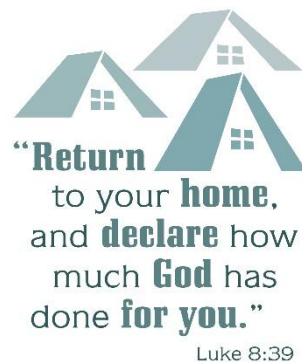


**The United Church of Big Rapids**  
**June 22, 2025**  
**Second Sunday after Pentecost**

❖ *You are invited to stand*



**Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Prelude**

*How Can I Keep from Singing? Lani Smith*

❖ **Call to Worship**

Leader: Break down the barriers that divide us, O Lord.

**People: Tear down the walls of hostility and fear.**

Leader: Melt the barbed wire of anger and hatred.

**People: Breathe new life into your people, O God.**

Leader: For we are called to newness in Christ Jesus.

**People: We are all brothers and sisters through God's love.**

Leader: Come, let us worship the God who removes obstacles from our paths.

**People: Let us praise God who seeks to unite us in peace. Amen.**

❖ **Unison Invocation**

**God in whom we take refuge, we seek you as the calm in the storm, the path in the wilderness, and the order in the chaos. Renew our strength with a vision of your kingdom made real and expanding before us. Encourage us with a word of possibility and an encounter with your presence. Enliven us as we pray, sing, laugh, cry, witness, listen, ponder, and imagine in your midst and in our own way. We come to you with our full selves knowing you offer us the fullness of your being. May we find hope and challenge, joy and rest, peace and power as we immerse ourselves in you and glorify your name. Amen.**

❖ **Hymn #376**

*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling, tune: Hyfrydol*

**Scripture Lesson** *(from New Revised Standard Version Bible)*

*Old Testament Lesson*

*Psalms 22:19-28*

<sup>19</sup> But you, O Lord, do not be far away!  
O my help, come quickly to my aid!

<sup>20</sup> Deliver my soul from the sword,  
my life from the power of the dog!

<sup>21</sup> Save me from the mouth of the lion

- from the horns of the wild oxen  
you have rescued me.
- <sup>22</sup> I will tell of your name to my  
brothers and sisters;  
in the midst of the congregation I  
will praise you:
- <sup>23</sup> You who fear the Lord, praise him!  
All you offspring of Jacob,  
glorify him;  
stand in awe of him, all you  
offspring of Israel!
- <sup>24</sup> For he did not despise or abhor  
the affliction of the afflicted;  
he did not hide his face from me,  
but heard when I cried to him.
- <sup>25</sup> From you comes my praise in the  
great congregation;  
my vows I will pay before those  
who fear him.
- <sup>26</sup> The poor shall eat and be  
satisfied:  
those who seek him shall praise the Lord.  
May your hearts live forever!
- <sup>27</sup> All the ends of the earth shall remember  
and turn to the Lord;  
and all the families of the nations  
shall worship before him.
- <sup>28</sup> For dominion belongs to the Lord,  
and he rules over the nations.

*Gospel Lesson*

*Luke 8:26-39*

<sup>26</sup> Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. <sup>27</sup> As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. <sup>28</sup> When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me" – <sup>29</sup> for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) <sup>30</sup> Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. <sup>31</sup> They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

<sup>32</sup> Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. <sup>33</sup> Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

<sup>34</sup> When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. <sup>35</sup> Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. <sup>36</sup> Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. <sup>37</sup> Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. <sup>38</sup> The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, <sup>39</sup> "Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

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

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## **Sermon**

*The Demons We Know – Rev. Devon Herrell*

## **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**

### **Offertory**

*from "A Child's Book of Hymns"*

### **❖ 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**

**Generous God, through our giving, we acknowledge the role you have delegated to us in meeting our collective needs and allocating our resources of time, talent, and treasure for the good of all. May these offering nurture ministry, further community engagement, and bring glory to your name. Amen.**

❖ **Hymn #341**

*Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine, tune: Assurance*

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

*With Shouts of Praise, Jason W. Krug*



**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 honor of family & friends.



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Dishwasher sign** – we are searching for a sign of some type that may be placed on the dishwasher in the parlor to indicate “dirty” or “clean.” If you have seen one or have something that would suffice, please let Julie know. We just want to make it easier for people to know what’s done & undone in the Parlor kitchen. Thanks!

**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 June. With the demand, any non-perishable food item is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued, generous support.

**Meijer “Simply Give”** – The Meijer Simply Give program has selected Project Starburst as the recipient of funds collected from now through June 28. You may purchase Simply Give cards at the local Meijer store, or find them in the narthex. You may also give your donation directly to Diane Long at Project Starburst.

**Save the Date** for Senior Enrichment Day, Wednesday, June 25. The event will be held at the Big Rapids High School. The seminar series offered this year includes a choice of more than 40 diverse educational sessions, providing a “one-stop-shop” for vital information for seniors. Registration materials are available in the narthex or found at locations throughout the county including RSVP offices and the Mecosta County Senior Center.

**Blood Drive** – The United Church will be hosting a Community Blood Drive on Wednesday, June 25 from 2:30 pm – 6:30 pm. Donate and get a \$25 E-Gift card with “Pool” in the notes (you must have a valid email on file.) If you would like to donate, see the poster on the bulletin board in the narthex or contact the church office. Julie will be available in the Parlor after worship today to sign you up!

**Pride Big Rapids Festival** is coming on June 29. The United Church is proud to support the Festival! We will not have a special booth or table this year, but church members are encouraged to attend and volunteer as you wish. To volunteer, visit <https://www.pridebigrapids.org/volunteer> and fill out an application.

**Save the Date!** Our annual “Worship in the Park” will be held on July 13 at Northend Riverside Park. Please mark your calendar to join us for what always proves to be a highlight of our summer. If you would like to assist the Spiritual Life Commission in preparing for this service, please contact Maryanne Heidemann.

**Contacting the church office** - You may contact the office at any time via email, [secretary@unitedchurchbr.org](mailto: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](http://www.unitedchurchbr.org) or by visiting our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/UnitedBigRapids](https://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](mailto: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
Sound Board .....	Peter McHugh, Trish McHugh
Liturgist .....	Dee Van Horn
Ushers.....	Maxine McKay, Jane Grzybowski, Don Olree
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors .....	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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