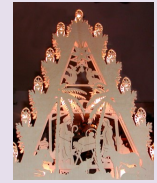




# The Pilgrim Spire December 2023



Pilgrim  
United Church of Christ  
130 Broad Blvd.  
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221

## Pastor's Parable

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Office:

Phone: 330.928.4847  
Fax: 330.928.1017

#### Staff & E-Mail:

#### Pastor:

Rev. Joy Fenton-Jones  
pilgrimpastor@ameritech.net  
216.702.7730 - Cell Phone

#### Faith Formation Director:

Open Position  
pilgrimce@ameritech.net

Music Director: Benjamin Knight

Choir Director: Kimberly Knight

Secretary: Kelly Gerstenberger  
pilgrimoffice@ameritech.net



#### Website: [www.pilgrimcf.org](http://www.pilgrimcf.org)

You'll find electronic versions of *The Pilgrim Spire*, Calendar, and more!

*The Pilgrim Spire* is published once a month.

Contact the church office:

- If you have something to share with your fellow Pilgrims in the next edition of . . . *The Pilgrim Spire*.
- If you'd like an electronic version of *The Pilgrim Spire* by email.
- Your address has changed.

## Thank you!

Image Downloaded 11.30.2023 from <https://www.freeimages.com/photo/christmas-1313224>



### *Waiting for the Light*

Advent is one of the most unique seasons of the church year. In fact, it might be the *most* unique in that it invites us to wait, in the quiet of December darkness, for an event that we have already experienced many times, yet we believe comes to us anew again and again. This idea of waiting for that which is always unfolding is sort of like layering “always has been” and “is” and “not yet” all on top of each other at the very same time!

We have many opportunities to engage with the mystery and majesty of this season. It is my hope and prayer that you will find something new and inspiring as we journey through this season and a story you may have heard many times before.

In our **Sunday worship**, we will embark on a series titled, *The First Advent in Palestine*. This series invites us to put ourselves in the shoes of our ancient ancestors of faith and reimagine all the surprising twists and turns of their story. We will follow the typical contours of the four Sundays of Advent, each with a unique perspective:

*Sunday, November 26 – The Complexity of HOPE*


*Sunday, December 3 – The Reversal that is PEACE*

*Sunday, December 10 – The Resistance that is JOY*

*Sunday, December 17 – The Radical Nature of LOVE*

You are also warmly invited to participate in our **Community Advent Study**, taking place on Thursday evenings [November 30, December 7, 14, 21] at First Christian Church. This study, *The Way of Love*, explores Luke 1-2 to help us understand how we can live the Way of Love as individuals, as families and friends, as a community, and out in the world. The study is open to all our Downtown Cuyahoga Falls neighbors and will be held upstairs in the FCC Gathering Area from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm each week. [There is an elevator, and it's fully accessible to all.]

**Continued On Page 3**

<b>ANNIVERSARYS - December</b>	<b>BIRTHDAYS - December</b>
<b>Date — Name (Years)</b> <b>No Anniversary's</b>	 <b>Date — Name (Age)</b> <b>12/04 - Jim Hampshire</b> <b>12/09 - Kate Ing</b> <b>12/16 - Cindy Spenoso</b> <b>12/17 - Rayna Kasperk</b> <b>12/20 - Carol Letvin</b> <b>12/25 - Kellianne Sutton-Bosely</b>
<b>COUNCIL</b>	
No Report	

**DIACONATE**

Plan to start your Christmas season with the **Crafts and Carols Advent Dinner** on Wednesday, Dec. 6th at 6 p.m.! We will enjoy dinner, sing our favorite carols, and create ornaments to decorate the social hall tree, and to take home! Pilgrim will provide fried or baked chicken, macaroni and cheese, rolls, dessert, and beverages. To fill out the meal, we need you to bring a hot or cold side dish or salad to share. Add your family's estimate for how many will attend to the list in the social hall, and remember guests are always welcome! Help will be needed to set up in the afternoon, and with clean up, too. See Kathie for details. We look forward to a fun evening together!

Cold weather is coming, and our **Mitten Tree** will be looking for your help! Warm hats, scarves, socks, gloves and mittens for all ages are needed. As you're doing your gift shopping, pick up something to add to the tree. We will share the bounty with Good Neighbors in January!

The **Traditional Wassail Celebration** will be after the service on December 17th in the Social Hall. Set aside some of your delicious treats as you are baking before the holidays, and bring them that morning to add to the table. Hot cider and eggnog will of course be served, too!

Our **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** will begin at 7 p.m. on Sunday December 24th. We look forward to a beautiful evening of scripture and music. There will not be a morning service, to allow for Pastor Joy to be at First Christian for their Christmas Eve service at 11:00 a.m. We are welcome to attend both!

**FAITH FORMATION**

		<p><b>ACME CASH BACK</b> began August 1, 2023 and ends February 15, 2024.</p> <p>Place your receipts in the <b>marked box</b> located in the social hall. <b>We've collected \$1,068.58!</b></p>
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**MUSIC/CHOIR**

No Report.

**NEWS FROM THE KITCHEN**

2nd Saturday dinners have begun! The next dinner will take place December 9, 2023 at Noon.

When you make a trip to the grocery store, please remember the Blessing Box. The need is great.

We really appreciate all the folks that have supported us through the last year. Also, know that the folks that use the blessing box really appreciate it too!

## NEWS FROM THE KITCHEN - continued

Suggested donations.

Pasta (not including mac and cheese)	Canned Ready-to-eat meals: Stew, Chili, Spaghetti O's	
Rice	Canned Meats: tuna, chicken, & Spam	
Dried Beans	Chunky meat soup can be added to pasta to make a	
meal	Canned Vegetables - no corn or green beans	
	Canned Fruits	
	Mashed Potatoes	
	Soup - NOT tomato	
	Snacks, Energy Bars, Breakfast Bars, Trail Mix, Pop Tarts & Chewing Gum	
Essentials:	3 in 1 (body wash, shampoo and conditioner)	Deodorant
	Shaving Cream & Razors	Toothpaste & Tooth Brushes
	Pocket Size Kleenex	Bar Soap

A larger Blessing Box was donated by Buckeye Guys Roofing to Pilgrim's Community Lunch Program. Items are needed to keep the Blessing Box stocked. Please prayerfully consider helping with this important mission Pilgrim UCC has in the Cuyahoga Falls Community!

## PASTOR'S PARABLE - continued

Most important, I hope you will find your own spiritual practice in this season. We have talked a lot recently about being anchored in a spirit of gratitude. Your spiritual practice might be as simple as waking up each morning and choosing to say, "Thank you, God," before you do or say anything else. If you're looking for other ideas—Advent devotions, family Advent calendars, or weekly liturgy to light Advent candles at home—please don't hesitate to reach out. There are many wonderful resources available! Sometimes small practices can make a big difference in centering our hearts around God's grace and goodness in our lives.

I look forward to our shared experience of God's grace in this special time of year!

In a spirit of hope, peace, joy & love,

~Pastor Joy

## PRAYERS & PRAISES

- ◇ The Ing family and friends as they grieve Mike's recent death.
- ◇ John, at Altercare, whose wife was kicked by a horse which broke her leg.
- ◇ Andrew Opritza, in the hospital with heart and circulatory issues.
- ◇ Scott Morris difficult surgery and the surgeons ability.
- ◇ Dad (Steven) Subichin in the hospital and transitioning.
- ◇ The issues and trouble of people this time of year.
- ◇ Peg Ewart's move to assisted living.
- ◇ God's Peace in the Middle East for all people and safe hospitals.
  
- ◇ To the family & friends of Scott Chaney, son of Lana Chaney, who passed October 23, 2023, and prayers for Lana as she grieves.
- ◇ We pray for Rick as he has he recovers from surgery for prostate cancer.
- ◇ Those who are struggling in any way.
- ◇ Plentiful donations for the Blessing Box.
- ◇ The family & friends of Henry Nagel who died October 17th.
- ◇ We lift a prayer of gratitude that Mark H. is safe after a car struck his home about a month ago. We also lift grateful prayers that no one else was injured.
- ◇ Thanksgiving for fall's colorful paintbrush and the first snow of the season.



## SHARING AMERICA'S RESOURCES ABROAD

SARA has set up a Ukraine Relief Fund.

Donations should be mailed to:

Heartland Conference, Attn: SARA Relief Fund  
PO Box 1230, Worthington OH 43085



Checks should be made out to the **Heartland Conference** with "**SARA Relief Fund**" in the memo line.  
Thank you, Bob & Jo Kindel

## STEWARDSHIP

The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross is an annual UCC offering that expresses our thanks to retired and active UCC pastors and lay church workers and their families facing financial need, providing direct assistance to supplement pensions, help with the cost of medical insurance, a thank you gift at Christmas, and funds to meet emergency needs.



Pilgrim UCC will receive the Christmas Fund themed, "Grace upon Grace" from John 1:16 "From Christ's fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." on Sunday, December 24, 2023 at the 7:00 pm worship Service.

*Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this UCC 5 for 5 Offering!*

**Contribution statements for the 4th quarter of 2023 will be sent out January 15, 2024.**

**Contact the church office if you need the 2024 offering envelopes.**

## THANK YOU'S

Your contribution of the \$302 combined ecumenical offering from 4 churches July Outdoor Worship Service at the Cuyahoga Falls Amphitheater (First United Methodist, St. John's Episcopal, First Christian Church - Disciples of Christ, Pilgrim United Church of Christ), your donation makes a difference.

Our sincerest thanks to you for your generous contribution. You are helping Cuyahoga Falls Good Neighbors fulfill its mission to assist families within our community with food, clothing, personal, and household items. Thank you for your continued support and reaching out to our neighbors in need.

*Kindly yours, Kat Wollyung, Cuyahoga Falls Good Neighbors*

## TREASURER

Thank you ... to everyone who ... have continued to send-in contributions!

Contributions Received:

\$ 2,133.00	October 1, 2023	\$ 3,888.50	November 5, 2023
\$ 3,654.49	October 8, 2023	\$ 1,783.00	November 12, 2023
\$ 1,010.00	October 15, 2023	\$ 1,135.00	November 19, 2023
\$ 1,315.00	October 22, 2023	\$ 1,404.00	November 26, 2023
<u>\$ 2,160.00</u>	<u>October 29, 2023</u>	<u>\$ 8,210.50</u>	<u>November Totals</u>
<b>\$10,272.49</b>	<b>October Totals</b>		

**+Ameriprise-Reserve Income (Asset Movement \$ 0)**

End of October 2023: Balance of all Ameriprise Accounts: \$ 235,479.38

End of October 2023: Income: \$ 10,272.49 Expenses: \$ 12,504.35

As of November 30, 2023: Income: \$ 8,210.50 Expenses: \$ 11,802.72

**Church Mutual Storm Damage Claim as of November 30, 2023:**

Total Received \$ 533,913.17 (Church Mutual) + \$ 100,000.00 (PUCC) + \$ 3,290.00 (Donations) =  
\$ 637,203.17

Total Expenses Paid \$ 625,313.54 Amount Due to Vendors: \$91,997.72

## TRUSTEES

The Education Wing work continues.

- \* The base molding was installed. **Perfect Finish**
- \* The painting touch-ups have occurred. **Custom Finish**
- \* NEW fire alarm sensors were installed, replaced, and fire alarm panel is fully functional. One stand alone duct, smoke alarms needs to be re-attached. **SILCO**
- \* The doors have been put on hold.
- \* The Western Reserve Suzuki School is appreciative of the dedicated room for Violin Lessons.
- \* The new large conference room is now in use by several of the AA groups meeting at Pilgrim.
- \* The ADA water fountain was installed October 20th, and needs to be lowered.
- \* The secretary and pastor have moved into their offices.
- \* Absorbent Minds Montessori School will not be returning to Pilgrim UCC. Other options are being explored. Comments received include, "It's a beautiful space, however to use the 2nd floor an elevator is needed."

### ON THE TO-DO LIST:

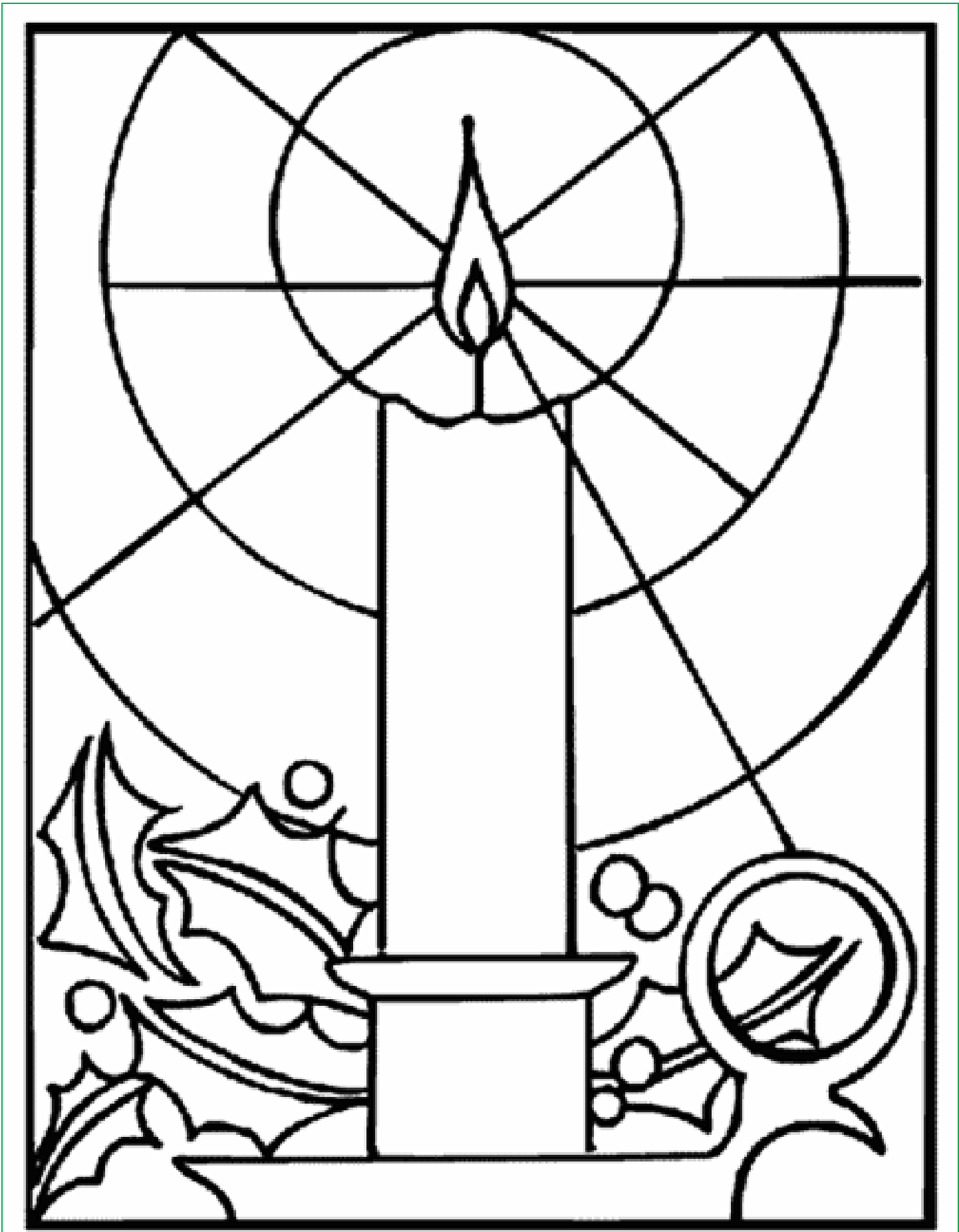
- \* ADA Bathroom on the 1st floor of the education wing and another across from the Heritage Room.
- \* Replacing old lighting with LED in the 2nd floor of the older addition.
- \* Miscellaneous plumbing work to be completed.
- \* Doors for the 1st & 2nd Floor education wing.
- \* Concrete walkway replaced around the sanctuary.

Pilgrim's rain water issue around the sanctuary was remediated with down spouts into pipes that drain to the road at a cost of \$18,000.00. The concrete to replace the sidewalks has been tabled until spring.

There continues to be a water issue, although not as severe, on the north side of the education wing in the stairway to the basement. This will wait until spring and may be resolved with the installation of the concrete sidewalks and perhaps a French drain.

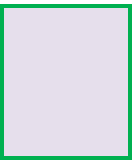
**Dan Gerstenberger, Trustee Chair**







Pilgrim United Church of Christ †  
130 Broad Blvd.  
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221



Address Correction Requested



## ***December 2023 The Pilgrim Spire***

**Sunday Schedule:**

10:00 am Worship

Recorded Worship Services:

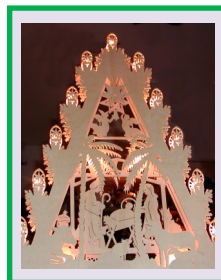
Website: [www.pilgrimcf.org](http://www.pilgrimcf.org)

Facebook: [Cuyahoga Falls Pilgrim United Church of Christ](#)

Contact us at:

[www.pilgrimcf.org](http://www.pilgrimcf.org)

330.928.4847



**Pilgrim United Church of Christ Staff:**

**Pastor**

Rev. Joy Fenton - Jones  
[pilgrimpastor@ameritech.net](mailto:pilgrimpastor@ameritech.net)

**Music Director**  
Benjamin Knight

**Choir Director**  
Kimberly Knight

**Secretary**  
Kelly Gerstenberger,  
[pilgrimoffice@ameritech.net](mailto:pilgrimoffice@ameritech.net)