

FIRST (PARK) CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

February 23, 2025



Order of Worship for February 23, 2025

Gathering, Centering, Announcements - 10:15am

Sanctuary Worship - 10:30am

Gathering Music

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ

Welcome

Pastor Darryl

The Moment for the Young & Young-at-Heart

Children are dismissed for Worship Center.

Visitors, you are welcome to go with your children to see their classrooms and to meet their teachers.

Then come back and join us for worship!

Invitation to Worship

Reading Responsively
Gary VanderHeiden, liturgist

One: Come, Beloved, and release your frenzied fear.

All: We come, trusting the enduring promises of the Holy One.

One: Let our humility rise in us to strengthen our souls.

All: May our promised inheritance of love shine brightly all around.

One: May it strengthen us in our waiting and our working.

All: May all that is evil wither, and all that is good grow to fullness.

One: May the grace of God rest on us all as we gather and worship today.

(Based on Psalm 37)

Ringling of the Chimes

*The Chimes give us an opportunity to center ourselves as we
prepare our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to receive the message God has for us.*

Prelude

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ
Arabesque for Flutes
Lani Smith

+ Invocation

Reading Responsively

One: I was overjoyed when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!”

All: **In faith, we gather to worship you, O God.**

This is where you teach us your ways, that we may walk in your paths.

This where we hear and act upon your Word of mercy and justice;

so that instruments of violence are transformed into tools of lifesaving

creativity; and nation shall not lift up arms against nation, neither shall they

learn war any more. As we hear and trust, surely we shall walk in the light

of the Lord! Amen.

(Based on Psalm 122 and Isaiah 2)

+ Hymn of Praise - No. 10

Sing Glory to the Name of God
Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Introduction of the Scripture

Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel

Scripture Reading

Psalm 121
Gary VanderHeiden, liturgist

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.

Solo

Kiara Gleckler, alto
Somebody's Knockin' at Your Door
arr. Moses Hogan

*Refrain: Somebody's knockin' at your door.
Oh, sinner, why don't you answer?
Somebody's knockin' at your door.*

*Can't you hear him...
Sounds like Jesus...
Jesus calls you...*

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel

Meditation

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ
In This Holy Hour
Hugh Livingston Jr.

Prayers of the People

Pastor Darryl

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
Praise God for this Holy Ground
Tune: HEYMONYSTRAAT

*Praise God for this holy ground,
place and people, sight and sound.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
God's goodness is eternal.*

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Anthem

The Chancel Choir
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
arr. Dan Forrest

(For text, see hymn 35.)

+ 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

Generous God, thank you for pressing Your holy love into the lap of our lives. Bless these gifts we bring that they may be multiplied into a good larger than we can imagine, and empower our ministry done in Christ's name. Bless us, also, that we might live our lives in gratitude, sharing freely without expectation of return. Through this way of Jesus, stretch our hearts, minds, and lives into channels of Your Holy grace and peace. Amen.

+ Hymn - No. 612

We Praise You, O God
Tune: KREMSER

+ 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
Sinfonia from "Solomon"
G.F. Handel

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

We warmly welcome Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel to our Park Pulpit this morning.

Rev. Daniel is a preacher, teacher and writer who serves as the Michigan Conference Minister of the United Church of Christ in East Lansing. A graduate of Yale Divinity School, she has served at several urban congregations across the country, working to build vibrant community. Most recently, Daniel was the Senior Pastor for a historic urban church in Dubuque, Iowa.

Passionate about faith formation for both clergy and laity, Lillian Daniel currently teaches UCC History and Polity at Chicago Theological Seminary where she is also on the Board of Trustees. She has taught preaching at a number of schools, including Chicago Theological Seminary, University of Chicago, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary and Yale Divinity School. We are glad she is here today!

**ParkPrize 2025: A showcase of creative expression!
Today in Merriam Hall**

ParkPrize 2025 has been a smashing success! Visit Merriam Hall one more time after worship this week and enjoy the artistic talent of your church friends and neighbors. We promise you will be surprised and amazed by what you see. Thank you to all these talented folk who were kind enough to put their pieces on display:

Gabe Pene, Bruce Robey, Lori Henry Hutchings, Peter Smith, Linda Dannison, Judy Wooden, Andrew DeBoer, Camille DeBoer, Jason King, Jack Boss, Alice Vis, Tammie Pontsler, Pam Nichols, Ellie Pettee, Mary Lee Wilkinson, Doris Robey, Mike Mitchell, Peggy Slattery, Paula Ellison, Ruth McCarty, Wayne Edwards, Linda Larsen, Carol Gess, Dave Wells, Roger LaWarre, Cheri Stanard, Kat Kolehouse, Kevin Rubingh, Mark Kelly, Dan Pettee, Mary Raab, Sarah Persenaire, Michael Gunne, Kurt Myers

Joys and Concerns

Please keep Bob and Pam Nichols in your prayers as Bob deals with health issues. Share your encouragement with them at 1509 Alexander SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Grace McClary, one of our Park Church Choral Scholars, is in the ICU at Blodgett Hospital in treatment for flu and double pneumonia. Grace's husband Kevin requests your prayers. Cards may be sent to 5883 Freeton Dr SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49548.

Please pray for those navigating illness/treatment including: Ron Bickel, Margaret Bilsky, Kurt Myers, Steve Smith, 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 memory of deceased members of Martenson Ten.

The flowers at the Pulpit

In memory of Ann VandenBerg.

Given by her husband, Tom VandenBerg
and by Mark, Jennifer, Mallory and Avery Hagemann.

The flowers at the Lectern

In memory of the anniversary of Toddy Johnston's birth on February 26, 1927.

Given by her family.

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

Martenson Parlor has a Spirit of A2A (Accessible to All)

This past month, members of our A2A Team met with a representative of the Disability Advocates of Kent County (DAKC – <http://dakc.us>). This is part of the A2A Team’s desire to build connections with community partners with expertise around accessibility. We found DAKC to be a wonderful resource to lean on and learn from.

We held our meeting with the DAKC representative in Martenson Parlor, the room with the couches off the main hallway across from Spindler Dining Room. After an informative talk, we made plans for future collaborations with DAKC. The representative mentioned that the Parlor was a fantastic example of the spirit of accessibility Park Church already possesses. “Harness the spirit of this room for your building at large,” she said, “and you’ll definitely make your church more accessible to all.”

Here are a few reasons why the Parlor has a Spirit of A2A:

- The Parlor has two entrances, and both doorways are wide enough for a wheel chair or walker to enter easily and freely without any obstacles to navigate.
- The Parlor is stair-free.
- The carpet in the Parlor is in good repair.
- One doorway is accessed using a ramp with a hand railed gentle incline.
- The Parlor is adequately lit by numerous lights: table lamps, floor lamps, overhead chandeliers. The light bulbs are soft, adjustable, and situated evenly throughout the space.
- The Parlor has different seating options for people to choose the best option for their own needs: couches, chairs with armrests, lower seats, higher seats, firm, soft, etc. These seats can be arranged in a variety of ways to make for easier accessibility.

We encourage you to pop into the Parlor and look for these signs of our A2A Spirit and join us on May 4, 2025, at our Annual Meeting. The membership of Park Church will be asked to consider an A2A Covenant that would infuse all aspects of our ministry with a Spirit of A2A. Isn’t it inspiring that Park Church can look to our Parlor as an example of what a Spirit of A2A can look like?

Submitted by Cheri Stanard, Mindy Peterson, and Pastor Darryl

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. While we encourage mittens, you'll hardly need any when you wrap your hands around a piping hot bowl of Paul Kelly's world famous chili...a vegetarian option is available. 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. If you would like yours mailed to you, please let Terrie know. thunter@parkchurchgr.org

Wednesday, March 5: Ash Wednesday **7:00pm in Thompson Chapel**

*From dust you have come, and to dust you shall return ... BUT
... God's steadfast love endures forever.*

Join us in Thompson Chapel at 7:00pm on March 5 for a contemplative Ash Wednesday service. The service will include the Sacrament of Communion and the Imposition of Ashes with music provided by The Choral Scholars and the String Quartet-in-Residence.

From the Park Church Women

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.

March Madness

Sunday, March 16 after worship

Enjoy “walking tacos” as you draw names for your team. This year we will be watching the men’s AND women’s brackets!!! Thank you Brian Bradley!

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 bulletin cover image is an albumen silver print from glass negative taken by Carleton E. Watkins (American, 1829–1916) in Yosemite Valley in 1878.

(Courtesy Open Access at the MET)



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

Coming up at Park Church

- 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
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
- Tues. March 4 at 6:30pm Board of Deacons meeting
- Wed. March 5 at 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service in Thompson Chapel
- Thurs. March 6 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
at 6:30pm Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal
at 6:30pm Parkmasters rehearsal
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sun. March 9 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship - First Sunday of Lent; Communion Sunday
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: Cherry Health information and Almsgiving
- Tues. March 11 at 12:15pm Music at Midday: Larry Visser, organ; Rob Hobgood, piano
at 7:00pm Board of Trustees meeting

Save the Dates - more information to come:

- 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
Maundy 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: Bob Nichols, captain; Brian Bradley, Diane LaWarre, Roger LaWarre,
Diane Sherlock, Dick Sherlock.

Greeters: Mike and Gyl Hondorp

Parking Lot Greeter: Andrew DeBoer

Sound: Sam Johnson-Begay

Video: Kevin Arnett

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

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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.