





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

December 21, 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

**Scripture Reader** is Dawn Jones-Goldstein.

**Flowers** are given by Keith and Kari Borgmann in celebration of the spirit of Christmas.

**Treats** are provided by Lana and Joe Biondo.



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

12/21 Valerie Detjen  
12/21 Donna Fauss  
12/21 Lisa Davidson  
12/21 Laura Waite  
12/22 Richard Race  
12/24 Ingrid Scharf  
12/25 Roger Fauss  
12/27 Karen Grayheck

## Anniversaries

12/22 Grant Doty & Pam Owens  
12/23 Carmen Bumgarner & Kevin Cameron  
12/27 Leslie & Tom Tupper  
12/27 Bill & Nancy Darland

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent: Love

Sunday, December 21, 2025 | 10:00am | Sanctuary & YouTube Live

## Prelude *Savior of the Nations Come*

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

**Meditation** Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief.  
Do justly, now. Love mercy, now. Walk humbly now. You are not obligated  
to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it. ~Pirke Avot

## Passing the Love of Christ

"May the love of Christ be with you."

(We are intentional about bringing more love into the world.)

## Lighting of the Candles & Ringing of the Bell

**Welcome Song** *Lead Me, Guide Me* | #2214 Blue Songbook

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.

**Scripture** 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 | New Revised Standard Version Updated  
If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part, but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

### \*Gathering at the Advent Wreath: Love

One:	In a season of waiting and longing, we come not with perfect words or polished faith, but with hearts open to love.
Many:	<b>For if we speak without love, our words are hollow and empty.</b>
One:	In a world that prizes certainty and power, we are invited to a different way - the way of patience, kindness, and humility.
Many:	<b>Love is not arrogant or boastful; it does not insist on its own way.</b>
One:	As we wait for Christ's coming among us, we remember that love is more than a feeling - it is action, courage, and hope.
Many:	<b>Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.</b>
One:	This Advent, we set aside what is partial and passing, to live into what lasts.
Many:	<b>Love is more powerful and tender than we can fathom. We are here to see it, feel it and share it.</b>
All:	<b>Let us worship our God together - Creator, Christ and Spirit.</b>

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

#### Questions at the Wreath

Where might **love** call us to speak up, disrupt, or take risks?

Who benefits when **love** is defined only as kindness and not as justice?

What does it look like to practice **love** when you don't feel loving?

## \*Song Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to  
2. Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to ev - ery  
3. Come, Al - might - y to de - liv - er, Let us all Thy  
4. Fin - ish, then, Thy new cre - a - tion; Pure and spot - less

earth come down, Fix in us Thy hum - ble dwell - ing,  
trou - bled breast! Let us all in Thee in - her - it,  
life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er,  
let us be; Let us see Thy great sal - va - tion

All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown! Je - sus, Thou art all com -  
Let us find the prom - ised rest; Take a - way the love of  
Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways  
Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee; Changed from glo - ry in - to

pas - sion, Pure, un - bound - ed love Thou art; Vis - it us with  
sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as  
bless - ing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts a - bove; Pray, and praise Thee  
glo - ry, Till in heaven we take our place, Till we cast our

Thy sal - va - - tion, En - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.  
its be - gin - - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.  
with - out ceas - - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.  
crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise.

## \*Opening Prayer

Holy One, we gather as people who know that your call does not come with certainty or ease. You asked Mary to carry new life before the world was ready to understand it. You asked Joseph to trust love when fear and convention urged him to walk away. They said yes - not because they had all the answers, but because they trusted your presence with them. Teach us that kind of courage. Help us to listen for your call in quiet nudges and unsettling invitations. Give us the grace to say *yes* when the path is unclear, when obedience looks like compassion, and when love asks more of us than comfort allows. As we worship today, open our hearts to the holy work of consent, faith shaped by trust, and love made real through action. May our *yes* be born of hope, our faith rooted in love, and our lives a dwelling place for Christ. Amen.

## **\*Response** *Spirit of God's Living Love*

**Spirit of God's living love, fall afresh on me;  
Spirit of God's living love, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me!  
Spirit of God's living love, fall afresh on me.**

**Children's Time** For children under the age of 3, parents are invited to take them to Room 06 (upper level) where one of our teachers will meet them at the door. Children and youth will gather in Room 13 (lower level) for the Opening Session. Children from age 3 to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will then go to Room 12, children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade will stay in Room 13, and youth from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade will go to Room 15. For children in Room 06, parents please pick them up after worship. Children and youth from age 3 thru high school can be met in the Gathering Space just outside the Sanctuary after worship, as the teachers will bring them back upstairs after class.

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

## **Scripture** Luke 1:26-55 | New Revised Standard Version Updated

In 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 he 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.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,  
“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

### **Scripture** Matthew 1:18-23 | New Revised Standard Version Updated

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”  
which means, “God is with us.”

### **Moment of Silent Reflection**

### **Sermon**

## Invitation to Prayer *Cares Chorus*



I cast all my cares up-on you, \_\_\_\_\_ I  
lay all of my bur-dens down at your feet, and  
an-y-time that I don't know what to do, I will  
cast all my cares up-on you. \_\_\_\_\_

## 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.]

### Mission Moment *Second Mile Advent* Lana Biondo

Circle of Concern | Emmaus Homes | PROMO | The 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 Gathering Space outside the sanctuary too. Thank you for your generosity.

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

### Offering Interlude *Pat-a-pan* Traditional Carol (Harpsichord)

## \*Response *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*



1. Make me a channel of your peace. Where  
2. Make me a channel of your peace. Where  
there is hatred, let me bring your love. Where  
there's despair in life, let me bring hope. Where  
there is injury, your pardon, Lord, and  
there is darkness, only light, and  
where there's doubt, true faith in you.  
where there's sadness, ever joy.

## \*Prayer of Dedication

God of generous love, we offer these gifts not as a transaction, but as a response to the love you have already shown us. Bless what has been given - the money, the time, the energy, and the quiet acts of care that may never be named aloud.

May these offerings become more than resources. Let them become welcome where there is exclusion, relief where there is burden, and hope where that has grown dim.

As we wait for love to be born again among us, shape us into people who give freely, who share boldly, and who trust that love multiplies when it is practiced.

Use what we offer today to repair what is broken, to lift what is bowed down, and to remind the world that love is still coming - and that we are part of its arrival. Amen.

## \*Song of Parting *Christ Be Our Light, v 1, 2, 5*

1 Long-ing for light, we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for  
 2 Long-ing for peace, our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for  
 3 Long-ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for  
 4 Long-ing for shel-ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for  
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the

Am7 Bm7 Esus Em Am7

truth, we turn to you. Make us your own, Your word a - lone  
 hope, man - y de - spair. Make us your bread,  
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your build - ing,  
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your ser - vants  
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be

D G C Am Dsus D

your ho - ly peo-ple, light for the world to see.  
 has power to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
 bro - ken for oth-ers, shared un - til all are fed.  
 shel - ter - ing oth-ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.  
 to one an - oth - er, mak - ing your king - dom come.

*Refrain*

G C G Em Bm Em

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the

*Refrain*

Am7 D G Dsus D Em Em7

dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your

C Am7 D G Am7

church gath - ered to - day.

1-4 G Last time G

## \*Benediction and God's Light Goes Forth

\*Music for Going Forth *O Come Divine Messiah*

**Petting Zoo Out Front** (*For real this time!*)

## Christmas Eve Choir Practice just before the services

Choir will practice their songs for Christmas Eve at 3:45pm and 6:45pm...  
 45 minutes before each service on 12/24. See you then! ~Amy Freeman

# 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)

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

TODAY | 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](mailto:greg_schmelig@hotmail.com)

## **Town & Country Symphony Orchestra Holiday Traditions**

TODAY | 2:30pm | Ridgway Auditorium, 13201 Clayton Rd.

Join TCSO as they perform a selection of holiday favorites including Holst's *In the Bleak Midwinter*, the Troika from Prokofiev's *Lieutenant Kijé*, and a variety of other seasonal music. Keep the season warm with good music and good friends. For more information, visit [tcsomo.org](http://tcsomo.org)

## **Jazz Noel Seeking the Light**

TODAY | 2:30pm | First Congregational Church, UCC, Webster Groves

The 15th annual Jazz Noel is coming today. An all-new program features jazz, renaissance music, actors, and Michael Anderson who will paint his interpretation of the theme: Seeking the Light. The concert is free to all. A free-will offering will be received. Hope to see you for a wonderful program celebrating the joy of the season.

## **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.

## **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)

## **Speaker Series Occasional opportunities after worship at 11:15am**

### **“Mark Twain, His Wit, His Words, and His Life,” by Bev Schuetz of History Talks.**

Sunday, January 4, 2026 | 11:15am | Heritage Room

Learn the surprising story of America's most beloved author while laughing at his wonderful observations on human nature. Follow this Missouri born writer's great successes and personal happiness as well as his tragic personal and financial losses.

Our speaker, Bev Schuetz, is a popular and dynamic speaker who has created HISTORY TALKS, a series of live presentations. She is known for her unique topics, delightful presentations, and thoroughly researched programs. HISTORY TALKS combines her skills in public speaking, historical analysis, and creative writing. The results are lectures that reward and enrich those attending her presentations.

### **“Bletchley Park; the Home of WWII’s Codebreakers,” by Parks Smith.**

Sunday, January 18, 2026 | 11:15am | Heritage Room

Bletchley Park, in England, was the top-secret home of the World War II "Codebreakers." a term for the over 9,000 men and women who intercepted and cracked German war messages. Winston Churchill referred to the Bletchley staff as "the geese who laid the golden eggs and never cackled." Our speakers, Parks Smith, is a retired St. Louisan historian, who often speaks at the St. Louis History Museum.

Mr. Smith will explore Bletchley Park's history from 1939 to 1946, sharing stories of those who worked there and detailing how German messages were captured and decoded during the Battle of the Atlantic. This mighty effort included breaking the German Enigma and Lorenz codes and developing the Colossus computer.

Questions? Please email Richard Scherrer at [9ofivetpr@gmail.com](mailto:9ofivetpr@gmail.com)

## **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: **January 6, 2026.**

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)

## **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.

## **Day of Service in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

Monday, January 19, 2026 | 9:30am-12pm | 3752 Giles Ave., St. Louis, 63116

Youth 12-17 years of age are welcome to join Interfaith

Partnerships Youth on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to serve

the unhoused. The youth will prepare a meal and set up

cots/bedding for the unhoused. They will offer team and

peace building games as well. Space is limited and you must

register by letting Kevin know you are interested. Kevin will

be leading the youth from PUCC. Contact him at [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) for more info.



## **Mona Maynard retiring from PUCC after 15 years**

Mona has just completed her time with us after many years at PUCC. She was our full-time office administrator beginning in 2010 and was most recently handling our website and graphic design. She has been working from home for the last few years. If you would like to send her a warm note of gratitude and blessing, please ask [kevin@parkwayucc.org](mailto:kevin@parkwayucc.org) for her address. Thank you.

## **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.

## **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)

## **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.

# Prayer List

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

## Celebrations

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

**Damien Joseph Cook** - new great-grandson for Barb Harrris.

**Mona Maynard** - retiring this week after many years at PUCC -currently handling our website and graphic design.

**Hanukkah** for our Jewish family/friends/neighbors this week.

## Concerns

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

**All the travelers this holiday season.**

**Marion Pleis** - healing from recent 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** - in a rehab facility after recent hospital stay.

**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>

**Tina** - complications of Legionaries' disease (Jones-Goldstein).

**Traci Saputo's dad** - hospitalized with broken hip and other issues.

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

**Deadly shootings** at Brown Univ, Australia, Syria and other places.

**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 recent brain surgery (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 Ververlo** - 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; 314-983-0255 [meadletter222@gmail.com](mailto:meadletter222@gmail.com) [birthdate: August 8]  
**Naomi Runtz** - 272 N Lindbergh Blvd; StL MO 63141; 314-993-0469 [naomiruntz@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.**

## **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+ educational, 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. Our PUCC gifts will go to the PROMO Fund specifically for education and awareness. *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.pbcc.org/index.php/christmas-fund-home>

## ***Awake at Home***

Matt Laney

*[Jesus said to them,] “Stay awake! If the house owner knew when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and stood guard. You also must be ready, for the Son of Man comes at an unexpected hour.” - Matthew 24:42-44 (adapted)*

In Plum Village, the monastery founded by Thich Nhat Hanh, I was taught to wash the dishes or clean the kitchen counter as if caring for a baby.

At first, it felt contrived. Eventually, something shifted. Giving loving attention to a tiny, fragile human can turn most anyone into an awakened being, if only for a moment, which is all we have.

Brother Lawrence, a 17th-century Carmelite monk, spoke of something similar. “The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer. In the noise and clutter of my kitchen...I possess God in tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the Blessed Sacrament.” He also said, “Great have abandoned all particular forms of devotion, all prayer techniques. My only prayer practice is attention.”

Jesus urged his disciples to remain awake and alert to the arrival of the Holy, because the Eternal is not only present, the Eternal is presence itself. In my experience, the presence of the Eternal becomes available through the practice of loving attention.

If God ever feels out of reach, try going about your day as if carrying a sleeping infant. Few people act heedlessly or recklessly while holding a baby at rest. We naturally move more tranquilly and speak more gently. Our attention becomes more acute; our being is more reverent. In one unexpected moment, holiness arrives.

Stay alert. Love what you do. The Presence is literally at hand.

### ***Prayer***

*Holy One, today may I strive for attention over perfection.*

Consider signing up to receive these UCC daily devotions  
from our God is Still Speaking writers:

<https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>





## **FUNDrive Planned for Jan-March 2026 Clean out your closets & cupboards--Help TWO GOOD CAUSES!**

Parkway United Church of Christ is sponsoring a FUNDrive for two organizations in our church: the Eco-Stewards, with funds going toward maintaining and improving the Wildflower Pollinator Garden and the Youth Group, with funds going toward their mission trips. We will provide bags and packing instruction after church **TODAY** and will start collecting bags of clothing and household textiles, as well as boxes of small household goods, books, and media on **Sunday, January 4**. The drive will continue through **March 7**. Start thinking now about what you can donate to support these causes and streamline your home to start the New Year! Drop off bags and boxes in the Fellowship Hall, to your right, when you walk in. Questions- contact Polly Rutherford, **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.*

