



*Christmas  
Eve*  
2022



www.parkwayucc.org  
Saturday, December 24, 2022

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- 3 4:30pm Worship
- 8 7:30pm Worship

## 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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2841 North Ballas Road | St. Louis, MO 63131 | 314-872-9330 [p] | 314-872-9014 [f]  
parkwayucc.org | contact@parkwayucc.org

Linda Tossing, *President of the Church Council* [puccpresident@parkwayucc.org]

Kevin Cameron, *Pastor* [kevin@parkwayucc.org]

Barry Luedloff, *Music Director* [barry@parkwayucc.org]

Mona Smith Herberg, *Office Administrator* [mona@parkwayucc.org]

Kathy Ferrell, *Office Assistant* [kathy@parkwayucc.org]

John Dwyer, *Treasurer* [treasurer@parkwayucc.org]

Dawn Friedmann, *Bookkeeper* [dawn@parkwayucc.org]

Julie Connors, *Nursery* [juliest1992@yahoo.com]

Kim Livengood, *Church Historian* [historian@parkwayucc.org]

Joyce Ruiz, *Alzheimer’s Assn Faith Outreach Ambassador* [JoyceRuiz7@gmail.com]

Polly Rutherford, *Environmental Justice/Sustainability Seekers* [pollyrutherford@gmail.com]

John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*



# Christmas Eve 2022

Saturday, December 24, 2022 | 4:30pm | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

## **Meditation**

*The greatest manifestation of the power of God comes when we work together to find ways to be together and do justice together and love together and stand together. ~Yvette Flunder*

## **Lighting the Candles & Ringing the Bell**

**Prelude** Traditional and Seasonal Hymns & Carols

*Mary, Did You Know?*—Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene

Offered by Cassie Rosenberger, flute

## **Gathering Songs**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven’s all-gracious King.”**

**The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!*

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and people reconciled.”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem.”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!**

## **Welcome**

## **Sharing Hope, Peace, Joy & Love**

## **Gathering at the Advent Wreath: The Christ Candle**

- One: We have come slowly these last four weeks of Advent, lighting candles and gathering warmth and encouragement for faithful living.

**Many:** This is the Candle of Hope. We strive to be people of empowering and possibility-laden hope.

One: Come, Jesus, with your light of hope.

**Many:** This is the Candle of Peace. We commit to being people who speak, pray and act out peace.

One: Come, Jesus, with your light of peace.

**Many:** This is the Candle of Joy. We rise to be people of bubbling, contagious, expanding Joy.

One: Come, Jesus, with your light of joy.

**Many:** This is the Candle of Love. We will be people of liberating and creative Love.

One: Come, Jesus, with your light of love.

**Many:** This is the Christ Candle. Jesus will grow up and show us how to share our hope, peace, joy and love with others. Jesus will light our way.

**All:** We commit to being these gifts to others. The Spirit moves us toward one another. Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.

## **Centering in the Light of Christ** John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

## **Response** *People, Look East*

**Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim**

**One more light the bowl shall brim,**

**Shining beyond the frosty weather,**

**Bright as sun and moon together.**

**People, look east and sing today:**

**Love, the star, is on the way.**

## **Hebrew Scripture Lesson** Isaiah 9, selected verses

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Parent, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

## **Response** *Be Near Me, Lord Jesus*

**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.**

## **The Christmas Message**

Luke 2:1-4

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.

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

Luke 2:5-7

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.

**Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

Luke 2:8-11

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be delivered to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

**The First Noel, the Angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel. Born is the King of Israel!**

Luke 2:12-14

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!"

**Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing,  
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo... Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

Luke 2:15-20

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. 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, just as it had been told to them.

**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**

## **Invitation to Prayer**

### **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.]

### **Mission Moment** 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Advent/Christmas

Emmaus Homes | Circle of Concern | The Christmas Fund

## **Invitation to Generosity**

**Offertory** *Oh Holy Night*—arr. Bill Holcombe

Cassie Rosenberger, flute

### **\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Generous God, thank you for sending Jesus to be a light in every darkness. Jesus is your gift to us. He teaches us so much and leads us into offering our own expression of the gifts—hope, peace, joy and love. We want to be like Jesus through our words and actions. Use us to bring the light of Christ to people who need it most. Help us to be available to receiving these same gifts—however they come to us. We are all in this together. Amen.**

## **\*Sharing the Light of Christ**

Tilt only the candle being lit

## **\*Congregational Carol** *Silent Night/Stille Nacht*

The first verse in German links us to our church's German founders.

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht  
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,  
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh', Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh'!*

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!**

**Holy Infant, so tender and mild.**

**Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,**

**Heavenly hosts sing: Alleluia,**

**Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light**

**Radiant beams from Thy holy face,**

**with the dawn of redeeming grace,**

**Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

## **\*Benediction**

## **\*Music for Going Forth**

*Improvisational Postlude* on "Antioch"—tune by G.F. Handel

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!*—German Folk Tune, 14<sup>th</sup> c.



# Christmas Eve 2022

Saturday, December 24, 2022 | 7:30pm | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

**Meditation** *Love is a form of sweet labor. Revolutionary Love is the choice to labor for others, our opponents, and ourselves. Love has been captured by greeting cards and pop songs as personal and romantic--too fickle and sentimental to be a revolutionary force. But the greatest social reformers in history grounded entire movements in the ethic of love. Revolutionary Love is the call of our times. We believe it's time to reclaim love as a public ethic. In an era of enormous grief and rage, we must resist policies and acts of hate that threaten our most vulnerable communities. Resistance alone will not deliver us: We need a cultural intervention to birth a new future--where love is a force for justice and a wellspring for social change. Each of us has a role. When we lead with love, we labor with joy, and we begin to see no stranger.*  
~Valerie Kaur

## **Gathering Music**

*Mary, Did You Know?*—Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene

Offered by Cassie Rosenberger, flute

*Feliz Navidad* as offered by Aidan McCarter, vocal and guitar

## **Lighting the Candles & Ringing the Bell**

### **Welcome**

### **Carols**

*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**

**O come, let us adore Him... O come, let us adore Him...**

**O come, let us adore Him. Christ the Lord**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:**

**“Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heaven’s all-gracious King.”**

**The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

**Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply Echoing their joyous strains.**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.**



*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!*

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and people reconciled.”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’ angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem.”  
Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!**

### **Gathering at the Advent Wreath: The Christ Candle**

**One:** We have come slowly these last four weeks of Advent, lighting candles and gathering warmth and encouragement for faithful living.

**Many:** **This is the Candle of Hope. We strive to be people of empowering and possibility-laden hope.**

**One:** Come, Jesus, with your light of hope.

**Many:** **This is the Candle of Peace. We commit to being people who speak, pray and act out peace.**

**One:** Come, Jesus, with your light of peace.

**Many:** **This is the Candle of Joy. We rise to be people of bubbling, contagious, expanding Joy.**

**One:** Come, Jesus, with your light of joy.

**Many:** **This is the Candle of Love. We will be people of liberating and creative Love.**

**One:** Come, Jesus, with your light of love.

**Many:** **This is the Christ Candle. Jesus will grow up and show us how to share our hope, peace, joy and love with others. Jesus will light our way.**

**All:** **We commit to being these gifts to others. The Spirit moves us toward one another. Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.**

### **Centering in the Light of Christ** John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

**Response** *When I Kneel at the Manger Tonight*—Mary Kay Bell

What can I give to him, a heavenly King?

What can I give to him? I have nothing to bring,

But I’ll offer my heart. When I kneel at the manger tonight...tonight.

**Children’s Message** Children return to sit with their families. The Nursery is not staffed tonight, but it is open if anyone needs a break.

## **Blessing the Children** (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.**

**Mission Moment** 2<sup>nd</sup> Mile Advent/Christmas  
Emmaus Homes | Circle of Concern | The Christmas Fund

## **Invitation to Generosity**

**Offertory Anthem** *’Twas in the Moon* of Wintertime—based on the French folk tune *Une Jeune Pucelle* (c. 16<sup>th</sup> cent.), text by Jean de Brebeuf, (1593-1649), tr. Jesse E. Middleton (1872-1960)

’Twas in the moon of wintertime, when all the birds had fled,  
That mighty Gitchi Manitou\* sent angel choirs instead.  
Before their light the stars grew dim, and wand’ring hunters heard the hymn:  
“Jesus, your king in born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!”

Within a lodge of broken bark the tender babe was found:  
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped his beauty round:  
But as the hunter braves drew nigh, the angel song rang loud and high:  
“Jesus, your king in born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!”

O children of the forest free, the angel song is true:  
The holy child of earth and heav’n is born today for you.  
Come, kneel before the radiant boy, who brings you beauty, peace and joy.  
“Jesus, your king in born! Jesus is born, in excelsis gloria!”

\*tr. God the Lord of all the earth

## **Prayer of Dedication**

**Generous God, thank you for sending Jesus to be a light in every darkness. Jesus is your gift to us. He teaches us so much and leads us into offering our own expression of the gifts—hope, peace, joy and love. We want to be like Jesus through our words and actions. Use us to bring the light of Christ to people who need it most. Help us to be available to receiving these same gifts—however they come to us. We are all in this together. Amen.**

**Carol** *O Little Town of Bethlehem* #44

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wondering love.**

**O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.**

**How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven.**

**No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where mees souls will receive Him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel!**

### **Hebrew Scripture Lesson** Isaiah 9, selected verses

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Parent, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

### **Christmas Gospel** Luke 2:1-20

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. He 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.

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. 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!” 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.

**Carol** *What Child is This?* #53

**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?**

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

**Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.**

**So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh;  
Come, one and all, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone Him.**

## **Meditation**

### **Invitation to the Communion Table**

We celebrate an "open table." All are invited to participate! There's plenty of room at this table.

## **Pastoral Prayer & 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.]

## **Sharing the Presence of Christ**

**Communion Interlude** *Oh Holy Night*—arr. Bill Holcombe  
Cassie Rosenberger, flute

### **\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Holy One, may this simple sacred meal bring us closer to You and one another. Help us to feel Jesus' hope, peace, joy and love moving through our minds, bodies, spirits and relationships. We have witnessed this birth story again. Now we go in its tenderness and intensity. We commit to being gifts to one other - even to the stranger. The Spirit moves us toward one another. We are available, vulnerable, flexible. Melt us, mold us, fill us, use us. Amen.**

### **\*Sharing the Light of Christ**

Tilt only the candle being lit

**\*Congregational Carol** *Silent Night/Stille Nacht*

The first verse in German links us to our church's German founders.

*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht  
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar. Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,  
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh', Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh'!*

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild. Sleep in heavenly peace.  
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing: Alleluia.  
Christ the Savior is born. Christ the Savior is born.**

**Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace. Jesus Lord, at Thy birth.  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.**

**\*Benediction**

**\*Postlude**

*Improvisational Postlude* on "Antioch"—tune by G.F. Handel  
*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!*—German Folk Tune, 14<sup>th</sup> c.

## **A Modern Magnificat**

My soul sings in gratitude.  
I'm dancing in the mystery of God.  
The light of the Holy One is within me  
and I am blessed, so truly blessed.  
This goes deeper than human thinking.  
I am filled with awe  
at Love whose only condition  
is to be received.  
The gift is not for the proud,  
for they have no room for it.  
The strong and self-sufficient ones  
don't have this awareness.  
But those who know their emptiness  
can rejoice in Love's fullness.  
It's the Love that we are made for,  
the reason for our being  
It fills our inmost heart space  
and brings to birth in us, the Holy One.  
~Joy Cowley

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I take so much delight in the silence of the men in the Christmas story.

Zechariah can't speak.

Joseph doesn't speak.

While the words and emotions of Mary and Elizabeth are unapologetically centered.

The sound of Advent is the voice of women. ~unknown

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

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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

