



# Joy

 **PARKWAY**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
December 13, 2020



Sunday, December 13, 2020

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## Limitless Love | Courageous Action | Spirited Inquiry

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### Purpose Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ strives to be an inclusive community embracing: spiritual nourishment, open—minded inquiry, courageous action, and interfaith partnerships to fulfill God’s calling to create a just world for all.

### Congregational Statement

Parkway United Church of Christ, with God’s grace, seeks to be a congregation that includes all persons, regardless of race, ethnic, or socio—economic background while respecting differences of gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability. We aspire to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. We invite all to share in the life and leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities and blessings of participation in our open and affirming congregation.

## PARKWAY UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

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# Welcome to Parkway

**Thank you for joining us this morning.** Please let us know you are here by commenting in the chat.

**Welcome Children.** We invite children to full participation in worship.

**Bell Rung During Lord's Prayer.** A tradition begun when farmers working in surrounding fields would stop their work and join in prayer.

**Subscribe to our email lists:** Text your email address to 22828 or sign up at [www.parkwayucc.org](http://www.parkwayucc.org)

**Communications Requests:** Please use the form at [www.parkwayucc.org/communications](http://www.parkwayucc.org/communications) for all announcements for the bulletin/eNews/website/social media/etc. Bulletin and eNews communications request deadline is noon Monday. Bulletin announcements will generally be run for three weeks prior to the event. However, all announcements will be posted via our various publications as fits in our communications strategy and as resources permit.

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## Birthdays

12/15	ROGERS, Mike	12/18	WILLIAMS, Anthony
12/17	SABLEMAN, Brian	12/19	BOWMAN, Cale
12/18	JONES, Daniel	12/19	NOURSE, Audrey
12/18	JONES, Mikey	12/19	SIMONSON, Julie
12/18	TALLYN, Evelyn	12/19	YESS, Kirstin

## Joy and Woe Are Woven Fine

Joy and woe are woven fine,  
A clothing for the soul divine,  
Under every grief and pine,  
Runs a joy with silken twine.  
It is right it should be so,  
We were made for joy and woe,  
And when this we rightly know,  
Through the world we safely go. ~William Blake

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent: Joy

Sunday, December 13, 2020 | 10:00am on YouTube

**Meditation** *The intimate relation between humor and faith is derived from the fact that both deal with the incongruities of our existence.... Laughter is our reaction to immediate incongruities and those that do not affect us essentially. Faith is the only possible response to the ultimate incongruities of existence, which threaten the very meaning of our life.*  
~Reinhold Niebuhr

**Welcome** A Practical Joke for this JOY Sunday?!

## Lighting the Candles & Ringing the Bell

### Jokes for this Joy Sunday

**Call to Worship** *O Come All Ye Faithful*  
Alex Roesler and Stephanie Polster

### Passing the Joy of Christ

“May the joy of Christ be with you.”

(We are intentional about bringing more joy into the world.)

### Scripture Joy

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ~Philippians 4:4

A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.  
~Proverbs 17:22

Jesus said, “You have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.” ~John 16:22

Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” ~John 15:11

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.  
~Psalm 118:24

Jesus said, “Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one who repents/returns.” ~Luke 15:10

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ~Romans 12:15

For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. ~Isaiah 55:12

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness. ~Psalm 30:11

Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold

and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. ~Habakkuk 3:17-18

Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart. ~Jeremiah 15:16

You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

~Isaiah 9:3

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." ~Luke 2:10

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ~Isaiah 12:3

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

~Matthew 2:10

## Response *Joy Before Us*

~The Changvit-Levins: Cindy, Summer, Yara

The musical score is written on four staves in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: Joy be - fore us, joy be - hind us, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, joy un - der our feet. al - le - lu - ia. Joy with - in us, joy o - ver us, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, let all a - round us be joy. al - le - lu - ia.

## Gathering at the Advent Wreath: Joy

### Children's Time

Children and Youth remain here – no Sunday School Zooms today.

## Response *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

~Dexter Cameron, Iris Cameron

## Listening for Joy

### Scripture & Christmas Pageant

Henry Waite, Atticus Reed, Ben Duke, Caitlin Scharf

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ~Luke 2:1-4

Joseph went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ~Luke 2:5-7

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” ~Luke 2:8-11

The angel said to them, “This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!” ~Luke 2:12-14

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. ~Luke 2:15-20

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ~Matthew 2:1-11

**Solo** *Mary, Did You Know?* ~Josie Duke

## **Prayers of the People & Lord’s Prayer**

**Our** [Creator/Mother/Father/Holy One] **who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**Interlude** *O Christmas Tree* ~Vivienne Reed

## **Invitation to Generosity**

*We must have humor in our lives, and warmth and giving.* ~Maya Angelou

**Mission Moment** 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Advent ~ Lana Biondo

**Circle of Concern**, Emmaus Homes, The Christmas Fund

**Offering Our Gifts to God** *Angels We Have Heard on High*

~Iris Cameron

## **Prayer of Dedication**

**Holy One here—and not yet here—we are grateful for the gift of Your love, which is beyond our understanding. Thank You for the glimpses of You and the ability to share You with others. May these gifts be expressions of our gratitude. Let them link us with You, with each other, and with the world you hold in Your peace embrace. May these gifts be messages of hope and beacons of light against the darkness in our world. May they even bring joy! Amen.**

## **Benediction**

**Sing-Along** *Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree*

~Zoe Lyons, Blake Lyons

## **God’s Light Goes Forth**

**Announcements** incl a Stewardship Moment from Richard Scherrer

# Announcements

## **TODAY! My Time as a Country Lawyer**

Presented by Phil Smith

Sunday, December 13 | 11:15am | <https://youtu.be/PtuCMuGHetk>

Phil Smith was born and raised in Louisiana, MO. and practiced law in a one lawyer shop for decades. During that time, he ran successfully for State Representative from his district. He spent a lot of time in Jeff City, when the Democrats ruled. He was a supporter of Governor Mel Carnahan for many years. Locked in those experiences are many stories, which Phil will share with us. Contact Richard Scherrer: 90fivetpr@gmail.com

## **Pledge Campaign for our Mission & Ministry 2021**

We are still accepting pledges: <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/pledge/>

Thank you for your continuing support of Parkway United Church of Christ.

## **Year End Contributions**

As year-end quickly approaches, a reminder that if you are making a Contribution via PayPal, it will need to be made by December 21<sup>st</sup> in order to be included in the 2020 Contributions.

Please remember that Parkway UCC does not receive your full contribution if it is made through PayPal. PayPal keeps up to 3% as their fee.

## **Christmas Cs: Carols, Candles, Candy Canes**

### **Carols**

Please video yourself singing, playing, humming, drumming, spooning a verse or two of a favorite Christmas Carol or Song. We would like to create a virtual “Christmas Carol” video to share with our shut-ins and others. Send along to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) or text to 314-330-0629.

### **Candles**

We would LOVE for you to send us a photo or brief video of you holding a lit candle - reminiscent of our Silent Night tradition on Christmas Eve. You can take a selfie or, if you need a masked photographer/videographer, please let us know. We can also get you a PUCC candle if you'd like! Send photo/video to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) or text to 314-330-0629.

### **Creches, Candy Canes and other Complimentary Gifts**

Come enjoy a variety of nativity scenes around the sanctuary Dec 12-14

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0D4CA4AC23AB9-private>

Sign up to honor physical distancing. We will add more slots if needed.

You may want to bring non-perishable food items and/or personal care items to donate at the same time – our collection table is in the front entryway.

We have candy canes, a wonderful CD of 4 stories told by our own Perrin Stifel, and other treats available as a holiday gift for you. They are on tables in the entryway, kitchen, Gathering Space and sanctuary! \* Front door: 17024



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Advent

We continue to receive your gifts for 2nd Mile Advent – an opportunity to stretch our hope, peace, joy and love across the area and the wider church. All gifts are shared evenly among the three mission partners in January. Please clearly mark your financial gift “2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Advent.” You may want to honor someone in your life with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Gift—perhaps that person who is hard to buy for and/or who does not have any real needs right now. We are grateful for your generosity.

## **Circle of Concern** [circleofconcern.org/](http://circleofconcern.org/)

Each day, Circle of Concern feeds families from the food pantry, shares financial assistance, and distribute school supplies, Thanksgiving turkeys or holiday gifts.

**Mission:** Circle of Concern feeds the hungry and provides assistance to low-income families living in west St. Louis County.

**Our Vision:** Improving every life in the community by reducing hunger and poverty

**Our Values:** integrity in all they do; respecting the innate worth of every Circle stakeholder, including clients, volunteers, donors, staff and community partners, and striving to reflect that respect in every interaction; collaborating with many partners so that the work of Circle is successfully accomplished; being responsible stewards of the time stakeholders donate, the talents they share and the funds they invest; committing to excellence which ensures the highest quality services for clients today and the resources to sustain them in the future.

## **Emmaus Homes** [emmaushomes.org/](http://emmaushomes.org/)

Emmaus Homes knows that adults with disabilities want to be independent. In order to do that, they need a home and a community that embraces their unique abilities. EH believes everyone deserves the resources needed to live independently.

EH understands it's tough to manage life alone, which is why for 125 years, as a faith-based organization, they have provided high-quality service caring for the whole person for their whole life – including the individual's spiritual life.

## **The Christmas Fund** [pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home](http://pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home)

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

Over the past nine months, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the emergency financial needs of many who serve the church have increased dramatically. In such a time as this, the need for the Christmas Fund is more urgent than ever.

# Prayer List

as of December 9, 2020

## Celebrations

**All the acts of kindness that are happening near and far!**

**The momentum toward justice and equity.**

**Advent** - our journey to Christmas!

## Concerns

**Donna Carey** - just home from the hospital

**Charlotte Smith and Family** - grieving/giving thanks for Dwight.

Charlotte Smith, 3337 Lake Bend Dr, Valley Park, MO 63088.

**Cassie Rosenberger** - tested positive for Covid-19.

**Justin Williamson** - healing (Svenson).

**Tommy Kurz** 14 yr old - recuperating - surgery to alleviate seizures .

**Carolyn & Hank Kraichley** - serious health challenges (McKenzie).

**Healthcare workers, homeless** and many others at risk right now.

**Physical Distancing...** if anyone needs groceries, medicine and/or other support, please reach out to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org); 314-330-0629

**People who are struggling with their mental health.**

**People who aren't feeling safe at home** but are remaining there.

**Individuals in all levels of leadership** as they make decisions today.

**Healing of relationships between the public and the police.**

**Those affected by natural disasters yesterday/today/tomorrow**

## Continuing

**Bob Boyd and family** - as they grieve and give thanks for Karen.

**Cherie & Mike Stolze** - her health; her father's kidney disease.

**Nelson Spencer** - very serious heart condition (Ellie Svenson).

**Blake** - recent cancer diagnosis (Greg Schmelig).

**Lori Connors** - for strength, stamina through some health challenges.

**Ruth Peace & Pinky Wilcoxon** - PUCC sisters with health challenges.

**Bill Darland** - ongoing health issues.

**Anthony** - multiple challenges as he lives his post-incarceration life.

**Gary** - risky behaviors; seeking balance and stability (McKenzie).

**Grateful Tran** - in prison; struggles w/schizophrenia (Evelyn Burette)

**Bob** - continues to struggle with Parkinson's (McKenzie).

**Christopher, Gail & Bill Haack** - chronic health challenges.

**The extended Eggebrecht Family** - healing and wholeness.

## Home/Care Facility/Rehab Center

**Millicent Guerri** - living with cancer... 14300 Conway Meadows Ct E, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: December 5]

**Marv Herpel** - *Brookdale West County*; 785 Henry Ave, #217;

Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]

**Pat Klein** - *Anthology Senior Living of Wildwood*; 251 Plaza Dr, #325; Wildwood, MO 63040 [birthdate: September 21]

**Bill Klein** - *Anthology Senior Living of Wildwood*; 251 Plaza Dr, #104; Wildwood, MO 63040 [birthdate: March 8]

**Pearl Sellenriek** - *Friendship Village Memory Care Division* #1001; 15250 Olive Blvd, Chesterfield, MO 63017 [birthdate: March 31]

**Sue Houser** - *Bethany Ctr for Rehab & Healing*; 421 Ocala Dr - #209B; Nashville, TN 37211; 615-577-2049. [birthdate: July 8]

## **Other**

**President Trump, Congress**, all local, national, world leaders - those continuing, starting, returning to leadership... including **Biden|Harris**.

**The “me too” Movement** - shining a light on sexual abuse.

**All people who live with mental illness.**

**PUCC Family** (and others) struggling with healthcare costs and limits.

**Our Missouri Mid-South Conference and St Louis Assn UCC**

**Variety of Parkway members/friends** - employment issues.

**Victims of Natural and Created Disasters** around the world.

**Peace and Justice** near and far.

**US Military** around the globe.

## **St Louis Association UCC Covenant Partner**

Week ending December 13 - Ivy Chapel UCC, Chesterfield; ivychapel.org

Week ending December 20 - Mt Tabor UCC, St Louis; mounttaborucc.org

**\*\***

## **All kinds of gratitude to Mona Herberg,**

our multi-talented office administrator for painting these bulletin covers for our Advent worship services. Amazing!

**\*\***

## **Let Kevin know if you would like a copy of the jokes we shared today on this Joy Sunday!**

**What do fish sing during winter?**

*Christmas corals.*

**Where do polar bears vote?**

*The North Poll!*

**What is a Christmas tree’s favorite candy?**

*Orna-mints.*

**What nationality is Santa Claus?**

*North Polish.*

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

## Shouts of Joy

Psalms 126

If you've ever been through a period of grieving, it's likely that someone in your life has, at one time or another, shaken their head and clucked their tongue and assured you that "God doesn't give anyone more than they can handle." Or, maybe that someone patted your hand and said "God is just testing you right now. If you have enough faith, you can get through it." Or maybe even, "Don't cry."

These platitudes, although they are usually intended to comfort, can instead sting. They can leave the recipient feeling that if only their faith was stronger, they would not feel sad or angry.

The psalmist shows us a different way of thinking of God. The psalmist knows that hard times and sorrows are neither tests from God, nor signs of the displeasure of God. The author of Psalm 126 sings instead that sorrows and grieving are just part of life. These words remind us that God does not bring misfortune; instead God is with us in our grief.

One UCC church in New Hampshire wanted to demonstrate God-with-us to the whole neighborhood last Advent. Motivated by the tragic death in their congregation, the church decided to show God's light in the darkness of grief. They invited members of the church to purchase a string of Christmas lights in memory of someone who had passed. Overseen by a professional lighting design company, it took twenty volunteers to hang all the lights that were donated. When the thousands of lights were strung together all over the outside of the building and surrounding greenery, they were a very visible reminder to all who passed of the light of the presence of God in the community. \*See link below.

During Advent, we anticipate the incarnation - the coming of the God to earth in the form of a human. The Divine One comes to us as Christ Jesus to remind us that through all the ups and downs and griefs of life, God is never far from us. And, like memorial lights in a New England winter, that presence can bring more joy than all the well-meaning words in the world.

\*[https://www.ucc.org/news\\_light\\_bulbs\\_tragedy\\_memorial\\_idea\\_set\\_n\\_h\\_church\\_aglow\\_for\\_christmas\\_12202019](https://www.ucc.org/news_light_bulbs_tragedy_memorial_idea_set_n_h_church_aglow_for_christmas_12202019)