GATHER AROUND THE TABLE—AND THE TREE!

Join us at First Church on Sunday, November 29, immediately after worship for a family meeting, potluck, and Christmas tree decorating! Bring a dish to share and an ornament that symbolizes your family to add to our church Christmas tree. Your ornament might reflect a favorite memory, a meaningful tradition, or something you enjoy together.

Sharing a meal gives us time to catch up, meet someone new, and strengthen the relationships that make us a church family. As we gather for conversation and decorate the tree, we'll celebrate the many people and stories that belong within the Body of Christ. Whether you've been part of this congregation for decades or have only recently joined us, we hope you'll stay and participate. There's a place for you at the table!

EUCHRE NIGHT: MAKE TIME FOR FUN AND FELLOWSHIP

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, November 18, at 5:30 p.m., and join us for an evening of euchre, conversation, and friendly competition! Bring a friend, pull up a chair, and enjoy some time together around the card table.

Playing together is one of the ways we build community. Between the hands of cards and the laughter, we get to know one another beyond a Sunday morning greeting. Those connections help us grow as the Body of Christ—people who enjoy one another's company, make room for others, and show up for each other. If you're a regular at Euchre Night or have been thinking about coming, we'd love to have you join us!

CRAFTING WITH A CAUSE

Crafting With a Cause will meet on Saturday, November 21, from 10:00 a.m. to noon to make Thanksgiving and Christmas cards for those who are homebound. A handmade card and a thoughtful message can brighten someone's day and remind them that they remain a cherished part of our church family.

Come lend your creativity, share in conversation, and help us extend care beyond the church building. You don't need to consider yourself an artist to offer encouragement! Serving together gives us an opportunity to build friendships while putting our faith into practice. As the Body of Christ, we are called to care for one another, including those who cannot regularly gather with us. Join us as we turn a morning of crafting into an expression of love and connection.

FRIENDSGIVING AT PARIS

Join us at our Paris campus on Sunday, November 22, for Friendsgiving! This gathering is an opportunity to celebrate the friendships, shared ministry, and everyday acts of kindness that make our church community special. Bring a friend and come ready to enjoy fellowship with familiar faces and get to know someone new. Maybe you've been part of the Paris congregation for years or are visiting for the first time, we hope you'll join us. Your presence is part of what makes this a community worth celebrating!

HELP US PREPARE FOR ADVENT @ PARIS

Join us on Saturday, November 28, at 10:30 a.m. for Hanging the Greens as we decorate our worship space for Advent and Christmas! Come lend a hand, enjoy some conversation, and help us prepare a welcoming place for the season ahead.

What's Happening

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15
9AM - Worship @ Paris (North) Campus
10AM - Worship @ First Church (Downtown) Campus
Coffee / Fellowship Immediately Following Worship

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17
9AM - Director's Meeting @ Downtown Campus

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
10AM - Choir Rehearsal
11:30AM - Good Company @ Big Rapids Public Library
12PM - Table Talk @ Downtown Campus

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
5:30PM - Community Dinner @ Downtown Campus

SAVE THE DATE! ADULT CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 12

Mark your calendars! Our Adult Christmas Party is coming up on Saturday, December 12, and we hope you'll plan to join us! The Christmas season is a wonderful opportunity to gather with friends, enjoy some fellowship, share a few laughs, and celebrate the joy of the season together. More details are coming soon, so for now, save the date and plan to be part of the celebration!

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS - ADOPT A FAMILY

This Christmas, our church is participating in Christmas Blessings Adopt A Family. We'll be helping two local families with six children between them. In one household, a parent cares for a child with special needs and takes part in the child's regular therapy appointments. Both families have little room in their budgets for gifts this year. Together, we can ease that worry and give the parents the joy of watching their children unwrap something picked just for them.

More information will be posted soon on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall. We're asking everyone to consider choosing one requested item and returning it unwrapped by mid-December. If you'd enjoy shopping with someone, invite a friend or bring the kids and let them help choose a gift.

Once the gifts are in, we'll check both families' lists, fill in any gaps, and gather for a wrapping day. We want all six children to have something they'll be excited to open on Christmas morning. Thank you for helping make that happen!

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Barbara Erb - Director of Administrative Services
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Linda Rinehart - Director of Choral Music
linda@ummecosta.org - (231) 631-4380

Rev. Jeremy Wicks - Executive Pastor
jeremy@ummecosta.org / (231) 796-7771 ext 2 / (231) 224-6545

Week of November 15 - November 21

Family News

Echoes

FAITH ACROSS GENERATIONS

UNITED METHODIST MINISTRIES OF MECOSTA COUNTY
304 ELM STREET, BIG RAPIDS MI 49307 • (231) 796-7771 • WWW.UMMECOSTA.ORG

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE HOURS: TUES - FRIDAY, 9AM - 3PM
PASTOR AND MINISTRY STAFF AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT

NORTH CAMPUS - PARIS
109 Lincoln St
Paris, MI 49338
ummecosta.org/paris

Worship Gathering in-person
Sundays @ 9:00AM

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS - FIRST
304 Elm Street
Big Rapids, MI 49307
bigrapidsfirst.org

Worship Gathering in-person and
live online, Sundays @ 10AM
www.facebook.com/brfumc

Services Archived Weekly:
www.youtube.com/@brfumc

Order of Worship - November 15, 2026

Prelude

Choral Introit

Welcome & Announcements

*** Call to Worship** (Reader / *People*)

One generation tells another what God has done.
We give thanks for those who first told us of God's love.

Some of us have gathered here for years. Some are finding our way here for the first time.
Whoever speaks, young or old, help us listen for you, O God.

God's compassion reaches all creation. Even now, someone among us has a story of mercy to tell.
Open our eyes to your goodness in the lives of our neighbors.

God is still at work among us. Come, let us worship together.
Faithful God, we add our voices to the praise of every generation. Amen.

*** Hymn** - *"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"* UMH #117, vss. 1,3,6

Children's Message

Choral Anthem *"Autumn Carol" Russell Schulz-Widmer with bells*

Old Testament Reading - Psalm 145:4–13 (NRSVUE)
May these words open our minds and deepen our understanding.
Thanks be to God!

Hymn - *"How Can We Name a Love"* UMH #111

Message - *"Echoes: God Is Not Done"*

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

*** Doxology**, UMH 95

*** Hymn** - *"As a Fire Is Meant for Burning"* TFWS #2237, vss. 1-2

*** Blessing and Sending**

*** Hymn** - *""As a Fire Is Meant for Burning"* TFWS #2237, vs. 3

Postlude

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

Altar flowers are given in honor of Ron Little.

Welcome to First Church!

Welcome to First Church, the downtown campus of United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County - we're so glad you're here! This is a community where every person belongs, every story matters, and every question is welcome. If you're new or exploring, we'd love to get to know you. You can learn more about who *we* are and find helpful information for your first visit at bigrapidsfirst.org.

Need directions? Curious about something? Our welcome team is nearby and ready to help. Truly, we're delighted to worship with you today.

NOTES:

Check In Here

SERVING TODAY - NOVEMBER 15

Reader: Suzette Compton
Ushers: Mike & Jana Pisani
Greeter: Kathi Parker
Nursery: Catherine Kloack, Kristin Supanich
Fellowship Host: Marlene Rodgers
Choir Director: Linda Rinehart
Accompanist: Kathy Bell
Organist: Shirley Jernstadt
Tech Team: Ken Draves, Gary Poole
Preacher: Rev. Jeremy Wicks

SERVING NEXT WEEK - NOVEMBER 22

Reader: Paul Hillman
Ushers: Rex & Cheryl Richardson
Greeter: Betsy Curtis
Nursery: Catherine Kloack,Char Fitch
Fellowship Host: Cheryl Richardson

THINK ABOUT IT THIS WEEK: GOD IS NOT DONE | PSALM 145:4–13

On All Saints Sunday, we remembered people whose faith shaped ours. Last week, we thought about what we're passing on. This Sunday, Psalm 145 invites us to tell a more recent story. If someone asked where you've seen God at work, what could you tell them about this past week?

The psalmist gives us a place to start. In verses 8 and 9, we hear that God is patient and compassionate, and that God's goodness extends to all creation. Think about the last time someone was patient with you when they had reason to be frustrated. You probably remember how it felt to have the time you needed. That experience gives you something to say about what God's patience is like.

Our congregation has seen changes, and some of us miss people and places that were part of our Sundays for years. We can say so. Someone who has only recently started coming may have a story about the very Sunday when we were missing those familiar things. Perhaps it was the first time somebody remembered their name. When we make room for both stories, we learn something about this church that neither of us could have seen alone. God is still at work here, and every generation has something to tell.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

- Who helped you recognize God's love earlier in your life? What did they do that you still remember?
- When did you experience patience or compassion this past week? Did you recognize it as an expression of faith at the time?
- Whose experience of this church are you curious about? What would you like to ask them?

ACTION STEPS FOR THIS WEEK

1. Ask someone from a different generation about their week. Try asking, "Who was kind to you this week?" Give them time to tell the whole story. If they ask about your week, be ready to share one of your own.
2. Tell someone what their kindness meant to you. A note or a phone call is enough. Be specific about what you remember. They may have no idea that you still think about it.
3. Follow up on something you heard. If a neighbor mentioned a difficult appointment, call afterward. If someone at church said they're still getting to know people, invite them to sit with you next Sunday.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Gracious God, I'm grateful for the people who taught me what your love feels like. Help me pay attention to the people I'll see today, especially when I'm in a hurry or think I already know what they'll say. If someone needs more time than I had planned to give, help me be patient. If there's something I can do to help, give me the willingness to follow through. Amen.

WRAPPING IT UP

Before next Sunday, finish this sentence in your own words: "This week, I caught a glimpse of God's compassion when . . ." It might be the sort of thing you'd ordinarily forget by the weekend. Tell somebody while you still remember. That's how one generation comes to know what another has seen.

Your generosity makes a difference! To avoid any confusion in our giving systems, please make your checks out to First Church. Thank you for your continued support!