



Progress

A monthly publication of Pilgrimage
United Church of Christ

PASTOR

Rev. Courtney Jones

pastor@pilgrimageucc.org



on Zoom. Activities for children and families are also in the works. Let's keep finding ways to be together even as we socially distance!

I encourage you, for your health, for the health of those we love, for the sake of the most vulnerable among us and for all who have to be out in the workforce, please continue to stay home as much as possible. Wear your masks. Follow social distancing guidelines. And as much as I don't want this to be my Easter message, please dear ones, speak your hearts to those you love without delay. Honor the new life of resurrection by treating this life as the gift that it is. Take care of yourselves and each other, body and soul, until we can be together again in person. We need each other to see resurrection, and we need each other to survive.

Love,
Rev. 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.

"So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.'"

JOHN 10:7

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Dear Beloved,

Christ is Risen! Alleluia! Even if it doesn't always feel that way, we know in our hearts that we serve a God stronger than death. And death seems to be always near these days, so I pray that we can all take courage from the Easter story.

Here's what I know about resurrection: in every post-resurrection appearance, those who meet the risen Christ are not alone. Which says to me, resurrection is best witnessed in groups. After tragedy, after trauma, after life's unspeakable calamities, the way we move forward into Easter's promise is *together*. We don't go alone. We bear witness with and for one another: yes, your struggle is real; yes, God is with you even in that struggle; yes, *I'm* with you—we're with you—in that struggle. This is how we keep the faith, with each other and sometimes *for* each other, that resurrection real. New life is coming. It won't be the same, but we will face it side by side.

Because we go together and leave no one behind, we will continue to worship online until further notice. If you haven't joined us for worship and/or coffee hour, it's a gift to be together virtually, so I hope you'll consider joining us. We also have a Breathing Room time of meditation, prayer, and checking in with each other each Thursday at 7PM

MUSIC MINISTRY

Anthony (Tony) Bernard, PhD

pilgrimageuccmusic@gmail.com



Dear Pilgrimage,

I miss seeing and hearing you all in person. In times like these, we are reminded how much music helps us connect to each other and the world around us. We sing praises, play instruments and make joyful noises to glorify our Creator. We are encouraged, uplifted, and inspired through music. We are calmed and consoled. We are called to action. During our Social Distancing, I encourage you to seek out music on YouTube, Pandora, or your favorite source that touches your soul and helps you connect your humanity to the Divine.

Until we meet again, blessings for peace and health.

Anthony (Tony) Bernard, PhD
Music Director, Pilgrimage UCC

PRESIDENT

Amy Jones

pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com



for the foreseeable future. I would love your ideas on other ways to connect, interact, inspire, and uplift our community as we keep moving forward and coming together, online until we can do so safely in person. I can be reached via email at:

pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com

...or by phone at:

770-378-9393

For now, if you're needing a little inspiration, follow the link and listen to Louis Armstrong's version of "What a Wonderful World":

<https://youtu.be/MVpB0lou3Ko>

"Yes, I think to myself, What a Wonderful World."
– Bob Thiele and George Weiss

My quote this month might seem strange, given the state of the world currently. About a week ago, there was an email thread going around my office, asking people to lift others up with words that inspire them. My choice was immediate and simple: "What a Wonderful World" performed by Louis Armstrong. As I started to think about what to write to all of you this month, it seemed like a good place to start.

This song has been one of my favorites for a very long time. I've always found it to be uplifting and it never fails to bring a smile to my face, even as it sometimes brings tears to my eyes. The lyrics are simple, focusing on the beauty that can be found in the world around us. As I look outside my window, I see some of the things he mentions, green trees and red roses. It's raining today so no blue skies and people walking by, but those are there on other days.

As I looked into the history of this song, I learned that it was written in the 60s to try and bring hope to those suffering the impacts of the Vietnam war. Currently, we're in need of our own sources of hope as we work through the impacts of COVID-19 in the US and throughout the world. Our church community inspires me in so many ways. We've got people working hard to find ways to enhance our virtual worship experience. We've got fun activities like unboxing videos and virtual scavenger hunts! This morning, I felt so much joy with our online greeters, Amy and Katie. Every creative idea on new ways to connect with one another lifts my spirits and gives me hope.

Given the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19, our in-person activities are on hold for an undefined amount of time. We don't yet know when it will be safe to be back together in our church home. We will continue to hold virtual worship services, the breathing room, Sunday School classes, Council and Committee meetings, etc.

CONGREGATION VICE PRESIDENT

By Susan Volentine

pilgrimageuccvicepresident@gmail.com



"I have always felt that laughter in the face of reality is probably the finest sound there is and will last until the day when the game is called on account of darkness. In this world, a good time to laugh is any time you can."

This quote from journalist Linda Ellerbee was on my "Smartest Thing Ever Said" daily calendar for April 16. The calendar was printed way back in 2019 when we didn't know what the world held in store for us. I have more free time than before, and I have used some of that free time to be on Facebook. I have learned to appreciate Facebook, and I am so glad for the connections it offers. Thanks to all who posted something that made me laugh. I have skipped over most of the serious stuff and anything political as laughter is what I need most right now. So if you can, please watch a funny movie or funny video. Distraction is good. Focus when you can on what is good and balance that with the pain you feel. At this point in our lives good and bad coexist in very strange ways. If you need any more Facebook friends, please feel free to tag me.

CHRISTIAN ED

By Janet Derby

pilgrimageucce@gmail.com



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

We began "Embracing a Life of Meaning" April 26. No book is necessary, however, should you want to read it can be found in the usual places.

There are five sessions of this video driven series. Our calendar for this series May 3, May 10, May 17, and May 24 at 11:30 a.m.



**YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES:
VBS AND ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 8-12, and we very much doubt if our social distancing will be over by then. However, we do not want the children to miss out, so we are making plans for a virtual VBS. Our theme will be *A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land*. Each day will be a story about what life was like in Jesus' time and a story about the people he met. We will also have activities for the youth. We may have some activities at the church if stay in place regulations ease up, but that remains to be seen.

More information will be forthcoming but keep VBS on your calendar! Also stay tuned for more youth and children virtual offerings.

If you have any thoughts or questions, please contact Janet Derby at pilgrimageuccevbs@gmail.com.



PILGRIMAGE GRADUATE RECOGNITION

We will celebrate our graduates this month as we always do. If you or someone in your family is graduating this year, please email the office or the CE committee with the name and where they are graduating from.

WORSHIP

Diane Reese & Sarah Holliday Co-chairs

pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com



Rev. Courtney Jones has provided very insightful virtual services for PUCC, and we thank Auggie for being onsite tech help for all of these. We have had views from many folks near and far. Special thanks especially to Matthew Gula and Angela Gula for reading scripture on Palm Sunday.

We would like to thank the dramatic readers for Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service – Tony Bernard, Trish Greeves, Sam Heilhecker, Courtney Jones, Rochelle Lofstrand, Anne Mooney, Steve Owens, Ben Shiver, Laurie Spencer and Duke Yaguchi. Thank you to Sarah Weaver for the graphic for Maundy Thursday.

Thank you to Janet Derby for the Children's Sermon on Easter Sunday including all of the interactive input virtually by the sweet children. We thank Sharon Getty and Monty Wyne for being scripture readers on Easter as well.

Thank you to scripture readers Pat Kask and Duke Yaguchi on April 19th and for April 26th, scripture readers Diane Reese and Monty Wyne.

The Worship Committee has helped facilitate the Virtual Services during the time of the current pandemic in our country. Sarah Holliday and Angela Gula have been supporting us with amazing tech skills to include more folks as readers and to include music in these virtual services. A big thanks go to Angela and Sarah!

STEWARDSHIP

*Matthew Alexander & Anne Mooney,
Co-Chairs*
pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com



Greetings Pilgrimage Family.

We continue to be amazed and grateful for our ability to connect, unite, and support each other in this time of Covid-19 and social distancing. We have all been learning new ways to be a faith community. Our work may look different, but it continues!

It may seem unbelievable, but we will soon be ending our fiscal year at PUCC. It is time for those who have been serving on your Council to consider whether to continue in their service or to try new roles in their church mission work. It is also time for us to reflect on what we have accomplished this year in our Church Ministry and look ahead to what we hope to accomplish in the next year.

Here is the list of Council members willing to continue in their leadership roles and the openings for new leaders:

- President: Amy Jones
- Vice-President: Susan Volentine
- Clerk: Carla Martin
- Receiving Secretary: Rita Mehlan
- Treasurer: Geoff Heilhecker
- Christian Education: **Co-Chair (Adult Programs): OPEN**; Co-Chair (Children & Youth): Janet Derby
- Communications: **Co-Chair-OPEN**, Co-Chair: Angela Gula
- Deacons: Julia Shiver
- Parish Life: Katie Simmons
- Missions: Amy Nichols
- Properties: Chris Shiver
- Stewardship: **Co-Chair (Spiritual Gifts): OPEN**, Co-Chair (Financial Gifts): Anne Mooney
- Worship: Co-Chair: Sarah Holliday, Co-Chair: Diane Reese

As you can see, we have several open positions on Council, so we encourage you to pray and consider whether you may feel called to step into a leadership role at this time. We also encourage you to prayerfully

consider that even if leadership is not for you right now, do you have an idea or a willingness to serve on one of these important ministry committees?

It takes all of us to be the church, for each other, and for those outside our local faith community.

Thank you,

Matthew Alexander and Anne Mooney
The Stewardship Team

DEACONS

By Julia Shiver
pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com



My friends, I pray that you are all healthy, safe, and sane during this unprecedented time in our lives. My prayers are with you all daily. Please let your deacon, or me, or Rev. Courtney, know if you have any needs or prayer concerns. We want to reach out to you all, but that is difficult. I ask that you let us know how we can best help you through this time. We now have a listing on the website so you can find your deacon easily.

And now on to a happier topic! It is time for nominations for the Doctor of Friendship! For those of you new to our community, every year we take nominations for someone you feel has gone above and beyond in serving you, this community, this church family. We typically don't nominate the official leaders of the church. This is usually more someone who quietly goes about doing all those things that keep us running, someone behind the scenes, or someone who has touched you in a special way during the past year. It can be a single person, or a couple.

Since I can't pass out forms this year, please just email me the name of the person you wish to nominate and a brief description of how this person has touched you. All information is kept confidential but the more information I receive, the better. The person (s) nominated will be declared Doctor of Friendship for 2019 and will receive a framed certificate and a plaque in the Narthex. It will be an exciting event to look forward to when we are all together again!

Email me at PilgrimageUCCDeacons@gmail.com or jyshiver@gmail.com. Let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing you all soon (when appropriate, of course!)



CLIMATE CHANGE – A Christian Concern

By Hugh Lowrey

We face two great threats, COVID-19 and climate change. The greater threat is climate change, if only because of the difference in the measures required to end each threat. COVID-19 will go away by itself. When enough people acquire immunity, hopefully through vaccination, by that or sickness, it will be gone. But our climate won't stabilize and return to what we remember as "normal", without enormous human effort and necessary changes causing wrenching upheaval to millions of people. The bigger difference, however, is that the impact of climate change, if allowed to take its course, would make the effects of COVID-19 look insignificant.

The striking thing about this is the near unanimity of our population in taking rather extreme measures against COVID-19. There's little dissent, even among politicians, although everyone's life is upended. On the other hand, climate change is controversial, politicized and, in this country, climate mitigation is stale-mated. So why fight the one, neglect the other?

Two factors help to account for opposite reactions to two calamities. First, the effects of COVID-19 are on top of us right now, whereas the full, fearsome climate impact is decades away. Also, epidemics are familiar; no need to explain them, whereas Climate change never happened before. Its effects aren't obvious to people untouched by its destruction. Its explanation is novel and complicated. Forecasts are required to convey the danger, and forecasts are suspect. Also, forecasts come from scientists, considered impractical eggheads by some and liars by those who deny evolution.

Sadly, the above remarks about climate may explain why our population was prepared to accept falsehoods, rather than the real reason for our climate situation. There's no ironclad proof, but the miscreants have admitted their guilt as their tactics changed. Over decades, Big Oil poured billions into propaganda and political influence, to prevent fossil fuel phase-out. Aided by TV broadcast content designed to maximize viewers and uninhibited by truth, they are winning.

May Celebrations

BIRTHDAYS

05/02 Ella Dorsey
05/02 Juliann Heilhecker
05/02 Nick Shiver
05/03 Pat Kask
05/04 Danny Schnitzlein
05/05 Kerry Schnitzlein
05/11 Launa Richardson
05/17 Donald Stoddert
05/26 Jeff Durkee
05/28 Paula Roberts

ANNIVERSARIES

05/07 Hugh & Mary Lowrey
05/15 Helene & John O'Neill
05/16 Kellyn & Jan Nally
05/29 Kerry & Danny Schnitzlein

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

8:30 Worship	May 3	May 10	May 17	May 24	May 31
Liturgist					
Scripture Reader					
10:00 Worship					
Welcome					
Liturgist					
Ushers					
Greeter					
Scripture Reader					
Children's Time					
Acolyte					
Little Lambs					
Nurse.y					
Counter					
Audio System					
Facebook Live					

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	TBD
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.

All Church-related Activities Suspended At this Time

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

Pastor
President
Music Director
Administrative Assistant
Accompanist

Rev. Courtney Jones
Amy Jones
Tony Bernard
Lynne Buell
Position to Be Filled

Pilgrimage UCC's Emails

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

The Month in Sundays

Church Activities Suspended Until Further Notice

- May 3 Worship 10:00 a.m. Facebook Live Stream
- May 10 Worship 10:00 a.m. Facebook Live Stream
- May 17 Worship 10:00 a.m. Facebook Live Stream
- May 24 Worship 10:00 a.m. Facebook Live Stream
- May 31 Worship 10:00 a.m. Facebook Live Stream