



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
June 2026

We glorify God by receiving the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and sharing that salvation through word and deed with those in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Confessing Christians stick-out their necks

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Someone not that long ago used the expression “stick your neck out”, which use made me wonder about from where that expression came. If you ask Google, the AI Overview explains that the expression is an American one and means, among other things, to take a risk, noting that “the neck and head are the most vital and vulnerable parts of the body”, so “exposing them—figuratively or literally—represents the ultimate act of bravery or recklessness”. Google’s AI Overview says the exact origin of the expression is “murky”, but it nevertheless offers two theories that linguists list for the origin of the expression. One theory is that the expression comes from a turtle, “which makes itself completely vulnerable to predators when it stretches its neck out of its protective shell to look around”. The other, reportedly more common, theory is that the expression comes from chickens and turkeys, which are said to “stretch out their necks on a chopping block just before slaughter”. That behavior is interesting if true; I do not personally remember it from my few experiences being around the butchering of chickens on extended-family farms when I was a boy. Regardless, sticking-out one’s neck is a bit of a theme that we hear this month.

This month as Pilgrim moves from May’s festivals of the red Day of Pentecost and the white Feast of the Holy Trinity into the long green season of Sundays after Pentecost, we, in this year of our Three-Year Lectionary Series, resume a more-or-less continuous reading of St. Matthew’s Divinely-inspired Gospel account, picking up at Matthew 9:9-13 on June 7, and ending at Matthew 25:31-46 on November 22. This month, there is one non-Sunday festival, the June 25 Commemoration of the Presentation of the Augsburg, and the Matthew 10:26-33 Gospel Reading for its 7:00 p.m. Divine Service repeats parts of the Gospel Readings from both the preceding and following Sundays, arguably about sticking-out one’s neck.

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In Matthew 9:9-13, Jesus calls St. Matthew as a disciple, and, in Matthew 9:35-10:20, Jesus speaks of the need for church workers and sends out the Twelve as apostles, telling them that persecution will come. In Matthew 21-33, Jesus describes that persecution as taking place even within families, says not to fear losing one's life, and indicates the need for believers to confess Jesus before people, in order for Jesus to confess the believers before His Father Who is in heaven. In Matthew 10:34-42, Jesus similarly describes the "sword" He brings as dividing families and says whoever does not take his or her cross and follow Him is not worthy of Him.

Of course, in general we are not worthy of Jesus at all. By nature we are sinful, and our sinful nature leads us to commit all sorts of sins of thought, word, and deed, for any one of which we deserve both death here and now and torment in hell for eternity. But, the Holy Spirit leads us to be sorry for our sin to trust God the Father to forgive us for the sake of God the Son, Jesus Christ, Who died on the cross for us and rose from the grave.


As Jesus describes in the Gospel Readings mentioned earlier, faithful Christians confess Jesus in front of other people, and they expect to be persecuted as a result. That persecution can come from anyone, whether society at large, a church body, or an individual's family. That persecution can take any form, up to and including a faithful confessing-Christian's death in this world. But, if Jesus says that we should not fear even our deaths in this world, then much less should we fear whatever other consequences might come from our faithful confession. Relying on God, we can stick-out our necks, risk our lives, knowing that, regardless of what happens, God works our suffering for our good (Romans 8:28).

The German princes originally presenting the Augsburg Confession in 1530 reportedly told Emperor Charles V that before they would let anyone take from them the Word of God ask them to deny their God, they would kneel and let the emperor cut off their heads. Whether or not, like the chickens and turkeys mentioned at the outset, the princes actually knelt and stretched out their necks, as works of art sometimes depict them doing, we do not know. But, we do know that, as we join them in making the good Augsburg Confession, such as by our membership in Pilgrim, we also should be willing to suffer all, even death, rather than compromise the truth of God's Word, deny our Lord, and have Him deny us! May God help us be so faithful to life eternal!

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

DAILY BIBLE READING

- 1 Isaiah 12:1-6
Acts 15-16
- 2 Psalm 150
Acts 17-18
- 3 Psalm 1
Acts 19-20
- 4 Psalm 2
Acts 21-22
- 5 Psalm 3
Acts 23-24
- 6 Psalm 4
Acts 25-26
- 7 Psalm 5
Acts 27-28
- 8 Psalm 6
Joshua 1-5
- 9 Psalm 7
Joshua 6-8
- 10 Psalm 8
Joshua 9-11
- 11 Psalm 9
Joshua 12-16
- 12 Psalm 10
Joshua 17-21
- 13 Psalm 11
Joshua 22-24
- 14 Psalm 12
Judges 1-3
- 15 Psalm 13
Judges 4-6
- 16 Psalm 14
Judges 7-9
- 17 Psalm 15
Judges 10-12
- 18 Psalm 16
Judges 13-15
- 19 Psalm 17
Judges 16-18
- 20 Psalm 18
Judges 19-21
- 21 Psalm 19
Ruth
- 22 Psalm 20
1 Samuel 1-3
- 23 Psalm 21
1 Samuel 4-6
- 24 Psalm 22
1 Samuel 7-9
- 25 Psalm 23
1 Sam. 10-12
- 26 Psalm 24
1 Sam. 13-15
- 27 Psalm 25
1 Sam. 16-18
- 28 Psalm 26
1 Sam. 19-21
- 29 Psalm 27
1 Sam. 22-24
- 30 Isaiah 12:1-6
1 Sam. 25-27



JUNE 2026

Texas District Church Extension Fund
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Investment	Fixed Rate ²		Floating Rate ²	
	Rate	APY	Rate	APY
One Year Note ¹	4.000%	4.06%	3.000%	3.03%
Three Year Note ¹	3.750%	3.80%	3.250%	3.29%
Five Year Note ¹	3.850%	3.91%	3.500%	3.55%
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\$100,000 minimum, 18 month term				
Flex Savings			1.000%	1.00%
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Amounts over \$10,000 receive the Flex Savings rate				
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June 2026

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
 www.pilgrimlc.org
 903-984-4333

Pastor's Regular Study Hours
 Tuesday 5:00-8:00 PM
 Wednesday-Friday 9:00 AM-Noon
 Saturday Noon-3:00 PM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 3:00 PM Catechesis	3 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	4 NO DFW Study Group 12:30 PM Catechesis 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	5	6 (Willows Services are suspended) Margot McMillen (B)
7 2 ND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service "The 15-2 Folk" Gathering	8	9 6:00 PM Board of Elders Meeting	10 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	11 12:30 PM Catechesis 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	12 Shockley (A)	13
14 3 RD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Mary/Martha Society Gathering	15	16 3:00 PM Catechesis	17 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study Jeanette Heil (B) Carter Knight (B)	18 12:30 PM Catechesis 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	19 Gwen Rittenberry (B)	20
21 4 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	22 Katy Myers (B)	23 3:00 PM Catechesis 5:30 PM Pastor prays at Kilgore City Council Meeting	24 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	25 THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION NO Circuit Meeting 7:00 PM Divine Service Lila LeBlanc (B)	26	27 10:00 AM Right to Life East Texas Celebrate Life Rally at Gregg County Courthouse
28 5 TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Anniversary Committee Meeting	29 Gwen Freeman (B)	30 3:00 PM Catechesis Spencer Land (B)	Elder on Duty: Carl Gardener (Back-up: Remo Gualtieri)			

**“Brave hearts, be bold! God’s truth confess, Your life and honor daring;
 The apostolic faith express, By word and deed declaring” (Stephen Starke)**

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713 Florey Street
Kilgore, Texas 75662-3503

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