



Progress

A monthly publication of
Pilgrimage United Church of Christ

CONGREGATION PRESIDENT

Amy Jones
pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com



"Life is about change, sometimes it's painful, sometimes it's beautiful, but most of the time it's both." -Kristin Kreuk

At Pilgrimage, we've had a lot of change over the past few years. Some of it has been beautiful, some of it painful and often a little bit of both. Those experiences have helped us to learn more about ourselves, what we want and need as a congregation. We've been working and dreaming and hoping for a future with a new pastor.

In February 2020, we'll be welcoming our new Pastor, Courtney Jones. This means more change is heading our way. The above quote seemed perfect to me to describe this time in our church life. As excited as we are about our new pastor, we need to remember that change can be difficult. It can feel unsettling. Each of us will find things we enjoy and likely a few things we dislike as we work through the changes ahead. We need to remind ourselves that although sometimes reality doesn't equal what we envisioned, those differences can be beautiful and even better than what we initially thought we wanted.

My ask for each of you is to be open to the changes ahead. Work with our Council to help Pastor Courtney get up and running. Share

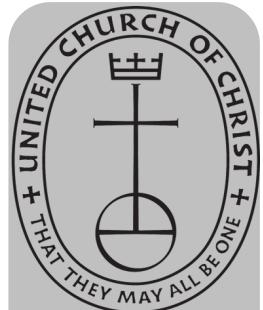
with her the things that matter most to you. Be willing to try new things. Give feedback, both positive and constructive, so your Council and Pastor know your thoughts and feelings. Above all, commit to being an active part of our church family. With the help and support of all of you, I am confident in our ability to grow and flourish.

CONGREGATION VICE PRESIDENT

By Susan Valentine
pilgrimageuccvicepresident@gmail.com



My New Year's resolution for my role as vice president to develop new and updated guidelines pertaining to safe church policies. We have a safe church policy in place that needs updating to make the guidelines clearer and apply to children, teens, and adults in a way that makes the guidelines easy to follow. We also want to address the physical safety of our church building. If you are interested in serving on this task force, please let me know. We will have an organizational meeting sometime in January. We will meet as we are able to develop proposals to present to church council for approval.



We seek to grow in worship, learning and service as a faithful people of God, bringing hope, comfort and friendship to all, welcoming everyone in Christ.

“...so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

2 THESSALONIANS 1:12

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CHRISTIAN ED

By Janet Derby & Gabriela Mills
pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com



Christmas Eve Family Service

Thanks to all the children and their parents for the hard work they put into preparing for a joyous Christmas Eve service. Special thanks to Paula Roberts for her creative accompaniment and to Morgan Jones for her assistance. Thanks also to Amy Nichols and Katie Simmons for the costuming and to Bill Dischinger for again supplying our manger.

Pastor Transition News

The children of Pilgrimage and Hope Central have been working to help each other bridge the pastoral transitions that each congregation is experiencing. To do this, our children made ornaments and a wreath made from their handprints to send to Hope Central UCC.



The children have also shared some questions they had of each other. Our children sent these questions first and received these answers.



Is she nice? Is she really good at being nice?

She is nice. She is actually ALWAYS nice.
(*Tessa and Declan*)

Does she like to sing?

She loves to sing. She's good at it. We think all pastors have to be good singers.

What makes her laugh?

Tessa says she makes Courtney laugh. *Declan* says this too. We think kids make Courtney laugh. And puppies.

What makes her angry?

Homophobic people (*Tessa*). People being RUDE (like

mean) on purpose. (*Dash*)

How old is she?

She is 36. She is a grownup but young and cool. We guessed her age at 24, 25, 26 and 32, because it is hard to tell grown up ages when you are a kid.

Does she like video games? If so, what games does she like to play?

We don't know this one. We guess she'd like Minecraft (*Julian*) and Madden (*Declan*), because we like these.

We received these questions in return, and shared our responses with them.

Are you Pilgrims? (*Julian* age 11)

"Say, what?" (*Bella*) No, they lived a long time ago. (*River*) Matthew thought this was asked because of the name of our church, so we talked about how pilgrims are people who travel to some new place and how we are on a journey to follow God's path. Ms. Janet asked some founding members of the church why the name was chosen. They said they thought it was because they were embarking on a new adventure. They also said that both the founding pastor and many of the founding members were from New England. They are going to check with the founding pastor for more information.

Are you nice? (*Tessa*, age 12) We really love Courtney, so we have some worries since we do not know you.

Yes! Yes, I'm very helpful (*Bella*) I love animals (*River*). We are very open. (*Emma*)

Why do you want her? (*Cora*, age 9) We are sad that Courtney is leaving, many of us have known her most of our lives.

"Then she should stay!" (*Bella and River*)

The children were very sad to hear that you are hurting. (*River* motioned wiping a tear from her eye because she remembers how sad she was when our last pastor left.) She was the only pastor many of our children and youth knew also. They are sorry we are taking Courtney away, but we are very excited about her coming. They explained that we have been without a pastor for a very long time. (Almost 2 years) We promise we will love her and take care of her.

We want to know about you. Do you like some of the same things we like? Do you like sports? Minecraft? Do you read books, like the Hunger Games?

They all like Minecraft. Here are the sports and books they like:

Maddie (age 3): Swimming

Cody (age 6): Swimming and Karate; *Narwahl*

Jackson (age 8): Baseball and Basketball

Jake (age 8): Baseball

Hannah (age 12): Dance

Bella (age 9): Soccer, Cheerleading, Gymnastics; *Dogman*

River (age 8): Soccer, Basketball; *Harry Potter*

Matthew (age 8): Golf; *Wedgie and Gizmo*

WORSHIP

Diane Reese & Sarah Holliday Co-chairs
pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com



The Worship Committee would like to recognize the inspirational leadership of Rochelle Lofstrand during all of the Sundays of Advent. We would like to thank her for the messages each Advent Sunday which are so relevant to our current times and significant for all of our congregants and visitors. We also appreciate her leadership on Christmas Eve at both the 5:00 and 10:00 services.



You're Invited to Join the Sandwich Club Support Group

Many of us find ourselves simultaneously caring for our offspring even as we are increasingly called upon to support our aging parents or other family members meeting our care. While these are people we love and feel privileged to care for, it can, at times, be stressful, tiring, and lead us to neglect our own needs.

Thus we have a Caregiver's Support group at Pilgrimage, a.k.a. the Sandwich Club, which meets quarterly for fellowship, support, and mutual learning. Our winter meeting will be at 3:15 PM on Saturday afternoon, January 25, at the church. We invite members, friends, and friends of friends to join us.

Contact facilitator, Trish Greeves, for more information (trishgreeves@me.com).

Climate Change: A Christian Concern

If you're not familiar with Katherine Hayhoe, she is a climate scientist who chose that career specifically to confront the doubts of evangelical Christians. She is an evangelical whose husband is an evangelical minister. She teaches (Texas Tech) and works at spreading the word about the climate through personal contact, videos, publications and hosting a PBS digital series. The balance of this newsletter article is from her, because it consists of excerpts from and paraphrases of something she wrote.

If caring about climate change is a Christian value, why do surveys consistently show white evangelicals to be the Americans least concerned about it? It's because the alliance between conservative theology and conservative politics has been deliberately engineered and fostered on the issues of race, abortion and now climate change, to the point that our politics is the best predictor of whether we accept the science. This framing portrays scientists as a godless bunch, teaming with liberals to overthrow religion.

I'm often asked by fellow Christians (Kathrine Hayhoe speaking here), "Do you *believe* in climate change?" I answer that climate science is not a belief system but the observation of facts and data about God's creation that we can see with our eyes and test with our minds, and that it matters because people are suffering today from climate change and we believe in sharing God's love with them.

I've grown to understand that much of evangelicals' opposition comes from fear. Fear of changes that will leave us worse off or fear of siding with those who lack respect for our values and beliefs. But fear is not from God; rather, we've been given a spirit of power and love, to act with compassion for others. I'm convinced that the most central parts of my identity – that of climate scientist and evangelical Christian – aren't incompatible. They have made me who I am.

DEACONS

By Julia Shiver

pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com



I don't know about you, but I am SO ready for a settled pastor! Just one more month to go! Our transition isn't over, of course. It will take time to integrate Courtney and Auggie into our church life. It will take time to get to know our new pastor and for her to know us. Meanwhile, your deacons are always here for you. Please feel free to let us know what is going on with you and your family.

In other news, Trivia Night is coming! It will be Saturday, February 29. Our party ladies (Amy and Katie) have suggested a beach theme! I love the beach any time of year. And I can think of all kinds of trivia questions, from beach volleyball, the Beach Boys, to the beaches of Normandy. So get out your bathing suit, with a very heavy, warm, cover-up, and join us for good food and fellowship!

STEWARDSHIP

Matthew Alexander & Anne Mooney,

Co-Chairs

pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com



³*I thank my God every time I remember you. ⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy ⁵because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.* Philippians 1: 3-6

The words above are from Paul who was writing to the church in Philippi, but they feel true for us at Pilgrimage as well. It is with gratitude and joy that I share our current pledges for 2020 have reached \$173,000 at the last count, which is more than was pledged in 2019! We have a full Council, staffed with willing, faithful, and enthusiastic volunteers working in partnership for our community of faith. Meanwhile many others actively share in carrying out the work of our church as we strive to do God's work.

Having said all this, there is always a place for you to join us in the life of our church. If you haven't filled out a time and talent pledge, they are available on the table in the narthex. You can turn them in to the church office or place them in the offering plate. We are currently actively seeking more volunteers to help with Facebook streaming.

...And if you haven't pledged your tithe for 2020, there is also still time for that. Those forms are also on the table in the narthex. We will be meeting soon to determine our final Mission Spending Plan for 2020. Your pledge helps us make financially responsible decisions for the future.

Finally, I am excited to announce we have received some grant money from the Southeast Conference. They have granted us \$3500 to be used to promote our church in the local community as we welcome our new settled pastor.



Congregational Meeting Sunday, January 26

We will have a brief congregational meeting to approve the 2020 Pilgrimage UCC budget on Sunday, January 26, immediately following the 10:00 service.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Anthony (Tony) Bernard, PhD
pilgrimageuccmusic@gmail.com



JANUARY IS THE PERFECT TIME TO TRY THE CHOIR!

January is an exciting time to come and try singing in the choir. Don't be embarrassed or frightened (by a lack of skill or anything else)! We'll all be learning new music for winter and Easter. Why not make a New Year's resolution that you can keep...come sing in the choir for a month!

The top ten reasons you should join the choir:

10. Rehearsals are every Wednesday night from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., which means that for those few hours, you will significantly reduce your risk of contracting tendinitis from nonstop operation of a digital device.
9. Because you wear a choir robe every Sunday, you are liberated from the challenging task of finding fashionable clothing.
8. From your special choir loft vantage point every Sunday, you may develop interesting new hobbies. Among these is a guessing game called "Who's Praying, Who's Sleeping?"
7. Sitting in full view of the congregation makes it much less likely that you yourself will give into a chronic lack of sleep. Although it has been known to happen.
6. If you think your shower singing sounds good now, just wait 'til you've been singing with us a few weeks!
5. Singing in a choir is one of the few hobbies that does not require gear. This could be good for the family budget.
4. For fitness buffs, singing in the choir is not only heart healthy, it is soul healthy. There are no monthly membership fees, and it's a lot easier on

the knees than jogging. Most of us feel rejuvenated when leaving choir rehearsal!

3. If you think you've done everything there is to do and there are no great challenges left in life, try singing next to us and staying on pitch.
2. Choir rehearsal lasts half as long as a professional football game, but it is at least twice as satisfying. This is especially true if you are a long-suffering fan of the Falcons. (Don't worry though, there are no games on Wednesday nights.)

And the number 1 reason you should join the choir:

1. Sharing your time and talent through music is a worship experience in itself. On Wednesday nights, we learn about Christ from singing and listening. No experience necessary: We'll teach you everything you need to know. We want you to be one of us!

So don't be afraid or embarrassed. Come try the choir!

(*Ideas borrowed from several internet sources.*)

Anthony (Tony) Bernard
Pilgrimage Music Director



Family Promise— Host Week: January 5-11!

On January 5, we begin the New Year hosting families from Family Promise for one week on January 5. While many of the volunteer slots have been filled, we still need meal preparers, over-night hosts, and others to help make the week comfortable for our guests. The volunteer website is now open and you can choose how you would like to help during the week by going to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0a4baeaf2ca4fc1-family11>

Book of Favorite Things for Courtney

Reminder, we would like to encourage everyone to contribute to the book of Favorite Things that we're preparing for Pastor Courtney's arrival. There is paper available on a table in the Narthex. Please take as many sheets as you like and write up some of your favorite things about Pilgrimage. When finished, please put them in the purple box next to the paper. We would like to collect all items by Sunday January 26. Please see Amy Jones if you have any questions.



January Book Club

Book Club will resume their monthly meetings on Tuesday, January 7 at 7:00 p.m. The book for review is "Becoming" by Michelle Obama. If you have any questions, see Fran Howard.

Raise the Roof!

Fundraising is ongoing for the Pilgrimage Raise the Roof Campaign. We are inching closer to our goal of \$23,000 which will cover all costs including full replacement of the main building's roof. You are invited to add a shingle to our display roof in the Narthex with any donation amount. See Chris Shiver with questions.

January Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

- 01/07 Tony Prahl
- 01/07 Maya McMahill
- 01/09 Mark Gomillia
- 01/15 Polly Yaguchi
- 01/25 Monty Wyne
- 01/27 Dana Martin
- 01/30 Clay Roth

ANNIVERSARIES

- 01/16 Pat & Greg Kask
- 01/31 Dawn & Dana Martin

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

8:30 Worship		January 5	January 12	January 19	January 26
Liturgist		Julia Shiver	Ugena Whitlock	Wayne Scott	N/A
Scripture Reader		Morgan Jones	Amy Jones	Sharon Getty	Morgan Jones
10:00 Worship					
Welcome		Carla Martin	Susan Valentine	Geoff Heilhecker	Rita Mehlan
Liturgist		Julia Shiver	Ugena Whitlock	Wayne Scott	Kathleen McNulty
Ushers		Sunny & Matthew Alexander	Carla & Joe Martin	Monty Wyne & Paula Roberts	Dick Mehlan & Diane Reese
Greeter		Susan Valentine	Paula Roberts	Fran Howard	Lois Dischinger
Scripture Reader		Ugena Whitlock	Joyanna Wyne	Kathleen McNulty	Paula Roberts
Children's Time		Anne Mooney	Janet Derby	Jaime Fulsang	Duke Yaguchi
Acolyte		Aiden Scates	Matthew Gula	Jake Alexander	River Simonson
Little Lambs		Sunny Alexander	Carol Reed	Susan Valentine	Helene O'Neill
Nursery		Teresa Scates	Teresa Scates	Teresa Scates	Teresa Scates
Counter		Susan Valentine	Clay Roth	Greg Kask	Carla Martin
Audio System		Ric Reitz	Monica Helms	Jeff Durkee	Ric Reitz
Facebook Live		Dick Mehlan	TBD	TBD	TBD

Meeting Schedule for Committees & Small Groups

Book Club (Fran Howard)	1st Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
Pilgrimage Sanctuary Choir (Tony Bernard)	Wed. at church (7 p.m.) - August Thru May
Pilgrimage Council (Amy Jones, Pres.)	Second Thurs. of the month at church (7 p.m.)
Pilgrimage Youth	Monthly meals & quarterly events.
Sandwich Club Support Group	Quarterly Meetings
Spiritual Seekers' Group	4th Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
PFLAG	4th Sunday at the church (1-3 p.m.)

This listing includes the group name, followed by the coordinator or director in parenthesis then the meeting days, locations and times. If your group should be added to this list, please e-mail office@pilgrimageucc.org.

Pilgrimage UCC
3755 Sandy Plains Road
Marietta, GA 30066
Phone: (770) 971-0007
Fax: (770) 565-9755

We're on the Web!
www.pilgrimageucc.org

President
Music Director
Administrative Assistant
Accompanist

Amy Jones
Tony Bernard
Lynne Buell
Lidia Kovaleva

Pilgrimage UCC's Emails

Pilgrimage UCC Website:	www.pilgrimageucc.org	Worship:	pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com
Pastor	pastor@pilgrimageucc.org	Christian Education:	pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com
Office-Lynne Buell:	office@pilgrimageucc.org	VBS-Janet Derby:	pilgrimageuccvbs@gmail.com
Youth Director:	youth@pilgrimageucc.org	Communications:	pilgrimageucccommunications@gmail.com
Whole Council:	pilgrimageucccouncil@gmail.com	Missions	pilgrimageuccmissions@gmail.com
Council President:	pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com	Music Director	pilgrimageuccmusic@gmail.com
Council Fin. Secretary:	pilgrimageuccfinsec@gmail.com	Properties	pilgrimageuccproperties@gmail.com
Deacons:	pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com	Stewardship	pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com
Parish Life:	pilgrimageuccparishlife@gmail.com		

The Month in Sundays

- January 5** Worship (8:30 & 10:00 a.m.)
 Communion (both services)
 Ritual of Healing (8:30 service)
 Connection Fellowship Time (9:15 a.m.)
- January 12** Worship (8:30 & 10:00 a.m.)
 Trish Greeves Preaching
- January 19** Worship (8:30 & 10:00 a.m.)
 Ugena Whitlock Preaching
- January 26** Worship (8:30 & 10:00 a.m.)
 Congregational Meeting (11:15 a.m.)
 PFLAG Meeting (1:00 p.m.)