



THE PILGRIM QUILL

SEPTEMBER 2026

Rev. Jeffrey Dodson

September 2026

"It is [Christ Jesus] whom we proclaim...For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that [Christ] powerfully inspires within me."

Colossians 1:28-29



Dear Pilgrim UCC,

What do you find inspiring? What is it that awakens something within us, causes us to see the world differently, and perhaps most importantly, moves us to do something because of what we have seen?

Greta Thunberg offers one powerful example. At just fifteen years old, the Swedish climate activist began sitting outside her country's parliament with a simple sign calling for action on climate change. What began as one young person's protest grew into an international movement. Today, at twenty-three, Greta continues to speak and act on climate justice, human rights, and the connections between environmental destruction and human suffering. She has published *The Climate Book*, participated in international climate actions, and increasingly used her voice to advocate for people experiencing war, displacement, and humanitarian crisis.

What inspires me about Greta is not that she has all the answers or that everyone will agree with everything she does. It is her willingness to show up, speak honestly about what she believes matters, and accept the cost of using her voice. Her story reminds us that we can sometimes feel insignificant in the face of enormous problems, climate change, poverty, war, racism, political division, addiction, homelessness, and injustice, and wonder: What can one person possibly do? Does my voice matter?

I believe the answer begins simply: show up. One person can speak. One person can ask a difficult question. One person can refuse to accept that something must remain the way it has always been. And sometimes one person who shows up discovers that they are not alone. Greta's solitary protest became a worldwide movement because other people were inspired to join her.

That is the difference between inspiration and admiration. Inspiration invites us to action. The Bible is filled with beautiful words: "Love your enemies." Feed the hungry. Welcome the stranger. Seek justice. Love mercy. Walk humbly with God. These words can inspire us, but they transform the world only when we put them into practice.

The word inspiration itself gives us a beautiful image. To inspire is to breathe into something. Scripture repeatedly uses breath and Spirit to describe God's life-giving presence. In the Wisdom of Solomon, we are reminded that God has formed us, "inspired us with active souls and breathed a living spirit into us." I love that image: active souls and living spirits.

Author Rachel Held Evans explored this same idea in her book *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*. She connected biblical inspiration with the image of divine breath, the movement of God within us. Her words echo one of the beautiful convictions of the United Church of Christ: God is still speaking. Perhaps we might also say, God is still breathing. God is still breathing life into us, stirring our spirits, and calling us toward love, justice, mercy, compassion, and hope.

So this fall, I invite us to ask: What inspires you? Who has inspired you? What scripture, song, person, experience, or moment has changed the way you see the world? And perhaps most importantly, what is God breathing into you now?

I believe Pilgrim is filled with people who have active souls and living spirits. I see it in the ways you care for one another, welcome others, serve our community, share your gifts, and dream about what this congregation can become. As your pastor, I am grateful to be discovering your stories and hearing about the people and experiences that have shaped your faith.

Our worship theme this fall will be *Inspired: Active Souls and Living Spirits*. Together, we will explore the ways God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, scripture, one another, and the world around us can inspire us. We will make room for questions and doubts, listen for God's still-speaking voice, and consider how our inspiration can become action.

Perhaps we do not have to change the whole world. Perhaps we simply need to change the small corner of the world where God has placed us. Maybe our calling is to offer encouragement, repair a relationship, welcome someone who feels excluded, care for creation, stand beside someone who is hurting, or simply keep showing up.

The wind does not ask the sail to create the wind. The sail simply has to be raised. The ember does not have to become the whole fire; it simply has to be tended. We do not have to know exactly where God's Spirit is taking us before we take the next faithful step. We only need to be willing to open ourselves and trust that God is still breathing.

The world needs more justice, love, mercy, courage, hope, and people willing to put their faith into action. The world needs active souls and living spirits. I believe God has invited us together so that we might become exactly that kind of community.

So, what inspires you? And what will you do with that inspiration?

May God's gracious love fill your sails, kindle your embers, strengthen your courage, and lead you toward a world aching for love, justice, mercy, and hope. May we discover together that God is still breathing, God is still speaking, and God is still calling us to become people with active souls and living spirits.

I am inspired by you.

Yours on the journey,



Rev. Jeffrey Dodson



Worship at Pilgrim UCC

Lessons in Leadership Mini Sermon Series

Sunday, August 30

Lessons in Leadership: Acceptance

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Exodus 3:1-15, Moses at the burning bush

Sunday, September 6

Lessons in Leadership: Conflict

Communion Sunday, Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Labor Day Sunday

9:00 am Worship

Exodus 12:1-14, The first Passover

Sunday, September 13

Lessons in Leadership: Grace

Celebration Sunday, Beginning of New Program Year, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

10:00 am Celebration Potluck

Exodus 14:19-31, Parting of the Red Sea

Inspired: Active Souls and Living Spirits, Fall Worship Theme

Sunday, September 20

Inspired Garden

Dedication of our Memorial Garden, Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 20:1-16, The parable of the vineyard workers

Sunday, September 27

Inspired Jazz

Jazz Sunday, Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 21:23-32, A parable of doing God's will

Sunday, October 4

Inspired World

World Communion Sunday, Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Neighbors in Need - Special 5 for 5 Offering

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 21:33-46, The parable of the vineyard owner's son

ADULT EDUCATION NEWS!

ADULT FORUM

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

To join with the Zoom link go to pilgrimuccfdl.org/education

SEPTEMBER 6—LABOR DAY WEEKEND—NO SESSION

September 13

Pilgrim Celebration Sunday

Let's rally with a potluck and to be informed and inspired by upcoming events of Adult and Christian Education at Pilgrim.

Egg dishes will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass!



September 20

An introduction to William James Varieties of Religious Experience

Leader: Jack Laufenberg

The author understands religion in its most fundamental sense refers to the feelings, acts, and experiences of individuals in relation to what they consider divine.

September 27

'Ready, Set, Action...Living Into Being ONA!'

Leaders: ONA Team

The team will update us on ONA activities.



EXPANDING HORIZONS

Monday afternoons 1:00PM to 2:30PM in the lounge.

For those joining from home, the link for the programs will be the same each week.

To join with the Zoom link go to pilgrimuccfdl.org/education

SEPTEMBER 7-LABOR DAY-NO SESSION

September 14 (12:30PM Start)

Welcome Back to Expanding Horizon Salad Luncheon

Hosts: Adult Education Team

We'll gather to share a meal, to reconnect and to review the upcoming year. Bring a salad topping to share!

September 21

Let's Discuss this Year's Supreme Court Decisions

Leader: Dr. Paisley Harris

Retired Assoc. Professor UW-Oshkosh

Dr. Harris will once again break down the last Supreme Court decisions and their impact on our country and daily lives.

September 28

Theo of Golden by Alan Levi

Leader: Peg Bradley

At home let's read this intriguing book and come together to discuss its important message of kindness, generosity and our daily encounters with God in creation and each other.



Christian Outreach

Let's Stock the Shelves of the Fondy Food Pantry!

Few of us know what it is like to be hungry and have nothing in our kitchen to eat. Yet for far too many of our neighbors in Fond du Lac County, having enough to eat is a challenge. During this time of rising prices, some find themselves making difficult choices between food, gas, health care etc. Fondy Food Pantry helps place meals in the hands of children, delivers groceries to homebound neighbors, and reminds those facing difficult times that they are seen, supported and cared for.

While most of us are familiar with the Walk-In Pantry, the Fondy Food Pantry also has a program which helps feed the homeless through a partnership with St. Vincent dePaul. Their Food for Thought program provides weekend meal bags for approximately 1,100 students during the school year. In addition, their Home Delivery Service provides essential groceries to eligible homebound individuals and families. During 2025, 92,902 pounds of food was distributed monthly and 41,827 individuals were served.

The Outreach Ministry is inviting you to help this life giving organization during the month of September. Bring your donations to church and put them on the shelves in the entryway. All of us together can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in Fond du Lac County.

MOST NEEDED ITEMS

Whole grain cereal
Oatmeal
Breakfast or granola bars
Pancake mix and syrup
Muffin mix
Peanut butter
Canned tuna, salmon, and chicken
Canned meals (beef stew, chili)
Canned pasta meals (ravioli, spaghetti)
Chunky soups with meat
Meal mixes (tuna or hamburger helper, sloppy joe mix, macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes)
Soups (all kinds)
Spaghetti sauce (in plastic jars or cans)
Canned vegetables
Canned or dried beans
Snack-sized nuts and seeds
Canned fruit
Applesauce
Baking items (flour, sugar, baking powder, cake or brownie mixes, etc.)
Condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salad dressings, etc.)

In addition to the most needed food items, the pantry also accepts donations of commonly requested household and personal care items that are not covered by SNAP benefits, including laundry detergent, dish soap, shampoo and conditioner, body wash or bar soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes, feminine hygiene products, toilet paper, paper towels, and deodorant.



Season of Creation

Each year from September 1 to October 4, Christians around the world unite in the Season of Creation — a worldwide celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It's a season when we celebrate God as Creator and recognize Creation as God's ongoing, unfolding gift — one that calls us to be collaborators in loving and caring for all that has been made.

As followers of Christ across the globe, we share this call to care for Creation. We are co-creatures, woven into the fabric of all God has made, and our well-being is tied to the well-being of the Earth. This season, we rejoice in the chance to safeguard our common home and all who share it with us.

This year's theme, "**Living Water**," draws on Ezekiel 47:9 and 12 — a vision of hope and ecological healing given amid exile and loss. In it, water flows from God's sanctuary, carrying divine healing that renews land, water, and biodiversity, and calls us to our responsibility toward the whole of creation. Ezekiel's message isn't passive hope, it's a call to action. Water is both a fundamental physical and spiritual need. Water is connective, restorative, and life-giving. It unites us with God and God's Creation, and we have a moral responsibility to protect it.

Hazardous Waste Drop Off for the City of Fond du Lac

The City of Fond du Lac does not routinely dispose of household hazardous waste at its drop off site, but it will be hosting a free collection event for city residents on Thursday, September 10, 2026, from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the [Municipal Service Center](#) at 530 Doty Street. For a complete list of acceptable and unacceptable items, visit the website:

<https://www.fdl.wi.gov/public-works/household-hazardous-waste/>

Heat Pumps and Getting to Fossil Fuel Freedom

By Carol and Andy Phelps, Middleton Community Church UCC

For those who aren't familiar with air-to-air heat pumps, they're like air conditioners that can also work in reverse - heating your home in winter as well as cooling it in the summer.

I hear that currently more heat pumps are being sold in the U.S than new gas furnaces.

Now that we have a heat pump, I think our family is completely done with the fossil fuels which cause wars, climate change, and air/water pollution at our home - i.e. no more coal-fired electricity, or natural gas, or gasoline. (If you don't count the historic gas station wagon which sits in our garage and only gets driven a few times a year, and the old gas furnace which is still in our basement as a back-up, in case it's ever needed in a long power outage or unusually severe weather.)

Ordinary people can't do all the "big" climate actions at once, but if you spread them out, one big thing a year (or every other year), it'll all get done.

And the expenses aren't as humongous as people think. If you're currently paying on a gas car loan, why not pay on an electric car loan instead? If you're paying an electric company every month for your energy, why not pay on a solar loan instead? If you're currently paying a lawn care company, why not pay for electric lawn equipment instead? In all those cases, you'll end up saving money in the long run, as well as doing your part to keep our planet beautiful and livable.

Source: Kairos Call to Action, Wisconsin UCC conference Newsletter



WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, Engaged) for Mental Health

"In case you forgot, the world is better because *you* are in it."

I know there are days you feel like you're not doing enough. Maybe you've been comparing yourself to everyone else, questioning your worth, or wondering if your presence even matters. But please remember that your worth was never measured by how productive you are, how many people notice you, or how much you've achieved.

You matter in ways you probably don't even see. Maybe someone feels less alone because of your kindness. Maybe your presence has made someone's hardest day a little lighter. Someone out there is grateful that you exist. You don't have to be perfect, successful, or have everything figured out to deserve a place in this world.

In case you forgot today, you are wanted, you are loved, and you matter. Keep going, even if all you can do right now is take things one day at a time. Your story isn't over. There are still people you haven't met, memories you haven't made, prayers that haven't been answered, and beautiful days you haven't seen yet. *The world is better with you in it.*

Please don't forget that.

-Anonymous

~~~~~  
**Hope** is a huge part of Mental Wellness. There is a basket on the table in the Narthex with **Mini Prayer Shawls**. Please take one...or two. This is one way to hold hope in your hand – a small soft square that was knitted with you in mind – with love. Thank-you to Dixie Sullivan for showing us how God can use even bits of yarn to share love, comfort and hope!  
~~~~~



The Autumn Equinox is September 22nd in the Northern Hemisphere. On this day, the day-light and night-darkness hours are nearly the same 12 hours in length and it marks the official transition between the seasons. *Autumn is a second spring, when*

every leaf is a flower. Albert Camus

Transitions and change can be hard physically and emotionally – and *September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month*. If you – or someone you know - are feeling that self-harm and/or suicide even seems an option, please call the Fond du Lac County Crisis Line at 920-929-3535 or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, available 24/7, nationwide at 988. You matter, everyone matters, and we are not alone.

One more chance to get a summer blood pressure check!

On the first Sunday of each month, health professionals offer informal blood pressure screenings after worship. ***Stop in the room across from the Office and Chris Frederick will be happy to check your early September/last of summer's blood pressure!***

Also, there is now an automatic blood pressure cuff on that desk. It's an older model, but has been calibrated and is accurate. There are instructions on using the unit and blood pressure recommendations on the desk also. You can stop in anytime the church is open for a quick check.

National Fruits and Veggies Month

There is always an overabundance of diet information and recommendations coming from all angles! I think the most important idea is to vary the foods you eat and when able to, choose ones that are fresh or minimally processed. Be proactive – e.g. prep veggies, hard boil eggs, make overnight oatmeal with fruit and yogurt, cut and package cheese and snack mixes with dried fruit and nuts in small containers; ***making the healthy choice the easy choice...***

Check out the bulletin board for healthy lunch and snack ideas.

A few Autumn Reminders:

With the start of school and cooler weather, (multiple mobile germ carriers trapped inside small rooms...) it is inevitable that there will be an uptick in the number of people with upper respiratory "colds". Here is a repeat of basic cleaning knowledge:

1. Disinfectants kill germs. Detergents clean. Some products contain one of those, some contain both.

2. To make your own disinfectant for non-porous surfaces, mix 1 TBSP bleach to 1 quart of water (or ¼ cup bleach to 1 gallon of water) – apply, let stand 3-5 minutes and then rinse with clean water. (wear gloves when applying/rinsing)

3. Please be mindful of the strength of body sprays and powders. The smell (however wonderful) can be a trigger for someone with asthma, allergies or lung disease. If they can smell it (whatever "it" is), it's already in their lungs.

4. Parents: A respected site for children's health information; including medications and when to keep children home from school is www.kidshealth.org along with you Primary Care Provider and Public Health Nurses.

My hope is that wearing a mask and using hand sanitizer in any indoor space has become socially "normal". It's a visible message to be respected and honored as we all care for ourselves and those we love. There are hand-sanitizer containers and masks strategically placed through-out the

church for your safety and comfort. And, as always, please be respectful of other individuals' touch preferences when Passing the Peace.

Reminder – it is the Year of the United States of Kindness

Launched by Kindland, an initiative of the Values-in-Action Foundation, the United States of Kindness is a national campaign to celebrate America's 250th anniversary through action: 250 Acts of Kindness.

The United States of Kindness challenges every person, organization, and community to participate in 250 acts of kindness, one for every year of our nation's history. These acts can be large or small, but together, they form a movement that connects people and restores hope. The United Church of Christ, UCC Wellness Ministry and UCC Mental Health Network are registered for this campaign...a call to act with intention, to notice the good around us, and to celebrate kindness in every form. ***Health wise, kindness is uplifting and transformative. It improves mental and physical health, (releases endorphins!) increases social connection, enhances learning environments, and strengthens workplace culture.***

There are Kindness ideas for the young and young at heart on the table in the Narthex from Kindland. Please help yourself.

Information taken from the US of Kindness website: (<https://www.usofkindness.org>)

Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) Education Series, What's Next in Alzheimer's Detection and Treatment ~ Friday, September 11, 2026, at ADRC, University Drive, Room A104, Fond du Lac. Please contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 920-929-3466 for more information.

Community Health and Prevention
4th Annual Stigma Awareness Event: Recovery Unfiltered
September is National Recovery Month

With community partners, FCHD is planning the 4th Annual Stigma Awareness Event: Recovery Unfiltered! On **Sunday, September 20th from 1pm-5pm at the Fond du Lac County Prairie Theater and Event Center**, we will come together to speak out on stigma and bridge the gap between community and recovery. All are welcome to attend and hear from local speakers on addiction. A resource fair featuring community partners will also be available!

4th Annual Stigma Awareness Event:
RECOVERY UNFILTERED

Save the date for an inspiring afternoon of
local speakers, connection and a resource fair!

 **Sun. Sep 20, 2026**
1:00PM - 5:00PM

 **Fond du Lac County Prairie
Theater and Event Center**
400 University Drive, Fond du Lac

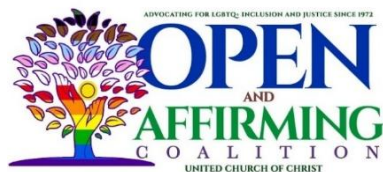


~~~~~

**Thoughts from the Worship Ministry:** During our August ministry meeting, we discussed the order of worship. This is in relationship to the change in Sunday School times for the upcoming programing year. We feel the time for announcements is too long for the beginning of worship if we want the children to be a part of worship before being excused for Sunday School. Our discussion led us to sharing with you that we plan to move announcements to after the offering time during service. We ask that people let Reverend Jeffrey know before service if you have an announcement regarding events within a week or two. We are also asking that people put their announcements in the pull-out bulletin sheet so that members have the details without a long announcement. If you have further thoughts about this, feel free to discuss with a worship ministry member.

Linda Stutz

Hello Pilgrim UCC family and friends!



It is hard to believe that August will soon be in our rearview mirrors and the start of school and September will quickly be upon us!

We are grateful to everyone who supports Café Q, the LGBTQIA+ youth group (for youth in grades 6-12) that meets at Open Circle Unitarian Church in Fond du Lac. Because youth lead the group's decision-making, Café Q has seen participation grow. Pilgrims'

support has made a real difference, including on Pride Picnic day, when Pilgrim members helped tear down both of Café Q's booth spaces. Café Q members shared many thanks for that help.

We sincerely thank Bobbi Flaherty and Sue Kaiser for purchasing the items needed and for prepping fruit and cheese and sausage trays for Café Q's August meeting night. Michelle Buck-Stark's financial contribution went a long way also! Thanks to all!! Anyone interested in helping to provide a meal can do so here: (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F4CA4AF2AA4F58-60367587-2026/182850317#/>).

**A BIG SHOUT OUT** to Dixie Sullivan for her VERY generous donation of Scrip cards to Café Q.

We are grateful that our Open and Affirming group continues to grow. In addition to Chris Deaner-Rogers and Sue Kaiser, we are now joined by Ceelie Williams, Michelle and Jeff Buck-Stark, and Andrea and Trixie Yttri. This growth comes at an important time, as we are involved in several September events. We hope you'll add them to your calendar and join us.

- Sunday, September 6<sup>th</sup> – ONA is hosting coffee hour. Come and spend some time chatting with us. We heard through the grapevine that there might be birthday cake!
- Friday, September 18<sup>th</sup> – ONA is helping with Intergenerational Night! We will be making tie-dyed shirts, playing games and of course, eating! Come and join the fun.
- Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> – Adult Forum..... Continuing our education outreach to Pilgrim members and to our community - come and learn and grow with us – as we discuss living as a transgender person .... Please plan to attend our ONA sponsored education session on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> after our worship service.

This month's educational resource is "How to Talk (and Listen) to Transgender People" with Jackson Bird. Although gender should not define a person, transgender people are still often misunderstood. Bird offers helpful guidance for those who may feel unsure about asking questions or anxious about saying the wrong thing. With humor and honesty, he addresses common misconceptions about pronouns, transitioning, bathrooms, and more. We invite you to watch, learn, and grow.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbQZ7jAvgol&t=106s>



We are heartbroken by the tragic passing of our sibling, the Rev. Derek A. Terry. A fearless leader, Rev. Terry touched countless lives through his ministry in the United Church of Christ and as Executive Director of the Open and Affirming Coalition. Rev. Terry brought a powerful voice to civil rights, racial and social justice, LGBTQ+ inclusion, income inequality, body positivity, and courageous living. His preaching and teaching called people toward deeper compassion, creative resistance, and a more inclusive church. His heart, spirit, and passion for justice will be deeply missed by all who knew and worked with him. Our sympathy to his family and friends.

In closing we wanted to let you know that Chris and Sue presented a revised ONA covenant draft to Rev. Jeffrey and the Council. They will now review and potentially wordsmith with Rev. Jeffrey's input. We are hopeful the draft will be in your possession by the end of September for your review and comments. Feel free to go to any of our members with that commentary.

Your Pilgrim ONA Team

---

### **The SCRIP program NEEDS YOU!**

As we begin to get ready for the new program year and the return of school, please keep the SCRIP program in mind. This is such an easy way to give a little bit more financially to our church budget. The program is easy to use – stop at the SCRIP table in the Narthex and purchase your needs for the week...gas, grocery & restaurants (places you go regularly) cards to name a few. You buy the cards at face value (ex. \$25 Kwik Trip – you pay \$25 but the church earns a percentage of each card purchase. Please stop and talk with Karen on Sunday morning or call her at 920)904-5740 if you have any questions. This program has so much more potential than we are utilizing!!



---

**Time to Get Ready for:**  
**Pilgrim's Fall Rummage Sale**  
**Thursday, October 15, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**  
**Friday, October 16, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**  
**Saturday, October 17, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM**  
Stay tuned for more details to come!

---

NEEDED: CLEAN ICE CREAM PAILS WITH LIDS FOR THE HAM DINNER  
LEFTOVERS  
PLEASE LEAVE IN CHURCH KITCHEN WITH NOTE ON THEM. THANK YOU!



## **Helping Our Neighbors Around the World With KIVA Loans**

The Outreach Ministry made five loans this month through KIVA to women in three countries. We were able to loan \$588.00 from other loans we have made that have been repaid. KIVA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. KIVA works with micro finance institutions on five continents to provide loans to people without access to traditional banking systems.

The first loan was made to Juana in Nicaragua. Juana works raising pigs, which is an important source of income for her family. She will use the funds to buy three pigs to fatten and veterinary supplies to keep them healthy during their development. This investment will permit her to improve rearing conditions, reduce risks, and prepare for better results at the time of sale. With more solid production, Juana hopes to increase her income and provide greater economic stability for her household, continuing to work with dedication and responsibility.

Two loans were given to women who live in El Salvador where the average annual income (USD) is \$5,744.00. Maria Magdalena studied until third grade. She is married and lives with her husband, who is involved in construction. She also lives with her three children. Two of her children are young and are studying at the community school. The older child is presently employed. Maria's primary work is making and selling tortillas, a business she has developed in her home over several years. She learned this work from her mother, who also was engaged in this work. She manages her business daily from 5AM until 2PM. Before beginning her business, she was engaged in domestic work. With the loan, Maria will purchase six quintals of corn and two propane gas cylinders - supplies necessary for making and selling tortillas. Maria's goal is to continue strengthening her business in order to generate more income and, in the future, to improve the roof on her home.

Maria Santos also lives in El Salvador. Maria completed her education up to the third grade. She currently lives with her partner, who works in commerce, and her son who is also engaged in commercial activities. She prepares and sells breakfasts and lunches - a business she started about a year ago, driven by the desire to earn more income and improve her family's living conditions. To run her business, she travels about two kilometers to her sales location and receives help from her partner with various tasks. She has extensive experience making and selling tortillas and managing a shop. She will use the loan to purchase pots and pans, enabling her to increase the production capacity of her breakfast and lunch business. Maria aims to expand her business and upgrade her facilities to provide better service. Additionally, she and her family plan to make improvements to their home.

Two loans were given to women who live in Kenya where the average annual income (USD) is \$2,549.00. Milka is 60 years old and has been farming for 22 years. As a single grandmother, she works hard to support and care for her grandchildren. She will use the loan to purchase animal feed and renovate her cow shed, improving the productivity of her farm. Milka hopes to use the increased profits to strengthen her farming business and provide a better education and future for her grandchildren.

Zipporah also lives in Kenya. She is 48 years old, married, and has no minor children. She has supported a family of three through dairy and crop farming for the past 10 years. She will use the loan to purchase a dairy cow. She will use the anticipated profits to expand her business to meet market demand. Her dream is to be financially stable and successful in life.

Learning about these 5 women and their efforts to support their families is inspirational. It is a blessing for Pilgrim to be able to help them. If you would like to learn more about KIVA see their website [www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org) or talk to Peg Bradley or any member of the Outreach Ministry.



### **Sunday School**

The school year is upon us and we can't wait for Sunday School to begin! Please take a moment to register your students for Sunday School using [this link](#) or with the paper copy found on the youth bulletin board. We are so excited to welcome back our students!

A reminder that, based on feedback from our families, the Christian Education Ministry has moved Sunday School to take place during the church service. All children will begin worship with their families, and after approximately 15 minutes, they will be dismissed to attend Sunday School.

On the first Sunday of each month, there will be no Sunday School. This gives children the opportunity to remain in worship and participate in Communion with their families.

We are excited about this change and hope it provides a meaningful balance of worship and learning!

### **Teacher, Shepherd, and Youth Group Leader Sign Up**

**We still need you!** Please consider serving as a teacher or shepherd in the Sunday School program. Lessons are provided to you and no prior teaching experience is needed. Please fill out [this link](#) or stop by the youth bulletin board to find the sign up sheet. We would love to have you join the team!

### **After Church Care**

Because Sunday School is now offered during the church service, we are excited to offer after-church care for school-aged children so that parents and guardians can continue to participate in adult education programming following worship.

Advance registration is required. Parents and guardians must register their child one month in advance. Each month, a registration link will be included in the Quill so families can sign up for the following month. Please [click here](#) to register for the month of September.

### **Youth Group**

We are excited to announce that we are expanding our Youth Group offerings for the upcoming school year! Each Sunday following church service we will be offering time for youth in grades 6-12 to gather, have fun, and build friendships. Youth Group will be a welcoming space where students can be themselves, connect with others, and enjoy a variety of games, activities, outings, service projects, and just plain fun! Our first meeting of the year will be Sunday, September 20th from 10:15-11:15 in the youth room.

Please fill out [this form](#) to register!

### **Intergenerational Fellowship Nights**

Mark your calendars! Our Intergenerational Fellowship Nights are back and full of fun, meaningful activities designed to bring all ages together. Whether you're young or simply young at heart, everyone is welcome, from long-time members to visiting friends.

Our first Intergenerational Night of the year is a fun evening of tie-dye shirt making! Join us at church on Friday, September 18, from 6:00–7:30 p.m. for an evening of creativity, fun, and fellowship.

Participants should bring a 100% cotton white T-shirt to dye. The Christian Education Ministry will provide all of the tie-dye materials.

This event is being hosted by our church's Open and Affirming Coalition. We hope you'll join us and make something colorful to take home!

### **Thank You**

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Community Family Fun Night a great success. We are so proud to have been able to provide a night of togetherness for our community. So many of you dedicated your time and energy to contribute to our event and we can't thank you enough!

~~~~~

Gratitude Moments:

~~~~~

### **From Membership and Evangelism**

#### **Fondue Fest – September 12**

Pilgrim will again have a table at Fondue Fest on September 12 on Main Street. Please check out the poster in the Narthex and signup to be a part of this fun day! We need at least 2 people at our table through-out the day (the more the merrier!) and will have giveaways to help share our message of love and inclusion. Thank-you! Membership and Evangelism Ministry

#### **A FYI Regarding the Infant/Toddler Room**

Considering toys that are age appropriate and can be disinfected, the Infant/Toddler Room next to the Pastors' Office has been re-organized. Some toys were donated for an upcoming rummage sale – mainly duplicates, stuffed animals, and those with small/choke-able parts. Anything broken, cracked, incomplete or unsafe was disposed of.

We understand that most of the toys in that room were lovingly donated, and are grateful for that generosity. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Vicki Lamb or Sue Schmitz.

~~~~~

Memorial Garden Update

The Memorial Garden is now complete with over 350 new native flowers and shrubs. Local Legacy LLC was hired to design and plant flowers in the Meditation Garden surrounding Ruth Sandidge's tree.

A Memorial Garden dedication service will be held on Sunday, September 20th. The worship service will conclude with a short dedication prayer and a walk through the Memorial Garden space that surrounds Ruth Sandidge's tree which leads over to the Prairie Garden. Donations for the Memorial garden can be made anytime to help with the upkeep and maintenance.

Anyone wishing to spread ashes in the Memorial Garden can start the process by filling out the Memorial Garden application form available on the information table in the Narthex or available from Amy in the church office.

There will be a raffle fundraiser held in November with the chance to win wreaths made by Judie Behnke. We thank Judie for the generous donation of 4 decorative wreaths for this fundraiser.

Tickets for the raffle will be sold on November 1, 8 and 15 after the worship services and the winning tickets will be drawn after the worship service on November 15. Tickets are one for \$5 or three for \$10. General donations to help maintain the Memorial Garden can be made at any time to Pilgrim UCC for the Memorial Garden fund #118.

Respectfully submitted by Gary Ring, Memorial Garden chairperson.



~~~~~



# SEPTEMBER

*birthdays*

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| Kevin Berens        | Sept 2  |
| Thomas Cornell      | Sept 3  |
| Lucia Walter        | Sept 8  |
| Juls Voss Hayibor   | Sept 11 |
| Billy Goodacre      | Sept 12 |
| Jane Steinke        | Sept 12 |
| Carter Mittelstaedt | Sept 13 |
| Patti Burns         | Sept 15 |
| Jim Wamser          | Sept 15 |
| Christopher Jackson | Sept 15 |
| Olivia Friedel      | Sept 20 |
| Andrew Curl         | Sept 21 |
| Kristie Luckow      | Sept 28 |

## Ushers for September

| Date    | 9:00 Service               |
|---------|----------------------------|
| Sept 6  | Jim & Dianne Bentley       |
| Sept 13 | Deb & Jim Wamser           |
| Sept 20 | Avery & Barb Geiger        |
| Sept 27 | Steven & Rachel Wicihowski |
|         |                            |

## Welcomers for September

| Date    | 9:00 Service |
|---------|--------------|
| Sept 6  | Gary Ring    |
| Sept 13 | Fran Schmid  |
| Sept 20 | Avery Geiger |
| Sept 27 | Randy Stutz  |
|         |              |



# SEPTEMBER

*anniversaries*

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Heather & Joshua Goetsch  | Sept 2  |
| Tina & Mike Potter        | Sept 9  |
| Dawn & Bart Dahlke        | Sept 10 |
| Beth & Mike Fedyszyn      | Sept 15 |
| Patti & Bill Burns        | Sept 16 |
| Laura & John Hawkins      | Sept 16 |
| Noreen & Stuart Henderson | Sept 26 |

## Worship Leaders September

| Date    | 9:00 Service       |
|---------|--------------------|
| Sept 6  | Sue Kaiser         |
| Sept 13 | Noreen Henderson   |
| Sept 20 | Joel Deaner-Rogers |
| Sept 27 | Linda Stutz        |
|         |                    |

**Pilgrim UCC Church Council Meeting  
June 15, 2026 (No July Meeting)**

Present: Jim Bentley, Linda Stutz, Wendy Ellison, Avery Geiger, Patty Minter, Ron McCreedy, Fran Schmid, Dixie Sullivan, Jean Wright for Peg Bradley

Guests: Tina Potter

Jim welcomed everyone and established a Quorum. And opened with prayer at 6:00 PM

**Secretary's Report:** Linda made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections as made, Ron seconded the motion. Minutes accepted as provided by Unanimous Consent.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Report attached. Report passed with unanimous consent. Jim made the motion and Linda seconded it.

**Vice President's Report:** Linda reported there has been concern raised again about the volume of the organ being too loud. She will speak to Chris.

1. Reviews of Amy and Michael will be completed
2. Request for an additional bulletin board. Linda will talk to Bill Burns to see if he is willing to build it.

**President's Report:**

Jim made a motion that the Church Council designate that portion of Reverend Jeffrey Dodson's compensation designated "Housing Allowance" as stated by the terms of the Call Agreement and any subsequent amendments to provide for his housing and related expenses. Call agreement was approved by the congregational meeting on June 7, 2026. Linda seconded the motion, motion passed with unanimous consent.

**Pastor's Report: Report attached.** May 16 – June 12

1. Met with 17 people for short-walk in counseling.
2. Attended 12 meetings
3. Special Services: provided 19

**Old Business:**

**New Business:**

1. Request for scholarship for Grandma and me camp was made. Jim made a motion that the monies be provided from the allocated trust fund. Fran seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent for them to go to Grandma and Me Church Camp.
2. Tina Potter brought up a perspective fund raising opportunity. She suggested a Dinner and Entertainment which we would sell tickets to attend. Perhaps \$25/ ticket. It would occur in the spring as the Ham Dinner is in the fall. She suggested that we would have volunteers cook a simple meal and then have church members perform the entertainment as well as a silent Auction. The council discussed being able to get enough volunteers as we have issues with getting enough for the Ham Dinner and other volunteer opportunities. The council will discuss this at a later date. Tina is willing to be the lead in this project.

### 3. Ministry Reports:

- **Worship and Music:** Steven Wicuhowski (Council Rep.) : Report attached
  1. The dissolvable paper has arrived for the prayer cross. The current prayers will be gathered and set aside until we have another service to properly dispose of. Linda will put an article in the Quill regarding the use of the new paper.
  2. There is a schedule of individuals for the 'Young at Heart' section of the Service.
  3. Summer Music also has a schedule of ' Special Music'
  4. The Ministry has developed a guideline statement regarding special music per request to have some reference point on how things should be handled.
- **Adult Education:** Dixie Sullivan (Council Rep) No minutes
- **Christian Education** Dixie Sullivan(Council Rep.) Minutes attached.
  1. Sunday School time change + curriculum decision is on hold until new 2026 – 2027 program year until Pastor starts.
  2. Family Fun Night – save the date ( August 6<sup>th</sup>) – sign up sheet will be available to help out
  3. Evaluating & Planning 2026 – 2027 program year for Intergenerational Night
- **Property and Maintenance:** Avery Geiger ( Council Rep)
- **Lay Life & Leadership:** Patty Minter (Council Rep): Minutes attached
  1. Hosted coffee hour/celebration after service to welcome new settled Pastor. Reverend Dodson
  2. A sign has been posted in the Kitchen with directions on what needs to be done when the Kitchen is used for special occasions
  3. Thank you to those that assisted in the coffee hour on June 7.
- **Stewardship & Finance:** Ron McCreedy (Council Rep): Minutes attached
  1. Monthly Income needed to meet Budgeted expenses: \$18,771
  2. Sunday offering and pledges – only May \$11,563
  3. May (offering & pledges) were below average - \$4,556
  4. May, overall- Budget is on track with spending and income.
  5. UCC, strength of the Church Offering for April/May – total \$815
  6. Fund Raising Type Dinner with auctions prepared for the June Council presentation.
- **Membership and Evangelism:** Fran Schmid (Council Rep.) Minutes attached
  1. Wise is working with NAMI on a series of classes (Hearts and Minds) to be held in January and February of 2027 which would be open to the community.
  2. Pride Picnic June 28<sup>th</sup>
  3. Fondue Fest application is approved and a sign up poster will go up Mid July
  4. We have added 6 new members, had 4 new confirmands and had one couple ask to be removed from the membership in May.
- **Christian Outreach:** Jean Wright for Peg Bradley (Council Rep.) Minutes attached.
  1. 21 birthday pans were taken to Fondy Food Pantry. Almos \$500 was donated on Blanket Sunday
  2. July begins our annual Back to School collections
  3. We have a tentative plan for Sept – Dec. Collections.

#### **Committee Reports:**

- **Nominating Committee**
- **Ham Dinner**
- **Memorial Fund Committee:**
- **Green Team:** Minutes attached.

#### **SCRIP**

- **Trust Fund Report:** Via email the council reached unanimous consent to release the funds to the following recipients. Steve made the motion, Wendy Seconded it, via E-mail.
- **Pilgrim UCC – 30% allocation: \$1,879.30**
  - **Pilgrim UCC Building Fund – \$521.17**
  - **Kathy's House – Milwaukee – \$1,000.00**
  - **Church World Services Menstrual Kits – \$500.00**
  - **Habitat for Humanity Fond du Lac – \$1,000.00**
  - **UCC Church Camp Roots & Wings – \$500.00**
  - **United Way Transportation Fund – \$1,000.00**
  - **Solutions Center Youth Services – \$1,000.00**
  - **Back Bay Mission – \$1,000.00**
  - **World Central Kitchen – \$1,000.00**
  - **Rosenow School Student Services – \$773.00**
  - **Fond du Lac High School Student Services – \$773.00**
- **ONA: Minutes submitted**
- **Pastoral Support**
- **Search Committee:** Seated Pastor has been chosen; Reverend Jeffery Dodson
- **Memorial Garden:** report attached.
  1. There is a plan to have a dedication service for the Memorial Garden on Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>.
  2. Donations to help maintain the Memorial Garden can be made to the Pilgrim UCC Memorial Graden fund #118

#### **Celebrations**

#### **Information Sharing Adjournment:**

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Wendy Ellison, Church Council Secretary.





# SEPTEMBER

| SUN                                                                          | MON                                                                  | TUES                                  | WED                            | THUR | FRI | SAT               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|-----|-------------------|
|                                                                              |                                                                      | 1<br>12:30pm<br>Christian<br>Outreach | 2                              | 3    | 4   | 5                 |
| 6<br>9am Worship<br>**BPs after<br>service**                                 | 7<br>Labor Day<br>Office Closed                                      | 8<br>11am P & M<br>5pm M & E          | 9<br>4:30pm Worship<br>Meeting | 10   | 11  | 12<br>Fondue Fest |
| 13<br>9am Worship<br>10am Adult<br>Forum                                     | 14<br>10am COP<br>12:30pm<br>Expanding<br>Horizons<br>5pm CE         | 15<br>1pm Book Club                   | 16<br>10am PCOP                | 17   | 18  | 19                |
| 20<br>9am Worship<br>Memorial<br>Garden<br>Dedication<br>10am Adult<br>Forum | 21<br>12:30pm<br>Expanding<br>Horizons<br><br>6pm Council<br>Meeting | 22<br>**Quill<br>Deadline**           | 23                             | 24   | 25  | 26                |
| 27<br>9am Worship<br>10am Adult<br>Forum                                     | 28<br>12:30pm<br>Expanding<br>Horizons                               | 29                                    | 30                             |      |     |                   |

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
535 Stow Street  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935-2865  
Phone: 920-921-0415  
Email: pilgrim.info@pilgrimuccfdl.org  
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. Jeffrey Dodson |
| 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.