



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

[www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org](http://www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org)

*A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service*

# *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

**JANUARY 2023**

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

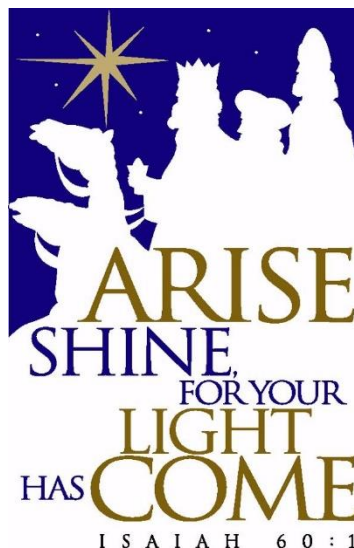
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM





*“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever”*

As we enter the new year, usually it is accompanied by a great deal of anticipation and excitement. I know I always look forward to the new year and the possibilities it brings.

As I announced at the December voters meeting, my intention is to retire from pastoral ministry beginning September 2023.

My main goals for 2023 are (1) to install the new organ and (2) to prepare the congregation for my successor. Of course, that is in addition to the many other things I do as pastor.

As was also stated at the voters meeting, Donald LoVullo will not be pursuing the Specific Ministry Program. Donald has decided that the pastoral ministry is not for him, and that's OK. It is a special calling from God, validated by the Church, and it isn't for everyone. We thank Donald for allowing himself to be considered for the program. I do regret that Donald has decided that he and his family will leave the congregation, which I do not believe is necessary. I want them to stay and be of service to the Lord here. Please pray for Donald and his family.

In the 30 years I have served as pastor of Pilgrim, our congregation has weathered many changes and challenges through the years. I will admit that the issues pertaining to Covid-19 have been particularly challenging. It has been difficult navigating the different political and social views of some. I want to keep the Gospel front and center, not politics or social issues.

I am very thankful for the solid, faithful core group of believers who are active and present. I have been disappointed by some who, for various reasons, have chosen to “drop out” and not participate in the worship and life of the congregation.

I am sorry if my decision to retire has caused pain or confusion for some. I do believe that Pilgrim needs a change, a different presence and voice to lead the people. Perhaps some of the stray sheep will listen to a new voice, and perhaps some new ones too.

My decision to retire isn't just about Pilgrim. I will be 66 this January and I'm thinking about the years ahead. Linda and I want to do some traveling, among other things, while we are still capable of doing so. The years take their toll, and no one can beat time.

I want to assure you that there is One who is in charge of Pilgrim, and that Someone is Jesus Christ our Lord. While I do believe that he wants me “off the stage,” I also believe he has someone else in mind to lead this congregation. I will pray and trust that he will.

As we enter this new year, remember that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” - *Hebrews 13:8* Amidst all the changes and challenges of this earthly life, we have the certainty that Jesus is the Lord of the Church. Let us place our trust in him as we go forward in faith.



## SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE

JANUARY 2023

AS OF THIS WRITING, NO LIST OF SERVERS WAS AVAILABLE FOR JANUARY.



Choir practice will be moved to Tuesdays at 6:30 pm for one hour. This will begin on January 10<sup>th</sup>. (There is no practice on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.) Anyone wishing to join the choir may contact Ruth Whitmer. Thank you.



Rev. Ben Eder	Jan. 5
Amber Trimmer	Jan. 9
Peter LoVullo	Jan. 17
Patricia Watkins	Jan. 31

(If you would like your birthday and anniversary in the newsletter, please contact Mary Werth by phone at 716-534-6922 or email: [madragon99@yahoo.com](mailto:madragon99@yahoo.com). Thank you.)



## **FOR 2023**

President – Mike Wuerch

Vice President – Sue Holway

Financial Secretary – Dianne Wuerch

Treasurer – Rhonda Mohr

Recording Secretary – Ruth Whitmer

Head Elder – to be determined

Other Elders – George Alessi, Tyrone Bryant

(new elder to be appointed in January)



## **ESTHER CIRCLE**

Our next meeting is on January 9, 12:30 pm via Zoom. We will be discussing chapter 7 from the book “FORWARD”. We will also decide on the 2023 outreach for the fellowship donations. The sign up for fellowship hosts is posted for January/February. Volunteers are needed.

**REMINDER:** Dash’s receipts go to Sue Holway; mites (loose change) to Karen Smith; old printer ink cartridges to Pat Watkins and canceled stamps to Sharon Mc Guan. Thank you for supporting these initiatives for missions.

**Blessings in 2023!** We pray that this new year brings you good Health, lots of Joy and Peace that only the Lord can give.

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



## **Resolve to revitalize**

Church revitalization is a hot topic, and ideas for congregations can bring fresh energy and meaning to personal and family life, too. Consider the following tips:

- Have a clear vision. It’s easy to go along day to day without considering what you’re moving toward. Beyond the everyday routine, what bigger vision does God have for you? This year, take specific steps toward living that out.
- Ask questions. What gets you excited — even passionate? What issues or situations break your heart? What are you good at? Resolve to use a talent or something you enjoy to help heal hurts.
- Balance history with innovation. Honor your past as God’s gift that makes you who you are, but be open to change. Dare to step out in faith for the sake of your life’s mission. Try something new in the spirit of the God who’s always doing a new thing (Isaiah 43:19; Revelation 21:5).

The best way to revitalize a church might be to revitalize the lives of its individual members!

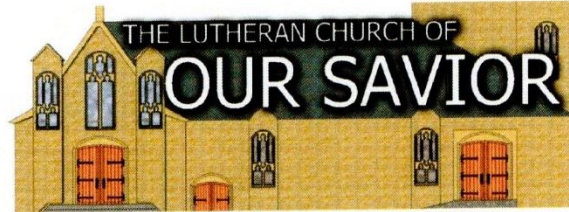




**2023 SUNDAY COUNTERS SCHEDULE**  
**Monthly Rotation**

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
LEAD COUNTER	Carolyn Alessi	Mike Wuerch
COUNTER	Ruth Whitmer	Jim Hartz
COUNTER		

**We still need a few more congregational members to help count offerings after Sunday Service, on a Monthly rotating schedule.**  
**If you feel the calling to do so, please contact Carolyn Alessi, Dianne or Mike Wuerch.**



Our Savior Lutheran | 26 Brunswick Blvd Buffalo 14208

We are collecting donations to send monthly. The offering plate is on the bulletin table behind the back pew. All donation amounts are welcome.

**Saturday & Sunday Services or Online**

**<https://secure.usaepay.com/pay/9nkt6jj6js3wnvhgb/2ZOkggt3>**



## January Tree of Life Celebration

On January 8<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate the sixth lesson of the Tree of Life series. The lesson, “Jesus is Baptized Into God’s Plan” comes from the Bible text, Matthew 3:13-17. This lesson will help us focus on our own baptism when we were washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sunday school classes for adults and children will begin at 9:00 a.m. The service at 10:00 will feature our VBS theme, video and Bible verse of the month (and perhaps a surprise from the children). Fellowship will follow the service. We thank each of you who have attended and supported the Tree of Life VBS Program.



## Writing our life — with God’s help

A journalist once said you can measure the quality of a piece of writing by the quality of what has been cut. No matter how beautiful or interesting a phrase or sentence is, the piece may be stronger without it.

Rabbi Evan Moffic applies this wisdom to life in general. Too often we refuse to let something — a habit, a memory, a process — go, even when it no longer serves us. Thinking of our life as a book, we can cut out, edit or rearrange some pages or sentences to reflect our new learnings and growth.

This is not always easy, but we don’t have to do it alone. “God is our ‘editor-in-chief,’” says Moffic, “and we are part of God’s story. [While] God ... gives us free will to decide what to write on the pages of our lives, ... God is always there for conversation and consultation. And God left us a great guidebook called the Bible. Its lessons make our writing shine with truth and beauty.” With God’s guidance, what will you “write” in the new year?



A Voters Meeting was held on December 18<sup>th</sup> after the service. The Council President, Recording Secretary and Financial Secretary have all agreed to extend their terms for two more years. No other nominations were made, and they were voted in. The head elder is going off the board, so one of the remaining elders will become head elder and a new elder will probably be appointed in January.

The budget for 2023 was discussed and approved. The House & Grounds Committee reported that they have been cleaning out the attic. Room is needed for when the old organ is taken out and the new organ is installed. If you would like to join the committee, please contact the council.

The Organ Committee announced that the new organ is expected to be shipped OR completed by the end of January (per the Allan Organ Company).

We have a new snowblower. The refrigerator and the lift have been repaired. The dishwasher repair or replacement is still pending. The furnace and boiler have been repaired.

Pastor Ben announced that he will be retiring in September of 2023. A lot of details will need to be addressed in the coming months by the church council and the congregation.

The LoVullo family is leaving Pilgrim. They will definitely be missed. We know they have prayerfully considered their decision and we ask that God continue to bless them wherever they go.

The next meeting will be on March 19, 2023. We adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.



### **Fresh starts**

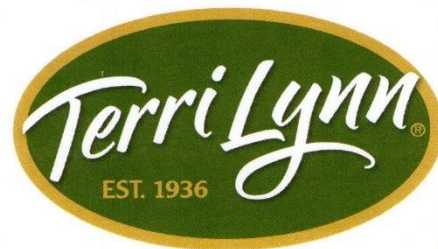
I suppose when we wake on January 1 the world will look the same. But there is a reminder of the Resurrection at the start of each new year, each new decade. That's why I also like sunrises, Mondays and new seasons. God seems to be saying, "With me you can always start afresh."

—Ada Lum



## FAVORITE RECIPES TO BAKE, CREATE, AND ENJOY

Terri Lynn's Signature nuts, snack mixes, and chocolates are delicious on their own; but they also make great ingredients for your homemade, tasty creations. Check out their recipes online and share them.



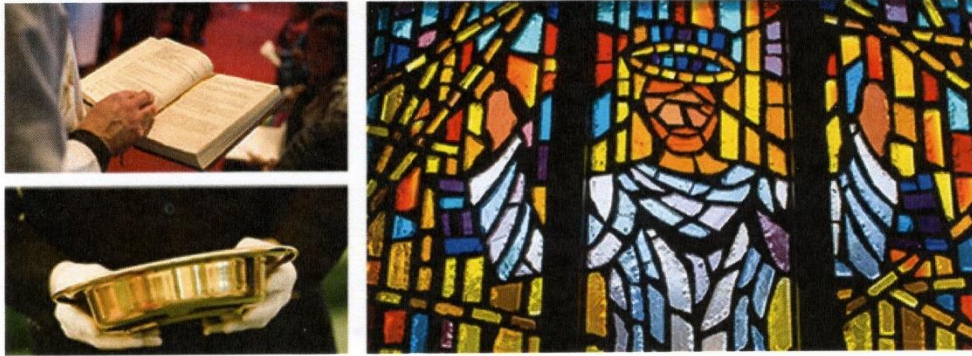
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All profits are used to support local charities such as Ken - Ton Meals on Wheels, Local Church Food Pantries, Lutheran Bible Translators, Lutheran Hour Ministries plus many others. Please help us support them. Thank you!

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

<https://pilgrimesthercircle.terri Lynn.com>

## A New Year of Giving



Your Weekly/ Monthly Gifts/Offerings are very personal. There is no minimum (or maximum) gift and Pilgrim Lutheran Church does not place requirements or expectations on any of our members' giving.

What is taught throughout the Old and New Testaments encourages us to give a percentage of what we receive. Most frequently it is taught as a "tithe," which means 10%.

Begin by committing to regular giving, such as weekly or monthly. Both can be done at our Saturday and Sunday Services or made Online.



<http://pilgrimkenmorelcms.org>

Then set the goal to grow in your generosity. Perhaps start with 2 or 3% for one year. Then as your faith grows, grow your giving by 1% per year. For more information on Tithing within the Lutheran Church visit the link <https://www.lcms.org/search?q=tithing#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=tithing&gsc.sort=&gsc.page=1>





# Counters Needed

We need congregational members to help count offerings after Sunday service. This will be done on a rotating schedule.

If you feel the calling to do so, please contact Carolyn Alessi, Dianne or Mike Wuerch. Thank you.



# Spiritual and Physical Food for Children of Peru

La Mision Luterana del Peru

## About This Mission Grant

Castillo Fuerte (Mighty Fortress) Mercy House is an outreach of the LCMS Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean and was started in 2013. The people of Lima are unable to fully finance the work of the Mercy House, and the work of our missionaries, who feed the souls with the Word of God and show the love of Christ by feeding the parents and children's stomachs. Families come to receive food for their physical bodies, and they stay because of Jesus' love for them as He feeds them the spiritual food which sustains their souls. The healing power of Christ's love and redemption shine into the broken lives of the families making them whole. This grant would partner with La Mision Luterana and Castillo Fuerte to work together to care for the children and families of Lima, Peru, by providing for the needs of the body and of the soul.



*Missionaries and locals serve lunch at Castillo Fuerte Mercy House of La Mision Luterana. Every day children receive a healthy, well balanced, hot meal at the Mercy House. For some of these children this is the only meal they will have all day. After this nourishing meal for the body, children gather around to hear the Word so that their souls might also be fed.*

*Photo by Erik Lunsford*





*Missionaries share with the children during a public health education class hosted by Castillo Fuerte. Castillo Fuerte cares for the children of the community in a three-fold way, with competencies in education, health, and life ministries. We seek to provide wholistic care for the children and their families providing for the need of their bodies intellectually, emotionally, and physically, as well as spiritually. This is done through daily activities Monday through Saturday as well as through special events like this public health education class.*

*Photo by Erik Lunsford.*



*Children head home alone through the streets of Lima, the capital city of Peru. In this city of over 10 million people, children often times find themselves alone while parents work 12 hour days trying to provide enough money to keep the family feed and out of poverty. Children are left to look out for each other against the dangers of the city: the dark streets, thieves, gangs, drugs and predators of all types. Castillo Fuerte serves these vulnerable children by providing a safe space away from these dangers, while caring for both body and soul.*

*Photo by Erik Lunsford*





### MENTAL HEALTH - A BIG DEAL AT ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

As part of its Community of Care vision plan, St. Peter's Lutheran Church & School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, holds quarterly events that feature a speaker or activity, along with a meal. To celebrate the increased awareness on mental health issues this past year, St. Peter's offered gifts to attendees at a recent event. Among these were LHM resources such as *The Vibrant Conversations Deck* of playing cards from our *Households of Faith* kit and our *30 Days of Household Devotions*.

"The Community of Care has already proven to be an outreach tool," said Michelle Leahy, pastoral care coordinator for St. Peter's. "In addition to the order from LHM, we've ordered books on grief, caregiving, pain/suffering, rest, and a few other topics. We're also offering a game for families and a calendar of activities to help reduce stress. The LHM cards and devotions will be offered to everyone as a way to strengthen the family."

St. Peter's belongs to a Lutheran community of 91 churches in northeast Indiana that are members of The Lutheran Foundation, a grant organization zeroed in on "transforming and supporting the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of our community," per its website, **[thelutheranfoundation.org](http://thelutheranfoundation.org)**. Beginning in 1904 as the Fort Wayne Lutheran Hospital, the Foundation began in 1995 from proceeds of the original hospital sale. It has awarded more than \$200-plus million in grants to organizations, schools, and churches in northern Indiana.

People with mental health concerns are sometimes closer than we think. Recently, before attending a Look Up conference on faith and mental health issues sponsored by The Lutheran Foundation, Leahy said she met a woman whose son had a severe mental illness - but no one knew. She kept it hidden from those in the church for fear of the stigma attached to her son's illness. "She was so afraid of being judged and shamed that she isolated herself from the very community that could have loved and supported her," Leahy said.

People are seeing St. Peter's care ministry as a safe place to express their mental health experiences. "Once they receive care here, then we have the opportunity to share the Gospel with them and enfold them into our Community of Care," Leahy said. LHM's resources complement the church's mission of bringing the light of the Gospel to real-world problems. Our Christ-centered podcasts, **Project Connect** booklets, **LHM Learn** courses, and Barna-based materials speak to a host of concerns. They're available at [lhm.org](http://lhm.org).

# TASTY CREATIONS

Make this yummy treat to remember what happened on each day of Creation.

## What you need:

- 6 large pretzel rods
- Candy melts (white, chocolate and blue)
- Green sprinkles
- White or star-shaped sprinkles
- Fish crackers
- Animal crackers
- Adult help



## What you do:

1. With help, melt the three colors of candy melts in separate dishes. Microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring until soft.
2. Decorate one pretzel for each day of Creation:
  - Dip half in white and half in chocolate to show light and darkness.
  - Dip half in white and half in blue to show separation of the atmosphere.
  - Dip half in chocolate, add green sprinkles and dip half in blue to show land, plants and water.
  - Dip in chocolate and add white or star sprinkles to show the stars.
  - Dip in blue and add fish crackers to show sea life.
  - Dip in chocolate and add animal crackers to show land animals.
3. Share the Creation story — and the snack — with a friend!



## Ordering the days

God spoke and created all that exists. He separated and ordered his creation. What did God say about all he made?

*Directions: Write the correct day of creation next to each clue. Then fill in the circled letters in order below to complete Genesis 1:31, NIV.*

### FIRST SECOND THIRD FOURTH FIFTH SIXTH

God made wild animals and livestock.

God said, "Let there be light."

God gathered the waters under the sky into one place.

God made a vault to separate the waters and called it "sky."

God created plants and trees.

God separated the light from the darkness.

God made the water teem with living creatures.

God made the sun and moon.

God made birds fly above the earth.

God made stars.

God created mankind in his own image.

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God \_aw all tha\_ he \_ad ma\_e, an\_ \_t was ve\_y g\_od.

GENESIS 1:31, NIV

Answer: sixth, first, third, second, third, first, fifth, fourth, fifth, fourth, sixth;  
God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE  
FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER IS JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>.**