



**FIRST (PARK) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC**

**November 24, 2024 ~ Thanksgiving Sunday**



Order of Worship for November 24, 2024  
Thanksgiving Sunday

*Gathering, Centering, Announcements - 10:15am*

*Sanctuary Worship - 10:30am*

Gathering Music	Phyllis Ann Miner
Welcome and Announcements	Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle
Blessing of the Children and Youth	Peter Smith
The Invitation to Worship and the Ringing of the Chimes	The Carol Choir Cheryl Wells, director <i>Thanks to God</i>
Prelude	Steven B. Smith, organ <i>Thanks Be to Thee</i> G.F. Handel
+ Invocation	Reading in Unison Dave Kutsche, liturgist

One: Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

**All: Loving Creator, we asked for strength, and you gave us difficulties to make us strong.**

One: We asked for wisdom, and you gave us problems to solve.

**All: We asked for prosperity, and you gave us purpose and brains to use.**

One: We asked for courage, and you gave us struggles to overcome.

**All: We asked for patience, and you gave us situations where we were forced to wait.**

One: We asked for love, and you gave us troubled people to help.

**All: We asked for justice, and you called us to be just and to lead with integrity.**

One: Lord, we have received nothing that we asked for or wanted.

All: **And yet, we received everything that we needed. For this, we give thanks.  
We gather to show our gratitude in song and prayer.**

+ Hymn of Praise - No. 336

*We Gather Together*

Tune: KREMSER

Scripture Reading

Ephesians 4:25-32

Dave Kutsche, liturgist

So then, putting away falsehood, let each of you speak the truth with your neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Those who steal must give up stealing; rather, let them labor, doing good work with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. Let no evil talk come out of your mouths but only what is good for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

One: The Word of God for the People of God...

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

The Chancel Choir  
*A Jubilant Thanksgiving*

Arr. Patti Drennan

*Come, ye thankful people, come!  
Raise the song of harvest home.  
All is safely gathered in, e'er the winter storms begin.  
Come sing a song of joyful praise!*

(continued...)

*Come, ye thankful people, come!  
Raise the song of harvest home.  
God our maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied.  
Come give him thanks and praise his name!*

*“Be still and know that I am God, the author of creation.  
Be still and know that I am God, the ruler of all nations.”  
Then let the sea roar and all that fills it;  
Let the hills sing together for joy.  
Let the trumpets sound and clap your hands!  
Make a noise, make a joyful noise!*

*Come, ye thankful people, come!  
Raise the song of harvest home.  
Praise God from whom blessings flow, praise God creatures high and low.  
Come give him thanks and praise his name!*

*Congregation joins:*  
**Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices.  
Who wondrous things hath done, in whom the world rejoices.  
Who from our mother’s arms has blessed us our way  
With countless gifts of love and still is ours today.**

*Come give him thanks and praise his name!  
Sing joyful praise!*

Sermon

Rev. David VanOpstall  
Executive Director, 20 Liters

Meditation

Steven B. Smith, organ  
*Now Thank We All Our God*  
Charles Callahan

Prayers of the People and Our Savior's Prayer

Rev. Jan Thorsen

concluding, the congregation prays in unison:

**...Our Father/Mother/God, 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 debt-  
ors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine  
is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Prayer Response

The Chancel Choir  
*In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful*

*In the Lord I'll be ever thankful;  
in the Lord I will rejoice!  
Look to God; do not be afraid.  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.  
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.*

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Rev. Jan Thorsen

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir  
*For the Beauty of the Earth*  
John Rutter

*(For text, see hymn no. 14)*

+ Doxology

*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow*  
Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures high and low;  
Praise God in Jesus fully known:  
Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Amen.**

+ Prayer of Dedication

Reading in Unison

**Most gracious and generous God, receive these gifts. May they be symbols of your steadfast love for all of creation. Bless these gifts that they may be used to further Christ's ministry of mercy and justice, and bless those who give them, that they may be agents of your grace and peace. With great thanksgiving and humble gratitude for all that you have given to us, and with hope in your better tomorrow, we pray. Amen.**

(based on 2 Corinthians 9)

+ Hymn - No. 17

*Sing Praise to God, You Heavens!*  
Tune: WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN

+ Common Commission

Reading in Unison

**Let us now go forth into the world in peace; being of good courage; holding fast to that which is good; rendering to no one evil for evil; strengthening the faint hearted; supporting the weak; helping the afflicted; honoring all people; loving and serving the Lord and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Postlude

Steven B. Smith, organ  
*Postlude on "Now Thank We All Our God"*  
Charles Callahan

**Our preacher today is the Executive Director for 20 Liters, David VanOpstall.** Dave is a native of Grandville, Michigan, but has spent the last number of years residing in Holland. A graduate of Hope College and Western Seminary, he spent the last 17 years as the lead pastor at 2 churches. In years past, he has served with Young Life in the Dominican Republic and built houses in Tijuana, Mexico. His heart comes alive when helping people develop to their full potential. When not working, you might find him on a golf course or paddle boarding with his wife, Tracy. Together they own a dog daycare and have two amazing pups of their own.

***Thank you for joining us this morning!***

**We'd like to know that you were here**, answer any questions you have, and support you in prayer. Please fill out the information card and place it in the offering plate.

**Following Worship**

P.O.P. Table: Pick up Advent devotionals and @home kit

Coffee Fellowship in Merriam Hall

Park Church Women's Holiday Bazaar and Martenson Ten Pie Sale

Hanging of the Greens after worship

Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal after worship

**Pastor Darryl will be out of the office** for a planned vacation from Nov. 22 - Nov. 30. Please note: There is no Bible Study on November 27. Pastoral care remains readily available. Please contact the office at 616-459-3203 or office@parkchurchgr.org.

**The Thanksgiving Altar enhancements** were designed by Amy Virkstis and installed by members of Allinder Ten. Bruce Robey took the photographs. Thank you all for making our Thanksgiving worship space so lovely!

***The Sanctuary Flowers***

**The flowers at the Pulpit**

In memory of Carroll and Frances Streeter.

Given by Bill and Marcia Streeter.

**The flowers at the Lectern**

In honor of Emmett Robert Butler on his 111th birthday.

Given by his grandparents Jim and Marty Butler.

**The flowers on the Children's Altar**

In honor of Gideon Burke's 8th birthday.

Given by grandparents Donna and David Boersma.

If you would like to dedicate Sanctuary flowers, email Marcia Streeter. mabiti1@gmail.com

## ***Joys and Concerns***

### **From Dick Wooden**

Thank you for the cards and well wishes. They did me a world of good during my recuperation time. I am happy to be back in worship. Dick and Judy Wooden

**Keep Margaret Bilsky and her family in your prayers.** Margaret has been placed in hospice care at Porter Hills. Cards may be sent to her at 3600 E. Fulton SE, AC209, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

**Please pray for those navigating illness/treatment including:** Ron Bickel, Jane Hackbardt, Kurt Myers, Liz Taylor, and Mike VanDuinen.

**Remember our young people away at college including:** Luke Barnum, Laura DeBoer, Mallory Hagemann, Lily Kugler, Jack O'Malley, and Drew Wolford.

**Remember those serving in the military including:** Jesse Campbell, Devon Goetz, Andy MacGregor, and Matthew Quick.

## **Meditating on Lesser Known Advent Scriptures**

**December 1, 8, 15, and 22 at 9:30 in Thompson Chapel**

Rev. Tracey Taylor-Kunst will guide you through a variety of prayer and meditation practices in preparation for the season. This will be a time of entering less familiar Advent scriptures with both our left and right brains and trying out a variety of prayer/meditation practices.

This Advent season, Pastor Darryl is using the lectionary readings from the Gospel of Luke each week. In these pre-service Chapel meetings, Rev. Tracey Taylor-Kunst will facilitate readings of lesser known lectionary scriptures chosen for that Sunday, enriching your understanding of the season.

December 1: Psalm 25:1-10

December 8: Malachi 3:1-7

December 15: Ezra 1-6 / Zephaniah 3:14-20 (Worship Center style with Megan Cottrell)

December 22: Luke 1:39-55 Mary and Elizabeth



## **It's a Big Day Today!!!**

### ***Holiday Bazaar, Pie Sale, and Hanging of the Greens***

Visit the Park Church Bazaar today after the worship service in Merriam Hall. You can shop for pantry delights and hand crafted items. Martenson Ten is selling whole pies to take home and slices to eat while you enjoy coffee and fellowship. *Pastor Darryl and Patrick have donated their world famous homemade pies for live auction.* We'll throw in a good cup of coffee for free!

You are invited to join the youth group in transforming the Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. All you have to do is show up in the Sanctuary after worship! Many hands make light work and you will still have time to shop the bazaar and enjoy pie and coffee.

### ***Advent @ the P.O.P. Table***

Pick up your personal Advent Devotional each week starting TODAY! Read the selections throughout the week in preparation for each upcoming Advent service. You are invited to record a thought on the ornaments corresponding to each week. These ornaments will be arranged on trees in Thompson Chapel where you are encouraged to take a moment to reflect on the Advent season after worship. You may also pick up your "Advent at Home" candle kit. (One kit per family; While supplies last.)

All Creation Waits by Gayle Boss is available for \$5.00 on Nov. 24 & Dec. 1.

### **Candlelight Christmas: Shall I Rejoice?**

**Sunday, December 8 at 4:30**

Join us for the 107th Annual Candlelight Christmas at 4:30pm on Sunday, December 8. The service will feature *Magnificat* by Taylor Scott Davis, an up-and-coming young composer from Texas. Davis writes primarily sacred music, composing often for Voces8, one of the world's most popular vocal ensembles and veterans of our GAV concert series. All of the Park Church music ensembles joined by our string and brass musicians-in-residence participate. Pre-service music starts at 4:00pm. The public is warmly invited (there is no charge) and parking is free in our lot and on the surrounding streets while space is available. A cookie reception will follow.

**Palmer School Night of Giving 2024**  
**Thursday, December 12 at 3:30pm**

**Drop off your donations today in Martenson Parlor.**

Each Palmer student will receive a pre-packaged bag of non perishable food, and if possible some fresh food as well. Students will also receive new underwear & socks, school supplies, personal care items and more. More information and lists of what items are needed can be found in the Congregationalist and in Martenson Parlor. **Please contact Sara Haines if you can help. 616-560-4756 [sjbhaines@gmail.com](mailto:sjbhaines@gmail.com)**

**Santa Claus Girls Delivery Day**  
**Saturday, December 14**

**Be a driver** and deliver gift bags to the children's homes or **be a loader** and help fill up the delivery cars. **Be a loader** (adult must accompany those under 16 years old) and carry organized batches of gift bags to assigned vehicles. To volunteer, fill out the registration form at [www.santaclausgirls.org/volunteer](http://www.santaclausgirls.org/volunteer).

**Monetary donations are always welcome.** Santa Claus Girls is an entirely volunteer run organization. Donations enable the purchase of each years' gifts for the children and pay the occupancy expenses for the large warehouse and storage facilities necessary to operate efficiently and safely. [www.santaclausgirls.org/donate](http://www.santaclausgirls.org/donate).

***Serving With You Today***

Ushers: Bob Nichols, captain; Brian Bradley, Jim McGlothlin, Nancy McGlothlin,  
Diane Sherlock, Dick Sherlock

Parking Lot Greeter: Kevin Larr

Greeters: Eileen Larr, Karen Kelly

Carol Choir: Cheryl Wells

Chapel Choir: Heidi Hertel

Sound: Sam Johnson-Begay

Video: Kevin Arnett

Flower Care: Kathy Miller

## **Coming up at Park Church**

- Tues. Nov. 26** at 12:15pm Music at Midday:  
Karen Albert, mezzo-soprano; Robert Byrens, piano
- Wed. Nov. 27** at 7:00pm Bible Study Gospel of Matthew No Bible Study this week
- Thurs. Nov. 28** No Events - The office is closed for Thanksgiving
- Fri, Nov. 29** No Events - The office is closed for Thanksgiving
- Sun. Dec. 1** at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship - First Sunday of Advent  
Communion Sunday; Deacon's offering  
at 9:30 Carol Choir rehearsal in the Children's Worship Center  
at 9:30 Chapel Choir rehearsal in the 3rd floor youth choir room  
at 9:30 *Meditating on Lesser-Known Advent Scriptures* in Thompson Chapel  
Continental breakfast before worship/coffee fellowship after worship  
Advent: Fill in ornaments, buy books, pick up devotionals
- Tues. Dec. 3** at 12:15pm Music at Midday: Caledonia Choralaires  
at 6:30pm Board of Deacons meeting
- Wed. Dec. 4** at 7:00pm Bible Study Gospel of Matthew (Zoom link available)
- Thurs. Dec. 5** at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group  
at 6:15pm Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal  
at 6:15pm Parkmeisters rehearsal  
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sat. Dec. 7** at 8:00am Music Department rehearsals Candlelight
- Sun. Dec. 8** at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship - Second Sunday of Advent  
at 9:30 Carol Choir rehearsal in the Children's Worship Center  
at 9:30 Chapel Choir rehearsal in the 3rd floor youth choir room  
at 9:30 *Meditating on Lesser-Known Advent Scriptures* in Thompson Chapel  
Continental breakfast before worship/coffee fellowship after worship  
Confirmation Calls meets after worship  
Advent: Pick up devotionals and Fill in ornaments  
at 4:30pm Candlelight Christmas Service: *Shall I Rejoice?*

Degage Volunteer  
sign up





*We are an Open and Affirming Congregation*

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

Candlelight Christmas Service: Sunday, December 8 at 4:30pm

Santa Claus Girls Delivery Day, December 14 at 7:30am

Christmas Eve Early Service: Tuesday, December 24 at 4:30pm

Christmas Eve Festival Service: Tuesday, December 24 at 9:00pm

***Ministerial and Office Staff:***

Rev. Darryl Kistler, Senior Minister

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

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Phyllis Ann Miner, Events Coordinator

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

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

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

616-459-3203



Access the online donor and payment portal by using the camera on your phone and clicking the link that appears.

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

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The wifi password is parkchurchguest.