

The Pilgrim Spire

Pilgrim United Church of Christ
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Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221

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Visit our website @

www.PilgrimCF.org

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 of every month.

If you have something you'd like to share with your fellow Pilgrims, please contact the church office by **December 11th** to include your announcement in the next edition of *The Pilgrim Spire*.

We don't want you to miss a single issue! Please contact the office with any address changes, temporary or permanent.



*Pastor's
Parable*

On one of the hills at the farm is a wood that has Aspen trees. I am told by experts, who know far more than me, that every Aspen in the woods is genetically the same tree. The Aspen tree sends shoots under the ground to a new place where it pokes out of the ground and forms a new tree. That tree also sends out shoots which form a new tree. Not only is this process of creating new trees interesting, it is good. We tend to think of seeds from trees: acorn from oaks and spirally helicopters from maples. Here is a tree that has found an entirely different way to survive.

We live in an entirely new age. The church, and we as parents, struggle because the world in which we have found ourselves in is different from the one we grew up in. Men and women, or boys and girls for that matter, do not have to marry to have children. People do not have to come to church to hold political office. Some folks are even required to work on Sundays. Still, we cling to our wands and wave them about to change the world back into the one we remember. But it doesn't happen. Our time has come to grow like the Aspen; we need to find a new way. We need to find a way to wave Christ in a way that makes sense in the eyes of the world.

All that we hold so dear in Christ shall not to be lost. But what is of culture and what is of Christ? In the prophetic words of Isaiah, "A shoot shall come up from the stump of Jesse." The question and challenge is not did we make sense last year, but will we make sense in the world next year? I know that faith will survive. I think the real question is what in our faith will survive? How do we and our faith need to grow to stay in touch with the world?

I have no doubt that God will send up from the stump of Jesse a shoot. My question is, can you and I be part of it?

Shalom,

Pastor Kirk

Your Fellow Pilgrims Your Fellow Pilgrims

- Prayer Requests
- Christmas Poinsettias
- Other Pilgrim News
- Steeple Lighting



Please keep the following in your **PRAYERS**:
All those mourning the loss of *June Rowan*, who passed October 1st; *Juli Kump*, now recovering at home; *Lou Yanik* caring for his father, *Ed Yanik*, who recently suffered a brain hemorrhage and stroke; *Ginny Offret*, that she continue to heal and remain healthy through this season; *Charlene Calvin*, now recovering at Traditions; all other prayers that have not been given voice.

We invite you to celebrate a loved one by dedicating one of the many **CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS** that will decorate the altar. The poinsettias will be delivered to those on our Visitation List as a gift from the Pilgrim Church Family. To cover the cost of these flowers, you are invited to make a donation of \$11 for a dedication in Sunday's bulletin as well as the next issue of *The Pilgrim Spire*. Please see the sign up sheet in the Social Hall or contact Amber in the church office with dedications.

Note: If you have put someone on the prayer list, please contact the church office at least once a month with updates to keep this list current.

Christmas Donations for the Pilgrim Staff

Once again this year during the Advent season, donations are being accepted for our staff. This is an opportunity for the entire congregation to show appreciation for their many efforts throughout the church year. Please direct your donations to Treasurer John Richards. Any donations by check should be payable to John Richards and not to the church.

Every Penny Counts: Just like the widow with her penny, young or old, we all have an opportunity to help pay down the deficit this year. In addition to making a contribution using the enclosed pink envelope, you can make a change to the deficit with your change! Through the end of the year, you are invited to bring in your change (loose or rolled) to fill the church social hall. Each week the change will be counted and added to the operating fund. For those who are able, you may consider matching funds either for a specific week or for the rest of the season. Lou Yanik of the Stewardship Board would be happy to discuss this with you!

The Steeple lights the sky over Cuyahoga Falls:

In memory of my family
from

Henry Nagel

The Steeple continues to light the sky

In honor of our Savior's birth
from

Jo Green

To light the *Pilgrim United Church of Christ Steeple* from dusk to dawn for a week in honor or remembrance of someone or a special event, please sign the sheet in the Social Hall or contact the church office.

Donations to **LIGHT THE STEEPLE** are \$5.

THE MITTEN TREE is in the parking lot entry way.

Please bring hats, scarves, mittens, gloves for kids and adults. These items will be given to Good Neighbors to help those who need to stay warm in the winter weather.

See pilgrims **Shari Schneider** as Mother Bailey and **Mackenzie Schneider** as ZuZu Bailey in the musical ***It's a Wonderful Life***. Performances will be at North High School Auditorium on Friday, December 18th and Saturday December 19th at 7:00 p.m. From 6:30 until 7:00 p.m., the Salvation Army Brass Ensemble will be featured! Tickets are \$7 and are available to order by calling (330) 762-7458 or visit www.ccakron.org. Proceeds benefit a summer self-esteem building camp for abused and neglected children.

Mark Your Calendar

L.I.G.H.T.

Learning In
God's House Together
Advent/Christmas

Sunday, December 6

TOYS AROUND THE MANGER: Unwrapped toys for children of all ages will be collected at our morning worship. These are given to Good Neighbors for distribution. Please remember items for older teens, as well and the younger children.

Saturday, December 12

Pilgrim hosts **FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH** at noon. Everyone in the community is welcome to enjoy lunch on us! Volunteers are welcome Friday @ 7pm to pack groceries, and anytime Saturday from 8am-2pm to help serve lunch. Contact *Crystal Wagner* (330.630.1600) for details.

Sunday, December 13

Friends, families, youth and visitors are invited to join the Youth Group and Evangelism Board for **CHRISTMAS CAROLING** at 6pm. The plan is to carol in the neighborhoods around Pilgrim. If we have enough people to divide up into several groups, we'd like to send a group to carol to Pilgrim members who are not able to attend church very often. If you plan on attending please sign in the Social Hall so we can be sure we have enough drivers. **Even if you don't sign up but find you are able to come join us in the Social Hall at 6pm.** If you have any questions please call *Jo Green* (330-945-4166) or *Shari Schneider* (330-926-1585). Evangelism and Youth Group members are asked to bring 2 dozen cookies or donuts to the caroling for refreshments.

Sunday, December 20

The Youth Group invites everyone to visit the **LIVE NATIVITY** they will present from 7-8pm. The stable will be located on the Church lawn bordered by Broad Blvd. and Second Street. It is our hope that Rosie, the sheep, will also be present.

Youth Group members are asked to arrive at church at 6:30 pm so they can don their costumes and find their places in the Stable. They are also asked to bring a dessert for the **YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY** that will be held in the Social Hall after the Nativity presentation. Each youth is also asked to bring in a white elephant gift whose value is no more than \$5 if they want to participate in the gift exchange. The gift should be suitable for both girl and boy. Any questions please call *Jo Green* (330-945-4166).

Wednesday, December 23

EAT & EARN AT DONATOS: Place an order for dine-in or take-out from 5-8pm at Donatos on State Rd. (not applicable for delivery orders) Be sure to mention that you are a *Pilgrim* and Donatos will donate a portion of your purchase to the church. This program will take place the 4th Wednesday of every month at the same place and time.

Thursday, December 24

Join us on the eve of our Savior's birth for a special **CANDLE LIGHT SERVICE** at 7:30pm.

It's Pageant Time!

Sunday, December 6 - 9:30- 10:15 am - Rehearsals for all parts
Sunday, December 13 - It's PAGEANT TIME - MORNING WORSHIP
Please plan to arrive no later than 9:45 am

It's Fluffy and God's Amazing Christmas Adventure!



December 20, 27 and January 3 children preschool - grade five are invited to meet in the disciples.net computer lab - room 20. We will journey through the Christmas story with God and Fluffy the sheep. We will meet prophets, shepherds, magi, kings and, of course—the Messiah—Jesus.

- Prayer Stations
- Letters to Pilgrim

More News...

More News...

Prayer Stations for Advent

In past eras, church sanctuaries were open most, if not all of the time, ready for anyone with spiritual needs to come in and pray in peace. As with everything else nowadays, security issues, expense, staffing and the effort to do that is sometimes a challenge for many congregations. So then, **where can we pray?** Actually we can pray anywhere, but the “busy-ness” of our lives and our world get in the way. There is a need for a place to go, set aside for the purpose of praying, set up to help us in the act of praying.

Prayer stations are a good way to help people to pray and engage with issues, and they appeal to people of all ages and at different stages on their faith journey. Prayer stations are interactive, multi - sensory, meditative, challenging, and inspiring. They are for people of all ages. Young children are invited to experience the prayer stations with an older teen or adult so station activity directions can be quietly read to them.

During the Advent/Christmas season, there will be a series of prayer stations set up in the Heritage Room. They are open for you to come, pray, and meditate in a quiet spot any time the church building is open. A Prayer Station Guide will be available at the entrance to further explain the purpose and give some simple directions for following the prayer stations.

Please come. . . experience God’s presence in your life through silence and prayer as we await the birth of our Savior, Jesus.

Dear Parishioners,

What gift are you looking for this Christmas? Is it a new car? Maybe a new TV! Wouldn't that be nice? What do you plan on giving your spouse or your children? Did you partake in that madhouse shopping spree on “Black Friday”, the day after Thanksgiving? What are you truly looking for? If Christ asked you these same questions, would you answer the same? Look closely and you'll see that the true gift this Christmas lies right with your family and neighbors. They are the gift God has given you to cherish and share. It is the gift of LOVE! Love of God, love of neighbor and love of self. Yes! Love of self. If we do not love ourselves, we cannot love others. For God makes us in His image and we cannot love His creation if we do not love ourselves. If we love God we will love everything He has made. The answer to that question of what we are looking for this Christmas should be- God's LOVE! Love God first then love His wonderful creation- our neighbors and ourselves. God has given His love freely when He gave us His only son. There are no contracts and no penalties. All he asks of us is that we love Him in return. What a simple yet powerful Christmas gift that is. Just bring your family and neighbors together this

*Christmas and God will do the rest. His gift is free. So, what are you looking for this Christmas? Is it in that store window or is it in that manger so sweet and simple> God has given us each other to share His love. SO, this Christmas just look to your family, neighbor and fellow parishioners and you'll find God's gift so rare and true. May God bless you this Christmas and I thank him for letting me know you!
Stephen Hendershot*

*How can we ever fully express our thanks and gratitude to all of you at Pilgrim Church? Your monthly deliveries of bags of groceries- those who volunteer to fill those bags, the young people in your church who help and the delicious lunches you prepare for us. Our residents are truly grateful and look forward to your visit each month. Our special thanks to Shari who coordinates everything so well and is such a joy to have around. May our Lord bless you all for everything you do for so many-
With God's love and ours-
Tenant Council at Sutliff II
Our special prayers to Reverend Kirk as he continues to recover.*

Pilgrim Fundraiser

Pilgrim Fundraiser

AVON has a long philanthropic history and the AVON Foundation, founded in 1955, states its mission is "to improve the lives of women globally" and to that end more than \$660 million has been raised and awarded worldwide for such vital issues as breast cancer awareness, domestic violence, and emergency relief. None of this is possible without the core of the company, the AVON Representatives. I am proud to be among them. AVON Representatives all over this nation and throughout the world use their businesses to help causes near and dear to their hearts.

Pilgrim, you are near & dear to my heart. As a member of Pilgrim, and knowing that Trustees is doing everything they can to be creative in raising the money needed for the Capital Fund, I requested from them that I be granted permission to conduct an AVON Fundraising event for the church. As you prepare for, or are doing your gift shopping this Christmas season, consider spending some of your holiday shopping budget at your church.

We have two wonderful opportunities...the current Script program and now AVON products. If you've not seen AVON lately, then you might not realize that they truly have something for everyone on your gift-shopping list. And they also have the basics, too. Ladies, you wear makeup and take care of your skin, right? Gentlemen, you have no idea what to buy that special lady in your life for Christmas and you're always waiting until the last minute, right? My family and I and the large customer base I have built over the years love both the value and quality of our products and I know that you will too. But just in case, AVON backs its products with a 100% satisfaction guarantee. How many drug or department stores will take back that lipstick you thought was the right color but wasn't? Let me help you all and let me help Pilgrim.

On Sundays, during Social Hour in the Heritage Room, I will have samples and a few products on display, such as our lovely gift basket kits. I will be available to answer questions as well as take orders. I encourage you to visit my website to see just how much AVON has to offer! I'll bet you can find something for everyone on your Christmas Shopping list, but the best thing of all...just like the Gift Card Program*...you'll be helping your church earn between 15 & 30% on all orders placed. Why you could even combine the two and insert a gift card in an AVON Basket and you'd have a lovely gift for someone!

Thank you for allowing me to give back to Pilgrim in this manner.

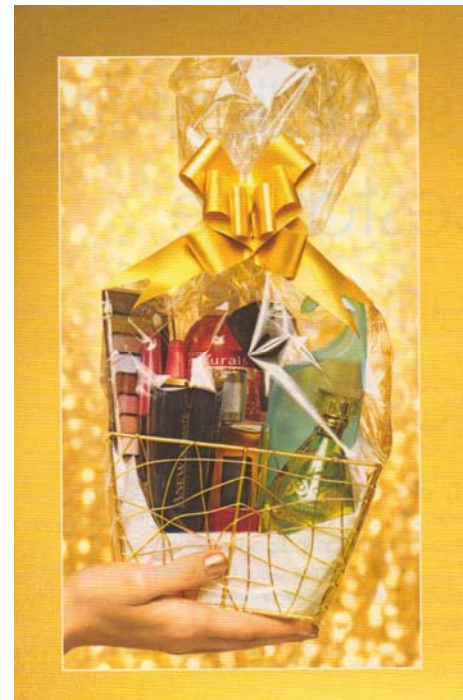
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*** Contact Vic Ing (330.459.9554/victoring@gmail.com) or Rich Shisler (330.815.6977/rshis@neo.rr.com) for more information about ordering gift cards to benefit Pilgrim!**