

The United Church of Big Rapids
May 25, 2025
Sixth Sunday of Easter

❖ *You are invited to stand*



Welcome

Announcements

Prelude

When He Cometh, by Pricilla J. King

❖ **Call to Worship (from Psalm 67)**

Leader: May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us;

People: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Leader: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

People: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Leader: Our God has blessed us. Come together now to give thanks and worship.

❖ **Unison Invocation**

Holy, omnipotent Father, we gather this morning in this sacred building to worship you and sing your praises, to lift our joys and concerns and to give you thanks. Come people of God and let us begin our worship of God.

Softly and Tenderly

Will L. Thompson, 1880; alt.



1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
 3 Time is now fleet - ing, the mo - ments are pass - ing, pass - ing from
 4 O for the won - der - ful love Je - sus prom - ised, prom - ised for



you and for me; See at the por - tals Christ wait - ing and
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not God's
 you and from me; Shad - ows are gath - er - ing, death - beds are
 you and for me; Though we have sinned Je - sus of - fers us



watch - ing, watch - ing for you and for me.
 mer - cies, mer - cies for you and for me? Come home, come
 com - ing, com - ing for you and for me. Come home,
 par - don, par - don for you and for me.



home, All who are wea - ry, come home;
 come home,



Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing— call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

Scripture Lesson *(from the Inclusive Bible)*

Epistle Lesson

Acts 16:9-15

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

¹¹ We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. ¹³ On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

Gospel Lesson

John 14:23-29

²³ Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

²⁵ "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.

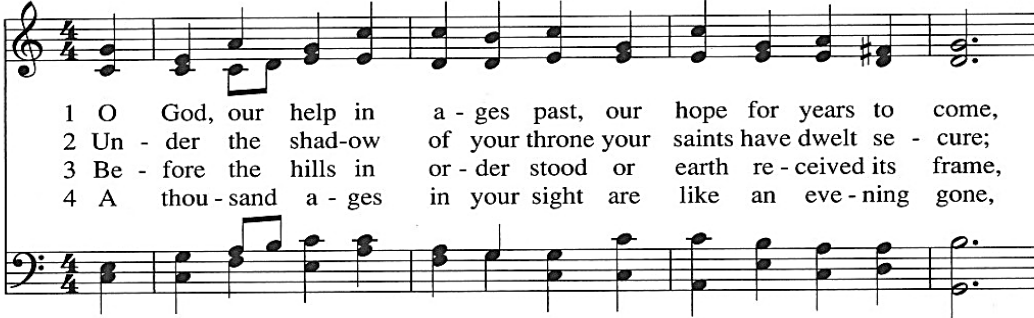
Leader: This is what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

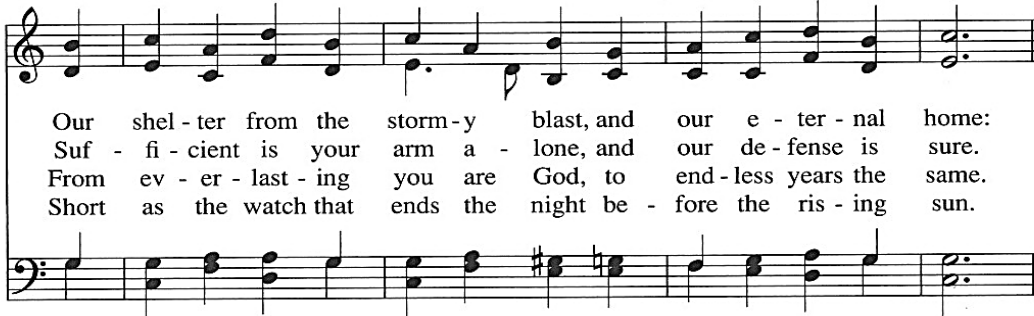
O God, Our Help in Ages Past

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 90:1-2, 4-5



1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
 2 Un - der the shad-ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
 4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,



Our shel - ter from the storm-y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
 Suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
 From ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
 Short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ev-er-roll-ing stream,
 soon bears us all away;
 We fly for-got-ten, as a dream
 fades at the o-pen-ing day.

6 O God, our help in a-ges past,
 our hope for years to come,
 Still be our God while trou-bles last,
 and our e-ter-nal home!

Sermon

There's a Call for You – Mr. Bob MacCord

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

We thank you Father for all the blessings you have given us. We now return this portion of our earnings and our lives to you so that your work in the world may be accomplished. In the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer. Amen.

❖ Hymn #345

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, tune: Rest

Benediction

Postlude

Foundation, by Bonnie Barrett



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 Maxine & Wayne McKay
in memory of Maxine's brother, Robert James (Bobby Jim) Eddy.

May 29, 1948 – November 12, 1953



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Free plants – Maxine McKay is offering pansy plants for the congregation to take home today. They are given by Jeff & Patrick at P & J's Plantiques to thank the church for its support of Big Rapids Pride.

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 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.

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.

Office hours for next week – The church office will be closed on Monday to observe the Memorial Day holiday. The office will also be closed on Tuesday, May 27. Julie will be in for a few hours on Wednesday and then regular hours on Thursday, May 29. Phone messages and email will be monitored through Tuesday.

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.

Volunteers needed to sign up to provide altar flowers or host fellowship time for the month of June. Sign up sheets are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Our Brother’s Keeper Raffle – OBK is conducting a cash raffle to raise funds for shelter needs. Tickets are \$10 each with prizes of \$150, \$100, and \$50. Dee VanHorn will have tickets available during Fellowship time. Great way to support OBK!

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. If you would like to donate, see the poster on the bulletin board in the narthex or contact the church office.

Keys – Do you have a key or keys to the church that you are not using? Please return them to the church office at your earliest convenience so we can keep our inventory up to date. 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. 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
April 2025	\$ 4,361.95	\$ 15,420.29
Year-to-Date (Jan-Apr 2025)	\$ 74,805.53	\$101,484.60




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.....	Mr. Bob MacCord
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	Trish McHugh, Peter McHugh
Liturgist	Dee Van Horn
Ushers.....	Jane Grzybowski, Paul Challender, Maryanne Heidemann
Livestream Team.....	Amy Buse, Adam Jewell, Aleah Ritzema, Wayne McKay
Technical Advisors	Amy Buse & Paul Heidemann

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