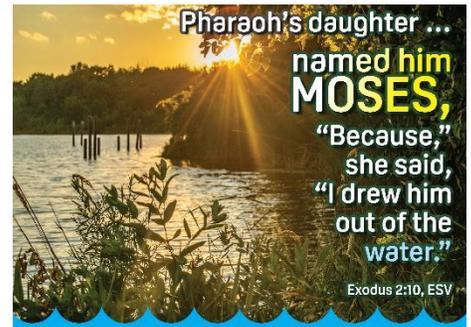


The United Church of Big Rapids
August 27, 2023
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

I've Got Peace Like a River, by Mark Hayes

❖ **Call to Worship**

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth;

People: And humanity with a divine design.

Leader: When we feel overwhelmed,

People: God hears our cries.

Leader: When we are afraid,

People: God will be our guide through the shadows.

Leader: In our faith, hope, and love,

People: God rejoices with us.

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

People: Blessed be the Lord!

❖ **Prayer of Invocation**

Gracious and loving God, we have been called and we rejoice to come together as your people. We are here for praise and to be renewed as your presence moves through us. May our eyes encounter your grace, and our hearts learn to love more generously. May our minds be opened in prayer and our hands consecrated for the service of others. Gathered to worship and sent out to serve, may we be known as the body of Christ as needed for this day. Amen.

❖ **Hymn #229**

From All That Dwell Below the Skies, tune: Lasst uns erfreuen

Scripture Lessons

Old Testament Lesson (from the Revised Standard Version)

Exodus 1:8 – 2:10

⁸ Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, 'Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.' ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard service in

mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ 'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.' ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

¹ Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him for three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. 'This must be one of the Hebrews' children,' she said. ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?' ⁸ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Yes.' So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.' So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, 'because', she said, 'I drew him out of the water.'

Leader: This is what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

All Heroes Great and Small – Rev. David Wheeler

Sharing of our Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Our Father/Creator, who is in heaven, hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom/kin_dom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom/kin_dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Call to Offering

Offertory

I'm Gonna Live so God Can Use Me, by Gregg Sewell

❖ Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.

❖ Prayer of Dedication

All good gifts around us come from you, O God. In you we have life and the grace of new life in Christ. As you have given us gifts, so we add ours, that your grace may grow and endure. Amen.

❖ Hymn

Come, Let Us Join with Faithful Souls, tune: Azmon

Come, Let Us Join with Faithful Souls

William G. Tarrant, 1892; alt.

Rev. 5:11-14



1 Come, let us join with faith-ful souls our song of faith to raise;
2 Faith - ful are all who love the truth and per - fect truth pro - claim,
3 And faith-ful are the gen - tle hearts to whom the power is given
4 O God of hosts, our faith re - new, and grant us, in your grace,



One fam - i - ly in heart are we, and one the God we praise.
Who stead-fast stand at God's right hand and glo - ri - fy God's name.
Of ev - ery hearth to make a home, of ev - ery home a heaven.
To join the songs sung by the saints in ev - ery time and place.

❖ **Benediction**

Postlude

Rejoice!, by Anthony Giamanco



The altar flowers today are given by John & Carlene Gahrs
in celebration of their 34th wedding anniversary.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome back to the United Church, Rev. Wheeler! We're glad to have you here. Thank you for sharing your message with us again.

Give to the Pantry! Project Starburst continues to have a high demand for food. The Mission Commission "Give to the Pantry" program has identified applesauce as the "food of the month". (As a heads up, next month's food will be spaghetti sauce.) With the demand, any non-perishable food item is also greatly appreciated. The bin in the Narthex is available to accept donations. Thank you for your generous support to our community through giving to Project Starburst!

Sunday school start date – It's that time! Sunday school classes will start on the first Sunday after Labor Day. Plans are being finalized for multiple classes. If you would like to volunteer to teach on a Sunday, please let Amanda Little, Deb Ducat, or the church office know. Watch for additional details in the next newsletter.

Building Use – There are lots of people that want to use rooms in our building. Please be sure that you check with the office before your meeting to reserve your space. If it's not on the calendar, there could be confusion as to who should be where. Please help keep the calendar up to date and check with the office! Thank you!

THANK YOU to all the volunteers that help out around the church and don't often get a shout-out. Small maintenance projects, outside work that keep the church looking good, serving as liturgists, hosting coffee hours, serving on commissions and committees, providing altar flowers, and helping with the media team each Sunday. Your efforts are invaluable! Volunteers make our church work, and we are grateful for your service!

Contacting the church office - You may contact the office at any time via email, secretary@unitedchurchbr.org or you can call **231-527-9567** between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday with questions or concerns. This phone number also accepts messages outside of regular business hours. You can also mail the office at 120 S. State Street, Big Rapids, MI 49307.

Financial Information – the Governing Board and Treasurer are sharing this data monthly with you. If you have questions, contact Amy Buse, Treasurer, or a member of the Governing Board.

	Expenditures	Income
June 2023	\$ 16,429.35	\$ 6,296.45
Year-to-Date (Jan-June 2023)	\$ 97,992.35	\$172,415.05*

This includes \$35,220.92 we received from the Employee Retention Tax Credit Program (ERTC) along with \$30,919 in donations for the elevator



The United Church of Big Rapids

Our vision is to honor all children of God through following the way of Jesus Christ.

Our mission is to celebrate all creation as an active presence in our community, engaging in transformational worship and nurturing families and relationships, as we cultivate Jesus' justice and love.



The United Church of Big Rapids is a union of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ. It is a congregation that worships together, seeks opportunities to serve others, encourages one another to grow in intellect and spirit, strives for social justice, and fully embraces Jesus' call to love one another as God loves us.



Because we believe God's whole creation is good, blessed, and sacred, we are an open and affirming community of faith. We celebrate persons of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, family structures, faith backgrounds, abilities, and economic circumstances.

As valued members of this congregation all persons are invited to equally participate in the full life of the church - worship, sacraments, ministry, fellowship, leadership, responsibilities, sorrows, blessings, and the continued presence of Jesus Christ.



Ministers	The Body of Christ
Guest Worship Leader	Rev. Devon Herrell
Administrative Assistant	Julie Cole
Organist	Paul Heidemann
Bell Choir Director	Judy Tressler
Chancel Choir Director	Linda Rinehart
Chancel Choir Assistant Director	Katie McInnis
Moderator	Marshall Henry
Elder in Charge	Frank Hartley
Sound Board	Trish McHugh, Peter McHugh
Sanctuary Sound	Wayne McKay
Liturgist	Sue Glatz
Ushers	Maxine McKay, Don Olree, Marilyn Loken
Livestream Team	Annie Ducat, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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