

Park Presbyterian Church

January 2024

Monthly Park Branches



Dear Friends,

In the pictures that follow, I hope you will be so pleased to remember—indeed, to be uplifted—by the Ukraine Benefit Concert we offered to the public, last month. Over \$23,000 was raised to assist the on-going humanitarian work of two charities, Nova Ukraine and DTCare!

Sunday afternoon, December 10th, saw over 200 in attendance, with our Sanctuary bathed in candlelight. For more than a few in the pews, this was their first traveled all the way from Connecticut to be present!

And, of course, there were the musicians—among them cellist Michael DeBruyn and violinist Sean Juhl, shown above. They joined four other Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra colleagues who freely offered their musical gifts to aid those in need.



For violinist Marta Krechkovsky—shown speaking at the pulpit—this aid is personal, as her cousin is currently serving in the Ukrainian armed forces. And I am sure all present will never forget the soaring voice of Katie Manukyan, accompanied by our dear Eric. "Prayer for Ukraine" followed. There were voices singing with her (in Ukrainian), and tears in all eyes.

And, yet, I will also personally cherish the thoughts offered by Victoria Luperi, the Associate Principal Clarinet of the PSO, prior to a performance of a quintet by Carol Maria von Weber (see photo). She spoke of the piece arising out of the deep friendship in the life of the composer. "We offer this piece because we are all friends here today," and truly there was a special sense of community present throughout this event. And what playing! What musicianship! The acoustics of our sanctuary made sure everything was heard in perfect detail.



There are so many people to thank, in this all too-brief a write-up, but let me extend a most sincere thank you, first, to your peers on the Session and Board of Deacons who backed up their support for this event by being present to line the sidewalk with luminaries, to attend to the musicians, to act as ushers, to assist attendees, and to also play their part in organizing and overseeing the post-concert reception. They were kept busy, as over 100 attendees—including the musicians—enjoyed a sit-down meal.

I would be remiss not to acknowledge the wonderful donations of food we received from no less than 10—count 'em—businesses—as part of this event. If you are in the area, please contact The Rumpy Beaver, Towne Square and Kretchmar's. I was also so pleased to welcome Father Michael Kochis, of the St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ambridge, to take part in this event. It was hard to miss Michael—standing over 6' 5" in attire! His pre-concert remarks, in both English and Ukrainian, blessed this event. Chery, Redmond, of Sewickley, also deserves our most sincere thanks. Over the previous six months, Cheryl worked tirelessly with me to arrange for musicians, coordinate publicity, and see to the many details involved to produce a top-notch experience. Thank you, Cheryl!

But, most of all, let us remain so thankful for the God-given gifts of those who moved us with their musicianship—as pictured below, from left to right: Our Eric, Katie Manukyan, Victoria Luperi, Michael DeBruyn, Marta Krechkovsky, Sean Juhl, David McCarroll, Carolyn Semes, and Regi Papa. A special call out for David, the Grammy-Winning Concertmaster of the Pittsburgh Symphony: David had performed in South Korea just two days before this concert—and yet he said he was privileged to be present! Below is the thank you note I received from Victoria, following this event:

" Thank you so much for hosting the Benefit Concert beautifully decorated and there was such a great feeling amongst the group during the concert and at the gathering afterward. It was very meaningful for us to be able to use our art as a vehicle for such important work, and we are so grateful to you for inviting us to do this work in your community and your church. Please extend our gratitude to all who volunteered to m



And what of the monies raised?

Please see the article following this one, which provides an on-the-ground update from our friends at DTCare. You will see the latest shipment of aid that recently departed from Pittsburgh, along with pictures taken, in Ukraine, of the delivery of aid, as well as the on-going pragmas offered by DTCare.

I recently traveled to the headquarters of DTCare, located in Moon Township, to witness 40 pallets being finalized for shipment. They arrive in Poland, and then the items are delivered overland to Ukraine. These deliveries are often made within miles of current hostilities and at personal risk to those driving cars and trucks. Let us keep all the folk at DTCare in our prayers.

In gratitude to God for this event—and praying for Peace and Goodwill to enfold our planet,

Faithfully,

Todd

An update from DTCare



DTCare loaded our last shipment in December of last year that sets sail for Ukraine this week. The shipment includes essential arts and crafts items, mobility aids, medical supplies, prosthetics, feminine hygiene, and more that will support our free art therapy sessions and humanitarian and medical supply distribution initiative in Ukraine.

Our programs are tailored to meet the unique and constantly changing needs of the regions where we work, ensuring that these supplies help and benefit Ukrainians during this challenging time and will continue to be needed in rebuilding efforts.

DTCare loaded our last shipment in December of last year that sets sail for Ukraine this week. The shipment includes essential arts and crafts items, mobility aids, medical supplies, prosthetics, feminine hygiene, and more that will support our free art therapy sessions and humanitarian and medical supply distribution initiative in Ukraine. Our programs are tailored to meet the unique and constantly changing needs of the regions where we work, ensuring that these supplies help and benefit Ukrainians during this challenging time and will continue to be needed in rebuilding efforts.





DTCare's Mykolaiv Creative Arts Therapy Center opened in September of last year to provide multifaceted mental health and psychosocial support to the Mykolaiv community. Each shipment we send includes the supplies that our therapists and clients utilize during our free art therapy sessions currently offered in various regions in Ukraine, including Odesa, Lviv, and Mykolaiv. DTCare's Mykolaiv Creative Arts Therapy Center offers free community arts programs, group art therapy sessions, and one-on-one support.

DTCare works closely with our partners and fellow organizations in Ukraine to ensure the supplies we send meet the urgent needs while also providing a mental health support component by providing free psychological support to children, women, veterans, and other vulnerable populations free-of-charge and creating awareness for the high demand of mental health support in the country given the challenges and trauma Ukrainians face.

Courtney Robson, DTCare's Ukraine Operations Coordinator, shared the impact of the funds raised during the Third Benefit Concert for Ukraine. With the help of the Park Presbyterian Church and all the generous families that attended, the concert raised \$23,464.17!



FACILITIES

Another year has passed, but we have some good things to start the new year.

1. HEALTH SCREENING will be visiting us in Guild Hall on Jan. 13, 2024. The cost depends on the procedures you choose. To be proactive about your health for yourself, your family, and your community, please register for these health screenings and receive a special discount today by calling 1-800-640-6307.

2. The RED CROSS Blood drive will be here in Guild Hall on Jan. 22, 2024 from 10:30 am-4:00 pm.
No cost.

The facilities meeting will be on Jan. 2, 2024. in The Gathering Room. Workday to be determined.
New volunteers will be accepted.

With Prayers for the new year.

Facilities Chair
Bob Gourley

YOUTH BOWLING PARTY

The Beaver-Butler Presbytery is having a Youth Group Bowling Party. The party will be held Sunday, January 28th from 3:00 – 5:00 pm at the Family Bowlaway Fun Center located at 540 Fairground Hill Road, Butler. You must RSVP to Diana by January 15th by calling 412-915-2097 if you plan to attend.

CHURCH ELECTION RESULTS

Church elections were held at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 10 and here are the results:

Elders: Harley Allen, Jeff Anderson, Tim Heist, Sandra Parker

Deacons: Kathy Bittner, Emily Dugan, Mary Lou Leslie, June Phillips

Auditor: Dave Flynn

2024 Nominating Committee: Jonelle Conley, Carol Connelly, Lucy Flynn, Deb McCowin

Thank you to each of you who volunteered to serve and may you find fulfillment in your position as you use your gifts and talents to serve the One who gives you all you will need.

NEW PICTORIAL DIRECTORY



Members: Dee Byers, Carol Connelly, Bob Correll, June Phillips. Co-chairs: Mary Gaydos and Sandra Parker.

In 2024, we will be making arrangements to have a pictorial directory printed. We will need the cooperation of the entire congregation to make this successful. Please be mindful of this.

We will still be providing snacks on the first Sunday of each month. Volunteers for any month are appreciated but not always necessary.

Thank you, church family, from the MIC.

THE CENTER END OF YEAR UPDATE

Hello, partners in the Gospel! As the year is winding down, I wanted to share some updates with you. Because of your support in 2023:

- The Center Thrift was launched and is actively sharing Christ with people, building relationships, and serving more & more people!
- The Center was able to provide over 7,000 meals to students and distribute over 3,000 bags of snacks for the weekends.
- We were able to match 36 high school students with young children in our peer mentoring program and match 15 adults with children in our community-based mentoring program.
- Over 300 individual students were impacted through our after-school and summer programs, camps, and trips.
- Over 720 bags of food were distributed through our food bank.
- Over 50 adults have been served regularly through our adult programs.
- 100s of bikes have been repaired and distributed through Communicycle.

I also wanted to let you know about an adult cooking class we will be hosting in partnership with Penn State Extension on Wednesdays from 5:00-6:30 from January 24- February 28, 2024. This will meet at The Center and we will provide child care upon request. It is intended especially for caregivers of children, is hands-on, and covers topics such as meal planning, healthy eating habits, and how to feed a family on a small budget. Please pass this information along to any families you know who may benefit from it.

We are beyond grateful for your prayers and continued support! 2024 has some exciting opportunities we can't wait to share with you.

Jen Miller
Executive Director
The Center
www.midland.center

PARK PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Park Presbyterian Preschool will hold its open house on Saturday, January 20th, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Registration for the 2024-2025 school year is now open. Come check us out! If you are unable to attend the open house but would like more information, please call the office at 724-775-2936 or email parkpreschool@parkpres.org.



PARK'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

Approximately 75 people enjoyed a delicious meal of stuffed pork chops, mashed potatoes and sautéed green beans prepared by chef Cliff Dietz and Lucy Flynn. We were blessed with songs from our preschoolers and beautiful Christmas music from Sharon Schaller and Eric Kochanowski. And finally, we topped it off with warm fellowship and wonderful desserts from gracious attendees!

Thank all of you so much for your help and attendance from The Membership Involvement Committee.



GIVING TREE



On December 17th, Park Church delivered presents to 30 children in our community through the guidance of Beaver County Children & Youth Services. The Mission Commission thanks each member and the Christmas spirit of giving to others this holiday season.

HEINZ CHAPEL CHOIR CONCERT - A HOLIDAY OUTING

The Ladies of Park sponsored a holiday outing to Heinz Chapel on Sunday, December 3rd, for 42 Park Church members and friends. The group enjoyed a holiday concert performance by the Heinz Chapel Choir, presented annually at the Heinz Chapel located on the Pitt campus in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. After worship at Park, many enjoyed a box lunch in the Gathering Area before boarding the bus driven by our very own Colleen Chaffin. A collection of *a cappella* performances by the choir conclude with a choral setting of the 23rd Psalm. A deafening, but timely, clap "Christmas in the Rain" drew smiles from the choir. The group gave witness to a gorgeous rainbow before boarding the bus for the return trip to Beaver.

PARK'S ANNUAL CHILDREN'S PAGEANT

Thank you, Sunday School children, for the gift you gave us during the Worship service on Sunday, December 17, with your songs and pageantry! You filled us with the joy of the Christmas story, and we are so thankful for you.





January Preschool Newsletter

Happy New Year 2024!



It's the most wonderful time of the year, especially when you are in the presence of excited young children. We cracked dinosaur eggs, went on a Dino dig as Paleontologists do, and moved around romping and chomping to dinosaur songs. We melted Arctic Animals from their icy capture with eye droppers and salty water, went In and Out the Windows in our singing game, and accepted Santa's invitation to part in the Reindeer Games.



But, I think the highlight of the month was our trip to Old Economy Village. The docents at the village told a tale of a stray cat and the railroad with stories and song, scenery, props and activities. And on our last stop we met Belsnickel, the keeper of Santa's book of naughty and nice. Needless to say we were relieved to learn that we were ALL on the nice list. A big thank you to our grandparent volunteers.



We also learned how giving makes us feel happy. We've been busy making gifts, cards and ornaments and wrapping a present for our families in the Elf Workshop. Oh, and a few more important bits of news: we shared our Christmas songs, Elf play and Trepak plate dance with our families on December 21st. What a special Christmas party day it was! A special thank you to our parent and grandparent volunteers for helping the day to run smoothly.

A look ahead to January: We will be saying goodnight and happy hibernation to our classroom bear, Coco. We have been feeding him all school year in anticipation of this winter event. We will continue to chop word parts, listen for beginning, middle and end sounds in our Heggerty Phonics program; we are very good at giving thumbs up and down to rhyming word pairs, and we like to come up with our own rhyming words, too! We 'll be ringing in the New Year with resolutions, firework fork prints, Best Part of Christmas L.A.M.B. page, and measuring our height to see how much we have grown.

Registration for the upcoming 2024/25 school year will be open January 3rd, 2024. We will be hosting an Open House Event on 01/20/2024. Please pass the word - there is a lot of fun learning going on in our school!

Mrs. Huwe and Ms. Britney

As a ministry of the Park Presbyterian Church, the goal of the Preschool is to
" Love God and" Love Others



Scotland 2025—Fancy a Trip?

It is with great pleasure—and anticipation—that I have begun discussions through AAA Member Choice Vacations to organize a trip to Scotland in 2025! Although these first discussions are VERY preliminary, here are some initial details:

Type of Trip: Guided Tour. We will have tour guide--plus Pastor Todd will offer commentary (not sermons!)

Length of trip: 9-10 days

Time of Trip: Early June

Group Size Limit: 45

Group Eligibility: All are welcome—park members, Friends—anyone who loves haggis!

Group Age Range: All are welcome, Families, please come!

Landfare Cost: \$3500-4000 per head, based on double occupancy in rooms. The tour package will include some meals, but not all. As the size of the group grows, the cost per head will come down.

Airfare Cost: Estimated \$900-1,000

Transportation: By large coach

Mobility Requirements: Expect to walk some distances, but walkers can also fit on the coach

Proposed Itinerary/Visits:

Ayr and Alloway—the birthplace of Robert Burns, the great Scottish poet, and the place where Pastor Todd began his ministry. Magnificent view of the Irish Sea!
Glasgow—a city with a rich industrial and artistic heritage

Edinburgh—the nation's capital, featuring the legendary Castle, famous churches and royal residences (pictured)



Stirling—site of pivotal Battle of Bannockburn in 1314, with another famous castle (of course!)

St. Andrews—epicenter of Reformation in Scotland, plus home of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club!

Loch Lomond—the gateway to the Scottish Highlands, with (hopefully) plenty of sunshine to make the loch (lake) sparkle during our visit! (pictured)



Fort William and Glen Coe—located further up the Highlands, and the site of an infamous clan massacre!

Isle of Mull and Island of Iona—venture into the Inner Hebrides Islands, plus visit the place where Christianity entered Scotland back in the 6th century. Pastor Todd served as a volunteer with the Iona Community in the spring of 1995. (pictured)

Interested?

While so many details are preliminary at this point, it would be so helpful to know if you have a serious interest in going. Please speak directly to me, as soon as feasible. As our headcount grows, so our planning will also advance.

D o n ' t m i s s w h a t I a m q u i t e s u r e w i l l b e a t r i p y

Faithfully—and Scots Wha Hae!

Todd



MARK YOUR JANUARY CALENDAR!

JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11 am	8	9 Playdates at Park Youth Hall 9:30 am - 11:30 am	10 The Chosen Class 1:30 pm Room 206	11	12	13 New Deacon & Elder Orientation 9 am-1pm The Gathering Area Life Line Screening Guild Hall by appointment
14 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11 am Installation of New Elders & Deacons 12 pm	15	16 Playdates at Park Youth Hall 9:30 am - 11:30 am Session 7 pm Room 207	17 The Chosen Class 1:30 pm Room 206	18	19	20 Park Preschool Open House 10 am-12 pm
21 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11 am	22 Red Cross Blood Drive 10:30am-4:00pm Guild Hall	23 Playdates at Park Youth Hall 9:30 am - 11:30 am	24 The Chosen Class 1:30 pm Room 206	25	26	27
28 Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11 am Annual Meeting following worship	29	30 Playdates at Park Youth Hall 9:30 am - 11:30 am	31 The Chosen Class 1:30 pm Room 206			



Desiree Kruzelyak	1/1	Eric Kochanowski	1/2	L.J. Wolfe	1/3	Harley Allen	1/3
Mary Lou Leslie	1/4	Sue Hage	1/4	Emily Dugan	1/6	Judy Angleberger	1/8
Barbara Anderson	1/9	LeahRae Ringer	1/10	Harry Pease	1/10	Cindy Sheline	1/16
Bob Davis	1/17	Marjie O' Ne i	1/19	Jan Pasuit	1/23	Florence Zelinske	1/26
Vicki Mann	1/26	Arlene Gallagher	1/26	Ginny Flick	1/27	David Saylor	1/27
Quinn Dugan	1/30						