

**The United Church of Big Rapids
January 19, 2025
Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Choral Introit

Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship

Leader: No matter how far we wander from you, O God,

People: your steadfast love finds us.

Leader: No matter how unjust the world seems to us, O God,

People: your steadfast righteousness sustains us.

Leader: No matter how vulnerable our lives seem to us, O God,

People: your steadfast presence gives us hope.

Leader: No matter how unloved or uncared for we feel, O God,

People: you hear our cries and answer our prayers.

Leader: Draw near to us as we worship together.

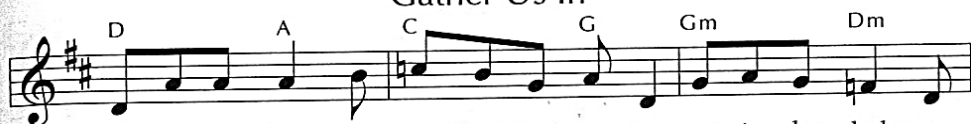
People: Thanks be to God!

❖ **Unison Invocation**

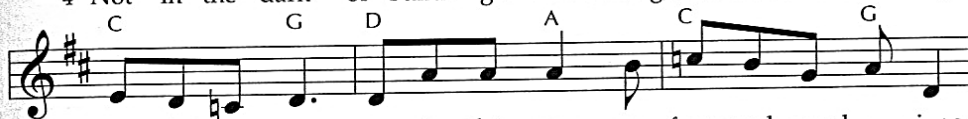
Gracious and loving God, source of all wholeness, forgiveness and mercy, may your Spirit heal those who are torn, mend those who are broken, and protect those who are fragile. Enable us, O God, through the gift of your steadfast love, to remember who we are and whose we are. In your love, may we be true and faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Here in This Place

Gather Us In



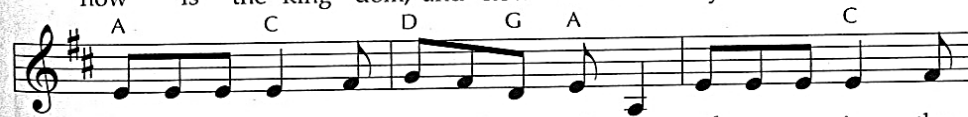
1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness
 2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who
 3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter; here we will take the
 4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



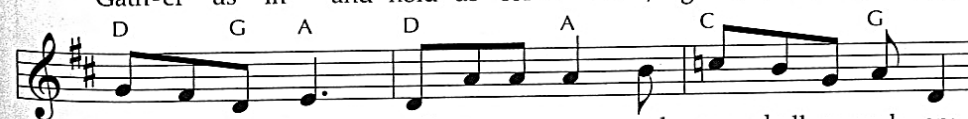
van-ished a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,
 bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light years a-way: here in this place the new light is shin-ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en; gath-er us in, the
 Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion; give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;
 proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low-ly;
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 give us the cour-age to en-ter the song.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Scripture Lesson

Old Testament Lesson (from the Inclusive Bible)

Psalms 38:5-10

⁵ Your love, YHWH, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

⁶ Your justice is like the mountains in their splendor,
your judgements like the great deep.
Whether human or animal, YHWH,
you keep us all in your care.

⁷ How precious is your love!
Whether creatures of heaven or children of earth,
we all find refuge in the shadow of your wings,

⁸ We feast on the bounty of your estate,
and drink from the stream of your delights.

⁹ In you is the wellspring of Life,
and in your light we become enlightened.

¹⁰ Prolong your love for those who know you,
and your justice for upright hearts.

New Testament Lesson

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Now dear sisters and brothers, I want to instruct you on the matter of spiritual gifts. ² Remember how, when you were still nonbelievers, you were drawn to mute idols and led astray by them?

³ It is for this reason that I want you to understand that no one can be speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit and say, "Curse Jesus"; by the same token, no one can say, "Jesus Christ reigns supreme," unless under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There is a variety of gifts, but always the same Spirit. ⁵ There is a variety of ministries, but we serve the same One. ⁶ There is a variety of outcomes, but the same God is working in all of them.

⁷ To each person is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

⁸ To one, the Spirit gives wisdom in discourse, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit. ⁹ Through the spirit, one person receives faith; through the same Spirit, another is given the gift of healing; ¹⁰ and still another, miraculous powers. Prophecy is given to one; to another, power to distinguish one spirit from another. One receives the gift of tongues; another, that of interpreting tongues. ¹¹ But it is one and the same Spirit who produces all these gifts and distributes them as she wills.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Chancel Choir Anthem

Love and Mercy, by Walter L. Pelz

Sermon

Identity Crisis: A Variety of Gifts – Rev. Devon Herrell

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 #563

Lift Every Voice and Sing, tune: Lift Every Voice

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**

God, we look at our offerings and wonder if they will change the world today. Giving helps us remember. We remember that you are generous. We remember that when we give our money, we mean that we're giving ourselves. We remember that you working in us does change the world, letting your kingdom come on earth. Bless all of these gifts. Amen.

Forward through the Ages

Heb. 11; 1 Cor. 12

Frederick Lucian Hosmer, 1908; alt.



1 For - ward through the a - ges, in un - bro - ken line,
2 Wide grows God's do - min - ion, reign of love and peace;
3 Not a - lone we con - quer, not a - lone we fall;



move the faith - ful spir - its at the call di - vine;
for it we must la - bor, till all striv - ings cease.
in each loss or tri - umph, lose or tri - umph all.



Gifts in dif - fering mea - sure, hearts of one ac - cord,
Proph - ets have pro - claimed it, teach - ers tes - ti - fied,
Bound by God's far pur - pose in one liv - ing whole,



man - i - fold in ser - vice, one the sure re - ward.
po - ets sung its glo - ry, mar - tyrs for it died.
move we on to - geth - er to the shin - ing goal.



Refrain

For - ward through the a - ges, in un - bro - ken line,



Move the faith - ful spir - its at the call di - vine.

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.



The altar flowers are given by Susan H. Grant
in appreciation for my United Church family.



The choir thought you might like to read the lyrics of their anthem today:

"Love and Mercy"

by: Walter L. Pelz

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Love and mercy, thistle, thorn,
God is here and life is born.
Love and mercy, ashes, dust,
God is here; in God we trust.

Love and mercy, awful tree,
God is here, so let it be.
Love and mercy, silent hill,
God is here; O death, be still.

Love and mercy, broken bread,
God is here and life is shed.
Love and mercy, heaven earth,
God is here for second birth.

Love and mercy, harvest home,
God is here and love is done
Love and mercy, Christ, the Lamb.
Angel choirs, one God, I Am.

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.

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

Winter Visits – from Bill Burmeister: *"Hello friends – Hope all is well with you. Winter is upon us, and it is tough to get through. As most of you know, Nancy is in Hospice at the Big Rapids Brook. Being confined to a wheelchair, it gets lonely!!! If you are in Big Rapids, please visit her. She loves company!"*

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
December 2024	\$ 21,327.71	\$ 12,232.12
Year-to-Date (Jan-Dec 2024)	\$ 198,525.69	\$ 227,739.88

A few notes on the budget:


- Just a reminder the expenses would be larger if we were paying a full-time pastor
- The December income includes \$1,650 from the Christmas Offering




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	Trish McHugh
Sanctuary Sound	Wayne McKay
Liturgist	Susan H. Grant
Ushers.....	Jane Grzybowski, Don Olree
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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