

# From the Desk of Pastor John

December  
2022

December is once again upon us. While our attention has been focused on cleaning up and restoring our homes and church, the last two months have flown by. It's hard to believe that we've had our fill of turkey and stuffing at Thanksgiving and have already done our Black Friday shopping. (Well, for those of us crazy enough to venture out into the Black Friday madness!) Now we have shifted our focus to the next major holiday: Christmas.

This year, Christmas is going to look a little bit different here at Pilgrim. Though we are thankful for all the hard work that is going into getting our Sanctuary and Community Center reopened, we will not be back in the Sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons. Of course, this means we must adapt and change how we prepare and celebrate the birth of Christ this year. Therefore, our Advent wreath and the "lighting" of the candles will be different. The decorations will be sparse, with a smaller tree and fewer lights. And our Christmas Eve service will most likely be outside. (Don't worry; I have plans to make it calm and bright!)

"(Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.'" Luke 2:8-11

These changes are out of our hands. Our situation is what it is.

However, how we choose to approach these changes is solely up to us. It is up to us to bring the Christmas spirit into our times of fellowship and worship, despite the absence of decorations and normalcy. It is our responsibility to bring the Christ-child with us as we gather to reflect upon and celebrate His birth, and give thanks to God for this wonderful, precious gift.

It is okay to be bummed that we will not be able to enjoy our Sanctuary all beautifully decorated for the holiday. I know that, for many, Christmas decorations enrich the holiday. I'm one of those people! But instead of focusing on their absence this year, let us refuse to let our current situation steal the sense of hope, joy, peace, and love that comes with Christmas.

For unto us a child is born! He is Emmanuel, "God with Us"!

Blessings to you and yours this holiday season,  
Pastor John

 **Pilgrim Church**  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

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Office Hours:  
Mon - Thurs, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

Joyful Noise  
Learning Center  
941-629-4821,  
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*Senior Pastor:*  
Rev. John Barnette

*Associate Pastor:*  
Rev. Ken Ewing

*Maintenance Technician:*  
Gene Burnell

*Office Administrator:*  
Cat Foster

*Organist:*  
Cheryl Huber

*Pianist:*  
Maverick Li

*Director of Joyful Noise:*  
Cynthia Poudrette

*Sunday School Director:*  
Jessica Warne

*Bell Choir Director:*  
Russ Whittaker

*Music Director*  
Katy Yoder

*No matter who you are,  
or where you are  
on life's journey,  
you are welcome here!*



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. In order to prepare herself for the coming of the Christ-child, the Early Church asked Christ’s followers to use the four weeks prior to that time to examine not so much their inner being – *that would come in Lent* – but the outer world. 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.

**Wednesday, November 30**

12:00 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study

**Sunday, December 4**

9:00 a.m. 2nd Sunday of Advent Worship

**Wednesday, December 7**

9:30 a.m. Pilgrim Women’s Christmas Shopping and Luncheon  
12:00 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study

**Sunday, December 11**

9:00 a.m. 3rd Sunday of Advent Worship

**Wednesday, December 14**

12:00 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study

**Sunday, December 18**

9:00 a.m. 4th Sunday of Advent Worship

**Wednesday, December 21**

12:00 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Not a Silent Night Bible Study

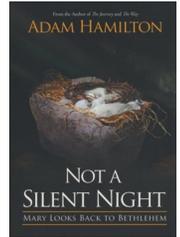
**Saturday, December 24**

6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship

**Sunday, December 25**

10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Hymn Sing with the residents at Sandhill Gardens

Starting, November 30, at noon and again available at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room, Pastor John will lead an Advent Bible Study reviewing Adam Hamilton’s “Not a Silent Night: Mary Looks Back to Bethlehem” on Wednesdays in the season of Advent. Copies of the book are available in the church office, a donation of \$10 is appreciated to cover the cost.



The monthly meeting on the series on Grace will resume in January.

Monday, **December 5**, at 6:00 p.m. will be the Book Club we had to miss last month. The featured book is *When Crickets Cry* by Charles Martin. The meeting will be at the home of Judi Wilson and will be catered. Please RSVP your attendance.

Pilgrim Women’s Christmas Shopping and Luncheon  
**ALL WOMEN ARE INVITED!**

Der Dutchman Buffet Restaurant in Sarasota

**December 7** at 11:30

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED

Pre-pay \$20 to Pilgrim Church. Mark your payment “Pilgrim Women”. Come prepared to participate in the gift exchange with a wrapped \$10 gift. Contact the Church Office or Judi Wilson to make your reservation for this holiday fellowship! The time schedule is:

- 9:30 a.m. carpools leave church
- 10:30 a.m. shopping in bakery and gift shop
- 11:30 a.m. buffet luncheon served
- 2:00 p.m. estimated return time



The Sunday morning Bible Study class will continue to read and discussion the prophecies of Ezekiel. The class will not meet on Christmas Day or New Year’s Day. Newcomers are welcome to join the discussion at anytime as we read chapter by chapter and verse by verse seeking God’s messages to us.



# Council Highlights

Restoration is in full swing at the Church and the Community Center. There are numerous projects happening in different areas within both buildings. At this time, only authorized work personnel are allowed in the construction areas due to safety concerns. *Even if you hold a key, please do not enter any of these buildings without authorization for any reason.* (Thank you.)

We have continued to meet outside for Sunday Worship. The weather has been wonderful so far and we have actually enjoyed worshipping with nature. However, we are looking into other places that would allow our congregation to meet for worship, just in case of some bad weather. If you know of any large spaces that would accommodate our worship service, please let the Church Office know. (Thank you.)

Thank you to all those that have gone above and beyond to help keep Pilgrim moving forward. Our work staff and volunteers continue to come and help where needed - THANK YOU!

And on behalf of Council, we would also like to thank all those who have given financially above and beyond. Thanks to your generosity, our operating budget is healthy during this time. As we move forward and look to the new year, with continued financial support, I am confident Pilgrim will remain strong and able to continue to serve and glorify our Lord, Christ Jesus.

We will have a new system for getting weekly offering envelopes to you. Instead of receiving a box for the year, they will now be sent straight to your door quarterly. Our seasonal members will have the envelopes sent to their alternative address during their time away from us. This will save so much waste, while simultaneously saving time getting these envelopes into your hands.

Please know, your voice matters to Council and myself. I encourage any of you, if there is an issue or grievance to please reach out to a member of Council (or myself). I am always happy to answer any questions, or get an answer to you. If it needs more research, we will add it to our agenda for the next Council meeting for further discussion. These open meetings are a great way to be part of the ministries of Pilgrim Church.

What a year 2022 has been! My first year as Moderator has been exciting, not a dull moment since the start of my term. As I review the hurdles Pilgrim faced this year, I am also reminded of the blessings they brought our way. I know things are not the most ideal, but we are embracing these struggles with grace. I look forward to a new year. God bless all of you and your families. Have a very, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Jessica Emard-Warne, Moderator



We are grateful for the multiple grants we have received to repair the playgrounds. We look forward to having the children spending time in the fresh air once again. Our classes are celebrating Thanksgiving by bringing in food to share for a "Friendsgiving".

The classes are getting ready to learn the true meaning of Christmas and welcoming Baby Jesus into our world. We can't wait to decorate the hallways with their angels, mangers, and other symbols of our Lord.

Cynthia Poudrette  
Director



# A Taste of Pilgrim

Pilgrim Cookbooks are available! For 150+ recipes, a \$15 donation is requested. You can pick up your first edition copy in the Church Office during office hours or after Worship on Sundays.



# Scouting

Update on Scouts, Troop351 and Pack 351. We are meeting at our temporary location but look forward to returning to Pilgrim Church.

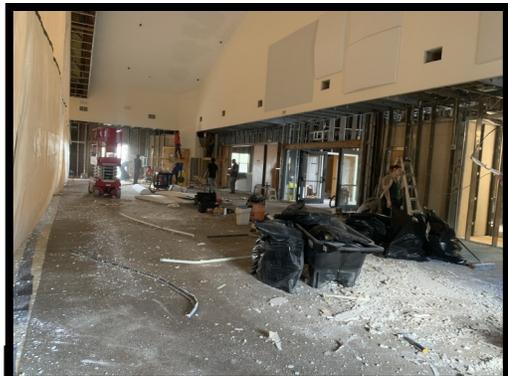
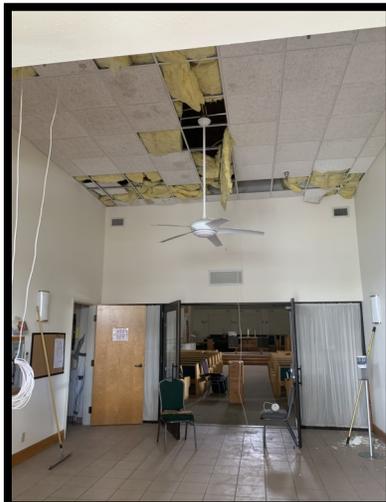
The Scouting for Food event was a success! This year the food supported the Salvation Army Food Pantry.



Boys are preparing to do Broke Back Dog Camping at Camp Miles in Punta Gorda. We have two scouts working on their Eagle Projects.



# Hurricane Ian + Recovery Progress



PilgrimSTRONG



# Pilgrim Prayer List

- Gloria Kurbanali - homebound
- Gene Rice - stroke
- Joe Beaudreau - health
- Jim Smith - health
- John Hames - PC Rehab
- Lorraine O'Keefe - cancer
- Sidoney Johnston - homebound
- Bill Wolf - homebound
- Kathy Wagner - health
- Recovery after Hurricane Ian
- Savina Krueger - cancer
- John Krueger - Parkinson's
- Elaine Pregowski - health
- Rick McLemore - cancer
- Fred Ripley - health
- Carroll Eastman - health
- Genny Sweetland
- Pat Wheatcroft - cancer
- Those who love to sing, to be able to sing and to sing beautifully
- World Peace, great hope for generations to come
- Pastor Paul Patton - health
- Those grieving and struggling in this full Christmas Season
- Ria Voigt - health
- Jim Byrne - health



# December Bible Readings

Read though the Bible in a Year

- 12/1 Romans 11:25-15:33
- 12/2 Romans 16; 1Cor 1:1-4:13
- 12/3 1 Corinthians 4:14-7:40
- 12/4 1 Corinthians 8:1-12:11
- 12/5 1 Corinthians 12:12-15:28
- 12/6 1 Corinthians 15:29-end; 2 Corinthians 1-2
- 12/7 2 Corinthians 3-7
- 12/8 2 Corinthians 8-12
- 12/9 2 Corinthians 13; Galatians 1:1-4:11
- 12/10 Galatians 4:12-6:18; Ephesians 1:1-14
- 12/11 Ephesians 1:15-5:14
- 12/12 Ephesians 5:15-6:24; Philemon 1-2
- 12/13 Philemon 3-4; Colossians 1
- 12/14 Colossians 2-4; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-2:12
- 12/15 1 Thessalonians 2:13-end; 2 Thessalonians
- 12/16 1 Timothy 1-5
- 12/17 1 Timothy 6; 2 Timothy 1-4
- 12/18 Titus; Philemon; Heb 1-2:10
- 12/19 Hebrews 2:11-6:20
- 12/20 Hebrews 7-10
- 12/21 Hebrews 11-13
- 12/22 James 1:1-4:10
- 12/23 James 4:11-end; 1 Peter 1-3:12
- 12/24 1 Peter 3:13-end; 2 Peter 1-2
- 12/25 2 Peter 3; 1 John 1:1-3:12
- 12/26 1 John 3:13-5:21; 2 John , 3 John ; Jude 1:1-16
- 12/27 Jude 1:17-end; Revelation 1-4
- 12/28 Revelation 5:1-9:11
- 12/29 Revelation 9:12-14:8
- 12/30 Revelation 14:9-18:24
- 12/31 Revelation 19-22



# December Birthdays

- 4 Betsy Field
- 5 Cathy Barnette, Sandy Wheatcroft
- 6 Rande Kelly
- 12 Elaine Pregowski
- 14 Steve Schrock
- 19 Fred Santiago
- 22 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, so we may update the records.



# PilgrimSTRONG

Our PilgrimSTRONG T-shirts have arrived! We are asking for a \$15 donation per shirt. The shirts are available in the church office and after worship. Thank you for supporting this fundraiser!



Church office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:30 am until 2:30 pm.



**December 2022**

**Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday**

|  |   |                              |  |                                  |    |                                       |
|--|---|------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------|
|  |   |                              |  | 1                                | 2  | 3                                     |
| 4<br>2nd Sunday of Advent<br>9:00am Worship<br>10:15am Adult Bible Study                         | 5<br>4:00pm Handbell Rehearsal<br>6:00pm Pilgrim Women Book Club<br>7:00pm AA - Women | 6                            | 7<br>9:30am Pilgrim Women Christmas Shopping and Luncheon<br>12:00pm Advent Bible Study<br>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal<br>6:30pm Advent Bible Study | 8                                | 9  | 10                                    |
| 11<br>3rd Sunday of Advent<br>9:00am Worship<br>10:15am Adult Bible Study                        | 12<br>4:00pm Handbell Rehearsal<br>7:00pm Missions Meeting<br>7:00pm AA - Women       | 13                           | 14<br>12:00pm Advent Bible Study<br>6:30pm Advent Bible Study<br>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal  | 15<br>9:15am PBJ Sandwich Makers | 16 | 17                                    |
| 18<br>4th Sunday of Advent<br>9:00am Worship with Christmas Cantata<br>10:15am Adult Bible Study | 19<br>6:30pm Finance Meeting<br>7:00pm AA - Women                                     | 20                           | 21<br>Newsletter Article Deadline<br>12:00pm Advent Bible Study<br>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal<br>6:30pm Advent Bible Study                         | 22                               | 23 | 24<br>Christmas Eve<br>6:30pm Worship |
| 25<br>Christmas Day<br>10:30am Hymn Sing with the residents at Sandhill Gardens                  | 26<br>Office Closed<br>7:00pm AA - Women  | 27<br>7:00pm Council Meeting | 28<br>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal   | 29                               | 30 | 31                                    |