

PASTOR

Rev. Courtney Jones

pastor@pilgrimageucc.org

Look, aren't all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; as well as residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the regions of Libya bordering Cyrene; and visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own languages!"— Acts 2:7b-11, Common English Bible

Dear Beloved,

In my Pentecost sermon, I suggested that what makes Pentecost the “birthday of the Church” is the act of testimony—ordinary people sharing stories of what God has done in their lives. We understand God more deeply and can see God’s movement more clearly in our lives when we hear one another’s stories, whether those stories are “happy” or “sad” or a little bit of both (as most stories are), stories of “success” or “failure” or a little bit of both (as most stories are), etc. Part of the gift of being God’s Church is that we get to be with and for one another when life is close to perfect, when life is close to disaster, and everywhere in between. It’s time for us to begin to testify, to tell our stories as individuals and as a community.

This congregation has undergone many seasons of loss, grief, and trauma, both within our community and in our lives outside of church. From saying goodbye to a longtime pastor and music director, to two years of interim ministry, to losing an accompanist, to pandemic, to struggles for racial justice, to a stressful political season, to individual losses and changes—we have been through a *lot!* When we experience grief and trauma, whatever we bottle up gets lodged in our bodies—in our mental processes, of course, but also in muscle memory. Experts suggest it’s important to integrate difficult/traumatic experiences, because a failure to do so can result in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other maladaptive behaviors. We have many things to process, many stories to tell, and therefore many opportunities to learn how God has been present along the

way (and how God continues to move us toward healing and wholeness, toward creativity and connection now and into the future). That is really Good News!

This summer, we are going to have some fun together. I’m calling it Story Summer. In worship, I will be preaching on stories from the Bible that we wish we knew—stories we feel like we are supposed to know but don’t know very well, stories we heard as children that we’d like to encounter again, stories we want our kids to know. Please make suggestions for stories you’d like me to preach—I want us to be curious together, and any story you want to hear, I am certain someone else will want to hear, too. Email me, or the worship chairs, or use the box in the narthex at church if you’d like to offer a suggestion anonymously.

We are also going to continue to use our “Question of the Week” as a prompt for telling our own stories—stories of survival, of resilience, of how the Divine brought us through something we couldn’t have done alone. I hope we will use these questions to spark conversation during coffee hour, or to prompt some contemplation during journaling/prayer time, or to invite family and friends to reflect more deeply on the experiences that have transformed us—recent experiences or long-ago experiences. All our stories are sacred, because we are God’s beloved ones in whom God delights and with whom God journeys.

The point of this Story Summer is to have some fun, get to know each other a little more deeply in the “after” of a year apart, and learn how to stretch ourselves to be more openhearted and playful in our spiritual lives. It is not to tell tender stories to people who haven’t earned the right to hear them or to push ourselves to bare our souls to the point of embarrassment or shame. God wants us to honor our boundaries while opening our hearts, to risk some vulnerability for the sake of Love without betraying our own dignity. If you’d like to talk more about what that could look like (because it looks different for everyone!), I would be truly delighted to have those conversations with you.

Love,
Courtney



**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.**

*“David had success in all his undertakings;
for the Lord
was with him.”*

1 Samuel 18:14

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PRESIDENT

Amy Jones

pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com



CONGREGATION VICE PRESIDENT

By Susan Volentine

pilgrimageuccvicepresident@gmail.com



“It’s not Goodbye, it’s See You Later”
—Richard Lawrence Belford

Two years ago, I started my term as President of Pilgrimage United Church of Christ. At the end of this month, my term will be at an end. When I started, we didn’t have a settled pastor. At this point, Reverend Courtney has now been with us for 16 months and I’m so pleased with how she’s doing. We’ve managed our way through a pandemic and are now starting to come out the other side. We started having indoor in person worship at one service a week in May and will move to two services a week in June. Our Search Committee is diligently working to find a new Music Director and I’m optimistic that we’ll soon have news to report there as well.

I am so grateful for the support of this congregation as we’ve worked through so many challenges over the past two years. Our church needs the support of many volunteers to make things happen. I extend my heartfelt blessings to those who will continue to serve on our Council for the next year and for new volunteers who will be serving with them. I hope you will all join me in wishing them well and committing your own time and talents to help where you are called and are needed. I look forward to continuing to participate in the church through worship even as I step away from my volunteer responsibilities. Together, we truly can do great things for our congregation and our broader community.

Things are moving quickly in our country to return to a new normal. Who knew that so quickly the CDC would say that vaccinated people don’t need to wear masks?

Things shut down very quickly in March 2020 and that was overwhelming. Now the opening up is creating worry among many of us. Are we truly safe without a mask? How long will our vaccinations last? Will we need a booster and when? Change is hard whether it is for the better or the worse. Our congregation has been through so many changes in the past years. With having our pastor leave (was that in 2017?), to having an interim, to having supply pastors, to having Courtney. Yea for Courtney! Stress can be caused by good things as well as bad things. Our church community has shown our ability to be patient and resilient with all these changes.

June Book Club

June 1 at 7:00 p.m.

Book for Review: *“Station Eleven”*
By: Emily St. John Mandel

We are planning to meet at the church. If you would like to attend or be added to the Book Club email list, contact:

Janet Derby at:
derby.jm@gmail.com

Fran Howard at:
roberthow@aol.com

CHRISTIAN ED

By Janet Derby

pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com



Vacation Bible School

Plans are underway for VBS 2021, *The Good Shepherd*. The dates are July 19-23. We are not at this point opening it to the general public, but PUCC children are welcome to invite friends to join us. Registration is available on our website here:

<https://www.pilgrimageucc.org/vacation-bible-school-2020>.

Congratulations to our Graduates!



Volunteers Needed!

We will probably have a limited number of children, so fewer groups than we usually have, but we have gotten permission to have snacks and music, so we will need volunteers for those areas as well as crafts, story time, and missions.

Our High School Graduates

- Gavin Roth is graduating from Lassiter High School and is going to be attending Georgia College this fall where he will be majoring in business. His favorite memories from Pilgrimage are definitely the Christmas eve services because it always brought everyone together and he loved singing the songs with the other kids.
- Emma Roberts is graduating from Omega Private Academy and will be attending Georgia Highlands College in the fall. She hopes to become a special education teacher or do speech therapy.
- Palmer Farrar, son of Donna Farrar, is expected to graduate from Oakville HS (Saint Louis) in June with a GED, High School Diploma, and 6 college credits.

If you are unable to volunteer in person, but want to help out, you can become a **Snack Wizard**. Wizards make snacks magically appear for the VBS children; no magic wand needed! You will be given a specific list of items with instructions for preparation. Then you will drop them at church at the assigned time. Poof! You have turned into a Snack Wizard who performs VBS magic—creating happy, healthy children. If you would like to be a Snack Wizard, contact Lynne Buell at:

lynnebuell49@yahoo.com

Our Other Graduates

- Ugena Whitlock finished her Master of Divinity at McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University this year.
- Hannah Alexander graduated from Hightower Trail Middle School. She will attend Pope High School in the fall.
- Madison Alexander graduated from Kids R Kids Preschool.

Lastly, you **can adopt a volunteer!** Now that we will be back in person, you want to be sure you won't have a boring old name tag, so you will want to contribute to VBS this way. You will not only help the general VBS effort, you'll show support for a specific individual who commits his or her time and talent to showing up every VBS day to work with the children. Here's what you'll get for your \$10 contribution per person/\$20 per family:

- A gorgeously decorated gaudy badge to wear during the weeks before VBS and then again on VBS Sunday as a proud display of your important role.
- A pre-addressed card where you to easily write "your" volunteer a note of support.
- The satisfaction of knowing you have been a part of an important Pilgrimage tradition!

For more information, please contact Janet Derby,

pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com

WORSHIP

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



Rev. Courtney Jones has provided timely inspirational words in her messages to all of us on Sunday mornings. The exciting news is that on Sunday, May 9th, we began 8:30 a.m. in-person worship. We had 21 folks with masks and social distancing; it was wonderful to be together in the Pilgrimage UCC sanctuary. On May 16th even more folks attended. At the end of the service, we walked outside and stood in a circle to sing “*Let There Be Peace on Earth*”. It was so good to be worshipping together in person for those who were ready and able to do so.

Continued thanks Auggie Jones for being the onsite, encouraging team member for Rev. Courtney and for all of us. We also have some other awesome tech support folks for the livestream services and in-person services including Jeff Durkee, Ric Reitz and more. Many thanks to all!

Starting on June 6, the 10:00 services will begin offering a hybrid option where folks can sign up to come in person or continue watching the livestream from home. Thanks so much to all of our tech support folks who are working towards this goal.

Thank you to the virtual scripture readers for the month of May. We realize that technical difficulties sometimes arise but we appreciate these volunteers. They are Isaac Martin, May 9th, Ron Shelby, May 16th and Reba and Courtney Williams on May 23rd. Thank you to Auggie Jones for reading scripture in person on Sunday, May 2nd, to Amy Jones and Morgan Jones for reading scripture in person on Sunday, May 9th, and to Angela Gula and Michelle Kozak for reading scripture in person on Sunday, May 16th.

We continue to reach out for volunteers, but it will help us if folks let us know when they are ready to be in the rotation for in-person scripture readers. Please feel free to email us about your willingness or availability at:

pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com

Music and art for all of the livestream services was provided by many volunteers. They are Juliann Heilhecker, Carol Hill, Carla Martin, Helene O’Neill, Noah Reed, Diane Reese, Ugena Whitlock and Duke Yaguchi. We now have beautiful live music being provided on the piano in the sanctuary Victoria Owens at the 8:30 in

person worship service. Thank you!

Many thanks continue to go out to Angela Gula, Sarah Holliday and Steve Owens for their tech support behind the curtain every single week.

Remember, if you have music or art that would be appropriate for our service preludes and reflections, please email pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com.

The Music Search committee is in the process of conducting auditions/interviews with candidates for the part time Music Director/Accompanist position. We will be in touch with Council as we continue these interviews. We are so grateful for the dedicated pursuit of this goal from the music search committee members.

DEACONS

By Juliann Heilhecker & Stephen Williams
Co-chairs

pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com



“The Church is not an automobile showroom - a place to put ourselves on display so that others can admire our spirituality, capacity, or prosperity. It is more like a service center, where vehicles in need of repair come for maintenance and rehabilitation.”

—Dieter F. Uchtdorf

I love this quote because it rings true for our church community. We believe in tending to each other and those outside our 4 walls. As we come back to in-person worship, we will need to reacquaint ourselves with the rituals and order of worship as well as welcoming old members back and opening our doors to new members. Deacons share in helping with worship as well as tending to the members of the church in many ways; sending out cards, giving rides, providing meals, just to name a few. Being a deacon has been a privilege at PUC, and I would like to ask you if being of service to our community is a calling that you would like to answer. We need new deacons, and I am happy to answer any questions you would have about the responsibilities of being a deacon. If you were a deacon in the past, maybe you would like to come back and serve in that capacity. Please feel free to reach out to the co-chairs at:

pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com

“Every believer has received grace gifts, so use them to serve one another as faithful stewards of the many-colored tapestry of God’s grace.” 1 Peter 4:10

STEWARDSHIP

Anne Mooney, Chair

pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com



Pilgrimage UCC Vice President

The Vice President serves on the nominating committee for Stewardship. They may also take on certain projects of interest for Council and/or the Congregation, in addition to assisting the President of the Congregation when needed. As VP, this person will also perform the President's duties if he or she are absent or unable to serve. When the VP term comes to an end, this person can step up to the position of President of the Congregation.

Pilgrimage UCC Properties Co-Chair

Properties - This group is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the church buildings, property, and equipment. This committee also advises on the need for repairs and upcoming improvements.

As Properties Co-Chair, you will be able to assist with:

- serving on Properties Committee as a contact for properties needs
- volunteer to work on Church Workdays for cleaning and maintenance inside and outside the church building
- serve as Kitchen Contact for keeping the Kitchen organized and clean
- volunteer as a church "Handyman" for various projects around the church
- assist with light landscaping needs
- serve as a contact with our Cleaning Service
- serve as a contact with our Alarm Company (this must be someone who lives near the church)

If you feel the call to join our leadership team, contact Anne Mooney at the email address listed above.



CLIMATE CHANGE – A Christian Concern

By Hugh Lowrey

Much of the world resembles a squirrel scamp-ering away from a cat and up a tree that offers no protection from the owl overhead. The immediate problem of COVID occupies us, as it should, but the greater problem of climate change is neglected while time to ward off calamity runs out.

Xi Jinping professes climate concern, but in China, coal-fired power plant construction continues. Bolsonaro of Brazil dismisses climate problems and burns the Amazon. Petro-states (Saudi Arabia, Russia, etc.), their economies dependent on fossil fuels, choose the road to disaster, permitting climate change if they can still sell oil. The U.S. and Australian governments are almost paralyzed by pressure from commercial fossil fuel interests.

One would think that the climate-related natural disasters already upon us would provide a wake-up call - a realization that indifference will make things worse - but the most obviously climate-related event yet, "snowmagedon" in Texas, seems to have changed nothing.

Resistance to vaccination is a mirror image of reluctance to accept climate change as real and dangerous. Refusal of scientific facts and acceptance of misinformation endangers both those who follow a false trail and their fellow citizens. But this similarity does not extend to Congressional attitudes and actions. The contrast between congressional attitudes toward climate science and toward medical science confirms the influence of fossil fuel money. Many members of Congress urge their constituents to be vaccinated; far fewer support climate mitigation.

This is a grim assessment, but avoiding decisions is not the answer. Most of us believe that a strong U.S. position on climate would influence countries worldwide to try harder, so it is up to each of us to do what is within his or her power, both through prayer and through worldly actions, to pull our fat out of the fire.



In Person Worship Returns!

Host Week: July 25—August 1

Covid restrictions will be in place (no physical contact with the families). There will be, at max, two families.

If you would like to help, please contact Rita Mehlan at:

rmehlan@bellsouth.net

Starting Sunday, June 6, we will resume indoor worship for the 8:30 service and begin in person worship for the 10:00 service. The 10AM service will be a hybrid model with people worshipping in person and online. The following safety protocols will be in place:

- Masks will be required
- Seating will be socially distanced and in pods that will allow guests from the same household to sit together.
- Capacity will be limited to 75 people
- Sign Up Geniuses will be used to ensure we don't exceed capacity. Sign up at:

<https://www.pilgrimageucc.org/events>

June Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

06/01 Greg Kask
06/05 Trish Greeves
06/05 Wade Jones
06/09 Jan Nally
06/11 Fran Howard
06/13 Madison Alexander
06/13 Jim Ward
06/18 Quinn Schnitzlein
06/21 Joshua Puente
06/28 Trudy Stoddert
06/29 Lynne Buell
06/29 Dan McMahill
06/30 Andalyn Farrar

ANNIVERSARIES

06/07 Bruce & Michelle Brumfield
06/10 Geoff & Juliann Heilhecker
06/22 Tony & Gabriela Mills
06/22 Chris & Julia Shiver
06/26 Sarah Holliday & Ugena Whitlock

If we missed someone, please let Lynne know at:
office@pilgrimageucc.org

Worship will not immediately look exactly as it did before. We will be working to make it a meaningful experience and to add things in as we move through the next several weeks. We ask for your patience and understanding as we work through these changes. We also ask that those who do return to in person worship provide us with feedback on what was meaningful, what we could do differently and any concerns or suggestions you may have.

If you have questions or suggestions, please reach out to:

The Worship Committee
pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com

Rev. Courtney
pastor@pilgrimageucc.org

STAFF

Pastor
Administrative Assistant

Rev. Courtney Jones
Lynne Buell

Pilgrimage UCC's Emails

Pilgrimage UCC Website:	www.pilgrimageucc.org	Worship:	pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com
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Treasurer:	pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com	Properties	pilgrimageuccproperties@gmail.com
Council Fin. Secretary:	pilgrimageuccfinsec@gmail.com	Stewardship	pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com
Deacons:	pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com	Parish Life:	pilgrimageuccparishlife@gmail.com

Meeting Schedule for Committees & Small Groups

Book Club via Zoom (Fran Howard)	1st Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
Pilgrimage Council (Amy Jones, Pres.)	Second Thurs. of the month via Zoom (7 p.m.)
Sandwich Club Support	Quarterly Meetings
Spiritual Seekers' Group via zoom	4th Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
PFLAG	Contact: https://pflag.org/chapter/pflag-marietta

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.

The Month in Sundays

June	6	In-Person Worship 8:30 & 10:00 a.m. Communion
June	13	Honoring Our Graduates In-Person Worship 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.
June	20	Father's Day In-Person Worship 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.
June	27	In-Person Worship 8:30 & 10:00 a.m.