





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

December 17, 2023

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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! If you are with us virtually, please let us know you are here by commenting in the chat or sending an email.

**Welcome Children** We invite children to full participation in worship. We also have activity bags for young children to use while they are here.

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

**Scripture Reader** Gabriel, Lisa, Bill, Sally, Kathleen, Evelyn, Joan, Jackie

**Flowers today** Yakel family

**Please** consider signing up to donate flowers and/or read scripture in 2024: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60BoD4CA4AC23AB9-scripture1>

**Subscribe to our email lists:** Sign up at [www.parkwayucc.org](http://www.parkwayucc.org)

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**Photos/Videos** Please be aware that our worship services are video recorded, streamed live on Facebook Live, and made available for later viewing through that service. Photos/videos should generally not be taken of children in church except as part of organized activities and programs, and any requests of children or their parents or guardians should be respected. Please be respectful of privacy and mindful that this is a safe and sacred space for all who enter. Media uploads: <https://tinyurl.com/PUCCmedia>

## Mental Health Support

988 (new nationwide 3-digit number similar to 911... call or text)  
24/7 Crisis Hotline 800-273-8255 (TALK) | 800-SUICIDE: 800-784-2433  
24/7 Missouri Department of Mental Health 800-811-4760  
Text 741741 and someone will text right back...[www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)  
Behavioral Health Network of Greater St Louis 314-449-6713

## Anniversaries

12/22 OWENS, Pam & Grant Doty (34)  
12/23 CAMERON, Kevin & Carmen Bumgarner (28)

## Birthdays

12/17	SABLEMAN, Brian	12/20	STOLZE, Cherie
12/18	JONES, Daniel	12/20	YAKEL, Alison
12/18	JONES, Mikey	12/21	DAVIDSON, Lisa
12/18	TALLYN, Evelyn	12/21	DETJEN, Val
12/18	WILLIAMS, Anthony	12/21	FAUSS, Donna
12/19	BOWMAN, Cale	12/21	WAITE, Laura
12/19	SIMONSON, Julie	12/22	RACE, Rich
12/19	YESS, Kirstin	12/22	WADDELL, Cole

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

Sunday, December 17, 2023 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & Facebook Live

**Welcome** Let us know you are here!

**Meditation** *Joy is an essential spiritual practice. It is the pure and simple delight in being alive. Joy is our elated response to feelings of happiness, experiences of pleasure, and awareness of abundance. It is also the deep satisfaction we know when we are able to serve others and be glad for their good fortune. Life is not meant to be endured; it is to be enjoyed.*  
~Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat

**Passing the Joy of Christ** “May the joy of Christ be with you.”  
(We are intentional about bringing more joy into the world.)

## Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

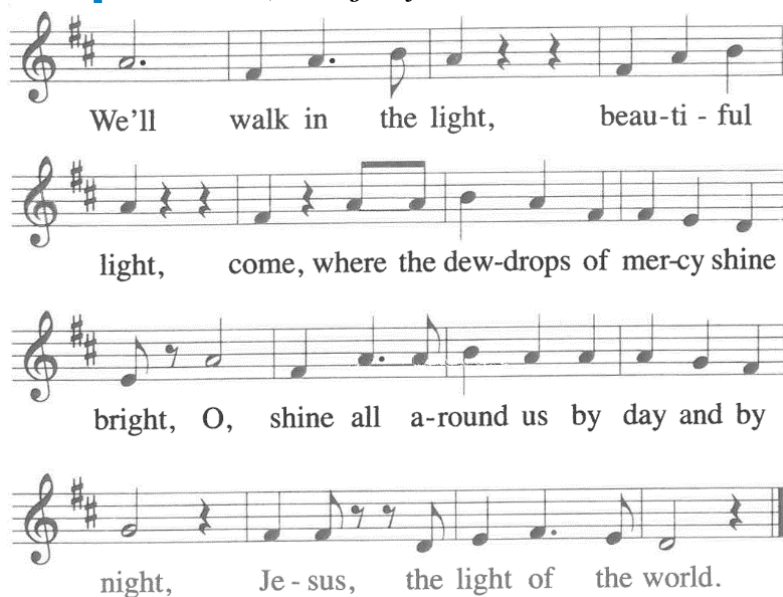
**Prelude/Introit** *Gathered Here*  
Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir & Hand Chimes  
Gathered here in the mystery of the hour.  
Gathered here in one strong body.  
Gathered here in the struggle and the power.  
Spirit, draw near!

### \*Call to Worship

One: Advent is a time for joy.  
**Many: We sing and give thanks to God for so many reasons.**  
One: Music is one thing that can fill us with light, joy and momentum.  
**Many: Joy is a thing that can transform our days and nights.**  
One: Scripture says “a joyful heart is good medicine.”  
**Many: Scripture also suggests we eat our food with gladness, and drink with a joyful heart.**  
One: We are grateful for both simple pleasures and grand pleasures.  
**Many: We aim to multiply the joy of others at the same time.**  
One: Personal and communal joy give depth and meaning to our lives.  
**Many: We are grateful to the Holy for all our gifts.**  
**All: Let us worship our God together—Creator, Christ and Spirit.**

### \*Advent Candle Lighting ~ Joy

## **\*Response** *Jesus, the Light of the World*



The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The lyrics are written below the notes. The melody is simple and suitable for a children's song.

We'll walk in the light, beau-ti - ful  
light, come, where the dew-drops of mer-cy shine  
bright, O, shine all a-round us by day and by  
night, Je - sus, the light of the world.

## **Prayer at the Wreath**

**Holy One, we wait expectantly, trusting that you are present, active and constantly at work. As we light the first, second and third Advent candles, we ask for a deeper faith and the ability to watch and wait for you ~ and to be ready to put our commitments into action at any moment. We become hope rooted in your hope, peace rooted in your peace, joy rooted in your joy. Amen.**

## **Carol** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* — arr. Lloyd Larson

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir & Hand Chimes

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Arrangement based on the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Latin hymn *Veni Emmanuel*

## **1<sup>st</sup> Lesson** Genesis 3:8-15 Gabriel Requadt

***In the Garden of Eden, God tells Adam that the serpent will be punished.***

They heard the sound of the God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the couple hid themselves from the presence of God among the trees of the garden. But God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

Then God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

## **Carol** *God Walked in Eden's Garden Fair*

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir & Hand Chimes

God walked in Eden's Garden fair, such beauty there none could compare  
It soon became a place of shame; there Adam's sin disowned God's name.

A world of peace was swept away when Adam chose to disobey.  
Like Adam, here we sometimes fall when we refuse to hear God's call.

The tale of Adam is our own. Like him we see God's love made known;  
Yet when we fail and go our way, the Holy One hears when we pray.

original material by Hal H. Hopson, based on Conditor Alme Siderium / Lyrics adapted for PUCC

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson** Isaiah 9:2,6,7 Lisa Davidson

### ***The prophet Isaiah foretells the birth of Christ.***

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. 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 One, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and the 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.

## **Carol** *Advent Verse* — arr. Deborah Governor

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir & Hand Chimes

Alleluia, Alleluia!

A virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and call his name Emmanuel.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Alleluia, Allelu!

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Based on Veni Emmanuel

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Lesson** Isaiah 11:1-3a, 4a, 6-9 Bill Owens

### ***Isaiah speaks of the peace that Christ will bring to the world.***

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling



together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

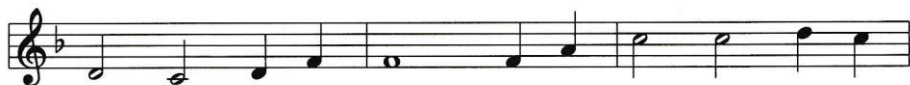
**\*Song** #2237—*As A Fire is Meant for Burning* (blue songbook)



1. As a fire is meant for burn - ing with a bright and warm-ing
2. We are learn - ers; we are teach - ers; we are pil - grims on the
3. As a green bud in the spring-time is a sign of life re -



flame, so the church is meant for mis - sion, giv - ing  
 way. We are seek - ers; we are giv - ers; we are  
 newed, so may we be signs of one - ness 'mid earth's



glo - ry to God's name. Not to preach our creeds or  
 ves - sels made of clay. By our gen - tle, lov - ing  
 peo - ples, man - y hued. As a rain - bow lights the



cus - toms, but to build a bridge of care, we join  
 ac - tions we would show that Christ is light. In a  
 heav - ens when a storm is past and gone, may our



hands a - cross the na - tions, find - ing neigh - bors ev - ery - where.  
 hum - ble, lis - tening Spir - it we would live to God's de - light.  
 lives re - flect the ra - diance of God's new and glo - rious dawn.

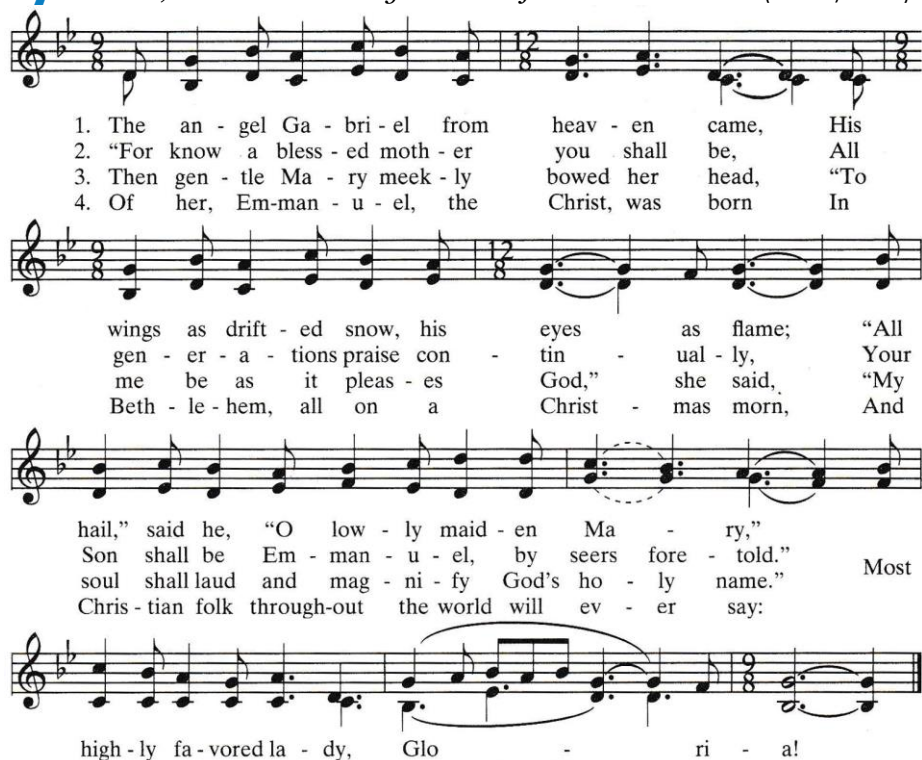
**4<sup>th</sup> Lesson** Luke 1:26-38 Sally Dischinger

***The Angel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary.***

On the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

**\*Hymn** #16, vs. 1 & 2 — *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came* (red hymnal)



1. The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came, His  
 2. “For know a bless - ed moth - er you shall be, All  
 3. Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head, “To  
 4. Of her, Em-man - u - el, the Christ, was born In

wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame; “All  
 gen - er - a - tions praise con - tin - ual - ly, Your  
 me be as it pleas - es God,” she said, “My  
 Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, And

hail,” said he, “O low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,”  
 Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told.” Most  
 soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God’s ho - ly name.”  
 Chris - tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:

high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!

**Carol** *Song of Mary (Magnificat)* Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir

My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.  
 God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

My God has done great things for me: Yes, holy is this name.  
 All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.

From age to age to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,  
 Dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.



Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,  
Leaves hungry spirits satisfied; the rich seem suddenly poor.

Praise God whose loving covenant supports those in distress,  
Remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

Orig. Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813, Para. Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

## **5<sup>th</sup> Lesson** Luke 2:1, 3-7 Kathleen Tarr

### ***The birth of Jesus is described by Luke.***

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 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.

## **Carol** *Only a Baby Came* — by Natalie Sleeth

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir

They waited for a king with crown of gold, to save the world as was foretold,  
A Sov'reign wise, a ruler bold, but only a baby came.

They waited for a prince to gain the throne, a Savior sent by God alone,  
The one with kingdom yet unknown, but only a baby came.

'Twas but a babe who came that night, the wonder to proclaim;  
With brightest star to shed its light and set the world a-flame!

They waited for a word of truth divine, a heav'nly dove, a sacred sign,  
A living branch from Jesse's line, but only a baby came.

Only a babe to bear the shame. Only a babe with Love his name,  
Only a lowly, Holy baby came

## **6<sup>th</sup> Lesson** Luke 2:8-16 Evelyn Buretta

### ***The shepherds journey to the manger.***

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.

**Carol** *Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child* — Traditional Spiritual, arr. by Jeffry Radford, 1992

Offered by the All-Young Children's Choir & Joyful Noise! Kinder Chimes

Jesus! . . . Jesus! . . . Oh, what a wonderful child!

Jesus! . . . Jesus! . . . so holy, meek and mild.

New life, new hope, the child will bring. Listen to the angels sing!

Glory! Glory! Glory! Let the heaven's ring!

**Choral Reading** *In The Judean Hills*—music by Joseph M. Martin, narration by Pamela Martin

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir

The birth of Jesus is replete with contrasts. The Christ Child, sent from the riches of heaven, is born into the household of a poor carpenter. Though He possesses the universe, no one grants Him shelter, and He laid in a manger. The Bread of Life . . . laid to sleep in a feeding trough.

And although He was long-awaited, His birth would go unnoticed were it not for a chorus of angels rousing shepherds from their slumber. Terrified at first, the shepherds are awe-struck by the sight and sound of the heavenly beings.

Against a backdrop of dazzling light, their unearthly singing is a call to joy, their wings stirring up an infectious rhythm.

Captivated by the song, the shepherds are led in a jubilant rush towards the stable.

Unexpectedly, these tenders of sheep dance into the very presence of God's own Lamb.

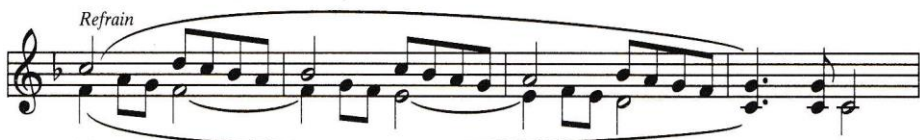
**\*Hymn** #23—*Angels We Have Heard on High* (red hymnal)

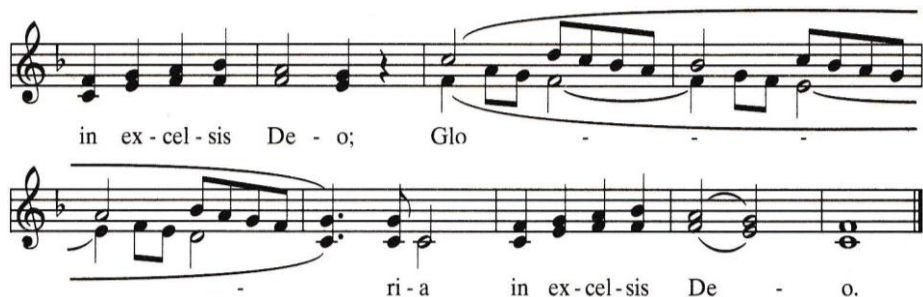


1. An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
2. Shep-herds, why this ju - bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?
3. Come to Beth-le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun-tains in re-ply Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad-some tid - ings be Which in-spire your heaven - ly song?  
Come, a-dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.





## 7<sup>th</sup> Lesson Matthew 2:1-11 Joan Degroote

### ***Three wise men follow the star and are led to Jesus.***

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.

### **Carol** *Still, Still, Still* — Traditional Austrian Carol

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir

Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill!

The Virgin’s tender arms enfolding,  
warm and safe the Child are holding.

Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill!

Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slumber deep  
While angel hosts from heav’n come winging,  
sweetest songs of joy are singing.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slumber deep.

### **Mission Moment** *Second Mile Advent*

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

## Offering Our Gifts to God

If you have an offering today, please place it in the plate on the communion table before the end of the closing hymn. There are also offering plates in the Gathering Space just outside the sanctuary. Thank you for your generosity.

## Offering Response

**Praise God whose many names abound;  
Our Peace, our Rock, Our Holy Ground,  
Our Home, our All, Earth's Majesty,  
Love, Spirit, Light and Mystery. Amen.**

## 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.**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Lesson John 1:1-5, 10-12, 14 Jackie Eiffert

***John unfolds the mystery of Christ's birth.***

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. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, and the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of God's only son, full of grace and truth.

## Carol I Look From Afar—Plainchant

Offered by the Parkway Sanctuary Choir

And a cloud covering the whole earth. Go ye out to meet him and say,  
Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?  
High and lo, rich and poor, one with another.

Go ye out to meet him and say,  
Hear O thou shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,

Tell us, art thou he that should come?  
Stir up thy strength O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel

Glory be to the Father and to the Son; and to the Holy Ghost.

I look from afar and lo, I see the power of God coming  
And a cloud covering the whole earth.  
Go ye out to meet him and say,

Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?

# 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.]

### \*Hymn *Go Now in Peace* (sung in rounds as directed)



Go now in peace, go now in peace, may the love of



God sur-round you ev-ery-where, ev-ery-where you may go.

### \*Benediction

### \*Postlude

Improvisations on *Bereden Väg För Herran* (Prepare the Way, O Zion)

Original melody published 1697

# Announcements

Please use the form at [www.parkwayucc.org/communications](http://www.parkwayucc.org/communications) for all announcements for our media. Bulletin and eNews deadline: noon Monday.

## **Christmas Caroling: Share the Spirit of the Season**

Sunday, December 17 | 11:30am

Monday, December 18 | 9:30am-12:30pm

Help us spread the hope, peace, joy and love of the season to our PUCC friends who can use an infusion of the Spirit right now. Come to the Gathering Space for a warm-up and then head out for a festive time.

Please RSVP to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org); 314-872-9330

## **Hope, Peace, Joy and Love in the Prayer Corner of the Sanctuary: Come for conversation and prayer**

Tuesday, December 19 from 3-5pm

Join Kevin in the Prayer Corner of the Sanctuary anytime during these open hours for individual conversation and prayer about hope, peace, joy and love. If these dates don't work for you or you just prefer it, we can settle on a time for a phone call or Zoom during this season of Advent. If you arrive and the Prayer Corner is occupied, feel free to wait a few minutes in the Gathering Space and text so I know you are waiting (314-330-0629).~Kevin

## **Christmas Eve this year is a Sunday!**

We will worship in the morning at 10am as it is the Fourth Sunday of Advent. We will light the fourth candle in the Advent Wreath and continue to prepare ourselves for Christ's birth!

Later we will have our Christmas Eve services:

**4:30pm Family Friendly Worship**—A lively and spirited service with Nativity scriptures, carols and contemporary reflections. We will sing *Silent Night* by candlelight as we prepare to go out into this holy night.

**7:30pm Candlelight & Communion**—This traditional service includes the Christmas Gospel, choir and carols as we ponder what this love story means for us today. We will share Communion at our open table and sing *Silent Night* by candlelight.

All three services will be in the Sanctuary and on Facebook Live ~

## **Christmas Dinner Potluck**

Monday, December 25 | 2:00-4:00pm | Heritage Room

Please join us for a fun, festive Christmas potluck dinner. Ham and rolls provided... together we will do the rest!

Please contact Gerry and Mike Rogers with RSVP, questions and/or comments at [gcr123055@gmail.com](mailto:gcr123055@gmail.com); 314-434-7122



## **Annual TWELFTH-NIGHT FEAST & FESTIVAL 2024**

Mark your calendars now for our annual TWELFTH-NIGHT FEAST & FESTIVAL This year's Twelfth-Night at Parkway UCC is on Friday, January 5, 2024 (the 12th Night of Christmas). FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC! Gather here at Parkway UCC at 6pm, with the festivities beginning at 6:30pm. Featuring several visiting Choirs and other Musicians presenting their best (and last) of this Christmas Season's music PLUS . . . good feasting after! More information to come! Any questions, please contact Parkway UCC's Music Director at [barry@parkwayucc.org](mailto:barry@parkwayucc.org)

## **Looking for More Singers for Pucc Sanctuary Choir**

If you've always imagined singing in the choir – or the thought is just occurring to you for the first time right now, why not give it a try for Christmas Eve? We're needing extra singers right now – reach out to [barry@parkwayucc.org](mailto:barry@parkwayucc.org) 636-485-5378 to let him know!

## **Pledge Reminder**

Last minute reminder, if you haven't, if you haven't pledged, we encourage you do as soon as possible. We are nearing the end of the campaign and your pledge is important for us to complete the budget for 2024! Blank cards are in the Gathering Space or contact either Amy Yakel or Harold Cobb:

[Ccjacob@aol.com](mailto:Ccjacob@aol.com) | (314) 965-4147

Pledge online>> <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/pledge/>

## **Inquirers' Gathering - for those who want to know more about Pucc and who want to be known**

Monday, January 8, 2024 | 6:30-7:45pm | Dessert | Heritage Room

Our goals that evening include:

- getting to know one another a bit more
- describing Parkway's worship, outreach, education, leadership, fellowship
- taking a look at our denomination, the United Church of Christ
- sharing ideas about the exciting future of Parkway UCC
- soliciting your thoughts on how we can be a more welcoming and inviting community of faith
- discussing some key issues of faith
- answering any of your questions

You will find our time together meaningful and informative.

Some churches call this sort of gathering a New Members Class—we do not.

While we do know that there are a number of visitors who have expressed interest in becoming members of the church, we do not assume that Inquirers are seeking membership. We just want to be hospitable, get to know you and have the chance to express gratitude for your presence among us.

Kevin Cameron: [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) | 314-872-9330

*Childcare is available that evening if requested ahead of time.*

## Our Church is a Firearm-free Zone

Some questions have recently arisen about firearms on church premises. Under Missouri law, the concealed carry right does NOT extend to church premises. Missouri law provides by default that concealed firearms are not permitted in churches, unless specifically authorized by the church. No such authorization has been made at Parkway. Missouri law also bars fire-ready firearms in churches (with certain law enforcement exceptions) where people are assembled for worship.

*The Church Council has decided to make these rules clear for all* by having No-Firearms-Allowed signs posted on church entry doors. This does not represent a change in policy, since that has been the effect of existing Missouri law, but Council believes the clear notice will best serve everyone.

## Advent Word Scramble

tvneda  
mistsarch  
ymra  
rats  
mehtheebl  
sneesu  
lenmaemu  
velo  
cnneauon  
pjsohe  
oyj  
ceered  
peedrhsh  
begrail  
phoe  
kreenpine  
escape  
yokend  
grapeycnn  
riftukace  
legosp  
gramen  
kawaccupry  
neebcloven

## Second Mile Advent Gifts

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 below 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 - and so many other - 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 over 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 last few years with COVID-19 pandemic and inflations of all kinds, 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

Wednesday, December 12, 2023

## Celebrations

**All the acts of kindness, justice and equity near and far.**

**Seasonal beauty.**

**Families and individuals** celebrating the holidays together.

**Nancy and Jack Litzinger** - relocating right now to *The Willows at Brooking Park* 207 S. Woods Mill Rd, #1211; Chesterfield, MO 63017.

**Judy Waddell** - as she continues to settle in at *McKnight Place*.

**Coree Mix** - also experiencing a fresh start - 8649 North Ave, StL 63114.

**Students, families, faculty and staff** - at the close of a semester.

## Concerns

**Don Wandless** - strengthening and getting medications aligned.

**Bill Hilgeman** - continued healing after serious injuries.

**Jackie** - loving and supporting her ailing mom (102) and step-father (103) as he nears the end of his life (Larson).

**Family/friends of Clare Chapman** - grieving/giving thanks for her.

**The people of Tennessee** - in the aftermath of lethal tornadoes.

**The University of Nevada at Las Vegas Community** - grieving.

**Grieving/struggling families or individuals** as the holidays unfold.

**The continuing war in Ukraine.**

**War in the Mideast** - Israel and Hamas....Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Yemen

## Continuing

**Becca Palmgren** - medical tests and discerning treatment options.

**Kathleen Tarr** - some success with her mental health program.

**Gram Ruth Hughes** - Lymphoma; receiving hospice care (Schneider).

**Cassie Rosenberger's mother Martha** - ongoing cancer treatments.

**Annette Harrison** - recovering from injuries (Stifel).

**Trudy** - living with cancer; healing after a fall (Scharf).

**Seger Ruiz** - paralyzed from car accident in September.

**Joseph Miller** - long road to healing (son of Deb Carter).

**Nelson Spencer** - medical concerns (Ellie Svenson).

**Barb** - complications with cancer tx and at odds with insurance co (Tarr)

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

**Bill Darland** - ongoing health issues.

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

**Chris** - hospice care after brain cancer surgery (Doug's sister-in-law).

**Renee** and family - very aggressive onset of dementia (McKenzie).

**Carol** - healing after recent vascular surgery (Mary Akers).

**Angie** - living with Hodgkin's Lymphoma (Rosenberger).

**Theresa** - surgery/treatment/recovery - aggressive cancer (Schwarz).

**Jackie** - special needs adult battling Parkinson's, cancer, dementia.

**Lizzie** - awaiting liver transplant (niece of Barb Kuhlmann).

## Home-Centered/Care Facility/Rehab Center

**Marv Herpel** - *Brookdale West County*; 785 Henry Ave, #217; Ballwin, MO 63021; 636-227-5838 [birthdate: March 3]

**Sue Houser** - *NHC Cool Springs*; 211 Cool Springs Blvd #1610; Franklin, TN 37067; 615-577-2049. [birthdate: July 8]

**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]

**John Nourse** *The Village at Cape Albeon*; 3300 Lake Bend Dr, #166; Valley Park, MO 63088 [birthdate: October 26]

**Ruth Peace** - 10379-D Forest Brooke Ln; StL MO 63146; 314-983-0253; meadletter222@gmail.com [birthdate: August 8]

**Naomi Runtz** - 272 N Lindbergh Blvd; StL MO 63141; 34-993-0469 naomiruntz@sbcglobal.net [birthdate: August 30]

**Gladys Sims** - *Friendship Village - 15200 Village View Dr, #2418*; Chesterfield, MO 63017; 636-898-8873 [birthdate: July 4]

**David Smith** - *Anthology of Town & Country*; 1020 Woods Mill Rd; #310; St Louis, MO 63017; 636-200-5076 [birthdate: July 24]

**Judy Waddell** - *McKnight Place*; 3 McKnight Pl, #229; StL MO 63124; 314-312-1129 [birthdate: August 13]

**Pinky Wilcoxen** - 10379-D Forest Brooke Ln; StL MO 63146; 314-983-0253; meadletter222@gmail.com [birthdate: April 7]

## Other

**Pres Biden, VP Harris, Congress**, all local, national, world leaders.

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

**All people who live with mental illness & those dealing with meds.**

**Caregivers of all shapes and sizes.**

**PUCC Family** struggling with employment; healthcare costs and limits.

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

**Gun violence and other violence across the US and other lands.**

**Conversations about the Death Penalty** in the United States.

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

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

**Peace and Justice** near and far.

**US Military** around the globe.

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

December 17, 2023

## Psalm 126

### *Shouts of Joy*

This is the third Sunday of Advent, the season when we set time aside to express the human longing for God to be right here with us. There are many moods in this season. Some of us are too busy and some of us are too lonely. Some of us take joy in all that there is, some of us grieve all that is lost. Some of us find comfort in the same story told a new way each year, some of us just want to hurry along to the turning of the year. Some of us find deep peace in the rituals of this season, and some of us feel very anxious. And many of us feel all these things! On each of our Advent Sundays, we are invited to sink deeply into our spiritual lives with a time of devotion and contemplation, knowing that God meets us exactly where we are - busy and lonely, joyful and grieving, comfortable and hurried, peaceful and anxious.

<sup>1</sup>*When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
we were like those who dream.*

<sup>2</sup>*Then our mouth was filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy;  
then it was said among the nations,  
‘The LORD has done great things for them.’*

<sup>3</sup>*The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we rejoiced.*

First, read the focus scripture for this day.

Read it again, more slowly, perhaps even out loud.

Now read it a third time.

What are the questions or images that come to mind?

Here are some to get you started. You may have others.

In the first week of Advent, we searched for a God who seemed to be lost. In the second week, we took comfort in finding our way to God at last. Now, in the third week, we lift up our voices in praise. What is your favorite way to express praise to God? Do you praise in quiet prayer or in direct action? Alone or with a group? Does your praise flow silently or through song and word?

How much time each week does your faith community spend in praising God? Do you express praise in worship? In meetings? In emails or newsletters? Do you believe that your faith community should spend more or less time in praising God?

End your time of meditation with this prayer: *I praise you, Holy One. And as I do, I breathe in your goodness. We praise you, Holy One. And as we do, we rejoice in all the ways you have been gracious to our community. In your amazing name we pray. Amen.*