



THE PILGRIM QUILL

OCTOBER 2026

Rev. Jeffrey Dodson

October 2026



Inspired

Active Souls and Living Spirits

Pilgrim United Church of Christ Fond du Lac

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven..."

Matthew 5:3

Dear friends,

Our fall worship theme is *InSpired: Active Souls and Living Spirits* (Wisdom of Solomon 15:11). By focusing on inspiration, I want to talk about the ways in which we feel inspired in our faith life, and how we can inspire others.

This topic has been a wonderful way for me to get to know each of you as your new minister. Thank you to all who I have already shared with me, and I look forward to the many more conversations that I will get to have. These conversations are heartwarming, comforting, and, dare I say... inspiring. YES!

After last month's Quill article, when I spoke with people about what inspires them, I heard the good stuff. But occasionally something else came up in these conversations: *disappointment*. It appears in our personal lives, in our politics, in our health, and yes, even in the church. We're human beings, so of course we feel both inspired and disappointed. Sometimes it feels that disappointment is a stronger driving force than inspiration, and causes us to react, rather than lead.

I wonder how do we steer away from the bottomless pit of disappointment? How do we lead from our inspiration?

Jesus once preached a good sermon on being disappointed. In the Gospel of Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus lays out the disappointments we experience in faith in a sermon that has come to be known as the Beatitudes. He said:

- 3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 4 *Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*
- 5 *Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*
- 6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*
- 7 *Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*
- 8 *Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*
- 9 *Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.*
- 10 *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

The promises here aren't necessarily that we will have love, hope and faith NOW. Or that all is well NOW.

It is a promise of blessedness. Now.

God meets us in our disappointment. When we are frustrated about how things are going at work or school, God blesses us. When we have complicated relationships with our friends or family, God blesses us. When we worry about what the news of the day will bring, God blesses us.

This blessing is an affirmation that when you are sad, you will know the kingdom of heaven. For Jesus, crying is comfortable. The quiet nobodies are in charge. Peacemaking is cool. The bullied kids are the mustard seeds of the world.

For Jesus, disappointment leads to blessedness. And blessedness leads to being inspired. We see it happen over and over again in the gospel.

I love this gospel. I love it deeply in my bones because it is such a different invitation into God's love than I see promoted out in the world, a world that seems filled with a commercialized and consumable Christianity. Jesus doesn't promise us that we can have it all now. Instead he tells us that God's blessing is for us, now. No matter who we are or where we are on life's journey.

Journeys are hard. Making a transition is never as easy as we think it will be. For me, starting a new ministry at Pilgrim in Fond du Lac has been inspiring. But that doesn't mean it has been without questions, surprises, setbacks, or blessings. I have to remind myself that when things don't go as expected, God is still there, blessing me.

We pause in the midst of any journey so that we can rest, reset, and breathe. When we take a moment to catch our breath, we are also letting our spirit catch up with God, who already arrived before we got there. This catching up often sounds like letting out a sigh of relief: “woooo.” I think this is the sound of the Holy Spirit reminding us that we are beloved, we are blessed. It is no coincidence that in Greek the Holy Spirit is called both pneuma (Hebrew ruach=breath) and paraclete (Greek=advocate, comforter). Every journey needs our breathe. Every journey needs an advocate. Every sigh of relief gives us both breath and comfort, which is a blessing.

The gospel is the good news that moves us from our places of disappointment to blessedness, and we need to be blessed to have inspiration, for inspiration is the experience of being filled with the holy breath of God.

We cannot totally avoid feeling disappointed. God knows this, and God does not want us to be leading from our disappointment. It’s bad leadership. So God blesses us, and goes with us. God inspires us by giving us a glimpse and a taste of the Kin-dom of Heaven. For some, it’s a glimpse of unconditional love. For others, it’s a taste of food and water and safety. For me, it is being supported by you, my faith community, especially when I need to catch my breath. This is what inspires me in my faith, and why I love our church.

Inspiration, disappointment, and blessedness. Seems like a good gospel to me. Sounds like good news that I need to hear. Perhaps you need to hear it, too.

In justice, kindness, and humbled by God’s love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey Dodson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Rev. Jeffrey Dodson



Worship at Pilgrim UCC

Inspired: Active Souls & Living Spirits

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

Sunday, October 11

Inspired Invitation

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 22:1-14, The parable of the unwelcome guest

Sunday, October 18

Inspired Allegiance

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 22:15-22, A teaching about the emperor and God

Sunday, October 25

Inspired Giving: There Our Hearts Will Be

Stewardship Campaign Kick-off, Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 6:21, Divine Treasure

Sunday, November 1

Inspired Souls

Communion, All Souls & Saints Sunday, Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

9:00 am Worship

Matthew 23:1-12, Humble yourselves

3:00 PM - Installation Service for Rev. Jeffrey Dodson

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

OCTOBER 4 - COFFEE FELLOWSHIP – NO SESSION



October 11

The History of Free and Fair Elections – Are They in Jeopardy?

Leader: Dr. Michael Jacobs

Professor of History U. W. Platteville

Important topic! As we prepare to vote in November, Dr. Jacobs will remind us of where this great privilege began and what is at risk in the current political climate.

October 18

Churches and Elections: Do's and Don'ts

Leader: Rev. Breanna Illene

Ecumenical Innovation/Justice Initiatives W.C.C

Got questions?! Rev. Breanna will discuss how churches can be impactful in speaking for humanity and justice and yet stay within the guidelines set forth for churches.

October 25

Dementia

Leader: Alyssa Sommerfeldt

Aging /Disability Resource Center Specialist

Do you know someone who is suffering from dementia? Ms. Sommerfeldt from our Fondy Resource Center will stop in to talk about dementia, its early signs, current treatments and how we can assist those we love.

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



October 5

Buddhism 101

Leader: Reishin Denise Leong

Hollow Bones/Zen River Sangha

We have so many questions! How are we alike? How are we different? Reishin Denise will join us to share the beliefs, practices and heart of Buddhism.

October 12

Guns to Garden Tools

Rev. Jeff Wild

We are grateful to be able to offer this unique opportunity! Join us as Rev. Jeff reflects on violence in the Bible and also does a demonstration where he forges guns into garden tools. **BRING FRIENDS!**

October 19

Beginnings of a Spirituality of Humility Part 1

Leader: Dr. Gary Boelhower

Dr. Boelhower will explore a tiny sampling of some of the ancient and contemporary writings about a spirituality of humility, in particular Saint Benedict, Saint Teresa of Avila, Rumi, and Beverly Lanzetta.

October 26

Practices of a Spirituality of Humility Part 2

Leader: Dr. Gary Boelhower

In our second session we will focus on spiritual practices in several dimensions of our lives that develop humility or facilitate the stance of openness, receptivity to diversity, not knowing, and attention to the mystery.



Christian Outreach
COATS FOR KIDS...A Pilgrim Tradition



Traditions are an important part of church life.

Here at Pilgrim the Coats for Kids collection sponsored by the Christian Outreach Ministry is one of our traditions.

Through this tradition, we provide new and gently used coats for the children in our community. Every child deserves a warm coat for Wisconsin's cold and snowy winters. October 1 - 29 we invite you to bring a coat for a child in Fond du Lac who might not have one without your donation. Remember, little ones grow quickly and last year's coat may not fit. Also, larger coats are needed for the older kids. Place the coats on the shelves or in the box in the church entryway. They will be distributed by the Salvation Army to Fond du Lac children.

Your participation in this Pilgrim tradition will feel like a "warm hug" to kids in our community.

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### **Pilgrim Compost Bins Are for All to Use**

Everyone at Pilgrim is welcome to compost at the bins located behind the church.

Here's how it works: grab a covered container to collect your kitchen waste at home—an old ice cream pail, a 5-gallon bucket, retired Tupperware, whatever you've got on hand. When it's convenient (no rush!), bring it to church and dump the contents into one of the bins.

A few hints: smaller pieces break down faster, so give your scraps a rough chop, especially citrus peels. Crushed eggshells decompose quicker too. A full list of what's compostable is posted on the bulletin board, but the simplest rule of thumb is: if it grows, it goes.

A couple of exceptions: please skip animal products—meat, eggs, or milk—since they attract unwanted critters. And hold off on yard waste like grass clippings, which fills the bin up too fast.

Why bother? When food waste ends up in the landfill, it rots and releases methane—a greenhouse gas even more potent than carbon dioxide. Composting keeps it out of the waste stream entirely.

Once you start composting, you'll likely become more aware of what you're tossing—which often means you end up wasting less food in the first place.. A win-win, however you slice it.

If you have questions, ask a Green Team member.

### **Mulching Leaves saves Time and Nutrients**

We have said it before, but old habits are hard to break. So we are sharing this information again.

As an alternative to raking up all of your leaves, try mulching up moderate amounts of leaves with a lawnmower. This can be done during normal lawn mowing. Just don't allow the leaves to mat and make sure that ample grass shows through. This will save you work and time, add nutrients to your lawn, and reduce windblown leaves in your neighborhood.

If you really like to rake, composting your leaves in a backyard garden is another alternative which will provide you with useful organic material next year.

### **Pill Bottle Collection**

We began collecting amber-colored pill bottles one year ago, October 2025. We were somewhat cautious at first, unsure whether we could manage the collection. Thanks to everyone for following directions by removing labels and washing the bottles in soapy water to remove any sticky residue and assure that the inside clean.

We also want to express our thanks to those who have contributed to shipping costs. Recent postage rate increases have added \$8.00 to the cost of each box we ship. So these contributions are essential.

With the one year mark, the Green Team will be evaluating the program.

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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!

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**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!!



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October 2026

October 4th Blood Pressures with Fran Schmid

A blood pressure reading is an easy way to gauge how hard your heart is working to pump blood through your insides. Fran Schmid will be available after the worship service on October 4th to take blood pressures in the room across from the Office.

October is National Spine Health Awareness Month

This is your reminder – Back and neck pain are among the leading causes of disability worldwide. We carry the weight of our stress on our shoulders and then look down at our phones and tablets for (seems like) hours at a time. And, Text Neck is a real thing with its own insurance code and treatment plan.

This is your reminder – Prevention boils down to healthy lifestyle practices like being active, not using tobacco/nicotine, balanced nutrition (healthy weight, calcium, Vitamin D) using large muscles (legs) with lifting, stress management, stretching, balancing and low impact exercise, and not ignoring pain. Your Primary Provider will want to see you if you have pain that does not resolve with rest, which travels to your arms or legs, or if it affects your ability to urinate or control a bowel movement.

This is your reminder - Spine health affects posture, mobility, nerve function, and overall well-being. So, follow me... shoulders up – shoulders back – chin up – 3 slow deep breaths – smile. Repeat multiple times throughout each day.

More Reminders! It's the start to Cold and Flu Season

Most germs are spread through touching contaminated surfaces and/or by breathing in microscopic droplets from someone's cough/sneeze/breath. Viral infections can be contagious before symptoms appear. The best defense is to wash your hands – with soap and water - before eating, after going to the bathroom, when visibly dirty and if you find yourself within 6 feet of someone who's sick. Remember to cough and sneeze in your sleeve if you don't have a tissue handy – and remind your friends to do the same. Vaccines take about 2 weeks to help the body make antibodies so getting one in October is perfect timing....

Rank in the order of (possible) germ grossness:

1. The door-handle inside a public restroom.
2. A shared computer key board
3. Any remote
4. Car door handle
5. Dr.'s office waiting room chairs with arms
6. Kitchen sponge
7. Bathroom hand towel
8. Shopping cart handle
9. Money
10. A pen off Amy's desk

(I just wanted to get your attention before you picked up that sandwich.....)

Psalm 26:6 I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar, O Lord.

Medicare Open Enrollment - October 15-December 7

Every year there are changes to Medicare benefits and supplements, and an *opportunity to make any changes to your policy from October 15 - December 7.*

If you have questions, the Elder Benefit Specialist through FDL Co. Senior Services may be reached at 920-929-3521 and the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center Specialist at 920-929-3466. These people are the go-to people for current, accurate, non-advertisement information about Medicare and types of supplements. They do not sell anything - they educate about options.

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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**

Get ready, it's time to start cleaning out those closets, basements, attics, garages, and storage sheds. It is time for Pilgrims fall rummage sale! Sale starts on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and goes through Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>.

If you are donating clothes, they should be clean, without holes and stains. Other items should be clean and in working condition.

Donations can be brought to the church starting September 14<sup>th</sup> and put in the "kindergarten" room in the northwest corner of the church. The church is open from 9:00 until 1:00 Monday through Friday.

**All donations should be brought to church no later than Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**, so that there is time to sort and price before the sale begins.

If you can help prior to the sale or during the sale, we will have sign up sheet in the narthex the beginning of October. All help and donations are appreciated.

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Hello, Pilgrim UCC family and friends!

October brings cooler weather, changing leaves, and—in Pilgrim's narthex—a tree we hope will soon blossom with colorful leaves.

By now, you should have received a letter from Pilgrim's Council notifying Pilgrim members about the revised ONA covenant that Chris Deaner-Rogers and Sue Kaiser presented to the Council in July. The revisions are intended to center the covenant in scripture that calls us to this ministry and to include a challenge scripture that leads us into the future. With the input we received from the congregation, we believe this revision meets that goal. This revised covenant is the version we will vote on at our 2027 Annual Meeting. No additional congregational input sessions are currently planned; however, comments are still welcome. If anything in the covenant revision raises questions or concerns for you, please reach out to the ONA Team: Sue Kaiser, Ceilie Williams, Michelle and Jeff Buck-Stark, and Andrea and Trixie Yttri. Rev. Jeffrey is also actively involved as he settles into ministry at Pilgrim. Depending on the input we receive, we can still revise the covenant before the final vote in 2027 if needed.

With sadness for our team, but with deep gratitude, we share that Chris Deaner-Rogers has stepped away from an active role on the ONA Team. She will continue to help with events as her time allows. We also give thanks for steadfast volunteers Joni Voss Hayibor and Chris Clementi. Chris C. is the artist who made the narthex tree possible. Inspired by the "living multicolor tree" image associated with the wider church ONA logo; the tree invites each person at Pilgrim—including children and each member of a family—to write their name on a leaf and add it to the tree. Our hope is to cover the tree with leaves as a visible expression of support for the covenant. If you are comfortable and would like your pronouns added to the church directory, you may also circle the pronoun printed on your leaf. Adding a pronoun is completely optional—your choice!

We had a blast at Intergenerational Night on Friday, September 18! Nearly thirty people attended. T-shirts were tie-dyed, snacks were enjoyed, a tie-dye-decorated cake and brownies were shared, and games were played. Lesson learned: next time, we need more supplies for all the people who join us! Thank you to Christian Education for inviting ONA to partner in the event.

Café Q's September meal went unmanned, but fortunately there were enough gift cards available to cover the cost. Pilgrim is signed up to provide the December meal. Please let Sue Kaiser know if you can help prepare the meal or donate to it.

As this Quill article is being written on September 22, we are eagerly anticipating two education sessions about the movie *Call Me Malcolm*, scheduled for September 27 and October 4. We hope to have a full house, so please plan to attend. October's educational resource focuses on one of Sue Kaiser's favorite singer-songwriters: Jennifer Knapp.

When Knapp stepped away from her successful Christian music career in 2003, many fans wondered why. Now, she is speaking about both her comeback and her coming out—a topic that has sparked significant conversation among Christian music fans and within the Christian music industry. Pastor Bob Botsford says his heart breaks for her, and Ted Haggard also joins the discussion. The series includes four videos, each approximately ten minutes long.

Parts 1 and 2 are included with this article; Parts 3 and 4 will be included in November's Quill article.

Part One: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xDWc7SvBOA>

Part Two: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0Pm_pPYkYA

With deepest appreciation for all of you! Your Pilgrim ONA Team (October Quill)



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This year's **Ham Dinner will be on November 5, 2026**. In the next few weeks, you will be receiving your tickets that you can sell to you friends and neighbors. There will be an opportunity for you to sign up to help out on that date. Once again, we will be doing a drive through dinner. Our prices will remain the same as last year. I am excited to once again have a successful event. If you have questions about how w you can help, feel free to contact me.

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

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With Gratitude from M&E

Thank-you to all who helped with our table and canopy at Fondue Fest – Mary Berens, Jill Peterson, Tony Penton, Julia Adame, Bruce Lehman, Adam Broten, Jim Bentley, Tracy Abler, Gary Ring, Joni Voss-Hayibor, Sue Schmitz, and especially, Randy and Linda Stutz. It was a fun day with many contacts and positive connections!

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# Pilgrim

## Children and Youth Ministry

### **Sunday School**

There is still time to register for Sunday School! 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!

### **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 October.

### **Job Postings**

We are currently seeking applicants for our Sunday School Coordinator and Nursery Room Attendant positions. Please reach out to Rev. Jeffrey if you would like the full job descriptions and to let him know if you are interested. Please also help spread the word!

### **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**

Join us for our upcoming Blanket-Making Event on Friday, October 16, from 6:00–7:30 p.m. here at the church!

We'll enjoy time together while creating blankets to support our community. All blankets will be donated to The Holy Family Warming Shelter.

We are also collecting fleece donations for this event. 2-yard cuts of fleece are perfect for blanket making. Donations can be brought the night of the event or dropped off in the collection box located in the narthex.

### **Thank You**

I am so thankful for the opportunity to serve as the Child and Youth Ministries Coordinator. It has been such a blessing to work with our children, youth, families, and volunteers, and I am grateful for all of the relationships and memories made along the way. Thank you to everyone who has supported, encouraged, and helped make our ministries possible. I will always be grateful for the time I have been able to spend serving our church in this role, and I look forward to what the future may bring. -Michael

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Gratitude Moments: *Thankful for all the wonderful and accepting people at Pilgrim UCC*

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### **Memorial Garden Wreath & Tool Kit Raffle**



## **Get Your Tickets!**

The Memorial Garden ministry will be hosting a raffle to begin on November 1st and end on November 15th, with sales of raffle tickets taking place before and after service on Nov. 1st, 8th and 15th. There will be 4 different homemade wreaths and a brand new tool kit.

Special thanks to Judie Behnke for the donation of the four wreaths and to Gary Ring for the donation of the tool kit.

The proceeds raised from this raffle will go towards the ongoing maintenance of the Memorial Garden.

Tickets will be available for 1 for \$5 or 3 for \$10. Please take a moment to stop by the table in the narthex to purchase your raffle tickets and help support our Memorial Garden.

You do not need to be present to win. Thanks for support.

## **A Sure Foundation:** The Relationship Between Pastors and Congregations

The **Pastoral Support Committee** is a standing committee in a congregation, with the purpose of supporting a healthy relationship between the pastor and congregants in order to enhance the effectiveness of the church's ministry. The committee serves in two primary ways:

1. As an advisory group to the pastor: sharing ideas, dreams, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor;
2. As a support group for the pastor's leadership: interpreting roles, functions, boundaries, opportunities, and needs of the pastor to the congregation.

Members of Pilgrim's Pastoral Support Committee (PSC) are: Tracy Abler, Peg Bradley, Brian Christensen, Lucia Hoyer, Mike Potter, Steven Wicichowski, and Lynne Zwerg.

In our role as an *advisory group* to Rev. Jeffrey, we invite you to share your personal ideas and/or concerns with any of us. PSC members aim to build bridges for healthy communication by providing safe/brave spaces for honest conversations between persons of concern with the person who has it. This cannot happen when anonymous feedback is provided. Our responses to concerns will be to listen, discern, tend to feelings, get facts, consult our Church Bylaws, review the pastor's job description, and when needed, consult with the Personnel Committee. All joys and concerns will be reviewed with Rev. Jeffrey and regular assessments will be conducted, both of him and of the congregation.

In our role as a *support group*, we believe this is a duty that can be shared by all members of the congregation. However, we can only know how best to support our pastor when we know the expectations, both his and ours. The PSC is using a handbook called, [\*A Sure Foundation\*](#). It is a UCC resource used by ministers serving in local churches as well as the leaders of those churches, striving together to be faithful in ministry. It provides best practices and tools that encourage healthy relationships between pastors and the congregations they serve.

Over the next several months, the PSC will be highlighting sections of the handbook and sharing them in the monthly Quill newsletters. This month we are sharing one of the many covenants in the UCC Ministerial Code. All persons with ministerial standing in the UCC are expected to abide by this code. We feel it is important for everyone to know and support our pastor's ***Covenant With Self and Family***, which includes:

- Tending to their physical well-being by adopting a healthy lifestyle including diet, exercise, and rest, setting time for Sabbath and vacation.
- Being a good steward of their time, talents, and personal financial resources responsibly.
- Accepting responsibility for all debts they incur.
- Refraining from abusive behavior including abusive behavior toward others, the abuse of alcohol, drugs, or any other substance; to seek appropriate care for physical and mental health concerns; and to avoid addictive behaviors.
- Engaging in sexually healthy and responsible behavior.
- Honoring their family commitments, including their family's need for privacy and time together.
- Developing and maintaining personal relationships outside of their ministry setting.

Please join us in supporting Rev. Jeffrey as he lives out these meaningful commitments to himself, his family, and to our congregation.

Faithfully,  
The Pastoral Relations Committee



# OCTOBER

*birthdays*

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Brooklyn Friedel      | Oct 3  |
| Chase Westphal        | Oct 7  |
| Karter Keys           | Oct 9  |
| Susan Roloff          | Oct 9  |
| Weldon Peterson       | Oct 10 |
| Andrea & Trixie Yttri | Oct 14 |
| Thomas Kirchhoff      | Oct 16 |
| Maddie Abler          | Oct 17 |
| Linda Friedel         | Oct 18 |
| James LaLuzerne       | Oct 18 |
| Matthew Steier        | Oct 19 |
| Jean Wright           | Oct 23 |
| Jessica Goodacre      | Oct 25 |
| Samantha Curl         | Oct 26 |
| John Westphal         | Oct 28 |
| Barb Tadych           | Oct 30 |



# OCTOBER

*anniversaries*

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Judi & David Faubel   | Oct 1  |
| Barb & Ron Spies      | Oct 3  |
| Jeanne & Arvin Koepke | Oct 4  |
| Jolene & Jason Schmid | Oct 4  |
| Linda & Randy Stutz   | Oct 27 |

## Ushers for October

| Date   | 9:00 Service               |
|--------|----------------------------|
| Oct 4  | Bart & Dawn Dahlke         |
| Oct 11 | Avery & Barb Geiger        |
| Oct 18 | Bill & Patti Burns         |
| Oct 25 | Jeff & Michelle Buck-Stark |
|        |                            |

## Welcomers for October

| Date   | 9:00 Service |
|--------|--------------|
| Oct 4  | Judie Behnke |
| Oct 11 | Avery Geiger |
| Oct 18 | Fran Schmid  |
| Oct 25 | Gary Ring    |
|        |              |

## Worship Leaders October

| Date   | 9:00 Service     |
|--------|------------------|
| Oct 4  | Sue Kaiser       |
| Oct 11 | Noreen Henderson |
| Oct 18 | Tony Penton      |
| Oct 25 | Sue Schmitz      |
|        |                  |

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
**Church Council Minutes**  
**Monday, August 17, 2026**

Present: Linda Stutz, Peg Bradley, Rev. Jeffrey Dodson, Patty Minter, Avery Geiger, Fran Schmid, Ron McCreedy, Dixie Sullivan, Donna Jost and Guests Sue Kaiser and Christine Diener-Rogers.

Meeting was called to order and Quorum established by Vice President Linda Stutz at 6:00 PM. Linda reviewed Pilgrim's Leadership Covenant,

Rev. Jeffrey led the group in prayer.

Sue K. and Chris R. presented an update on the progress of adopting a revised ONA covenant. They reviewed plans for presentation of the proposed covenant and suggested the introduction of pronouns to name tags and in the directory. They would like to see increased concentration on trans issues. Jim Bentley will be directed to prepare a letter to the congregation members regarding plans for final review of revisions, the tree of support activity and plans to vote on revised ONA covenant at annual meeting February 2027

**Secretary's Report:**

Report attached. Report was approved by unanimous consent after motion by Ron M. and seconded by Fran S.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Report attached. Motion by Avery, second by Patty to accept the report as presented. Passed by unanimous consent.

A request for trust fund allocation of \$325 for continuing education and support for a lay leader was presented by Linda. Motion by Ron, second by Fran to grant this allocation. Motion passed with unanimous consent.

**Pastor's Report attached:**

Rev. Jeffrey shared his enthusiasm for his new position and gratitude for the warm welcome. He described some of the issues he would like to address, particularly for communicating about meeting times and places. He is addressing new member planning which he is planning to do on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the months, electronic storage of church records and his installation, as well as reaching out to various community leaders.

He has arranged for Pastor Steve Stepp to provide coverage when he is unavailable.

**Vice President's Report:**

Plans for Immigration summit. Linda shared information about the email request to council on July 21, 2026. The council voted unanimously to have Pilgrim be a sponsor of the local Immigration Summit held at Marian University July 31-August 1. We supported at the Silver level which was \$250. With that

level of support we sent two member of our church to the event, Dixie Sullivan and Barbara Roder. New furniture for Pastor's office discussed and Reverend Jeffrey has ordered some chairs that he wanted.

#### **Old Business:**

There have been some problems with accessing Notebird. Pastor hopes to utilize Breeze for more church uses.

Need for a centralized scheduling system for times and places for meetings is being addressed.

Rev. Jeffrey needs to know what meetings are scheduled and when. He requests to be informed.

#### **New Business:**

Installation plans are in the planning process with October being the anticipated time.

The change in Sunday School time, worship order, child care were briefly discussed.

A Youth Group is being formed with planned meetings 10:15-11:15 on Sunday Mornings.

Some high school youth may not have completed Confirmation for various reasons and Rev. Jeffrey would like to explore inviting HS age youth to participate.

#### **Ministry Reports:**

##### **Worship:**

Paul Thelen will do a Jazz service on Sunday, Sept. 27.

Hanging of the greens will be on November 22 after service.

All announcements will be given later in Sunday services to allow the children to proceed to Sunday School after the children's sermon. Announcements are to be pre-approved by the pastor and will be included in the bulletin insert. Verbal announcements to be limited to 2-3.

Sunday school will be held from 9:15 to 10:15. No SS on first Sundays to allow children to participate in communion with their families.

At the September 20 Memorial Garden dedication, the worship service will start in the sanctuary, then move outside for the Memorial Garden dedication and blessing and prairie garden blessing. The benediction will be from the garden.

##### **Christian Education:**

Family Fun Night had a good turnout with 96 registering

##### **Youth Education:**

CE ministry is developing a plan for children whose parents wish to attend the Adult Ed. sessions. Parents need to request by the 15th of prior month to allow for staffing plans.

September 13, Celebration Sunday, will have USA 250th anniversary as the theme. An all church potluck is planned

The ministry hopes to plan for a mission trip in the summer of 2027.

##### **Adult Education:**

Guns to Garden Tools demo is planned for October 12<sup>th</sup> at Expanding Horizons.

Making plans for future educational sessions.

**Property and Maintenance:**

The pastor's office was thoroughly cleaned.

The carpet in fellowship hall was wet cleaned. The carpet in the lounge and pastor study was deep cleaned.

The A/C for kitchen/fellowship hall was broken and repaired at a cost of \$3254.

Based on survey results, the ministry is exploring making a carport door handicap accessible and making 1 bathroom (women's) ADA compliant and making both bathrooms in the worship wing unisex bathrooms. Work is contingent on bids still to come.

Internet and telephone services have been changed from Spectrum to TDS. This will cut our costs in half for those services.

**Stewardship & Finance:**

Income has been keeping pace with needs in 2026.

Rev. Jeffrey suggested that some supplies for the Pledge Drive are available from the conference.

On-line giving is being encouraged.

Pledge Drive plans are in the works.

Discussed possible Warming Shelter fund drive.

\$1313 was collected in 2nd offer on 8/16 for the Wisconsin Conference Disaster Relief Fund related to the Menasha tornado.

**Lay Life and Leadership:**

Patty has been re-arranging and labeling the contents of the kitchen cabinets.

Guidelines for hosting potluck meals at Pilgrim need to be updated. Please contact Patty with any suggestions.

Diners club will be on hold until January.

**Membership and Evangelism:**

Our presence at Pride Picnic was positive

Fondue Fest on September 12 will be the next event. Please sign up on poster in Narthex.

Welcome folders are up to date with fall Adult Ed. info.

**Christian Outreach:**

The Alternative Gift Fair planning meeting will be held Wed., Aug. 26 at 6 pm. Jean Wright is chairing the fair this year.

Kiva loans were made. \$588 was loaned to 5 women in Kenya, El Salvador and Nicaragua. The September Quill will have an article describing the women and the loans.

We will be collecting food for the Fondy Food Pantry in September.

**Committee Reports:**

**Nominating Committee**

**Ham Dinner: organizational meeting August 26 at 4:30pm**

**Memorial Fund Committee**

**Green Team:** To date, collection of soft plastics has resulted in recycling 1.000 pounds of plastic. Ice cream cones were given out as part of the last week of "Make this Summer the Last Straw" on July 26.

**Scrip**

**ONA**—See report at beginning of Council meeting minutes.

**Pastoral Support Committee:** Gathered with Rev. Jeffrey; using "A Sure Foundation" for guidance. Meeting scheduled for August 19<sup>th</sup>

**Search Committee:** Final closure meeting to occur after installation service

**Memorial Garden:** Memorial Garden and Prairie Garden dedication will occur Sunday September 20. There will be envelopes included in the bulletin for people to donate to the continued care and maintenance of the garden. Extra envelopes will be placed in pew pockets for ongoing support. Judie Behnke has donated 3 decorative wreaths to raffle for garden support.

**Investment Committee:** Due to the large balance in the National Exchange checking account, it was decided to move excess money to a fund where interest can be earned. No other changes were advised at this time.

**WISE:** meeting scheduled for August 25, 5pm

**Celebrations:**

Patty and Mark are celebrating their 15 year anniversary.  
Donna is planning a trip to Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Schmid, Acting Secretary



| SUN                                                                                         | MON                                                         | TUES                                              | WED                                                       | THUR                                                        | FRI                                                                                | SAT                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                             |                                                             |                                                   |                                                           | 1<br>9am Yoga<br><br>6pm SAA<br>7pm Choir practice          | 2<br><br>7pm Alanon                                                                | 3                                                                                                              |
| 4<br>9am Worship<br>No Sunday School<br>10am Coffee Hour<br>**BPs after service**<br>6pm NA | 5<br><br>1 pm Expanding Horizons<br><br>5pm CE              | 6<br><br>12:30 Christian Outreach                 | 7                                                         | 8<br><br>6pm SAA<br>7pm Choir practice                      | 9<br><br>7pm Alanon                                                                | 10                                                                                                             |
| 11<br>9am Worship<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10am Adult Forum<br><br>6pm NA                 | 12<br>10am COP<br>1pm Expanding Horizons<br><br>6pm CE      | 13<br><br>11am M&E<br><br>5pm P&M                 | 14<br><br>3:30pm Worship Meeting<br>4pm Memory Garden Mtg | 15<br><br>Rummage Sale<br><br>6pm SAA<br>7pm Choir practice | 16<br><br>Rummage Sale<br><br>6pm Intergenerational Night - Blankets<br>7pm Alanon | 17<br><br>Rummage Sale                                                                                         |
| 18<br>9am Worship<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10am Adult Forum<br><br>6pm NA                 | 19<br><br>1pm Expanding Horizons<br><br>6pm Council Meeting | 20<br><br>**Quill Deadline**<br><br>1pm Book Club | 21<br><br>10am PCOP                                       | 22<br><br>9am Yoga<br><br>6pm SAA<br>7pm Choir practice     | 23<br><br>7pm Alanon                                                               | 24                                                                                                             |
| 25<br>9am Worship<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10am Adult Forum<br><br>6pm NA                 | 26<br><br>1pm Expanding Horizons                            | 27                                                | 28                                                        | 29<br><br>9am Yoga<br><br>6pm SAA<br>7pm Choir practice     | 30<br><br>7pm Alanon                                                               | 31<br>Happy Halloween<br> |

**Pilgrim United Church of Christ**  
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**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.