

April 27, 2025

Doubt is not
the opposite
of faith;



it is an
element of
faith.

Paul Tillich

Welcome all to First (Park) Congregational Church!

We pray this worship service will be a blessing unto you. While at Park Church if you need directions to the restrooms, classrooms, fellowship spaces, or you need any help at all, please speak to a greeter or usher and we will do our best to assist you. The Sanctuary and Merriam Hall are equipped with the Loop System and other hearing-assist devices are available from an usher.

Thank you to the wonderful staff and volunteers who made today's service possible. We are grateful for all the ways you serve. And we lift a prayer of thanksgiving to God for you all!

Our Congregational Commitments:

Vision Statement

...to build a community of relentless compassion and courageous hope, where all are seen and known, and the God of extravagant Love is revealed.

Inclusion Statement

Park Church is a community of faith that welcomes and values all people regardless of beliefs or doubts, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical, mental, or emotional ability, or economic status. Park Church is a place where all are included and equal.

Safe Church Statement

Park Church is a designated Safe Church of the United Church of Christ. Park Church is committed to create a safe environment for all members, attendees, and visitors, especially children and youth, and to address any concerns about abuse, harassment or misconduct.

The wifi password is parkchurchguest

Order of Worship for April 27, 2025

Gathering, Centering, Announcements - 10:15am

Sanctuary Worship - 10:30am

Gathering Music

Steven B. Smith, piano

Welcome

Rev. Darryl Kistler

The Moment for the Young & Young-at-Heart

Peter Smith

Children are dismissed for Worship Center and Youth for Youth Group.

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

Katie Bradley, liturgist

One: We are people of the twenty-first century, far removed from the upper room.

All: **“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”**

One: We have put away the festive trumpets, the fancy clothes, the chocolate bunnies of Easter Sunday. Must the message of Easter be put away for another year?

All: **“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”**

One: We still seek the One who offers victory over death, whose love conquers evil.

All: **“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”**

One: As we gather to worship this day far removed from the upper room, may the risen Christ be present and offer us the gift of resurrected life.

All: **“Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”**

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

Steven B. Smith, organ

Now the Green Blade Riseth

Michael Burkhardt

+ Invocation

Reading in Unison

We are your Easter people, O Holy God.

Doubters, deniers, saints, sinners, questioners, believers, spiritual and religious, who skip, run, walk, stop, double-back, hasten forward, stumble and fall on the journey. We pray that wherever and whoever we are on this journey, that you will open our lives to your call, to be Your love. In the name of Christ we pray, Amen.

+ Hymn of Praise - No. 233

The Day of Resurrection!

Tune: LANCASHIRE

+ Prayer of Transformation and Grace

Reading Responsively

All: Wondrous God, we confess that at times our doubts and fears override our hope and faith. Forgive us when we lose sight of the joy of Your love and instead fall into despair and gloom. Lift our spirits, Lord, and help us to remember the promise of new life here and now, not just the hope of resurrection for the future. Forgive us, restore us and renew us. In the name of our risen Savior, Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

One: Friends, hear this Good News:

The tomb is empty. The stone is rolled away. God continues to renew us and restore us. We are forgiven, loved and restored, receiving the gift and promise of new life and resurrection now. Go and share the wondrous news of God's love in Jesus the Christ.

All: Amen.

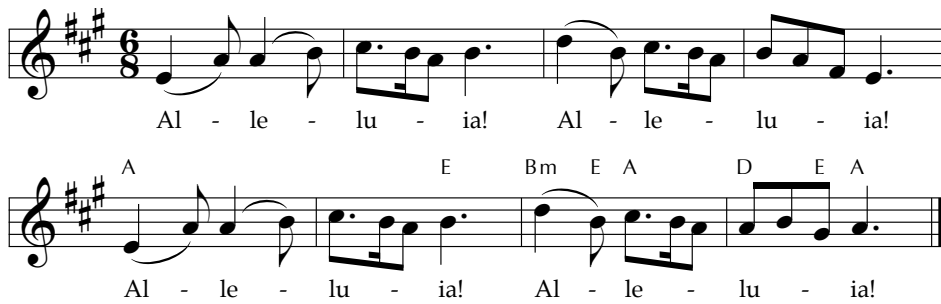
+ Response

1st time: choir, 2nd time: Congregation

Alleluia

Tune: CELTIC ALLELUIA

(Music continued ...)



Scripture Reading

John 20:19-29
Katie Bradley, liturgist

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

One: The Word of God for the People of God.
All: Thanks be to God.

*Last night I lay a-sleeping, there came a dream so fair.
I stood in old Jerusalem beside the temple there.
I heard the children singing and ever as they sang,
Methought the voice of angels from heaven in answer rang.*

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Lift up your gates and sing
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna to your King!

*And then methought my dream was changed;
The streets no longer rang.
Hushed were the glad Hosannas the little children sang.
The sun grew dark with mystery, the morn was cold and chill,
As the shadow of a cross arose upon a lonely hill.*

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Hark! How the angels sing:
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna to your King!

*And once again the scene was changed,
New earth there seemed to be.
I saw the Holy City beside the tideless sea.
The light of God was on its streets, the gates were open wide.
And all who would might enter and no one was denied
No need of moon or stars by night or sun to shine by day.
It was the new Jerusalem that would not pass away.*

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Sing for the night is o'er!
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna forevermore!

Meditation

Steven B. Smith, organ
I Know that My Redeemer Lives
Charles Callahan

Prayers of the People and Our Savior's Prayer

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.**

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir
Christ the Lord is Risen Again
Philip W.J. Stopford

*Christ the Lord is risen again, Christ hath broken every chain.
Hark, angelic voices cry, singing evermore on high:
Alleluia, Alleluia!*

*He who gave for us his life, who for us endured the strife,
Is our Paschal Lamb today; we too sing for joy and say:
Alleluia!*

*He who bore all pain and loss, comfortless upon the cross,
Lives in glory now on high, pleads for us, and hears our cry.
He who slumbered in the grave is exalted now to save;
Now through Christendom it rings that the Lamb is King of Kings.
Alleluia!*

*Thou, our Paschal Lamb indeed, Christ, thy ransomed people feed;
Take our sins and guilt away: let us sing by night and day:
Alleluia!*

+ 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

**Holy God, we dedicate ourselves and our offerings.
In the presence of fear, may these gifts bring hope.
Where doors are locked, may these offerings open new possibilities.
Where there are wounds, may these gifts honor their truth.
In the presence of despair, may these offerings bear witness to Your
new world rising. Amen.**

+ Hymn - No. 247

Now the Green Blade Riseth

Tune: NOËL NOUVELET

+ 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 af-
flicted; honoring all people; loving and serving the Lord and rejoicing in
the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Postlude

Steven B. Smith, organ
Mfurahini Haleluya ("Easter Joy")
Phil Lehenbauer

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

Before, During and After Worship: Blood Drive

Carnation Callers Meeting after worship in the Parlor

Bylaws Informational Meeting in the Sanctuary

Joys and Concerns

The memorial service for Dr. Judith Meyer will be held on Monday, April 28 at 11:30am at Park Church with Rev. Darryl Kistler presiding. The visitation is at 10:30 and a luncheon will follow the service. Condolences may be sent to the family in care of her niece, Nancy Rhodes, 3961 Hancock Forest Trail, Annandale, VA 22003.

Dee Casanova will be having wrist surgery soon. Send prayers and cards for healing...and patience as this is a long process to Dee and Humberto at 5261 Marindy St. SE Caledonia, MI 49316.

Annie Hager suffered a fall recently. She is convalescing at home following surgery for a broken hip. Send your good cheer and encouragement to her at 2510 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Apt. 315, Grand Rapids, MI 49504.

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

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 at the Pulpit

In celebration of our great Mother Earth and Earth Day.
Given by Nancy and Jim Beaver.

The flowers on the Children's Altar

In honor of our grandson's, Owen, 19th birthday.
Given by John and Kathy Miller.

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

The Season of Eastertide starts on the day of Easter and goes to the day of Pentecost. This year, it is from April 20 – June 8 (Day of Pentecost) If you are a numbers person, Eastertide is always 50 days. Note: there is no subtracting Sundays like Lent. We have special opportunities throughout the season. See the Congregationalist for more!

Worship Service Livestreaming

Our services are now live-streamed on YouTube. (You can find our channel using the QR code.) Click on the worship service livestream link at the top of the page anytime during the broadcast. You do not need permission to join and there is no additional software. If you have any issues, please email office@parkchurchgr.org. Technology help is available, though somewhat limited on Sunday morning. We will certainly do what we can.



Do You Have a Graduate?

Graduation Sunday is June 1 and we would like to recognize your graduate! Please let us know if you or someone you love is graduating from high school or completing post secondary education or certification programs. We would like to know your graduate's name, school or institution and, if applicable, field of study and degree. Send an email to office@parkchurchgr.org.

The Season of Eastertide @ Park Church

Silent Reading Group

Ongoing beginning April 27

Sundays from 9:00-10:00am

Have you heard of the “silent reading club”? Perfect for all types of readers and thinkers, this is your opportunity to read alone together! You will have a disciplined time to quietly center, read and reflect without pressure to discuss or expectation. You are welcome to read whatever you would like but we suggest you consider reading *The Tears of Things, A Prophetic Wisdom for the Age of Outrage* by Richard Rohr.

You can pace your own reading supported by a reader’s guide. Pastor Darryl will join the group on May 18 for conversation. The book is available from bookstores for about \$25.00. Library stock is limited. If you have trouble obtaining a copy, see Terrie.

We will be continuing the “Silent Reading Group” on Sunday mornings through the summer and Darryl will join us once a month for conversation.

Pentecost is June 8, 2025

The Day of Pentecost is full of excitement, movement, and celebration. This “birthday of the Church Universal” is celebrated with flames, speaking in tongues, and wind. On June 8, we will be celebrated with all of it! This is the service in which we bless our youth on their way to their summer mission experience. Additionally, Erik Keener, the executive director of United Church Outreach Ministries (UCOM), will give us an update during the worship service on the unique challenges and opportunities UCOM is facing right now. You can drop off your cake kits for UCOM clients and enjoy some birthday cake with your coffee in Merriam Hall after worship. The Sanctuary will reflect the season and everyone is asked to wear RED!

We are collecting cake kits for UCOM that you assemble at home. Everyone has special occasions to celebrate but sometimes the ingredients are not readily available or fit a family’s budget. We would like to provide the UCOM clients with simple festive cake kits including all of the ingredients necessary for a delicious celebratory cake. Your kits should include: cake pan with lid, box of cake mix, can of soda, can of frosting. Examples can be found in the Congregationalist and at the P.O.P. Table in the coming weeks.

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the Congregation of First (Park) Congregational Church, United Church of Christ will take place on Sunday, May 4, 2025, immediately following worship in Merriam Hall.

The Congregation will elect officers and members of the Boards of Trustees and Deacons, receive the annual report, vote on Articles of Association, Spiritual Foundations, and a revision to the Park Church Bylaws, and consider for congregational affirmation the Accessible to All Statement.

Printed versions of all documents and reports will be available in the Narthex of the sanctuary starting on April 27. Digital versions can be found in the Congregationalist and the website.

Childcare is available. Lunch with gluten free / vegan options will be provided. If you are considering membership, visiting, or just curious, coming to an Annual Meeting is great way learn more about all aspects of the ministry and mission of Park Church. You are welcome to attend. Note: church membership is a requirement to vote.

Would you like to hear more about the proposed revised Bylaws, Articles of Association, and Spiritual Foundations? You may attend one of the following informational sessions with members of the Bylaws Committee, Trustees, and Pastor Darryl. Each session will be about an hour. (Email office@parkchurchgr.org for the zoom link.)

Sunday, April 27, following worship in the Sanctuary (in-person only)

Tuesday, April 29, 7:00pm in Spindler Dining Room (zoom available)

Wednesday, April 30, 12:00pm in Spindler Dining Room (zoom available)

Thursday, May 1, 5:30pm in Spindler Dining Room (zoom available)

Pastor Led Bible Study

Wednesdays, April 23-May 14 at 7:00pm

Join Pastor Darryl and your Park Church friends for a four-week study on the Prophecy of Isaiah. We will be exploring the themes of Isaiah's prophecy, why it was so influential to Jesus' ministry and the establishment of the early church, and what good word it has for us today. You can join the Bible study in person or on zoom. Please read Isaiah Chapters 9-12 and 24-27 in preparation for this week's class.

Days for Girls Kit Creation Days

Thursday, May 8 at 5:30pm

Our beloved leader, Christina Pittman, will no longer be heading the Days for Girls chapter that Park Church is involved with. This means that May 8 will be our last meeting. Although this is very sad, we would like to celebrate the mission of Days for Girls, and the energy Christina brought to it. So, if you had ever come to a meeting, please come on May 8 and wish her well and help us finish as many projects as we can.

Volunteer Opportunity: Summer 2025 Grounds Crew

It's time to recruit our Grounds Crew for the season! We need willing hands to help with deadheading, weeding and litter pick up. You don't need to be a master gardener and all ages are welcome to help! Volunteers sign up for 2 week shifts and agree to stop by once a week to take care of the grounds, so grab your work gloves and a trash bag or two and come help Park Church look her best! Sign up online by clicking the QR code or contact Kelly Jasperse at 616-288-8047 or by email kellyjjjasperse@gmail.com.



Volunteer Opportunities: Children and Youth Ministry

For information about any of these opportunities, please contact Peter Smith.

psmith@parkchurchgr.org - 616-459-3203

Summer Sunday Fun Day @ The Worship Center (begins June 1)

This is our third summer offering consistent summer programming for children and youth. And we need volunteers! You could be a leader or an assistant and support planned activities like reading books aloud, assisting with a craft or activities, and serve snacks. The materials are prepped ahead of time. While the youth will be working with the children throughout the summer, we need some adults to join them in supporting this curriculum. If everyone takes one Sunday, we will have more than enough help!

Youth Group Support

The youth group (grades 6-12) meets during the worship service most Sundays and after the service on the first Sunday of each month. As an adult volunteer you will be on hand during meetings to assist the leader, focus on community and relationship building. Your input is welcome on lessons and activities and you have the opportunity to teach...if you would like to, We have a specific need for chaperones for the youth mission trip from June 12-17. The more volunteers we have, the more flexible the schedule is!

Music at Midday: A Free Concert Series in the City

Concerts (12:15pm - 12:45pm) are free to all.

April 29 – Bruce Robey and Friends

May 6 – Mary Rademacher

Celebrating the Arts Concert at Beacon Hill

Phyllis Ann Miner, harp

Sunday, April 27 (today!) at 2:00pm

This free concert is presented in loving memory of Sara Fetty and is made possible through generous anonymous donations. Sara loved hearing Phyllis play the harp and now you have the opportunity to hear some of the music that she so enjoyed. Please join us at the Community House Auditorium at Beacon Hill (1919 Boston Street SE) on Sunday, April 27 at 2:00pm.

Park Church Golf League

Wednesdays at 4:00pm

Park's golf league meets at Ironwood Golf Course, 3750 64th Street in Byron Center. All levels of players are welcome. If you don't want to commit for the entire season, you may stop out and play whenever you wish or fill in as a sub. Tee-off time is 4:00 PM. For more information, contact Jim Butler at j.butler@comcast.net or 616-802-4355.

Whitecaps Baseball Game

Tuesday, June 17 at 6:30pm

Save the date! Join us for a fun night at the ballpark on June 17. Tickets are \$15.00 and are available from Cheryl and Dave Wells. They will be at the P.O.P. Table on May 4, 11, and 17 to make sure you get a seat.

Coming up at Park Church

- Mon. April 28 at 11:30 Judith Meyer Memorial Service
- Tues. April 29 at 12:15 Music at Midday: Bruce Robey and friends
at 7:00pm Bylaws Informational Meeting
- Wed. April 30 at 12:00pm Bylaws Informational Meeting
at 4:00pm Golf League at Ironwood Golf Course
at 7:00pm Bible Study Book of Isaiah
- Thurs. May 1 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
at 5:30pm Bylaws Informational Meeting
at 6:15pm Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal
at 6:30pm Parkmeisters rehearsal
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sun. May 4 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship - Communion and Deacon's Offering
Annual Meeting after worship in Merriam Hall
at 9:00am Silent Reading Group in Martenson Parlor
at 9:30am Carol Choir and Chapel Choir rehearsals
Continental breakfast before worship/coffee fellowship after worship
Youth Group after worship
- Tues. May 6 at 12:15 Music at Midday: Mary Rademacher
at 6:30pm Board of Deacons meeting
- Wed. May 7 at 4:00pm Golf League at Ironwood Golf Course
at 7:00pm Bible Study Book of Isaiah
- Thurs. May 8 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
at 5:30pm Days for Girls Kit Creation Day (This is the last meeting)
at 6:15pm Smith-Dively Ringers rehearsal
at 6:30pm Parkmeisters rehearsal
at 7:00pm West Michigan Survivor's of Suicide Support Group
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal



Click the QR code to sign up for Degage cooking and serving.



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, Jim McGlothlin, Nancy McGlothlin, Diane Sherlock, Dick Sherlock

Greeters: Mary Bamborough, Tom Bamborough, Fritz Crabb

Parking Lot Greeter: Kevin Larr

Sound: Sam Johnson-Begay

Video: Kevin Arnett

Live stream: Camille DeBoer

Carol Choir: Cheryl Wells

Chapel Choir: Heidi Hertel

Flower Care: Gail Bickel

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](mailto:gguess@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.