

Let Us Adore Him



PARKWAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 27, 2020

Sunday, December 27, 2020

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Limitless Love | Courageous Action | Spirited Inquiry

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

2841 North Ballas Road | St. Louis, MO 63131 | 314-872-9330 [p] | 314-872-9014 [f]
parkwayucc.org | contact@parkwayucc.org
Office Hours: Mon - Thu 8:30am-3:00pm; Fri 8:30am-12:30pm

Linda Tossing, *President of the Church Council* [puccpresident@parkwayucc.org]
Kevin Cameron, *Pastor* [kevin@parkwayucc.org]
Barb Kuhlmann, *Director of Christian Education/Youth* [barbk@parkwayucc.org]
Barry Luedloff, *Music Director* [barry@parkwayucc.org]
Mona Smith Herberg, *Office Administrator* [mona@parkwayucc.org]
Kathy Ferrell, *Office Assistant* [kathy@parkwayucc.org]
Rich Race, *Treasurer* [treasurer@parkwayucc.org]
Susan Thomson, *Financial Administrator* [finance.admin@parkwayucc.org]
Julie Connors, *Nursery* [juliestl1992@yahoo.com]
Emma Pennycuick, *Nursery* [epennycuick1@live.maryville.edu]
Joyce Ruiz, *Alzheimer’s Assn Faith Outreach Ambassador* [JoyceRuiz7@gmail.com]
Polly Rutherford, *Environmental Justice/Sustainability Seekers* [pollyrutherford@gmail.com]
John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*

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

Communications Requests: Please use the form at 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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Anniversaries

12/27 DARLAND, Nancy & Bill (65)

12/27 TUPPER, Tom & Leslie (40)

12/28 HAACK, Bill & Gail (42)

12/29 YESS, Gregory & Kari (31)

Birthdays

12/27 GRAYHECK, Karen

12/30 ROGERS, Gerry

12/28 LYONS, Zoe

1/2 HOGARTY, Rosanna

12/28 ZOLLER, Robert

1st Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, December 27, 2020 | 10:00am YouTube

Greeting Take a look at the *Holy Listening Stones* (see page 14)

Prelude Traditional and seasonal hymns and carols

Meditation *Blessing in the Chaos* by Jan Richardson

To all that is chaotic in you, let there come silence. Let there be a calming of the clamoring, a stilling of the voices that have laid their claim on you, that have made their home in you, that go with you even to the holy places but will not let you rest, will not let you hear your life with wholeness or feel the grace that fashioned you. Let what distracts you cease. Let what divides you cease. Let there come an end to what diminishes and demeans, and let depart all that keeps you in its cage. Let there be an opening into the quiet that lies beneath the chaos, where you find the peace you did not think possible and see what shimmers within the storm.

Welcome Song *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him, Born the King of angels!**

Refrain: **O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing!** [refrain]

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation!
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest!** [refrain]

Lighting the Candles & Ringing the Bell Dexter Cameron

Hebrew Scripture Lesson Isaiah 6:10-62:3 (Common English Bible)

I surely rejoice in the LORD; my heart is joyful because of my God, because God 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.

For Zion's sake I won't keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I won't sit still until her righteousness shines out like a light, and her salvation blazes like a torch.

Nations will see your righteousness, all royalty your glory. You will be called by a new name, which the Lord's own mouth will determine. You will be a splendid garland in the Lord's hand, a royal turban in the palm of God's hand.

Song *What Child Is This*

**What Child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?**

**This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

Psalter Lesson Psalm 148 (New Revised Standard), Sarah Machado
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise in the heights!
Praise, all angels; praise, all the host!

Praise the Lord, sun and moon; praise, all you shining stars! Praise, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for the Lord commanded and they were created.
The Lord established them for ever and ever; and fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling the Lord's command! Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Royalty of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young women and men alike, old and young together! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for this name alone is exalted; this glory is above earth and heaven.

The Lord has raised up a horn for the people, praise for all the faithful, for the people of Israel who are close. Praise the Lord!

Song *Joy to the World*; v1,2, 4

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing**

**Joy to the world! The Savior reigns: Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love, And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.**

Passing the Hope, Peace, Joy & Love

Gathering at the Christmas Wreath Dexter Cameron

One: We have come through Advent and Christmas Eve and Day, now in these twelve days of Christmas.

Many: We continue to light candles and assess the gifts we have received.

One: We have found hope and it still carries us.

Many: We have found peace and it still calms us.

One: We have found joy and it continues to bubble up inside of us.

Many: We have found love that continues to call us by name—and hold us close.

One: And now we come to deepen our journey with the Christ Child – wherever he goes.

Many: Jesus has come into the world so that we can experience God fully – over and over again.

One: Jesus will grow up and show us how to share our hope, peace, joy and love with others – in old and new ways.

Many: We are ready to learn again and again about these gifts.

All: We commit to being these gifts to others. The Spirit moves us toward one another as we go in confidence and in compassion.

Song *Christ Before Us*

Christ be - fore us, Christ be - hind us,
Christ em - brace us, Christ o - ver us,

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time, G major. The first staff contains the melody for the first two phrases: 'Christ be - fore us,' and 'Christ be - hind us,'. The second staff contains the melody for the next two phrases: 'Christ em - brace us,' and 'Christ o - ver us,'. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

Christ un - der our skin.
let all a - round us be Christ.

Listening for Jesus

Children's Time Children and Youth are invited to separate Zoom classrooms immediately following this Children's Time.

Blessing the Children *Be Near Me, Lord Jesus*

Tune: *Away in a Manger*

**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 teach us, dear Jesus, to laugh and to share.**

Gospel Lesson Matthew 2:13-23 (NRSV)

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

Moment of Silent Reflection

Sermon *Holy Listening Stones* (see page 14)

Call to Prayer *In the Bleak Midwinter*, v 1

**In the bleak midwinter, Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, Long ago.**

Pastoral Prayer and 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.

[A variety of names for God are welcome here—including in the Lord's Prayer.]

Song *The First Nowell*, v 1-2

**The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay a-keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain: **Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Born is the King of Israel.**

**They looked up and saw a star Shining in the east beyond them far.
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night. [refrain]**

Mission Moment 2nd Mile Advent/Christmas

Circle of Concern, Emmaus Homes, The Christmas Fund

Invitation to Generosity

Offering Our Gifts to God

Prayer of Dedication

Holy One, 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.

Song of Parting *Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow*

**There's a star in the East on Christmas morn,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow,
It will lead to the place where Christ was born,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.**

Refrain: **Follow, follow, Rise up, shepherd, and follow,
Follow the Star of Bethlehem, Rise up shepherd and follow.**

**If you take good heed to the angel's words,
Rise up, shepherd, and follow.
You'll forget your flocks, you'll forget your herds,
Rise up shepherd, and follow. [refrain]**

Benediction Maya Cameron

The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman, African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader.

**When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.**

Extinguishing Candles, Becoming Light Sarah Machado

Music for Going Forth

2nd 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 “2nd Mile Advent.” You may want to honor someone in your life with a 2nd 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/

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/

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

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.

Announcements

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.

Join Us for Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue (TAD) Jan 5

1st & 3rd Tuesdays beginning 11/17 | 2:00-3:00pm | via ZOOM

TED has a new sibling! Introducing TAD, Tuesday afternoon Dialogue, a Zoom book discussion group. Everyone is welcome. We are meeting the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. The book we have selected is *Almost Everything: Notes on Hope by Anne Lamott*—an exploration of hope and the place it holds in our lives. Copies are available through local bookstores, Amazon, and local libraries. We hope to see you on Zoom. Questions or comments? contact Gerry Rogers: gcr123055@gmail.com or Jackie Eiffert: jeiffert2@gmail.com

Video:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83670617428?pwd=bUXPZEdDMiU4ay9oNndTWw4yZUYwUT09>

Join by phone: 312 626 6799 | **Meeting ID:** 836 7061 7428 | **Passcode:** 480007

TED Book Group: This I Believe (starts January 12)

2nd & 4th Tuesdays | 7:00pm | via Zoom

Please join us for some fun and inspiring discussion of the book *This I Believe* edited by Jay Allison and Dan Gediman. Volume 1.

Based on the NPR series of the same name, it features 80 short essays. Some were written by famous people and other essays were written by lesser known folks. These essays may bring us moments to reflect and rethink not only how we have arrived at our own personal beliefs but also the extent to which we share them with others.

For our first session of this book discussion, please read up through Temple Grandin's essay which ends on page 90.

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89263841824?pwd=eIVDSVVUMHZZeStLZIBLeEZjWVBVZz09>

Meeting ID: 892 6384 1824 | **Passcode:** Book Club

Phone: (312) 626 6799 US | **Passcode:** 410992587

Subscribe to our email lists: Text your email address to 22828 or sign up from the homepage of our website or this direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/PUCCemail>

Prayer List

as of December 23, 2020

Celebrations

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

The momentum toward justice and equity.

Advent - our journey to Christmas!

Brian Sableman & Daphane Tan - PUCC wedding in February;
traditional Chinese wedding in 2022 with Daphane's family in Malaysia.

Concerns

Jim Winkelmann - in rehab hospital, healing after a stroke. He would welcome encouragement! 314-610-3348... SSM Health Rehabilitation Hospital, 12380 DePaul Dr; Room #219; Bridgeton, MO 63044.

Barb Kuhlmann family - as cousin Steve died of Covid-19 last wknd.

John - fighting Covid, currently at home (friend of Barry Luedloff and neighbor of Linda Tossing).

David and Kim Sieber - grieving/giving thanks for her mother who died of complications from Covid. Her father is recovering at home.

Tom - neck surgery... fusion of vertebrae (Kathleen Tarrs's nephew).

Anne Brodgerski - nearing end of her life (Svenson).

Justin Williamson - healing (Svenson).

Tommy Kurz 14 yr old - recuperating from 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; 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

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

All individuals and families who are grieving this season.

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 Buretta)

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 Assn UCC Covenant Partner

Week ending December 27 - Calvary UCC, St Louis; calvaryucc.org

Week ending January 3 - Bethany-Peace UCC, St. Louis;

<https://www.facebook.com/Bethany-Peace-United-Church-of-Christ-188016801273333/>

Inspired by Psalm 66, “But God has surely listened; God has heard the voice of my prayer.”

But how can God hear
billions of prayers?
Hurricanes howl. Wildfires whoosh.
The ventilators
hum us deaf all night. God’s ear
must not be like ours.

- Dana Delibovi, November 2020

HOLY LISTENING STONES TO CUT OUT



© Rev Leanne Ciampa Hadley, 2006 - First Steps Spirituality Center

Come back next Sunday for a Facebook Live worship experience as we celebrate Epiphany – when the wisemen arrive with their gifts.

A Prayer for Epiphany

Maren Tirabassi, UCC Pastor in New Hampshire

God, Epiphany gives us guidance
for this season in our lives —

we look up so we can follow a star
to the manger of new life,
a place to leave our gifts unwrapped

and then we look up again
and follow it home by another way,
or we fall asleep

and let angels speak in our dreams
of escape, of courage, of hope.

And this is what I can do —

I can help a friend look up
who has been looking down so long,

the neck is bent and stiff
and stars are known
only as glitter in a puddle.

And this is what I can do —

ease a friend's burden long enough,
so sleep has a chance

and, with sleep, the possibility
of the whispering of angels.

amen.

1st Sunday after Christmas

December 27, 2020

Long-Awaited Gift

Luke 2:22-40

A Litany

Holy One, Like Anna and Simeon, we have waited.

And, like Anna and Simeon we rejoice now at the young ones who have appeared.

In an age of climate change, the seas rise along with the temperature. While her elders posture to protect resources, or argue about who is at fault, a single young woman dares to speak truth to power. As our youth are empowered, empower us at all ages to listen and then to act.

We give thanks for the energy, vitality, and leadership of the youth in our church, community, and world. Like Anna and Simeon, we rejoice!

The scourge of gun violence has affected no group so horribly as the young. Children who cannot yet read know how to hide in the event of an active shooter in their classrooms. And so, it is the young who lead the way in calling for reasonable gun controls and an end to gun violence.

We give thanks for the energy, vitality, and leadership of the youth in our church, community, and world. Like Anna and Simeon, we rejoice!

The cries of Black Lives Matter that has spilled from hearts into the streets is a rallying cry that gives voice to generations of oppression and violence. As the youth lead the way in making the social change that must come, help us to uplift their leadership. Give us the grace to get behind them, instead of standing in their way.

We give thanks for the energy, vitality, and leadership of the youth in our church, community, and world. Like Anna and Simeon, we rejoice!

(Lift up the gifts of local youth who have shown energy, vitality, and leadership in calling for social change and justice in Christ's name.)

We give thanks for the energy, vitality, and leadership of the youth in our church, community, and world. Like Anna and Simeon, we rejoice! Amen.