

Happy New Year!

January 4, 2012

THE PILGRIM SPIRE

*Pilgrim United Church of Christ
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for electronic versions of current and previous Spires, calendars, the Pilgrim Constitution, wedding, funeral and facility use policies, history, and much more!

The Pilgrim Spire is published twice monthly, on the first and third Wednesday.
If there is something you'd like to share with your fellow Pilgrims, please contact the church office to include your announcement in the next edition of *The Pilgrim Spire*.

Pastor's Parable



This Sunday's scripture is about Jesus' baptism. Time moves fast. We just celebrated His birth, and now He is already grown up. Our challenge is to remember what we are doing so that we can enjoy each moment.

Baptism is a sign, reminding us of who we are, and what we are doing in life. Forty years ago, our country was engaged in a war on the other side of the world. Some of the young men who served left behind children who grew up in a life neither belonging to their own culture or ours. They grew up not belonging. What a horrible feeling, not belonging. Christ has claimed you and me. We do belong. Christ has claimed us all - the question is, have we claimed Him?

An active faith is all about claiming Christ. After the Baptism of his baby brother in church, little Johnny sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."

All too often, that is the way our faith is, not very active. Then we wonder why God hasn't helped us out. Maybe the issue isn't God, but us. Our baptism in the faith is not a blanket of protection or an insurance policy. It is a work contract. It is a choice to invest our lives in Christ, because in doing so, we find meaning and purpose. It tells us who we are, but we have to act on that decision. The choice to follow Christ is like receiving a birthday gift. We can leave it wrapped up neat and pretty, or we can work at it, and discover its real beauty, the real value of the gift. Life in Christ does require our work, but it is an effort that is well worth it.

See you Sunday.

Shalom, Pastor Kirk

Your Fellow Pilgrims

- Welcome Mary Ann Jopper!
- Coming Up at Pilgrim this month
- Thank-You!

My name is Mary Ann Jopper. I will be doing a Partners in Ministry (PIM) internship at Pilgrim Church during the next four months. At the November meeting, the church council graciously voted to allow me to do my internship at Pilgrim Church. I look forward to serving your congregation and working with Rev. Bruce to further the church's mission to serve God.

For those unfamiliar with PIM, it is the lay ministry program of the Eastern Ohio Association of the United Church of Christ. This program provides training for those who wish to pursue ministering in the United Church of Christ or for those who want only to further their knowledge about their own faith. Members who complete the first part of the PIM program will then be credited; those who finish all PIM classes and complete a PIM internship will earn accreditation. Anyone who is a member of an EOA church can apply for acceptance into the Partners in Ministry program. The first classes students take in PIM, are those that help a person discover more about their own spirituality, followed by classes in biblical studies and the Old and New Testaments. After finishing the first group of classes, a member will go through a discernment process to help them decide which path they feel a call to pursue. Some of those who have completed their PIM classes and internships have gone on to become licensed ministers serving in such positions as pastors, chaplains in hospice or nursing homes, providing pulpits, or lay leaders in their own churches' congregations.

Thank you for this opportunity! ~ Mary Ann

Coming up this month

- Wednesday 1/4 - 7:00pm FCL meeting
- Thursday 1/5 - 7:00pm Mystery Dinner Theater Auditions, Attc
- Monday 1/9 - Diaconate, Trustees
- Wednesday 1/11 - 7-8pm Beginner Bible Study
- Thursday 1/12 - Mystery Dinner Theater Auditions
- Saturday 1/14 - FCL 11:30-1:00
- Sunday 1/15 - 6:30pm Free Movie Night featuring the movie "G Force"
- Monday 1/16 - Council
- Thursday 1/19 - Mystery Dinner Theater Rehearsal
- Saturday 1/21 - 11:00 Friendship Circle Tea and calendar planning meeting
- Friday 1/27 - 7:00pm Family Game Night

Is there a hymn that is special to you? Maybe you know of one that is an old favorite, one that you remember as a child, or one that has always been played at special functions or family gatherings. We all have favorite hymns that touch our heart. If you would like to hear a certain hymn played during Sunday Worship, please feel free to leave a suggestion in the offering plate, or drop a note to the church office. Thank you!

We would like to thank the wonderful members of Pilgrim UCC for your Christmas gift, including our lovely staff lunch. You are the reason it is such a joy to work here at Pilgrim.

Thank you and God Bless!
Pastor Kirk Pete & Barb Cathy Marilyn Ryoji

Thank you for the lovely poinsettia that is still brightening my room!
Also thank you to Jan Morgan for her visit. ~ Nita Snider

Thank you for making your parking lot available for the recent Red Cross Blood Drive at the Sheraton. I am a Red Cross volunteer and a member of Paradise UCC in Louisville. I parked my car in your lot for my six-hour shift and appreciated the convenience.

Yours in Christ, Judy Honeywell
Always, Alice Geopfert
Gill for their visits this past year.
Reverend Bruce and Kris & Rich Polly McCallum. I want to thank beautiful poinsettia and a visit with of Christmas, with a delivery of a
What a nice way to start the week