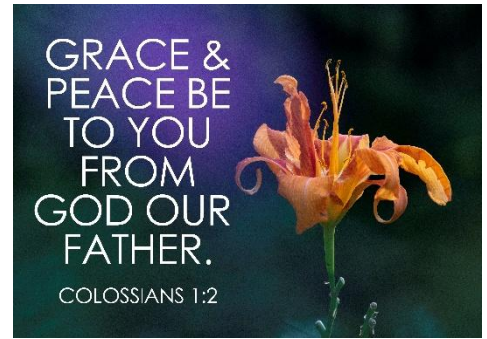


The United Church of Big Rapids
July 13, 2025
Outdoor Service

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Welcome

Announcements

❖ **Call to Worship**

Leader: We come to worship this day, knowing deeply what it means to struggle.

People: We remember times in our lives when we've felt hopeless, yearning for someone to care for us.

Leader: In this divided climate that might tempt us to ignore the neighbors in our midst, we need only tap into our own humanity.

People: Because we know what it means to struggle, we are challenged each day to show radical love to our neighbors.

Leader: Even those who aren't like us.

People: Especially those who aren't like us.

Leader: May our worship today help us remember times we have been helped ...

People: ...and how we can become the helpers, and the hope-bearers, in this world.

❖ **Invocation**

Leader: Let us pray:

Holy God, we come together to worship, a people who would like to think that we love you with all our hearts and souls, with all our might, but there are so many other things in our lives that clamor for our attention that we often relegate you to Sundays and times when we want you to rescue us.

Most of us really do want you to be the one in whom we live and move and have our being. We really do want to listen to your voice above all of the other voices in our lives. But we get bogged down in the daily routine. We forget who we are. We forget who you are. We forget what the church can be.

So here we are, gathered before you today, with our human foibles and our short attention spans, asking that you would make yourself known to us, that you would help us to recognize the presence of the Holy, that you would continue to challenge us, inspire us, and make us into the people you want us to be.

Amen.

Hymn Sing

Scripture Lesson *(from the Inclusive Bible)*

Old Testament Lesson

Deuteronomy 30:9-14

⁹ YHWH will make you prosper in all the work of your hands, and in the fruit of your body, of your livestock and of your lands. ¹⁰ YHWH will once again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as God delighted in your ancestors and prospered them, if you obey YHWH, your God, and keep the commandments and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law, and return to YHWH with all your heart and soul.

¹¹ For this Law that I give to you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it beyond your reach.

¹² It is not up in heaven, so that you need to ask yourselves, "Who will go up to heaven for us and bring it down to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?" ¹³ Nor is it beyond the seas, so that you need to wonder, "Who will cross the seas for us and bring it back to us, so that we may hear it and keep it?" ¹⁴ No, the word of God is very near to you; it is in your mouth, and in your heart, so that you can keep it.

Epistle Lesson

Colossians 1:1-14

¹ From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Timothy, ² To the holy and faithful sisters and brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace and peace to you from our Loving God.

³ We always give thanks to the Abba God of our Savior Jesus Christ whenever we pray for you, ⁴ ever since we heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you show toward all the holy ones, ⁵ because of the hope stored up for you in heaven. It is only recently that you heard of this, when it was announced in the message of the truth. The Good News ⁶ which has reached you is spreading all over the world; it is producing the same fruit there as it did among you, ever since you heard about God's grace and understood what it really is. ⁷ Epaphras, who taught you, is one of our closest coworkers and a faithful laborer of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and it was he who told us all about your love in the Spirit.

⁹ Therefore, since the day we heard about you, we've been praying for you unceasingly and asking that you attain the full knowledge of God's will, in perfect wisdom and spiritual understanding. ¹⁰ Then you'll lead a life worthy and pleasing to our God in every way. You'll multiply good works of every sort and grow in the knowledge of God. ¹¹ And by the might of God's glory you'll be endowed with the strength needed to stand fast and endure joyfully whatever may happen.

¹² Thanks be to God for having made you worthy to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light! ¹³ God rescued us from the authority of darkness and brought us into the reign of Jesus, God's Only Begotten. ¹⁴ And it is through Jesus that we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Encountering Hope – Rev. Devon Herrell

Hymn Sing

Sharing of our Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer & 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

❖ **Hymn Sing**

❖ **Benediction**



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 today are given by Julie Cole
in gratitude for the hands that prepared our meal today.



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 pasta as the "food of the month" for July. With the demand, any non-perishable food item is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued, generous support.

Thank you for being here today – Please join us for time of fellowship and food after worship. There is plenty of food and beverages available. All are welcome!

Thank you. Pastor Devon – Thank you for leading us in music today! We are certainly blessed to have so many talented people that can share their talents with us.

Next week Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel will be joining us to lead us in worship. Rev. Daniel is the conference minister for the Michigan Conference UCC. We are pleased she will be here to worship with us!

Notice of Congregational Meeting – The Governing Board is calling a Special Congregational meeting. The Search and Call team elected to secure a new settled pastor has completed their work and have selected a candidate for approval by the congregation. The Church By-laws require the selected candidate be approved by the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting. This meeting is scheduled to take place following the church service on July 27, 2025. This notice meets the by-laws requirement for publication in the church bulletin for at least 2 Sundays prior to the meeting.

Our next Pub Theology gathering will be on Tuesday, July 22, 7:00 pm at Crankers. Invite a friend and share in the 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. 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
May 2025	\$ 13,676.99	\$ 15,597.00
Year-to-Date (Jan-May 2025)	\$ 91,745.40	\$117,881.60




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
Worship Lead.....	Rev. Devon Herrell
Administrative Assistant	Julie Cole
Organist	Paul Heidemann
Chancel Choir Director	Linda Rinehart
Chancel Choir Assistant Director.....	Katie McInnis
Bell Choir Director.....	Judy Tressler
Custodian	Larry Carnes
Nursery Attendant	Michell Kamptner
Moderator.....	Marshall Henry
Sanctuary Sound	Wayne McKay
Liturgist	Susan H. Grant
Ushers.....	Kay Achterhof, Chuck Achterhof
Luncheon Hosts	Spiritual Life Commission
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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