



First (Park) Congregational Church
Christmas Eve 2025
Sanctuary Worship

Christmas
Eve

You are invited to join your Park Church friends on a Summer 2026 Service Trip!

The Park Church Mission Committee is pleased to announce our Summer 2026 Service Trip taking place this June. We are partnering with the Appalachia Service Project (asphome.org) to assist with home repairs for those in critical need and share God's love with our neighbors in Appalachia. This is an intentionally multi-generational experience, open to youth and adults alike. Whether you participate as an individual, a family, or with friends, you will find plenty to do! Carpentry skills are not required. (Though if you have related experience, you are most welcome to join us.) We will serve the community in a meaningful way, deepen our faith with daily worship and devotionals, immerse ourselves in Appalachian culture...and enjoy some great Bluegrass and Gospel music.

The Mission Committee reserved spots with the Appalachia Service Project for two work crews of 7-8 people each. If you would like more information or if you'd like to register for the service trip, please contact Pastor Darryl at dkistler@parkchurchgr.org.

Here are some details:

Service Trip Dates:
Sunday, June 7 - Saturday, June 13, 2026

Registration Deadline:
February 28, 2026

Who:
Any youth or adult 12 yrs+, who has completed 6th Grade

Where:
West Virginia or Kentucky

Cost:
\$375.00 per person (scholarships are available through the Missions Committee).
\$50.00 per person is due at the time of registration to reserve your spot.
This fee covers all transportation, food, and lodging.

Order of Worship for December 24, 2025
Christmas Eve Sanctuary Service
The + symbol indicates standing in body or in spirit.
Words in **bold type** are spoken or sung in unison.

Preservice Music

Phyllis Ann Miner and
Patrick Coyle, piano duo

Brass Quintet-in-Residence
Sweet Songs of Christmas
Christopher Dedrick

Welcome

Rev. Darryl Kistler

Prelude

Jubiloso! Handbell Ensemble
Kurt Stroh, director
O Come, All Ye Faithful
Arr. Kevin McChesney

+ Prayer of Invocation

Reading Responsively
Timothy Torres, liturgist

One: Beloved, on this night, we gather to remember the good news of God who came to dwell among us as a vulnerable baby.

All: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

One: We remember the stable, the animals, and the manger that witnessed the arrival of Emmanuel, God with us.

All: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

One: We recall the angels who announced the Messiah's birth to the shepherds, those most unlikely witnesses of God's glory.

All: We rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits.

One: In our remembering and enlivening, we gather today as people of God's promise, witnesses to God's glorious presence among us in the vulnerable, forgotten, and tucked away places of the world.

All: We gather to rejoice in the day that all the earth awaits, the day that has already come and will yet be. Thanks be to God! Amen.

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born king!"

Advent Theme

The Chancel Choir
When God is a Child
 Arr. Patrick Coyle

*Christ is the child who came to the earth,
 bringing good-will and good news of our worth.
 When God is a child, there's awe in our song.
 The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,
 and none shall be afraid.*

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Reading Responsively
 Mallika David and Jesse Bloomster

Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy!

Tonight, the candles of hope, peace, love and joy were alight as
 we entered this sacred space and time.

Tonight, we come in awe and delight to celebrate the birth of Christ,
 the very incarnation of hope, peace, love and joy.

**All: We gather to once again bask in the glory that visited a stable and a manger,
 shepherds watching their flocks, and a young couple cradling the newborn Messiah.**

We light the Christ candle as a sign of the glory that came among us
 in unexpected places and to unexpected people.

May we may be people who seek and follow the glory of the Christ child here and now.

Advent Response

When God is a Child

Brian Wren, Joan Collier Fogg, arr. Patrick Coyle

5. Christ is the child who came to the earth,
bring - ing good - will and good news of our worth. When
God is a child, there's awe in our song. The
last shall be first and the weak shall be strong, and
none shall be a - fraid.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7
Timothy Torres, liturgist

The people walking in the shadows have seen a great light.
On those living in a land covered in the dark of night, light has dawned.

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.

They will call this child
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Parent, Prince of Peace.

The child's authority will continuously grow, and the land shall know endless peace for the child is the heir of David and his reign. The Child will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

For the Lord our God will accomplish this with great zeal.

Meditation

Jubiloso! Handbell Ensemble
O Little Town of Bethlehem
Arr. Cathy Moglebust

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7
Laura DeBoer, liturgist

In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. He went to be enrolled together with Mary, his fiancé and who was pregnant. While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary to have the baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Meditation

The Chancel Choir
Ding, Dong Merrily on High
Daniel E. Schwandt

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:8-20
Laura DeBoer, liturgist

Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. The Angel of God stood before them; heaven's glory shone around them, and the shepherds were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. This day in the city of David, the savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They sang, "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace and goodwill to all." When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the angel has revealed to us."

They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully.

The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Sermon: *The Extraordinary Gift of an Ordinary Manger*

Pastor Darryl

Response

Brass Quintet in Residence

Carol of the Bells

Arr. Charles Evans

Invitation to Generosity and Stewardship

Offertory Music

The Chancel Choir

Jessye's Carol (This Christmastide)

Donald Fraser

*Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Holly, ivy, mistletoe, and the gently falling snow,
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*From a simple ox's stall came the greatest gift of all.
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Children sing of peace and joy at the birth of one small boy.
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Let the bells ring loud and clear, ring out now for all to hear.
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Trumpets sound and voices raises in an endless stream of praise.
Truth and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

*Green and silver, red and gold, and a story born of old.
Peace and love and hope abide this Christmastide, this Christmastide.*

+ Doxology

Angels We Have Heard on High

(Refrain only)

Tune: GLORIA

Gloria, in excelsis Deo; Gloria, in excelsis Deo

+ Prayer of Dedication

Reading in Responsively

One: Radiant God of holy interruptions, in the stillness of night and the chaos of our days,
you slip into our world with glory wrapped in swaddling cloth.

(continued...)

All: Like the shepherds, we come breathless, humbled, and hoping—to offer what we have. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and trust. May they help announce your peace on earth, not with trumpets and headlines, but with justice, compassion, and shared burdens. Let the offering we place here be the beginning of the offering we make with our lives in response to the child who changes everything. In Jesus’ name, Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.

+ Candle lighting

Cheryl Wells, flute
Steven B. Smith, organ
Silent Night
Tune: STILLE NACHT

+ Carol - No. 122 (verses 1-2)

Silent Night, Holy Night

*Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon virgin mother and child;
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia:
Christ the savior is born, Christ the savior is born.”*

+ Benediction

Postlude

Brass Quintet in Residence
Steven B. Smith, organ
Angels We Have Heard on High
Lloyd Larson

*Our service of worship ends, and our service in the world begins.
If you choose to exit the service, please do so quietly,
as some remain to listen, meditate or pray.*

Brass Quartet-in-Residence

Charley Lea, trumpet

Morgan Hare, trumpet

Erich Peterson, horn

Daniel Mattson, trombone

Robert Ward, bass trombone

Christmas Offering

Community and Service Center

ongoing through December 31

We are thrilled this year to name the Community and Service Center as our 2025 Christmas Offering Recipient. The Community and Service Center is a collaborative ministry of Dégagé, Mel Trotter, and seven downtown churches (including Park Church!). It is a week-day center established for Heartside neighbors to gather for warmth, rest and a meal. It is a service center connecting clients with essential services like securing safe housing, medical referrals, and employment. The Community and Service Center is located at Westminster Presbyterian Church where it will operate M-F from 8:00-3:00 through to March 31, 2026.

Our Christmas Offering is part of a coordinated effort to expand the Community and Service Center to a year-round program in a permanent home with professional staffing. You can make your contribution by clicking on the QR code or by using the envelope in your bulletin.



PLEASE NOTE!: One of the immediate needs for the Community and Service Center guests is socks: Warm, dry...NEW socks for men and women! Let's fill the stockings in Allinder Commons with new socks in adult sizes and make the winter months just a little bit easier for our neighbors.

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation

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

Merry Christmas

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
Julie Anderson, Finance Director
Camille DeBoer, Communications Coordinator
Tim Persenaire, Lead Custodian
Marty Butler, Parish Life Assistant
Judi Stroh, Office Administrator & Event Coordinator

dkistler@parkchurchgr.org
pcoyle@parkchurchgr.org
psmith@parkchurchgr.org
thunter@parkchurchgr.org
janderson@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

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and clicking the link that appears.