

FIRST (PARK) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

February 16, 2025



Order of Worship for February 16, 2025

Gathering, Centering, Announcements - 10:15am

Sanctuary Worship - 10:30am

Gathering Music

Cheryl Wells, flute
Phyllis Ann Miner, harp
Let All Things Now Living
Fairest Lord Jesus with Jesus Loves Me
arr. Joyce Weaver

Welcome

Pastor Darryl

The Moment for the Young & Young-at-Heart

Invitation to Worship

Reading Responsively
Rev. Tracey Taylor-Kunst, liturgist

One: Jesus declared, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."

All: May we learn to depend on God's abundant provision instead of the world's grasping for wealth as we worship today.

One: Jesus declared, "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled."

All: May we learn to follow Christ's call to provide for the hungry as co-creators of God's kingdom as we worship today.

One: Jesus declared, "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh."

All: May we learn to pay attention to those who suffer and mourn and to extend God's comfort and hope to those who need it as we worship today.

One: Jesus declared, "Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man."

All: May our worship teach us to rejoice in that day and every day as we live out the good news in our families, neighborhoods, community, and world!

Ringling of the Chimes and Prelude

Phyllis Ann Miner, harp
Jesus Loves Me
arr. Barbara Fackler

+ Invocation

Reading Responsively

One: Compassionate God,

we recognize that our world is a broken place, hurt by poverty, famine, and disease. We admit that sometimes we make the world a broken place, tolerating prejudice, conflict, and self-interest. We confess that our hearts also suffer with anger, resentment, and jealousy.

All: Renew us in Your love, O God, and heal us with the comfort of Your abundant love. Awaken us to the role we can play in healing Your creation. Strengthen us through the power of the Holy Spirit to hear Your word and move forward in faith. Amen.

+ Hymn of Praise - No. 4

Holy God, We Praise Your Name
Tune: GROSSER GOTT, WIR LOBEN DICH

Scripture Reading

Luke 6:17-26
Rev. Tracey Taylor-Kunst, liturgist

He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them. Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.
Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

(continued)

Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.

Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

Anthem

Evan Snyder, tenor
Jason Coffey, baritone
Be Thou My Vision
Arr. Hal Hopson

(For text, see hymn 450.)

Sermon: *With Them*

Pastor Darryl

Meditation

Phyllis Ann Miner, harp
Shadowed Peace
Phyllis Ann Miner

Prayers of the People

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 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.

Prayer Response

The Chancel Choir

Be Still, My Soul

Tune: FINLANDIA

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side.
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain.
Leave to thy God to order and provide,
who through all changes faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: thy best, thy heavenly Friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Anthem

The Chancel Choir

There Is a Balm in Gilead

Spiritual, Arr. William Dawson

Refrain:

*There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.*

*Sometimes I feel discouraged and think my work's in vain,
But then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again.*

*If you cannot sing like angels,, if you cannot preach like Paul
You can tell the love of Jesus, who died to save us all.*

+ 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
(Inspired by Luke 6:17-26)

Gracious God, who blesses us in our brokenness and rejoices with us in our joy, we bring these gifts as an offering of hope and love. May they be used to heal the hurting, feed the hungry, and welcome the weary. Help us to be a community that reflects your kingdom, where all find acceptance and grace. In Jesus' name, we pray.

+ Hymn - No. 757

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples
Tune: KINGSFOLD

+ 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

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ
Laudation
Gilbert M. Martin

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

Coffee Fellowship in Spindler Dining Room
ParkPrize 2025 in Merriam Hall after worship

Joys and Concerns

Chris Krive's mother, Susan Stone, passed away last week in Muskegon at the age of 80. Services have take place. Share your condolences with Chris at 523 Cummings NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534.

Carrie Corbin is managing some health concerns. Send her good wishes during this stressful time. 2510 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Apt. #F102, Grand Rapids, MI 49504.

Steve Smith, our principal organist, will be away from the organ bench for a time while he is recovering at home from knee replacement surgery. Please send Steve (and Eric too!) cheerful support and best wishes for a speedy and uneventful recovery. 857 Chancel Circle. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.

Sue Winer's father Mike VanDuinen passed away in January. Services have taken place. Please share your condolences with Sue and Greg at 2134 Innwood SE, Kentwood, MI 49508.

Please pray for those navigating illness/treatment including: Ron Bickel, Margaret Bilsky, Kurt Myers, Judy Strock, and Liz Taylor.

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.

Pastoral care is always available. Contact Pastor Darryl at dkistler@parkchurchgr.org.

The Sanctuary Flowers

The flowers on the Altar

In loving memory of Stuart Kutsche, Sr., son Ben Kutsche,
and grandson Matthew Kutsche.
Given by Ruth Kutsche.

The flowers at the Pulpit

In loving memory of Frances Streeter.
Given by Bill and Marcia Streeter.

The flowers on the Children's Altar

In honor of all the children.
Given by Kathy Miller.

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

ParkPrize 2025: A showcase of creative expression!

February 16-23 in Merriam Hall

ParkPrize 2025 is here! Our Merriam Hall art gallery features over 25 works of art by the very talented Park Church artists. From taxidermy to needlepoint, origami to painted Emu eggs, airplane models to music scores, Park People ages 9-90 have contributed their work for display. Visit ParkPrize 2025 after worship this week and next to enjoy the artistic talent of your church friends and neighbors. *(As tempting as it may be, we respectfully ask you not to touch the art.)*

Why Christianity Must Change or Die Book Study

Sundays, February 23 and March 2 at 9:00am

You are all invited to a 4-week book study on *Why Christianity Must Change or Die* by John Shelby Spong led by Rev. Dick Sherlock. The group will meet in-person on Sunday mornings in Martenson Parlor. Grab your breakfast and join us! You'll be finished with plenty of time to head upstairs for the worship service. While the discussion is now underway, you are welcome to join in at any point.

The Burning of the Palms Sunday, March 2 at 4:00pm

Have you ever wondered where the ashes for Ash Wednesday come from? Every year, after the Palm Sunday service, the palms are collected and dried. The Sunday before Ash Wednesday (March 2 this year) we each take a dried palm and burn it. The burnt palms are ground into the ashes that are put upon our foreheads in the shape of a cross on Ash Wednesday. This is a very tangible experience for all ages.

Here at Park, we go to the Paul and Beth Kelly's scenic back yard and gather around the fire pit. Darryl leads us in short explanation and liturgy. Then we each take our palm and burn it. Dave Kutsche, along with help from the kids, stirs the burnt palms until they are ash then we enjoy roasting hotdogs and fellowshiping with each other. This is a perfect "pre-lent" activity that adds meaning to lent....and is fun!

Everyone is invited to the Burning of the Palms on March 2 at 4:00pm at the home of Paul and Beth Kelly (6669 Egypt Valley Road, Rockford MI 49341). The activities take place out of doors, so dress for the weather and plan to stay about an hour.

The 2025 Stillspeaking Lent Devotional Available at the P.O.P. Table starting March 2.

Our 2025 Lent Devotional invites reflection on God's mysterious depths. As the introduction states, "God inhabits the depths of life, love, loss, ecstasy, and pain, God dwells in the profundities of prayer, in sighs too deep for words. God loves the deep." What courage, what faith, what reckoning, what wonder might find us as we go deep into God's depths this Lent? Pick up your copy at the P.O.P. Table starting March 2.

From the Park Church Women

Thank you to everyone who bought Super Bowl Soup last week. You all contributed \$358.00 to the Park Church Women and it only took you 20 minutes to do it! Thanks again, and see you next year.

In a sure sign that winter cannot last forever, the Park Church Women invite you to support the annual Spring Thank Offering. Your donations (of whatever amount you see fit) can be delivered by hand or post to your Ten leader or to the church office. Please make your check out to Park Church Women and mark your envelope to the attention of Marcia Hammontree. The collection wraps up in a few weeks.

Park's Justice in Action committee is encouraging Park members and friends to read and comment on the City of Grand Rapids Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). The CAAP will act as a roadmap for how the community of Grand Rapids will reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and prepare for the impacts of climate change on its residents, environment, and infrastructure. The CAAP is being co-created in partnership with community stakeholders to meet community-wide science-based targets. Members of Park have been involved in the process of creating the Plan. The CAAP targets are:

1. 62.8% per capita GHG reduction community-wide by 2030 from 2019 emissions
2. 100% per capita GHG reduction by 2050 from 2019 emissions

You have until tomorrow to go on the Grand Rapids city website www.grandrapidsmi.gov/caap to make comments on the plan.

Music at Midday: A Free Concert Series in the City **Concerts (12:15pm - 12:45pm) are free to all.**

March 11 – Dr. Larry Visser and Rob Hobgood, Organ and Piano

March 18 – Castalia Quartet

March 25 – Grand Rapids Christian High School Chamber Chorale and Bella Voce

April 1 – Jason Coffey, Baritone, and Phyllis Ann Miner, Piano

April 8 – Diane Penning, Soprano, and Robert Byrens, Piano

April 15 – Easter Break (No Concert)

April 22 – Eric Strand, Organ

April 29 – Bruce Robey and Friends

May 6 – Mary Rademacher



The Degage sign-up sheet has been updated through 2025.
Click the QR code to sign up.

Coming up at Park Church

- Mon. Feb. 17 The office is closed for President's Day
 at 9:00am Cooking for Degage at Park
- Wed. Feb. 19 at 7:00pm Bible Study (in-person with zoom option)
- Thurs. Feb. 20 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
 at 6:15pm Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal
 at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sun. Feb. 23 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship
 at 9:15 Book Study: *Why Christianity Must Change or Die*. Martenson Parlor
 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
 Continental breakfast before worship/coffee fellowship after worship
 ParkPrize 2025 continues in Merriam Hall
- Wed. Feb 26 at 12:00pm Bible Study (Note updated time for this class only)
 at 4:30 Mobile Food Pantry
- Thurs. Feb 27 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
 at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sun. March 2 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship - Communion Sunday
 Special musical guests: The River Rogues
 at 9:00 Book Study: *Why Christianity Must Change or Die*. Martenson Parlor
 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
 Continental breakfast before worship/coffee fellowship after worship
 P.O.P. Table: Pick up your Lenten Devotional and find out more about the
 Behavioral Health services available from Cherry Health.
 at 4:00pm The Burning of the Palms at the Paul and Beth Kelly home

Save the Dates

- Ash Wednesday Service, Wednesday, March 5 at 7:00pm
- Lenten Wednesday night programs, March 12, 19, 26, April 2, and 9 from 6:00-8:00pm
- University of Michigan Men's Glee Club in Concert, Sunday, April 5 at 7:00pm
- Maunder Thursday Service, Thursday, April 17 at 7:00pm
- Good Friday Community Service at Park Church, Friday, April 18 at 12:00 noon.
- Easter Sunday Service, Sunday, April 20 at 10:30am



We are an Open and Affirming Congregation

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

Serving With You Today

Ushers: John Miller, captain; Jim Butler, Cindy Dexter, Kathy Miller, Susan Sochanek,
Harlan Wilson

Greeters: Paul Kelly, Beth Kelly

Parking Lot Greeter: Chris Camfferman

Sound: Sam Johnson-Begay

Video: Andrew DeBoer

Carol Choir: Cheryl Wells

Chapel Choir: Heidi Hertel

Flower Care: Diane LaWarre

Ministerial and Office Staff:

Rev. Darryl Kistler, Senior Minister

Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle, Minister of Music

Peter Smith, Spiritual Formation & Education Minister

Terrie Hunter, Congregational Life Coordinator

Gene Gess, Finance Director

Camille DeBoer, Communications Coordinator

Tim Persenaire, Lead Custodian

Marty Butler, Parish Life Assistant

Judi Stroh, Events Coordinator

dkistler@parkchurchgr.org

pcoyle@parkchurchgr.org

psmith@parkchurchgr.org

thunter@parkchurchgr.org

ggess@parkchurchgr.org

cdeboer@parkchurchgr.org

tpersenaire@parkchurchgr.org

mbutler@parkchurchgr.org

jstroh@parkchurchgr.org

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

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

616-459-3203

office@parkchurchgr.org

www.parkchurchgr.org

www.facebook.com/parkchurchgr

The wifi password is parkchurchguest.



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