

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

THE NEWSLETTER OF PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH OTHELLO, WASHINGTON

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2020



Virtual Services!

FaceBook: **Pilgrim Lutheran Church-ELCA**

Website:

othellolutheran.com

Don't forget to hit the **SHARE** button to share the Good News with friends and family!!

Wednesday messages continue! Please continue to join us on FaceBook for these uplifting messages!

Women's Bible Study

At this time, we still plan to meet for Bible Study on December 12th, at 10 am, at the church. Please be flexible as our orders from the Governor may change. Please bring your Bibles, and the Gather magazine for December.

Our Sincere Condolences

We offer our deepest sympathy to the Bunch family on the passing of Dr. Richard Bunch. Please hold his family in your thoughts and prayers as they grieve their beloved dad, grandpa, brother and uncle. Our community mourns with you at the loss of our beloved doctor and friend.

Our Sympathy

We extend our sincere sympathy to the family of Jim Robinson. Please keep his daughters DeeDee Graves and Darla Spurgeon and their families in your prayers as they mourn the loss of their dad, grandpa, and uncle.

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

We are living in some interesting times right now; the Pandemic continues to rage and we are living with restrictions designed to help control it. At Pilgrim we continue both online and in person worship; we follow the health department's guidelines in an effort to keep us all safe. The future may seem uncertain; however, God is with us always – especially now as we make careful preparations to celebrate the Christ Child's birth on Christmas Eve.

Advent Services on Wednesday, Dec. 2 and 9 will be online only. We will wait to hear for the 16th, and get that information out to you!

Children's Christmas Program is scheduled for Dec. 13th. Please see page 3 for more information.

Christmas Eve falls on Thursday, Dec. 24th.

We will be holding two worship services – one at 5 p.m. and a second one at 7 p.m. Pastor has been taking an informal poll and these times seem to work for most people. We have to carefully control the number of people inside the church at one time. The maximum allowed at this writing will be 50 per service. If this should change we will let you know. In order to make this work we ask you all to check your schedules and let us know which service you will be attending by calling Anna at the church. Her office hours are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 3-5 pm. The church phone is 488-9952. Anna's phone is 509-761-1205. Please leave a message if there is no answer, and Anna will write your preference down. Thank you.
-Fay Coats

Celebrate the Reason for the Season! The Birth of JESUS!

Giving Opportunities during this Christmas Season

Our ELCA Good Gifts Christmas tree is standing in the narthex ready for you to buy ornaments for your friends, relatives or yourselves! The purchase of these animals including goats, chicks, pigs, roosters, and honeybees improves the lives of those who receive them. There are additional options to purchase school uniforms, supplies, microloans for women, Bibles, feeding 50 at a soup kitchen, and a latrine. Your participation is a vital part of Pilgrim's continued support of this valuable ELCA program. Thank you!

In addition to the ELCA Good Gifts opportunity we have a tin can in the Narthex labeled "Lutheran Disaster Response-Hurricanes & Wildfires". We will be leaving it up all month for donations to these causes which have created hardships for so many people. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



Adult Forum

Adult Forum continues to meet at 9 am each Sunday morning, even during this pandemic. We wear masks and keep our distance, but we still have great discussions. We are more than halfway through the book, The Hole in Our Gospel, by Richard Stearns, but there is plenty of time to get in on the interesting reflections. Please feel free to come on Sunday at 9 am in the Council Room. See you there!

December 2020 Message from our Pastor

Dear Pilgrims,

When this pandemic started back in March, we all thought it would be over before Easter. That didn't happen, so then we all thought it would be over by Pentecost. Well, Pentecost came and went, and we were still in the midst of pandemic restrictions. We set our sights on the end of summer, but summer passed but the pandemic remained. Reformation Sunday came and we are still dealing with the pandemic. All Saints Day was the same, and then the governor and the CDC (Center for Disease Control) determined that in order to be safe we should forgo Thanksgiving gatherings.

We have been dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for nine months of 2020. We are sick of it. We are tired of wearing masks everywhere. We are weary of social distancing and we want things to get back to normal. Unfortunately, Christmas will include some pandemic accommodations as well.

To be sure, we are going to do our best to make Christmas as close to normal as possible, but already we will face some different circumstances that have come as a result of dealing with COVID-19. For one thing, there will be no Christmas cantata this year from the Othello Choral Society. For the first time in over 40 years, Othello will not hear the message of the birth of Christ in song from the ecumenical choir that has been a fixture in our community.

Secondly, the church is not able to allow either a choir or congregational singing until December 14th at the earliest. This is following the order of the governor, who is just trying his best to keep as many of us safe as possible. Thirdly, we will not have a Service of Lessons and Carols from the Othello Ecumenical Ensemble. It simply isn't allowed since these are wind instruments and the COVID-19 virus is spread primarily through the sharing of air.

It seems like the pandemic has been an assault on music and our worship practices. However, the Spirit of Christ cannot be stilled by cancelling musical events. Jesus Christ still came to earth on Christmas Day to save us from our sin. His mother, the Virgin Mary, is still an obedient servant of the Lord. Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, still took Mary as his wife, the same way men have been marrying women for thousands of years.

The story is the same. The Christmas message is the same, and we still have a way to leave sin and sorrow behind as we follow Jesus Christ. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem the angels decided to share the message with shepherds who were tending their flocks at night just outside of town. The message of the angels was, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!" (Luke 2:14).

It is a beautiful message of peace, and it stirs our hearts to joy to know how much God loves us. God loves us so much that God sent to us the only Son God has. God is willing to sacrifice God's only Son because God wants us to live in heaven forever as God's children, God's holy flock. That certainly seems like God favors us! So, let your heart be at peace. Let the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (from Philippians 4:7)

The pandemic has disrupted our familiar traditions, but it cannot change the love of God. The pandemic has changed the way we gather, but God is still in our midst. The pandemic has altered our worship practices, but it cannot change the fact that we worship God alone and serve only Him.

Christmas will come and we will worship our God, our Christ, our King who "humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross. Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:8-11) Have a merry Christmas and I'll see you in church, even if it is online.

Peace,
Pastor Don Short

Pastor Short's office hours:

Tues-Friday 9-12
Afternoons reserved for visitations, meetings, and appointments.
If you are in need of emergency pastoral care, please contact Pastor Don Short at **509-761-1212**.

Pastor's Email: pilgrimlcpastor@gmail.com

Anna's office hours

Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday 3-5 pm.
Please contact Anna on her cell if you need info and she is not in the office.
Thank you! Cell phone **509-761-1205**

INFO CORNER

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|-------|-------------|----|-----------|-------------|
| 11/1 | Attendance: | 24 | Offering: | \$ 2,943 |
| 11/8 | Attendance: | 33 | Offering: | \$ 1,230 |
| 11/15 | Attendance: | 22 | Offering: | \$ 2,175 |
| 11/22 | Attendance: | 22 | Offering: | \$ 2,575 |
| 11/29 | Attendance: | 24 | Offering: | \$ 1,833.73 |

2020 Offerings — \$ 124,473
2020 Expenses— \$ 114,137

If you are attending online services, you may send your offerings to the church and they will be added each week! This has been working very well! The address is on the newsletter return address. Thank you.

Thank you, Pilgrims, for supporting your Church and it's Mission!

**Merry
Christmas!**

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p>Saturdays at 8 am- Casa Mexicana-suspended at this time until at least the 14th. Dec 8th Council Meeting, 7 pm @ church</p> | | <p>1 Send a cheerful note to another Pilgrim.</p> | <p>2 Online Advent Service</p> | <p>3 Pray for Othello's teachers & all support staff.</p> | <p>4 Pray the Lord's Prayer out loud.</p> | <p>5 Pray for an end to civil unrest.</p> |
| <p>6 10 am Worship & Sunday School</p> | <p>7 Send a birthday card to someone on the Pilgrim list below!</p> | <p>8  Church Council 7 pm</p> | <p>9 Online Advent Service</p> | <p>10 Pray for a decline in Covid numbers.</p> | <p>11 Bake some Christmas cookies & give some away!</p> | <p>12 Women's Bible Study- To Be Determined</p> |
| <p>13 10 am Worship & Children's Program</p> | <p>14 Pray for the residents & workers @ Coventry and Avalon.</p> | <p>15 Get outside for a walk.</p> | <p>16 Advent Service To Be Determined Where</p> | <p>17 Pray for our Sunday School Children.</p> | <p>18 Send a thank you text to Pastor Don.</p> | <p>19 Bring a friend a loaf of bread!</p> |
| <p>20 10 am Worship & Sunday School</p> | <p>21 Pray for your neighbor.</p> | <p>22 Send your tithing to church.</p> | <p>23 Pray for Pastor Don and Anna during this busy week!</p> | <p>24 Candlelight Services @ 5 and 7 pm</p> | <p>25 </p> | <p>26 Pray for ALL the Front Line workers.</p> |
| <p>27 10 am Worship</p> | <p>28 Have your children or grands send a note to a Pilgrim.</p> | <p>29 Pray for an end to racial inequality.</p> | <p>30 Pray for Othello's school children.</p> | <p>31 Happy New Year! </p> | <p>Birthdays-December 5 Liz Jensen 12 Joshua Rodriguez Sr. 15 Michael McKay 17 Mike Roth 19 Joyce DeLeon 20 Leonard Bland 22 Jim Nau 26 Jon Erickson 27 Trudy Doolittle 30 Randy Deasy</p> | |

Help Wanted
 If you have information and/or photos that you would like included in the newsletter, please contact Kristi Spohr at 509-331-4406. Thank you in advance.

**Grace is a free gift, but it is not a free ride!
 Good works matter!**

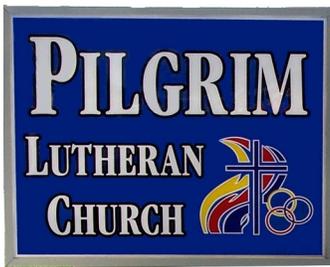
Children's Program
 The children's Christmas Program is scheduled for Dec 13th. We may have to adjust the number of adults in the sanctuary to fit all the kids, but that's a great thing. We are hopeful that everyone will be flexible and that there will be plenty of children to put on a fun and meaningful program!

Big Thank You

- To Pastor Don & Anna for all the extra work they have done to provide us with online services midweek and on Sundays
- To Bob & Donna for wonderful music, and Liz & Vicki for filling in when necessary
- To Pete R. & Leonard M. for the upkeep of the lawn during the summer
- To Tammy for refinishing the doors to the church entry & for coordinating the cement work at the south entrance, & the Mendoza family doing the cement work
- To Marc for the edging around the church
- To DeeDee for keeping our facility clean
- To Shirley for paying our bills
- To Marc for providing financial reports to the council
- To Kristi for putting together the newsletter
- To Trudy for printing the newsletter, and Roger for providing the means to do the printing
- To Ernie for his diligence in seeing the cell tower through completion
- To our Council & Committee members continuing God's work during the pandemic

Thank you Pilgrims for your continued service and love of our Lord.

Our Sympathy
 Our Brother in Christ and former Pilgrim, Cecil Johnson, recently passed away. Please keep daughter Amy, daughter-in-law Marilyn, and their families in your thoughts & prayers.



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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

December 2020



Mission Statement: PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH is led by the Holy Spirit **to invite** everyone to experience **God's Love and Grace** through life's pilgrimage of faith.
Vision Statement: PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH provides a warm, caring, and open atmosphere where we spread God's Word by **servicing our community, being a good neighbor, and embracing the power of prayer.**

Our Thanks to the Jensen Family

Thank you to Liz & Steve Jensen for the wreaths on the church door and our entry Pilgrim, and also to Liz's dad Dallas Boge for the beautiful Christmas tree donated to our congregation. It is such a blessing to us, and we are so grateful and appreciative of the donation and the delivery!



Above: Pilgrims decorating the tree after the service on November 29. A good & safe time was had by all!

Lectionary Readings for December

| | | | | |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Dec 6 | Isaiah 40:1-11 | Psalm 85:1-2,8-13 | II Peter 3:8-15a | Mark 1:1-8 |
| Dec 13 | Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11 | Psalm 126 | I Thessalonians 5:16-24 | John 1:6-8,19-28 |
| Dec 20 | 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16 | Psalm 89:1-4,19-26 | Romans 16:25-27 | Luke 1:26-38 |
| Dec 27 | Isaiah 61:10-62:3 | Psalm 148 | Galatians 4:4-7 | Luke 2:22-40 |



book of faith
Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.