

From *An Old-Time Christmas* by Helen Steiner Rice & Virginia J. Ruehlmann, published by Fleming H. Revell, a division of Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, copyright 1997, page 35.

Messenger Of Love

*Listen—be quiet—perhaps you can hear
The Christmas tree speaking, soft and clear:
I am God's messenger of love, and in my Christmas dress,
I come to light your heart and home with joy and happiness.
I bring you pretty packages and longed-for gifts of love,
But most of all I bring you a message from above—
The message Christmas angels sang on that first Christmas night
When Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, became this dark world's light.
For though I'm tinsel laden and beautiful to see,
Remember, I am much, much more than just a glittering tree,
More than a decoration to enhance the Christmas scene,
I am a living symbol that God's love is ever green,
And when Christmas Day is over and the holidays are through,
May the joyous spirit of Christmas abide all year with you..
So have a Merry Christmas in the blessed Savior's name
And thank Him for the priceless gifts that are ours because He came.*

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

Pastor, Rev. Kirk W. Bruce: pilgrimpastor@ameritech.net

F.F. Director, Marilyn Freeman: pilgrimce@ameritech.net

Music Director, Kyle Kelvington: kelvingtonk@gmail.com

Cleaning Services: Robert David "Peter" Paugh

Secretary, Kelly Gerstenberger: pilgrimoffice@ameritech.net

Acolyte: Thank You!

Altar Flowers: Poinsettia's

Greeters: Everyone present today!

Ushers: Thank You!

PowerPoint: Thank You!

Liturgist: Brian Ewart

Fellowship: Team #4

Steeple Lighting: David Kump

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, December 24, 2017



Hope
Peace



<https://images.pexels.com/photos/356661/pexels-photo-356661.jpeg?h=350&auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb>

<https://images.pexels.com/photos/356661/pexels-photo-356661.jpeg?h=350&auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb>

A Gift of Grace

Rev. Kirk Bruce



Joy
Love



<http://wearelivingforacure.blogspot.com/>

<https://images.pexels.com/photos/356661/pexels-photo-356661.jpeg?h=350&auto=compress&cs=tinysrgb>

Pilgrim United Church of Christ
A Caring Church for Thinking People
Sunday, December 24, 2017 † Fourth Sunday of Advent

THE PRELUDE *Angels We Have Heard on High* Traditional French
Pilgrim Men's Ensemble

*HYMN (Red Hymnal) *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* No. 120

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 89)

One: Let us sing of the Lord's great love.

All: In all that I say I will tell of God's faithfulness.

One: Let us declare how His love stands firm forever.

**All: Who can compare to The Lord in the skies above or the earth below.
God has No Equal!**

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

**O Lord, you stand alone in power and in strength. You have no equal in
compassion or love. This we see in your coming. This we know in your
presence with us. This we celebrate in our time together. For your great care
we give you our praise. Hear us now as we pray together the prayer your son
taught us, "Our Father . . ." [debt, debtors]**

*THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS (Red Hymnal) No. 116, Refrain

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD AND EACH OTHER

*GREETING EACH OTHER IN CHRIST

OUR LIFE TOGETHER Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE-Love The Howell Family
John, Meghan, Simon & Grace

THE CRADLE SONG *One Candle Is Lit (verse 4)* Parrott/Kirkpatrick
***Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play, where evil is banished and faith
takes the day, a babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes. One candle is lit for
God's loving surprise.***

***all who are able may stand**

CHILDREN'S SERMON
Faith Focus 4th Sunday of Advent – A Child Is Born

Rev. Kirk W. Bruce
Marilyn Freeman

ANTHEM *Mary Did You Know* Mark Lowry
Pilgrim Choir

WE GIVE TO GOD

AN OFFERTORY INVITATION

THE OFFERTORY *Coventry Carol* Robert Croo
Pilgrim Men's Ensemble

*THE DOXOLOGY (Red Hymnal) *In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 4)* No. 128

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

CALL TO PRAYER (Black Hymnal) *Away in a Manger (verse 3)* No. 124
***Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you
there.***

THE MORNING PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE

HYMN SING

GOD GIVES TO US

SCRIPTURES Luke 1:26 – 38 (page 49) Brian Ewart

SERMON *A Gift of Grace* Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

WE RESPOND TO GOD WITH SERVICE

*HYMN (Red Hymnal) *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen* No. 122

*THE BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE (We invite you to join hands as we sing)
(Black Hymnal) *Go Tell It on the Mountain* No. 154, Refrain
***Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; Go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!***

POSTLUDE *What Songs Were Sung* John Jacob Niles

***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 Worshiping with Pilgrim United Church of Christ!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pray for:

A couple with financial issues.

Don's health.

Carl's healing from cancer.

A member trying to adjust to additional health issues and not give up on life.

The friends & family of Becky Woodcock, grieving her death on December 15.

The friends & family of David Wagner, step-brother of Marilyn, grieving his death on December 21.

The friends & family of Chandler Van Horn, grieving his death on December 21.

The world and all its people. May we all trust God and do his will. Grant us peace and love.

Our public servants, first responders and medical personnel.



THE ENTIRE MONTH OF DECEMBER . . .

You are invited to bring one canned good/non-perishable item to the church every time you enter the building. We have extended this invitation to all of the groups who use our building for meetings and gatherings. Just imagine how many hungry tummies we could fill! All of the canned goods can be placed in the Good Neighbors box located in the parking lot entry



From Stewardship . . . Christmas Fund Offering taken Today!

**The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund:
Remembering Those Who Serve Our Church**

This fund is taken annually at Christmastide to help provide pension and health premium supplementation to lower-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy or lay church employees in need, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to hundreds of annuitants; administered by the Pension Boards.

In the bulletin is one example of a donor's experience. To read 3 other personal experiences, look for the printed information on the tables at the 2nd Street and Parking Lot entrances.

*Thank
You!*

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service - scriptures, music & candle light.

A Note from the Treasurer . . .

The end-of-year, 2017 catch-up contributions must be in by 11:30 a.m. Dec. 31st to be credited to 2017. Anything after 11:30 a.m. Dec. 31st will be a 2018 contribution.



Thank You! From the Pilgrim Staff for the lovely lunch and generous gifts!

Rev. Kirk W. Bruce

Marilyn Freeman

Robert "Peter" & Barbara Paugh

Kyle Kelvington

Kelly Gerstenberger

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 24, 2017 - 4th Sunday in Advent/Christmas Eve

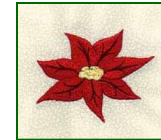
9:00 a.m. Pilgrim Choir Rehearsal, Heritage Room

10:30 a.m. Worship Service - Rev. Kirk Bruce, Sanctuary

11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour - Team #4

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service, Sanctuary

Join Pilgrim for an evening of scriptures, music & candle light!



Monday, December 25, 2017 - Christmas Day

Offices are Closed



Tuesday, December 26, 2017

8:00 p.m. Fellowship of the Spirit Alcoholics Anonymous (FOTS AA),
Heritage Room

Wednesday, December 27, 2017

Thursday, December 28, 2017

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Emotions Anonymous, Heritage Room

Friday, December 29, 2017

Saturday, December 30, 2017

8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Social Hall

Sunday, December 31, 2017 - New Year's Eve

9:00 a.m. Pilgrim Choir Rehearsal, Heritage Room

10:30 a.m. Worship Service - Rev. Kirk Bruce, Sanctuary

11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour

Monday, January 1, 2017 - New Year's Day

Offices are Closed