



**Pilgrim Lutheran**  
CHURCH AND SCHOOL  
*Academic Excellence with a Heart*

# PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

4300 N Winchester Ave, Chicago, IL 60613  
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www.pilgrimchicago.org

▪ Rev Kristian Johnson, *Pastor*

▪ Christopher Comella, *Principal*

Mike Suhajda,  
*Congregation President*

**FEBRUARY 2016** ♥

Jeanne Valencia,  
*Volunteer Editor*

## Our Potential For Growth (Pastor Kristian Johnson)

*"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." \_Jesus,  
Luke 4:21-30*

If Pilgrim is known in the community, we are mostly known for three things:

- 1) our strong school
- 2) our wonderful hot meals program
- 3) a warm and friendly church.



I say "if" Pilgrim is known, because a lot of people I meet in the neighborhood have never heard of Pilgrim. This is indication that our potential for growth is extremely high.

Not only are my wife Anna-Kari and I both ordained ELCA Pastors, but we are also specially trained as mission developers: leaders that start new churches.

In the last five years, there are six new congregations (from various church bodies/denominations) that have been planted within 10 blocks of Pilgrim.

When I think about these church plants, who are meeting in school gymnasiums, storefronts, and theaters, I can't but think, "Wow... there is not one of these ministries with whom I would want to trade places!"

We as Pilgrim are truly anointed by the Spirit to share the good news of Jesus Christ in a multitude of ways. Our welcoming and creative worship community, our "down-home" hot meals program, and our academically excellent, servant-hearted school... most churches don't have even **one** of these things... and we have all three! And I haven't even mentioned that we own our own handicapped accessible building, complete with multiple classrooms and a beautiful sanctuary.

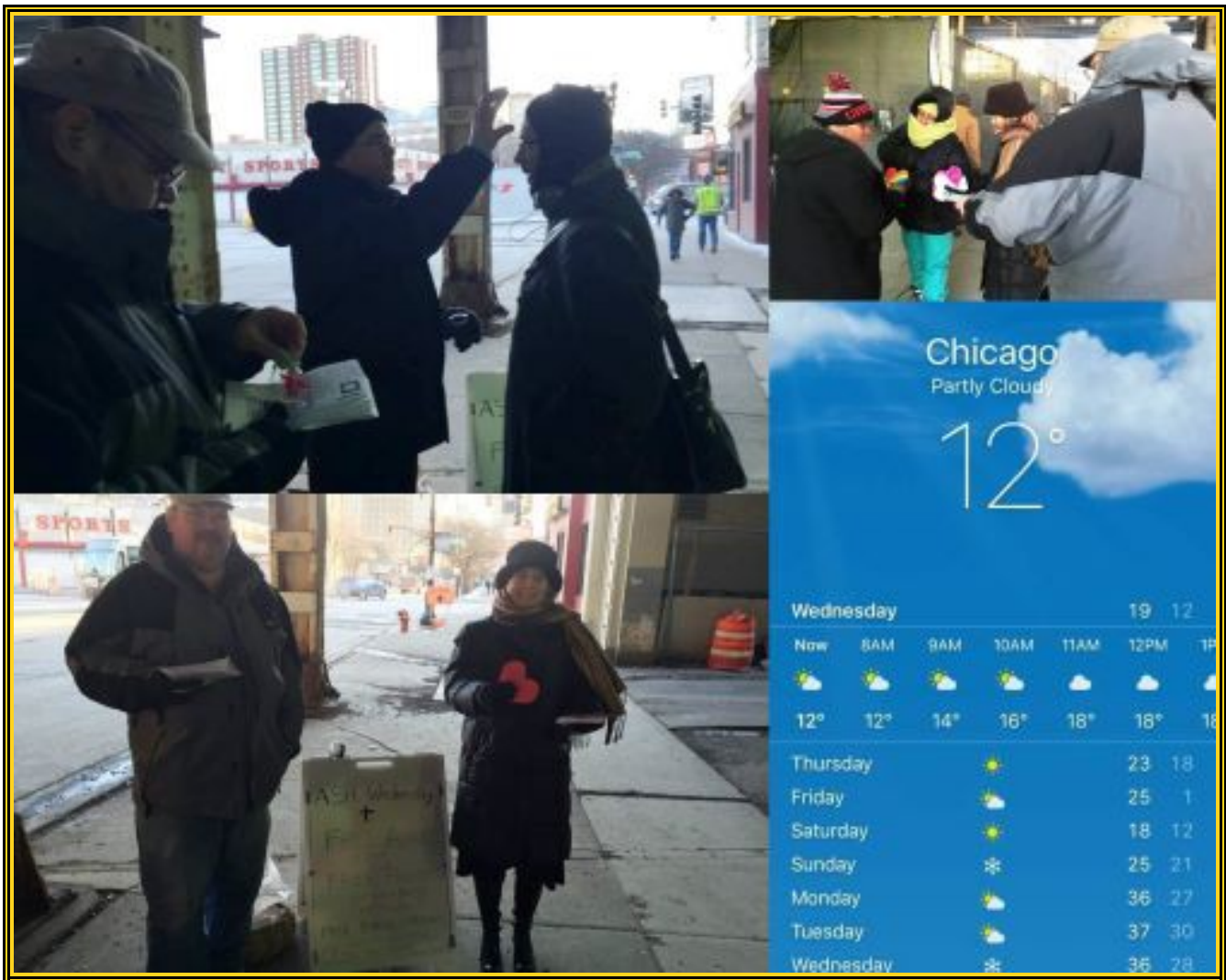
All of these factors contribute to the reality that our potential for growth is very high, but none of these things serve as the primary basis for optimism. The main reason our potential is so enormous is the surpassing power of the Holy Spirit! As we open ourselves to the Spirit's vision for this place, God will continue to unify us in love and mobilize us to gather, prepare, and send all as leaders for God's mission in the world

## Lent at Pilgrim 2016 “40 Days of Creativity”

Because we are all made in God’s image...we are creative! (Genesis 1:26) Our Lenten Theme is “40 Days of Creativity.” Each Wednesday starting on February 10th, we gather from 6:15 to 7:45 PM for a community dinner for all ages, followed by an interactive prayer/creative activity that will draw us closer to God, to one another, and our community! We are looking for creative ideas and people to weave together as we journey toward the cross and the empty tomb. We also recommend a book for your Lenten Journey: “The Artisan Soul” by Erwin McManus on Amazon.com, either as an ebook or a hard copy as we move through “40 Days of Creativity” throughout Lent.



It was cold, but very warm in God's love this ASH WEDNESDAY morning, blessing folk with ashes, valentines, cross necklaces, and Bibles.



(Pastors Kristian and Anna-Kari Johnson; James Haisler at the Wilson Red Line Station)

### General Worship Offerings

Budgeted through 12.30.15	\$82,500	Needed weekly to meet budget	\$ 3,173
Actual through 12.31.15	\$74,834	Actual received week of 01.24.16	\$ 2,716

## Prepare (Growth) Opportunities

**New Adult Education Series: Honoring our Neighbor's Faith**—Would you like to learn more about your faith? The faith of others? Get to know other members better? Discuss spirituality in a non-threatening, non-judgmental context? We invite you to join us Sundays at 9:15 AM in Maring Hall as we read and discuss the Bible together and begin a new series, "Honoring our Neighbors Faith," in which we explore our relationship with people of other denominations and religions... there is NO EXPERIENCE necessary. Child care is available, contact [kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org](mailto:kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org)



**New Member Classes**—What does 'Lutheran' mean? How can Pilgrim help me and my family grow in faith? What does it mean to become a member of Pilgrim? If you're at all curious about any of these questions, please explore with us. Our next session will be held on Sunday, February 21st at 9:15 AM. Contact Pastor Kristian or Kathy in the Church Office at [kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org](mailto:kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org) if you are interested.



**First Communion Class-Begins in February**—We invite everyone who is in 2nd grade or older to participate in our upcoming First Communion Program. The interactive class (that is geared for adults as well as children and youth) is focused on helping us grow in our relationship with God. We will cover the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the 10 commandments, and the meaning of the sacraments. Classes begin on Wednesday, February 10th at 5:30 PM in the annex (in the basement of the church).



**🎵 Invitation to Worship/Music Team**—Attention all singers, instrumentalists, dramatically talented, poets, artists of every kind. We have openings available on our worship music team! We would love to have you join us! For more information, contact Marta Hardacre at [martasmarta79@gmail.com](mailto:martasmarta79@gmail.com)

### **Come to El Salvador 2016**



If you have ever wanted to go on a mission trip, now is the time! Come with us to El Salvador, Central America, July 31st-August 10th, 2016. We will be witnessing the dedication of a new Resurrection Lutheran Church in San Salvador, El Salvador. We will be able to meet Nobel Peace Prize nominee Bishop Medardo Gomez and the leaders in the Lutheran Church of El Salvador. We will accompany the church in their work to resettle and feed refugees, help children attend school, help bring solar electricity to rural homes, minister with the homeless, and encourage our sister churches who raise Christian voices for human rights on a daily basis. This trip is open to all people. ALL AGES WELCOME, no Spanish knowledge required. Please talk to Pastor Kristian or Pastor Anna-Kari for more information.

*Love Letters to God      Love Letters from God*

Throughout February, we will be sharing "love letters" written by the Pilgrim community. We invite you to get creative and write:

A) a love letter from God, creatively imagining what God would say to us

Or

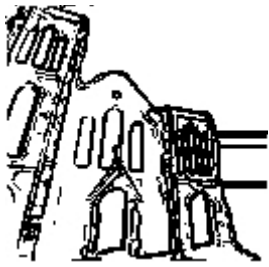
B) a love letter to God, thanking God for all the blessings in our life

We invite you to keep your letter to just 100 words...

Please bring letters to the school office to Kathy Danner's attention, or email them to [kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org](mailto:kdanner@pilgrimchicago.org) if you are able to share a letter with the Pilgrim community!

Inspiring words of love from the Bible:

Jeremiah 31: 1-14, Hosea 11:1-11, Psalm 91, 1 Corinthians 13, John 3, 1 John 4



## Pilgrim School Open House/Learning Fair

March 3rd, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Call Pilgrim at 773•477•4824 to RSVP.



### Totally 80's Pilgrim Prom Auction

(Sam Doerfler, Chair)

Here I Go Again, getting all excited for this year's auction! The auction team and I can't wait for the most fun event yet...

Now that the excitement of the holidays has passed us, don't get down! We have the biggest event of this year (forget the elections!) coming up on April 30th- The Totally 80's Pilgrim Prom! Save the date and get ready to dance the night away because we are Livin' On A Prayer that you will help us with this great cause! Don't Stop Believin' that this is going to be our best year yet.

This year's event will be held at Pilgrim for the first time in many years- we will have a DJ, spiked punch and a lot of great surprises- Our Lips Are Sealed! We'll have some fun 80's food for those of you who are Hungry Like The Wolf. We encourage you to dress in any 80's themed costume- no prom dresses required. Now you can finally use those neon legwarmers you saved!

So---here's what we need:

Each family is invited to donate or solicit AT LEAST one donation- the more you can do, the better! Local businesses, your place of employment (or friends' or family businesses), restaurants and talents are great sources for donations. We are open to your ideas and would love some new and creative donations this year. Last year, we had everything from restaurant gift cards to vacation homes to homemade art and more. For any ideas or questions, email Sam ([samanthadoerfler@hotmail.com](mailto:samanthadoerfler@hotmail.com)) or Karen ([karen@nevotti.com](mailto:karen@nevotti.com)). ALL donations are due on April 11th.

We will have a lot of volunteer opportunities coming up prior to the event and during the event. Please be on the lookout for more info with detailed needs and requests.

Get ready to have some fun and support Pilgrim!



(Pastor Kristian's Jan 27th facebook post)

*"So blessed to enjoy a visit from **Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center's Director Russ Senti** at Pilgrim today! This guy is pure walking-around-encouragement for the Jesus movement in this world!"*

## Rai\$ing Fund\$

(Anne Barsano)



Congratulations to everyone who purchased gift cards during 2015! \$131,159 worth of cards were sold, generating a profit of \$6557.95. 24% of total sales were in the "six weeks of Christmas," from November 16th until December 28th. Just think how much we would earn if we had killer weeks like those each quarter! Thank you again for your support of the program!



Don't forget to renew your magazine subscriptions throughout the year to support Pilgrim. Our account number is 2633014 through [www.gaschoolstore.com](http://www.gaschoolstore.com). Reordering this way starts or continues your subscription faster than through the publishers and Pilgrim earns 40% of your order. Contact Anne Barsano at [cbarsano@aol.com](mailto:cbarsano@aol.com) or 773-472-6037 with questions.

## Dining Review: Shokran

(Julie Lea)



On a very frigid Sunday evening in January, the dining group was met with the warm hospitality and very delicious Moroccan cuisine at Shokran on Irving Park Road. Candles are lit on every table and in the back rooms sheer drapery is hung from the ceilings. Hummus was ordered which came with sliced black olives and tangy red sauce for dipping. The mixed grill was the most popular, which is kebabs of lamb, chicken, kefta - marinated ground beef, and merguez - traditional sausage of lamb and beef in savory spices. It was excellent! Other dishes ordered were lamb fez and chicken fez; each having cinnamon, honey, fruits and garnished with slivered almonds. All dishes arrived in a timely manner and everyone enjoyed the food. The service was outstanding even though they had a big party in the back room. It is BYOB and moderately price, and a great restaurant for exotic dishes.

On Sunday, February 21st, Mexican is in the menu, but place yet to be determined. Watch for notice and join us!

Please email newsletter items to Jeanne Valencia, [j3valencia@yahoo.com](mailto:j3valencia@yahoo.com) or leave in my church mailbox. When submitting photographs, please include date taken and a brief caption. Thank you :)



## School Subjects (Principal Christopher Comella)

If you have a subscription to Chicago Parent Magazine, you probably already know that the January edition comes with a special extra edition: *Making the Grade*, Your best guide to Chicagoland Schools. One of the feature articles in *Making the Grade* is called "Brain research=happy learners." Pilgrim Lutheran is one of the featured schools in the article. If you would like a copy, we will have it available in the school office. If you look at the magazine, be sure to check out the quarter page ad for Pilgrim, too. This is a great way to spread the good news about Pilgrim!




CHICAGO AREA SCHOOLS PUTTING BRAIN RESEARCH TO WORK.



All of the students have gotten back into the rhythms of post-holiday school. We are blessed to welcome a two new families representing three new students at Pilgrim. Prospective families have been in the building touring and shadowing. Pilgrim hosted its 3rd Open House on Tuesday, January 26, and we look forward to our Learning Fair Open House on Thursday, March 3, the kick-off to ELCA Lutheran Schools Week. And the first chapel of the year involved all of our students in the story of the Magi and the Star. Your kind support makes this all possible. Thanks!

In January, Pilgrim welcomed two new faces in the school. One is **Mr. Jake Skipworth**, who will be subbing for Ms. Sorensen with chorus through the first week of February. Mrs. Sorensen is going to New York City for a special opportunity, so Mr. Skipworth will be taking over her classes. Mr. Skipworth has a master's degree in choral music education and has experience teaching music in schools in Kansas and Michigan. The other new face is **Bjorn Bollig**, a student teacher earning his masters in teaching from Concordia University. He has previous teaching experience at Park View Lutheran School in Chicago and has a good deal of experience coaching sports. Ms. Huelskoetter is his coordinating teacher here at Pilgrim. Mr. Bollig will focus his efforts working with grades 2, 3 & 4.

 The Pilgrim World Service Station after-school workshop is in session! In this service club, 4th through 8th grade students are exploring some of the issues facing children, especially girls, around the world as they fight for the right to go to school. They will watch movies and participate in hands-on activities that illustrate both the obstacles and the solutions to the problems their peers encounter on their road to an education. They will also work together to create a unique, group service project that will raise money and awareness for the cause of girls' education. This after-school program is being sponsored by **Girls Supporting Girls**, a local charity that works to build schools in developing countries and to raise awareness of the issues involved in global girls' education. The money raised by students will go to Girls Supporting Girls in support of their mission to build a new school in India. Pilgrim parent Lori Hilton serves on the board of *GSG*, so please feel free to contact her with any questions.

Many thanks to the Parent Teacher League and all the parents who helped make Winter Carnival a success. The core planning committee of Anna Lambros, Carrie Goerne, Sally Benson, Donna Sotiros, and Kelly Tobin are all to be congratulated! Thanks also to Ms. Huelskoetter, faculty representative on PTL.



# Hot Meals Ministry

(Janet Taylor)

HOT MEALS - Please welcome Jackie Mokszycki to the HOT MEALS team. Jackie has taken on the task of reaching out to the community with the good news of HOT MEALS.



The HOT MEALS program continues to be popular with new members who want to get involved in a hands-on vital ministry - we thank all of you!!!! And, of course, we thank all the HOT MEALS volunteers who have committed to decades of cooking, serving and getting to know our guests. Young volunteers are evident every Sat. in the form of Pilgrim students and Lane Tech Homeland Helpers - we thank all of them, too.

Cards and flyers describing HOT MEALS can be found in the lobby of the church - pick up a few and distribute the cards to the homeless you may see and/or post the flyers in your neighborhood.

If you would like more information about HOT MEALS, contact Janet Taylor at [jkstay@aol.com](mailto:jkstay@aol.com) or Jackie Mokszycki at [jmokszycki@gmail.com](mailto:jmokszycki@gmail.com)

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Metropolitan Chicago Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## **Death of the Rev. Larry J. Morkert**

The Rev. Larry J. Morkert died on January 14, 2016. A memorial service will be held at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 1234 N. Arlington Heights Rd., Arlington Heights, IL 60004, on Saturday, January 23, 2016, at 1 p.m. Visitation will be at the congregation beginning at noon. A reception will follow the service. Clergy need not vest. For more information, contact the congregation at 847-255-8700.

Pastor Morkert was ordained on June 1, 1965. He received his BA from Concordia Senior College, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1961, and his MDiv from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1965. In 1990 he received CPE Certification at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto, California. From 1965 to 1969 he served at Holy Trinity, Ministry to Robert Taylor Homes residents, in Chicago, and from 1961 to 1971 he served at St. Paul in Birmingham, Alabama. From 1971 to 1975, while on leave from call, he served as director of Gates House, a drop-in center for fringe teens in Wilmette, Illinois, and he was a teacher and chaplain at Luther North High School, Chicago, from 1975 to 1980. From 1982 to 1990 he served at Chicago Uptown Ministry, and at St. John's, San Francisco, California, from 1982 to 1990. Pr. Morkert was chaplain at Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital from 1990 to 2000, and served as chaplain at Vitas Hospice, Chicago, from 2000 to 2003. He served as associate pastor at Our Saviour's, Arlington Heights, Illinois, from 2003 until his retirement in 2008. He was involved in immigration issues and provided pastoral care to detained immigrants at McHenry County Jail.

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# A Pictorial Ode To Christmas 2015



Drying off over bowls of chili after Caroling in the rain!



Worship



Jan 10: Epiphany "3 Kings" Celebration



1) Pilgrim gift boxes made by students for the home-bound  
2) Carolers visit St. Paul's House senior residence



**Thank you Pilgrim!** We are so blessed to have such a generous community!  
**Coat Angels:** We more than doubled the goal we were hoping to reach, thanks so much for the many coats and financial contributions.



**Toy Drive:** Thanks to your generosity, we have exceeded our goal and were able to provide toys for all of the preschool-2nd grade children at Pablo Casals Elementary School in Humboldt Park!





Pancake Breakfast: Thanks to the Pilgrim community for taking part in the Dads' Pancake Breakfast. We had 25 dads (including alumni dads) helping out. With the support of Unitas Global, Thrivent, and Starbucks, the breakfast was able to net over \$1250 for the school's Technology Fund. We're so grateful for Glenn Williams, Pete Gillespie, and all the Pilgrim Dads for an exceptional effort!



The Box Tops For Education collection program continues at Pilgrim....you can also place your box tops in the container on the table in the narthex of the church or in the container in the school office. Join the effort! All funds raised from the box tops collection will go to fund Pilgrim Kids Care. Questions? Email Paula Raabe at [praabe@pilgrimchicago.org](mailto:praabe@pilgrimchicago.org) or check out the program's website: [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com)

### FIRST SUNDAY, FEED THE HUNGRY



On the first Sunday of every month, Pilgrim makes a special effort to collect money in support of local and world efforts to help feed the hungry. We invite you to use the special envelopes in each pew, check off our Hot Meals program or any other designated mission listed, enclose your donation of any amount, take the envelope with you when you go for communion, and hand the envelope to the usher standing behind Pastor Kristian. Thanks for keeping the hungry in your hearts.

MOPS is a morning group for moms. MOPS meets the first and third Thursday mornings of the month from 9-11:45 am at the Pilgrim parsonage (4332 N Winchester). Cost is \$10 and includes childcare. For questions or to RSVP, please contact Tarah Dickerson at [tdickerson15@hotmail.com](mailto:tdickerson15@hotmail.com).



Electronic Giving: Save time, simplify your life, and support Pilgrim! We're keeping up with the times by offering a new way to help our ministry. Our new Electronic Giving program is an automated program that will allow you to make contributions without having to lift a pen to write a check or reach into your wallet for cash!



## Pilgrim Groups And Committees

**CHURCH COUNCIL** Oversees the business of the church, but delegates work to committees. They meet the last Tuesday of the month in the School Library at 7:30 PM. Council positions are elected, but anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Contact **Mike Suhajda** 773-878-8163 or [mike@accurate-prod.com](mailto:mike@accurate-prod.com) for info.

**DINING GROUP** A group for all ages which dines out once a month, usually on the 3rd Sunday, and patronizes restaurants with varied ethnic cuisines. We would love to have you join us!! Contact **Julie Lea** 773-764-3140.

**GIRL SCOUTS** Pilgrim Church is the home of four troops of Girl Scouts: Cadettes, Daisies, Brownies, Juniors, Seniors, and Ambassadors. Contact **Judy Daniel** 773-547-2956.

**HOT MEALS** Successful outreach program working in teams to prepare and serve Saturday noon meals for area homeless. Each team commits to a three-hour shift (10 AM-1 PM) about four times a year. Interested in helping? Contact **Janet Taylor** 773-777-4052 or [jkstay@aol.com](mailto:jkstay@aol.com).

**MOMS IN TOUCH** Part of an international organization. All Pilgrim School mothers are invited to join us in the church parlor on Wednesdays, 9-10:30 AM, to pray for our children and school (childcare provided). Call **Cathy Basler** 773-509-0988.

**MOPS** is a morning group for moms that meets monthly on the first and third Thursdays, 9-11:45 AM at the Pilgrim parsonage. Cost is \$10 and includes childcare. For questions or to RSVP, please contact **Tarah Dickerson** at [tdickerson15@hotmail.com](mailto:tdickerson15@hotmail.com).

**PARISH LIFE BOARD** This group meets monthly on the first Tuesday at 7:30 PM, and is responsible for most of the hospitality, assimilation and outreach activities and projects that go on within the church. If you are interested in joining, please talk to **Anne Barsano, Shellie Volkens, or Jim Volkens**.

**PROPERTIES COMMITTEE** Oversees the property of the congregation and coordinates its repair and general upkeep, including church, school, teacherages and parsonage. They meet the first Sunday of the month in the School Office at 9:30 AM (8:30 in the summer). For more information, contact **Jim Volkens** 773-477-4824.



**PTL** The Parent Teacher League is a very active organization that supports the staff and families of Pilgrim Lutheran School. The PTL hosts many events for the families and staff through the year. Contact PTL Co-Presidents, **Anna Lambros** 773-612-3563 or **Carrie Goerne**

**QUILTERS** The group welcomes anyone interested in fellowship and quilting (or other needlecraft). Gatherings are informal and do not adhere to a set schedule. For dates and locations of meetings, please contact **Gail Mendiola or Chris Wallis**.

**SCHOOL BOARD** Oversees our Christian education programs, including Preschool, K-8, Before-School Program, After-School Program (PAS) and sports programs, as well as other programs helpful for youth. Board positions and committees are elected, but anyone interested is encouraged to attend. They meet the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM in the school Library. For more information, contact **Chad Smith**.

**T.O.P.S.** (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) meets every Thursday from 6:30-8:00 PM in the church annex. Please join us for a friendly support program with helpful hints and discussions of current information regarding personal health. Contacts: **Millie Ostrander** 773-281-5762 or **Anne Barsano** 773-472-6037.

**WOMAN'S SOCIETY** An organization of women that meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 12:30 PM. All women are invited to join this group for fellowship and fund raising activities. Contact: **Millie Ostrander** 773-281-5762

**WORSHIP COMMITTEE** Plans and creates meaningful worship for the needs of the congregation. They coordinate the activities of the choirs, ushers, acolytes, Altar Guild, organist, worship and communion assistants. They are also responsible for the creation, purchase and display of seasonal decorations in the church. They meet as necessary after the late church service in the Parlor. For more information, contact **Chris Wallis** 773-561-5419 or [cewallis1949@yahoo.com](mailto:cewallis1949@yahoo.com).



**FEBRUARY** (After 10:30 Worship)

- 07 **S Abu-Absi; T. Dickerson; C. Dickerson**
- 14 **G Schwarz; S Riedle Volkens**
- 21 **Telford Family; Crabtree Nelson Family**
- 28 **The Azzaro Family; L Cardo; J Stoker**