



Pilgrim Church



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

February 2020 NEWSLETTER



Each year, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a 40-day season (not counting Sundays, which are called Little Easters) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebration. The 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

Wednesday, February 26

Begin your reading of *The Easter Code*

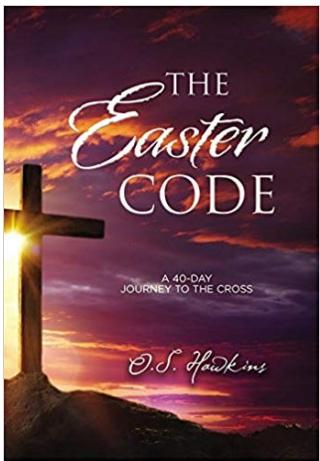
6:00 pm Gather for fellowship

Soup and Sandwiches are on the Wednesday Nite Dinner Menu

7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service

the congregation will be invited to receive the ashes on their foreheads.

The Easter Code for Lent



Ash Wednesday marks the opening of Lent in the Liturgical season. For six and one half weeks, Christians around the world will prepare themselves spiritually for the celebration of their highest Holy Day: Easter Sunday. Many Christians will make personal sacrifices, focusing through these long days on the sacrifices Jesus made as he set his face toward Jerusalem.

We encourage you to open yourself up to the ancient rituals that invite us to turn away from things that distract us from, or learn anew spiritual disciplines that focus us on, spiritual awakening. Pick up a copy of *The Easter Code A 40-Day Journey to the Cross*, and set aside time each day to review the reflection. Spend meaningful time with Jesus this Lenten Season as you read through *The Easter Code* devotions, focusing on the places, people, and events in the life of Christ all the way to His resurrection. Each reflection includes a Scripture passage, a devotion, a Code Word, and a prayer.



Michael's Missive

Where did 2019 go? For that matter where have *all* the years gone? Exactly as Einstein postulated, time is relative not static. The older we get, the faster time flies. Reality is how we perceive it. Remember as a child how the days dragged between Halloween and Christmas? No more!

Yes, at this time of year we tend to assess where we have been and where we are going and along with that to make "New Year's Resolutions."

Let's be honest with ourselves: How many of those resolutions have we actually achieved ? Not many.... Instead of resolutions, something much more profound is called for as we face another New Year: A whole change in attitude. It starts with turning up the rear-view mirror, banishing all the "should, would or could have's" and bravely facing what lies ahead, paying no heed, as Admiral Farragut said, to the torpedoes.

Your church "...was born in the mind of the Rev. Otto Tiede, at 1024 Harriet Street in Port Charlotte, FL sometime in early 1963... He went about it in this way: He paid for a small advertisement in the News-Herald inviting anyone who might be interested in discussing the possibility of a new group to meet in his home." (Historical Sketch by Rev. H.H. Goodfell, "Founding Pastor")

Well, indeed meet they did and soon after began worshipping at the Port Charlotte Yacht Club. An ailing Rev. Tiede was succeeded by Rev Horace Goodell in early 1964 and the name *Pilgrim Congregational Church* was adopted. Because of logistical difficulties, the place of worship was moved from the Yacht Club to the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Peachland. Rent there was the princely sum of \$10/wk and a Site and Building Fund was initiated.

In 1974, the Adventist church approached *Pilgrim* with an offer to sell at which time an appeal for financial assistance was made to the Florida

Conference UCC Minister, Rev Charles Burns. The Conference subsequently made a grant to Pilgrim of \$10,000 and a bank loan for \$92,000 was obtained with the backing of the UCC. In November 1974, Rev. Ray Utterback, Rose Utterback's husband, commenced his ministry. In his Annual Report letter to the congregation in January 1976, he had this to say:

"We have confidence in the future. We know, with God's help, we are going to make it.

We will have some struggles ahead, but we have the resources of patience and courage and generosity to seize our opportunities... I have one anxiety as I look ahead.

In our concern to become a viable congregation we must never forget our reason for existing. Let us constantly keep in mind our discipleship to Jesus Christ."

("A Time of Rejoicing" annual report of the pastor, Rev. Ray Sealy Utterback)

By November 1990, the church had paid-off both the grant and the mortgage. In 1992, a Building Committee was formed and an ambitious plan to build a new \$1.1 million church had been formulated. By year-end 1993, nearly half of that amount had been raised, and the UCC Homeland Ministries had committed \$425,000 in loans together with a new \$20,000 grant to Pilgrim to make it possible.

And the rest is history.

So, how do we *grow* membership? By each shouldering the *responsibility* of membership through sharing in what will need to be a joint effort to achieve a balanced budget. We need to focus on the income aspect of church finances - how to attract more attendees/members and other income by fundraisers/rentals.

Let this be our challenge: that during Lent we each invite someone - neighbor, friend, relative - to one

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of our services or church events; that we introduce them before and after the church/event and truly make them feel welcome.

Echoing those words of Pastor Utterback 33 years ago: despite what at the moment might seem to be a hill too steep to climb, instead be a challenge worth surmounting, keeping in focus the very reason for this church's existence: to be faithful disciples of our Savior, Jesus the Christ.

May we, with that attitude of faithfulness, grounded in the bedrock of Faith itself, be the beacon to illuminate our path forward in 2020.

Blessings,

Pastor Mike

From the Moderator



Some of you may know that Pastor Mike's contract with Pilgrim ended at the end of last year. He graciously continued while your General Council decided what to do next. As you remember, we fully expected to fill our vacancy with Pastor David Williams. Unfortunately, that did not happen.

So, going forward General Council has decided to use supply Pastors. You will see in front of you, Pastors you know such as Pastor Ken Ewing and Pastor Bill Klossner. We will also introduce you to new Pastors. These well-qualified individuals will help us finish the transition to new spiritual leader.

Pastor Mike deserves our thanks for helping Pilgrim get through the hard times of 2019!

Meanwhile your Search Committee has started the process of bringing in new candidates for review. They will be discussing the first three in the next week.

Don Anderson Moderator



Pilgrim Church is proud to charter and support Troop 351 and Pack 351.

Sunday, February 9, 2020, we will be recognizing Scout Sunday. The Cub and Boy Scouts will be here to lead us in worship, present the colors and prepare breakfast.

Breakfast will be served at 9:00 am. Please plan to attend to show your support for these scouts.

Wednesday Menu



Meals cost \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. All meals include salad, bread, drink and dessert. This ministry depends on ample volunteers to prep, cook, and clean up afterwards. Stop by the kitchen and find a way to get involved! Doors open at 6:00 pm.

2/5

Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Vegetable

2/12

Spaghetti with Meatballs

2/19

Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Baked Beans, Corn on the Cob, Coleslaw

2/26

Soup and Sandwiches



Psalm 66:18, John 15:5, Ephesians 5:18 — Pray for deep spiritual cleansing and fullness of the Holy Spirit in each Pastor Search Committee member. Pray this for each member by name—Debi Allen, Don Anderson, Robyn Biluk, Pastor Ken Ewing, Ken Rhoe, Jessica Warren and Susan Wright.

Day 1- Colossians 1:9 — Pray for God to fill the chairman, Don Anderson, with knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom & understanding and for strength.

Day 2 - Amos 3:3, Matthew 18:19, Ephesians 4:3 — Pray for powerful unity and oneness in spirit within the Pastor Search Committee .

Day 3 – James 1:5, Isaiah 55:8-9 — Pray for God's clear direction in how resumes are examined and interviews conducted. Ask God to bring the right person to the attention of the Pastor Search Committee .

Day 4 - 1 Corinthians 2:10-16 — Pray for the Search Pastor Search Committee to have God's wisdom in all the questions and information they share with the prospective lead pastor. Spirit-led thoroughness is essential.

Day 5 - James 1:5-6 — Pray for the Pastor Search Committee to have wisdom and discernment as to the unique characteristics and traits most needed for our church in a Lead Pastor.

Day 6 - Ephesians 5:17 — Pray for the Pastor Search Committee to have no timetable but God's. They must be determined to find God's perfect will in God's perfect time.

Day 7 - Ephesians 6:10-12 — Pray for the prevention of Satan's influence in misleading or rushing the search Pastor Search Committee (One of Satan's tactics is deception). Pray for a powerful hedge of protection around the Pastor Search Committee and their families.



Did you know the Joyful Noise Learning Center Mission Statement?

Pilgrim United Church of Christ is a community responding to God's call. Our mission is to reach out to all people and help them grow in their faith and to know God personally.

JOYFUL NOISE is a ministry of Pilgrim Church. We believe childhood is precious. In a world where children are often forced to grow up too soon we offer a community of gentleness and safety where Christian values of kindness, honestly, and respect of God and others are taught with loving care.

JOYFUL NOISE provides creative learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate and nurture children to thrive intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, socially, artistically and physically. We instill a genuine love of learning while providing a broad, challenging and stimulating education. We promote self-reliance and establish a supportive and nurturing learning environment for students of varied talents and abilities.

We maintain a strong, inclusive, family atmosphere committed to Christian values while honoring the socioeconomic, ethnic and religious diversity within our school community.

Cynthia Poudrette, Director of Joyful Noise

*Take delight in the Lord, and
He will give you the desires of your heart.*

-Psalm 37:4 (NIV)

Pilgrim Women's Fellowship

Women of the church, start the new year by joining this small group who worships, serves church needs, and fosters hospitality with one another. Generally, we meet in the Church Library on the first Monday of each month.

Our February program will feature the life of Abraham Lincoln as a Christian who changed the world. We plan to have lunch at Longhorn Steak House. All women are invited to join us Monday, February 3, at 10:00 am in the library.



A Game/Card Party luncheon has been scheduled for Thursday, February 20, at 11:00 am in the Community Center.

Altar Flowers for 2020

Save your special date now! This is a touching way to honor your friends, family and those who make a difference in your life. These flowers and recognition are also a great gift for those who "have everything they need" on occasions such as birthdays and such. Allow the flowers to grace the altar and then take the flowers to your loved one or leave for our deacons to take to a shut in.

If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please make note of it on the bulletin board in the Narthex or by calling the church office. Dates are available for next year, 2020. Mark your date now! A single arrangement will cost \$25.

Keep The Lights On

MONTHLY FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>Annual</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Pledge Offerings	\$194,211	\$225,000
Loose Offerings	\$ 23,604	\$ 40,000
<u>Missions</u>		
Pledges	\$42,793	\$ 43,879
Mission Payouts	\$41,547	\$ 48,079
<u>Mortgage Balance</u>		\$69,958
<u>2020Vision</u>		
Campaign Pledges	\$ 769,549	
Total Cash Receipts	<u>566,708</u>	
Balance of Pledges due	<u>\$ 202,841</u>	



God's Valentine To You

God so loVed the world
That he gAve His
onLy
bEgotten
SoN
thaT whosoever
belIeveth
iN Him should not perish
but have Everlasting life.

-John 3:16



Stephen Ministers are congregational members trained by Stephen Leaders to offer high-quality, one-to-one Christian care to people going through tough times.

We all experience challenges in life—times when we could benefit from the support of a caring Christian friend. Stephen Ministers are ready to provide this care to one person at a time, meeting with that person once a week for about an hour when faced with a crisis or difficulty such as:

- Loss of a loved one
- Hospitalization
- Divorce or separation
- Loneliness or discouragement
- Spiritual crisis
- A chronic/terminal illness
- Incarceration
- Aging
- Relocation
- Recovery after an accident or disaster
- and many more.

A Stephen Minister is...

- A child of God who walks beside a person who is hurting
- A congregation member with gifts for care giving who was carefully selected to serve in this role
- A lay person who has received 50 hours of training in providing emotional and spiritual care
- A caring, Christian friend who listens, cares, prays, supports and encourages
- Someone who will “be there” for his or her care receiver, meeting faithfully for as long as there’s a need

To request a Stephen Minister or to learn more about the program, please reach out to Wini Bender at 941-875-4682.



PRAY, GIVE, & SERVE.

As a strategy to encourage giving to the church's Operating Fund, this campaign will end three months early on January 31.

Please watch for a stand-alone document capturing the results of this fantastic three year accomplishment of Pilgrim Church.



This month's Prayer Focus is built on Rick Warren's Purposes of the Church

February 2 -**WORSHIP** – Open my heart to worship You with my whole being.

February 9- **DISCIPLESHIP**- Teach me to follow in Your steps daily.

February 16- **MISSIONS**- Strengthen me for service to those in need.

February 23- **FELLOWSHIP**- Help me step out and join my fellow church members in activities.

Let all that you do be done in love.

-1 Corinthians 16:14 (NRSV)



Pilgrim Church
A Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
24515 Rampart Boulevard,
Port Charlotte, FL 33980
941-629-2633
www.pilgrimonline.org
office@pilgrimonline.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 2 pm

"To Help People KNOW Christ Personally and GROW in Their Faith."
Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship,
Ministry and Evangelism

Rev. Ken Ewing, Associate Pastor
All Members, Ministers
Russ Whittaker, Administrator & Bell Choir Director
Darryl Johnson, Choir Director
Mona Johnson, Organist
Patrick & Marilyn Randall, Worship Leaders
Jessica Warne, Sunday School Director
Cat Foster, Administrative Assistant

Joyful Noise Learning Center
941-629-4821, www.joyfulnoiselc.org
Cynthia Poudrette, Director of Joyful Noise

Full Contemporary Services are available to view online at:
<https://vimeo.com/channels/pilgrimonline>

SOCIAL MEDIA
Follow our Facebook Page! Search "Pilgrim Church of Port Charlotte" and be part of our online community during the week.

GIVE YOUR GIFT ONLINE
Step by step instructions are available in the Narthex and on our website.



03 David Wheatcroft
07 Marty DeWitte
10 John Krueger
12 Jane Beaudreau
Carol Smith
13 John Kelly
15 Linda Shipp
John Sweatt
16 Robert Switzer
17 Kevin Beaver
18 Carol Veigel
21 Joan Meader
26 Barbara Ross
30 Marlene Warburton
31 Pat Malagisi



Back Pack Kidz
<http://backpackkidz.com/>

Pilgrim Church February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Every Sunday						1 10:00am Praise Team Practice
	8:00am Traditional Worship 9:15am Adult Bible Study 10:00am Children's Sunday School 10:00am Contemporary Worship					
2	3 10:00am Pilgrim Women Meeting 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting - Women 7:00pm BSA Scout Troop Meeting	4 10:00am Prayer Group 3:15pm STAIR 7:00pm BSA Cub Scout Pack Meeting	5 9:00am Al Anon 10:00am Al Anon 6:00pm Dinner 6:00pm Traditional Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Kids Bible Craft 6:30pm Adult Bible Study 7:00pm Depression & Grief Support Group	6 8:00am Staff Meeting 10:00am Overeaters Anonymouse 10:00am Beaders Group 3:15pm STAIR 6:30pm Rhode Island Club	7	8 10:00am Praise Team Practice
9	10 Scout Sunday 9:00am Scouts Serve Breakfast	11 10:00am Food Pantry 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting - Women 7:00pm Missions Meeting 7:00pm BSA Scout Troop Meeting	12 10:00am Prayer Group 3:15pm STAIR 7:00pm BSA Cub Scout Pack Meeting	13 9:00am Al Anon 10:00am Al Anon 10:30am EM Bible Study 6:00pm Traditional Choir Rehearsal 6:00pm Dinner 6:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Kids Bible Craft 7:00pm Depression & Grief Support Group	14 8:00am Staff Meeting 9:00am Stephen Ministry 10:00am Overeaters Anonymouse 10:00am Beaders Group 3:15pm STAIR	15 8:00pm Scouts Pinewood Derby and Lockin
16	17 9:15am Town Hall Meeting 11:00 am Town Hall Meeting	18 JN School Age Camp Day 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm BSA Scout Troop Meeting 7:00pm AA Meeting - Women 7:00pm Finance Meeting	19 Pediatric Dentistry at Joyful Noise 10:00am Prayer Group 3:15pm STAIR 7:00pm BSA Cub Scout Pack Meeting	20 Newsletter Articles Due 9:00am Al Anon 10:00am Al Anon 6:00pm Dinner 6:00pm Traditional Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm Kids Bible Craft 6:30pm Adult Bible Study 7:00pm Depression & Grief Support Group	21 8:00am Staff Meeting 10:00am Beaders Group 10:00am Overeaters Anonymouse 10:30am PBJ Sandwich Makers 11:00am Pilgrim Women Game Day 3:15pm STAIR	22 4:30pm Serving Homeless Coalition
23	24 9:15am Diaconate Meeting	25 4:30pm Handbell Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting - Women 7:00pm BSA Scout Troop Meeting	26 10:00am Prayer Group 3:15pm STAIR 7:00pm BSA Cub Scout Pack Meeting 7:00pm Council Meeting	27 Ash Wednesday 9:00am Al Anon 10:00am Al Anon 10:30am EM Bible Study 6:00pm Dinner 6:00pm Traditional Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service	28 8:00am Staff Meeting 9:00am Stephen Ministry 10:00am Overeaters Anonymouse 10:00am Beaders Group 3:15pm STAIR	29 10:00am Praise Team Practice 3:00pm Scouts Blue and Gold Banquet

**Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God,
and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.**

1 John 4:7