

JOY



PARKWAY  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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

December 14, 2025

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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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John Nourse, *Pastor Emeritus*

# 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.

## Worship Serving Today

**Flowers** are given by Cindy Wessel in memory of her son, Tyler, and her nephew, Chris.

**Treats** provided by Linda Tossing.

If you would like to volunteer for any of these serving opportunities or join the corresponding group, please scan the QR code and click on the **Serving Opportunities Calendar**. Thanks!



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

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## 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

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://warmline.org/warmdir.html>

## Birthdays

12/14 Henry Waite

12/19 Julie Simonson

12/15 Mike Rogers

12/20 Don Wandless

12/16 Jessica Gwyn

12/20 Alison Yakel

12/17 Brian Sableman

12/20 Cherie Stolze

12/18 Anthony Williams

12/18 Evelyn Tallyn

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

Sunday, December 14, 2025 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & YouTube Live

**Prelude** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* Michelle Breuggemann and Amy Freeman

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

**Introit** *Ringing in the Jingle Bells* Kinderbells

**Meditation** Joy is not the same as happiness. We can be unhappy about many things, but joy can still be there because it comes from the knowledge of God's love for us... Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day. It is a choice based on the knowledge that we belong to God and have found in God our refuge and our safety and that nothing, not even death, can take God away from us. ~Henri Nouwen

**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**

**Welcome Song** *Lead Me, Guide Me*

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way,  
for if you lead me, I can - not stray.  
Lord, let me walk each day with thee.  
Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

## \*Gathering at the Advent Wreath ~ Joy

One:	In this season of waiting, we come with hearts that ache for good news.
Many:	<b>Still, joy rises - quiet but persistent - like dawn over the horizon.</b>
One:	Joy is not the denial of sorrow, but the courage to hope anyway.
Many:	<b>We gather to practice that courage, to remember that God delights in us.</b>
One:	Today we light the candle of Joy, not because all is well -
Many:	<b>but because God's dream for the world is alive and unfolding.</b>
One:	Joy calls us to notice beauty, to celebrate liberation, to stand with the weary and the worn.
Many:	<b>Joy invites us to sing, to laugh, to breathe deeply of grace.</b>
One:	Come, let us worship the One who meets us in every shadow and every song.
Many:	<b>We rejoice together - expectant, grateful, ready to welcome all that God gives.</b>
All:	<b>Let us worship our God together – Creator, Christ and Spirit.</b>

## Lighting of the Joy, Peace and Hope Advent Candles

### Questions at the Wreath

What do children teach us about **joy**, curiosity, and delight - and how does that shape our faith?

Where have you noticed a small spark of **joy** recently - something easy to miss, but worth naming?

How might our church embody **joy** in ways that heal, include, liberate, and restore?

### Response *Spirit of God's Living Joy*

**Spirit of God's living joy, fall afresh on me;**

**Spirit of God's living joy, fall afresh on me.**

**Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me!**

**Spirit of God's living joy, fall afresh on me.**

### A Light of Advent St. Lucia Day Thad Gwyn

### Response *Christ Be Our Light*

Refrain by children and youth:

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts,

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church

Gathered today.

Soloist Michelle Brueggemann:

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.  
Longing for truth, we turn to you.  
Make us your own, your holy people,  
Light for the world to see.

Refrain by children, youth and congregation

**Children's Time** *The Christmas Tree* Zoe Lyons and Gabriel Requadt

**Response** *O Tannenbaum ~ O Christmas Tree*

Children and Youth:

O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum  
How ever green your branches!  
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum,  
How ever green your branches!  
They're green when summer days are bright,  
They're green when winter snow is white.  
O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum  
How ever green your branches!

**Mission Moment** *Second Mile Advent* Deborah Reinhardt  
Circle of Concern | Emmaus Homes | **PROMO** | Christmas Fund

**Offering Our Gifts to God**



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

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

**Offertory** *Arctic Odyssey* Elijah Gwyn

**\*Offering 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.

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

Holy One, on this Advent Sunday of Joy, we bring our gifts with grateful hearts. Not because joy is simple, but because joy is sacred - a light that refuses to be extinguished. Bless these gifts that we offer: may they become instruments of delight for those who long for good news. Let joy ripple outward through acts of justice, through words of encouragement, through the courage to imagine a world made whole. As we give, teach us to hold joy gently and to share it boldly. May our generosity join your work of lifting the weary, mending the broken, and birthing hope in surprising places. Amen.

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

Jackie Eiffert

### ***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 You Made Us In Your Image (Tune: The Church's One Foundation)***

You made us in your image, O God of love and grace;  
You treasure every person in every time and place.  
You call your world to follow — to see in every one  
A person loved and cherished, your daughter or your son.

Your will is for your people to live in safety here,  
With dignity and justice, and free from want or fear.  
In families and nations, may all know freedom's song;  
May all enjoy the blessing to choose where they belong.

You warn against enslavement and things that would oppress.  
You call for living wages, for times of welcome rest.  
You call for education for all — not just a few;  
You teach us: Welcome strangers, for so we welcome you.

You made us to be equal; you made us to be free -  
To speak the truth with courage, to change society,  
To follow our own conscience, to choose the words we pray.  
O God, may all your children enjoy these gifts each day.

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

Sally Dodge

### ***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 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som  
2. O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir - its  
3. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind All peo - ples

cap-tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile  
by Thine ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of  
in one heart and mind; Bid en - vy, strife, and dis - cord

here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
night, And death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re-joice! Re-joice!  
cease; Fill the whole world with heav - en's peace.

Em - man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

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

### ***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.

## **Speech Choir for Four Voices based on *Isaiah 11:6-9***

Evelyn Buretta, Gabriel Requadt, Michelle Brueggemann, Kevin Cameron

## **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.]

## 4<sup>th</sup> Lesson Luke 1:26-38

Lynn Mark

### ***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.

## First Sunday Choir *The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came*

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

Daniel Jones

### ***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.

## **The Tradition of Las Posadas** Elijah Gwyn

## **Song** *Feliz Navidad* led by Mary, Joseph and Donkey

Children and Youth:

Feliz Navidad, Feliz Navidad, Feliz Navidad,  
Prospero ano y Felicidad,  
I want to wish you a Merry Christmas,  
I want to wish you a Merry Christmas,  
I want to wish you a Merry Christmas,  
From the bottom of my heart.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Lesson** Luke 2:8-14

Atticus Reed

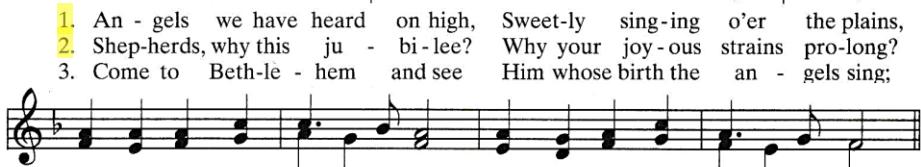
### ***The shepherds journey to the manger.***

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!”

## **Song** *Angels We Have Heard On High*, verses 1-2



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.



Refrain  
Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glo -



ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Lesson Luke 2:15-16

Jo Grove

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.

### Song *See the Little Baby*

Refrain - children and youth

Verse 1 soloist Erin Frick

Refrain - children, youth, and congregation

*Refrain*

See the lit-tle ba - by born in a man-ger, on this Christ-mas morn-ing,  
bright as the an - gels; See the lit - tle ba - by born in a man - ger,  
*Last time, end*  
sing No-el! Sing No-el! 1 There were shep-herds keep-ing their watch  
2 "Come and see," said Mar - y and Jo - seph;  
o - ver sheep as the an - gels sang. There were sa - ges  
"Come and see what a won-der-ful child." Sheep and ox all  
fol - low - ing the star. Sing No - el! Sing No - el!  
gath - er - ing a - round. Sing No - el! Sing No - el!  
*to Refrain*

## 7<sup>th</sup> Lesson Matthew 2:1-11 James Milam

### *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.

### **Song** *See the Little Baby* (page 11)

Refrain - children and youth

Verse 2 soloist Erin Frick

Refrain - children, youth, and congregation

### **8<sup>th</sup> Lesson** John 1:1-5, 10-12, 14      Ashley Milam

#### ***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** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Youth Chimers

Introduction by Youth Chimers then all stand as comfortable and sing

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 all glory given;

Word of God's sure love, 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)

### **Benediction**

### **Announcements**

### **Postlude** *Santa Lucia*

### **Petting Zoo Out Front**

# 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.

Our Communications Team is very active and is exploring all kinds of avenues. Please subscribe to our YouTube Channel today. Our YouTube Channel is [@parkwayuccstl](https://www.youtube.com/@parkwayuccstl). There is a subscribe button under the main heading and brief description of our church. Thank you! Questions? Please contact [barbharris@charter.net](mailto:barbharris@charter.net) or [cynthianouri@gmail.com](mailto:cynthianouri@gmail.com)

## Christmas Eve Worship

We hope you will be with us in person or on YouTube Live for worship on Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24

### 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, 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.

Both services will be in the Sanctuary and on YouTube Live. We need some help with greeters, ushers and leaders at the Advent Wreath. Please consider signing up by scanning or clicking the QR code:



## Poinsettias Gratitude

Thanks to the following people who graciously donated poinsettias for our Advent Worship Services. Cindy Nouri, Jackie Eiffert, Marian Pleis, Joan DeGroote, Sue Moellering, Greg Schmelig, Kathy Ferrell, Sue Stohr, Joyce Ruiz, Kari Borgmann, Cindy Levin, Donna Ruzicka, Barb Harris, and Cassie Rosenberger.

## AWOL (Adventurous Women Out Late) - Holiday Concert

TODAY | Panera then Lindbergh High School

Join the 200+ voice St. Louis County Community Chorus (including our own Michelle Brueggemann) and guest orchestra for their 50th Anniversary holiday concert, *My Voice Will Light the Way*. Get in the holiday spirit with a selection of wonderful music.

We will be attending the 2pm show. Some of us will lunch at Panera after church and go on to the show together!

Please RSVP to Carmen [cfbum@charter.net](mailto:cfbum@charter.net)

(If you aren't available at 2pm, you could go to the 4:30pm show.)

Tickets are \$20 and are available online or at the door.

## Tuesday Afternoon Dialogue on Zoom

1st & 3rd Tuesday | 1:45pm fellowship | 2:00-3:00pm discussion

Zoom Link (312) 626-6799; Meeting ID: 836 7061 7428; Passcode: 480007

Please join with TAD for our latest book, *The Maid* by Nita Prose. We'll discuss the book in thirds on Zoom: **December 16, and January 6.**

A *Clue*-like, locked-room mystery and a heartwarming journey of the spirit, *The Maid* explores what it means to be the same as everyone else and yet entirely different - and reveals that all mysteries can be solved through connection to the human heart (Penguin Random House). We'd love to have you! Fellowship starts at 1:45pm and the book discussion is from 2-3pm. For more info, please contact [jeiffert2@gmail.com](mailto:jeiffert2@gmail.com)

## **Open House New Kitchen Warming at Christmastime**

Sunday, December 21 | 1-5pm | Greg Schmelig's place...  
2020 Washington Ave, Unit 514, St. Louis, MO 63103

My extended family will be here and I wanted my church family to join as they are able. Please bring an appetizer or shareable dessert if able... but especially bring cheer. Come, stop by and stay for a while...but at 5 pm...go home. Love you... but by 5 pm I'll be done. Beer, wine and soda will be provided. Peace, joy and love! Greg Schmelig ~greg\_schmelig@hotmail.com

## **Opportunities for Good Samaritans**

**North St. Louis Tornado Relief, food.** Please add extra nonperishable food items on Give-a-Meal Sundays and throughout the winter season for Sunday give-aways to people affected by the St. Louis tornado. Please place items in marked containers in the lobby.

**North St. Louis Tornado Relief, nonfood.** Our church is a collection point for Planned Parenthood as they gather baby and personal hygiene items for mothers and babies affected by the St. Louis tornado. Please place items in the marked containers in the Gathering Space library area. Questions? Please contact Sally Dodge [s.dodge@hotmail.com](mailto:s.dodge@hotmail.com); and Evelyn Buretta [burettaevelyn@gmail.com](mailto:burettaevelyn@gmail.com)

## **Looking for another way to support immigrants and refugees this Christmas season?**

Jennifer Owens founded the Forai initiative 16 years ago. Forai, Inc., partners with local refugee and immigrant women to enable the realization of economic, educational, and social goals through training and peer support, and by expanding market opportunities for artisans to help refugee women develop/monetize skills by making items to sell - mostly jewelry and sewn items. The faith-based, Christian 501(c)3 organization recently opened a store in Kirkwood at 211 S. Kirkwood Road. For further info, feel free to email Lisa Mason, [lmason624@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lmason624@sbcglobal.net)

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

Wednesday, December 17 and Saturday, December 20 | 9am -12pm

Help us spread the hope, peace, joy and love of the season to our PUCC members/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. We have song sheets and bells! Come to one or both opportunities. All ages are welcome! Scan or click QR code to sign up for either day:



## **A Giving Tree 2025**

In the Bible, the rainbow symbolizes God's promise to all living things. A rainbow Christmas tree in our Gathering Space on the round table by the main office is filled with colorful ornaments.

A mother of three had a car accident in November and is having a great deal of difficulty. She has three part-time jobs. Since she does not have a vehicle and is in the process of healing, she isn't able to make money to purchase Christmas gifts for her three children – 11, 9, 5.

We have a list of favorite colors, clothing/shoe sizes and likes/interests for each child under the tree.

If you are interested and able to help, please take an ornament off the tree. Check the lists and place your name next to the item(s) you plan to purchase on the MASTER COPY sheet for the child you want to gift. Take the ornament and a copy of the sheet with you as a reminder.

Please bring unwrapped gifts back to church, labeled with initial of the child, by Friday night, December 19.

For more information, please reach out to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org)

## **Christmas Gathering Meal, Games, Singing and Santa**

Thursday, December 25 | 2-5pm | Fellowship Hall

This is a family-friendly gathering to enjoy each other and the holiday. Feel free to bring members of your family and come enjoy with us. Please RSVP with Pam Walker by 12/18 at [pamandbrenda95@yahoo.com](mailto:pamandbrenda95@yahoo.com)

## **December 2025 Alzheimer's News "Timing is Critically**

### **Important": Preemptive Treatment May Delay Alzheimer's**

A recent clinical trial found that an experimental drug may help delay the disease in high-risk individuals –particularly when given before symptoms of cognitive decline appear.

Researchers administered an antibody called "gantenerumab" to individuals aged between 30 and 50 who had no symptoms of Alzheimer's, but do have a rare genetic mutation that nearly guarantees they will develop the condition down the road. While "gantenerumab" has previously been linked to clearing amyloid plaques in the brain, which are associated with Alzheimer's, this is the first research to suggest that taking the drug as a preemptive treatment may help preserve cognitive function for longer.

"It doesn't stop the dementia. Dementia still continues, but at a slower rate," WashU School of Medicine research lead Dr. Randall Bateman told CBS News, explaining that participants who took the drug are doing 30% better than untreated individuals. "Timing is critically important," he added.

The study is part of a worldwide network of early-onset Alzheimer's trials that are likely to continue for at least another five years, and the results could mean big things for future research, Bateman said: "If this trial holds up and we can continue to demonstrate benefit year after year that these people are protected, then I actually think that will predict what's going to happen in the near future in ongoing prevention trials. That they will be positive, they will work, they will give people years of dementia-free life."

For more details on current and future Alzheimer's research, visit [alz.org/Research](http://alz.org/Research). You can learn more by going to [www.alz.org/help-support/resources](http://www.alz.org/help-support/resources) or the Alzheimer's Helpline which is accessible 24/7 via 800-272-3900 and staffed by master's level clinicians to assist with crisis situations, decision making, and disease information. Tools and support are also available in Spanish.

Want to learn more about the Alzheimer's Association and what they do here in St. Louis? Visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) and/or contact PUCC's Faith Outreach Ambassador with the Alzheimer's Association, Joyce Ruiz at [joyceruiz7@gmail.com](mailto:joyceruiz7@gmail.com)

### **Prayer Corner an opportunity to pray with someone**

Saturday, January 10, 2026 | 7-9am | New Sanctuary

Drop-in Prayer Time. Kevin will be in the Prayer Corner in the Sanctuary.

Come on by if you'd like to pray together.

If you see someone else there, simply wait a bit in the Gathering Space.

We can arrange a phone call or Zoom for another time if you'd like. Just reach out to [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org); 314-872-9330

### **Coffee and Conversation at Panera**

Monday, January 12, 2026 | 2pm | Panera on Manchester Road in Des Peres

Join us for a beverage and sweet treat. Come connect!

No need to RSVP - just show up!

Questions? Contact [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org); 314-872-9330

### **Tuesday Evening Dialogue**

2nd and 4th Tuesdays | 6-8pm | Heritage Room

Zoom Meeting ID: 849 4403 9731; Passcode: 792617

Please join us on for friendship and lively book discussions on Jan 13 when TED resumes after our Holiday Break. We read a variety of books related to social justice, spirituality, different faiths, history, relationships, current events and nature. We also may choose some random books just for fun. Most books take three sessions to complete. Bring a dish to share for the pot luck & join us for our next conversation! Newcomers are always welcome!

Please join us in person at 6pm or on Zoom starting at 6:45pm.

Contact Helen Race at [raceh@att.net](mailto:raceh@att.net) for questions.

### **Witnessing Whiteness PUCC Study Group begins in January**

We're forming a *Witnessing Whiteness* learning circle using Shelly Tochluk's book *Witnessing Whiteness: The Journey into Racial Awareness and Antiracist Action* as our framework. It's a supportive, no-shame space where white-identifying people can explore identity, grow in self-awareness, and practice showing up with more courage, compassion, and clarity in our diverse and hurting world. No expertise needed is - just curiosity and a willingness to reflect in community. This will take place on Zoom - Mondays 6:30-8:30pm

If you're looking for a space to deepen your understanding, build stronger relationships, and align your actions with your values, we'd love to have you. *This experience is free.* We just ask that you purchase the book. More guidance will be provided by our three trained volunteer facilitators that have been assigned to shepherd or PUCC group.

We invite you to engage in an exciting opportunity that supports our core values of limitless love, courageous action and spirited inquiry. The purpose of this group is to gain thought-provoking information and engage in meaningful conversations surrounding how White people can, and should, play an important role in the fight for racial justice.

Kevin has participated in a Witnessing Whiteness group in the past and will not be a part of this one. Please reach out to him with questions or to sign up.

Dates: Jan 26; Feb 2, 9, 23; Mar 2, 9, 23, 30; Apr 6, 13, 20, 27; May 4 and 11.

### **Clean Out Your Closet!**

PUCC youth and Eco Stewards are planning a FUNDrive! They will be collecting clothing, household textiles, dishes, small appliances, books, media, and more to raise money to support our Pollinator Garden and teen mission trips. Start thinking of gently used items you can donate to help these causes and begin the New Year with a bit less clutter. For more info on how you can help, contact Polly Rutherford at [pollyrutherford@gmail.com](mailto:pollyrutherford@gmail.com)

### **Stewardship Campaign 2026**

If you would like to make a financial pledge toward our mission and ministry for 2026, please visit <https://parkwayucc.org/giving/>

*Your involvement helps keep our passion for limitless love, courageous action and spirited inquiry rooted in love and moving forward. We appreciate your support! Parkway UCC 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.*



# Prayer List

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

## Celebrations

This Advent Journey of hope, peace, joy and love!

## Concerns

**Individuals and families grieving at the holidays.**

**Marion Pleis** - healing from this week's carpal tunnel surgery.

**Pam Walker** - preparing for surgery on December 22.

**Alex Wiseman** - seeking diagnosis/treatment for health concern.

**Virginia Krus** - healing after leg amputation (Evelyn Buretta's sister).

**Greg Schmelig's father** - hospitalized... will go to a rehab facility.

**Cindy Levin** family as they mourn Nick who was married to her mom.

**Bill Haack** and family as they grieve and give thanks for his Aunt Ann.

<https://www.boppchapel.com/obituaries/Ann-Haack?obId=46563230>

**Jan and family** at the death of his wife Georgia (McKenzie).

**Ongoing chaos/grief in the Middle East** - and the *peace talks*.

**The continuing war with Ukraine and Russia.**

**Our St Louis neighbors finding their way after tornado in May.**

## Continuing

**Rebecca** - healing at home after brain surgery on 12/1 (Bowermaster).

**John & Dottie Dwyer** - continuing to make progress with his healing.

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

**Lori Connors** - healing and strengthening.

**Karla Beck** - as her family seeks peace and her brother receives care.

**Howard Price** - rehab hospital after car accident, seizures (Svenson).

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

**Judy Brueggemann** - continuing health challenges (Brad's mother).

**Mark McKenzie** - for healing, clarity, refreshment (Tom's brother).

**Emi** - 5 year-old back at Children's Hospital for chemo (McConnell).

**Kate Moran** - treatments have begun; exorbitant cost (Borgmann).

**Kathy** - diagnosed with lymphoma, preparing for surgery (Akers).

**Ron Mudica** - receiving hospice care; stage 4 cancer (Akers).

**Derek** - dying from alcoholism; grace for his father David (Akers).

**Kenton & Teal Blacksten** - K's many health challenges due to diabetes

**Bob Messey** - serious health concerns (Svenson).

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

**John & Nancy Tallyn** - his heart condition; her recurring leukemia.

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

**Danny Venverlo** - awaiting a kidney transplant (McDougall).

**Pam and David** - divorcing after 55 years of marriage (Akers).

**Craig Hoffman** - career Navy officer receiving hospice care (Svenson).

**Haack's doctor and his wife Christine** - her ongoing health crisis.

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

**Bill & Nancy Darland** - his ongoing health issues.

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

## **Home-Centered/Care Facility/Rehab Center**

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

**Pat Owens** - *Mason Pointe* - 13190 South Outer Forty Rd, #2303; Town and Country, MO 63017; 314-323-7194 [birthdate: February 18]

**Ruth Peace** - 10379-D Forest Brooke Ln; StL MO 63146; 314-983-025 meadletter222@gmail.com [birthdate: August 8]

**Naomi Runtz** - 272 N Lindbergh Blvd; StL MO 63141; 314-993-0469 naomiruntz@sbcglobal.net [birthdate: August 30]

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

**Ellie Svenson** - *Mason Pointe* - 13190 South Outer Forty Rd, #2213; Town and Country, MO 63017; 314-323-7194 [birthdate: June 19]

**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.

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

**All who depend on USAID programs** that have been eliminated.

**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.

**Prayer Chaplain Ministry here at Parkway UCC.**

## **Drivers Needed**

From time to time, PUCCers are in need of rides to medical appts when their usual circle of support is unavailable. Some in our church family also need help getting to worship. Please let [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) know you are willing to help. You will be added to the list of potential drivers and will receive an email once we have a request for a ride.

## **Advent Second Mile 2025**

Support local and denominational efforts at caring for people via  
Circle of Concern | Emmaus Homes | PROMO | The Christmas Fund

### **Circle of Concern**

Serving four west St. Louis County school districts as well as areas of Jefferson County, *Circle of Concern* provides wholesome foods and a host of other services to more than 2,000 individuals monthly as their needs continue to grow.

Circle's tagline is, "Feeding families is just the beginning." They know that when a family is struggling to put food on the table, there are likely other needs as well. So they offer wraparound support for eligible households: wholesome foods, emergency rent and utility assistance, counseling, career mentorship, scholarships, kid programs and more! These programs work together to take a little off clients' financial plates, and help them to get back on their feet. Along with a caring community of volunteers, donors and community partners, they help families move from crisis and uncertainty to stability.

Learn more: <https://www.circleofconcern.org/>

### **Emmaus Homes**

Adults with developmental disabilities find the services, support and care they need to reach their highest potential at *Emmaus Homes*. Through a variety of residential, habilitative and recreational programs, each client receives individualized care based on their needs, interests and goals. With a large number of individual Emmaus homes spread out across the metro area, their clients receive stable and supportive housing, home management training, budget tutoring, grocery shopping and meal prep assistance, as well as physical, occupational, speech and behavior therapy services – all so they can live their best lives.

Learn more: <https://emmaushomes.org/>

### **PROMO**

Missouri's statewide LGBTQ+ public policy and advocacy organization was formed in 1986 in response to all of the legal and political attacks on queer persons in Missouri and throughout the country. Unfortunately, with an increase in proposed and enacted anti-LGBTQ+ legislation today, the need for organizations like *PROMO* continue to be needed. Their four focus areas are health and wellness; transgender justice; youth and education; and older LGBTQ+ adults. PUCC has been a satellite location for some of their volunteer trainings and will continue to be in 2026.

Learn more: <https://promomissouri.org/>

### **The Christmas Fund**

*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. Your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

Learn more: <https://www.pbucc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home>