



How does a
weary world
rejoice?



Advent 2 December 7, 2025
We find joy in connection

PARK RIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Advent 2 - We Find Joy in Connection

December 7, 2025

8:30 am & 10:00 am

WELCOME!

We welcome you to worship today. Park Ridge Community Church affirms that all people are made in the image of God and are worthy of God's love and grace. We commit to the ongoing work of being a church journeying together to deepen our understanding of the nature of God's love and to fulfill our responsibility to embody the Christ Spirit in the world. No matter who you are or where you are on this journey, you are welcome and loved.

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Prelude (BWV 998)

J.S. Bach

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome to worship. **Welcome to worship.**
I am glad you're here. **I am glad you're here.**
Surely God is in this space. **Surely God is in this space.**
I see God in your face. **I see God in your face.**
Let us worship together. **Let us worship together.**

*HYMN

Lift Up Your Heads

8

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

John Sasser

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of laughter, God of open front doors and family reunions, we confess that we often doubt good news.

We move through this world waiting for the other shoe to drop, waiting for life to fall apart, waiting for our humanity to get the best of us.

Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity.

We lean into fear. We lean into isolation.

Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared.

Heal the wounds we have from past hurts, and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth. Show us how to find joy in connection.

Silent Prayers are Offered

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Faith family, I imagine that when we come before God with the truth of our lives, God meets us like Elizabeth meets Mary in our scripture today. The door is thrown open. There is laughter. There is joy. There is embracing—and it is holy. So trust this; believe this:

You are claimed. You are loved. You are forgiven. And you are sent to serve. We can find joy in that. Amen!

ADVENT RESPONSE

Star Child

Insert

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-11

MINISTRY OF MUSIC (10 am)

Advent Mediation

P. Lieberger

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (10 am)

PASTORAL PRAYER

MUSICAL RESPONSE (8:30 am)

Savior of the Nations Come, v. 2

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

***PREACHING LESSON**

Luke 1:24-45

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Joy in the World

Rev. Mollie Foster

AN ADVENT AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that joy is a sacred gift, existing on a plane deeper than happiness, stemming from the truth that we belong to God. We believe that joy is not meant for isolation. Joy is meant to be shared, weaving us together in laughter and in hope. And when joy feels impossibly out of reach, we believe that part of being a sacred community is leaning on one another. So together we say: I will share my joy when yours runs out. You will share your joy when mine runs out. And in doing so, we will both see God. Amen.

OFFERTORY

Sinfonia (BWV 106)

J.S. Bach

***ADVENT DOXOLOGY**

Angels From the Realms of Glory

22

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son, Evermore your voices raising to the Eternal Three in One: Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn King!

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

God of the weary world, thank you for bringing us good news of joy, hope, and peace. As we respond with our gifts, help us envision the possibilities you have imagined. May our gifts create opportunities for connection to provide peace for the weary, hope for the hopeless and joy in the chaos. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, our source of peace. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

May the Advent God give you hope.

May God grant you peace.

Let us lift our hearts to God who offers righteousness to all.

We open our hearts to the One who loves justice.

Children of God, rejoice in the One who call us to live in harmony with everyone.

Amen and Amen! We give our thanks to God!

...With those who have trouble playing nice, with those who seek to bear fruit, together with one voice, we glorify you:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who gives hope to all.

All creation gathers your harvest of peace.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who stands side-by-side with the most vulnerable.

Hosanna in the highest!

...As we inch closer to Bethlehem, as we wait for the kingdom to draw near, we sing of that mystery which comes as faith:

This is the One who died, blessing those who feared him;

this is the One who was raised, the Spirit of resurrection resting on him;

this is the One who will come, to give justice to everyone.

...we will sing and glorify you forever, God in Community, Holy in One. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (sung)

Our Father, which 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

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

Communion will be served to congregants in the pews by the Deacons. Please hold the bread and cup until we all eat and drink together.

***HYMN**

I Can Celebrate You

Insert

***BENEDICTION**

CHORAL BENDICTATION

Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

POSTLUDE

Etude

L. Ritenour

** INDICATES TO PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR IN SPIRIT*

BOLD INDICATES TO SPEAK ALOUD IN ONE VOICE

In the event of an emergency, please follow the direction of the ushers.

Leading Us in Worship:

Rev. Carol Hill, Senior Minister
Rev. Mollie Foster, Associate Minister
Susan Greenwood, Lector
John Sasser, Advent Wreath Lighter and Reader
Adrian Hill, Worship Leader

Jane Kenas-Heller, Accompanist
Angie & Andrew Weber
Sue Douglass, Organist
Dr. Brian Torosian, Guitar
Jackie Tilles, Flute

CREDITS: Today's prayers and liturgy is written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

PLEASE SEE AN USHER...for seat cushions and/or hearing assistance devices for use during worship. Thank you to our December Users: Barbra Madro (CAPTAIN), Ace Steele, Dave Figgins, Dave Kapolnek, Gretchen Kapolnek, Christopher Browning, Marty McHugh, Marylyn & Dick Collentine, and Mike Proue.

Star-Child



WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray (Matt. 2:1-12)
MUSIC: Carlton R. Young

STAR CHILD
45.45 with Refrain



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!!**

Dec. 12th - 13th



On Saturday, December 13, PRCC will open its doors for our community to come experience a Bake Sale, Cake Walk, Gingerbread and Tree Decorating Contests, Live Music, a full Pageant Production, AND MORE!! We need volunteers to help run the cake walk, welcome guests, bake cakes and treats for the bake sale, and be a welcoming representative of PRCC. Can you donate an hour or two? WE NEED YOU! [Sign up here!](#)

I Can Celebrate You

Text: Anna Strickland (2023)

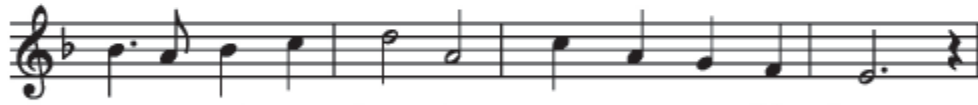
Music: Gustav Holst (1906)



I can cel - e - brate you, I can hold your joy
I can re - cog - nize good fruit that you will bear
We can hold each oth - er in our joy and fear



When the load is crush - ing and you've lost your voice
When your own self - doubt hides gifts you have to share
Know - ing that the Spir - it moves when we are near



I can cel - e - brate the pro - mise your life holds
I can re - cog - nize your Christ-light deep with - in
We can hold each oth - er, lift each oth - er up



When the wear - i - ness bears hea - vy on your soul
Ev - ery gift that God has sown wait - ing to be - gin
Fill - ing one a - noth - er from the Spir - it's cup

ITEMS OF NOTE

WELCOME GUESTS! We are glad you are joining us in worship today. Please fill out a postcard found in the pew baskets or in the narthex to share your information with us!

Please email office@parkridgecommunitychurch.org if you have any questions.

ALTAR FLOWERS this Sunday are sponsored by Luan Zoellner in Loving Memory of Bill Zoellner! Flowers are \$60 to sponsor! You can sign up to sponsor flowers on the sign-up sheet on the office bulletin board.

RESTROOMS are located on the lower level at each end of the church. All-gender/family restrooms are located at the bottom of the stairs at the back of the sanctuary.

ONLINE DONATIONS can be made via Zelle (our Zelle email is giving@parkridgecommunitychurch.org), or via our new online giving platform! You can text "GIVE" to (847)-908-9088 or scan the QR code to make a donation!



CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Nursery (0-5 years old) Our nursery is open from 8:30 am to 11:15 am for children up to 5 years old. It's a safe and welcoming space located downstairs, just next to Jordan Hall.

PK-5th Grades Children are invited to leave the worship service after the Children's Message and head to the Sunday School Wing to learn the Bible story Jesus is Born. You can pick them up in the Sunday School Wing after the service.

6th-12th Grades: Youth will remain in worship today for Holy Communion..

Middle School Holy Chow TODAY, 11:45 am-1 pm We will gather in the Butler Place Entry and walk Uptown for a meal together with meaningful discussion with Pastor Mollie! No money needed!

Youth LATE NIGHT, Friday, Dec. 12 from 7-10 pm Youth and friends are invited to gather for a silent disco, Christmas Karaoke, Reindeer games in Jordan Hall, and enjoy some holiday cheer! Bring a snack to share!

Wacky Wednesday (6th-8th Grades) Wacky Wednesday provides a fun and safe space at PRCC for Middle School Students on Early Release Wednesdays from 2:30-3:30 pm.

Youth Choir The Youth Choir meets on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:45 pm.

Christmas Pageant Registration Open



Children from preschool through high school are invited to participate in singing or speaking roles. Each child will wear a beautifully handmade costume by the talented Ann Swindell. This heartwarming, joy-filled pageant is carefully scripted and rehearsed under the direction of Sasha Gerritson, and there's a role for everyone! An important rehearsal will be held on Saturday, December 13th from 10:00 am -11:45 am, and songs will be practiced during regular music time in November and December. We will also need many adults to help make these productions a success!

TODAY! Advent Festival December 7th, 3-5 pm

Join us for a family-friendly Advent Festival at PRCC! Come and experience the joy of the season with activities, fellowship, and fun for all ages.

ADULT MINISTRY

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY - 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm in Ellinger Transept

Join our weekly Bible Study class as we study the Prophets. We will learn from a variety of theologians using the Disciple Bible Study materials. Through DVD, scripture reading, and additional background, we will explore the meaning of these ancient texts and what they say to us today. All are welcome! We will use this study through December!

MEN'S BREAKFAST - Thursdays at 9:00 am

Calling Men of all ages! Join us for coffee and pastries at 9 AM every Thursday in the Church Library. We chat about the latest news, check in with each other about life, and enjoy the absence of an agenda! All are welcome! Join us on Zoom!

TODAY! FAITHFUL FIRST SUNDAYS, Sunday, December 7 at 9:30 pm

Is the idea of praying in front of others daunting? Do you ever feel like you just don't know what to say? Join the Stephen Ministers for Faithful First Sundays, a monthly gathering to explore different approaches to prayer. We meet on the first Sunday of each month from 9:30-9:50 am in the Ellinger Transept (off the sanctuary, opposite the chapel). December - Topic: "Meditation- Finding the Quiet Place."

OUTREACH

THE CHRISTIAN OUTREACH COMMITTEE

WINTER COLLECTION Let's help our new neighbors stay warm this winter! All are invited to join in by providing mens boots, warm socks, hats, gloves, and scarves for the Night Ministry. Donations can be dropped off in the Butler Place collection bin through December!

GIVING TREE We are partnering with Avalon Park Community Church to provide gifts for **100 children** ages 1-17 this Christmas! Grab a gift tag off the Giving Tree in Butler Place or just go shopping! Gifts must be dropped off by Sunday, December 14. Please bring gifts unwrapped.

PRAYER REQUESTS


One of the gifts of community is that we hold one another in prayer. Each week, we share our joys and sorrows with one another so that we might feel the support of the community. No one is alone. God is with us, and we are supporting one another.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE IN OUR CONGREGATION AND OUR LOVED ONES:


Laura Beaudion, Tom Berry, Evan Curtis, Amber Douglass, Wylie Douglass, Jon Forsythe, Ginny Feurer, Kym Giera, Christine Kotecki, Michelle Leach, Joey M., Tommy Mack, Michael McDonough, Tracy McKenzie, Kappy Muenzer, Pete Muenzer, Sandra, Brian Stevens, Kathleen Weller, Joyce Wright, and Bernice Zabawski.

PRAYER REQUESTS FROM November 30th:

- Please pray for Victor M. and Viola S.
- We pray for Grace's friend Ken, whose treatment for stomach cancer has begun.
- We pray for Annie L. whose husband Werner just died suddenly after a battle with prostate cancer.



Staff Christmas Gift



As we enter this season of Christmas, the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) invites you to reflect on the many blessings we share — and the many people who make our church such a special place.


During this busy time of year, our dedicated staff give so much of themselves to support our congregation and community. From planning extra worship services and special events to offering care and hospitality in countless ways, they work tirelessly to make our celebration of Christ's birth meaningful for all.

Donations can be made through Shelby/the Ministry One App, Zelle, or by check (please note "Staff Christmas Gift"). Contributions will be accepted through December 22nd, after which the SPRC will distribute the gifts to our staff as a token of our shared gratitude.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity. Your gifts are a heartfelt way to express our collective appreciation for the love and ministry our staff share throughout the year.

With gratitude and joy,

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC)





CHURCH EVENTS

SUNDAY, December 7

- 8:30 am - Worship Service (Chapel)
- 10:00 am - Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 11:45 am - Middle School Holy Chow (Uptown)
- 3:00 pm - Advent Festival (Jordan Hall)

MONDAY, December 8

- 6:00 pm - Finance Meeting (Library)
- 7:00 pm - Yoga (Great Hall)

TUESDAY, December 9

- 10:15 am - Chair Yoga (Great Hall)
- 12:00 pm - Kindred Spirits Cafe (Jordan Hall)
- 5:30 pm - Rainbows for All Children (Great Hall)
- 7:30 pm - Stephen Ministry Supervision (Library)

WEDNESDAY, December 10

- 10:00 am - Women's AA (Parlor)
- 10:00 am - Staff Meeting (Pastoral Office)
- 2:30 pm - Wacky Wednesday (Great Hall)
- 2:45 pm - Girl Scout Meeting (Jordan Hall)
- 3:45 pm - Youth Choir (Music Room)
- 7:00 pm - Action Ridge (Jordan Hall)
- 7:00 pm - Bible Study (Ellinger Transept)
- 7:00 pm - Crop Walk Committee Meeting (Library)

THURSDAY, December 11

- 9:00 am - Men's Breakfast (Library)
- 6:30 pm - Bells on High (Balcony)
- 7:30 pm - Chancel Choir (Music Room)

FRIDAY, December 12

- 7:00 pm - Youth Late Night (Jordan Hall)

SATURDAY, December 13

- 10:00 am - Christmas Stroll through Park Ridge (Great Hall and Sanctuary)
- 10:00 am - Pageant Practice

Happy Birthday

12/07 Jacky Dustin Good
12/07 Keith Reboletti
12/08 Blaire Sullivan
12/09 Linda Thomas
12/10 Ashton Dase
12/10 George Skoog
12/12 Bud Shinn
12/13 Michael Maher



ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS FLOWERS TODAY!

Orders must be placed by December 12.

Help us fill the sanctuary with beauty and warmth for our Christmas Eve worship services. Christmas flowers are a cherished tradition, and the names of those who purchase them—as well as anyone you wish to honor or remember—will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins.

This year's flowers are 6" Christmas Cyclamen from Lurvey's Florist, wrapped in festive green foil. You may request red or white, and we'll do our best to honor your preference. The cost is \$15 per plant, payable by cash, check, Shelby Online Giving, or Zelle.

Please note: We will not have live poinsettias at PRCC this year, as Pastor Carol is highly allergic. Thank you for your understanding!

We invite you to place your order by December 12 and help make our Christmas Eve services extra special.