Pilgrim United Church of Christ
130 Broad Blvd.
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221
December 13, 2020 - Worship Service

WELCOME

INSTRUMENTAL PRELUDE    *O Little Town of Bethlehem*    Brass Quartet

CALL TO WORSHIP
L:  In the midst of cold days and long nights, God offers joy.
    As we miss holiday traditions that are not possible this year, God still offers joy.
    Though we wonder what the future holds and how long this pandemic will last,
    God continues to offer joy.
    Even as we face illness and grief, separation and uncertainty, God’s joy abides.

PRAYER
L:  O God, come, for the night is already half-gone. We’ve been waiting for so much
    for so long, so that now even when the frost has come and nothing blooms,
    we dream of tender stems birthing bright wonder.
    Come, O God, to dream with us. Teach us to dream of what is possible, and
    how the world could change if we could just show love aright.
    The night is already half-gone, O God. So come. Come to make all the tears
    we have shed this year blossom into shouts of joy.
    Come, O God. Come and dream with us. Dream through us.
    Come, O God. Come.

POEM FOR REFLECTION    *I Dream a World*    Melissa Shedlock
by Langston Hughes

SPECIAL MUSIC    *The Wizards In Winter*    Guest Pianist: Lily Laszlo
by Trans-Siberian Orchestra

WE LIGHT THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE - JOY
Our thanks to John, Meghan, Simon & Grace Howell for lighting today’s advent candle.

RESPONSE    *One Candle Is Lit*    Pianist: Mr. Benjamin Knight
Vocalist: Ms. Kim Brenstuhl

SONG    *Angels, We Have Heard on High*

SCRIPTURE    Isaiah 61:1 - 4, 8 – 11    Common English Bible

1 The Lord God’s spirit is upon me, 
because the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me
  to bring good news to the poor,
  to bind up the brokenhearted,
  to proclaim release for captives,
    and liberation for prisoners,
  to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
    and a day of vindication for our God,
  to comfort all who mourn,
  to provide for Zion’s mourners,
  to give them a crown in place of ashes,
    oil of joy in place of mourning,
    a mantle of praise in place of discouragement.
They will be called Oaks of Righteousness,
  planted by the Lord to glorify himself.
They will rebuild the ancient ruins;
  they will restore formerly deserted places;
  they will renew ruined cities,
  places deserted in generations past.

I, the Lord, love justice;
  I hate robbery and dishonesty.
I will faithfully give them their wage,
  and make with them an enduring covenant.
Their offspring will be known among the nations,
  and their descendants among the peoples.
All who see them will recognize
  that they are a people blessed by the Lord.
I surely rejoice in the Lord;
  my heart is joyful because of my God,
because he has clothed me with clothes of victory,
  wrapped me in a robe of righteousness
  like a bridegroom in a priestly crown,
  and like a bride adorned in jewelry.
As the earth puts out its growth,
  and as a garden grows its seeds,
  so the Lord God will grow righteousness and praise before all the nations.

TODAY’S MESSAGE  Restore Your JOY!  Rev. Glen Shedlock
SONG  Joy to the World  Isaac Watts
BENEDICTION
POSTLUDE  On This Day the Earth Shall Sing