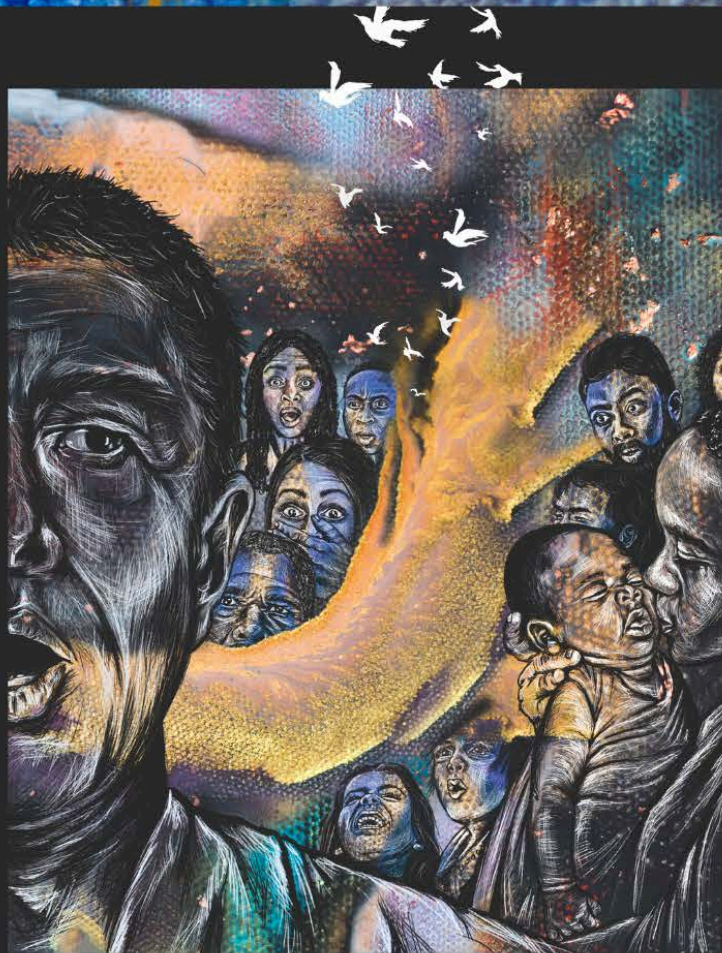




How does a
weary world
rejoice?



Advent 3 December 14, 2025
We allow ourselves to be amazed

PARK RIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Advent 3: We Allow Ourselves to Be Amazed

December 14, 2025

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

Alleluia He Comes To Us

Keller

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Our God can part the sea.

God can bring water from a rock, and provide bread in the desert.

Our God can walk on water. **God can heal the sick, and turn water into wine.**

Our God sets the stars in the sky.

God hears our voice when we cry, and is closer than our own breath.

There is nothing our God cannot do.

Let us stand in awe. Let us worship God with wonder.

*HYMN

Prepare the Way

13

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

McCarty Family

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe. We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts. We praise those who have answers, and assume that wonder is an answerless game. Forgive us for closing that door to you. Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children. Teach us the ways of awe and wonder, so that like Zechariah, when we find ourselves speechless, our first words will be words of praise.

Silent Prayers are Offered

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Family of faith, Just as we marvel at mountains and newborns, at sunrises and sunsets, God marvels at us. There is nothing you could do or leave undone that could prevent God from loving you. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

We are forgiven. We are loved. We belong to God. Amen.

ADVENT RESPONSE

Star Child

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, 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.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Isaiah:

Hear ye, Hear ye! The Lord himself will give you a sign.

The young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and name him Emmanuel.

And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;

and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Narrator:

In the sixth month the Lord sent the Angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee, called Nazareth. Gabriel sought out a young woman named Mary, who was engaged to Joseph, of the house of David. The Angel Gabriel came to her and said:

Gabriel:

Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.

Narrator:

Mary was startled by his words and wondered what sort of greeting this might be. The Angel said to her:

Gabriel:

Fear not, Mary, the Lord is with you. You will bear a son, and name him Jesus, Emmanuel. He will be called "the Son of the Most High", and His kingdom will have no end.

Mary:

How can this be?

Gabriel:

The child to be born will be holy; and he will be called "Messiah, Son of God." For nothing is impossible with God.

Mary:

Here I am, Lord. I am yours, Lord.

Narrator:

And the angel departed.

(Congregation joins in singing)

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

***Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free.
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation. Hope of all the earth Thou art.
Dear desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart.***

Roman Soldier 1:

Right this way, King Herod.

King Herod:

Where is my scribe?

Roman Soldier 2:

I will find him and bring him here.

Narrator:

The Roman soldier helped deliver King Herod to the front, so his scribe could read the decree from Emperor Augustus, which said:

Scribe:

All the world should be registered!

Narrator:

Joseph came from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David, called Bethlehem. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.

Joseph:

Is there room? Is there room? Is there room? Please, kind sir, is there room?

Innkeeper:

There is no room at the Inn, but you may take shelter in the stable.

Narrator:

Mary gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger.

Gabriel, and 3 Magi:

*Once in Royal David's City stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby, in a manger for his bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.*

Narrator:

And there were shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night.
Then the angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone all around them,
and they were terrified. And the angel said to them,

Gabriel:

Fear not; for behold —I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be for all people:
For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord.
You will find him wrapped in bands of cloth and laying in a manger.

Narrator:

And suddenly... there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and
saying: Glory to God in the Highest and peace to His people on Earth!

Gabriel:

"Gloria in excelsis Deo"

All characters:

"Gloria in excelsis Deo!"

Sunday School Music

*Away in a Manger
Go Tell It on the Mountain*

Narrator:

When the angels left them, the shepherds said to one another,

Lead Shepherd:

Let us go to Bethlehem and see what has happened.

Narrator:

So they went with haste and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus in the manger.

(Congregation joins in singing)

Silent 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!***

Narrator:

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, three Kings from the East came to Jerusalem, asking:

Magi 1:

Where is the child who was born a King?

Magi 2:

We have followed the star.

Magi 3:

And have come to pay him tribute.

Kings Trio:

***We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar. Field and fountain, moor and
mountain, following yonder star. O star of wonder, star of might. Star with royal beauty
bright. Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!***

Camel Driver:

They set out; following the star, until it stopped over the place where the baby Jesus lay sleeping.

Narrator 1:

When they saw the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. Entering the house, they
saw the baby Jesus with his mother, Mary; and they knelt down to pay him homage.

Narrator 2:

Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Isaiah:

And the Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth. For unto us a child is born, for unto us a son is given; and all authority will rest upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called: "Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(Congregation joins in singing)

Joy to the World

***Joy to the World, the Lord is come. Let Earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare Him room and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and heaven and nature sing!***

***Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.***

Children will return to the Sunday school wing to return costumes.

Parents may pick them up following worship.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*PREACHING LESSON

Luke 1:57-66

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Child of Wonder

Rev. Carol Hill

AN ADVENT AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in a God who knows our names,

who counts the hairs on our heads, and carries the dreams in our hearts.

We believe that God's fingerprints are all over creation,

and that God is forever speaking to us in a million different ways.

We believe that awe and wonder,

goosebumps and laughter, telling stories and paying attention,

are all ways that we can say thank you to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.

**Therefore we commit ourselves to moving through this world with eyes wide open,
with porous hearts, and grateful spirits.**

We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude,

trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper into God's loving arms.

We believe. We stand in awe. Thanks be to God!

OFFERTORY

Who Would Send a Baby?

Beall

*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

**Wonderful, Awe-inspiring God, thank you! Thank you for punctuating our lives with
goodness. Thank you for the wonder of our children, who inspire and teach us. Thank
you for using each of our gifts to bless the world around us. Continue to use all that
we have and all that we are to shine your light and love. In the name of Emmanuel we
pray, Amen.**

*HYMN

Isn't It Amazing

Insert

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

A Christmas Carillon

Tucker

* 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
McCarty Family, Advent Wreath Lightning

Sasha Gerritson, Director of Music Ministries
Angie & Andrew Weber
Sue Douglass, Organist
Jane Kenas-Heller, Accompanist
Youth Choir
Bells on High, Sandy Bowen

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.

PRCC Christmas Pageant Cast 2025

BABY JESUS

Kellan Joyce

ANGELS

Rosie Pringle, Sawyer Good, Harper Good, Sophia Joyce, Maeve Hunter, Riley Hogle,

TEEN ANGELS

Ella McCarty, Sadie Huddleston

LEAD SHEPHERD

Lily Weber

SHEPHERDS

George Newman, Jack Tone, Bennett Smith

LAMBS

Alex Newman, Finnegan Greenwood, William Greenwood, Declan Joyce

TOWNSPERSON

Emma Hollingsworth

MARY

Rachel Born

JOSEPH

Noah Laginess

WISE ONES

Nate Jarvis, John Weber, Coren Smith

CAMEL DRIVER

Amalia Hogle

STAR CARRIER

Harper Tone

KING HERROD

Emmit Tone

ROMAN SOLDIERS

Nicholas Laginess & Henry Pringle

SCRIBE

Henry Born

INNKEEPER

Jillian Blackburn

NARRATORS

Leah Born, Josh Jarvis, Rae Hill, Drew Chandler, Owen Smith

ISAIAH

Eliza Hinton

GABRIEL

Emily Laginess

**Many thanks to Sasha Gerritson, Ann Swindell, Morgan Tone
and all those who make our pageant possible.**

Star-Child

3. Grown child, old child, mem-ory full or years,
sad child, lost child, sto-ry told in tears,

Refrain
This year, this year, let the day ar-rive when
Christ-mas comes for ev-ery-one, ev-ery-one a-live!

Isn't it amazing?

Text: Anna Strickland (2023)

Music: Traditional French Carol

Seeds with-in the so-il grow Deep un-der the
Deep-er, deep-er grow the roots Reach-ing up-ward
Cell by cell a plant is built Toward the sun the
Ev-en when the earth seems bare Plant the seeds of

ground be-low Plant-ed when the earth was bare
grow the shoots Through the earth they weave and snake
leaves will tilt Nour-ished by the sun and rain
hope with care If you wat-er in the drought

No life show-ing an-y-where Glo-
Un-til so-il starts to break Glo-
To bring forth its seed and grain Glo-
You will reap with joy-ous shout Glo-

ri-a Is-n't it a-ma-zing?

Glo- ri-a

Is-n't it a-ma-zing?

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 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

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Nursery (0-5 years old) Our nursery is open from 9:15 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 Christmas Pageant and head to the Sunday School Wing to return costumes. You can pick them up in the Sunday School Wing after the service.

6th-12th Grades Youth will meet in the Library following the Children's Message for Sunday School! Today's lesson is "Nativity".

Confirmation Class We will gather in Jordan Hall for lunch following worship, load up the Giving Tree gifts, and deliver the gifts to Avalon Park Community Church! We will return to PRCC at 3 PM.

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. Dec. 17 will be the last WW of the semester. We will resume on Jan. 7.

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

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!

FAITHFUL FIRST SUNDAYS: Sunday, January 4 at 9:30 am

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). Topic: Meditation: Finding God in the Quiet Places

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! Gifts are being **DELIVERED TODAY following worship!** 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 December 7th:

- We continue to hold the McGuffey family in our prayers.
- Julie B. asks for prayers for her nephew-in-law, who is struggling with pain and side effects following a bone marrow transplant. We ask for his healing and wholeness.
- Brendan J. requests prayers for the family and friends of John Kalanik, who entered Life in the Resurrection on Dec. 2. John was a strong entrepreneur, great mentor, and a friend to many.
- Gretchen and Dave celebrate the clear follow up scans for niece Sara and sister in law Bonnie.
- We pray for a son who is struggling with depression and is unable to find a job.



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)







Please join us!

Blue Christmas Service

A Service for the Weary

Sunday, December 21st

7:30 pm

Candlelight Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24th

Candlelight, Carols,
and a Christmas Message

4:00 pm

11:00 pm

*Light of the
World*

Your savior is born today
in David's city.

He is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:11



Save the Date

Annual Fundraiser
A Night of



CARNIVAL

PARK RIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH

FEBRUARY 28, 2026



CHURCH EVENTS

SUNDAY, December 14

- 8:30 am - Worship Service (Chapel)
- 10:00 am - Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 11:00 am - Loving Lunches (Parlor)
- 11:15 am - Confirmation Class delivering gifts to Avalon Park

MONDAY, December 15

- 6:30 pm - Executive Committee (off-site)
- 7:00 pm - Yoga (Great Hall)
- 7:30 pm - Board of Directors (off-site)

TUESDAY, December 16

- 10:15 am - Chair Yoga (Great Hall)
- 12:00 pm - Kindred Spirits Cafe (Jordan Hall)
- 6:30 pm - Stephen Ministries Christmas Party (Jordan Hall)

WEDNESDAY, December 17

- 10:00 am - Staff Meeting (Pastoral Office)
- 10:00 am - Women's AA (Parlor)
- 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 - Bible Study (Ellinger Transept)

THURSDAY, December 18

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

*Happy
Birthday*

12/15 Meg Ulery
12/15 Elaine Zabawski
12/16 Char Neumann
12/17 Jim Solomon

*****Note- The Church Office will be closed Dec 24 thru Jan 1. Staff will be working remotely.**



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!

Park Ridge Community Church
100 Courtland Ave. Park Ridge, IL 60068
www.parkridgecommunitychurch.org