



# Pilgrim's Progress Keeping in Touch Issue 32



Pilgrim Lutheran Church

2155 N. Oakland Ave., Decatur, Illinois 62526

“Where the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God”



August 10, 2025

Rev. Brock Abbott  
Rev. Bill Abbott  
Rev. Lucas Abbott

### Staff:

Kay Tolly, Youth Director  
Beth Abbott, Office Manager  
Judy Tish, Secretary  
Andy Apel, Custodian

**Church Office:** 217-877-2444

**e-mail:** [plc@pilgrimlutherandecatur.org](mailto:plc@pilgrimlutherandecatur.org)

### websites:

[www.pilgrimlutherandecatur.org](http://www.pilgrimlutherandecatur.org)

[www.unitedlutheranmission.org](http://www.unitedlutheranmission.org)

[www.waltherseminary.org](http://www.waltherseminary.org)

### Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sanctuary is reserved from

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Fridays.

**Newsletter Deadline:** Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.

## OUR RESPONSE TO CALVARY 8/3

General Fund: 19,891.55

Christian Sharing: 26.00

Sunday School: 6.00

Memorials: 555.00

Loose: 122.00

CDs: 3.00

Donuts: 75.00

Total: 20,678.55

## ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

8/13 12:00 Wednesday Worship

8/14 8:00 Quilters

9/7 12:15-4:00 Rally Day

**MITE OFFERINGS...ALL** Pilgrim members are encouraged to use a mite offering box to collect their coins. Return your mite box at your convenience. **AUGUST** mites will go to United Lutheran Mission Association.

## ATTENDANCE

- 8/3 Sun 8:00 service: 102  
Sun 10:45 service: 85  
Adult Bible Class: 105  
Sunday School N3-Gr. 12: 15  
8/6 Wednesday 12:00 service: 59

Everlasting  
JOY will  
be yours.

Isaiah 61:7



**MISSING AN ITEM? CHECK THE LOST & FOUND BOX IN THE USHERS' ROOM. WE ALSO HAVE A SMALL COLLECTION OF EYE GLASSES THAT HAVE BEEN LEFT BEHIND. THOSE CAN BE FOUND ON TOP OF THE CABINET IN THE USHERS' ROOM. ANY ITEMS THAT ARE NOT PICKED UP BY AUGUST 17 WILL BE DONATED. THANK YOU!**

## SERVING THE LORD

### Communion Assistants

8/17 Sunday 8:00 Allen Kilzer 10:45 Don Mast

**Ushers** 8/17 Sunday 8:00 Tim White; Derek Ames; Mark Ames; Scott Perry; Cory Ritter 10:45 Stan Lange; Will Bryan; Craig Goepfinger; Terry Massey; Steve Musgrove; Dave Pressley; Gary Winchester

**Communion Set up & Clean Up** 8/17 Sunday

Steve & Jennifer Gensler; Don & Jo-Anne Mast; Patti Zeck; Jane Martin

**Coffee Servers** 8/17 Sunday Harvey & Ruth Ann Thompson; Smitha Jeyeseelan & Ivan Jayakar

**Financial Counters** 8/17 Sunday Rich Lanier; Rick Leach; Steve Musgrove; Gary Schueller

**Greeters** 8/17 Sunday 8:00 Phyllis Kunzeman 10:45 Rich & Shannon Lanier

**Trustees** Week of 8/10 Larry Wolf; Pete Williams; Brad Roberts; Gene & Linda Wise-Litter control



### Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 8/12 Palmer Gensler  
8/13 Brock & Beth Abbott (37 years)  
8/14 Mark Pokey  
8/15 Kelly Holcomb; Chad Wooters  
Greg & Barb Luka (38 years)  
8/16 Kurt Bickes; Ruth Bork; Loren Hiser  
8/17 Natalie Stout  
8/18 Pam Rhodes  
8/19 Ralph Kuhn  
8/20 Sylvia Ohlwine  
8/21 Joe & Donna Wisner (32 years)  
8/22 Janet Foster  
Harvey & Ruth Ann Thompson (55 years)  
8/23 Roger German  
8/24 Judy Arnold; Rick Campbell; Karen  
Easterling; Kathy Fulk; Warren Leevy  
8/26 Steve & Peg Musgrove (25 years)  
8/31 Dian Centers; Leah Moore; Susie Schoon  
Nelson & Merrilee Lock (6 years)



*We want to Thank You from the bottom of our hearts Pastor Bill, Pastor Brock, Pastor Lucas, our Pilgrim family, the ladies who prepared and served the wonderful meal, and the entire church staff for all the thoughts, prayers, words of encouragement, calls, visits and time plus the sharing of your memories of Dad with us. One special memory our family has that I would like to share with you is that even though his memory and ability to converse was altered, he could still say a prayer that came out as clear as if he'd written and memorized it just that day. It was in him and through him in every way and every day and we know our Pilgrim Pastors and our Pilgrim family with God in his heart and soul is to thank for that. We are truly blessed to be able to call Pilgrim our home and family.*

*We thank God for you all,  
Family of Richard Rotz*



Can you help or know of someone at Pilgrim that would like to be trained? We need more people willing to take turns running the SOS on Sundays/Wednesdays when we don't have an organist. It's not difficult to run and I would be happy to train you or show you how it works. You can sit with Dave Schroeder, Will & Jennifer Bryan, or Sarah Marsaglia before doing it alone. Teens are welcome to give it a try too. Please contact me to take a look!

~Kay Tolly



**All Things New**  
**2025 HIGHER THINGS CONFERENCES**

*HE WHO WAS SEATED ON THE THRONE SAID, "I AM MAKING EVERYTHING NEW!"  
(REVELATION 21:5)*

**Thank you to all who donated to the Higher Things Conference**

\*\* Thank you, Pastors, for always providing us with amazing lessons and Scripture. Thank you, Congregation, Church Council and Pastors, for letting us go to this conference. Thank you to all the people who donated to our trip! Without all the donations we wouldn't have been blessed with this amazing trip. I learned so much and had an amazing time. **Royce Stenger**

\*\* Thank you, Pastors for taking your time to preach to us and to be willing to have patience with all of us kids and keeping up with us. Thank you congregation and Church Council for providing for us so we could go. I personally learned a lot from all of the breakaway sessions. A big thank to all of you for the donations and giving up resources to help us go to Higher Things. I learned so much. **Braeden Lee**

\*\* Thank you, Congregation, Pastors and Church Council, for helping and allowing the 12 of us to attend this amazing youth conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan! It is a great experience! To all the generous donors at Pilgrim Lutheran Church, thank you for making this trip possible! It is/was an amazing experience for all of us! It was a great environment to learn and absorb the glorious word of God, and it provided the perfect set-up to be around and interact with lots of other Lutherans. Without you this trip never would have occurred! It means a lot to have kind people like you who help make this trip possible each year. So again, thank you! Thank you for this amazing blessing! **Emett Stenger**

\*\* To the Congregation, Pastors and Church Council, thank you for your support and encouragement in attending the Higher Things conference. Higher Things really helps pull me closer to Christ and strengthens my faith as I start my collegiate studies, where others will challenge my faith. This community really changes my perspective of isolation in the church, especially youth in the church, telling me that I'm not alone in my faith. To the donors, thank you for your support in enabling me to join fellow Lutherans in worship at a Higher Things Conference. Higher Things significantly helps bolster my faith in Christ. I look forward to using these experiences and connections to get through my time in college. **Josh Bryan**

\*\* Thank you, Pastors for your constant reminder of this sinful world and Jesus' love. Thank you, Pastor Bill, Pastor Brock and Pastor Lucas for your devotion to our church and the Lord. It inspires me to be more faithful and more knowledgeable. Pastor Bill, thank you for your constant reminder of this sinful world and our place. Pastor Brock, thank you for reminding us of the Gospel and Jesus' love. Pastor Lucas, thank you for teaching modern issues that Christians face. To the Church Council, congregation and individual donors, thank you for giving to the youth so we can go and enhance our praise of God at Higher Things. This was truly a great experience to hear all of these interesting stories from all kinds of fellow Lutherans. Your support allows us to strengthen our faith with events like these. **Steven Musgrove**

\*\* Congregation, Pastors and Church Council, thank you for letting us go on this trip. It means a lot and I had a wonderful time and was taught more about Jesus. To the donors, I just wanted to say thank you for taking your time and donating to us. It means a lot and I'm very appreciative of it. This was my first time at Higher Things, and I really enjoyed it a lot. I learned a lot about my faith from it too. **Caebrian Lee**

\*\* Church Council, Pastors and Congregation, thank you so much for this opportunity for spiritual growth. The Higher Things Conference is a good experience for youth and adults both. It has been a great blessing to have been able to participate. Thank you to the donors for your generosity in giving toward the Higher Things conference fund that we could once again participate in this amazing opportunity. It is such a good experience for the youth as well as the adults. I am very thankful to have been able to be a part of it. **Brett Stenger**

\*\* Pastors, Congregation and Church Council, thank you for supporting Pilgrim youth and adults in attending Higher Things again this year! It is always an uplifting experience. I appreciate that our congregation prioritizes the learning and growth of our youth. Thank you to the individuals who donated to support Pilgrim youth and adults at Higher Things! Being able to attend these conferences and grow in my faith is always a blessing. I enjoy the worship services (and learning during the topical breakaway sessions. I appreciate your continued support and am grateful to be part of a generous congregation! **Jennifer Bryan**

\*\* Thank you so much, Council, Members and Pastors for this amazing experience at Higher Things. I'm so thankful for the opportunity for the boys and I to attend. It's been a great week for all of us to grow, learn and worship together. We had so much fun. And, thank you to the donors for the blessing you have given with your donation for all of us to attend Higher Things. It has been an amazing experience for me and my boys. I am so thankful for the opportunity to go, and we look forward to next year. **Stephanie Whisnant**

\*\* Pastors, Church Council and Congregation, thank you for sending us to Higher Things for another year of learning, reflection, and fun. It is an incredible blessing to surround ourselves and our youth with fellow Lutherans, and the HT conference is unlike any other opportunity to really engage with the faith and build a unique knowledge and appreciation for the faith that Pilgrim cultivates. It is an incredible boon for our youth (and the chaperones) to attend, and I hope that we can continue to bring our youth for many years to come. To the individual donors, thank you for your continued support in sending our youth (and chaperones) to the Higher Things conference. It is always a blessing to be able to surround ourselves with likeminded youth while devoting time to learn, reflect and have fun. I find myself learning new things every time that I attend the conference. Being able to bring more youth to experience their first Higher Things is an amazing experience. I pray that we can continue to bring our youth to the conference and share the experience with even more in future years. **Will Bryan**

\*\* Pastors, Congregation and Church Council, thank you for your kindness and attention to making sure we were able to attend Higher Things this year. I could tell it was edifying, strengthening, and worth every expense for the youth to see the strength of our faith and the truth of our worship that is distinct from anything else in the whole world. It was also good to grow our connection and support for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and I look forward to prayerfully attending next year.

To the individuals who donated, your contributions to the youth and to our time together do not go unnoticed. Thank you so much for supporting our trip that is so edifying and strengthening in a world so opposed to what we believe. I only wish you all could be there to hear the power of the gracious Word of God so powerfully sung! Please never stop praying for and being there for our youth. They need our Christian love and support more than we ever know. Thank you again! God's blessings, **Pastor Lucas Abbott**

\*\*Thank you so much for supporting and praying for our youth. We are truly blessed at Pilgrim to have such a supportive congregation. You are truly a gift from God. This conference always reinforces what we learn each week from our Pastors and Sunday School/Midweek teachers. Worship (2 Divine Services, 2 Matin Services, 2 Vesper Services and 3 Evening Prayer Services) is amazing (we do not commune at these services but were blessed this year with Pastor Lucas and Pastor Josh Killion's church in Texas to have private communion together). If you have Facebook and are on our "Members of Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Decatur IL" private page you can hear some of the sessions and worship services plus see a lot of pictures. I could also email some to those if you don't have Facebook. Each year there are 3 conferences held around the United States. At Grand Rapids this year we had 770 attendees, 79 churches, 21 states, 2 countries, 21 new groups, 276 adults and 75 pastors that participated. The youth are exposed to real Confessional Lutheran theology, and nothing is dumbed down or watered down for them. They are immersed in the truth and purity of Scripture and how it pertains to their lives. They call sin, sin. Law and Gospel are continually put in front of them. Feel free to look around at their website [www.higherthings.org](http://www.higherthings.org).

Once again, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your continual support for our youth! It has eternal consequences. Blessings in Christ, **Kay Tolly**

### ***A Little Higher Things History***

Higher Things was born as an alternative to the LCMS “Youth Gathering” which brought in non-Lutheran speakers and leaned towards contemporary worship and music. We have been attending almost every year since 2001.

A little history (from their website):

In 1998, several LCMS pastors began planning a smaller, more regionally minded, cost-effective conference for youth, designed to be uniquely Lutheran. A year later, those plans were unveiled for the Dying to Live national Lutheran youth conference, held in the summer of 2000. Over 700 youth and adults from 25 states attended what was, for all intents and purposes, the first Higher Things conference. Based on the success of that first conference, more plans developed for what would become Higher Things.

The name for the emerging group was chosen just before the first conference, as it had become obvious by then that the event would serve as the impetus for something worth continuing and expanding. The new organization’s theme verse was: “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Colossians. 3:1-2).

Higher Things is many things, all of which seek to keep young people focused on Christ and His gifts as they grow and mature in their faith. It is parents teaching their children the catechism. It is youth workers and volunteers reinforcing what is preached from their congregations’ pulpits and confessed in their pews. And it is pastors keeping their young sheep Lutheran as they grow up.

In (over) two decades, we haven’t wavered in our mission to assist parents, pastors, and congregations in cultivating a distinctly Lutheran identity among their youth and young adults. We work to bring the Gospel of Christ, and Him crucified to youth via our events, app, confirmation curriculum, Reflections, videos, articles, VBS curriculum, and more! Higher Things strives to be available to youth from their cell phones and computer screens all the way to their summer plans.

Our plan for the future? We will keep putting the Gospel in the ears of youth as long as the Lord allows!

***WE PRAY MORE OF OUR YOUTH WILL ATTEND NEXT YEAR AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS FROM JUNE 30-JULY 3, 2026***

Check out the video on youtube: <https://youtu.be/iq4vPny-hkI?si=HGpJDCjyYkH-fDSv>

**Dying Church Rising Hope “SO YOU ALSO MUST CONSIDER YOURSELVES DEAD TO SIN AND ALIVE TO GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.” (ROMANS 6:11)**



# RALLY DAY

in Pilgrim's wooded area

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2025**

12:15-4:00 p.m. (eat at 12:15)

Sign up by **August 27**

on the worship folder insert or email

Kay at [Kt2155@gmail.com](mailto:Kt2155@gmail.com).

## Coney McKane's American Eatery

### Menu:

Fried Chicken

Hot Dogs

Pulled Pork Sliders

Baked Beans

Potato Salad

Macaroni & Cheese

Peach Cobbler, Berry Cobbler, Cookies

Tea, Lemonade, Soda & Water

Free-Will Offering



**SCOVILL  
ZOO**  
DECATUR, ILLINOIS



## AIRWALK ACTION CARNIVAL

**PRIZES**



Each person will get one Mimi's ticket worth \$6 to use on the ice cream treat of your choice. Depending on what treat you order, you may need some extra cash.







