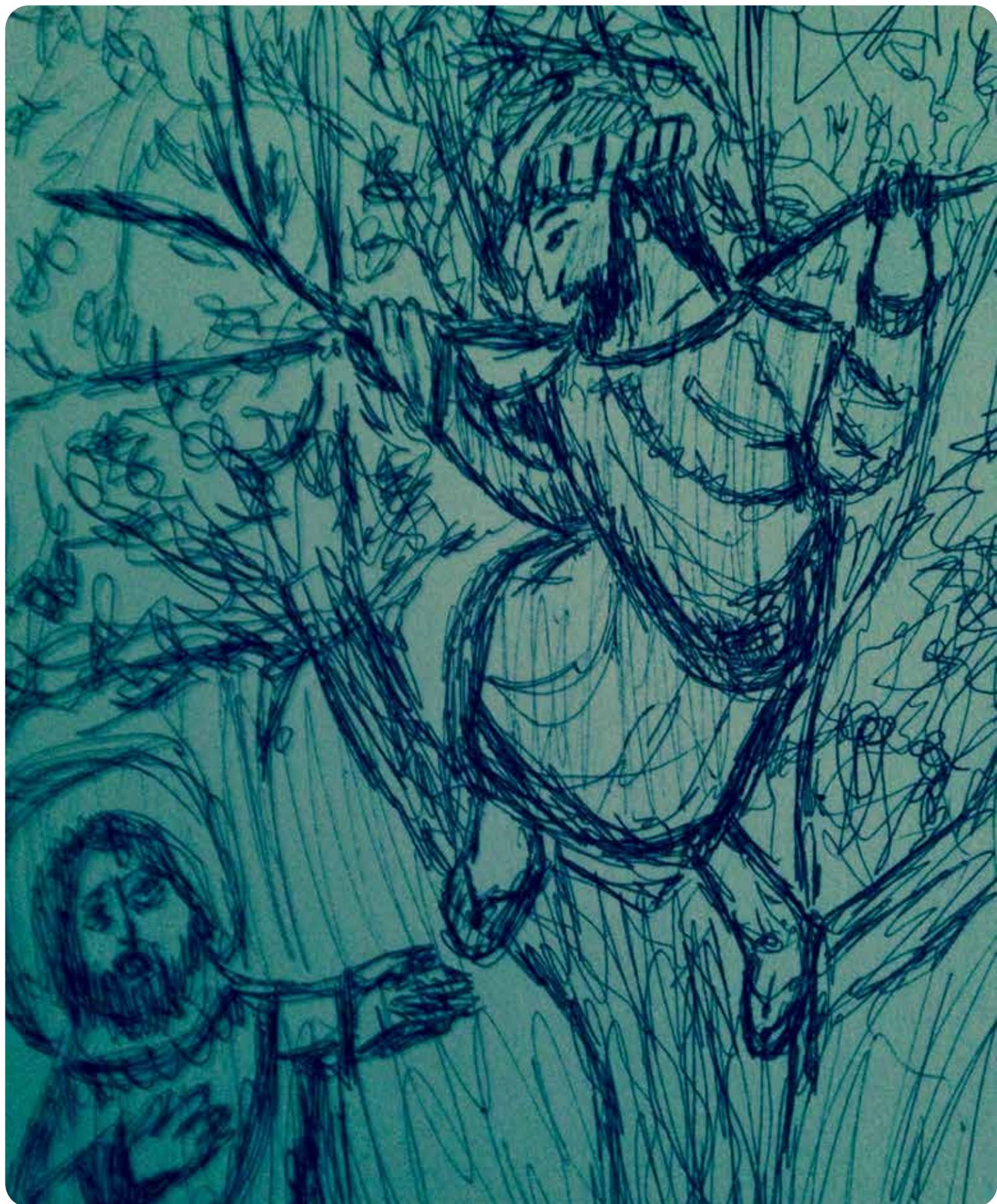


FIRST(PARK)CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

November 16, 2025



Welcome to First (Park) Congregational Church!

We pray this worship service will be a blessing to you. While at Park Church if you need directions to the rest rooms, 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. The wifi password is parkchurchguest.

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

As Jesus demonstrated by his life and teachings, we fully welcome into the life of Park Church and value all people regardless of beliefs or doubts, age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical, intellectual or emotional ability, or economic status. Park Church is a place where all are welcome and equal. We value and celebrate the rich diversity of all God's creation. *(adopted 2015, updated 2020 and 2025)*

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.

Accessible to All (A2A) Statement

Park Church welcomes people of all abilities and disabilities into the full life of the congregation. Called to participate in Christ's ministry, we pledge to continue expanding our views and attitudes as we evolve to meet the needs of our church and community.

In this way, Park Church is fully committed to being *Accessible to All*. *(adopted 2025)*



Click the QR code for the current Congregationalist.

Order of Worship for November 16, 2025
Gathering and Centering 10:20am
Announcements and Sanctuary Worship 10:30am
The + symbol indicates standing in body or in spirit.
Words in **bold type** are spoken or sung in unison.

Gathering Music

Steven B. Smith, piano

Welcome

Rev. Darryl Kistler

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
Fanfare on "Engelberg"
John A. Behnke

+ Prayer of Invocation

Reading Responsively
Lori Henry-Hutchings, liturgist

One: God, source of blessings and grace...

**All: yet marvelous and mighty,
nation rises against nation,
kingdom against kingdom.**

**The peoples of the earth suffer earthquakes, famines, and plagues,
and we feel betrayed by those we had trusted.
Show yourself to us in these troubled times.**

One: Grant us wisdom...

**All: to speak words of peace and comfort
into places of brokenness and hurt.
Make us instruments of the new heaven
and new earth you have promised,
in which we place our trust. Amen.**

1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith-er by thy help I'm come;
3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud-est praise.
and I hope, by thy good plea-sure, safe-ly to ar - rive at home.
Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to thee.

Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a-bove;
Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un-chang-ing love!
he, to res - cue me from dan-ger, in - ter-posed his pre-cious blood.
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

Mission Moment: The Community and Service Center

Thelma Ensink
Executive Director of Dégagé Ministries

Prayers of the People and Our Savior's Prayer
concluding, the congregation prays in unison (continued...)

Pastor Darryl

...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.

Congregational Response (verses 1 and 2)

This Peace That I Have

African-American Spiritual

1. This joy that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. —
 2. This peace that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. —
 3. Ho - ly Ghost that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. The

This joy that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. Oh!
 This peace that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. Oh!
 Ho - ly Ghost that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. Oh! The

this joy that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. The
 this peace that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. The
 Ho-ly Ghost that I have, the world did-n't give it to me. The

world did-n't give it, and the world can't take it a - way. | 1,2
 world did-n't give it, and the world can't take it a - way. 3. The way.
 world did-n't give it, and the world can't take it a - way.

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Solo

Timothy Kroll, tenor

The Love of God

Arr. Brad Russell

*The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can ever tell.
It goes beyond the highest star and reaches to the lowest hell.
The guilty pair, bowed down with care, God's only son to win;
The erring child God reconciled and pardoned from all sin.*

*O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure,
The saints' and angels' song.*

*Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill, and everyone a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky.*

Sermon: **The God-Filled Life**

Pastor Darryl

Meditation

Steven B. Smith, organ
Breathe on Me, Breath of God
arr. Mark Hayes

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir
A Jubilant Song
Allen Pote

Refrain:

*Sing to the Lord a jubilant song.
Rejoice and sing and let the earth be glad,
Let the heavens be filled with joy and a jubilant song.*

*Sing alleluia to the Lord, alleluia, alleluia;
Tell of His salvation from day to day.
Shout His marvelous works among the people,
For great is the Lord, great is the Lord and greatly to be praised. (Refrain)*

*Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were made, or the land and the sea were born,
From age to age you are God,
and we pray for the coming of your Kingdom.
We shall rejoice, we shall be glad all the days of our lives!
(Refrain)*

+ 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

Restoring God, as we bring our gifts this day, may they be seeds of your promised future—an offering of hope, justice, and mercy in a weary world. Use what we give and who we are to proclaim a community where none are forgotten, where the wolf and lamb lie down in peace, and where the sound of weeping is no more. Let this act of giving remind us that your blessings are still flowing—and that we are called to pass them on. In Christ, who is our joy. Amen.

1 "Go, my chil-dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
2 "Go, my chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
3 "Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos - er to me.

Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.

In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for -
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry; here you touched him, saw his
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you; here my ten - der com - fort

ev - er. Go, my chil-dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
glo - ry. Go, my chil-dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
stilled you. Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, joy - ful and free."

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

Recessional

Phil Lehenbauer

**26th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration
Monday, November 24 at 7:00pm @ Park Church**

We are excited to host this celebration and we hope you will be able to attend. The Kaufman Interfaith Institute, along with the interfaith community of Grand Rapids, welcomes you to enjoy an evening of celebration for the religious diversity of our community.

The Interfaith Thanksgiving celebration is a service that features musical pieces, reflections, and dances from various religious and secular traditions in our community. During the event, we will hear from members of our community, representing an array of religious, spiritual, and secular worldview identities, as they discuss the enduring need for gratitude for our shared home during this and all seasons. A free-will offering will be collected to benefit a local charity.

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 in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate.

Following Worship

Coffee Fellowship in Allinder Commons

Stop by the POP Table and sign up to be a greeter!

Lunch and Learn: Community and Service Center

Serving With You Today

Greeters: Jan and Wayne Edwards

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

Audio/Video: Sam Begay-Johnson, Andrew DeBoer, Camille DeBoer

Flower Care: Kathy Miller

The bulletin cover art is: *Zacchaeus and Jesus* (quick sketch): Ronald Raab, CSC. Ron serves as Religious Superior, Holy Cross House, Notre Dame, IN.

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

The Sanctuary Flowers

The flowers at the Pulpit

In memory of Rusty Dannison and Penny Grant.

Given by his and her families.

The flowers at the Lectern

In memory of Henry and Jane Velzen.

Given by Randy and Laurie Velzen.

The flowers at the Children's Altar

In celebration of our granddaughter Kate Tilley's 13th birthday.

Given by Jim and Nancy Beaver.

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

Joys and Concerns

Dear Park Church family,

Thank you all for your get-well wishes and prayers. They have been greatly appreciated, and I'm recovering nicely. Sincerely, Ben Lundquist

Dan Pettee has been hospitalized with issues related to a previous bout of pneumonia. Please send your get well wishes and encouragement to him at 5972 E Lyn Haven Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512.

Barbara Osburn and Mark Mullinax are at their Florida home where Barbara is recovering from reverse shoulder replacement. Send your Michigan greetings and cheerful encouragement for a swift recovery to her at 9151 SE 171st Drayton Place, The Villages, FL 32162.

Kathy Osborn is a member of the Chancel Choir. Kathy's husband Tom Rysko has suffered a traumatic medical event and is in the beginning stages of a complicated recovery. Please send your love and support to Kathy and Tom at 3530 Water Walk Dr. SW, Grandville, MI 49418.

Pat Schaub is recovering from gall bladder surgery. Let's brighten her day! Send your get well wishes to her at 2510 Lake Michigan Dr. NW, Apt. B301, Grand Rapids, MI 49504.

Jonathan Hodde is home recovering from thyroid surgery. Jonathan, his parents Shelley & Darin and his grandparents Bruce & Doris appreciate your support and prayers. Send encouragement to him at 3027 Perry Ave. SW, Wyoming, MI 49519.

Please pray for those navigating illness/treatment including: Ron Bickel, Marcia Bishop, Doug Gammage, Ruth McCarty, and Tom VandenBosch

Military Personnel: Jesse Campbell, Devon Goetz, Andy MacGregor, and Matthew Quick.

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

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



Advent Reflections for the LGBTQIA Community and Allies

In-Person: Sunday Nov. 30 after worship (Joey Styron will be present at this meeting)

Via Zoom: Mondays 12/1 12/8, 12/15, and 12/22 at 7:00pm

We are excited that J. M. Styron, author of “All is Calm, All is Bright,” will be personally hosting an event here at Park with LGBTQIA people of our church and community.

In a series of four reflections - corresponding to the weeks of Advent - Joey invites us to ponder the angels’ message: good tidings and great joy for all people. He weaves together sacred texts, carols, and portions of his own journal to share that God’s love is for everyone, not a select few. The reflections are brief but inspiring and thought-provoking, respectful of your individual spirituality and religious wounds. Having survived the trauma of his own coming out and alienation from his beloved church, Joey encourages the thoughtful deconstruction and reconstruction of faith, ridding ourselves of all that is not love.

The kickoff for this study will take place on Sunday, November 30, after worship and will include lunch. Joey will be present with us in worship that day, as well as in this first session. Following the session, the group will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM on Mondays, December 1, 8, 15 and 22. To sign up for the introductory session on November 30 and for the four sessions, Sign up using the QR code and the Zoom link will be sent to you by email.

Books will be distributed free of charge to series participants at the event on Sunday, November 30. If you are not participating in the series but would like to purchase a copy of the book as a gift or for your own study, please contact the main office at office@parkchurchgr.org or 616-459-3203. Watch the Congregationalist for more information.



The stewardship campaign for 2026 is underway.



Thank you to everyone who has already submitted their giving intentions and, if you have not, please prayerfully consider how you can continue to support the work of Park Church financially in the coming year. Please note: The mission budget is dependent on your response as is it 12% of pledges received.

Click QR Code to read Pastor Darryl’s appeal, access a digital pledge card, and view the stewardship moments delivered in the worship services.

From The Park Church Women

PCW Holiday Bazaar and Martenson Ten Pie Sale

Sunday, November 23 after worship

The Park Church Holiday Bazaar will take place on November 23 after the worship service in Merriam Hall. You can shop for pickles, preserves, sweet treats and other pantry delights, and hand crafted items. Martenson Ten will be selling whole pies to take home and slices to eat while you enjoy coffee and fellowship.

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, November 23 after worship

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.

Calling all cookie monsters!

Ongoing through December 14

We need cookies for the reception for the Candlelight Service on December 14. If you are able, please make 2 dozen cookies and bring them to the morning service or, if they can be refrigerated or frozen, drop them off ahead of time. Mark your contributions "Candlelight".

Park Throughout the Holidays Dinner

Friday, December 5 at 6:00 PM in Merriam Hall.

Come celebrate 190 years of Christmas at Park Church at a church-wide holiday dinner on Friday, December 5. You will enjoy fellowship with your Park Church friends over a delicious gourmet dinner, special entertainment, and presentations on the various ways Park Church has made Christmas a special time of year. You will also have the opportunity to support this year's Christmas Offering recipient, the new Grand Rapids Community and Service Center.

The dinner is \$25.00 per person and reservations are due by December 2. The price covers the event related costs. Attendees are invited to bring a bottle of wine or beer for themselves to drink during dinner. (please consume alcohol responsibly). Reserve your place(s) by contacting Marty Butler by email at mbutler@parkchurchgr.org, or by phone at 616-459-3203. Payment for the dinner can be made by using the QR code below, by check (please put Holiday Dinner in the memo line) or by cash using an offering envelope. If this event is cost-prohibitive for you at the moment, please contact Pastor Darryl about sliding scale options.



Attendees are invited to bring a beloved Nativity set or Creche to display that evening in Merriam Hall during the dinner. Please circle the date and join us for this festive evening!

Palmer School Night of Giving (NOG)

December 9 at 4:00pm

Night of Giving 2025 will be held on December 9, 2025 at 4pm. The event will be held in the school playground area, weather permitting or in the gym if necessary. As you may recall last year Palmer had a Snow Day on the Night of Giving. We are praying that is not the case this year. We will set up outside at 3:00, with a 4pm start. More information will be available closer to the event as to what time to arrive at church to transport to Palmer etc.. Please contact Sara Haines at 616.560.4756 if you are interested in volunteering on December 9, or can help organize & assemble items for the family bags prior to December 9. We will be working out of the Parlor. Feel free to stop in and say hello and see what NOG is all about.

Blessings, Sara Haines

NOG 2025 Wish List:

- Drivers to help transport NOG bags and other items to Palmer on December 9
- Girls & boys underwear all sizes
- Kids Waterproof winter Gloves & Mittens
- Personal Care Items; soap, shampoo, misc personal care items
- Unused new toys
- Perishable Fruits & Vegetables i.e. Potatoes, Apples, Oranges etc.
- Home Goods Style Large Shopping Bags - new
- Reusable Grocery Bags (Meijer or Aldi)
- Quart & Gallon zip lock bags

Cookie Walk and BBQ Lunch

Sunday, December 7 after worship

Allinder Ten will sponsor the annual Cookie Walk and BBQ Lunch on December 7 after worship. Cookies will be prepackaged in small assortments. (cash appreciated). You KNOW how talented the Park Church resident bakers are, so start saving those nickels and dimes and kick off your holiday celebrations with some delicious Christmas cookies.

Candlelight Christmas: *Wander in Wonder*

Sunday, December 14 at 4:30

Join us for the 108th Annual Candlelight Christmas at 4:30pm on Sunday, December 14. All of the Park Church music ensembles joined by our string and brass musicians-in-residence participate. 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.

Introduction to the new downtown Community and Service Center

In a collaboration with Dégagé, Mel Trotter, and at least seven area churches (including Park Church) a weekday winter shelter is being established for Heartside neighbors. This community gathering space offers a warm and welcoming place to set down burdens, rest, and share a meal. With the support of non-profits like Dégagé and Mel Trotter, and assisted by professional staff, this space will also be a service center connecting clients with essential services like securing safe housing, medical referrals, employment, assistance with paperwork, and much more.

Along with financial support from the City of Grand Rapids, seven(+) churches are committed to this project, pledging financial resources, recruiting volunteers, and supplying in-kind necessities. The Park Church Board of Trustees has authorized a \$25,000 gift utilizing special funds as Park Church's initial financial support. Information on how you can volunteer and support the Service Center and Resource Center will be coming soon!

Currently being hosted by LaGrave Ave CRC in one of their spaces known as "The Vault", the service center will soon move into a longer term but temporary space at Westminster Presbyterian Church, operating from 8:00am – 3:00pm Monday – Friday, November 17, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Every effort is being made to expand to a year-round program in a permanent home supported by volunteers, donors, churches, businesses, and neighbors, with professional staffing and an independent board of directors. Park Church is pleased to be committed to this project at these early stages, and we look forward to being part of it for years to come.

Save these dates and watch for the Advent Congregationalist on November 18 for more information about all Advent and Christmastide season programming.

Santa Claus Girls Delivery Day, Saturday, December 13 at 7:30am

Candlelight Christmas Service: Sunday, December 14 at 4:30pm

Children's Christmas Pageant: Sunday, December 21 at 10:30am

Christmas Eve Meditative Service: Wednesday, December 24 at 4:00pm

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

This Week at Park Church

- Mon. Nov. 17 at 9:00am cooking at Park for Degage
- Tues. Nov. 18 at 11:30am serving breakfast at Degage
at 12:15 Music at Midday: The River Rogues Jazz Band
- Wed. Nov. 19 at 1:00pm Martenson Ten meeting
at 7:00pm Bible Study Book of Luke in person or online
- Thurs. Nov. 20 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
at 6:30pm Jubiloso! rehearsal
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Sun. Nov. 23 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship
Coffee Fellowship before and after worship
The Hanging of the Greens after worship
Park Church Women Holiday Bazaar and Martenson Ten Pie Sale
11:45 Melodia/Camerata rehearsals
- Mon. Nov. 24 at 7:00pm Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
- Tues. Nov. 25 at 12:15pm Music at Midday Rhonda Edgington, organ
- Nov. 27 and 28 The church office is closed

Ministerial and Office Staff:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Rev. Darryl Kistler, Senior Minister | dkistler@parkchurchgr.org |
| Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle, Minister of Music | pcoyles@parkchurchgr.org |
| Peter Smith, Spiritual Formation & Education Minister | psmith@parkchurchgr.org |
| Terrie Hunter, Congregational Life Coordinator | thunter@parkchurchgr.org |
| Julie Anderson, Finance Director | janderson@parkchurchgr.org |
| Camille DeBoer, Communications Coordinator | cdeboer@parkchurchgr.org |
| Tim Persenaire, Lead Custodian | tpersenaire@parkchurchgr.org |
| Marty Butler, Parish Life Assistant | mbutler@parkchurchgr.org |
| Judi Stroh, Office Administrator & Event Coordinator | 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.