



APRIL 2022

More Truth and Light

“When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him...”

Luke 24:30-31

As I write my article for the April newsletter, I am days away from beginning, what I anticipate will be a transformative time in my personal and spiritual life. A pilgrimage is by all intents and purposes, a holy walk that opens our spirits to receive God’s unexpected grace and love in new and unexpected ways. As I anticipate the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela Basilica, I am remembering the story of Cleopas and friend who were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus when they were joined by a stranger who opened their eyes to ways that God continues to break into our lives in unexpected ways, and that ‘aha!’ moment when we realize that we are in the presence of the Holy!

I shared my plans with the Interim Ministry Support Team that I have been a part since January. I shared with them that I was sorry I would not be with my congregation on Easter and that this was uncomfortable to me. They reminded me that Easter for your congregation will happen with or without me. Easter doesn’t happen because Pastor Dan is in the pulpit. Easter happens despite our vocations, our jobs, and our secular distractions. In my reservations, I realized that I was like Cleopas and his friend – puzzling over things that do not define God’s power and grace and forgetting that a pilgrimage is a journey of the heart and not one contrived by pastors and musicians on Easter morning. Like the stranger who drew close to Cleopas and the friend, the Interim Ministry Support Team opened my eyes to how God is working in my life. They encouraged me to unpack the feelings

of guilt, discomfort, disappointment, vocation, and responsibilities and leave them at home, and allow space for the Holy Spirit to do God’s amazing work in your heart. They reminded me that this was wonderful opportunity for me to experience the season of Lent and Easter morning in a new way and different way. Easter happens. Let it be.

Yes, in the spirit of the Congregational people, ‘the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth of [God’s] holy word’ and although we are on different paths to all that is Holy, we are all still making our pilgrimage to cross of Jesus Christ. Despite our type A personalities, our best intentions, our tangled ball of multiple emotions, the empty tomb is still an invitation to hope and newness that redefines for us, the meaning of Christian discipleship. Easter morning will come in Spain, in Costa Rica, Ukraine, in Washington D.C., Chicago, or in our neighborhoods. Despite what is happening around us and no matter where the Spirit leads us, we will gather at the table on Easter morning with strangers and friends and our eyes will be open in the breaking of the bread and we will proclaim, ***‘were not our hearts burning within in us.’***

Adios mis amigos y amigas!

Pastor Dan



FROM THE MODERATOR -

Stand up and be recognized for who you are - one of the most important pieces to our church.

1Timothy 1:12-14

"I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

Confession of St. Patrick.

"I, Patrick, a sinner, a most simple countryman, the least of all the faithful and most contemptible to many, had for father the deacon Calpornius, son of the late Potitus, a priest, of the settlement [vicus] of Bannavem Taburniae; he had a small villa nearby where I was taken captive. I was at that time about sixteen years of age. I did not, indeed, know the true God; and I was taken into captivity in Ireland with many thousands of people, according to our desserts, for quite drawn away from God, we did not keep his precepts, nor were we obedient to our priests who used to remind us of our salvation. And the Lord brought down on us the fury of his being and scattered us among many nations, even to the ends of the earth, where I, in my smallness, am now to be found among foreigners."

I was driving into work when someone on the radio said that St. Paul's confession and St. Patrick's confessions are very similar in wording and context. Of course this set a fire in my soul to see if it was true. I know St. Paul's confession very well. We read over it (depending on the season of liturgy) once every three years. I have not read St. Patrick's confession at all. After reading it, I realized the confessions are similar, but also different.

Both talk about being sinners, both talk about the transformation that happens and both talk about just being led by God and God's plans. The method of God talking to both gentlemen are different and most of all time and location of their callings. Both give their life and their names to follow God's plan.

Which brings me to an idea; could they go back to "the old way" or their old lifestyles before knowing God and Jesus. I believe we all will come to the same conclusion "no".

Understanding the call St. Paul and St. Patrick from God, it is nearly impossible to do because it is a personal call. Time has shown that when it is God's call, life is changed forever.

But is it possible? We all know that some people give birth to children and leave them. We have all read (or heard) about the number of pets that were adopted during the pandemic but now are left at animal welfare because the owners can not take care of them. My question is what has changed (from the time of St. Paul and St. Patrick) in the definition of the word commitment. Is commitment truly made by only us, affecting only us and we only have ourselves to answer to? NO.

Realize I am talking about commitment in the true sense of the word. The definition of commitment from Google is "the state of quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc" (Thank you Google) How can one be committed when it only fits their schedule? When it only fits what they want to do, or believe that they have all the answers. Is this true commitment based on the meaning of the word itself? How can one say "I am here to give you my time, my money, my skills and talents; as long as it does not affect my personal plans." Is that what God is calling us to do?

When one commits to God and His plans, you can not stand on the sidelines and say "I am committed to this cause" God is not only on Holy Days and Sunday. God's plans are 24/7. God is calling you 24/7 and He is loving you more than 24/7. Remember He loved you before you took your first breath. He continues to love you. He continues to call you. If you attend Pilgrim Faith in person or virtually. God is calling you to take part in the transformation of Pilgrim Faith UCC of Oak Lawn.

If you are afraid of not having energy, time, money, being vulnerable, being hurt; I hear you but I am also here to say, God will help you find the way. I believe this because I live this. During times when we (my small family) did not have money for an upcoming bill, fears of what could happen are totally out of our control. I would pray Philippians 4:6-7 "Do not worry about anything, but in everything prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"

Continued on page 3 →

Sometimes I would pray this weekly, sometimes daily, and a few times, multiple times a day. The peace that comes over my soul, I simply can not place into words. This reading and prayer is the way I can say "I can be committed to this cause" without fear of what could happen because I know that God will protect me, energize me and allow me to continue to do His work. If God is Love then fear is the opposite of Love therefore why allow fear all the control in your life?

You are the most important part of Pilgrim Faith UCC. You are loved by God and this community and even though you might be fearful, God has great plans for you. God will protect you, God will energize you and you will feel God's peace.

No matter who you are, where you are, how much money you have (or don't have), whether or not you believe you can make a difference, God is loving you. God is calling you, are you ready to answer that call without fear?

May God bless you and keep you under His wing of Love.
Mary Weierman

The Confession of St. Patrick, Orthodoxroad website, 3/25/2022, <https://www.orthodoxroad.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/confession-of-st-patrick.pdf>

Feed Our Starving Children Plans!

On Saturday, May 14th 2-3:45 p.m. we will be volunteering at Feed my Starving Children in Aurora, IL. This is a mission that packs healthy meals and ships nutritional food around the world to alleviate hunger for millions of children. What a thrill it is to know that for giving so little time to helps so many of God's children have a healthy meal for a day. We will be packing as many bags of grains and vitamins that we can pack as a group in the time that we are there. We will plan to leave from the church at 1 p.m. and we'll drive to Aurora to volunteer for an hour and 45 minutes. Here is the link to their website and it would be helpful to go to the page and review the mission and work of Feed my Starving Children. **Website address:** <https://www.fmssc.org/about-us>. Please note that as volunteers we are to wear no jewelry, including watches, fit bits, and pierced earrings into the plant. Yes, we will be wearing a hairnet, but the agency makes it very clear that we will still have to remove all jewelry. If you are planning to attend this event, please let Pastor Dan or the Martins know by Saturday, May 7th. We have reserved 10 spots and they are counting on us.

MEMBERSHIP EXPLORATION CLASSES PLANNED!

Pastor Dan will be providing Membership Exploration Classes beginning on Thursday, May 12th beginning at 7 p.m. We will start on time and wrap the classes up by 8 p.m. If you or someone you know is interested in exploring membership at Pilgrim Faith United Church of Christ, please let Pastor Dan. We will receive those who choose to become members during our morning worship on Sunday, June 5th. The purpose of this class is to explore membership and attending the classes does not obligate you to become a member of the congregation. If after you attend the classes, you decide to join, we will welcome you on June 5th. If you choose not to join at this time, you will not be required to attend classes in the future. Instead, you can continue to participate in the life and ministries of Pilgrim Faith U.C.C. Please let Pastor Dan know of your interest by Sunday May 8th. The topics we will cover in class are as follows:

- May 12 Who are we? (*Getting to know one another, mission, and history of Pilgrim Faith*)
- May 19 Tell us about the United Church of Christ (*History, polity, beliefs, mission*)
- May 26 How can I get involved? (*Governance, Plans for the reception of membership*)

Governance, Ministry, Policies, and Constitution Transition

On Sunday, March 6th, the Congregation voted to transition to a new way of governing and doing ministry together. As a congregation we voted to take a year to transition. During this time there will be a team of four (4) people who will be monitoring the progress of the transition and adjust the Constitution and Policies and if all goes as well as expected, the congregation will vote at their annual meeting in 2023 to formally adopt the Constitution and Policies. The four people who have agreed to serve as the monitoring team will be Charles and Peggy Martin, Chris Raap. At our recent Council meeting Roger Dykstra has agreed to be the fourth person to assist in the transition.

In the meantime, we need to organize for the ongoing ministry of Pilgrim Faith United Church of Christ. The Ministry Teams are the **KEY** component to our new structure and there is a team for **EVERYONE**. It is our plan to slowly transition the new structure. The Council is currently meeting on the third Wednesday of each month. **On Sunday, May 22**, following worship, the Council will formally kick-off the ministry teams with an introduction to the work that each team will do and introducing the guiding principles for all ministry teams. Every member is invited and strongly encouraged to be a part of a ministry team. On May 22nd, the Council will share the vision and objectives of the ministry teams and formally invite every member to prayerfully consider which team they feel most called to serve. **On Sunday, June 5th** following worship, the ministry teams will meet for their first meeting. During that time, the team will meet their Council liaison, select their convenor and notetaker, and begin planning for the fall and the work that must be done.

For the meetings on May 22nd and June 5th, the Council will provide snacks for meeting day and will provide for Childcare. All meetings should complete their work by 1 p.m. Ideally, it would be good for all the teams to meet all together on a particular Sunday, however, there may be times throughout the year that a meeting of the team will be better on another day during the week. When you meet in June, there will be an opportunity to talk about this if your team feels that Sundays after worship will not be in the best interest of the team-members. There are some good things happening at Pilgrim Faith. We're making some important decisions and we want **EVERY MEMBER** to be a part of a Ministry Team. Come! Be a part of a team and be a part of a brighter future for our congregation!

BEDS Plus News

In March, the Pilgrim Faith Food Team provided a hot meal for 25 BEDS Plus motel guests. This month's meal consisted of two hamburgers with all the fixings, potato salad and baked beans. We also provided shelf stable items such as oatmeal packets, tuna packets, granola bars, individual servings of fruit, and 40 bottles of water. Thanks go out to members of the team who continue to support the BEDS meals program with monetary donations throughout the past two years. Special thanks to Diane Millar who has volunteered to make Turkey Tetrizzini for the BEDS meal on April 24. If anyone else would like to volunteer to cook any part of the monthly meal, please contact Peggy Martin at 708-819-4618.



Pilgrim Faith BEDS Donates Goods to Assist Ukrainian Refugees

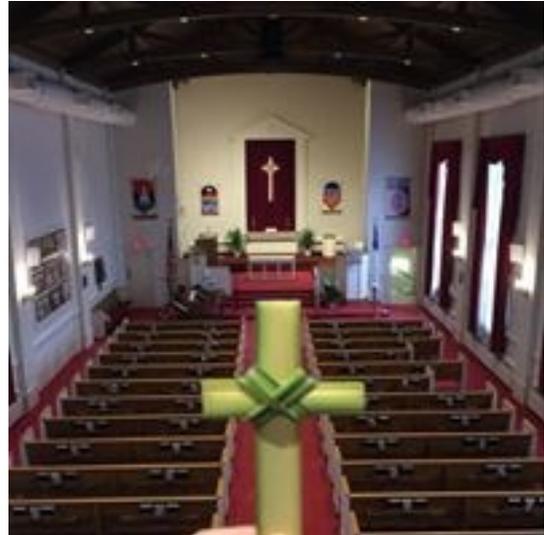
During the past month, many Pilgrim Faith members have donated money to assist the people of war-torn Ukraine. But did you know that surplus donated goods from the BEDS closet have also been donated to the Ukrainian Refugees? Over the past two years that the weekly BEDS Plus shelters have been closed while the homeless are housed in an alternative environment, many of the socks, hats, gloves, scarves, and toiletries that had been collected for the homeless population were going unused. On March 19, the village of Orland Park opened a one-day collection site for items to be shipped to Ukraine. Pilgrim Faith donated two carloads of donated items to the Ukrainian people who are in desperate need right now. Despite this generous donation, the BEDS closet is still stocked with enough items to serve homeless guests when, and if, the BEDS shelter reopens. The members of Pilgrim Faith should feel good about sharing our excess goods with the people of Ukraine!

Thank you for your past donations, but please **do not** bring additional items to the church for BEDS. We are already well stocked.

Psalm Sunday Throwback Pic

Thanks Daune Sebastian for sharing this great pic. A member took this photo on Psalm Sunday a few years ago.

How about you? Do you have any photos you'd like to share with us? Send them to us at office@pilgrimfaith.org.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Meals on Wheels needs
Volunteer Meal Delivery Drivers
in your community!**



Drivers needed Monday thru Friday mornings*

***Routes take 90 minutes to 2 hours to complete**

**For Information or to Volunteer,
please contact us at:**

**Volunteer@cnnssa.org
or call 312-207-5290**



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The Heart of a Woman is Unique- Treat it Kindly

Cardiologist Dr. Rashmi Raghuvir will speak about the unique aspects of women's hearts on Wednesday, April 13 at 6:30 p.m. in partnership with Advocate Aurora Health. This is a hybrid program that will take place in the Library's lower-level meeting rooms. Registration is required for in-person attendance. Those who cannot attend in person can watch the presentation live on our YouTube channel. For more information, please call 708-422-4990, visit www.olpl.org, or use the Ask a Librarian feature on our website.

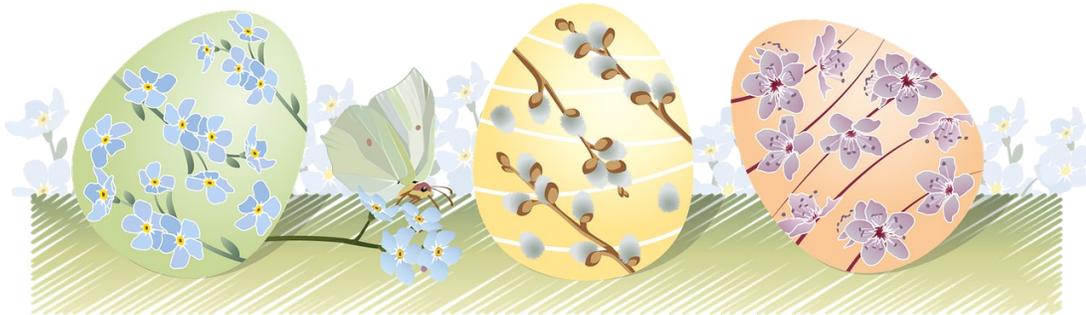
Search Committee Update

The Search Committee continues to discuss profiles as they come in. We are not receiving very many at this time but hope to get more in the new future.

Chris Raap
Chair Search Comm.

Pick your STAR WORD on May 1st!

On May 1st we will not only have a communion but we will also get our Star Word for this year! Don't miss out, please join us for the celebration of communion, and the picking out of a message in the form of a Star Word! We will join together afterwards in a circle to say a prayer of thanks, and sing a song! Please join us!



Church Receipts as of February 28, 2022

	As of FEBRUARY 28, 2022	
	Year-To-Date Actual	Year-To-Date Budget
Receipts		
Pledges	\$ 13,663.74	\$ 12,341.79
Non-Pledged Giving		
Total Receipts (all sources)	\$ 18,450.49	\$ 17,726.01
Disbursements		
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 26,609.76	\$ 20,535.34
Expenses	\$ 13,151.68	\$ 11,299.40
Total Disbursements (all expenses)	\$ 40,237.12	\$ 32,534.74
Net Total	\$ (21,786.63)	\$ (14,808.73)

Please remember to use Amazon Smile when ordering to benefit Pilgrim Faith Church.

Limitless Fun!

On Sunday evening, March 13, the Limitless Youth group from Pilgrim Faith met with the youth from Salem UCC for a joint event. Five members of Limitless and four youth from Salem enjoyed an evening of games, pizza, and conversation hosted at Salem UCC. After a game of Hot Potato and some icebreaker games, pizza and pop were served followed by Minute to Win It games. The evening ended with a video, discussion, and prayer led by Pastor Steve of Salem UCC. The smiles on the faces of the kids reflect the fun that they had together! On Sunday, April 24, the two groups will once again join forces to play miniature golf. Members of Limitless should watch for details about upcoming events in the April youth newsletter.



Hometown Community Cafe
Our Lady of Loretto Church
8925 S. Kostner, Hometown IL
Phone: 708-422-5180



Doors Open from 10am - 1pm
Bingo at 10am
Lunch at 11:30am
Suggested donation: \$2



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National Library Week



Libraries connect you to more than just books. We connect you to technology, programs, ideas, classes and, most importantly, we connect you to each other. Join us from April 3-9 to help us celebrate **National Library Week** with activities and giveaways that emphasize why we love what we do. Please refer to our website (www.olpl.org) for details.

Food Pantry Update

The Pilgrim Faith Food Pantry is in the process of becoming its own entity. The decision, made by the congregation by vote, will separate the Food Pantry from the church. The reason is because many organizations cannot donate to religious organizations. The pantry will still operate out of Pilgrim Faith Church. It now has its own board of directors. They are Mary C., president; Jimmy Werner, vice president; Gail Siwek, secretary; Vicki Brooks, treasurer; and Leece Nicol, pantry director. The Food Pantry has about 15 volunteers. It operates from 10 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and Saturdays and serves about 30-50 or so singles and families.



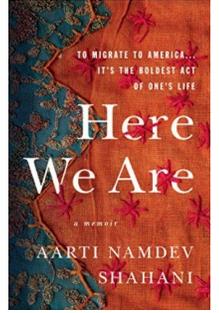
Lenten Opportunities

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE will be led by Rev. Jim Benzing, on Thursday, April 14th at 7 p.m. This service will include Communion and a time of reflection as we encounter the last hours of Jesus. Please plan to attend this special service.

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL books are available in the Narthex for the purpose of enriching your Lenten walk. Please pick up your copy of Henri Nouwen's Lenten Reflections.

Book Club Meeting

The April Book Club meeting will be April 24th. We are going back to gathering in person and will meet in the church lounge. Come at 6:30 for refreshments before we start to talk about the book.



The book is "Here we Are" by Aarti Shahani and is described as "A heartfelt memoir about the immigrant experience from NPR correspondent Aarti Shahani, *Here We Are: American Dreams, American Nightmares* follows the lives of Aarti, the precocious scholarship kid at one of Manhattan's most elite prep schools, and her dad, the shopkeeper who mistakenly sells watches and calculators to the notorious Cali drug cartel. Together, the two represent the extremes that coexist in our country, even within a single family, and a truth about immigrants that gets lost in the headlines. It isn't a matter of good or evil; it's complicated."

We will read "The Orphan Collector: A Heroic Novel of Survival During the 1918 Pandemic" by Helen Marie Wiseman for the May Meeting.



Remember Our Homebound

Mary Brehm

Bridgeview Healthcare
Ctr.
8100 S. Harlem Ave.
Bridgeview, IL 60455

Ruth Hook

Aperion Care
9401 S. Ridgeland
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Grace Pluhar

8824 S. 55th Ct.
Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Bob Salveson

6146 S. Karlov Ave.
Chicago, IL 60629

Darlene Wank

10942 S. Oak Ave
Chicago Ridge, IL 60415

Mildred House

Clarendale of Mokena
#2221
21536 S. Wolf Rd.
Mokena, IL 60448

Donna Twichell

10032 Harnew Rd. East
Oak Lawn, IL 60453



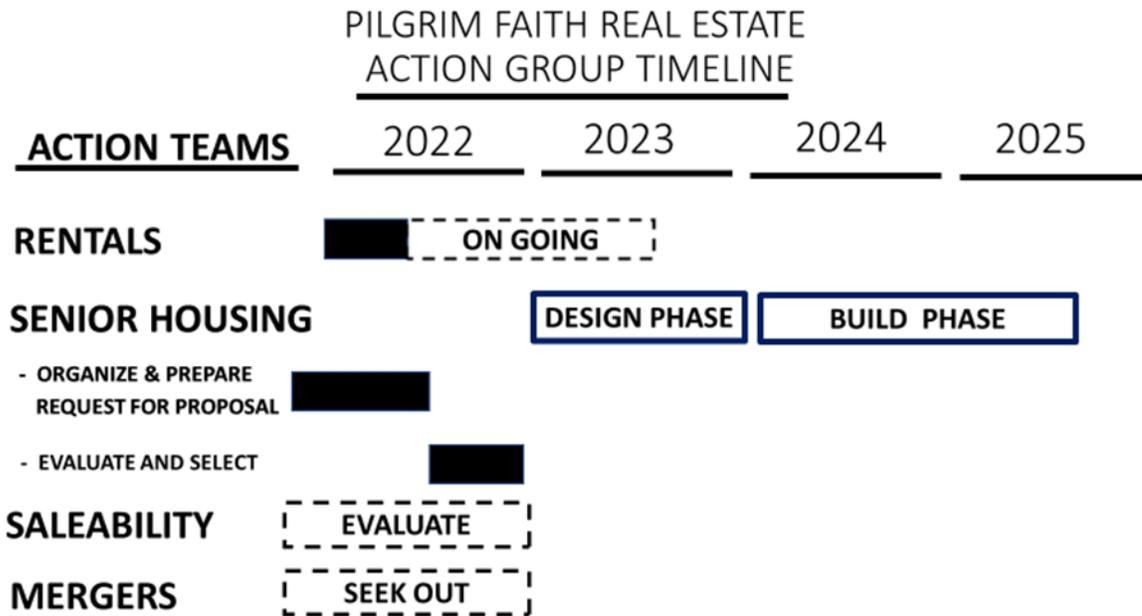
Real Estate Committee Meeting

The REAL ESTATE Committee met for a second time on Saturday, March 12, and participation – in person and on Zoom – is growing. Our next meeting is after Pastor Dan’s return on Saturday, May 21 at 2 P.M. in Colonial Hall. We have begun breaking into “focus” groups, so if any of the following are of interest, PLEASE JOIN US.

The Bar chart below shows the various groups and what they will be doing throughout 2023. The Rental Group will be showing various pieces of the property for rent, including the Parsonage (using the agreements from Lagrange Congregational as a reference.) They will also work on recommendations for event charges: such as the one-day use of Colonial Hall or the AA group meetings. As shown, this is an On-going effort. Please note that Alyssa has agreed to coordinate the evaluation and perhaps planning of a Farmers Market use of the Parking Lot, as part of this group.

The Senior Housing project will focus on developing a Request for Proposal to be given to five or six organizations that could Design, Develop and Manage a large project like this. The target date for the RFP is the end of June. A draft for review is expected by the next meeting. (When available you can request an email copy of the Draft RFP through Candace in the Church office.)

The Saleability group will focus on the various parcels of Church property to determine an appropriate value for each, and all together. This option will be front and center if the Senior Housing project does not proceed. The last group: Mergers with other U.C.C. area churches and potentially other like-minded denominations is being lead appropriately by Pastor Dan. He will request the assistance of his working group as opportunities for meeting and discussion arise.



Lay Leaders

Here are the upcoming lay leaders:

April

3 Jacques Lopez
10 Jimmy Werner
17 Aidan McGinnis
24 Daune Sebastian

May

1 TBA
8 Keith Stevenson
15 Rick Wank
22 Cari Stevenson
29 Chris Raap



MESSY CHURCH - APRIL 10 11:30-1:00 PM

Join Messy Church as we hear the story of Holy Week with Resurrection Eggs! We will do some **FUN** egg crafts **AND OUR EASTER EGG HUNT RETURNS!!!**

Come to *Messy Church* on Sunday, **APRIL 10TH** from **11:30-1:00 PM** downstairs in Colonial Hall! Bring the **WHOLE** family- **ALL** ages! **AND** bring your friends!

Come for the 4 F's-

**FELLOWSHIP
FOOD
FUN
FAITH**



...camps have shaped and formed lives

overheard at camp...

"Camp bridges the chasm between confusion and awareness in our faith journey"

...come, rediscover your camps, we're here for a reason and that reason is you.

Week 4, "...my faith journey" was overheard from one of our guests. For decades Tower Hill and Pilgrim Park have been here to **change a young person's life**, and your financial gifts to **uplift, shape and form our campers** spiritually is a wonderful blessing. Please consider donating a needed scholarship directly at: <https://outdoorministries.campbraingiving.com/>

Many retreats, camp offerings and **special events are happening in 2022** promising to all a joyful experience. Call Tower Hill at 269-426-3881 or Pilgrim Park at 815-447-2390 for details or log-on to see what is **available this year**: [Camps and Retreats Information \(il-outdoorministries.org\)](http://Camps and Retreats Information (il-outdoorministries.org))

April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 10:00AM Worship	4 	5 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	6	7	8	Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
10 10:00AM Palm Sunday Worship	11	12 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	13	14 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Worship	15	16 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
17 10:00 AM Easter Sunday Worship	18	19 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon		21	22	23 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon
24 10:00 AM Worship 6:30 PM Book Club Mtg.	25	26 Food Pantry 10:00 AM- Noon	27	28	29 	30



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MONDAY

12:00pm AA 2nd Floor

TUESDAY

10:00am Food Pantry
10:00 am AA 2nd Floor

WEDNESDAY

10:00am AA 2nd floor
1:00pm Al-Anon
6:00pm Boy Scouts
7:00pm AA 2nd floor

THURSDAY

10:00am AA 2nd Floor

FRIDAY

8:00pm AA 2nd Floor

SATURDAY

10:00am Food Pantry
10:00am AA 2nd Floor

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Amazon Smile

Shop on AMAZON Smile and select Pilgrim Faith UCC as your charity of choice. For each transaction you make, AMAZON donates a percentage back to Pilgrim Faith. Donate to Pilgrim Faith every time you shop!

