

THE JOURNEY OUT



2023: A YEAR TO EXPAND

Seven years ago as I was stepping into my role as the President of PCR, I received a picture from the Lord in prayer. I was going down a river in a low dugout canoe. There were high reeds and rushes on the banks which blocked me from seeing anything on either side. Further down ahead I could see that the river deepened, widened, and strengthened and that the reeds and rushes faded away and gave way to open fields. Over these past seven years I have seen that picture come to life.

I am profoundly grateful for how the Lord has led this remarkable ministry over the last 29 years, and in the last 7 years in which I have had the privilege of leading it. We have seen God build on truly amazing moments of healing and reconciliation to now growing movements of reconciliation. We have always recognized that wounded people wound and healed people heal, and in recent years we have also realized that wounded churches wound and healed churches heal. It has been such a joy to see healing come into individuals as well as churches which then impacts communities and ultimately countries.

Our theme for this year aligns with this vision, **2023: A Year to Expand!** As we think about our lives and this work of healing and reconciliation I believe this scripture gives us some clear guidance for the season ahead as the river continues to deepen, widen, and strengthen.

ENLARGE

This is an invitation to **expand our vision**. In Hebrews 11:1 the scripture tells us that *"Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."* This means that our faith is rooted into something substantial, involves seeing that which is not yet seen, and stepping into that new vision of reality with confidence in God. The need is urgent and growing and now is the time for us to "see" with fresh eyes God's plans and purposes for this ministry.

STRETCH

A natural result of an enlarging vision is that we will be stretched! This stretching will require us to **expand our comfort zone**, being willing to move

EXPAND

**"ENLARGE THE PLACE OF
YOUR TENT,
STRETCH YOUR TENT
CURTAINS WIDE.
DON'T HOLD BACK;
LENGTHEN YOUR CORDS,
STRENGTHEN YOUR STAKES.
FOR YOU WILL SPREAD OUT
TO THE RIGHT AND
TO THE LEFT."**

ISAIAH 54:2-3

beyond our current knowledge and understanding. The apostle Peter's experience in Acts 10 is instructive to us. He went through a stretching process that included a new awareness, an attitude adjustment, specific action steps, and eventually to the point of advocacy.

LENGTHEN

As our vision enlarges, and the fabric of our souls are stretched, our cords must be lengthened. What does that mean? It means that we must **expand our relational connectedness**. These cords are what the Bible calls the ligaments which hold us

together. In Colossians 2: 19 the apostle Paul says *"from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow."* It is our relationships with one another which will provide the support needed for our expanding vision.

STRENGTHEN

In addition to lengthening our cords, we are also exhorted here to strengthen our stakes. We do that as we **expand our foundations** in the Word and the Spirit. Colossians 2: 6 - 7 says *"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him."* As we picture this enlarging tent, it is essential that our stakes go ever deeper, so that whatever wind of adversity might come, our tent will stand!

DO NOT HOLD BACK!

This is definitely a time and season for us to **engage with the plans and purposes of God** for PCR. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15: 57-58, *"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourself fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."* Let us continue to give ourselves fully to this work of healing and reconciliation.

YOU WILL SPREAD OUT!

Here is His promise to us, we will have impact and influence on the lives, relationships, and communities around us and beyond us. We know that there are more people and places to reach with this vital ministry of healing and reconciliation. Together, let us **embrace our destiny**. As the prophet Haggai declared, *"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house," says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' says the LORD Almighty.* Haggai 2:9 The best days for this work are upon and ahead of us. He is faithful, and He will do it!

Jim Olson,
PCR President



JOURNEY TOWARD SHALOM



Tim, Rachel and Joy Uthmann

A single word helps capture my invitation into, and my fascination with Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation: “shalom.” My excitement to step more deeply into this organization is fueled by a vision beyond “mere peace.” I’m captivated by a movement of people traveling pathways toward biblical shalom: Completeness. Healing. Reconciliation. Integration. Abiding. Perhaps shalom captures my imagination because these are the paths along which my Shepherd is leading me.

In the Pilgrim Center’s “Way of Reconciliation” course, we explore the scope of shalom in five different spheres: environmental, economic, governmental, societal and spiritual. Each area coincides with parts of my own journey from deferential, conflict-averse peacekeeping toward becoming a more whole person who pursues authentic, Spirit-led peacemaking. Together, they help frame my ongoing pursuit of *Shalom*.

A deep love and appreciation for the natural world has long been part of my life. I had the privilege of working on a trail crew in the backcountry of Yosemite National Park during college. In the midst of that pivotal time, my shepherd’s heart was shaped more deeply to care for the people

around me. Twenty years later, working with diverse faith communities in a chaotic, crowded London suburb reminded me that loving Christ includes caring for all of His creation. My call to vocational ministry was being revealed in the Yosemite wilderness, but it was in urban Southall, England, that my love for nature and ministry came back together in a movement toward renewal. *Shalom*.

Growing up, I did not consider my family “poor”; we just didn’t have much. If I wanted something, I figured out ways to earn it. Paper routes, lawn mowing and cleaning horse stalls were simply part of life. I even started a small cake decorating business as a teenage boy, but that’s a story for a different day! As my wife, Rachel, and I raise our own delightful 14-year-old daughter, Joy, I’ve discovered my “strong work ethic” was really a scarcity mindset embraced as a child. I was never sure there would be enough, and I held myself responsible to provide for my family. *Shalom*.

**GOD IS GENTLY MOVING ME TOWARD HIS
ABUNDANCE, WHICH ALLOWS GENEROSITY
TO FLOW FROM FREEDOM, NOT FEAR.**

Rachel began serving as a missionary among refugees over two decades ago. We have shared that call together over the past 15 years. This ministry has deeply formed our lives in many ways, but one of the most significant is my growing awareness of the brokenness of our world. Things do not always “work out” for people – even humble, godly people. The powers and systems of this world do not always bend toward justice and good; there are always people who bear scars of injustice, inequality, displacement. But there is a better Word. We are invited to be ministers of reconciliation, moving toward the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. *Shalom*.

“Conflict is destructive.” That tape has played over and over in my head for much of my life. As a child, I experienced the pain of unbridled anger, tearing at the fabric of our family. In early relationships, discord almost certainly preceded ruptures. Even in faith communities, disagreements became divisions became disunity. Conflict, for me, has been marked by fear and keeping a shallow “peace” almost always felt safer than the hard work of making true peace. And yet, true love casts out fear. It is a precious gift of courage which helps me move through conflict toward authentic reconciliation. *Shalom*.

**RELATIONSHIPS WHICH REFLECT OUR
SHARED HUMANITY ARE WORTH SIGNIFICANT
COST; PEACE IS MORE THAN
A LACK OF CONFLICT.**

The real resonance of reconciliation, of course, is the long journey with God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Many years ago, by the mystery of Jesus’s life, death and resurrection, I was reconciled to God and recognized Jesus as the savior of my soul for eternity. The further I follow my humble Shepherd along these paths, the more I experience Him as the loving redeemer of my life. Just now, it seems, I am learning to abide in Him, who is both the source and the fruit of true love. The ministry of reconciliation, moving me ever deeper toward the person of Jesus. *Shalom*.

Hearing the gentle strains of the Spirit weaving through the history of Pilgrim Center, the reconciliation stories many of you carry and the crafting of my own heart, I am struck by a deep sense of harmony. I am quietly excited about what is yet to come as together we move into the next movement of reconciliation. *Shalom*.

Tim Uthmann,
Incoming PCR Executive Director

Dear Pilgrim Center family,

The last seven years have been so rich. God has moved in such powerful and life changing ways. Jim has been a tremendous gift as president of PCR. With his leadership, new curriculum was created, critical reconciliation efforts have flourished in the US and through the internet, PCR ministry has literally reached around the world. It has been a significant and fruitful time. God has been so good.

I am extremely hopeful for the next season. The future offers new possibilities with the addition of Tim and Sam. I am thrilled that Tim Uthmann has agreed to be the new Executive Director. I believe Tim is uniquely gifted to lead PCR. Tim is

thoughtful, discerning, very collaborative and brings years of International and multicultural experience. Sam Snyder is also perfectly qualified to lead the international ministry for PCR. Sam offers a lifetime of international ministry experience.

PCR has a terrific team. I could not be more pleased and excited for our future.

With Great Expectations,
Todd Bertelson,
Pilgrim Center Board Chair

EXPANDING INTERNATIONALLY

It has been almost seven years since my first experience on retreat with the Pilgrim Center and since then I have been involved in increasing ways. Since beginning as International Ministry Director I have had a *closer* view of everything that God has been doing and is doing, and a *clearer* picture of what I believe He is going to do through this ministry of reconciliation. I have been so encouraged to see how God has been expanding us internally and externally to grow our vision and our relationships with Him and one another!



Bishop Paul Ndahigwa, PCR Rwanda Country Director

LOOKING BACK

It has been 29 years since the beginning of the Rwandan genocide and many thousands of lives have been impacted by this work of reconciliation throughout Rwanda and the Great Lakes region of Africa. This March we were able to spend time with the Rwandan Leadership Team and 30 Rwandan facilitators, along with many others who have experienced healing, reflecting on all that God has done and refreshing the understanding of the principles and values of this ministry. We celebrated the 20th anniversary since the establishment of the Rwandan Pilgrim Center organization: We heard testimonies of how many had been personally healed and reconciled through the PCR ministry and how they were now taking the ministry into their families, churches, and communities.



PCR Uganda Board and US team

LOOKING AROUND

Our recent trip to Uganda gave us the opportunity to see what God is doing through the leaders there. We were able to connect with the PCR Uganda Board to hear and see the ministry that is expanding throughout Uganda. We were even able to participate in a 3-Day Healing & Reconciliation Retreat for Pastoral Couples where we later heard testimonies of how God used the time to bring healing and wholeness to those who were gathered. We were also able to connect with other ministry leaders who are passionate about seeing the work continue to grow and flourish in Uganda.



PCR Congo facilitator prayer

LOOKING AHEAD

Our trip included a powerful time of training Congolese Facilitators for these retreats with Pastor Gilbert, one of the Rwandan team leaders, in the city of Gisenyi (on the border with Goma, Congo). We were really encouraged by how this group received

the Foundational Principles and Values of the Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation. Pastor Gilbert has already been working with this dynamic group of 17 leaders as they assist in facilitating retreats. Their passion to be a volunteer movement of healing & reconciliation was truly inspiring and a confirmation of the way that God is leading this work of reconciliation forward. We are seeing a growing interest for this ministry in South Sudan, even with South Sudanese leaders here in the USA, Mexico, Ethiopia, and several other places where we are connecting through international online cohorts of The Way of Reconciliation and Becoming a Reconciler courses.

**THEIR PASSION TO BE A VOLUNTEER
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During our time in Uganda & Rwanda we had in-depth conversations about the current state of the work and envisioned the future of this movement as we continue the progression of going from Moments of Reconciliation to becoming a Movement of Reconciliation by aligning ourselves with our Orienting Strategies of becoming Contextual, Sustainable, and Reproducible. I am inspired to see the many ways that this simple message and method of reconciliation is transforming lives and communities and I am excited to see the various means by which God will continue to expand His work in and through us

Sam Snyder,
PCR International Ministry Director

"NO LONGER WILL VIOLENCE BE HEARD IN YOUR LAND NOR RUIN OR DESTRUCTION WITHIN YOUR BORDERS. BUT YOU WILL CALL YOUR WALLS SALVATION AND YOUR GATES PEACE."

ISAIAH 60: 18

PEOPLE OF PEACE

Peace is the goal, the work of the Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation, a goal we desperately need in our personal lives, our communities, our countries -- and we are so far from it. But there are ways to peace - the pathways of healing, hope, forgiveness, and always the example of God's love to teach us. *Strangely, the success of the Pilgrim Center can often be measured not by "what happened" but by "what did not happen."* The evil that was averted, the hatred that came to forgiveness, the hurt that was forgiven, the revenge not taken. In all these outcomes, so many have been released into new life - making peace.

Into this strange ministry, God has called remarkable people to leadership - to lead the way into paths of peace. In 1994, my dear Arthur came to the work of



L to R: Rachel and Tim Uthmann, Sam and Sarah Synder. Front: Molly Rouner

the Pilgrim Center with a clear call to bring reconciliation to places suffering from long years of war and conflict. In 2014 Todd Bertelson stepped in to help us continue moving forward until 2016 (when Arthur was in his mid 80's, still loving the work but...) Jim Olson offered himself in response to God's calling to take on the leadership of the Pilgrim Center. In these years since, he has faithfully led the ministry, building on all that went before and expanding the Pilgrim Center for Reconciliation in amazing ways.

And as a last great gift to the Pilgrim Center, Jim has brought others to share and carry on the ministry. *Both Sam Snyder and Tim Uthmann come to us with a full and dedicated understanding of this work of peace. Each of them with extraordinary faith and work experience qualifying them for PCR leadership.* Their response to this call and the gifts they bring clearly bear the signs of God's blessing.

Our prayers go with you, Jim; prayers of gratitude for all that has been accomplished and prayers of blessing for all that is ahead. And our prayers, too, for Tim and Sam (and others) to lead us on, with so much gratitude for your deep commitment to peace - to heal the broken hearted. And our prayers for the Pilgrim Center family; our colleagues, our supporters, and all those who have been taught, healed, reconciled, and loved by this ministry. May we carry on in the faith that peace is possible.

Lovingly, in faith,
Molly

THE PILGRIM CENTER is called to bring hope and healing by renewing individuals, restoring relationships, and revitalizing communities through the ministry of reconciliation.

Journey Out Contributors:

Jim Olson, PCR President
Tim Uthmann, Incoming PCR Executive Director
Sam Snyder, PCR International Ministry Director
Molly Rouner, PCR Co-Founder
Todd Bertelson, PCR Board Chair
Jan Leadholm, Graphic Design
Judi Glidden, Layout Design



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In this year of expansion, the Pilgrim Center is entering a season of growth and transition. The Summer Celebration will be a special opportunity to gather together as a PCR community and celebrate this Year to Expand. The program will include opportunities to celebrate and honor Jim's tenure as PCR President and welcome the next generation of Pilgrim Center leadership of Tim Uthmann (Executive Director) and Sam Snyder (International Ministry Director). In lieu of our annual Fall Celebration, we hope you will join us for this inspiring evening of food, fellowship, celebration, and thanksgiving.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

JUDI GLIDDEN

Judi has served with New Peace Network since 2012, where she serves as a conflict coach and mediator and co-leads the ministry outreach of New Peace Network in New England and the Northeast along with her husband David. Judi and David have provided reconciliation services to many churches in New Hampshire and Maine. Judi's experiences serving on a church leadership board and on ministry committees in startup, mid-sized, and large churches, including her home church, First Congregational Church, Ossipee, has deepened her effectiveness when helping churches overcome conflicts. Before retiring Judi ran a successful graphics design business for 25 years and trained others in graphic design programs.



BRUCE MOOTY

Bruce practiced business law for over 40 years and thoroughly enjoyed helping clients solve a variety of business and legal issues. He always tried to find creative "win-win" solutions in difficult transactions and conflicts. Bruce was the Chair and Managing Officer of a large law firm for many years. Bruce and his wife Tracy have been members of Meetinghouse (formerly Colonial) Church for over 40 years serving in a variety of leadership roles. Bruce has also been blessed by the opportunity to be involved as a board member or chair of many nonprofits and community organizations. He enjoys working with other people who share a passion to improve our communities and assist people in need.



PROVISION UPDATE

I THANK MY GOD EVERY TIME I REMEMBER YOU. IN ALL MY PRAYERS FOR ALL OF YOU, I ALWAYS PRAY WITH JOY BECAUSE OF YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL FROM THE FIRST DAY UNTIL NOW, BEING CONFIDENT OF THIS, THAT HE WHO BEGAN A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL CARRY IT ON TO COMPLETION UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS.

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-6.

Paul's word to the church in Philippi expresses beautifully how we feel about you, our Pilgrim Center Family! This year again our *Circle of Friends* Giving Partners have graciously and generously given to sustain and grow this work. Your investment is reaping an increasing and eternal reward.

2022 INCOME: \$351,071.

2022 EXPENSE: \$369,839.

As we now step into 2023: *A Year to Expand* we are asking God for His provision through His people to help support our growing vision. With our new Executive Director and our new International Ministry Director we are anticipating significant growth in our work both here in the US and in East Africa, Mexico, and beyond.

2023 FINANCIAL PLAN: \$329,900.

Would you consider joining our growing *Circle of Friends* to support this expanding movement of healing and reconciliation? If you are already giving, would you consider increasing that giving? So many doors of opportunity are opening and we need your support to enable us to step through those doors. We are confident that He who began this good work 29 years ago will, with your partnership, help us to carry it on until it is completed!

Please use the enclosed remittance envelope to make your most meaningful donation now and/or to join our growing number of monthly Sustaining Partners.

Thank you for your great generosity!