



Pilgrim Church



December 2020 NEWSLETTER

"A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'" Isaiah 40:3-5

The Christmas season is once again upon us! Even though this Christmas season isn't going to look the same as it has in the past, for many of us, it is exciting to think about the Christmas decorations, holiday music, and gifts. I'm sure many of you have already started making lists of the gifts that need to be bought if you haven't already started buying them. Christmas trees have started going up and many have started to deck the halls with boughs of holly, ornaments, greenery and bows.

Christmas is such a wonderful time of the year because not only do we get to reconnect with family and friends, but we also get to celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. It's a time when we dust off the old Christmas carols that fill us with fond memories of past Christmases and help us to retell the Christmas story. We can't wait for Christmas to get here, so we try to get there as quickly as possible. However, when we do that, we forget a particularly important season of the Christian year: Advent.

Advent is a season we know about, but don't necessarily give much thought to why it is such a

vital part of the Christian year. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word that means "coming." It is a season where we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth or his "coming" to us. This time of preparation is not limited to lighting Advent wreathes and decorating the church and our homes, even though those practices can help us to get into the spirit of the season. Embrace and partaking in Advent means preparing our hearts, minds, and souls as well.

Advent is a time when we are to prepare our hearts, minds, and soul to welcome Christ once again. It is a time when we look within ourselves, acknowledge where we have allowed Christ to be crowded out of lives, and set about the tough work of "cleaning house" or letting go of that which we allow to distract us from Christ. In other words, Advent is a time of repentance and recommitment.

This year, Advent starts on November 29th. From then until Christmas, our worship services will consist of music, scripture, and sermons to help you hear anew and engage in the Christmas Story. I encourage you to continue your Advent journey at home through Bible study, prayer, and personal worship. May this Advent season be a time of renewal and reconnection. May it be a time of preparation so that when Christmas is finally here, you may experience the celebration of Jesus' birth in a whole new way.

Blessings,
Pastor John



The staff and children at Joyful Noise are very excited about our bulletin board in the narthex of Pilgrim Church! In this time of distancing we can now safely share what we are doing with the congregation.

Each month a different class will display pictures of the children busy learning with samples of the children's work.

This month you will get a glimpse at our Ocean classroom which is taught by Ms. Samantha and Ms. Carol. The Ocean class has 19 3-year-old children who Ms. Samantha says, "arrive every day eager to learn." Please take a moment to see what is happening at your Joyful Noise Learning Center.

Cynthia Poudrette, Director of Joyful Noise



Cub Scouts

Our Cub Scouts are hand-making holiday wreaths! Each wreath is made with love and hard work from our Scouts. The money earned from their Holiday Wreath sales will be used to support future scouting adventures. The holiday wreaths will be available for purchase the first week of December and will cost \$20.

Thank you for your continued support of our elementary age Scouts, we are thankful to be part of Pilgrim's family.

Boy Scouts

Our Boy Scouts (and a few Cub Scouts!) had our annual Scouting for Food Drive. Our Scouting for Food Drive supports Pilgrim's Food Pantry. The boys spend a few hours on two Saturdays: The first Saturday is spent distributing door hangers. This year they had to compete with blustery winds! On the second Saturday, the Scouts collect the food donated and deliver it to the church. We are proud to say we collected a little over 1,000

pounds of food! Thank you to all of the volunteers that assisted us to make our Scouting for Food drive a success!



Also, we still have keychains available for purchase for only \$10. Thank you for your continued support of our Scouts. We are grateful to be part of the Pilgrim Church family.



Thank you!
 Thank you!
 Thank you!
 To the Pilgrim
 Family and to
 the Scouts and
 to the families at Joyful Noise Learning Center.
 You provided 70 Thanksgiving bags!



Because we have been so blessed this season, we are opening the Food Pantry every Monday, 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. for the remainder of this year. Volunteers and additional supplies are always welcomed.

This most recent Monday we were able to help feed over 253 neighbors.

Our Food Pantry list:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| canned soup | mac n cheese |
| saltine crackers | mashed potatoes |
| beef stew | canned potatoes |
| canned pasta | rice |
| canned tomatoes | dry beans |
| canned green beans | dry cereal |
| canned pork n beans | grits |
| canned carrots | oatmeal |
| canned corn | pancake mix |
| canned mix veggies | syrup |
| assorted canned beans | peanut butter |
| canned peas | jelly |
| canned fruit | snacks |
| ramen noodles | canned tuna |
| spaghetti sauce | toilet paper |
| dry pasta (assorted) | paper towels |



We need donations of creamy peanut butter and jam (it spreads so much easier than jelly) for the monthly Sandwich Ministry. We use 18 loaves of bread to make 200 sandwiches!

Join us for an hour on Thursday, December 17, 10:30 a.m. to assemble sandwiches.



The Mission is simple. Alleviate and prevent hunger and homelessness.

The Hot Meals Program is open 365 days per year. It serves breakfast and lunch to Shelter residents and Veterans in the Shelter, and dinner to the general public in the Homeless Coalition's dining room, as well as evening snacks to the shelter's children. Over the last year, the Hot Meals Program has served more than 75,000 hot meals and snacks.

The Homeless Coalition offers Hot Meals every evening from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. all year. On Fridays these meals are restaurant style. With ordering from menus and having a wait staff bring those eating their meals. On the 3rd and 5th Fridays of each month, Pilgrim Church volunteers serve as the wait staff. We meet at the Homeless Coalition at 4:15 p.m. Hope to see you there on December 18!

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” – Matthew 1:21



Christmas Worship

Sunday, November 29

First Sunday of Advent - Hope

Mark 13:24-37

9:00 a.m. Worship

Sunday, December 6

Second Sunday of Advent - Peace

Mark 1:1-8

9:00 a.m. Worship

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent - Joy

John 1:6-8, 19-28

9:00 a.m. Worship

Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love

Luke 1:26-38

9:00 a.m. Worship

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service

Luke 2:1-14

6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Worship

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

John 1:1-14

Wednesday, January 6

Epiphany

Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday, January 10

9:00 a.m. Epiphany Worship

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6



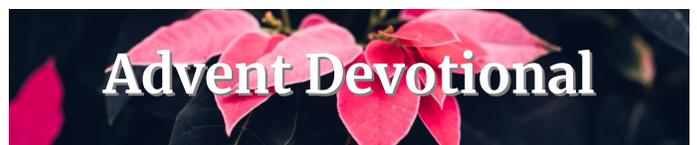
Advent United Church of Christ

Advent is from an old Latin phrase – ad venio, loosely translated “until the coming.” It is a time for reflection during which we prepare for Christ’s coming.

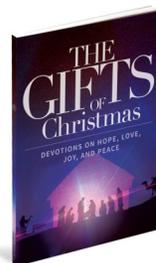
Christmas is itself the adaptation of an ancient ritual known as Saturnalia – a raucous and ribald occasion that celebrated the return of the light. It took place on the eve of the winter solstice – an evening that marked the sun’s slow walk back from the lengthening nights. The light was returning.

When early Christian communities, who knew very little about how or when the birth of Jesus actually took place, wanted to find a fitting time to commemorate his birth, they appropriated this pagan ritual and decided the return of the light was the perfect metaphor for celebrating the coming of Jesus: Saturnalia became Christmas.

As disciples called to extend the reach of God’s love most fully expressed through Jesus – Advent became the occasion to assess whether or not such love was evident.



Advent Devotional



This 30-day journey includes daily devotions for the four weeks leading up to Christmas based around the Advent themes of hope, love, joy and peace. These readings will add to the richness of the season and we encourage readers to set aside time to experience these gifts in the most meaningful way. Pick your copy up today!



Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Pilgrim Church's Salvation Army Bell Ringing will be on Wednesday, December 9 from 11:00 am until 5:00 pm at the Publix on Peachland BLVD. You may sign up on the schedule in the Narthex or by calling the Church Office. There are one hour time slots. For more information reach out to Tony Caniglia 401-374-8695.



Christmas Poinsettias

Christmas Poinsettias are available this year for \$9.00. You may indicate a purchase in memory of, honor of or to the Glory of God.

Poinsettias may be picked up after the Christmas Eve service.

Return this form with payment to the Church Office or place it in the offering box before December 10.

Name _____

No. of poinsettias : ____

Dedicated to _____

- Dedicated Red
- in Memory of White
- In Honor of Pink
- To the Glory of God

- Deliver to Shut-In
- Will pick up

Dedicated to _____

- Dedicated Red
- in Memory of White
- In Honor of Pink
- To the Glory of God

- Deliver to Shut-In
- Will pick up



Advent Bible Study

Wednesdays, starting December 2

Please contact the church office if you are interested in participating or for more details 941-629-2633 or office@pilgrimonline.org

Pastor John is considering: online, noon and/or 6:30 p.m.



Share the Reason

We have Pilgrim United Church of Christ "Keep Christ in Christmas" magnets available in the Church Office for \$5 each.



These are strong enough to be used on your vehicle or any where else you wish to share the message.

Pilgrim Prayer List

Bill Wolf
 Gloria Kurbanali
 Louise Timchak
 Dennis Tagge
 Joe Beaudreau
 Carol Glanton
 John Hames
 Martinez Children &
 Family
 Jim Smith
 Sidoney Johnston
 "Bullet" McClean

Karen Ahlgrim
 Huff Family
 Jim Wright
 Howard Meader
 Zander Jones
 Gene Rice
 Louise Wright
 Leanne Minnick
 Ken Ewing
 Marty DeWitte
 Robert Garofola

Prayer Shawls

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is stocked. Different sizes and lots of colors available. If you could use a shawl for yourself or neighbor, please call the Pilgrim Church office or call Gayle Bratton at 941-764-3454.

Pilgrim Face Masks



Masks with the Pilgrim log will be available for sale in the church office. Cost is \$6. Masks are made of a 3-layer blend of Knit fabric, anti-dust, and machine washable.

A Thousand Words





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. John Barnette, Senior Pastor
 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, Office Administrator
 Gene Burnell, Maintenance Technician

Joyful Noise Learning Center

941-629-4821, www.joyfulnoisec.org

Cynthia Poudrette, Director of Joyful Noise

SOCIAL MEDIA

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

View our worship services at

- our Facebook page, “PilgrimUCC”
- Our Vimeo Page:
<https://vimeo.com/channels/pilgrimonline>
- Our website: www.pilgrimonline.org



December Birthdays

4

Betsy Field

5

Cathy Barnette, Sandy Wheatcroft

6

Rande Kelly

9

Bradley Dean

10

Brooke Fisher

11

Omelda Hibbert

12

Elaine Pregowski

14

Steve Schrock

17

Avery Huff

19

Fred Santiago

22

Ruth Brown, Julie Griffin

23

Carol Fischle

25

Jan Moore

27

Linda Dawn Bredfeldt

29

John Hames

Did we miss a birthday?
 Please call or email the office,
 and we will update our records.

December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 10:00am Prayer Group 7:00pm Cub Scouts	2	3	4	5 9:00am Praise Band Practice
6 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship 10:00am Wilson Small Group	7 10:00am Food Pantry 7:00pm Boy Scouts	8 10:00am Prayer Group 7:00pm Cub Scouts	9	10	11	12 9:00am Praise Band Practice
13 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship 10:00am Wilson Small Group	14 7:00pm Missions Meeting 7:00pm Boy Scouts	15 10:00am Prayer Group 7:00pm Cub Scouts	16 Newsletter Articles Due	17 10:30am PBJ Sandwich Makers	18 4:15pm Serving at Homeless Coalition	19 9:00am Praise Band Practice
20 4th Sunday of Advent 9:00am Worship 10:00am Wilson Small Group	21 JN Closed 10:00am Food Pantry 6:30pm Finance Meeting	22 JN Closed 10:00am Prayer Group 7:00pm Council Meeting	23 JN Closed	24 Christmas Eve JN Closed Office Closed	25 Christmas Day JN Closed	26 9:00am Praise Band Practice
27 9:00am Worship 10:00am Wilson Small Group	28 10:00am Food Pantry	29 10:00am Prayer Group	30	31 JN Close at Noon New Year's Eve Office Closed		