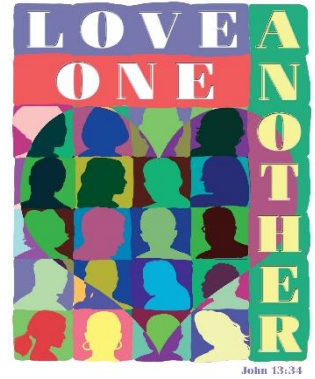


The United Church of Big Rapids
May 18, 2025
Fifth Sunday of Easter

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Choral Introit

Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound, arr. Mark Hayes

❖ **Call to Worship**

Leader: In the beginning was the Dream.

People: And the Dream was with God and spoke for peace.

Leader: In the beginning was the Dream.

People: And the Dream was with God and spoke for justice.

Leader: In the beginning was the Dream.

People: And the Dream was with God and longed for love. We come to worship the God of the Dream in the spirit of peace, justice, and love, longing to glimpse the promise of a holy dwelling place for all creation.

❖ **Unison Invocation**

Creator of the Collective, let us begin by sitting in silence so that we can feel the presence of You in one another ...*(pause for moment of silence)*

...open up our senses to be more ready to build up a world in which we become agents of change. Open our hearts, O God, and help us to feel the brokenness of your world so we can begin again. Amen.

❖ **Hymn #467**

How Great Thou Art, tune: O Store Gud

Scripture Lesson *(from the Inclusive Bible)*

Old Testament Lesson

Psalms 148

¹ Alleluia!

Praise YHWH from the heavens;
praise God in the heights!

² Praise God, all you angels;
praise God, all you hosts!

³ Praise God, sun and moon;
praise God, all you shining stars!

⁴ Praise God, you highest heavens;
and you waters above the heavens!
⁵ Let them praise the Name of YHWH,
by whose command they were created.
⁶ God established them forever and ever
and gave a decree which won't pass away.
⁷ Praise YHWH from the earth,
you sea creatures and ocean depths,
⁸ lightening and hail, snow and mist,
and storm winds that fulfill God's word,
⁹ mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,
¹⁰ wild animals and all cattle,
small animals and flying birds,
¹¹ rulers of the earth, leaders of all nations,
all the judges in the world,
¹² young men and young women,
old people and children –
¹³ let them all praise the Name of YHWH,
whose Name alone is exalted,
¹⁴ whose majesty transcends heaven and earth,
and who has raised up a Horn for God's people
to the praise of the faithful,
to the children of Israel,
the people dear to God!
Alleluia!

Gospel Lesson

John 13:31-35

³¹ Once Judas left, Jesus said,
"Now is the Chosen One glorified and God is glorified as well.
³² If God has been glorified, God will in turn glorify the Chosen One and will do so very soon. ³³ My little children, I won't be with you much longer. You'll look for me, but what I said to the Temple authorities, I say to you: where I am going, you cannot come.
³⁴ I give you a new commandment: Love one another. And you're to love one another the way I have loved you. ³⁵ This is how all will know that you're my disciples; that you truly love one another."

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Chancel Choir Anthem

A New Song, by Lloyd Larson

Sermon

Signals – 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.

Choral 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**

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for the opportunity to dedicate our gifts and talents to You. Help us understand the profound significance of this act of giving. Teach us to offer our gifts with pure hearts and grateful spirits. We ask for Your guidance in using our blessings to uplift others and glorify Your name. Amen.

❖ **Hymn #554**

Let All Things Now Living, tune: Ash Grove

Benediction

Choral Benediction

Postlude

Voluntary on "Lobe den Herren," arr. Hugh S. Livingston



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 today by Dee Van Horn & Bruce Fredrick
in celebration of their 25th Wedding Anniversary.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Pub Theology meeting will be at Crankers on Tuesday, May 20, at 7:00 pm. Invite a friend and join in lively conversation!

Free concert – The Treble Makers Youth Choir is presenting their spring concert on Tuesday, May 27 at 6:30 pm here at the United Church. The concert is free of charge. Any donations will benefit the Voca Lyrica Student Scholarship Fund.

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 canned vegetables as the "food of the month" for May. Comin up for June, the food of the month is cereal. With the demand, any non-perishable food item is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued, generous support.

Voca Lyrica "The Beauty Still Remains" – featuring the moving choral work, "Anne Frank: A Living Voice" – Sunday, June 1 at 4:00 pm at the Big Rapids High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$15 and are available at Pattersons, Old Pioneer Store, and vocalyrica.org.

Book Study – For this month's book study the book is "*A Year of Biblical Womanhood*," by Rachel Held Evans. The next session will meet on Tuesday, June 10 at 7:00 pm, in the Parlor.

Meijer "Simply Give" – The Meijer Simply Give program has selected Project Starburst as the recipient of funds collected from now through June 28. During this time, donations are matched by Meijer one to one. A double match day is scheduled for June 14. 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 to turn in on the double match day.

Altar flowers and Fellowship time hosts are needed! The sign-up sheets for May and June are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex and are a bit empty. Would you be interested in providing flowers or making coffee on Sunday morning? No prior experience is necessary and there are always helpers available. Please sign up for an available date.

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 is generally 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
April 2025	\$ 4,361.95	\$ 15,420.29
Year-to-Date (Jan-Apr 2025)	\$ 74,805.53	\$101,484.60

The choir thought you would like to follow the words of this week's anthem:

"A New Song"

Adapted from Psalm 98

by: Lloyd Larson

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Refrain:

O sing to the Lord a new song;
For he has done marvelous things.
O sing to the Lord a new song;
and let your glad praises ring.

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
Break forth into joyous song!
Give thanks unto God, your melodies raise;
Let instruments of joy sound his praise!

Refrain

Let the sea roar, and all that is in it!
Let the world rejoice He is King!
Let the floods clap their hands,
The hills sing for joy;
For the Lord who reigns over all!

Refrain


Sing your glad praises;
Ring out your praises;
He has done marvelous things.
Sing to the Lord a new song.




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	Adam Jewell
Liturgist	Susan H. Grant
Ushers.....	Maxine McKay, Don Stephen, Jane Grzybowski
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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