NOON**

 **PILGRIM COMMUNITY CENTER**

RSVP on registration slip or by contacting the Church Office.



941-629-2633 x 5



office@pilgrimonline.org



24515 Rampart Blvd,
Port Charlotte

June 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 12:00pm Care Group	3	4 12:00pm Bulletin Team 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	5 9:00am TOPS	6
7 10:15am Adult Bible Study	8	9 12:00pm Care Group	10	11 12:00pm Bulletin Team 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	12 9:00am TOPS	13
14 10:00am Reception for Pastor Merci	15 Ministry Reports due for Council Meeting	16 12:00pm Care Group 6:30pm Finance Committee Meeting	17 Newsletter Article Deadline	18 12:00pm Bulletin Team 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	19 9:00am TOPS	20
21 Father's Day 10:15am Adult Bible Study	22	23 12:00pm Care Group 6:30pm Council Meeting	24	25 9:15am PBJ Sandwich Makers 12:00pm Bulletin Team 7:00pm NA	26 9:00am TOPS	27 9:00am Deep Creek Civic Association Indoor Craft Fair
28 10:15am Adult Bible Study	29	30 12:00pm Care Group	<p>Every Sunday 8:00am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Worship 9:00am Worship</p>			