



THE PILGRIM QUILL

MARCH 2026

Journeying With Jeannie
Journeying With Jeannie

Dear Members and Friends,

The other day I was reading from the book of Luke and the following passage spoke to me:

“...she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, and as she stood behind him at his feet, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.”

Luke 7:38

This passage reminded me of an article I once read on the internet telling the story of a teacher who was teaching about the 7 wonders of the ancient world. It seems that after the lesson, the teacher wanted to stretch the lesson, so she asked the students to write down what they would consider to be the 7 wonders of the world. The notes that were turned in included items like the Great Pyramids of Egypt, or the Taj Mahal or the Grand Canyon. As the teacher was looking at her students notes she noticed that one child had not turned in her assignment.

She asked her student “Mary, are you having trouble with your list?” Mary quietly replied, “Yes, I can’t decide, there are so many.” Realizing that the girl had written something on the paper, the teacher persisted, “Well, just tell me what you have so far.” Mary hesitated and then said, “I think the seven wonders of the world are to touch, to taste, to see, to hear, to run, to laugh and to love.” The teacher was speechless. Mary, in her innocence, had captured the true wonders of life – the wondrous gifts from God.

Mary’s list is composed of common, everyday things that we take for granted. By labeling them wonders of the world we can gain greater appreciation for how extravagantly God has blessed us.

And yet, as we journey through Lent this year, those simple wonders feel more fragile.

We live in a time when the world seems loud with division and fear. We scroll through headlines that leave us weary. We see communities fractured, wars continuing, neighbors struggling, and hearts burdened with anxiety about the future. It does not take much effort to notice what is broken.

Lent invites us not to ignore that brokenness — but to face it honestly.

In Luke’s story, the woman with the alabaster jar does something extraordinary, not because it is grand, but because it is deeply human. She touches. She weeps. She wipes. She kisses. She pours out what she has. In a world that judged her, dismissed her, and likely kept its distance, she draws near with love.

She embodies Mary’s list. She touches. She sees. She weeps. She loves. And Jesus receives her.

That moment reminds us that the wonders of the world are not monuments of stone, but moments of mercy. Not architectural achievements, but human acts of compassion.

As we wander through Lent — through wilderness, reflection, and repentance — perhaps the question before us is this: How will we respond to the wonders we have been given?

Will we truly see one another, beyond labels and opinions?
Will we listen deeply instead of reacting quickly?
Will we allow ourselves to feel — even when it would be easier to grow numb?
Will we use our hands to serve?
Will we laugh when joy appears?
Will we love — especially when it costs us something?

Lent is not only about what we give up. It is also about what we take up. We take up attentiveness. We take up compassion. We take up courage. We take up love.

In a world that often feels hardened, choosing to notice the simple wonders — the ability to touch, taste, see, hear, run, laugh, and love — becomes an act of quiet resistance. Gratitude softens us. Compassion connects us. Love restores us.

The woman with the alabaster jar did not change the political landscape of her time. She did not solve every injustice. But in that room, she created a space where love was undeniable.

Perhaps that is our call as well. To create small spaces of mercy. To notice the gifts right in front of us. To pour out kindness generously. To remember that even in troubled times, God's wonders are still present — in our senses, in our relationships, in our shared life together.

As we continue our Lenten journey toward the cross and, eventually, the empty tomb, may we not rush past these everyday miracles. May we cherish them. May we protect them. May we practice them.

For in the end, these may be the true wonders of the world.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Jeannie

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

To join the zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87682457999?pwd=NkICTOZEYWtTRnlwcEtrNDhCMGRhQT09>

ADULT FORUM

Sunday Mornings 10:15AM to 11:15AM in the lounge following the 9:00AM worship.



MARCH 1 – COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

March 8

Spiritual Defiance: Building a Beloved Community of Resistance by Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers

Leader: Peg Bradley

Part 2—Resisting the Christian Status Quo

Rev. Franz Rigert, Wisconsin Conference Minister, will join us on March 8 to share his thoughts and insights on this subject. UCC Pastor Robin Meyers in his 2015 book, *Spiritual Defiance*, challenges Christian communities to become the voice of peace and justice in the world. According to Wikipedia, in his writing and preaching Meyers emphasizes the humanness of Jesus and the literary (rather than literal) nature of the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, stating that: “I seek to build, not a collection of believers, but a beloved community devoted to embodying peace and justice”. Meyers contends that Christianity “was once, and must be again, about following Jesus, not about worshipping Christ.” He calls on modern Christianity to return to the core beliefs and practices of the early Church by focusing on faithful practice and social justice rather than right belief. Meyers describes his approach to Christianity as “non-literal, non-dogmatic, and. profoundly subversive.” What would that kind of church look like in Fond du Lac and beyond? Join us as we explore Pastor Meyer’s ideas for the church of today and tomorrow.

March 15

First Ladies: Abigail Adams-Eleanor Roosevelt

Leader: Mary Ann

Every First Lady in American history has brought a unique story to this position at the White House. Each has had a certain influence on their President husband. We will take a look at two women whose voices and actions were “out of the box” for their time in history. Join us to perhaps be surprised a little proud and to celebrate Women’s History Month.

March 22 and March 29

Great Figures of the N.T. Judas-Pontius Pilate by Vanderbilt Professor, Amy-Jill Levine

Leader: Linda Stutz

As we journey through Lent, let’s investigate the role both Judas and Pontius Pilate play in the life and death of Jesus. Using videos by Scripture scholar Amy Jo Levine, Linda will lead us in a discussion of these important characters in the Jesus story.



EXPANDING HORIZONS

Monday Afternoons 1:00PM-2:30PM in the lounge.

March 2

Francis Perkins and The New Deal

Leader: Dr. Paisley Harris

Retired Assoc. Professor UW-Oshkosh Dr. Harris returns to Pilgrim for Women’s History Month to discuss the impact of the first woman in the Cabinet and her influence on F.D.R. - The New Deal.

March 9

A Revolution of the Heart-The Dorothy Day Story: A Documentary by Martin Doblmeier

Leader: Linda Stutz

Continuing our celebration Women’s History Month, we will take a look at a woman who was once called communist and anarchist. This P.B.S. documentary explores the fascinating and courageous Dorothy Day who is on her way to sainthood.

March 16 and 23

Beyond the Passion Part 1 & 2 by Stephen J. Patterson

Leader: Neal Sieglaff

Neal will offer two session this Lent using Stephen Patterson book to enlighten us and engage us in discussion. We will consider different perspectives on the meaning on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

March 30

How We Learn to Be Brave by Mariann Edgar Budde

Leader: Mary Ann Otto

Episcopalian Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde has served as the Bishop of Washington D.C. since 2011. Using video and the themes from her book, we will discuss ways that we can learn to respond to world with grace and clarity.



Christian Outreach
How You Can Help During March!

Pilgrim is participating in the community wide “Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive” during March. This drive helps ease the financial strain on homeless and crisis programs in the Fond u Lac community. Beacon House and Blandine House are just two of many nonprofits that will benefit from the drive. Please put the items on the shelves in the entryway or in the box provided. Thank You!

Most Needed Items

Bathroom Tissue	Diapers/Baby Care	Paper Towels
Cleaning Supplies	Face/Bath Soap	Razors
Dental Care	Feminine Care	Hair Care
Deodorant	Laundry Detergent	Trash Bags

The staff of Rosenow School were very grateful for the items given by Pilgrim to help keep the children fed, warm and dry this winter. The following items were donated to Rosenow by Pilgrim Church: 20 packages of miscellaneous snack items, 19 pairs of gloves and mittens, 5 pairs of boots, 9 coats, 21 pairs of sweatpants and tops, 30 hats and scarves.

February 19th the ministry, with your help, provided a meal for the Warming Shelter. Many thanks to those who provided extra stroganoff for Loaves and Fishes, so we could use it for the Warming Shelter meal. The two committees working together fed many hungry people during this cold winter month!

Many Thanks for Your Generosity!



Do you know about Focus on Energy's free energy-saving packs?

Any time is the perfect time to reset your routine and make some improvements around your home. Small changes add up when they help you use less energy every day. That's why we want to be sure everyone knows about the Focus on Energy free energy-saving packs you can claim through the Focus on Energy Marketplace.

Each pack is filled with practical items to make your home more efficient.

Depending on the pack you choose, you may receive:

- Long-lasting LED bulbs.
- A water-saving showerhead.
- Weatherstripping for drafty spots.
- Pipe insulation and other easy upgrades.
-

These simple products help lower energy use without changing how you live – and since they come at no cost, it's an easy way to begin the new year with a little extra savings.

Go to the website, choose your pack and have it delivered to your door for free.

To select your pack at [focusonenergy.com](https://www.focusonenergy.com)

Support for the Pill Bottle Reuse Project.

Each month, your donated pill bottles fill a box that is shipped to the agency that repurposes them for medical use. Each shipment costs about \$25, and the Green Team is asking for help covering this expense.

If you'd like to contribute:

- Place your gift in the provided envelopes
- Drop it in the offering plate or leave it in the church office
- To have your donation included on your contribution statement, please add your name to the envelope

Thank you for caring for creation by recycling pill bottles—and for any financial support you can provide.

Reducing Our Digital Handprint

It is easy to forget that every web search completed, every single email, and every social media update posted requires the consumption of energy. The hidden costs of carbon emissions from infrastructure and processes involved in data transmission and storage accounts for 6 to 10% of global electricity or 4% of greenhouse gas emissions. This is equivalent to all the air traffic in the world.

Did you know that just two of the AI data center projects approved in our state will use more energy than all the homes in Wisconsin combined. A single AI data center could also use more water than an entire city when offsite withdrawals are factored in. Right now in Wisconsin, we have 40 data centers. What are a few things each of us can do to reduce the need to build more data centers, save energy and water?

1. Clean up digital clutter: deleting old emails and files reduces the demand on storage, mute inactive channels, avoid sending unnecessary replies, and clear out junk mail.
2. Whenever possible, type in the actual web address instead of performing a search and be specific with your keywords in order to cut down on the number of results that are returned.
3. Streaming is one of the internet's biggest carbon contributors.

For example, one hour of video conferencing produces anywhere from 150 to 1000 grams of CO2 per hour. An average mid-size car burns about 400-500 grams of CO2 per mile of driving. Turning cameras off reduces the energy consumption of the call by up to 96% if all cameras are off - similar to a phone call.

4. Log off when you can, go outside, read a physical book. Digital downtime is good for your mental health, too.



SAVE THE DATES!
SPRING RUMMAGE SALE
March 19TH, 20TH & 21st

Pilgrim's Spring Rummage sale is right around the corner. Now's the time to do that early spring cleaning.

If you have clothing to donate it should be clean, without holes or stains. Other miscellaneous items should be clean and in working order.

Your donations can be dropped off at the church starting February 22nd through March 15th, weekdays between 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM. LAST DAY FOR DROP OFF IS MARCH 15.



Intergenerational Fellowship Nights

Our next event will be a crafting night and will take place on Friday, March 20th. This month we will be decorating our own spring planters before planting flowers or herbs to take home and enjoy. No crafting experience is needed, and all supplies will be provided. Please sign up in the narthex so we can purchase an accurate amount of supplies. We hope you'll join us for this special night of creativity and community! As always, friends and family are always invited to our Intergenerational Fellowship Nights!

Youth Group

All 6th–12th graders are invited to Youth Group on Friday, March 20th, from 4:30–5:45 p.m. Come for food and fun! Please let Michael know if you plan to attend. Remember, friends are always welcome!

Confirmation Class

The confirmation students are taking a field trip to Trinity UCC in Chicago on Sunday, March 22nd, and we invite the congregation to join us! Trinity is a large and vibrant UCC congregation, and experiencing worship there will give our students (and all of us) a meaningful opportunity to see the wider church in action, connect with another faith community, and grow together in our understanding of what it means to be part of the United Church of Christ. Sign up is in the Narthex, Michael will email out details to attendees.

A Sweet Beginning to Our Lenten Journey

As we prepare to enter the season of Lent, you are invited to begin the journey together through story, reflection, and community.

On **Wednesday, February 25**, we will gather at **5:00 p.m.** to watch the film **Chocolat**, which serves as the foundation for our upcoming Wednesday Lenten series. You are invited to bring your own dinner and join us as we watch the film together. This shared experience will help shape our conversations during the four Wednesdays in March.

During March, we will continue to meet on Wednesdays at **5:00 p.m.** for those who would like to share a meal together. (please bring your own dinner) Our Lenten sessions will begin at **5:30 p.m.** and conclude at **7:00 p.m.** As we meet together each gathering will offer space to explore how God meets us in longing, restraint, generosity, and grace as we move toward Easter.

The film *Chocolat* is set in a small French village. The story follows Vianne Rocher, who arrives with her young daughter at the beginning of Lent and opens a small chocolate shop. Through simple acts of hospitality and courage, her presence begins to influence the lives of those around her. The film raises meaningful questions about tradition and change, fear and openness, discipline and delight—questions that resonate deeply with the Lenten journey.

You are welcome to attend the film night, the Lenten series, or both. Watching the film is not required, but it will enrich our shared experience in the weeks that follow. Come as you are, bring a friend, and join us as we begin Lent together.

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**The Palm Sunday Path**

The Wisconsin Council of Churches has shared information about a growing national movement known as *The Palm Sunday Path*. This movement brings together church leaders and faith communities who believe that this moment calls Christians to respond—faithfully and publicly—to the rise of authoritarianism and white Christian nationalism.

Palm Sunday itself offers a powerful contrast. Jesus enters Jerusalem not with force, spectacle, or domination, but with humility, compassion, and mercy. His way exposes the limits of power rooted in fear. Matthew tells us that when Jesus entered the city, *the whole city was shaken*—not by military might, but by the disruptive power of truth and love.

The Palm Sunday Path is grounded in the Matthew 25 call to feed the hungry, heal the sick, and welcome the stranger. On Palm Sunday afternoon, tens of thousands of Christians across multiple states are invited to embody these values through visible, faithful action—bearing witness to a different way of power, rooted in Christ’s love and justice. If anyone from Pilgrim would like to join in a Palm Sunday Path event, our sister congregation to the north First Congregational in Appleton, is hosting the following:

Thursday March 5th 6:00pm-8:00pm: Multi-church Immigration training. Learn about the current state of the immigration system and prepare ourselves for government enforcement here in the Fox Valley. Location TBD. Sunday March 29th 1:00pm- 3:00pm: Multi Church & Interfaith Rally in Houdini Plaza. If you would like more information about The Palm Sunday Path, including how to learn more or get involved, please visit their website at [www.wichurches.org/palmsundaypath](http://www.wichurches.org/palmsundaypath).

**Property and Maintenance Survey**

The Property and Maintenance Ministry is asking for your input! The ministry would like to know all the building and grounds items you think need improvement. In the future, we will present a combined list of items for you to consider and prioritize. Please list your items below. Please include your name in case we have questions. Please place your survey in the pail located in the Narthex by March 16<sup>th</sup>. THANK YOU.

Name:

Items:



(Detach and turn in)

**EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM**

On Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026 our Sanctuary will be enhanced by a variety of spring flowers. You are invited to purchase a plant or plants by completing the order form below. Please return this form to the church office by mail or by dropping it in the Sunday offering plate. Please enclose your check or cash with the order form; checks should be made out to Pilgrim Church with notation of "Easter Flowers" in the memo section. Please note the deadline for placing an order is Sunday, March 22, 2026. Your flowers may be taken home on Easter Sunday after the 9:00AM worship service.

Please order: \_\_\_\_\_ (qty.) Spring Flowers at \$10.00 each

Complete information below as you would like it to appear in the Easter bulletin: (please print)

Flowers are Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_

**Last Day to Order ~ Sunday, March 22, 2026**

Please hand order in by Sunday, March 22, 2026





## Caring for someone with Anxiety- Conversation Starters

Anxiety — an overwhelming feeling of fear, dread, and worry — can make it hard for people to do everyday activities. Letting a friend or loved one with anxiety know that you support them can really help. Use these tips to start a conversation.

### Show you care.

You can say:

- “How are you feeling? I’m here to listen and support you.”
- “I’m worried that you’ve been feeling anxious lately. Let me know if you want to talk.”
- “I care about you and want you to feel better. Do you want to grab lunch and talk about it?”

### Remind them things can get better.

You can say:

- “Lots of people deal with anxiety — it’s nothing to be ashamed of. And it can get better with treatment.”
- “There are therapies and medicines for anxiety. Getting treatment is the best thing you can do.”
- “I know asking for help can be hard, but getting treatment can help you get back to your normal activities.”

### Offer to help.

You can say:

- “I want you to get better. Can I help you make an appointment with your doctor?”
- “How can I best support you?”
- “You can call or text me anytime if you need support — or if you just want to talk.”
- “Moving your body can help you manage your stress and feel better. Do you want to meet for a walk on Saturday?”
- “You might feel better if you talk to people who are going through the same things as you. Can I help you find a support group?”

### Ask life-saving questions.

Many people who have anxiety also have depression. Check in on your friend or loved one with anxiety. For example, you might ask: “Do you feel safe?” or “Have you felt hopeless or thought about hurting yourself recently? I’m here for you. Let’s call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.”



## SCRIP UPDATE

For those of you that may not be aware, the SCRIP program at Pilgrim is an ongoing weekly program that allows you to purchase gift cards at their original value while at the same time earning a percentage from each gift card purchased to help our church's operating budget. This past year the scrip program was able to give \$7000 to our church's budget. For each gift card purchased a percentage is earned. We all go to the grocery store, out to eat or put gas in our vehicles, so everyone can use SCRIP cards in one way or another. Following is a large list of people, both members and friends of the church, who throughout the year 2025 have supported this awesome program and I thank all of them. If you have never used SCRIP, stop by the SCRIP table in the narthex and talk with me and I'd be happy to explain it to you. Again, THANK YOU SO MUCH to the following for your support of this program....

|                        |                        |                         |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Tracy Abler            | Connie Anderson        | Doug and Joanne Baltz   |
| Benedict & Joy Behrens | Jim and Dianne Bentley | Kevin and Mary Berens   |
| Peg Bradley            | Bud & Carol Browning   | Bill & Patti Burns      |
| Judy Burton            | Matt & Chris Clementi  | Ted & Deb Drewsen       |
| Dave & Judi Faubel     | Bob & Jane Flaherty    | Bobbie Flaherty         |
| Chris Frederick        | Michael Friedel        | Avery & Barb Geiger     |
| Karen Goodacre         | Billy Goodacre         | Cliff & Nicole Goodacre |
| Jessica Goodacre       | Mary Hartgerink        | Noreen Henderson        |
| Mary Hobbs             | Donna Jost             | Laura Kauffman          |
| Tom & Sarah Kirchoff   | Vicki Lamb             | Ron & Karen McCreedy    |
| Patti Minter           | Mike & Tina Potter     | Gary Ring               |
| Barb Roder             | Fran Schmid            | Gail Schmidt            |
| Sue Schmitz            | Sue Schnorr            | Neal & Ellen Sieglaff   |
| Mary Southard          | Barb Spies             | Nolyn Stutz             |
| Randy & Linda Stutz    | Dixie Sullivan         | Barb Tadych             |
| Pete Vercouteren       | Jean Wright            | Kaitlyn Zick            |
| Lynne Zwerg            |                        |                         |



March is all Lent. And Lent is second only to January 1 when it comes to making changes in habits. For many, Lent is about giving up something important as a daily reminder that this time before Easter is sacred. By the time you read this we will be in the Lenten season. It's never too late, or the wrong time to do something – however small – to remind yourself that Lenten time is about showing love – like Jesus did.

#### **Lenten Blood Pressures with Patti Burns on March 1st**

The first Sunday of each month, health professionals are offering informal blood pressure screenings. Stop in the room across from the Office after the service and Patti will be glad to take your 11 days into Lent blood pressure!

#### **Daylight Savings Time and Sleep Awareness Month**

Every year, the National Sleep Foundation takes this time to reemphasize the important connections between sleep and both physical and mental health. They coincide Sleep Awareness Week (**March 8-14**) with the start of the Daylight Savings time change when we “lose” an hour of sleep. So, especially during the week of March 8<sup>th</sup>, please concentrate on being rested and refreshed!

#### **National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**

Colorectal cancer usually starts as a [polyp](#). Polyps are small overgrowths in the tissue lining the colon or rectum. Polyps are not cancer. Most of these polyps are *adenomas*, which begin in the mucus-producing gland cells that line the intestine. Adenomas are considered pre-cancerous growths and it can take several years for an adenoma to develop into cancer. When it does, the cancer is called **adenocarcinoma**. This is the most common type of colorectal cancer.

Colorectal cancer screening [is recommended beginning at age 45 for most people](#). But the disease is rising in people under age 50 which means their cancer is being found later when it's harder to treat. “As to the “why”, we do know that about 20% of colorectal cancer patients under age 50 have an inherited genetic mutation, and [family history](#) also plays a role in causing a portion of colorectal cancers in these young adults. But research is still being done re: the cause in the remainder of the group.”

Polyps may not produce any symptoms until they become large. Symptoms of colorectal cancer may include: Diarrhea or constipation that does not go away or a change in normal bowel habits, discomfort or pain in the lower abdomen, cramping, feeling bloated or full, evidence of blood in the stool or toilet, and/or excessive fatigue or weight loss without dieting. Regardless of age, these symptoms should be reported to a Primary Care Provider for evaluation.

As with many things, “healthy lifestyle habits” are the most beneficial in preventing disease....Staying at a healthy weight, regular exercise, eating a healthy diet with lots of fruits and vegetables and less red and processed meats, (think lower fat, higher fiber and less chemicals), avoiding nicotine in all forms, and drinking alcohol only in moderation if at all.

[Colorectal cancer](#) cases in older adults are on the decline overall as it is highly preventable with screening and highly treatable when caught early. The incidence of disease in younger people is increasing worldwide however, which questions whether recommended screening should start before age 45. People generally don't like talking about their poop, but Care Providers do care about such things (And if there's a family history of Colon Cancer, they care even more!) Any health related change means that something's going on and it should be checked out.

Information taken from the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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### **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Upcoming Workshops**

**Mind Over Matter** for women over the age of 50 with bladder and/or bowel incontinence. (Three-week class) March 4 – April 1, 2026, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. held in-person at the SSM Health Ripon Community Hospital.

**Powerful Tools for Caregivers** supports caregivers in their caregiving journey. (Six-week class) April 2, - May 7, 2026, from 2:30-4 p.m. held in-person in Fond du Lac.

**Stepping On: Falls Prevention** ~ (Seven-week class) April 2 – May 14, 2026 from 1-3 p.m. held in-person at the Oakfield Community Center.

**Boost Your Brain and Memory** ~ (Six-week class) Starts May 21, 2026, from 10-11:30 a.m. held in-person at the Fond du Lac Senior Center. •

**2026 Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) Education Series** ~ Friday, March 6, 2026, from 9:30-11:30 a.m. held at the ADRC in Fond du Lac. •

Call the ADRC at 920-929-3466 with questions and to register for any of these classes

**We Empower** – “We empower women and children to spread their wings into a new reality.” “We are dedicated to providing resources and a supportive sisterhood that fosters healthy relationships, empowerment and the ability to build the skills necessary for independence.”

**Women's Empowerment Series** is an annual series providing guidance to women and children, helping them make positive changes. *These classes are weekly on Tuesdays from 5:00-8:00pm and begin on March 10.*

**Wisconsin HER Day** *Friday, March 20 from 11am-4pm* at the Oshkosh Arena with Wisconsin Herd, speakers, breakout sessions networking opportunities and community and business booths. There are flyers for both of these events on the table in the Narthex, you can go online at [www.weempowher.org](http://www.weempowher.org), or call 920-204-0050 to learn more and/or register.

**Fox Valley Bronze** is a community handbell ensemble under the direction of Sandra Eithun. They are an outreach ministry of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Appleton. The proceeds of their concerts go to causes throughout the Fox Valley.



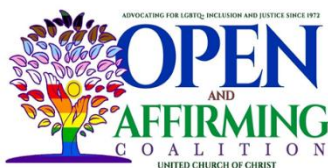
**FOX VALLEY BRONZE**  
**SPRING**  
**HANDBELL**  
**CONCERT**

*Sunday, March 29, 2026*  
— 2:00 PM —

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
535 Stow St., Fond Du Lac, WI

*Free and open to the public*  
*(a freewill offering will be taken)*

The poster features a dark brown background with a gold border. The central text is in a serif font, with the title in all caps and the date and time in italics. The logo at the top is a gold handbell with a fox tail. The bottom corners are decorated with illustrations of white and yellow flowers and green leaves.



Hello Pilgrim family & friends!

Part of a Lenten journey can include a call to conversion. A time to "come back to God with all our hearts". It is an invitation to move away from misdeeds and toward a closer relationship with Christ. Rather than just external sacrifices, the focus is on a true change of heart, or "rending the heart". As members of Pilgrim UCC, an Open and Affirming church, we utilize this time of Lent to look inside ourselves and contemplate.

To assist us in that contemplation, following are two links to help educate and give us insights into different viewpoints:

- 1) An article from Ash Wednesday 2020 - <https://justiceunbound.org/queerlent-ash-wednesday/>
- 2) A short video (2023) entitled: LGBTQ+ congregants on finding faith and acceptance - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46\\_N0GQg8Wl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=46_N0GQg8Wl)

Pilgrim remains active in spreading the word (yes evangelizing!) about being an ONA church! Thanks to Ministry & Outreach for taking the lead in registering Pilgrim for the 17th United for Diversity event held on Saturday, February 21. Our booth assignment was alongside our Café Q friends and fellow Ally churches. We thank all who were able to help that day as well as Pilgrim members and friends who stopped by to say HI!

We thank Barb Roder for stepping up and preparing the meal for Café Q's valentine gathering on February 20th! Café Q sends its deepest thanks to all that contribute. Remember, if cooking isn't your skill set – feel free to utilize Pilgrim's Scrip program and donate cards to Café Q. Cards for grocery stores or restaurants are always appreciated. And when we purchase Scrip, Pilgrim also sees a benefit! Please plan on joining us in the Sanctuary after worship on **Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**. We will have our 2nd and final "We are ONA - What Now" discussion. This will be a duplicate of our January discussion – giving you a chance to give input you might not have thought of in January. Or giving people who weren't able to attend in January the chance to give input. Also please remember that ONA team members Christine Deaner-Rogers & Sue Kaiser would be happy to sit down for a talk anytime. Also, please let them know if you are willing to participate on the ONA Team. We will be planning a meeting for April and would love to have you join us.

Your Pilgrim ONA Team!

## LOAVES and FISHERIES

We served our first meal of the year on February 4, 2026. We prepared and served 132 meals to our neighbors in need. Leftovers which were taken to the Katharine Drexel Shelter.

We would like to thank the following people for contributing either food, service, or both:  
Patty M, Bruce L, Mary B, Sue S, Patti B, Mark S, Barb S, Gary and Judy B, Michael F and Brooklyn, Gary R, Linda and Randy S, Peg B, Deb W, Chris F, Pete V, Connie A, Tina P, Donna J, Ellen S, Ron and Karen M, Rachel W, and Dianne B.

Expenses for this effort were provided in part by Thrivent Financial through a program they have to assist good deeds in our community. Thank you Judy Burton for making this happen.

We will prepare and serve our next meal on April 1st...no fooling! New volunteers are always welcome. If you have questions please contact Karen Goodacre (920-904-5740) or Jim Bentley (920-922-5093).

Thank you!  
Karen and Jim

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### Worship Ministry Thoughts

I am writing to all of you to share some worship ministry thoughts that have been discussed at our monthly meetings. We are concerned with the amount of time our Sunday morning announcements are taking at the beginning of worship. We have been brainstorming ideas on how to improve what we do.

On Sunday March 15, the worship leader will invite ministry member forward who has an announcement for the church community. The worship leader will draw people's attention to the pull out announcement page

Beginning the week of March 8, we are asking Amy to develop an announcement pull out page for the Sunday Bulletin. Weekly and monthly announcements will be listed on this page. She will accept announcements to be printed for the upcoming Sunday until 10:00am on the Thursday, prior to that Sunday. This deadline will be held firm. If something comes up after that deadline, you will be asked to print up your brief information and have Pastor Jeannie announce during the service. We are asking that the weekly announcements be brief. If you have more information we would like those details to be in the weekly eblast, sent to Neal ready to print, or the details can be placed in a quill article.

We are aware that this will take some time to adjust to and we are aware that each individual announcement is of great importance, but we need to streamline that time line during the service. We are also exploring moving announcements completely to near the end of the service, so watch for that experiment as well. Please share your thoughts regarding these changes with members of the worship ministry.

Steven Wichowski, Deb Wamser, Mary Christenson, Benedict Behrens, Sue Kaiser, and Linda Stutz

**Worship ministry** is reaching out for anyone who would like to participate in our worship service. We are seeking worship leaders, ushers and individuals to share a story or reflection with the children and young at heart

Please speak with Linda Stutz or Deb Wamser if you can help with these areas of worship.



**Wisconsin Conference UCC Annual Meeting**

The 2026 Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ will be held April 10–11, 2026, at the Green Lake Conference Center. The theme is *Cultivating Community: Rooted in Christ and Bearing Fruit*, grounded in Jesus’ words from John 15:5: “I am the vine; you are the branches.”

This gathering offers an opportunity to connect with congregations across the conference, share resources and stories, and strengthen our collective witness for justice, vitality, and faithful ministry. Our church is permitted **two voting delegates** to attend. Registration deadline is March 26, 2026.

If you are interested in attending as a delegate, please contact **Linda Stutz, Jim Bentley, or Amy Rector (Administrative Assistant)**.

For more information, visit **wcucc.org**.

To view the meeting schedule, visit: **wcucc.org/annual-meeting/schedule**

Dear Wisconsin Conference UCC Members and Congregations:

There is still no just-peace in the Holy Land. As the Palestine Justice Working Group (PJWG) of the WCUC, we continue to share resources with you to foster deeper understanding and advocacy. In our December PJWG newsletter we invited you to watch for this email – to update you on a **new educational opportunity** we hope will be meaningful for members of your congregation. It's an opportunity to hear from both bereaved Palestinians and Israelis who have lost one or more loved ones to the violence – and have moved through their grief to choose a path of reconciliation through the grassroots organization ***The Parents Circle – Family Forum***. For more information, please check out the website of the organization we have contracted with to use this curriculum: [American Friends of the Parents Circle Families Forum](#). If you or your church has been interested in learning more about the situation in Palestine and Israel, this is one way you can do so from people who have lived – and suffered immensely from the violence that has left them bereaved.

Here are more details about participation in a [Listening From the Heart workshop](#):

***Listening from the Heart*** workshops are 90 minutes long and feature a video of a Palestinian and an Israeli as they share their stories of loss – and their willingness to transform feelings of anger, revenge, despair, and helplessness in the choice to act for hope and reconciliation with other bereaved Israelis and Palestinians. This workshop is a means of empowering others to engage in meaningful dialogue about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—and other seemingly intractable conflicts. These workshops will equip participants with the tools to foster empathy, bridge divides, build respectful communication skills, and create inclusive spaces for difficult conversations. Participants are invited to come prepared to listen with an open heart and engage in difficult but meaningful conversations.

### **Listening from the Heart to Bereaved Palestinians and Israelis Who Choose Peace!**

The *WCUC Palestine Justice Working Group* invites you to attend one or more FREE 90-minute ZOOM mtgs this year to listen to the stories of Palestinians and Israelis who have lost loved ones to the violence (each workshop will feature a video of one Palestinian and one Israeli sharing their stories). This workshop is deeply rooted in the painful and loving work of the *Parents Circle-Family Forum*, which brings together bereaved Palestinian and Israeli family members to share their grief and humanity amid ongoing, brutal war.

*American Friends of the Parents Circle* has developed the “Listening from the Heart” program as a means of empowering others around the world to engage in meaningful dialogue about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—and other seemingly intractable conflicts. “Listening from the Heart” will equip participants with the tools to foster empathy, bridge divides, build respectful communication skills, and create inclusive spaces for difficult conversations. Come prepared to listen with an open heart and engage in difficult but meaningful conversations. For more information on the Parent’s Circle, go to [www.parentscirclefriends.org](http://www.parentscirclefriends.org). Workshops will not be recorded.

**To sign up for another Free Zoom workshop during the year:**

- Watch for more information in correspondence from the Wisconsin Conference
- [Sign up to receive the Palestine Justice Working Group newsletter](#)

Go to [www.wcucc.org/Palestine-Justice-Working-Group/](http://www.wcucc.org/Palestine-Justice-Working-Group/).



|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Randy Mittelstaedt    | Feb 1  |
| Jake Zheng            | Feb 3  |
| Judie Behnke          | Feb 5  |
| Mikayla Schmid        | Feb 6  |
| Victoria Dietenberger | Feb 7  |
| Kayden Keys           | Feb 9  |
| Bridget Keys          | Feb 13 |
| Lily Mae LaLuzerne    | Feb 13 |
| Kathleen Dille        | Feb 14 |
| Barbara Geiger        | Feb 15 |
| Kay Lynn Speidel      | Feb 17 |
| Bayard Frederick      | Feb 19 |
| Julie Freund          | Feb 19 |
| Mary Berens           | Feb 19 |
| Neal Sieglaff         | Feb 24 |
| Luke Walter           | Feb 25 |
| Stuart Henderson      | Feb 26 |
| Dianne Bentley        | Feb 28 |
| Hannah Wright         | Feb 28 |

| Ushers for March |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Date             | 9:00 Service               |
| March 1          | Deb & Jim Wamser           |
| March 8          | Bill & Patti Burns         |
| March 15         | Steve & Rachel Wicichowski |
| March 22         | Jim & Dianne Bentley       |
| March 29         | Randy & Linda Stutz        |

| Welcomers for March |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Date                | 9:00 Service         |
| March 1             | Gary Ring            |
| March 8             | Avery Geiger         |
| March 15            | Linda Stutz          |
| March 22            | Jim & Dianne Bentley |
| March 29            | Randy Stutz          |



|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Gail Schmidt | Feb 8 |
|--------------|-------|

| Worship Leaders March |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Date                  | 9:00 Service     |
| March 1               | Jill Barbeau     |
| March 8               | Noreen Henderson |
| March 15              | Linda Stutz      |
| March 22              | Sue Schmitz      |
| March 29              | Bobbie Flaherty  |

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
**Church Council Meeting**  
**January 19, 2026**

Present: Pastor Jeannie Douglas, Jim Bentley, Peg Bradley, Donna Jost, Steven Wicichowski, Ron McCreedy, Patty Minter, Avery Geiger, Dixie Sullivan, Linda Stutz, Gary Ring (guest)

A quorum was declared at 6pm and Pastor Jeannie opened the meeting with prayer.

Gary Ring made a presentation on the proposed Prairie Memorial Garden. In reviewing the application and policies, questions were raised regarding some of the wording. Alternative wording was suggested that was acceptable to the council. \*This work continued well into the next day via email. By Wednesday morning a new rewriting had been accepted by all.\*

This topic will be brought up at the upcoming Congregational Meeting.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the December Council Meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's Report: Report attached. December givings were excellent. Linda made a motion to accept the report. Steven seconded the motion. Motion passed. The proposed church budget for 2026 was discussed briefly and will be put forward for congregational approval at the annual meeting February 1, 2026. On the recommendation of Donna, the church's credit card limit will be raised from \$12,000 to \$20,000.

Pastor's Report: February 11, 2026 is the 25th anniversary of Pastor Jeannie's ordination. This anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday, February 8, 2026.

Vice President's Report: Evaluations of staff will be completed by the end of January.

President's Report: Tracy Abler will be on the February Council agenda to provide information on a gun disposal event in Fond du Lac and explore if Pilgrim might want to be a joint sponsor.

Tracy also has made a request that Pilgrim help with her expenses as she attends the April WCUCC Annual Meeting. It was agreed that we would offer \$200 to aid with expenses. Pastor Jeannie will send an announcement to Neal for the eblast, asking if another member would like to attend WCUCC as a Pilgrim delegate as we can send two.

Old Business:

The changes to the ByLaws have been completed, approved by Council, and are ready for distribution to the congregation.

New Business:

The Audit Report has been finished and will be included in the Annual Report.

Ministry/Committee Reports and Updates

#### Worship and Music - Steven Witichowski

- Linda will continue to sort out the details of moving announcements to a bulletin insert.
- On February 8th we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Pastor Jeannie.
- Sandy Eithen from Appleton would like to bring her bell choir to perform a concert at 2 pm on March 29th. She would like to have our bell quartet join them. Pastor Jeannie will confirm the details for the event.
- Deb W. will put a note in the Quill inviting anyone interested in joining in on the usher or worship leader rotation.
- Franz Riegert will be the guest minister on March 8th.

#### Christian Education - Dixie Sullivan

- Dixie encouraged the members of the Children/Youth Ministry Committee to talk with the Adult Education Committee and Worship Ministry about their thoughts on changing the time of Sunday School.
- The Younger Sunday School Group requires additional teacher support. The Committee is actively recruiting people.
- Ticket sales for the Quilt Raffle will take place from January 18th through February 22nd, at which time the raffle drawing will take place.
- The Christmas Program was a success. Thanks to all who participated.
- The Adult Education committee would like to work with M&E on purchasing some chairs for the lounge that will have arms and are slightly taller than our current chairs. More to come regarding this project. Adult Education ministry has begun work for Fall 2026 Adult Forum and Expanding Horizons.

#### Property and Maintenance - Avery Geiger

- Water pipes to the west side froze during single digit temperatures. Opened attic panels to thaw pipes. Later added R-11 insulation batts over pipes and existing insulation on 1/8/26. Cost \$23.98
- Purchased a new office admin computer as the old computer would not update the operation system. Cost \$778.99 paid from Council Trust money. Neal will set it up.
- With Council approval, the fellowship hall carpet was cleaned by PH Cleaning for \$600. I have received lots of compliments.
- Zehren Electric replaced the west parking lot lights.
- Replaced burned out lights in the hallway.
- Contacted the Community Risk Reduction Specialist at the Fond du Lac Fire Rescue. She said smoke/co alarms are not required, but it will not cause a problem if we add them. We installed one in each furnace room.
- Jim W. investigated options for fire extinguisher inspection. We agreed to switch to DRB Fire Extinguisher Sales and Service because they are less expensive, small customer oriented and, as a fire fighter, it is his passion. Jim W. will call DRB and arrange. Avery will call Cintas and cancel.
- We will be doing a survey and making a prioritized list of all the things the congregation feels need attention. If painting the sanctuary comes to the top of the list, we will make it happen. This surveying may be done at the Congregational Meeting or on several Sundays.

#### Lay Life and Leadership - Patty Minter

- Dinners Club continues to be successfully offered. 14 members participated 1/18/26.
- Lay Life will be providing food for the Christmas Eve Service.

#### Stewardship and Finance - Ron McCreedy

- Monthly income for December was very good.
- Our overall budget is on track with spending and income.
- Neighbors in Need offerings have totaled \$1,405.
- Christmas Fund has collected \$280 to date.
- Thank you letters were sent to Pledgers and 2nd request for pledge to those not heard from.

#### Membership and Evangelism - Fran Schmid

- January Mental Health activities are going well.
- The Welcome Center brochures and folders need some attention.
- The flow of information on people who have visited will also be reviewed.
- A Feather Flag with our church's logo has been purchased.

#### Christian Outreach - Peg Bradley

- Barb Spies shared her experience with our "Adopt a Family" when she delivered the gifts. The family was so grateful and overwhelmed. Peg Bradley shared the thank you notes will be shared in the February Quill.
- The Warming Shelter was discussed. Meals for 35 people will be needed for February 19.
- Collection will be taken for The Blandine House and Beacon House for the month of March.

#### Committee Reports

##### Nominating Committee

- All the committees have proper membership numbers for 2026.

##### Ham Dinner

##### Memorial Fund

##### Green Team

WISE Task Force: January Mental Health Awareness activities have been going well.

##### SCRIP

Sales continue to be positive. An end of 2025 check was written to Pilgrim's general fund in the amount of \$7000 from scrip profits.

##### Trust Fund

##### Open and Affirming

- Letters have gone out to the congregation regarding a new covenant statement.
- ONA members will make a presentation at the January 25th Adult Forum.

Pastoral Support

-A summary of 2025 activity appears in the Annual Report.

Search Committee

-The search continues!

-They are updating our church profile.

The meeting closed at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Bentley and Linda Stutz

# MARCH 2026

| SUN                                                                                              | MON                                                                         | TUES                                                            | WED                                                     | THUR                                                | FRI                       | SAT                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1<br>9AM Worship<br><br>10:15AM Coffee Fellowship<br><br>**BP Checks after service               | 2<br>1PM Expanding Horizons<br><br>5PM Christian Ed                         | 3                                                               | 4                                                       | 5<br>7PM Choir Practice                             | 6                         | 7                         |
| 8<br>9AM Worship with Franz Reigert<br><br>10:15AM Adult Forum                                   | 9<br>1PM Expanding Horizons<br><br>4PM Adult Ed                             | 10<br>10AM Christian Outreach<br><br>11AM M & E<br><br>5PM WISE | 11<br>4PM Memorial Garden Mtg<br><br>4:30PM Worship Mtg | 12<br>7PM Choir Practice                            | 13                        | 14                        |
| 15<br>9AM Worship<br><br>10:15AM Adult Forum                                                     | 16<br>1PM Expanding Horizons<br><br>6PM Council Mtg<br><br>*Quill Deadline* | 17                                                              | 18                                                      | 19<br>Spring Rummage Sale<br><br>7PM Choir Practice | 20<br>Spring Rummage Sale | 21<br>Spring Rummage Sale |
| 22<br>9AM Worship<br><br>10:15AM Adult Forum<br><br>*Confirmation Class to Trinity UCC - Chicago | 23<br>1PM Expanding Horizons<br><br>4PM Green Team Mtg                      | 24                                                              | 25                                                      | 26<br>7PM Choir Practice                            | 27                        | 28                        |
| 29<br>9AM Worship<br><br>10:15AM Adult Forum<br><br>2PM Fox Valley Bronze Handbell Concert       | 30                                                                          | 31                                                              |                                                         |                                                     |                           |                           |

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
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Website: www.pilgrimuccfdl.org

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## The Pilgrim Quill

### Pilgrim United Church of Christ Mission Statement

*Pilgrim United Church of Christ, a theologically progressive Christian church, pursues growth in faith, social justice, and respect for all voices-with Jesus as our model for how to live and love.*

### Those Who Serve

|                                    |                      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Pastor.....                        | Rev. Jeannie Douglas |
| Administrative Assistant.....      | Amy Rector           |
| Parish Nurse.....                  | Sue Schmitz          |
| Child & Youth Coordinator.....     | Michael Friedel      |
| Adult Education Coordinator.....   | Mary Ann Otto        |
| Worship Musician.....              | Chris Deaner-Rogers  |
| Choir Director.....                | Zachary Ball         |
| Choir Accompanist .....            | Chris Deaner-Rogers  |
| Custodian.....                     | Green & Clean        |
| Church Council President.....      | Jim Bentley          |
| Church Council Vice President..... | Linda Stutz          |
| Church Council Secretary.....      | Wendy Ellison        |
| Church Treasurer.....              | Donna Jost           |

Rides to church are available by contacting Randy Stutz 920-539-6277

We are happy to send you our newsletter, but if you no longer wish to receive it, please contact us and we will remove you from our mailing list.