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Laughing, Singing and Dancing Our Way to Resilience

November 13, 2018

Written by **Rebecca Voelkel**

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." - Hebrews 12:1

It was Christmas morning 1987, and I was in the remote, mountainous Salvadoran village of Santa Marta as part of a small delegation of North American Christians and Jews. We awakened, disoriented, to the ground shaking. Quickly, an older leader in the community explained that the Salvadoran government was dropping bombs nearby to scare and intimidate them. The contrast between the ground-shaking bombs and the early Christmas morning was lost on no one. With this backdrop, we heard more about the village's history, including the killing of this elder's daughter and the murder of his childhood friend. He described in detail the ways in which colonization targets real bodies with torture, pain, and death.

But the story made a sharp turn when, after describing the history, we sat in silence and prayed. Then he said, "Do you know how I can tell which North Americans are going to last here with us?" After a pause in which no one answered, he continued, "I know that someone is going to last here when they know how to laugh, to sing, to dance, to experience joy . . . because the work we are doing is so difficult, we have to claim the promise of how the world is going to be, now. We have to live the promise. That's what our faith teaches us."

Prayer

Holy One, you surround us with a great cloud of witnesses, elders and ancestors whose wise laughter and dancing remind us of your Kingdom. May we remember and laugh with them. Amen.

About the Author

Rebecca Voelkel contributed this devotional to [Rise Up! Spirituality for Resistance](#), a collection of devotionals to keep you burning bright without burning out, whether you're leading a justice effort at church or heading out to join a local protest. You can [order Rise Up!](#) from UCC Resources.

Mission Statement:

*God calls us to live our faith as disciples
Sharing the love of God revealed through Christ
In the community and the world.*

Pilgrim United Church of Christ Staff

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Acolyte: *Thank You!*

Altar Flowers: *In Memory of Joe & Joan Spenoso. Kirk Spenoso*

Greeters: *Everyone present today!*

Ushers: *Thank You!*

PowerPoint: *Cheryl Bruce*

Liturgist: *Brian Ewart*

Fellowship: *Team #4*

Steeple Lighting: *Anonymous*



Pilgrim United Church of Christ

A Caring Church for Thinking People

130 Broad Blvd † Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221 † 330.928.4847 † www.pilgrimcf.org †



Sunday, November 25, 2018



Good Things Come In Small Packages

Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

Pilgrim United Church of Christ

A Caring Church for Thinking People

Sunday, November 25, 2018 † Reign of Christ Sunday

THE PRELUDE *All In the Name of Jesus* Stephen Adams

*HYMN (Red Hymnal) *We Gather Together* No. 21

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 93)

One: Let us celebrate the Lord our God, for He is robed in majesty.

All: The Lord's throne was established in the beginning and shall endure for all eternity.

One: The seas have come and gone, the mountains raised. All by the hand of God.

All: We gather to celebrate and worship together in Your name, O Lord.

*THE INVOCATION, OUR LORD'S PRAYER (Unison) Brian Ewart

We come into Your house, to give You our thanks, to share our lives with You and to let You into our days O Lord. For life together with You is full and secure. Life lived in Your presence is filled with hope. Come O Lord, not only into this day, come and dwell with us every day. Come O Lord, as we pray together the prayer Your son taught us, "Our Father ..." [debt, debtors]

*THE GLORIA PATRI (Red Hymnal) No. 513

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD AND EACH OTHER

*GREETING EACH OTHER IN CHRIST

OUR LIFE TOGETHER Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

CHILDREN'S SERMON Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

Faith Focus: *Moses: Flying Frogs & Locusts;*
Following God by Cloud & Fire Marilyn Freeman

ANTHEM: *The Lord is My Shepherd* John Rutter
Brian Ewart, Soprano Saxophone
Adam Holthaus, tenor & Lauren Heidler, soprano

WE GIVE TO GOD

AN OFFERTORY INVITATION

THE OFFERTORY *Coming Home* Jay Althouse

*THE DOXOLOGY (Red Hymnal) *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow* No. 515

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CALL TO PRAYER

(Red Hymnal) *Blest Be the Tie That Binds (vs. 1)* No. 272

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

THE MORNING PRAYER

*HYMN (Black Hymnal) *Great is Your Faithfulness* No. 423

GOD GIVES TO US

SCRIPTURES I Samuel 17:41 - 50 (page 243) Brian Ewart
Luke 13:18 - 21 (page 67)

SERMON *Good Things Come in Small Packages* Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

WE RESPOND TO GOD WITH SERVICE

*HYMN (Red Hymnal) *Now Thank We All Our God* No. 29

*THE BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE (We invite you to join hands as we sing)
(Black Hymnal) *Peace I Leave with You, My Friends* No. 249
Peace I leave with you, my friends, shalom, my peace, in all you do. Peace I leave with you my friends. I give to you so you can give to others, too.

POSTLUDE *Domine Deus* Antonio Vivaldi

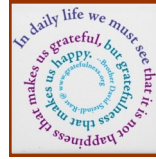
*all who are able may stand

SIGN-IN

There are worship pads on each pew in the sanctuary.
 We joyfully welcome all visitors! Please join us again!
 Please sign in to let us know you are worshipping with us today.
 We are so glad You are Worshipping with Pilgrim United Church of Christ!

Pray for:

For the health of all as the flu season approaches and winter comes near.
 Remember those in need, especially the elderly and the very young, and need help.
 Healing prayers for a church members daughter.
 Healing prayers for my grand-daughter.
 The family & friends of Jake Sloan (especially AJ Redd), a 10 yr. old who died in a car accident.
 Anita, a two year old, in Akron Children's Hospital for at least 35 days due to burns on her hands & arms requiring multiple skin grafts.
 A toddler who had a liver transplant & all the members who need healing physically, mentally, etc.
 Baby Isaac recovering in CICU after heart surgery at 2 days old. Strength for Isaac and his family.
 Diane, sister of Kenneth C., that healing begins soon.
 Jeff in the hospital with many medical problems.
 Everyone effected by the hurricanes that have damaged property and lives.
 Daughter-in-law with cancer, lymphoma, a mother of young children. Pray for healing and comfort for the family.

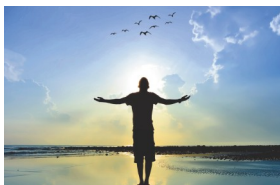


ANNOUNCEMENTS

ACME CASH BACK program continues through December 29th! Save your receipts!
Supports the Pilgrim Mission Trip Fund. Place in the box in the Social Hall!



- December 2, 2018 - 1st Sunday in Advent (Hope)** - Communion Sunday
- December 5, 2018 - Advent Dinner at 6 pm** - With dinner, crafts & tree decorating
- December 9, 2018 - 2nd Sunday in Advent (Peace)** - Toys Around the Manger & Children's Pageant
- December 16, 2018 - 3rd Sunday in Advent (Joy)** - Cantata & Wassail
- December 23, 2018 - 4th Sunday in Advent (Love)** - Baptism of grandchild of Glen & Gail Tepper
- December 24, 2018 - Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm**
- The mitten tree is up for donations! Advent Avalanche for Good Neighbors!**



Thank you to everyone who helped with the Stewardship Celebration Lunch on the 11th: Dan, Helen, Mitzi, Chuck, John, Jim, Kathie, Cheryl & Kirk
 10 flower arrangements and 2 \$15.00 Starbucks gift cards were given away.
 As of 11/15/2018, Pledges total \$81,558.00 for 2019.

CALENDAR

Sunday, November 25, 2018

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Heritage Room
10:30 a.m. Worship Service - Rev. Kirk W. Bruce, Sanctuary
11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour - Team #4, Social Hall
11:45 a.m. Cantata Rehearsal, Heritage Room
 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #169, Adult Library

Monday, November 26, 2018

1:00 - 1:30 p.m. Absorbent Minds Montessori School - Tae Kwan Do, Social Hall
7:00 p.m. Faith Formation - Candy Making at Evelyn Ing's home

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

10:30 a.m. Bible Study, Adult Library
6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Needle Work Group, Adult Library
 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. Broad Highway Group AA, Heritage Room

Wednesday, November 28, 2018

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Absorbent Minds Montessori School - Dance, Social Hall
 2:00 - 8:00 p.m. Western Reserve Suzuki School - Violin Lessons, Adult Library & Children's Library
5:30 - Hand Bells Rehearsal, Music Room

Thursday, November 29, 2018

3:30 - 9:15 p.m. Western Reserve Suzuki School - Cello Lessons, Rev. Greene Room
 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Cub Scout Pack #3186 - Pack Meeting, Social Hall
 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Emotions Anonymous, Adult Library or Heritage Room

Friday, November 30, 2018

Saturday, December 1, 2018

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon. Cub Scout Pack #3186 - Committee Meeting, Adult Library
 8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Hall

Sunday, December 2, 2018

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Heritage Room
10:30 a.m. Worship Service-1st Sunday in Advent: HOPE-Rev. Kirk W. Bruce, Sanctuary
11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour, Social Hall
11:45 a.m. Cantata Rehearsal, Heritage Room
 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Girl Scout Daisy Troop, Adult Library

Monday, December 3, 2018

1:00 - 1:30 p.m. Absorbent Minds Montessori School - Tae Kwan Do, Social Hall
6:30 p.m. Diaconate Board meeting, Adult Library

