

The United Church of Big Rapids
(120 South State St., Big Rapids MI 49307)

July 2, 2023

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

❖ You are invited to stand



And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones... he will certainly not lose his reward.
Matthew 10:42

Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

Meditation on "Materna," by Matthew McConnell

❖ **Call to Worship** (*from Psalm 89*)

Leader: We will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;

People: **With our mouths we will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.**

Leader: We declare that your steadfast love is established forever.

People: **Your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

Leader: You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: 'I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.'"

People: **Happy are we the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your countenance; we exult in your name all day long, and extol your righteousness.**

Leader: For you are the glory of our strength; by your favor our horn is exalted. Come together, fellow children of God and let us sing His praises, listen to his word, and prepare ourselves for the coming days.

❖ **Hymn #150**

Come, Christians, Join to Sing, tune: Madrid

❖ **Invocation**

God of all peoples, we give you thanks and praise for this time together to share worship as a community of believers. Knowing our weaknesses you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, that we might live freely, out of the shadow of death. We know the joy of You. May your words today give us strength, compassion, and knowledge to share through example and word, your love of all of your creation. In the name of Christ, our savior. Amen.

Scripture Lessons

Epistle Reading (*from the Revised Standard version Bible*)

Romans 6:12-23

¹² Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. ¹³ No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, ¹⁸ and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

²⁰ When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hymn #281

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah, tune: CWM Rhondda

Gospel Lesson (from the Revised Standard version Bible)

Matthew 10:40-42

⁴⁰ 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴² and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

A Cup of Water – Bob MacCord

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

Eternal Father, Strong to Save, by Nigel Williams

❖ **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**

We thank you Lord and praise you for the many blessings we have received from your bounty. Now we return this portion of our earnings so that your work may continue to be done wherever there is a need. We pray in gratitude through our redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

❖ **Hymn #357**

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee, tune: Maryton

❖ **Benediction**

Postlude

With Faith Transcending, by Lani Smith



The altar flowers are given by Roger & Megan Vajda
in memory of Megan's dad, Randy Mack.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to Bob MacCord for leading worship and sharing his insights with us today. Welcome back to the United Church of Big Rapids!

Communion – we will be celebrating Communion on the second Sunday of July and August to accommodate the schedule of our supply pastors.

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

Our annual outdoor service will be held at the pavilions at Northend Park on Sunday, July 16, at 9:30 am. Our worship there will be led by our conference minister, Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, and followed by a potluck. You are asked to bring a dish to pass, your own table service, and a lawn chair. Lemonade, iced tea, and coffee will be provided by the Spiritual Life Commission which is hosting the event. There is always plenty of food, so please plan to come even if you aren't able to bring something. If you have questions, please contact Maryanne Heidemann or the church office.

The Elevator Fund – Our elevator needs updating! We are asking the congregation to raise money to help pay for the upgrade. Any amount donated is greatly appreciated! Please write elevator on the envelope/check when making your donation. You can also make a donation using our DONATE webpage. Additional information about the elevator upgrades and/or financing can be obtained from Amy Buse, Treasurer, or members of the Property & Finance Commission.

THANK YOU to the volunteers that sign up to host Fellowship time in the Parlor, to those that provide altar flowers, and to those that serve as liturgists or multi-media team members each week. Our church needs each and every volunteer and staff member to make our Sunday worship service come together. You are appreciated! If you'd like to help, in any way, check the bulletin board outside the office for opportunities, or call the church office. Sign-up sheets for July & August have been posted.

Friendship Pads – Please sign your name and contact information in the Friendship pad that is located in the pew in front of you. This helps us to identify guests that attend worship. Thank you!

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.

Financial Update:

	Expenditures	Income
May 2023	\$ 16,833.93	\$ 44,298.25*
Year-to-Date (Jan-May 2023)	\$ 81,563.00	\$ 166,118.60*

* 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	Bob MacCord
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	Mike Rinehart
Sanctuary Sound	Wayne McKay
Liturgist	Kari Clark
Fellowship time Hosts	Dee Van Horn, Bruce Fredrick
Ushers	Maxine McKay, Alice Dean, Marilyn Loken
Livestream Team	Amy Buse, Annie Ducat, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

*Permission to use the music in this service obtained from OneLicense with license #A-712368