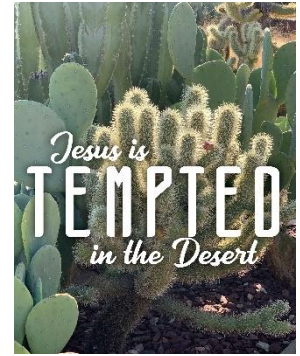


The United Church of Big Rapids

March 9, 2025

The First Sunday of Lent

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Choral Introit

Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

An Upper Room Did Our Lord Prepare, by Franklin Ritter

❖ **Call to Worship**

Leader: Ashes have been smeared and sins have been confessed.

People: We follow our faithful Lord.

Leader: These times, they are troubling. This journey, it is hard,

People: We follow our faithful Lord.

Leader: It is God who sustains, not the temptations of this world.

People: We follow our faithful Lord.

Leader: In the Lord is our trust, our protection from harm,

People: We follow our faithful Lord.

Leader: Come, let us worship the One whom we serve,

People: We follow our faithful Lord.

❖ **Unison Invocation**

Prayer of Saint Boniface

Eternal God, the refuge and help of all your children, we praise you for all you have given us, for all you have done for us, for all that you are to us. In our weakness, you are strength, in our sorrow, you are comfort and peace. We cannot number your blessings; we cannot declare your love. For all your blessings, we bless you. May we live as in your presence, and love the things that you love, and serve you in our daily lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

❖ **Hymn #391**

Take My Life, tune: Hendon

Psalm Reading

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

¹ You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,

² will say to the LORD, 'My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust.'

- ⁹ Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling-place,
¹⁰ no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.
- ¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
¹² On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.
¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder,
the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.
- ¹⁴ Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.
¹⁵ When they call to me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.
¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.

Scripture Lesson

Gospel Lesson

Luke 4:1-14

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.' ⁴ Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "One does not live by bread alone." '

⁵ Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil said to him, 'To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.' ⁸ Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." '

⁹ Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, 'If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you",
¹¹ and
"On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone." '

¹²Jesus answered him, 'It is said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." ' ¹³When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

Chancel Choir Anthem

God's Peace, by M. Dawn/C.J. Adams

Sermon

Resisting in the Wilderness - 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.

Call to Offering

Offertory

Here's One, Traditional Spiritual, arr. by Evelyn Lauter

❖ 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

Almighty God, we offer these gifts as a testament to our trust in your provision and guidance. May they be used to strengthen your work in the world and to help those who are struggling. Bless these offerings that they may be a source of hope, truth, and renewal for all who receive them. Amen.

When Peace, Like a River (It Is Well with My Soul)

Ps. 146; Col. 1:19–23; 2:13–14; 3 John 1:2

Horatio G. Spafford, 1873; alt.



1 When peace, like a riv - er, up - holds me each day, when
 2 Though e - vil should tempt me, though tri - als should come, let
 3 My sin— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought— my
 4 O God, speed the day that is filled with your light, when



sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll, What - ev - er my lot, you have
 this blessed as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ has re - gard - ed my
 sin— not in part, but the whole— Is nailed to the cross and I
 clouds are rolled back as a scroll; The trum - pet shall sound and the



taught me to say, "It is well, it is well with my soul."
 help - less es - tate, and has paid life and blood for my soul: It is
 bear it no more. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!
 Lord shall ap - pear, "e - ven so"— it is well with my soul.



well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.
 It is well with my soul.

Benediction

Postlude

Trumpet Tune in D, by Jeremiah Clarke



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 noodles/pasta as the "food of the month" for March. With the demand, any non-perishable food item is greatly appreciated. The bin in the Narthex is available to accept donations.

AAUW Book Bin – AAUW is holding its annual book sale on April 11 and 12. Funds raised are used for scholarships for non-traditional students. To make the sale a success, books are needed! The bin in the Narthex is waiting for donations – books of all kinds are welcome.

Today is Woman Composer Sunday. Paul has chosen an offertory by Evelyn Larter, director of music at Deerfield Presbyterian Church, South Jersey. She is known for her arrangements of African American spirituals and chose "Here's One" for this composition. The first verse is:

*Talk about a child that do love Jesus,
Here's one.
Ever since I heard the gospel story,
I've been walking up the path to glory.
Talk about a child that do love Jesus,
Here's one.*

Lenten Book Studies – There are two Lenten book studies in which you may participate during this Lenten season. The first is on THURSDAYS at the First United Methodist Church beginning at 7:00 pm (the first session was on March 6). The book is Sacred Resistance, by Ginger Gaines-Cirelli. You may attend in person or via Zoom. To register for the Zoom session, please send an email with "Sacred Resistance to register@ummecosta.org. Pastor Devon will lead the second study in the United Church Parlor on TUESDAY evenings beginning on March 11, 7:00 pm. The book is Entering the Passion of Jesus, by Amy-Jill Levine. Both studies will be for 6 weeks. You can find more information in the newsletter or by contacting the church office.

Project Starburst's Annual "Souper Supper" is coming Wednesday, March 19 from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm at Three Girls Bakery. We are looking for sponsors. Forms are on the table in the narthex. Alice Bandstra and Dee Van Horn will have tickets.

Pub Theology – The March session of Pub Theology will be on Monday, March 24 at Crankers, 7:00 pm. Please join us for fellowship and discussion – all are welcome.

AARP Tax Program Ready to Serve Mecosta County Residents – There is an AARP program in Mecosta County that can help prepare your taxes. This program is designed for taxpayers with low to moderate incomes, with special attention to those aged 60 and older. The program is run entirely by volunteers who assist clients at four centers from February 10 through April 15. Appointments are usually scheduled for one and a quarter hour and can be completed in a timely manner if the taxpayer brings all the paperwork required to prepare the return. Appointments can be scheduled by calling the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). They have a NEW number for tax scheduling – 231-349-0842 which accepts phone calls and texts.

Sign up for Altar Flowers and Hosting Fellowship Time! Our sign-up sheets for altar flowers and fellowship time hosts are a bit empty for March and April. Check the bulletin board to sign up for your choice of Sundays!

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
January 2025	\$ 29,211.76	\$ 22,812.39
Year-to-Date (Jan-Jan 2025)	\$ 29,211.76	\$ 22,812.39

*The expenses include the downpayment for the painting project of \$18,000

Here is today's Chancel Choir anthem. They thought you would like to see the words:

God's Peace"

Words by: Marva J. Dawn

Choral setting by: C.J. Adams

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Come away from rush and hurry to the stillness of God's peace;
from our vain ambition's worry, come to Christ and find release.

Come away from noise and clamor, life's demands and frenzied pace;
come to join the people gathered here to seek and find God's grace,
God's grace.

In the pastures of God's goodness we lie down to rest our soul.
From the waters of God's mercy we drink deeply, are made whole.

At the table of God's presence all the saints are richly fed.
With the oil of God's anointing into service we are led,
we are led.

Come then children, with your burdens, life's confusions, fears and pain.
Leave them at the cross of Jesus, take instead his kingdom's reign.

Bring your thirsts, for he will quench them, he alone will satisfy.
All our longings find attainment when to self we gladly die.


Come away from rush and hurry to the stillness of God's peace




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
Chancel Choir Director	Linda Rinehart
Chancel Choir Assistant Director	Katie McInnis
Bell Choir Director	Judy Tressler
Custodian	Erin Dumond
Nursery Attendant	Michell Kamptner
Fellowship Hosts	Sue Boitos, Laura Herrell
Moderator	Marshall Henry
Sound Board	Mike Rinehart
Liturgist	Diane Fleming
Ushers	Maxine McKay, Kay Achterhof, Chuck Achterhof
Livestream Team	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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