

FIRST(PARK)CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC

November 9, 2025 - Stewardship Sunday



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)*

The bulletin cover art is: *First Park Congregational Church*, Mathias Alten 1914.



Click the QR code for the current Congregationalist.

Order of Worship for November 9, 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

Phyllis Ann Miner, 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

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ
Canzona
Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)

+ Prayer of Invocation

Reading in Unison
Fritz Crabb, liturgist

Almighty God, across the ages you have guided your people through the wilderness, assuring us of a home in your Peaceable Realm. Strengthen us along the way, so that we might not neglect our call to serve the cities and towns where we live. Help us to trust in your unfailing presence amid all of our fears. Bless us with a peace that is a gift and a responsibility, that is a promise and a challenge. Grant us wisdom to discern your way in this world even as we hope for the next. Amen.

+ Hymn of Praise - No. 409 *(continued next page...)*

God Is Here!
Tune: Abbot's Leigh

1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an

of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in
 life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,
 Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and
 age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful

full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.
 font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.
 wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.
 to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we

var - ied skills and arts wait the com - ing
 si - lence, as in speech, here, in new - ness
 wor - ship to ex - plore what it means in
 have to give, re - ceive: we, who can - not

of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Moment for the Young and Young-at-Heart

Sacrament of Baptism

Bennett Richard Claypool

Everly June Claypool

Children of Kameron Richard Claypool and Schyler Teagan Claypool

Jairus Allan Douglas

Child of Jason Robert Douglas and Allaina Suzanne Douglas

Prayer for the Baptized

Reading in Unison

Gracious and loving God, we pray for the newly baptized, Bennett, Everly, and Jairus. They are children made in your image, and we offer our love and blessing to them. Grant them strength for life's journey, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and hope of new life. Let them know your abiding presence as they continue to grow and emerge into whom you have called them to be. In Christ Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Stewardship Moment

Stephen Cole, Park Church Treasurer

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.

Response

There Is a Redeemer

Tune: GREEN

*There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son;
precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.*

Scripture Reading

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14
Fritz Crabb, liturgist

These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to your dreams that you dream, for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord. For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon: Living into the Vision

Pastor Darryl

Meditation

Phyllis Ann Miner, organ
Adagio from a Voluntary
John Bennett (1735-1784)

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir
Exsultate, Jubilate!
Kyle Pederson

*Exsultate, jubilate! Exsultate Deo, omnis terra!
(Rejoice and shout to God, all the land!)*

*For the gift of breath in our lungs,
For waking our spirit when morning comes;
For your light which illumines our night,
For shaking the darkness away with your Son;*

*Give us voice the skies may sound,
And give us voice to shake the ground;
Alleluias fill the air, for joy has chased away despair.
Shouts of joy now shape our prayer.*

+ 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 Responsively

One: In gratitude for God provisions and with faith these gifts will be blessed for the living out of our Vision *to build a community of relentless compassion and courageous hope, where all are seen and known, and the God of extravagant love is revealed*, let us pray...

Gracious God, we humbly thank you for the ways you bless us. We ask your blessing upon this offering. Consecrate our pledges and commitments so that by your grace and with your help, we may turn the vision you grant us into a reality.

All: Gracious God, through your blessing and our willingness to share, may our joyful stewardship and humble offerings of time, talent, and treasure become a source for hope and love, joy and peace, for Park Church, for West Michigan, for our nation, and for the world.

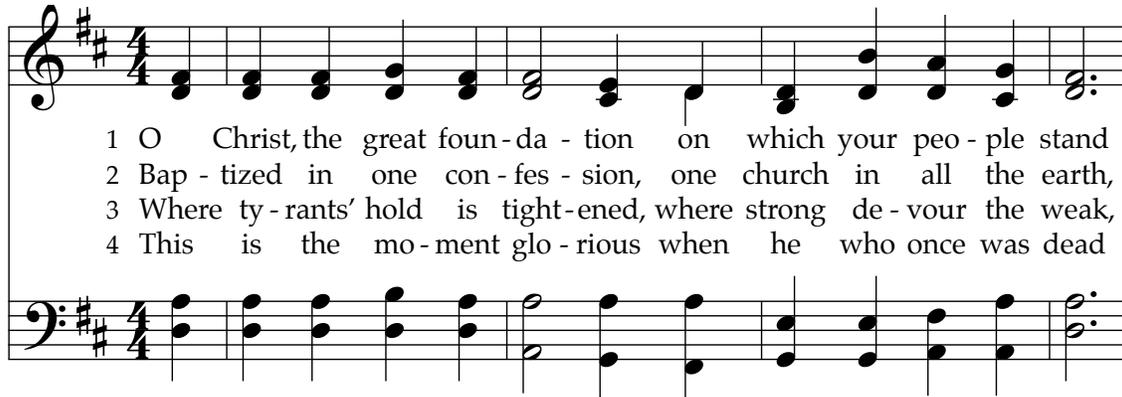
One: We pray, O God, that in no small way may our stewardship make a big contribution to your work of mercy and justice in our world.

All: Amen.

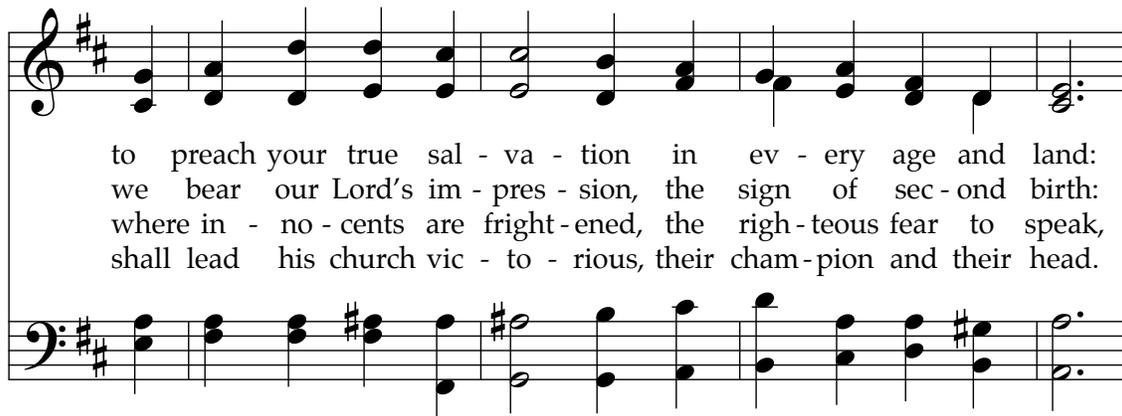
+ Hymn - No. 361

O Christ, the Great Foundation

Tune: AURELIA



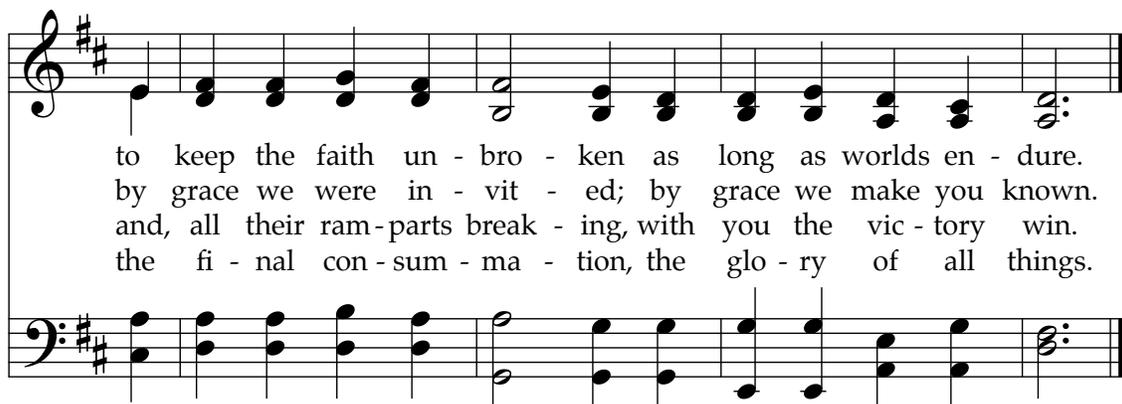
1 O Christ, the great foun - da - tion on which your peo - ple stand
2 Bap - tized in one con - fes - sion, one church in all the earth,
3 Where ty - rants' hold is tight - ened, where strong de - vour the weak,
4 This is the mo - ment glo - rious when he who once was dead



to preach your true sal - va - tion in ev - ery age and land:
we bear our Lord's im - pres - sion, the sign of sec - ond birth:
where in - no - cents are fright - ened, the righ - teous fear to speak,
shall lead his church vic - to - rious, their cham - pion and their head.



pour out your Ho - ly Spir - it to make us strong and pure,
one ho - ly peo - ple gath - ered in love be - yond our own,
there let your church a - wak - ing at - tack the powers of sin
The Lord of all cre - a - tion his heaven - ly king - dom brings:



to keep the faith un - bro - ken as long as worlds en - dure.
by grace we were in - vit - ed; by grace we make you known.
and, all their ram - parts break - ing, with you the vic - tory win.
the fi - nal con - sum - ma - tion, the glo - ry of all things.

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
Jubilation
Douglas E. Wagner

The stewardship campaign for 2026 is underway.

It's Stewardship Sunday! This is when we ask you for an estimate of giving which will help us craft a responsible budget for 2026. 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.

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

Serving With You Today

Greeters: Jeremy Kress, Michel Waite-Kress, Carolyn Molica

Ushers: Mike Mitchell, Jan Edwards, Jeff Liggett, Janet Mitchell, Gary VanderHeiden, Bob Wolford

Audio/Video: Sam Begay-Johnson, Kevin Arnett, Camille DeBoer

Flower Care: Kathy Miller

The Sanctuary Flowers

The flowers on the Altar

In memory of Dr. G. Richard Johnston on the anniversary of his birth.
Given by his family.

The flowers at the Pulpit

Happy Birthday to Bruce Robey.
Given by his family.

The flowers at the Lectern

In loving memory of Bert Furman.
Given by the Furman family

The flowers at the Children's Altar

In honor of Jonathan Hodde's 17th birthday.
Given by Grandpa and Grandma Robey.

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

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



Joys and Concerns

Kent Krive passed away on November 1 at the age of 67. Services have taken place. Condolences may be sent to Kent's daughter, Emma Youngquist 9301 Main St. PO Box, Ellsworth, MI 49729.

Nancy Kuyers passed away at the age of 93 on October 16. We will celebrate Nancy's life on Thursday, November 13 at 2:00pm in Thompson Chapel. A cookie reception will follow. Condolences may be sent to Nancy's brother, William Roth 3600 Fulton St. East, Apt. BC222, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

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 having gall bladder surgery this week. 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 hospitalized at DeVos Children's Hospital 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.

Keep Trudy Zvirgdzs in your prayers as she recovers from a fractured leg. Send your cheerful greetings and best wishes for a speedy recovery to her at 6883 Longtail Dr., Hudsonville. MI 49426.

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.

The “Sow and Sews”: Sowing with kindness, Sewing with purpose
Thursday, November 13 at 1:00pm

The Park Church Sow and Sews make bags for the mobile food pantry, wound and dental kits for Cherry Health and emergency menstrual kits. We meet the second Thursday of each month from 1:00 – 3:00 in Spindler Dining Room. Bring your sewing machine, scissors, iron or rotary cutters but most importantly bring yourself to find out how you can be involved! No experience required. Any questions, ask Terrie thunter@parkchurchgr.org.

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.



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.

Grand Rapids Community and Service Center Lunch and Learn

Sunday, November 16 after worship

On Sunday, November 16, following Sunday worship, learn about the exciting new collaborative ministry for our neighbors experiencing homelessness between Degage Ministries, Mel Trotter Ministries, and nine downtown churches (including Park Church). We will be joined by Thelma Ensink, Executive Director of Degage Ministries. Thelma will inform us on where we are in the creation of the Service Center and Resource Center and how Park Church can play a huge role. RSVPs are appreciated so we can have an accurate count for the lunch. Please RSVP by Monday, November 10 to Marty Butler at mbutler@parkchurchgr.org.

Warm Clothing Items for AYA

Thank you everyone who brought in warm clothing in excellent condition for AYA! Your response was overwhelming. The many sweatshirts, long sleeved tees, warm pants, and jackets are being delivered this week (thank you, Ruth Fitzgerald!) and will be immediately put to good use. Thank you again for so quickly filling this critical need.

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.

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

From The Park Church Women

Fall 2024 Thank Offering - ongoing through November

The Park Church Women invite all of the women of the church to participate in the annual Fall Thank Offering for Santa Claus Girls. Contributions in the amount of your choosing can be turned in at your Ten meetings or directly to the church office.

The Holidays Are Coming

The Park Church Women's Holiday Bazaar is November 23. If you have something you would like to contribute to the sale, Doris Robey would love to hear from you. (doris49509@yahoo.com). Handcrafted items like preserves, holiday decor, and treats are just some ideas...Your work can be included in the sale and the proceeds will benefit the many good causes of the Park Church Women.

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!

This Week at Park Church

- Mon. Nov. 10 The church office is closed for a staff retreat. Messages will be monitored.
- Tues. Nov. 11 The church office is closed for Veteran's Day. Messages will be monitored.
at 12:15pm Music at Midday The choirs of Alger and Burton Middle Schools
at 6:30 Board of Trustees meeting
- Wed. Nov. 12 at 10:00am Park Church Women board meeting
at 7:00pm Bible Study Book of Luke in person or online
- Thurs. Nov. 13 at 8:30am Men's Discussion Group
at 1:00pm Sow and Sews
at 2:00pm Celebration of the Life of Nancy Kuyers
at 6:30pm Jubiloso! rehearsal
at 7:00pm West Michigan Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group
at 7:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal
- Fri. Nov. 14 at 9:00am cooking at Park for Degage
- Sat. Nov. 15 at 7:00am servicing breakfast at Degage
- Sun. Nov. 16 at 10:30am Sanctuary Worship
Coffee Fellowship before and after worship
Drop off handheld treats for Degage
11:45am Lunch and Learn: Community and Service Center: Thelma Ensink, Degage
11:45am Melodia/Camerata rehearsals

Ministerial and Office Staff:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Rev. Darryl Kistler, Senior Minister | dkistler@parkchurchgr.org |
| Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle, Minister of Music | pcoyle@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



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

office@parkchurchgr.org
www.parkchurchgr.org
www.facebook.com/parkchurchgr
The wifi password is parkchurchguest.