



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org

A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

MARCH 2021

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

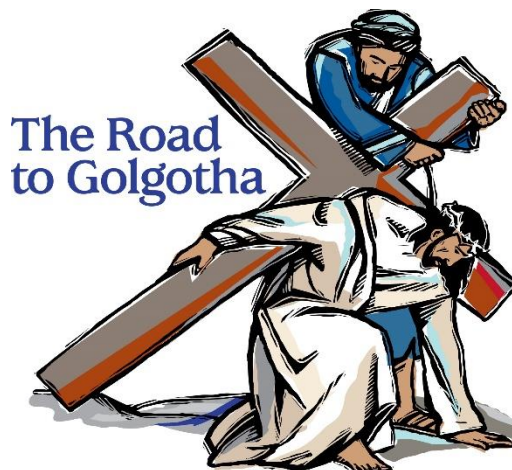
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM





There is a saying that it's "Always darkest before the dawn," and that is certainly the case in our experience with the Coronavirus over the past year. Last year, due (in part) to my surgery and government pleas for everyone to stay home, our congregation did not meet in-person during Lent and Easter. Then, around June, restrictions were lifted somewhat and we re-introduced in-person services along with the Zoom option.

I am pleased to say that (as of this writing), we have not had one case of Covid-19 originate because we gathered as a congregation. Although cumbersome and inconvenient, the washing of hands, mask wearing, and keeping physically distant have played a major role in keeping most free from the virus.

In this first quarter of 2021, vaccines were introduced and now they are well underway. Quite a number of people in the congregation have not only received their first shot, but also their second. Those who have received their second shot should be confident that they are protected from the virus and can resume their normal activities, including leaving the house and attending worship.* The health authorities recommend the continuation of safety measures (mentioned above) because even though you may be fully vaccinated you could still be a carrier of the virus and infect someone else. Of course, as a congregation we will continue to follow the laws and guidance of our government officials in regard to the virus and the proper safety measures that are to be in place.

Echoing Dr. McCoy of "Star Trek," "Jim, I'm a pastor, not an epidemiologist!" In the past year I've learned more about viruses and infections than I really care to know. My main task is to bring you the hope of the Gospel, and I have tried to do that over this difficult period. My message to you now is, "There is hope!" Vaccines are in full swing. More places and events are opening up. Life is gradually returning to some sense of normality. Not totally, but we're getting there.

My counsel to you is that, when you are vaccinated and feel secure, to return to church if you haven't already done so. Yes, we do a service on Zoom and record the in-person service for viewing later on Facebook. Those options are better than nothing, but they are not a substitute for being together and receiving the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper.

This technology is a blessing (especially for those who cannot physically attend). However, let us not use it as an excuse not to attend the in-person services. Our Lord Jesus, who dwells bodily in the elements of bread and wine, is waiting for you.

*The CDC recommends waiting two weeks after your second vaccine shot before resuming normal activities outside of your home.

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Ben Eder



Madison Porter	Mar. 1
Karen Smith	Mar. 5
Wes Wiers	Mar. 20
Linda Eder	Mar. 23
Rhonda Mohr	Mar. 23
Naomi George	Mar. 26
Tim McGuan	Mar. 30
Judy Miller	Mar. 31



Paying it back — and forward

During the pandemic, acts of kindness seemed especially meaningful. Last spring, as Covid-19 hit Native American communities particularly hard, an interesting transatlantic outreach occurred. Donations from Ireland began appearing in a relief fund for Navajo and Hopi families, leading administrators to suspect the account had been hacked. Then they realized a cross-generational payback was underway.

In 1847, Choctaw Tribe members sent \$170 overseas to Ireland to help with Potato Famine relief. That generosity was never forgotten, and by May 2020, people in Ireland had contributed more than \$4 million toward pandemic assistance for relatives of people who'd helped their ancestors. Many donors included an Irish proverb meaning "In each other's shadows the people live."

The concept of paying it forward dates back to a 1784 letter by Benjamin Franklin. It also echoes Jesus' Golden Rule: "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31). How might you live out this practice today?



ESTHER CIRCLE

This month's Esther Circle meeting is Monday, March 8th, at 12:30 pm via Zoom. We welcome all women of Pilgrim to attend. If you are interested, please contact Sue Holway 716-861-1687 or Carol Obot 716-873-5303.

Easter is here! If you would like to purchase some delicious chocolates or dried fruits and nuts, check out our Terri Lynn fundraiser that is ongoing. Refer to the enclose flyer. Our 2021 mission outreach donation is going to the Kenmore Presbyterian Church Pantry. Your continued support with these projects is appreciated.

REMINDER!! Dash's receipts go to Sue Holway. The mites (loose change) go to Karen Smith for LWML mission grants. **NEWS UPDATE!!** The 2020-21 grants were met! Now there are grants for 2021-22. Every little bit counts. The cancelled stamps cut with a 1/2-inch frame go to Sharon McGuan to help purchase Bibles for prisoners. Old ink cartridges go to Pat Watkins. Thank you!

SPRING IS HERE! A time of rebirth and new growth. Enjoy all the natural beauty the Lord has given us!

God Bless!

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



When God giggles

Before dinner, our family was preparing to pray, which we do by holding hands. Upon discovering that one child hadn't washed his hands, my husband struck a contorted pose to avoid physical contact. The mealtime blessing quickly dissolved into laughter as we each peeked at him.

Afterward, as we passed around the food, I asked, "What do you imagine God thought about us laughing during prayer?" One child quickly replied, "I think he was laughing right along with us."

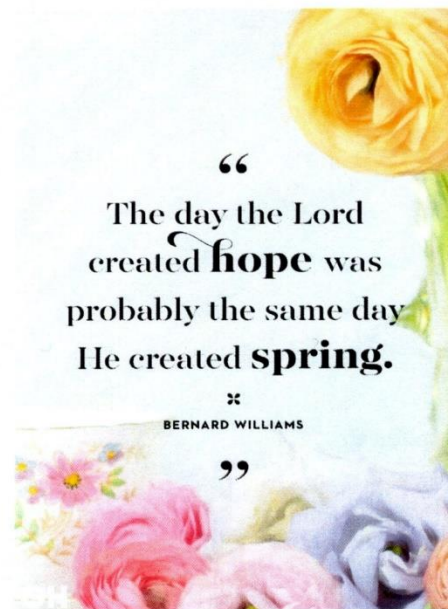
Yes! Although prayer is reverent, God invites us to converse with words, emotions — and even giggles!

—Janna Firestone

Spring & Easter Are Coming

SPRING CONFECTIONS AND FRUIT MIXES

Tasty, colorful sweets and mixes that are sure to bring your organization a profit for Spring holiday fundraisers — Easter, Mother's Day and more.



Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Terri Lynn's Webstore is contactless, safe and easy!!

<https://pilgrimesthercircle.terrilynn.com>





***Giving can be done at our Saturday
and Sunday Services or made Online.***

<https://secure.usaepay.com/pay/9nkt6jj6js3wnvhqb/2ZOkqgt3>

An ancient stewardship message

Some Christians actively avoid church on Stewardship Sunday because giving is a private matter “between me and God.” New pastors are even sometimes advised never to preach about money, lest certain people get riled up. Yet Jesus talks frequently in the Gospels about giving and sharing our material goods — and he wasn’t the first in Scripture to do so.

A thousand years before Christ’s birth, King David prepared to hand over the kingdom to his son, gathering tons (literally!) of gold, silver and other materials for Solomon to use in building the temple. Revealing his take on stewardship, David prayed: “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand” (1 Chronicles 29:14, NIV).

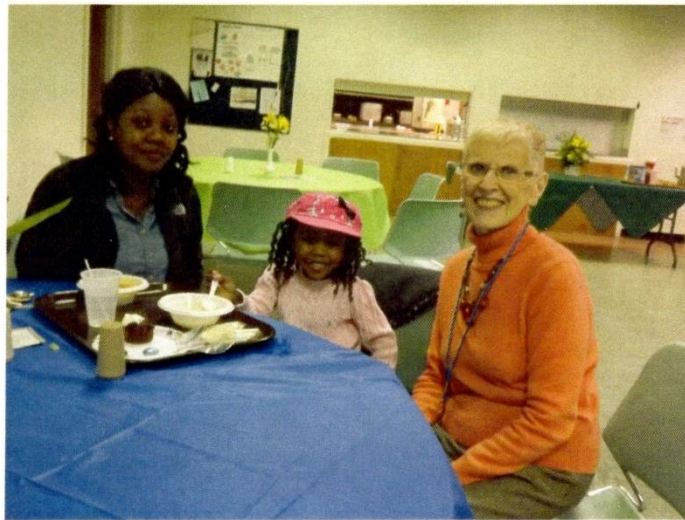
Esther Circle Donations for 2021

Kenmore Presbyterian Church Food Pantry

The Board of Deacons of Kenmore Presbyterian Church offer a Food Pantry

1. Second Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
One of our deacons serves Coffee and Goodies.
2. Last Thursday of the month from 12 noon to 2 p.m.,
We offer a Soup Luncheon.

**** During COVID they are bagging a variety of items and handing out the bags**



**Until we are able to hold Fellowship and Pot Faith Sundays,
all donations will be collected by:**

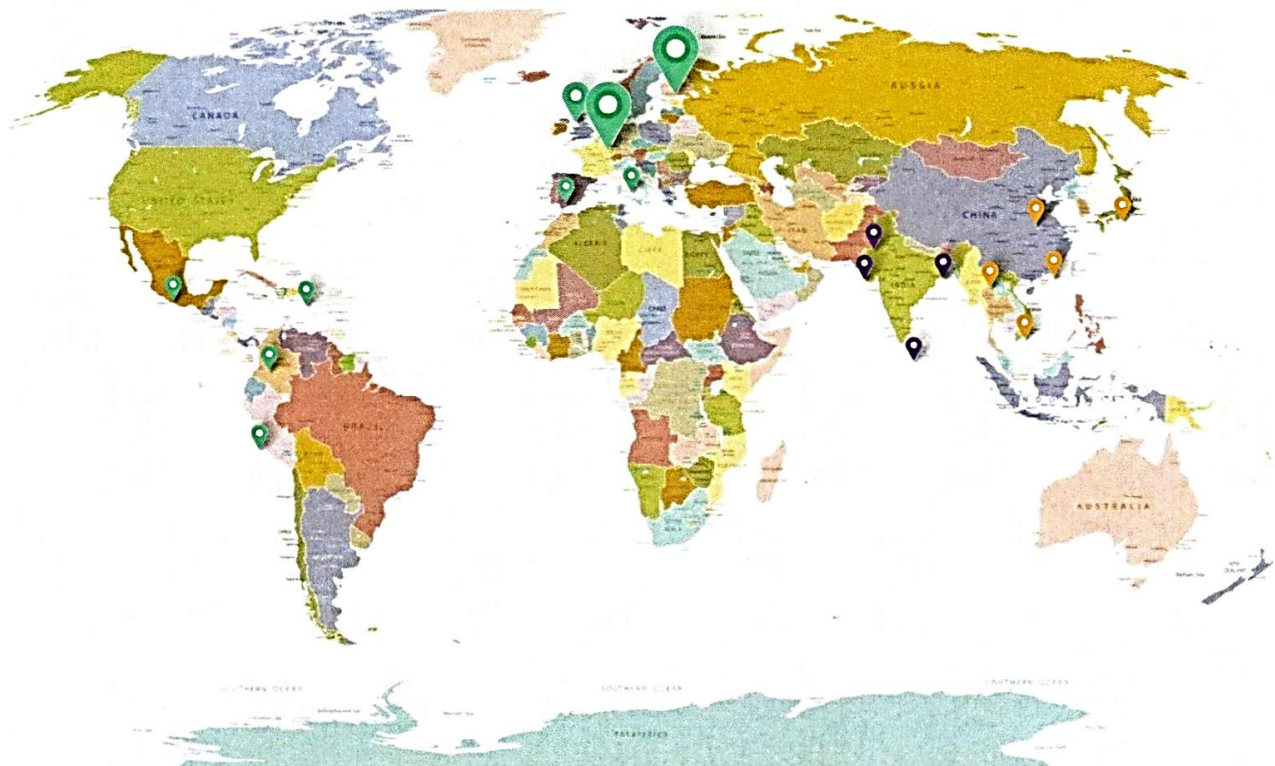
Sending Donations to Esther Circle
Use Offering Envelopes During Services
Online Offerings

A Quarterly Check will be given to the Food Pantry during 2021.

***Make checks payable to Esther Circle and please note
KPC Food Pantry in memo area or on envelopes***

***Thank You
Esther Circle***

TRAVELS WITH THE EDITOR'S DNA



Northern European – 36.7%

Sri Lankan Tamil – 0.7%

Northwest European – 20.4%

Bengali – 0.3%

British Isles – 17%

Japanese – 0.6%

Iberian – 8.9%

Chinese Dai – 0.5%

Toscani Italian – 8%

Kinh Vietnamese – 0.4%

Peruvian – 1.2%

Southern Han Chinese – 0.3%

Puerto Rican – 1.2%

Northern Han Chinese – 0.1%

Colombian – 1%

Mexican – 0.3%

Gujarati Indian – 1.5%

Punjabi – 1%

My First Trip to a Counselor

"You know there are people you can talk to about this, right?"

My first instinct was to tell my mother, rather vehemently, that I was not crazy. I had a loving family, great friends, and a rock-solid Christian faith.

I was also 26, living in a small town with very few local friends, and spending the majority of my time working. Overworking, really. I was definitely having a bit of a quarter-life crisis, and I kept filling my life with more and more things, saying yes to whatever came my way.

I was stressed to the max, and because of that, had no idea what I should do with my life. I was offered several opportunities for new work, and each would require significant life changes. The stress left me with no tools to make those big decisions.

That's how I ended up in my first appointment with a counselor.

I was totally skeptical, and I felt embarrassed for allowing myself to believe that I was potentially mentally unstable enough to see a counselor. That's what society had taught me to believe: only crazy people need therapists.

National Public Radio was a staple on my radio, and as I drove to my appointment it seemed like a stroke of fate when I heard the counselor's name mentioned on air as a recent donor to the station! I felt a certain kinship to her as we listened to, and supported, the same station. But, that didn't stop me from plopping down in her office and saying, "You know, I'm not sure if I believe in this 'therapy' thing." She assured me that I never had to come back if I didn't want to!

It took her about ten minutes to peg me. As I talked to her about my confusion and overwhelming sense of not knowing what to do, she was hard at work writing on her desk. Was she even listening?

But when I stopped speaking, she handed me her work: a stack of sticky notes each containing the word "No." Instead of actually saying "no" to people, which seemed to be a huge struggle for me, I could give myself permission to just hand them a sticky

note. It seemed small and silly, and honestly I don't think I ever handed one to anyone, but it was exactly what I needed to hear in that moment.

I left her office with a little homework, and a huge shift in mentality. There was nothing scary that happened in that office, and definitely nothing to be ashamed of. In fact, it was really helpful.

This experience definitely made me wonder why there's such a stigma surrounding mental health. Shouldn't we be encouraging people to be as healthy mentally as we encourage them to be physically? Is this really less important than having routine bloodwork done, or a healthy BMI? Is there any danger in seeing a counselor -- or talking to your doctor when physically you're healthy, but you just don't feel right?

"Use Your Resources" has become a bit of a battle cry for me. I say let's end the stigma!

Written by Rachel Legoute

You can share your thoughts on this blog by [clicking here](#) and leaving a comment.

You can let the folks at THRED know what you think by [clicking here](#).



The comfort connection

Amid suffering, we might feel alone and wonder what good can come of it. But later we may discover ourselves equipped to serve precisely because of what we experienced.

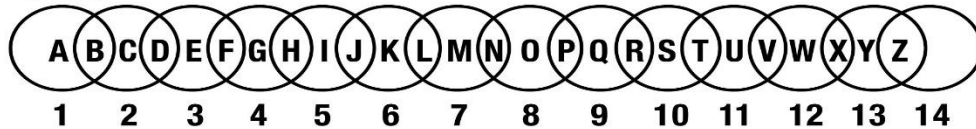
Writer and civil rights activist James Baldwin stated: "You think your pain and heartbreak are unprecedented ... but then you read. [Books] taught me that the things that tormented me the most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive or who had ever been alive." Whether through books or direct human interaction, we often learn that our suffering connects us to other people and that our pain gains meaning by moving us to support someone else who's hurting.

Paul writes of such connection: "Praise be to ... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV). May you share the comfort you have received from God with others in pain. As a bonus, along the way you'll realize you're not — and never have been — alone.

Puzzle!

Use the code to complete the blanks — and find out how God wants us to treat people.

CODE:



1,2 3 6 5 7,8 2,3 1 7,8 2,3

2 8 7 8,9 1 10 10 5 8 7,8 1 10,11 3

10,11 8 8 7,8 3 1 7,8 8 10,11 4,5 3 9,10'

3,4 8 9,10 4 5 11,12 5 7,8 4 3 1 2 4,5

8 10,11 4,5 3 9,10' 5,6 11 10 10,11 1 10

5 7,8 2 4,5 9,10 5 10 10,11 4 8 2,3

3,4 8 9,10 4 1 11,12 3 13 8 11'

EPHESIANS 4:32, NIV

Answer: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32, NIV

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER IS MARCH 24TH.