



# Christmas Eve Festival Worship

FIRST (PARK) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

December 24, 2024



# Christmas Eve Festival Worship Service

December 24, 2024 at 9:00pm

*Please enter the sanctuary quietly and prayerfully,  
enjoying the pre-service music as you prepare to worship.*

## Gathering Music and Meditation

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

String Quartet-in-Residence

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Bring a Torch*

*He Is Born*

Arr. Michael Tyree

*There's a Song in the Air*

Phyllis Ann Miner, harp

Arr. Phyllis Ann Miner

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Arr. Frank Voltz

*The First Noel*

Arr. Joy Slavens

*O Little One Sweet*

Cheryl Wells, flute

John A. Behnke

Steven B. Smith, organ

Welcome

Rev. Darryl Kistler

+ Call to Worship

Reading Responsively  
Katie Bradley, liturgist

One: For you who are filled to the brim with happiness,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**

One: For you who are mourning the loss of family and friends,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**





One: For you who feel like you are tripping about in darkness,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**

One: For you who rest in gratitude and contentment,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**

One: For you who feel the ache of loneliness,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**

One: For you who are surrounded by unlikely yet beautiful companionship,

**All: Jesus Christ, the joy of the world, is born.**

One: Come, let us worship the birth of our Savior!

**All: Come, let us worship God who came to dwell among us!**

+ Processional Carol - bulletin page 10 (verses 1, 3, 4)

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Tune: ADESTE FIDELES

Arr. Lloyd Larson

The Advent Liturgy

The Chancel Choir

*Advent's Holy Light*

Joel Raney

*As we watch for the dawn of a brighter day,  
A candle of love lights the way.*

*As we look for the signs of the promised birth,  
Of a Savior who brings heaven to earth.*

*Lord, we are waiting for peace to reign,  
Lord, we are listening for love's refrain.*

*For hope, peace and joy and love to unite  
In the beauty and wonder of Advent's holy light.*

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Jeremy Kress and Michael Waite-Kress

One: As we gather on this sacred Christmas Eve, we light all the candles, including the center candle, the Christ candle. Together, these candles symbolize the Light of the World coming to dispel the darkness. As we light this Christ candle, may its flame ignite the warmth of God's love within us and spread the message of joy and salvation to all.



One: Tonight we celebrate the birth of Jesus, the source of our hope.

All: Let heaven and nature sing.

One: The Prince of Peace has come to dwell among and within us.

All: Let heaven and nature sing.

One: The source of our joy and our salvation is here.

All: Let heaven and nature sing.

One: The greatest gift of all, the gift of love, has been given.

All: Let heaven and nature sing.

One: Gracious Creator, we thank you for the love that brought Christ into our lives, for the hope his birth represents, and for the peace that his presence brings. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, may this Christ candle illuminate our hearts and minds, drawing us closer to you and to one another. In the name of the newborn King, we pray. Amen.

Response

The Choir and Congregation  
*Advent's Holy Light*

*(on cue)*

Lord, we are wait - ing for peace to reign.

Lord, we are lis - tening for love's re - frain.

For hope, peace, and joy and love to u -

nite in the beau - ty and won - der of

Ad - vent's ho - ly light.



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 for the poor  
and decide with equity for the oppressed 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 will feed 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.

Meditation

The Smith-Dively Ringers  
*The First Noel*  
Arr. Cathy Moglebust



## The Second Lesson

Luke 2:1-7  
Andrew DeBoer, liturgist

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

### Meditation

String Quartet in Residence  
*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*  
Arr. Kevin Hildebrand

## The Third Lesson

Luke 2:8-20  
Andrew DeBoer, liturgist

Now in that same 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 he favors!"*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which



the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

+ Carol - bulletin page 11 (verses 1, 2, 4)

*Joy to the World*

Tune: ANTIOCH

Sermon: *Christmas Finds Us Where We Are*

Rev. Darryl Kistler

Response

Brass Quintet-in-Residence

*Noël Nouvelet (Christmas Comes Anew)*

Arr. Charles Evans

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir

Phyllis Ann Miner, piano

Steven B. Smith, organ

*This Christmastide*

Donald Fraser

*Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.*

*Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Holly, ivy, mistletoe, and the gently falling snow,*

*From a simple ox's stall came the greatest gift of all.*

*Children sing of peace and joy at the birth of one small boy.*

*Let the bells ring loud and clear, ring out now for all to hear.*

*Trumpets sound and voices raise in an endless stream of praise.*

*Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.*



Doxology

*Angels We Have Heard on High*  
(Refrain only)  
Tune: GLORIA

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo; Gloria, in excelsis Deo*

+ Prayer of Dedication

Reading in Unison

**Glorious God, as the shepherds rejoiced at the angel's news, we too bring our offerings with joy. Bless these gifts, that they may spread your good news of great joy to all people. Use them to bring peace, justice, and hope to our community and beyond. In this season of Advent, may our giving reflect the light of Christ, and may we be your instruments of love and generosity. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

(Based on Luke 2:1-14)

Candlelighting

The Smith-Dively Ringers  
*Stille Nacht*  
Arr. James Weber

Carol - No. 122 (verses 1 and 2)

*Silent Night, Holy Night*  
Tune: STILLE NACHT

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

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





+ Benediction

*Please be seated for the Postlude.  
You may exit when the lights are turned on and it is safe to do so.*

Postlude

**Brass Quintet-in-Residence**  
*Noel, Noel, Noel*  
Arr. C. Hamlin/R. Nichols



The bulletin cover art is by Canadian artist, William Kurelick (1927-1977) from his book  
*A Northern Nativity: Christmas Dreams of a Prairie Boy*, Tundra Books 1976.

***Special thanks to our musicians tonight:***

The Chancel Choir – Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle, director  
The Smith-Dively Ringers – Kurt Stroh, director  
Steven B. Smith, organ  
Phyllis A. Miner, harp/piano  
Cheryl Wells, flute

***Brass Quintet-in-Residence:***

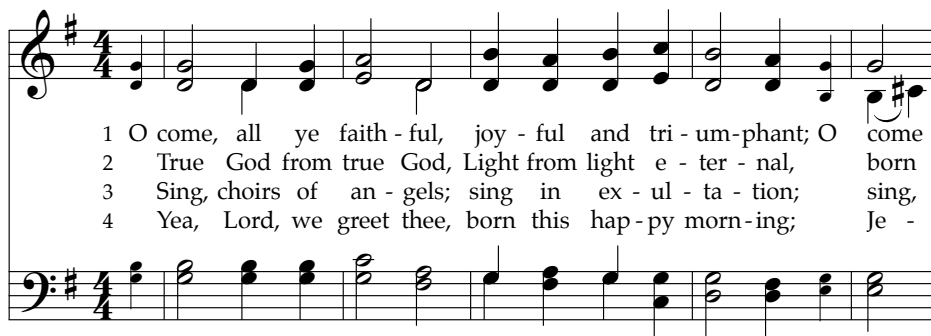
Alex Wilson, trumpet  
Morgan Hare, trumpet  
Erich Peterson, horn  
Daniel Mattson, trombone  
Robert Ward, bass trombone

***String Quartet-in-Residence:***

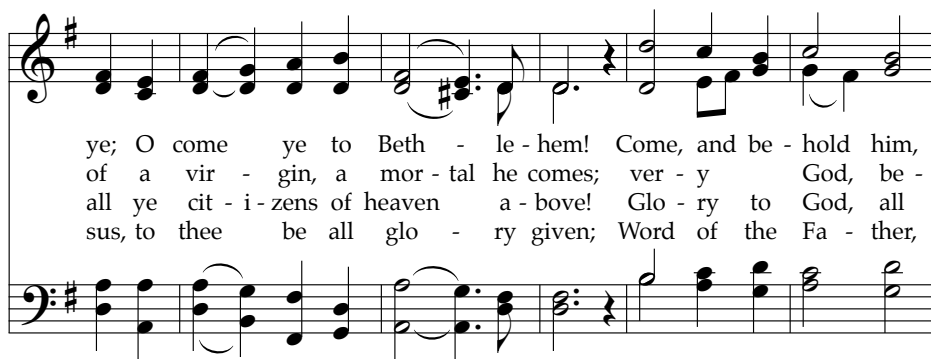
Christopher Martin, violin  
Megan Crawford, violin  
Leslie Van Becker, viola  
Jinn Shin, cello



## O, Come All Ye Faithful (verses 1, 3, 4)

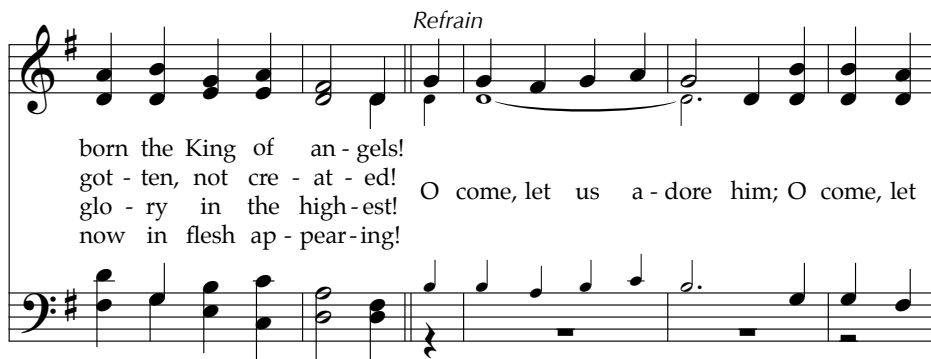


1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come  
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,  
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -



ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,  
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -  
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all  
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

*Refrain*



born the King of an - gels!  
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed!  
 glo - ry in the high - est! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let  
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!



us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!



# Joy to the World (verses 1, 2, 4)

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and  
 sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.  
 heaven and na - ture sing,





***We are an Open and Affirming Congregation***

*No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here.*

## **Park Church Christmas Offering 2024**

*The Christmas Offering takes place every December. You can make your donation by cash or check using the designated envelope in the bulletin or by using the QR code below. Please make checks out to "Park Church" and write "Christmas Offering" on the memo line.*

We are thrilled to name Undue Medical Debt (<http://unduemedicaldebt.org>) as our 2024 Christmas Offering recipient. Undue Medical Debt is the leading 501(c)3 non-profit working to eliminate the medical debt of neighbors in our country. They have worked closely with many congregations in the United Church of Christ.

For every \$1 donated, \$100 in medical debt will be erased. Our goal is \$15,000 so that we can eliminate \$1,500,000 in debt for our neighbors. We have asked Undue Medical Debt to allocate the money raised in our Christmas Offering to assist folks living with debt in West Michigan, prioritizing Kent, Ottawa, Ionia, and Muskegon Counties. The process is income-based. Undue Medical Debt uses data analytics to pinpoint the debts of those experiencing financial hardship. Relief cannot be requested, and recipients don't have to apply — they're simply notified of debt. Thank you for your generosity and care for our neighbors.

**December 25 - January 1:** The church office will be open intermittently with staff available limited hours to process correspondence and year end giving. Please call ahead if you are stopping by. Voicemail/email is monitored 24/7 with priority given to pastoral care concerns.

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 - 3:00

10 E Park Pl. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

616-459-3203

[office@parkchurchgr.org](mailto:office@parkchurchgr.org)

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

[www.facebook.com/parkchurchgr](https://www.facebook.com/parkchurchgr)

The wifi password is parkchurchguest.



Access the online donor portal for the 2024 Christmas Offering by using the camera on your phone and clicking the link that appears.