



THE VISITOR



Pilgrim Christian Church

Rev. Ralph Wearstler, Interim Pastor Mary Carson, Editor, 286-1101

December 2008

Writings from the Rev.

The time has come for me to bid all of you at Pilgrim Christian Church a fond farewell. In many ways this has been one of the quickest 25 months in my ministry. Two years ago God put us together. Two years ago this congregation was very anxious about its future and what God had in store for you. And to be honest the same was true for me. Together we began a time of transition and preparation that required challenge and change, evaluation and soul searching, prayer and commitment, faith and hope. And all this has lead you to the calling of Rev. Scott Holland as your new Minister. As I look upon you now I see that anxiousness has turned to excitement, fear and uncertainty have turned to hope and a clearer understanding of who you are as part of the Body of Christ.

My work here is done. And maybe the best way to describe what that work has been is to share a rural analogy. Some of you may have heard me use this terminology along the way, as I've talked about tilling the soil.

You see, whether it's a large field or a small garden, before something can be planted, the first thing that needs to be done is till the soil. Which means to loosen it up and make it ready for the seeds to be planted.

Remember Jesus talking about this in his parable of the seeds? He says that the seed is the word of God which is scattered out and it falls to the ground. The ground is described in a variety of conditions. In some places the hard, rocky, or weedy, but some is seen as good soil. Good soil is that which has gone through the process of being tilled and nurtured.

Now I don't want to have this analogy to get out of hand. In many ways the tilling has been easy, and the soil has been good for a long time. But to be honest there have been some tough spots, and not all the tilling has been completed, yet enough is ready for a new season of planting.

As Interim Minister, I was called to get you ready for this next new, great, adventure. I have tried to make it clear from the beginning that is was my role among you. And this time of transition will come to a close as of December 31st.

In some ways I think that Paul's ministry was something like this. He would come into a faith community for a little while and the people worked with him, became comfortable with him, and perhaps even became attached to him, and then he would have to move on to another place that needed help or tilling, and someone else would come to continue the ministry.

To all of this Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 3:5-9, ***Who do you think Paul is, anyway? Or Apollos, for that matter? Servants, both of us—servants who waited on you as you gradually learned to entrust your lives to our mutual Master. We each carried out our servant assignment. I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plants, but God made you grow. It's not the one who plants or the one who waters who is at the center of this process but God, who makes things grow. Planting and watering are menial servant jobs at minimum wages. What makes them worth doing is the God we are serving. You happen to be God's field in which we are working.***

I have truly been blessed in my efforts to serve you. I believe that I leave this part of my ministry for the better, for having shared this time with you.

My sincere thanks to all who have stepped out in faith to see the potential that you as a congregation have. Thank you for your support, even when you didn't fully understand what it was I was asking you to do or be. Thank you for trusting in God, and letting this whole process unfold as God has intended.

None of this would have occurred without the dedication of many faith members and leaders, Elders, Trustees, Consistory, Search and Call, etc.

"The Peace of God Be With You All!"

UP - BEATS

What a year, eh?! Does anyone want to talk about having a Presidential election any time soon? As slowly as all that yammering went, it seems like the year has zipped by. But, it has been good here. Pilgrim Christian Church has done a LOT. In spite of the economy, we got a new roof on the Sanctuary and a major face-lift in the offices and Parlor. Thank you, Trustees and your prominent elf, Butch Penrod. I know he had important help, but he was the common denominator in these projects. Thank you, all.

Then, there was the work of the Search and Call Committee, with all their reading, interviewing, and travel. They really made a grand and serious effort to find us a settled pastor, and I am immensely grateful. Theirs was a labor of love, for there certainly was no monetary compensation. But, look at the results! I am a bit hesitant to predict what God might have in mind for us; still, at this point before the formal call of Pastor Scott as our settled minister, his ending up in that position seems imminent. That anticipation thrills me.

If that be true, then we must acknowledge Reverend Ralph's success at preparing us for this time. I see many ways that the Spirit has grown in us. Though there have been obstacles, such as Betsy Griffin's need to step down from being Director of Christian Education, and other members leaving some posts for differing personal reasons, we have persevered and moved ahead. I see solutions to these worker needs. Some people have already stepped forward, and maybe you are the next one to do so. I am excited for our church, and it's spot in our community. I believe we are going to become conspicuous beyond being a pretty presence on the Square.

At this point, looking forward to Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, and the new year, I am optimistic in realizing God's work in us. The work is not done, but may just be starting anew. I believe that we will find opportunities to serve that cannot even be imagined at this time. That shouldn't intimidate, but intrigue. Think of the fun and satisfaction we have experienced helping our neighbors, whether it be by cutting grass and brush, or by distributing food to the hungry, or by sharing God's love and word to the housebound. And if you haven't experienced this fun and satisfaction, then my bet is that you were not there. How easy is it to remedy that?!

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Let us each make a commitment to get involved. If you feel burned out, try another activity; if you think you cannot find the time, take on a special prayer focus; if you are unsure, talk to someone with whom you feel comfortable. We at P.C.C. have a reputation of being friendly and helpful. Let us determine to make that conspicuous as we refresh our efforts in the new year!

In His name,
Steve Wick
Moderator

2009 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Following an enthusiastic kick-off response during worship and a delicious potluck dinner on November 16, we are happy to report that pledge cards are coming in.

At this time of financial crunch, we know it may be difficult to keep bills paid. The Church is in the same situation. Please help us keep the doors of PCC open. We will make our report at the Congregational Meeting on December 14, when the proposed budget is presented for approval. Please return your support pledge cards as soon as possible. The slate of officers for the new year will also be presented.

Regards,
Stewardship Committee
Jim Rayl, Betsy Griffin, Bruce Carson

DO WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL?

In this high tech world we live in news reaches us much faster by e-mail than by phone or the postal service. If you have an e-mail address and are willing to communicate that way, would you please send a note to the church office at chardonpcc@windstream.net. Thanks.

NINTH ANNUAL CHILI DINNER
Thursday, December 4, 5:30-7 pm
Come have chili, hot dog, cole slaw, beverage and dessert, before you attend the lighting of the lights on the square.



MOMENT FOR MISSION

Greetings! We are all so richly blessed. Thank you for sharing your blessings with our Thanksgiving family by providing food and grocery certificates. Thank you also for your generous offering to support the Senior Discretionary Fund. This is so much appreciated by those who need to use it.

Now we look toward this joyful season of sharing God's great gift to us. May we all be blessed with His grace falling down upon us like a waterfall. In that spirit let us share in the various opportunities to provide a happy Christmas to those less fortunate.

We have three local families. Look for their needs listed elsewhere in the Visitor. As in the past, look for mittens for each person's gifts on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. Feel free to take one or as many as you wish. We try to keep the amount of gifts among the siblings of one family equal. Grocery and gift certificates and gas cards are always needed, as are wrapping paper, tape and ribbons for each family. **Deadline is Sunday, December 14.**

We will again have a **Littlest Heroes family**, with a child suffering from cancer. At press time we do not have information of the family or needs. Look for further information in the church bulletin and on the bulletin board. **Deadline Sunday, Dec. 14.**

Please bring gifts unwrapped. Mark them well with whom they are for. If you would like the Mission Committee to be your personal shoppers, your cash donations are very welcome.

Again we will be sending toys and other items to the **Brookside Hunger Center/West Side Ecumenical Ministry (WSEM)**. Our youth make us so proud and joyful every year as they undertake a shopping spree for this mission. You may buy gifts or provide cash for the youth to do this. Gifts are needed for all ages up to 14, although they encourage us to buy for kids over 10. Suggestions: hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, books, coloring books, board games, small stuffed toys and dolls, small cars and trucks, crayons, markers, school supplies, hair care and personal grooming items. **No guns or toys of violent nature, no battery toys. Unwrapped, please. Deadline is Sunday, December 14.**

The **County Home** always appreciates our gifts. Look for a new, updated list elsewhere in the Visitor and on the bulletin board. One gift especially appreciated are transit passes to ride the Geauga bus. These are available from the County Garage on Merit Road. If you like, the Mission Committee can purchase these for you. **Deadline Sunday, Dec. 14.**

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Once again there will be a **hat, mitten, scarf, sock, etc. tree** in Fellowship Hall. All items collected will go to the West Side UCC and Grace Community Church of Christ for distribution to boys and girls ages 4-10.

The **Geauga County Department of Jobs and Family Services** which provides our families needs help sorting and packing food and gifts and delivering. If you can help, call Sarah Shinger at 285-9141 extension 263. If you can deliver a meal to a senior citizen on Christmas Day or New Years, call the Dept of Aging 285-2222 extension 2138.

Thank you all for your wonderful support of our on-going mission projects. We are always looking for new members for our committee and we are happy to have extra help at Christmas with someone who likes to shop and/or wrap gifts.

Love, peace and God bless,
Your Mission Committee

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Sunday, December 14 following worship.



SENIOR SNOWPLOWING PROGRAM

Geauga Communities Development Corp, a United Way agency, will be offering reasonably priced snowplowing in Geauga County for low income seniors during the 2008/2009 season. Special pricing has been negotiated with a reputable plowing contractor to help seniors through another Geauga County winter. If you live in the Chardon area, Middlefield, Burton, Newbury or Chesterland, please call 440-357-4400 for details and pricing.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE WORD? Pilgrim Christian Church has a called pastor! Rev. Scott Holland

**Rev. Holland will be joining us
starting in January. Watch for more
information next month!**

PRAYER CONCERNS, NEEDS, JOYS AND BLESSINGS

Prayers for Healing

Betsy Griffin for full recovery and strength.
Bob Eldridge for healing following knee replacement.
Robert Hunter, Gwen Carlson's father, for strength during his treatments for lymphoma.
Erin Painter, Bob and Nora Painter's daughter is facing serious health concerns.
Lisa Christy, Sue and Mitch Pike's daughter had surgery for thyroid cancer. Her husband was able to come home from Iraq for her surgery.

Prayers of Blessing

All the **Snowbirds** of PCC who have left for warmer areas. We will miss you, but have a wonderful winter.

Prayers for Guidance

For **Our Congregation** as we vote to affirm the Search Committee's selection of Rev. Scott Holland.

Prayers for Welcome and Praise

Julie Joilat who was baptized and became a member of PCC. Welcome!
Peggy and Larry Baker celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary.
Bill Kvet is home from the hospital and doing well.
Kathy Cosimano had a rewarding Emmaus Walk.
Jennie and Dave Gilles transferred their membership to PCC. Welcome!

Prayers for our Military

Keith Temple who will soon be sent to Iraq.

ALL SAINTS REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The following members of Pilgrim Christian Church were remembered during worship on Sunday, November 2, 2008.

Ted Wiech, December 26, 2007
 Mary J. Ferris, December 28, 2007
 Beverly J. Carver, January 19, 2008
 Viola M. Jameson, April 2, 2008
 Jack Arnold, April 3, 2008
 Audrey Osborne, June 29, 2008
 Robert Wheeler, July 25, 2008
 Eva Smith, August 19, 2008
 Anna Ash, September 23, 2008



THANKS SO MUCH

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your prayers and concern for Bill and me during Bill's recent hospitalizations. There is such a feeling of peace and well-being knowing we are surrounded by so much love and prayers. A special thank you to Friendship Guild for the lovely prayer shawl for Bill. He was quite touched and found it comforting. And I can't tell you the uplift to see the super surprise of the bouquet of sunny flowers from the altar sitting at my door when I came home from the hospital late at night. What a cheerful delight! Thanks also to Reverend Ralph and Terri for the hospital visit. We truly are blessed in our community of Christ.

Love and peace,
 Roz and Bill Kvet

Women's Fellowship,

With sincere appreciation I thank you for sponsoring my Emmaus Walk. It was a time of strengthening and renewing my faith. I left there with a new sense of God's presence and His love.

In Christ,
 Kathy Cosimano

Dear Family and Friends,

Words cannot express the heartfelt thanks and gratitude for your cards, flowers, meals, and prayers that you showered on me during my time of surgery and re-cooperation. I believe that the Good Lord is with us during all times, and that the joy of difficult times is that He allows us to see the circle of strength that is around us. You are my circle of strength/support, and I know that our whole family has been touched by your kindnesses.

Jerry, Mom, Lindsay, Drew, Casey and I are truly blessed to have you in our lives, and we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all that you do for us. I continue to grow stronger daily, and praise the Lord for all of our blessings!

Sincerely,
 Betsy Griffin & family

Thanks so much to all those who donated food and helped serve, cleanup and setup for the Annual Chili Dinner. Please know that the dinners served at Pilgrim Christian Church are only possible because of all the good cooks and willing helpers who offer to help each time I call. I certainly hope you never tire of hearing my voice asking for more.

God bless all of you,
 Mary Carson

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

December Calendar

Sunday School - every Sunday, right after the 9 o'clock service. Come, grab some snacks, and study God's Word. We meet upstairs in the youth room, with occasional "field trips" to local food joints for intense study of scripture (and donuts)

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

Saturday Dec 6th - Christmas Shopping for West Side Ecumenical Ministries. Meet at the Church at 6PM - Being savvy shoppers, we'll search out the bargains as we buy Christmas gifts for needy kids on Cleveland's west side. Afterwards, as weary shoppers, we'll kick back and chow down at a nearby restaurant.

Friday Dec 12th - Cavs Basketball - Youth for Christ Night at Quicken Loans Arena - He's not really "the chosen one" or "the king", but he does play ball well. Yep, he's LeBron James- lets go downtown and cheer the Cavs to victory as they host Philadelphia. We'll ride in style on a bus right from Chardon High, enjoy special pre game on court fun, food, the game, and special post game show. All for around 25 bucks! That ones a slam dunk! Invite your friends, and call me for a tickets.

This months scripture verse -

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free".

Galations 5:13

What's in your ear? - is it Air 1 ; **90.9FM** or online at **air1.com?**

24/7 ***** Call anytime for help with anything - we are always here for you.***** 24/7

Ray and Lisa Laino 286-1778 Home
440-223-3637 Cell
rlaino@windstream.net

NOTE TO PARENTS - All youth meetings/events are always supervised by at least two adults.

(NOTE TO YOUTH - Don't worry, the two supervising adults are crazier than you are.)

Remember - Church service or youth event, if you need a ride, we'll get you there.

Home For Christmas, Pilgrim Christian Church, 2008

In this season of the year home is a special place. Many of us make the effort to be home for Christmas, sometimes traveling great distances to be with family and friends. Or doing what we can to help those we care about make it home. And when this is not possible, we find ways to connect through phone calls, cards, and memories.

We often talk about where we worship and share our ministry as our Church Home. And the same feelings about our family home apply to our church home.

So, as we prepare to the coming of the Christ Child into our family and church home, we have a great opportunity to help others make it home for Christmas. Each of us knows of someone who needs or should be home for Christmas, a family member, a friend, a neighbor, a co-worker, a classmate, a new person in town. We have not only the opportunity, but the responsibility to help them make it home to this community of faith. What better gift could we give than helping someone grow in their faith. Helping them to encounter the God who loved us so much that Jesus Christ was sent into the world to show us all the way home.

Home for Christmas begins each Sunday of Advent with 1st Worship at 9a.m., Bible Study at 9:15a.m., 2nd Worship at 10:30a.m. We will also have a special Homecoming Worship on Christmas Eve by sharing in a Fellowship Gathering time at 6p.m., and worshipping the Joy of Christ's birth at 7p.m. with a Traditional Family Pageant, and a special Celebration at 11p.m.

Remember you may be the only means that someone makes it to our Church Home this Christmas. May God bless you in the efforts that you make to share this time together.



December

2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7 pm Handbell Rehearsal	3	4 5-7 pm Chili Dinner 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	5	6 7 pm Messiah at Notre Dame with Pilgrim Brass
7 Communion 3 pm Messiah at Notre Dame with Pilgrim Brass	8	9 7 pm Handbell Rehearsal	10 7 pm Elders and Trustees meetings	11 Project Hope Dinner 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	12	13
14 Congregation meeting after worship Deadline for flower orders Handbells playing	15	16	17 6:30 pm Consistory meeting	18 6 pm Brass Dinner 7 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	19	20
21 Christmas Sunday	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 7:30 pm Family Service 11 pm Service	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS	26	27
28 Lessons in Carols during worship with Pilgrim Brass	29	30	31			

January

2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	2	3
4 Communion	5	6 7 pm Handbell rehearsal	7	8 5 pm Project Hope Dinner 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	9	10
11	12	13 7 pm Handbell rehearsal	14 7 pm Elders and Trustees meetings	15 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	16	17
18 Annual Congregation Meeting	19	20 7 pm Handbell rehearsal	21 6:30 pm Consistory meeting	22 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	23	24
25	26	27 7 pm Handbell rehearsal	28 4 pm Hot Meals in East Cleveland	29 6 pm Brass Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	30	31 1 pm Friendship Guild afternoon retreat in parlor

The Visitor

December 2008

**Pilgrim Christian Church
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OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Deacons

Sunday 10:30 Morning Worship

Steve Moore, Captain	Corey Godine
Bruce Carson	Mary Carson
Chuck Boros	Holly Boros
Carol Wolfe	

Christmas Eve 7:30 PM Service

Linda Arotin, Captain	Bill Arotin
Ken Campbell	Beth Craig
Holly Hummel	Kathy Cseplo
Olive Schultz	

Christmas Eve 11 PM Service

Janet Boyles, Captain	Chuck Arndt
Judy Hederstrom	Paul Hederstrom
Laura Kobuszewski	Mike Kobuszewski
David Carlson	Jan Stewart

Elder

Ray Laino

Trustee of the Month
Terry Calabrese



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!!!

Dec. 1 - John Poling, Terri Wearstler
Dec. 2 - Shirley Fisher, Bob Penrod, Emily Arotin
Dec. 3 - Laura Fowler
Dec. 6 - Carol Zeller, Nicole Humpolick
Dec. 8 - Ruth Wheeler, Bill Downs
Dec. 9 - Jessica Ristimaki, Ken Bevington, Dorothy Eging
Dec. 12 - Ruth Hawkins
Dec. 13 - Marala Schmucker
Dec. 14 - Lynn Fuerst
Dec. 15 - Jeanne Ziemak, Mitch Pike
Dec. 17 - Muriel Halstead
Dec. 18 - David Meek, Holly Hummel, Amanda Meek
Dec. 19 - Paul Jozwiak, Lydia Calabrese Gehring
Dec. 24 - Heather Penrod
Dec. 25 - Holly Boros, Paul Hederstrom
Dec. 26 - Russ Reed
Dec. 27 - Claudia Rolf
Dec. 28 - Wanda Ash, Chuck Boros
Dec. 29 - Cody Cseplo, Mary Carson, Blakely & Isabella Brozic
Dec. 30 - Susanne Dauler

