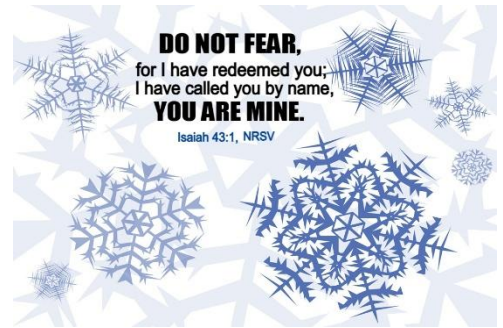


The United Church of Big Rapids
January 12, 2025
Baptism of the Lord

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Choral Introit

Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship

Leader: When we pass through the cleansing waters of baptism and the troubled waters of our lives, God declares:

People: I will be with you.

Leader: When we go through the fires that refine us and the fires that threaten our livelihoods, God declares:

People: I will be with you.

Leader: Even when we travel to the far corners of the earth or down into the depths of our souls, God declares:

People: I will be with you.

Leader: So come, let us worship God whose love never fails, whose presence never leaves, whose mercies never end.

People: Praise be to God who, in the form of Jesus, waded into the waters of baptism to prove God's solidarity with us! Amen.

❖ **Unison Invocation**

Holy One, awaken us again to Your outpouring Spirit of Love. Through this generous gift, stretch our souls wide and form us into channels of your healing grace. Gift us with an ability to recognize You in each other, all imprinted with Your beloved blessing. Clarify our intentions, purify our actions, fill our words with grace and our hearts with hope. Yes, soak our thinking, our praying, our hoping, our everything in You. Amen.

❖ **Hymn #138**

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty, tune: Nicaea

Scripture Lesson

Old Testament Lesson (from the New Revised Standard Version)

Isaiah 43:1-7

- ¹ But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
- ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
- ³ For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
- ⁴ Because you are precious in my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
- ⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
- ⁶ I will say to the north, 'Give them up',
and to the south, 'Do not withhold';
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
- ⁷ everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.'

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Chancel Choir Anthem

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need, by Mack Wilbers

Sermon

Identity Crisis: We Are Chosen – Rev. Devon Herrell

Baptized in Water, Tune: Buinessan

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.

Choral Amen

Hymn #492

Baptized in Water, Tune: Buinessan

Call to Offering

Offertory

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

Gracious God, we bring our offerings before you, as we remember the gift of the Holy Spirit descending like a dove at the baptism of Jesus. May our gifts today be filled with the same Spirit, spreading your love and grace to all who are touched by them. Amen.

Affirmation of Baptism

Greeting

Leader: Dear friends, on this day of re-creation we recall Christ's baptism, and we claim and remember our own.

People: We gather at this font of living water to celebrate the gift of God's redeeming grace.

Leader: For just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

People: For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, male or female—and were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Leader: Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Affirmation of Faith

Leader: Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in God?

People: I believe in God, the creator of heaven and earth.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, the only one begotten of God before all worlds.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in God, the Holy Spirit.

Leader: Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and community, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer?

People: I will, with God's help.

Leader: Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being?

People: I will, with God's help.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: In this and all we do, keep us faithful to our Savior Jesus Christ, forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing of Water

Leader: Let us pray:

...kept faithful until you receive us at last in your eternal home.

People: Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was and is, and shall always be, world without end. Amen.

Remembrance of Baptism

❖ Hymn Insert

I Will Come to You (You Are Mine), tune: You Are Mine

JESUS CHRIST: LIFE

177

I Will Come to You You Are Mine

Leader or All

1 "I will come to you in the si-lence;
2 "I am hope for all who are hope-less;
3 "I am strength for all the de-spair-ing,
(4) am the Word that leads all to free-dom;

I will lift you from all your fear.
I am eyes for all who long to see. (2) In the
heal-ing for the ones who dwell in shame.
am the peace the world can-not give.

You will hear my voice; I claim you as my choice. Be
shad-ows of the night, I will be your light.
All the blind will see; the lame will all run free, and
I will call your name, em-brac-ing all your pain. Stand

still and know I am here. (to stanza 2)
Come and rest in me. (to Refrain)
all will know my name. (to Refrain)
up, now walk and live! (to Refrain)

Refrain All
Do not be a-fraid, I am with you. I have called you each by
name. Come and fol-low me, I will bring you home; I
love you and you are mine." 4 "I

Benediction

Postlude



Welcome to our visitors today! We're glad you chose to worship with us! Please be sure to sign the attendance sheet with your name and email/address in the pew in front of you. We like to keep up with those that visit us.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Give to the Pantry! Project Starburst continues to have a high demand for food. The Mission Commission's "Give to the Pantry" program has identified cereal as the "food of the month" for January. With the demand, any non-perishable food item is greatly appreciated. The bin in the Narthex is available to accept donations.

Book Study – A new book study will begin on January 14 at 7:00 pm in the Parlor. The book selected is "Everything Happens for a Reason: and Other Lies I've Loved," by Kate Bowler. The book is available on Amazon.com and is currently on sale for \$9.99. If you would like to come to the book study and can't obtain a book, please let the church office know. For the 1/14 meeting, please read Chapters 1-5.

Pub Theology – Tuesday, January 21, 7:00 pm at Crankers. Join the fellowship and conversation!

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. You can also find information about our church on our website: www.unitedchurchbr.org or by visiting our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/UnitedBigRapids.

Pastor Devon's contact information – If you need to contact Pastor Devon, you may contact her by phone for pastoral care needs at 231-629-2302. You may also reach out via email: devonherrell@gmail.com. Pastor Devon does have another full-time job, so in-person meeting time is limited. She plans to be in the office on Thursdays from 9:00 am – 11:45 am. You may contact the church office to set up an appointment.

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
November 2024	\$ 9,195.06	\$ 17,067.69
Year-to-Date (Jan-Nov 2024)	\$ 176,948.23	\$ 215,507.76




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
Lead Minister	Rev. Devon Herrell
Administrative Assistant	Julie Cole
Organist	Paul Heidemann
Guest Accompanist.....	Ginny Kerwin
Chancel Choir Director	Linda Rinehart
Chancel Choir Assistant Director	Katie McInnis
Bell Choir Director.....	Judy Tressler
Custodian	Erin Dumond
Moderator.....	Marshall Henry
Sound Board	Mike Rinehart
Sanctuary Sound	Wayne McKay
Liturgist	Kathleen Keys Singh
Ushers.....	Jane Grzybowski, Paul Challender, Don Stephen
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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