

# PILGRIM'S Progress

February 2024

*"When they found him, they told him,  
'Everyone's looking for you!'"*  
Mark 1:37

## PASTOR

Rev. Courtney Jones

[pastor@pilgrimageucc.org](mailto:pastor@pilgrimageucc.org)



Dear Beloved

Lent is fast approaching. In the forty days (minus Sundays) leading to Easter, we are encouraged to enter the wilderness with Jesus. For some of us that means taking on the spiritual practice of fasting, for others of us that means adding some other spiritual practice that helps us ground ourselves in the Divine. In worship, we choose a theme, a lens through which we will explore the ancient stories that are so familiar to so many of us.

This year, the theme is "Sin, Suffering, and Salvation." We will consider questions especially related to the role of suffering in the life of faith: why do bad things happen? Where is God in suffering? What does it mean to be saved, and what ultimately saves us?

What are your questions about how suffering relates to salvation? What story do you have to tell about how God was present when hope seemed lost?

These are big questions without easy answers, but we will dive in and see what we can learn with and from one another. Hopefully we will spark conversation that will deepen our relationships with God and each other, and in the process we will discover that sharing this journey brings us closer to the Source of our Salvation.

If you want to talk more, please be in touch! I'd be so glad to hear from you and to have your perspective represented during this season.

God loves you, and so do I.

Courtney

## Rev. Courtney's New Hours

- \* Days Off: Saturday & Monday
- \* Works from Home: Tuesday
- \* At the Church:
  - Wednesday 3:30-8:00 p.m.
  - Thursday 12:30-5:30 p.m.
  - Friday 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- \* Study Leave Out of town:  
February 8-10, 2024



## PUCC Vision Statement

**"We are an open and affirming faith community living out Christ's love through acceptance, learning, service, and action."**

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*Pilgrimage*  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

## COUNCIL MODERATOR

Ken Moss

[pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com)



Greetings, I hope this note finds you a little warmer in the month of February! I am writing this after the deep freeze we experienced, and I can only hope the weather has returned to more seasonable temperatures.

I am assuming the annual meeting went well and everyone agreed with—or we agreed on a way forward!—the many changes proposed to our By-Laws. Again, I want to thank our Vice President (now Vice Moderator?) for all his hard work and diligence ensuring we stay procedurally current with the necessary safeguards in place. I also thank all of the people who participated and supported the review process to get it right, this was no small endeavor. Thanks also to the small group who worked on a draft Congregational plan for any insurance money which will be recovered. This will require more conversations, but they certainly gave us a good start. Which brings us to February...

We enter this month with two major events to celebrate: Black History month and Valentine's Day. I find these two celebrations can and should be closely tied together. I am not a deep history buff on saints, but I know there can be some trepidation about celebrating St. Valentine in the way we do. However, I always thought that taking a day to emphasize the love we have for others and expressing that love is very much in keeping with Christ's teachings. Meanwhile, Black History month gives us an opportunity to reflect on the many contributions African-Americans have made to our nation despite the numerous obstacles they faced. This nation and our world is a better place because of their relentless pursuit of excellence in the face of adversity; I, for one, am very grateful.

I have heard some say that Black History Month being in the shortest month of the year indicates continued disrespect to an oppressed minority. I choose to see it differently. I think placing Black History Month in a month focused on love enables us to magnify our gratitude and thanks placing us in a better frame of mind to reconcile any competing feelings of shame and pride. In my mind, expressing love and celebrating Black History

month does not detract from either event. It merely proves the wisdom of our Creator that he made us capable of multi-tasking, self-reflection and growth. That is my February wish for all of you: a month of continued growth filled with love and self-reflection...hope to see you on Sunday!

## WORSHIP

Molly Moss & Melissa Fadeley, Co-Chairs

[pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com)



Happy New Year!

We finished using the Sanctified Art series "*How Does A Weary World Rejoice*" and would love to hear your feedback. Please share with anyone on the Worship committee your thoughts about this special Advent series and whether you would welcome another one in the future.

We'd like to thank all of January's scripture readers:

Michelle Brumfield, Laurie Spencer  
Amy Jones, Sharon Getty  
Pat Kask, Ann Baker,  
Katie Bridges, Joyanna Wyne

Thanks, as well, to all those who volunteered to usher and greet for the month.

If you are interested in becoming a reader or usher please reach out to Melissa Fadeley or myself at:

[pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com)

Molly Moss



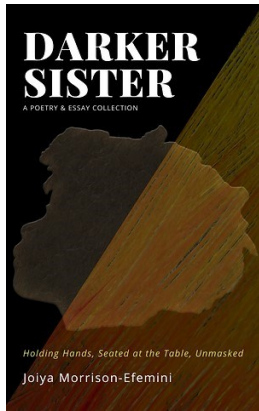
## February 2024

Book Club will be held at the church  
and is scheduled for Tuesday,  
February 6 @ 7:00 p.m.

The book for discussion is:  
"*West with Giraffes*"  
By Lynda Rutledge

If you have any questions,  
please contact Fran Howard at:

[roberthow@aol.com](mailto:roberthow@aol.com)



## Mark your calendar for PUCC's "Community Voices Series" Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

We are exceedingly fortunate to have Joiya Morrison Efemini as our Special Guest for the new Community Voices series. Joiya, a former child advocate attorney turned author and editor, will lead a discussion with us drawing from her recent book, *Darker Sister*.

Joiya Efemini lives in Marietta with her family and shares treasured connections with our congregation. Joiya is good friends with the daughters of several of our members, whose grandchildren are friends with some of Joiya's four children. We now look forward to extending these connections to our wider congregation.

You may remember that this event was postponed from last fall when Joiya's daughter received a serious diagnosis that required major surgery. The good news is her daughter is now recovering well and has returned to school.

This eagerly anticipated event will begin with a potluck around 11:45 following our 10am service, which Joiya will be attending. Please bring a dish to share, and Parish Life will provide drinks. After lunch, Joiya will read some poems from her book sharing with us how she came to write them and giving us time for questions and further conversation. Also, Joiya will have a book signing, and copies will be available for purchase at that time.

If you would like to purchase *Darker Sister* before the meeting for \$12.00, please contact Ann Baker (or see her after the 10:00 worship service).

[annbaker5@verizon.net](mailto:annbaker5@verizon.net)

## DEACONS

*Stephen Williams, Chair*  
[pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com)



It's that time of year again! Put on your thinking caps and get ready to test your knowledge!

The deacons are hosting their Annual Trivia Night and Potluck on Saturday, March 2nd. Dinner will be at 5:00 and the games will start at 6:00. If you are going to attend the potluck, we ask that you bring a favorite main dish or a dessert to pass.

This year's theme is **"Travel Around the World"**.

So mark your calendar and we hope to see you then!

## STEWARDSHIP

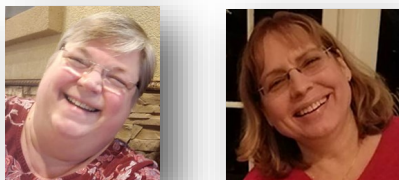
*Greg Kask, Duke Yaguchi, Co-Chairs*  
[pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com)



A new year is the time when we consider ways about how we can make positive changes in our lives, both personally and within our surrounding communities. In February, the Stewardship committee will be sending out a Time & Talent Survey. As a heads-up, we would like you to begin thinking how *you* can utilize your talents for the benefit of Pilgrimage UCC; what brings you joy being part of our beloved church? Rather than silently *guessing* what the church's needs are, we invite you to join us by sharing your talents and putting your inspirations in motion for the betterment of both you and Pilgrimage.

## PARISH LIFE

Susan Volentine & Carol Hill, Co-Chairs  
[pilgrimageucparishlife@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageucparishlife@gmail.com)



The chili-cook off was a great success. We had 10 different chilis to sample and a wonderful selection of baked goods. Thanks to everyone who contributed their cooking and baking skills and to those who provided beverages.

We raised \$386.00 from the chili and \$318.00 from the bake sale, for a total of \$704.00. Simple needs will put this money to good use helping people moving from homelessness into permanent homes.

Our chili winners are:

- \* 1st place Rita and Dick Mehlan (Maple-Bacon Chili)
- \* 2nd place Anne Mooney (Cincinnati Chili)
- \* 3rd place is Helene O'Neil (Turkey Chili)

## MISSIONS

Cindy Westlake, Chair  
[pilgrimageucmissions@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageucmissions@gmail.com)



February 4 is the final day Missions is collecting donations for "Life Safe Resources of Marietta." This organization has been providing survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault & elder abuse for 100 years. Here is a list of suggested items that are in need:

- Dish cloths and towels,
- Plastic cups and bowls,
- Drinking glasses,
- Potheolders,
- Eating utensil sets
- Cooking utensils

## We can Make a Notable Difference Together Voters Rights in GA 2024

*PUCC Missions Committee  
Voting Rights Initiative*

Last fall our survey told us there is strong interest within our congregation to work towards improving Voters Rights. Hence, a Voter Rights initiative is beginning.

The Missions Committee has identified ways we can join hands with excellent non-profit organizations to increase our impact. If you are interested in learning more and participating, please reach out to Ann Baker preferably before Feb 1. Ann will work with interested folks to identify the most convenient time and venue to gather and plan. There are opportunities to begin work before the end of February so do not delay!

Ann's email is [annbaker5@verizon.net](mailto:annbaker5@verizon.net), and she regularly attends the 10am service.



## Poll Workers Needed

Our church provides a valuable service to our community by being a polling site for East Cobb. The following request came from the election supervisor of our location:

*"We are always looking for more poll workers, please feel free to share my contact information with anyone interested."*

Angela Haniford  
Cobb County Elections – Area Supervisor

[Angela.haniford@cobbcounty.org](mailto:Angela.haniford@cobbcounty.org)  
770-869-6039 cell

Read about more information about being an election worker by clicking on this link:

[Apply To Be An Election Worker  
Election Worker Portal](#)



As the Easter season approaches, we extend an invitation for you to join the Pilgrimage Sanctuary Choir temporarily during Lent (*or permanently!*).

This new membership model involves a low-level commitment for folks who are unable to dedicate full-time, requiring you to only rehearse with us every 1st and 3rd Sunday after worship each month beginning February 4th. We will have Wednesday evening rehearsals on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Regardless of your skill level, we encourage you to come and sing with us!

Feel free to contact Asa Bradley at:

[abradl47@aol.com](mailto:abradl47@aol.com)



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday which falls on February 14th, and we are now accepting orders for Easter Lilies through February 18th!

We will display our lilies at the Easter Sunday service on March 31, 2024. After which, you are welcome to take your beautiful flowers home to enjoy.

Order instructions, sizes and pricing are shown on the order form. You can also dedicate your plant to a loved one. Please use the link below.

*Note: You have the choice of 6" single stalk or 7" double stalk. The cost includes foil and delivery.*

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScCW479qTaUoBZqNr0cr6fmeDfsTYCHz6OISI0GLrzVdU8Quw/viewform>

If you have any questions, contact Lynne at:

[office@pilgrimageucc.org](mailto:office@pilgrimageucc.org)

## February Celebrations

### BIRTHDAYS

02/03 Lorelle Mills  
02/04 Donna Farrar  
02/05 Jaime Fulsang  
02/07 Devin Scott  
02/08 Ezra Loche  
02/17 Matthew Wyne  
02/28 Eli Scates

### ANNIVERSARIES

02/22 Jeff & Jamie Durkee

If we missed someone,  
email Lynne at:

[office@pilgrimageucc.org](mailto:office@pilgrimageucc.org)

## Lent 2024



As we will begin to reflect on and contemplate the beginning of the season of Lent in mid-February, our annual Ash Wednesday service is scheduled for February 14th at 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendar for the following:

- Palm Sunday on March 24
- Maundy Thursday on March 28
- Easter Sunday on March 31

**TREASURERS**

*Amy Jones, Treasurer*

*Rochelle Lofstrand, Asst. Treasurer*

[pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com)



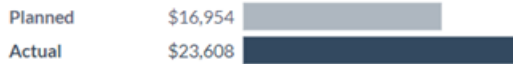
This month, we have reports for December and YTD December income and expenses.

**December 2023 Actual vs Budget**

Starting balance: **\$36,809**



**Expenses**



**Income**



**Expenses**

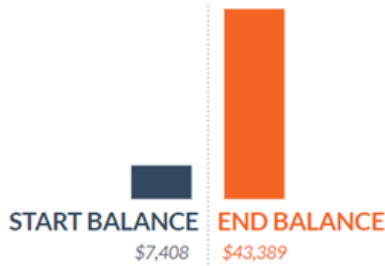
	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	\$16,954	\$23,608	-\$6,654
Utilities	\$1,843	\$1,980	-\$136
Properties	\$1,725	\$849	+\$876
Communications	\$53	\$0	+\$53
Staff compensation	\$8,614	\$8,531	+\$83
Pastor dues, travel & learning	\$134	\$0	+\$134
Payroll taxes	\$750	\$531	+\$219
Pastor health insurance	\$616	\$867	-\$251
Family health insurance	\$0	-\$174	+\$174
Payroll Processing	\$230	\$355	-\$125
Nursery Staff	\$208	\$0	+\$208
Office Supplies	\$284	\$339	-\$55
Insurance	\$1,297	\$677	+\$620
SE Conference	\$833	\$4,235	-\$3,402
SE Conference-Special Gifts	\$0	\$1,075	-\$1,075
Worship	\$316	\$263	+\$52
PayPal Fees	\$0	\$11	-\$11
Legal Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0
Deacon Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Other	\$50	\$4,068	-\$4,018

**Income**

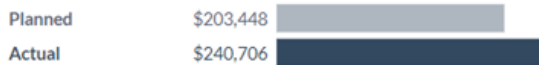
	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	\$17,952	\$30,188	+\$12,236
Offering Deposit	\$17,952	\$22,719	+\$4,767
Paypal	\$0	\$461	+\$461
Zelle	\$0	\$7,008	+\$7,008
Dividend	\$0	\$0	\$0

# January-December 2023 Actual vs Budget

Starting balance: **\$7,408**



## Expenses



## Income



## Expenses

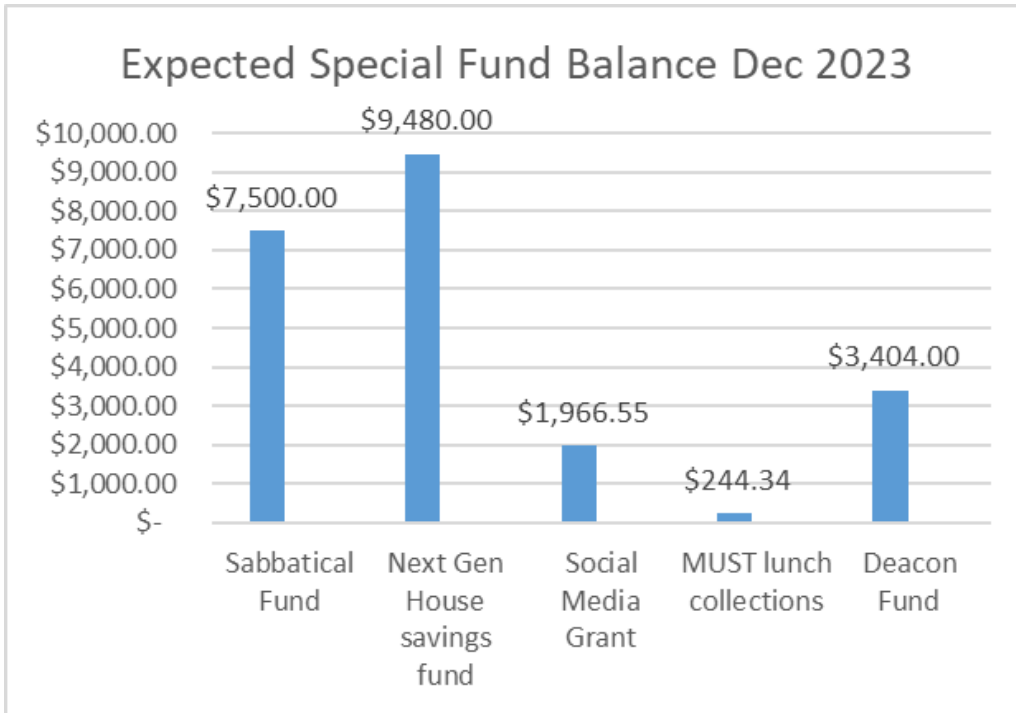
	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	\$203,448	\$240,706	-\$37,258
Utilities	\$22,120	\$14,803	+\$7,317
Properties	\$20,705	\$16,110	+\$4,595
Communications	\$630	\$655	-\$25
Staff compensation	\$103,363	\$99,353	+\$4,010
Pastor dues, travel & learning	\$1,610	\$1,000	+\$610
Payroll taxes	\$9,005	\$6,147	+\$2,858
Pastor health insurance	\$7,392	\$8,852	-\$1,460
Family health insurance	\$0	\$4,798	-\$4,798
Payroll Processing	\$2,760	\$3,545	-\$785
Nursery Staff	\$2,500	\$600	+\$1,900
Office Supplies	\$3,410	\$4,344	-\$934
Insurance	\$15,563	\$12,383	+\$3,180
SE Conference	\$10,000	\$10,000	-\$
SE Conference-Special Gifts	\$0	\$6,860	-\$6,860
Worship	\$3,790	\$3,084	+\$706
Deacon Fund	\$0	\$3,305	-\$3,305
Paypal fees	\$0	\$525	-\$525
Legal Fees	\$0	\$8,504	-\$8,504
All Other	\$600	\$7,082	-\$6,482
Unexplained	\$0	\$28,755	-\$28,755

## Income

	Planned	Actual	Diff.
Totals	\$215,427	\$276,687	+\$61,259
Offering Deposit	\$215,427	\$212,184	-\$3,244
Paypal	\$0	\$14,151	+\$14,151
Zelle	\$0	\$46,359	+\$46,359
Dividend	\$0	\$11	+\$11
Family Health Insurance	\$0	\$3,983	+\$3,983

Update on our IRS penalty issue: we haven't yet received an official communication from them. They did cash the check for the interest. I'm hoping to have a response from them on our request to waive the penalty later this month.

Currently, we have \$41,130 in the bank accounts. Our restricted funds account balance is \$22,595 which leaves us with \$18,535 as a buffer in our operating account. We have been able to fully fund the restricted funds balance as of the end of December 2023.



We do not have any new updates on the insurance claim. We know they are working on the claim itself. There were conversations with the forensic accountant assigned to our claim in December right before Christmas. We will update everyone once more information is available.

All treasurer related requests should be sent to:

[pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com)

Both Rochelle and I have access to that account so we will each be able to respond. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Amy Jones



## STAFF

<b>Pastor</b> <b>Music Director</b> <b>Accompanist</b> <b>Administrative Assistant</b>	<b>Rev. Courtney Jones</b> <b>Asa Bradley</b> <b>Anna Mbiad</b> <b>Lynne Buell</b>
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### Pilgrimage UCC's Emails

Pilgrimage UCC Website:	<a href="http://www.pilgrimageucc.org">www.pilgrimageucc.org</a>	Worship:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com</a>
Pastor-Rev. Courtney Jones	<a href="mailto:pastor@pilgrimageucc.org">pastor@pilgrimageucc.org</a>	Christian Education:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccce@gmail.com</a>
Office-Lynne Buell:	<a href="mailto:office@pilgrimageucc.org">office@pilgrimageucc.org</a>	VBS-Janet Derby:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccvbs@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccvbs@gmail.com</a>
Council:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageucccouncil@gmail.com">pilgrimageucccouncil@gmail.com</a>	Communications:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageucccommunications@gmail.com">pilgrimageucccommunications@gmail.com</a>
Council Moderator:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccpresident@gmail.com</a>	Missions:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccmissions@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccmissions@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com">pilgrimageucctreasurer@gmail.com</a>	Properties:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccproperties@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccproperties@gmail.com</a>
Council Fin. Secretary:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccfinsec@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccfinsec@gmail.com</a>	Stewardship:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccstewardship@gmail.com</a>
Deacons	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccdeacons@gmail.com</a>	Parish Life:	<a href="mailto:pilgrimageuccparishlife@gmail.com">pilgrimageuccparishlife@gmail.com</a>
Music-Asa Bradley:	<a href="mailto:abradi47@aol.com">abradi47@aol.com</a>		

### Meeting Schedule for Committees & Small Groups

Book Club via Zoom (Fran Howard) .....	1st Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
Pilgrimage Council (Ken Moss, Moderator) .....	Second Thurs. of the month—7:00 p.m.
Sandwich Club Support (Trish Greeves).....	Monthly—3:00 p.m. Saturday
Spiritual Seekers' Group (Laurie Spencer).....	4th Tuesday of the month—7:00 p.m.
PFLAG .....	4th Sunday of the month—1:00 p.m. <a href="https://pflag.org/chapter/pflag-marietta">https://pflag.org/chapter/pflag-marietta</a>

*This listing includes the group name, followed by the coordinator or director in parenthesis then the meeting days and times. If your group should be added to this list, please e-mail [office@pilgrimageucc.org](mailto:office@pilgrimageucc.org).*

## The Month in Sundays

Feb.	4	<b>Worship (8:30 &amp; 10:00 a.m.)</b> <b>Communion (Both Services)</b> <b>Choir Rehearsal (11:30 a.m.)</b>
Feb.	11	<b>Worship (8:30 &amp; 10:00 a.m.)</b> <b>Missions Comm. Mtg (9:15 a.m.)</b> <b>Community Voice Series (11:45 a.m.)</b>
Feb.	18	<b>Worship (8:30 &amp; 10:00 a.m.)</b> <b>Choir Rehearsal (11:30 a.m.)</b>
Feb.	25	<b>Worship (8:30 &amp; 10:00 a.m.)</b> <b>PFLAG (1:00 p.m.)</b>