



www.parkwayucc.org

March 5, 2025

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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

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John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 | 7:00pm | Sanctuary & YouTube Live

In the middle of a week, we pause to observe Ash Wednesday together - individually and as a faith community. We remember that God made us from fragile, blessed dust and breathes through us the breath of life and love. From dust we are created and to God's good dust we shall return. With dust and oil and glitter tonight - we claim the mark of God's cherished, flawed and blessed creature. *We are loved with a forever love.*

Today we begin our 40-day Lenten journey to discover who we are created to be as God's beloved - and how we are to approach and treat one another as also beloved.

In daily practices of prayer, study, self-reflection and service we will be very intentional on this Lenten journey. We follow Jesus - God's Beloved Child, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh in whom we see God's image most clearly. So come, let us pray for strength and imagination to follow Jesus wherever he will lead us this Lent. We model ourselves after him and long to be a more faithful, creative and effective expression of him.

Our theme this year is: *Traveling with Jesus*

As we travel this journey alone and together, we will pause in many different places as the gospels invite us to pay attention to where we have been, where we are today and where we headed.

We welcome the Spirit to lead us, guide us and light the way so that we can more intentionally communicate the words and ways of Jesus to others as we understand them.

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Prelude *Experience* by Rinaudo

Welcome

Passing the Peace of Christ

Meditation You are not on a journey *to* God. You are on a journey *with* God. ~Steve Maraboli

Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

Hebrew Scripture Lesson Joel 2, selected verses

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near — a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether God will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people.

Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

Centering Please take a breath between each line.

Be still and know that I am God

Be still and know that I am

Be still and know that I

Be still and know that

Be still and know

Be still and

Be still

Be

Amen.

Lenten Candles

We light seven candles tonight as we embark on this Lenten journey. We want the light of the Holy to illumine our path as we seek to be the words and ways of Jesus. We commit to being more infused by the Spirit as we travel. Even as we know this is good and important work, we recognize that it isn't easy—and we will come upon the shadow side of humanity and some of our own unique darkness.

We extinguish one candle each time we gather for worship this season, acknowledging that this can be tough and exhausting work. As we approach the desertion and depletion of Good Friday, we also prepare ourselves for the dawn and love of Easter morning... the light that never goes out.

Prayer at the Candles

Holy One, we begin this Lenten journey, knowing that you are with us every step of the way, wherever we find ourselves... feeling overwhelmed in wooly wildernesses and devastating wastelands; heading down off-ramps and appreciating detours; seeking balance and eye-contact on see-saws; experiencing safety in hometowns and heartfelt spaces; refreshing at leisure sites; memory gazing in places of the past; toiling in vineyards and other workplaces; committing to community centers; venturing to places we've never been; stopping in someone else's home; meandering well-traveled roads or taking the road less-traveled; seeking perspective in cemeteries; waltzing in the front door or coming around the secret entrance; surviving in a chaotic courtroom or learning in a crowded classroom; pulling up a chair at a welcome table; grieving in gardens; or envisioning future places where You are already waiting for us. We make this journey to be with Jesus and to become more like him. Send Your Spirit to help us along the way. Amen.

Response *The Servant Song* | v 2 and 4



1 & 6 Won't you let me be your ser- vant, let me be as Christ to you?
2 We are pil- grims on a jour-ney, we are trav- elers on the road;
3 I will hold the Christ-light for you in the shad- ow of your fear;
4 I will weep when you are weep- ing; when you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
5 When we sing to God in heav- en we shall find such har- mo- ny,



Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my ser- vant, too.
We are here to help each oth- er go the mile and bear the load.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.
I will share your joy and sor- row till we've seen this jour-ney through.
Born of all we've known to- geth- er of Christ's love and ag- o- - ny.

Unison Invitation to Confession Psalm 51, selected verses
Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Silent Prayers

We suggest more centering and cleansing breaths.

Assurance of Forgiveness based on Romans 8

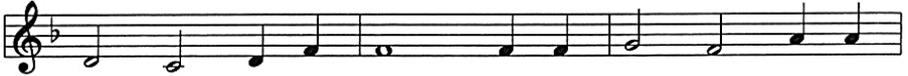
We have this assurance that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Hymn *Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes*

Our ashes are made from the palms we waved last year during Holy Week.



1. *Sun-day's palms are Wednes-day's ash - es as an -
2. We have failed to love our neigh - bors, their of -
3. We are hast - y to judge oth - ers, blind to



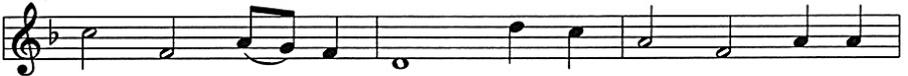
oth - er Lent be - gins; thus we kneel be - fore our
fenc - es to for - give, have not lis - tened to their
proof of hu - man need; and our lack of un - der -



Mak - er in con - tri - tion for our
trou - bles, nor have cared just how they
stand - ing dem - on - strates our in - ner



sins. We have marred bap - tis - mal pledg - es, in re -
live, we are jeal - ous, proud, im - pa - tient, lov - ing
greed; we have wast - ed earth's re - sourc - es; want and



bel - lion gone a - stray; now, re - turn - ing, seek for -
o - ver - much our things; may the yield - ing of our
suf - fering we've ig - nored; come and cleanse us, then re -



give - ness; grant us par - don, God, this day!
fail - ings be our Len - ten of - fer - ings.
store us; make new hearts with - in us, Lord!

Children's Message

Children will remain in Worship this evening. The couches, open area and speaker from the sanctuary also make the Gathering Space a good option. Please feel free to use that space if your child needs a change of environment for a few minutes or longer. All are welcome.

Blessing & Imposition of Ashes

*From dust we are created and to God's good dust we shall return.
With dust and oil and glitter tonight - we claim the mark of God's
cherished, flawed, blessed and beloved creature.
We are loved with a forever love.*

Response *Spirit of the Living God*

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

Mission Moment ^{2nd} Mile Lent/Easter

Heifer Int'l | Lydia's House | Unleashing Potential | Bread for the World

Offering Our Gifts to God

Offertory *Nada de Turbe (Let Nothing Disturb You)* by Taize

*Doxology

**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, as we commit again to being gracious and generous, we are mindful of all that we have received. We are in the constant flow of giving and receiving. None of us is self-sufficient. We need one another and so we put love of neighbor at the center of our lives. When we all focus on the common good, we help create the kind of community God dreams, Jesus talks about and the Holy Spirit makes possible. Bless our efforts – even the ones that fall short. Help us to rise and begin again. Amen.

Gospel Lesson Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Jesus said, “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from our God in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and our God who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to our God who is in secret; and our God who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by our God who is in secret; and our God who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Reflection

Call to Prayer *Come and Find the Quiet Center*



1. Come and find the qui - et cen - ter in the crowd-ed life we
2. Si - lence is a friend who claims us, cools the heat and slows the
3. In the Spir - it let us trav - el, o - pen to each oth - er's



lead, find the room for hope to en - ter, find the
pace, God it is who speaks and names us, knows our
pain, let our loves and fears un - rav - el, cel - e -



frame where we are freed: clear the cha - os and the
be - ing, touch - es base, mak - ing space with - in our
brute the space we gain: there's a place for deep - est



clut - ter, clear our eyes, that we can see all the
think - ing, lift - ing shades to show the sun, rais - ing
dream - ing, there's a time for heart to care, in the



things that real - ly mat - ter, be at peace, and sim - ply be.
cour - age when we're shrink - ing, find - ing scope for faith be - gun.
Spir - it's live - ly schem - ing there is al - ways room to spare!

Prayers of the People and 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.

Benediction

Postlude *Improvisation on Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes*

Prayer List

Monday, March 3, 2025

Celebrations

Lenten Journey

Karla Wandless - her health is improving (Don's daughter).

Concerns

Family/Friends of Pat Klein - mourning and sharing gratitude... we'll host a Celebration of Life on Saturday, March 8 at 11am here at PUCC.

<https://stlouiscremation.com/obituaries/patricia-klein/>

Bill Hilgeman - hospitalized; recuperating from emergency surgery.

Jan McAllister - hospitalized for tests and discernment of treatment.

Lori Connors - healing of a broken shoulder blade.

John Dwyer - strengthening after recent hospitalization..

Pamela Burcham - has begun receiving hospice care (Stan's sister).

Mark McKenzie - dealing with some breathing issues (Tom's brother).

Lana and Joe Biondo - healing from her knee replacement on 02/25.

DJ Meyer & Lisa Davidson and family thru his mom's memorial svc.

Carole Gwyn - ongoing health issues (David's mother).

Jim Butler and Jim Schwenkendorf families - grieving (McKenzie)

Our trans siblings as they deal with harmful state/federal policy plans.

All who depend on USAID programs that have been eliminated.

The continuing war with Ukraine and Russia.

Continuing

Family/friends of Marv Herpel - grieving & giving thanks for him!

Peggy/Jack Sieber & family as they grieve grandson Ryan Bruce Sieber

Kathleen Tarr - healing after recent foot surgery - some complications.

Keith Borgmann - continuing to gain strength after illness.

Steve and Paige Penico Family - as they navigate his ALS.

Phil and Amy and daughter B - as his terminal illness progresses.

Barry Luedloff - healing after open-heart surgery and pacemaker.

Rick - receiving chemotherapy (father of Laura Waite).

John Ruiz's oldest brother - healing in Cape Girardeau.

John & Nancy Tallyn - his heart condition; her recurring leukemia, etc

Sharon and Chuck - a variety of health issues (Gerry Rogers' cousins).

Haack's general practitioner and his wife - healing happening.

Kari Borgmann - her mom turns 101 in 2025; health issues.

Renee Pellegrino & family - as she deals with multiple health issues.

Rebecca Ray - that her book on suicide prevention will be published.

Mike Kolman - healing and discerning his future care (Svenson).

Ruth Hughes - Dec discharge from hospice; tests/PT now (Schneider).

Seger Ruiz - paralyzed from car accident (John and Joyce Ruiz).

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

Bill & Nancy Darland - his ongoing health issues.

Gail, Bill and Christopher Haack - chronic health challenges.

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

Home-Centered/Care Facility/Rehab Center

Lewis Junior Burcham - *The Glenwood*; 1635 N. Baltimore Ave #25; Mt. Zion, IL 62549; 217-864-1757 [birthday: January 15]

Mildred Hoxie - *Sunrise at Bluemont Park*, 5900 Wilson Blvd. #253, Arlington, VA 22205; [birthdate: January 15]

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; 314-993-0469 naomiruntz@sbcglobal.net [birthdate: August 30]

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

Judy Waddell - 13510 Weston Park Dr; STL, MO 63131; 314-369-4885 [birthdate: August 13]

Other

Pres Trump, VP Vance, 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.

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

Behavioral Health Network of Greater St Louis 314-449-6713

The numbers below are called Warmlines (not Hotlines).

They are peer run by people with lived experience.

Not all of them are 24/7/365

Teen Warm Line: 1 800-248-8336

Black Warm Line: 1-800-604-5841 (They are divested from the police)

Trans Warm Line: 1-877-565-8860

Project Return Warm Line: 1-800-448-9777 (run away)

Learn more about warm lines: <https://warmlines.org/warmdir.html>