

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



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PILGRIM CHURCH A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

May 1st, 2021

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

By Pastor Paul Eknes-Tucker

Last year at this time, Pilgrim was learning to do distance worship, figuring out Zoom technology and trying not to be too freaked out waiting for vaccines or treatments for COVID. The month of May 2021 has some new opportunities and some new challenges.

You may remember that the Firehouse Shelter opened their new facility just before the Pandemic hit. The Pilgrim Cookers got to cook one meal in the new facility to serve to the residents in person before it became too risky for everyone. As a result, we cooked in the church kitchen with the new ovens Covenant Community purchased for their weekly dinners. We learned to provide our services in a new way and we even received a few new volunteers to join the team. The second Friday of May 2021 will find the Pilgrim Team once more cooking at Firehouse with new Team Member Lea Davis taking charge of buying and bringing the food from Sam's. Mask and distance protocols will remain in place but we get to see the residents again and interact with them in person. *Non-Ordinary Time just became a little less so.*

Another exciting piece of progress is that the members of the Pilgrim Book Club have all completed vaccinations and will once more meet at the church at 10AM on Sundays. Most gatherings will



THE KEY
to an **AA**
UNCERTAIN FUTURE
IS THE FAITH OF KNOWING
THAT **GOD IS GOOD**
ALL THE TIME!

be in the garden. When weather doesn't permit, we will meet in the Conference Room with masks and social distance. The Book Club is reading John Archibald's book about growing up in Birmingham during the Civil Rights era. It is titled, "Shaking the Gates of Hell."

And the final piece of great news is that John Williams has installed streaming technology in the sanctuary that will allow us to record and broadcast worship on Sunday mornings instead of Thursday nights. Several volunteers are in the process of training on the new system. We hope to return to Sunday morning worship in late May/early June. We will continue to use masks and other protocols to make worship safe for all who would like to be present in person. And for those who watch the streamed service, you can now be part of worship as it is happening.

Once Pilgrim returns to Sunday morning worship, *Non-Ordinary Time* will come to an end. No doubt, there will still be crazy things happening in our world.

COVID remains a threat for years to come. The effects of systemic racism continue to plague our nation with violence and death. Our climate continues to groan from the years of abuse. There is much that needs our attention and love. We will not return to the *ordinary* of the past. *The world has changed and in the process, it has changed us.* We will begin the new rhythms of life that will challenge us, thrill us and open us to perceive the ways grace is alive and well in our new edition of the world.

I look forward to seeing your faces without a screen between us. I can't wait to see the children who have grown and changed in our time apart. I am so grateful for the faithfulness of everyone who kept things moving, ministry happening and connections maintained.

*God is good...
ALL the time!*

**TOGETHER WE CAN
FACE ANY
CHALLENGES AS
DEEP AS THE OCEAN
AND AS HIGH AS THE
SKY.**

Sonia Gandhi

Of Rage, Retribution, and Reconciliation

By Rev. Pamela A. Canzater

I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Psalm 27:13

Was one of my cerebral aneurysms about to burst? Was I having a stroke or heart attack? I looked at my daughters' face as it vacillated betwixt concern and anger, so I continued to hold fast in Mommy mode, demanding my inner workings to remain calm, in appearance to all, as generations of enslaved ancestors cried out from unmarked graves to me; *"Keep your head up, don't let them see they got to you!"*

"They" were descendants of the ruling White class, and having to maintain this social facade for their benefit seemed ludicrous in this setting, for we had all gathered in the Gadsden Museum of Art where my work had been displayed during Black History Month. This was the final evening, and after viewing my paintings and collages more than one person of European descent had come up to me, some hesitantly, tearfully, chastened, apologetic for what their ancestors had done to mine. And oh, how magnanimous I was at first. I truly see regret in the eyes and posture of these individual folks.

But after a while, standing before my artwork subtly depicting the lynching of my forebear in Calhoun county, all that my parents suffered through to vote in Perry County; and yes, finally escaping Marion in 1957 before the KKK could wipe out my entire immediate family -- rage choked this Lady Bountiful in her taffeta cocktail dress.

I held yet another hand of yet another person..." Where is your Mama's Klan robe?" I asked her this silent question as she complimented my brave political artistic stances.

Another person hugged me... "Did you inherit your family Confederate flag, the one hanging from the pick-up truck as shots were fired around my grand-parents house, so my sister and I had to hide under the bed?" My head ached as I tried to verbally answer a question, posing the silent one in my brain, in my being.

My daughter spoke up, "My Mother must sit down, she has been standing too long."

Retribution! There is was! My Great-grandmother would tell me how it was in the fields for my Great-grandfather,

wisdom of a ten year old New York Yankee. Mother Anna looked at me, sighed with love, said, "Lord, Pam child, keep picking."

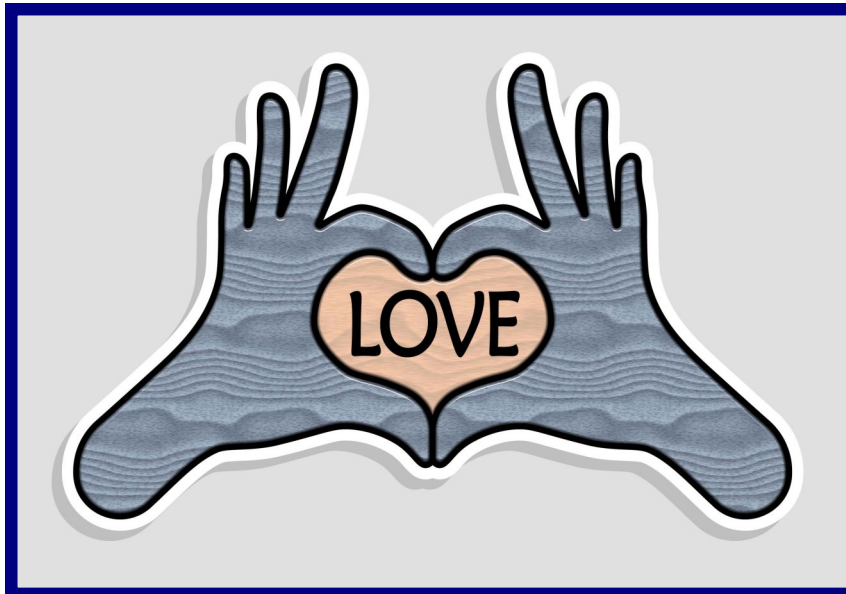
She told me then of the retribution of the fields under slavery. She told me of the Auction Block. She told me about our Negro Spirituals -- or more than I'd already learned in my church. She told me about fighting back with your brains, because your hands were not enough. She even shocked me, by telling me how some White people, a few White people helped Black people, even down here, in White Plains, Calhoun County.

The year was 1965, so not only had JFK already been assassinated, my Daddy had already driven my sister and I by the bombed out house of Malcolm X, so we, as Daddy told us, *"could see what hate does, no matter if you are Black or White."*

Sitting in the Gadsden gallery I thought of my father, who would have understood my rage, even while trying his best to temper it. *"Boo,"* my heart heard his voice speak to me, *"did you*

learn nothing from me as your Sunday School teacher? What did Christ come for, if not to show we are all equal, and deserving of God's love? How can you continue to harbor this rage, knowing it leads to nothing but more divisiveness and hate? Sing the third stanza with me and Mommy Pam, both you and Bev."

In the hollowness of my desire for retribution the third stanza of *"Lift Every Voice and Sing"*; the Negro



freed from slavery after The War, he was 12.

"You never asked to sit down," Mo' Anna told me, "You never asked for water, or food, or to use the bathroom or anything, you just kept working."

"But Mo'Anna," I stopped picking cotton then, in the field behind her house where she had demanded I go to harvest this cash crop as our people did, so I might learn some common sense, *"people can't work all day without stopping, God doesn't like that."* I spoke with the

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BREAK the CHAINS of HATE & INJUSTICE! LOVE ONE ANOTHER!!!

National Anthem rang true as memory of our family quartet sounded within:

*God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought
us far on the way...
Thou who hast by
Thy might led us into the light,
keep us for ever
in the path we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places
our God where we met Thee,
lest our hearts,
Drunk with the wine of the world
we forget Thee.
Shadowed beneath thy hand,
may we forever stand,*

*True to our God,
true to our native Land.
Amen.*

Four years ago I wrestled with my rage and fear as an American Black woman. Today, four years later as the toll of Black corpses created by police gunfire escalates, my fear increases – not just for my children, my relatives and my Black people – but for me, on a daily basis. I'm plotting my wardrobe, and speech patterns, and transportation routes so **IF** stopped by police I won't convey to them *"an angry Black woman"* because when I leave the relative safety of my home, I have a target on my back, and I want to live. I desperately cling to the

promise of Psalm 27:13, *"I believe I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."* I pray the motto of our denomination of John 17:21 is truly etched on our hearts, minds and Spirits;

*"That they may all be one.
Let us all be One, see and
treat each other as we
would want to be treated."*

*It IS that simple.
Amen.*



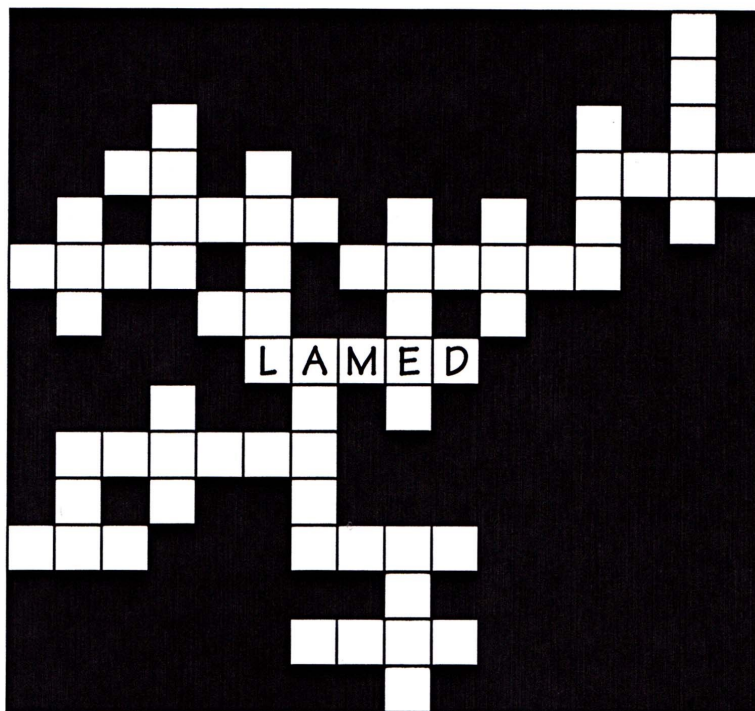
Every day should be mother's day, but since it just doesn't work that way in the real world, it's nice to have a special day to honor women... and specifically those brave souls who take on the enormous task of motherhood. I can't imagine anything that's quite as intoxicating as watching your newborn baby sleep, the toothy grin of a toddler, or a warm hug from a teenager. The years, days and moments pass so quickly... let's celebrate mother's day with an outpouring of love for all those who have played a maternal role in our lives.

Love to ALL! Jennifer & Tammy

Complete the acrostic below that reveals how the Lord took care of His people as they wandered in the wilderness on the way to the promised land. Refer to Exodus 13:21; 15:22—17:16; 19:2, and Numbers 10; 12; 21.

- | | | |
|--|-----|-------|
| 1. It came from a rock | 1. | _____ |
| 2. Name of place with twelve wells and seventy palm trees | 2. | _____ |
| 3. The Lord-Is-My-Banner was the name of the one Moses built after the victory at Rephidim | 3. | _____ |
| 4. The way the Lord led the people by day | 4. | _____ |
| 5. What Moses cast into the bitter waters to make them sweet | 5. | _____ |
| 6. Place of bitter waters | 6. | _____ |
| 7. The bread given by the Lord | 7. | _____ |
| 8. When Moses held up his hand, the Israelites prevailed against them | 8. | _____ |
| 9. Place where God gave the covenant | 9. | _____ |
| 10. Name of wilderness between Elim and Sinai | 10. | _____ |
| 11. What Moses did to reverse Miriam's leprosy | 11. | _____ |
| 12. Amount of manna allotted per person | 12. | _____ |
| 13. A fiery serpent was made of this and set on a pole | 13. | _____ |
| 14. Signal announced by two silver trumpets | 14. | _____ |
| 15. Place where Moses struck a rock and water rushed forth | 15. | _____ |
| 16. Victory over them was marked by the defeat of king Og at Edrel | 16. | _____ |
| 17. Type of bird that came in droves at evening to cover the camp | 17. | _____ |
| 18. First place where water came from a rock | 18. | _____ |
| 19. Place where the cloud settled after Sinai | 19. | _____ |

Psalms 119 is divided into sections, each of which has been given a name. These names are provided for you below. Your challenge is to fit them into the grid! We've given you one name as a starting point.



Word Pool

ALEPH AYIN BETH DALETH GIMEL HE HETH
KAPH LAMED MEM NUN PE QOPH RESH TSADDE
SAMEK SHIN TAU TETH WAW YOD ZAYIN

By adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing the numbers found in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' miracles, you will arrive at the number of persons Jesus sent out to preach, teach, and heal in His name.

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------|
| The number of men who were fed with the miracle multiplication of the boy's lunch of loaves and fish (John 6:10) | | 5,000 |
| Divided by ... | | |
| The number of lepers who were cleansed and healed by Jesus (Luke 17:12-14) | ÷ | 10 |
| Multiplied by ... | | |
| The number of days Jesus was in the tomb before His resurrection (Luke 24:7) | × | 3 |
| Divided by ... | | |
| The number of years the woman suffered with the issue of blood before she was healed (Matthew 9:20) | ÷ | 12 |
| Plus ... | | |
| The number of years the lame man laid by the pool of Bethesda (John 5:5) | + | 38 |
| Minus ... | | |
| The number of waterpots filled with water that Jesus turned into wine (John 2:6-9) | - | 6 |
| Plus ... | | |
| The number of friends who carried the paralytic man to Jesus to be healed (Mark 2:3) | + | 4 |
| Minus ... | | |
| The number of sons of the widow woman who had a son who was raised from the dead (Luke 7:12) | - | 1 |
| Divided by ... | | |
| The number of days Lazarus was in the tomb (John 11:39) | ÷ | 4 |
| Minus ... | | |
| The number of demons cast out of Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2) | - | 7 |
| Plus ... | | |
| The number of blind men who received their sight as Jesus passed by (Matthew 20:30) | + | 2 |
| Multiplied by ... | | |
| The number of men from the country of the Gergesenes who were delivered of demons (Matthew 8:28) | × | 2 |
| Equals ... | | |
| The number of followers Jesus sent out two by two to minister in His name (Luke 10:1) | = | 70 |

FOR EVERY MINUTE YOU ARE ANGRY, YOU LOSE 60 SECONDS OF HAPPINESS

TRUST

in the Lord

WITH ALL your heart

(Proverbs 3:5)

PILGRIM BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

Bob Greene ~ May 4th
Austin Eargle ~ May 7th
Carol Schulz ~ May 10th
Ron Vander Schaaf ~ May 14th
Gary Abel ~ May 17th
Cedric Rudolph ~ May 22nd

PILGRIM ANNIVERSARIES FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

David & Susanna Precise
May 22nd

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IF WE HAVE MISSED YOUR BIRTHDAY, WE APOLOGIZE! PLEASE LET US KNOW & WE WILL GLADLY ADD IT!