November 2026

PILGRIM'S Progress

Interim Pastor's Message *by Rev. Phil Price*



It is a well-known fact that parts of our brain cannot readily distinguish between "real" stimulus and imagined stimulus.

Think about this. If you see a lemon and lift it to your mouth, you will start to salivate. Also, if you just IMAGINE doing the same thing you will also start to salivate. The salivation response clearly cannot distinguish between input that comes from the eyes and input that comes from the imagination.

Herein lies maybe our greatest problem and our greatest hope. It sets the stage for the great fear/faith contest that determines how we will live. Is our reality going to be shaped by fear or by faith?

Fear is a necessary and a good thing. Without the possibility of fear, we would have died out long ago. It is good to have a fear of falling and a fear of heights. It is an important evolutionary advantage to have a fear of saber tooth tigers, alligators, and poisonous snakes. Fear is the ability to "see" what could happen and take the necessary steps to avoid that situation. If we see an alligator, we can "see" what might happen if we don't change our course. This fear is important and can be lifesaving. A truly fearless person will soon be a dead person.

However, it has also been well said that "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." All too often we get stuck imagining all the bad things that could happen and we become immobilized, despairing and un-resourceful. Often, the very thing we fear comes into being due to our fear. Fear is a self-fulfilling creative force. If athletes fear missing the shot and "sees" themselves missing the shot, most often they WILL miss the shot.

Faith is also the ability to "see" what could be, before it is. In Hebrews 11:1 we read, "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the essence of things unseen."* In other words, you have to "see" it in essence, in your imagination, before you see it in substance—with your natural eyes. Faith is also a self-fulling creative force.

Start to imagine how our personal and our shared life could be if more time was spent in faith mode rather than in fear mode. Both are equally necessary, self-fulfilling and creative. One set of imaginings brings missed dangers, missed shots, missed misfortunes and missed opportunities. The other set of imaginings self-fulfill in miracles and mistakes, joy and sometimes in regret!

Both fear and faith need to be conditioned by reliable information and data.

Is it really a snake or is it a stick? Is this really an amazing opportunity or am I being had. Both fear and faith need to be grounded in a reliable stream of information and needs to be truth tested.

"Fear not," cannot be heard as an absolute, or else we will come to a sudden and probably hurtful end. "Always believe," can be equally hazardous as we have seen "true believers" do unimaginably awful things. Fear and faith grounded in TRUTH will see us through any storm and help us to reach the skies of possibility!

Election Day!

Tuesday, November 3, is Midterm Election Day, and our church will serve as a polling place for East Cobb.

The key box code in the lobby will be temporarily changed from Sunday, November 1, through Friday, November 6, to provide election workers with building access for equipment setup, Election Day operations, and equipment removal.

If you need to use the key to enter the church during this period, please contact Susan Volentine or Sarah Wilson for the temporary code.



Moderator's Message *by Sharon Getty*

November is here, and the holiday season is quickly approaching! This month also marks the midpoint of the council's term. A sincere thank-you to the executive council, committee chairs, search committee, and renovation committee for your time and efforts. Pilgrimage continues to inspire through its volunteer support for organizations such as MUST Ministries and Family Promise. In the spirit of gratitude, please mark your calendar for the Annual Thanksgiving Potluck on Sunday, November 22. Sharing this special feast with our church family is always a highlight of the year.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOVEMBER 15TH: Architect Plans to be Presented

An important Congregational Meeting will be held after the late service on November 15. At the meeting, you will have an opportunity to see the architect's renovation plans for our building. This will be an informational meeting only; no formal vote will be taken at this time. After the presentation, your input is encouraged and will be very much appreciated.

The renovation committee has worked diligently for more than two years to develop recommendations for the next steps. Council has reviewed the plans. Now, it's time for PUCC members to review the recommendations and share their thoughts. A recent question asked whether church members have had input into the renovation process. Congregational suggestions helped shape the committee's work from the beginning. You can view all those suggestions in the "Members" section of the church website (pilgrimageucc.org) by clicking the link titled "Insurance Money." These suggestions gave the renovation committee a starting point. The committee later brought in an architect experienced in working with church facilities to help develop its recommendations. The committee carefully considered our needs and made every effort to address them within the available space. We sincerely thank the committee members for their dedication and hard work.

Several steps remain before the renovation can move forward, including approval of the plans and hiring a contractor.

As you prepare to review the plans, please keep the architect's words in mind: *"Everyone gets something. But nobody gets everything."*

November Book Club

Book Club will meet on Saturday, November 7th at 4PM. They will meet at the home of Jamie Durkee. Susan Volentine will lead the discussion about ***"Leaving Time"*** by Jodi Picoult. Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.

Sandwich Club

The Pilgrimage Sandwich Club is a monthly caregiver support group offering connection, support, and a sense of belonging.

Due to Thanksgiving events, the next Sandwich Club meeting is December 12 at 3 p.m. at the church.

Email Trish Greeves at trishgreeves@me.com if you have any questions.

Christmas Eve Family Service



We will soon begin to prepare for our Christmas Eve Family Service!

For those who are new to Pilgrimage, the children and youth lead our afternoon family Christmas Eve service each year. This involves reading Scripture, music, and a short presentation of the Christmas story. They will practice some during Faith Formation and have a few rehearsals after the 10:00 worship service in December. Those dates have yet to be determined.

In order to choose an appropriate script, we need to know how many participants we will have.

If your child would like to be a part of this service or if you have any questions about it, please contact Janet Derby at:

derbyjm@gmail.com

The Seekers



The Seekers Group will meet next on Tuesday, Tuesday, November 24 at the church at 7PM.

Looking for a welcoming small study group to grow in faith and form meaningful friendships? We'd love to have you—please reach out to Laurie Spencer for more information.

lauriespencergardens@gmail.com

Join Us for Our Thanksgiving Potluck!

The Parish Life Committee warmly invites you and your family to the Pilgrimage UCC's Annual Thanksgiving Potluck on Sunday, November 22, at 5:00 PM. As we share a delicious meal and enjoy one another's company, a slide show featuring photos from the past year at PUCC will be shown on the sanctuary screens.

Please use the Signup Genius link below for additional details, to sign up to bring a dish, or assist with setup, or help with cleanup.

Sign up here: PUCC Thanksgiving Dinner Together 2026

We hope you'll join us for this special evening of food, fellowship, and gratitude!

Warmly,
Carol and Susan
Parish Life Committee

Deacons' Thanksgiving Food Drive

Let's put our gratitude into action! Our Deacons' Challenge returns this Thanksgiving, inviting each Deacon Family to join in collecting even more food for the clients of MUST Ministries. Together, we can share Christ's love with our neighbors while showing appreciation for our deacons. Start shopping now and place your **non-perishable food donations** in your deacon's box in the **Narthex through November 22**. The youth and children will count the donations during Faith Formation during the 10AM service. **Every donation makes a difference. Let's give generously and make this a season of gratitude, fellowship, and love in action!**

Worship *by Juliann Heilhecker*

Sunday, November 1st, is All Saints Day, when we remember our loved ones that we have lost. To honor our saints, you are invited bring a photo and place it on the table that will be set up at the front of the sanctuary. Although we miss those who have left this world, their love will live in our hearts forever.

It's hard to believe that Advent is just around the corner. To prepare for this season we are having a worship workday on Saturday, November 28 from 9AM - 12PM to put up the tree and organize the Chrismons, wreaths, and the crèche. We're hoping to have 1 or 2 folks who are able to climb the large ladder to put our tree together and hang the larger wreathes behind the pulpit and on the side walls. Coffee and pastries will be provided.

As a team, we will get the church Sanctuary ready for the Annual "Hanging of the Green" services on November 29!

Interfaith Thanksgiving

The Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration is an annual celebration that brings together people of different faiths and beliefs to share in an evening of inspiration, music, fellowship, and gratitude.

This year's theme, "Is Faith Enough?", invites us to reflect on the role of faith in our lives and how we put it into action in our communities.

Date:
November 19, 2026
Host Location:
Temple Kol Emeth, 1415 Old Canton Rd., Marietta
Doors Open:
6:30 PM
Celebration Begins:
7:00 PM

The evening will include inspirational reflections, a combined multi-faith choir, the return of the handbell choir, and a dessert reception.
The strength of this celebration comes from the many faith communities that come together to make it meaningful.

Carpooling is recommended.

If you would like to contribute to the refreshments, contact Lisa Mallis at:

LisaMallis18@gmail.com



You are warmly invited to the Annual PUCC Ornament Exchange on Saturday, December 5, at 3:00 p.m. at Gabriela Mill's home. Please bring a wrapped Christmas tree ornament and an appetizer or dessert to share. Enjoy a festive afternoon of fellowship and a lively exchange of beautiful, whimsical, and lighthearted ornaments—with opportunities to claim an ornament from another participant. We look forward to celebrating with you.



November Events

11/1: All Saints Sunday & Communion Both Services

11/3: Midterm Elections

11/7: Book Club

11/15: Congregational Meeting

11/19: Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration

11/22 Thanksgiving Potluck

11/26: Thanksgiving Day

11/28: Worship Work Day

11/29: Hanging of the Green Service—Advent 1

PUCC Vision Statement

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



STAFF

Interim Pastor, Rev. Phil Price
mailto:pastor@pilgrimageucc.org

Music Director, Jake Daron

Accompanist, Anna Mbiad

Administrative Assistant, Lynne Buell
office@pilgrimageucc.org



BIRTHDAYS

11/03 Heidi Schuler
11/06 Matthew Alexander
11/07 Dick Mehlan
11/10 Anne Offermann
11/10 Sydney Schnitzlein
11/12 Ross McDuffie
11/15 Diane Reese
11/17 Jean Ellis
11/19 Anne Mooney
11/23 Carol Hill
11/24 Sylvia Nelson
11/26 Helene O'Neill
11/29 John O'Neill

ANNIVERSARIES

11/01 Joe & Carla Martin

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