

Dear Pilgrim Families,

Happy summer! August is such an incredibly beautiful time in the Northland! I also hope that you all, not just your kids, have had enough time outside and have soaked in everything that only nature can provide. Congratulations to the families celebrating the birth of their newest family member, and my deepest condolences to those of you who have suffered a loss this summer, or are living with the pain of a diagnosis of a family member.



Over this summer, Pilgrim has been like an early spring in the Northland. Committees and staff have been creating structures and roots to allow for an exceptional foliage at the beginning of the school year. It seems that a lot of the dreams and hopes that we have had for our children's programming at Pilgrim are taking a tangible and appealing form. Jackie Falk, a longtime and beloved Pilgrim member, is joining our team to help guide our Sunday school and youth faith formation. Jackie will be sending out a letter of introduction and will explain of the type of work she will be doing at Pilgrim, but I cannot contain my excitement that she is blessing us with her gifts! She brings to us such a wealth of experience from her work at Peace UCC, and I can't believe how lucky we are to have her work with us!

Last program year we tried some new music programming at Pilgrim and based on the feedback I got from parents, I will be continuing and hopefully improving upon it! I will not be holding Joyful Noise Thursday nights this year.

In general, Sunday mornings will look like this for music options:

8:30-9:15 am: Youth Handbells/Percussion Ensemble (selected Sundays) 5th grade to adult
(Occasional weeknight rehearsal - Wednesdays: 5:00-6:00pm or Fridays late afternoon/early evening depending on what works best for participants)

9:00- 9:30 am: Youth Orchestra (selected Sundays) 4th grade and older

9:30-9:55 am: Youth Choir (every Sunday) 3rd grade and older

11:00-11:30 am: Joyful Noise music time: 4 years through 2nd Grade
Below is a description of the ensembles:



Youth Orchestra: 4th Grade and up: This is an ensemble to encourage youth and children who are already studying an instrument at school or privately with a teacher. If a youth does not play an instrument but would like to join, I can start them playing on recorder. We will play a couple times as a semester as a large group. More advanced players will be invited to play in smaller breakout ensembles to provide special music, or special instrumentation with another ensemble at Pilgrim. Adult instrumentalists are also welcome! *Youth who are younger than 4th grade who are studying an instrument are welcome to join the orchestra too! I will just need to touch base with the parent to see what level the student is at and rewrite parts to fit where they are in their studies!*

Youth Choir: This is going to be a big year for singing in church and so we are rehearsing as much as possible. In addition to learning some of the classical choral repertoire, the youth choir is going to help enliven worship by representing and lifting up social justice issues by singing music from different cultural traditions that have lived in the shadows of injustice. The choir will be singing in parts, and will be using percussion instruments for some of the pieces this year.

Youth Handbell/Percussion Ensemble: 5th grade to Adult

This ensemble requires dedication to coming to every rehearsal possible and participants cannot miss a scheduled performance because each person plays their own individual part. This ensemble requires participants to have a basic understanding of music notation, but participants do not have to be completely fluent in note reading. We will be working on handbell and African/Latino percussion music. We will be using the handbells, and Djembes, Shekeres, Güiros, etc. There are only **11 slots** available. I would like the youth who would like to have this opportunity to fill the

slots first and then I will open up any additional slots to adults. Once the roster is formed, we will make a schedule that works around major conflicts. Early morning rehearsals will have muffins!

Joyful Noise Music Time:

This music opportunity will begin with snack time and will be held downstairs in Fellowship Hall following worship. This will allow us to be able to move and groove and use the parachute safely. We will be singing, drumming and learning children's handbells and recorders during this time. We will also be learning music theory with games. It will be a fast-paced time with lots of movement! We also will be learning some songs for the Christmas Pageant too, but our main focus will be on building musical skills and making a joyful noise! Ages are 4 years through 2nd grade. Third graders are welcome, too if they prefer this music time over youth choir. Older aged kids are welcome to help lead the activities.

Adult Choir: 9:00-9:45 am, and Wednesday Evenings 7:15-8:30pm.

Why is joining choir such an intimidating thing? I could fill pages with the social, emotional, physiological, and brain benefits of singing in a choir, but somewhere along the way a person's ability to make music has been compromised by the belief that it isn't "good enough." The time commitment can also seem intimidating, too! If there is a part of you that has always wanted to sing in a choir, or misses singing, or wants to try it out, you are most welcome! In the church music world, you, your life experiences, and your personality are what bless the people around you, not the ability to hit all the right notes the first or the tenth time. Part-time singers, occasional singers...all are welcome. We want you!

Bellissimo: Wednesdays: 6:00-7:00pm. This is our advanced handbell group. We have had youth and adults ring together and teach people how to ring bells in this group, too. We have limited space available for new members in this group, but we always find room, even if it means purchasing more bells.

A detailed schedule will be sent out at the end of August and beginning of September outlining the rehearsal schedule for the different ensembles, but here are some major music events that you can mark on your calendar:



Major Music Sundays for the Youth:

Sunday: September 25th:

Theme: Social Justice, Peace
"Concert Across America to End Gun Violence"
Music: "Peace Drum Song" Pilgrim Choir, youth choir, and K-2

Sunday: October 16th:

Theme: Children's Sabbath
Music: "Lord Listen to your Children Praying"
"Jesus Loves Me This I know"
"This Little Light of Mine"
Pilgrim Choir, Youth Choir, K-2



November 13th:

Theme: African Heritage Sunday
Music: Funga Alafia (Ghana Welcome Song) African Drumming
Youth Choir, K-2

December 18th:

Christmas Pageant
"The Drummer Boy"
Youth Choir, K-2

June 11th:

Youth Musical
"Once Upon a Parable"
Youth Choir, K-2



Enjoy the last licks of summer!

Thanks, Rachael Kresha, Music Director at Pilgrim Congregational Church
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