

SOUL CIRCLE WELCOME GATHERING
Loss touches us in many ways – the death of a loved one, the end of a relationship, loss of health, identity, employment, or a life dream. Whatever your experience, you do not have to grieve alone.

We invite you to join us for a SOUL CIRCLE Welcome Gathering, where you can learn more about our supportive group that offers understanding, compassion, and community for those navigating grief in all its forms.

Date: Thursday, August 14
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: First Church Campus, UMMMC
Contact: Kathy Bell with any questions

This meeting is to simply share information – no pressure, no commitment. Whether your loss is recent or years behind you, SOUL offers a space to be heard, supported, and gently guided toward healing.

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

ITEMS NEEDED - CRAFTING WITH A CAUSE
The Crafting with a Cause group is in need of personal hygiene items for the Big Rapids Virtual School and Big Rapids High School counseling offices. Items needed are listed below and can be placed in the gray donation bin under the community notice bulletin board in Fellowship Hall at First Church. Thank you for your help as we work together to assist young people in need.

- Body wash (Men's and Women's)
- Deodorant (Men's and Women's)
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Dental Floss
- Combs
- Feminine hygiene products

JULY 20 - SPECIAL OFFERING
Get ready to make some noise! Today we will receive a Noisy Offering to support the Heifer Project, the amazing cause the kids at Camp Chaos have been learning about this summer.

Through fun, faith-filled nights, our campers have explored how Jesus meets us in the midst of chaos—and how we can respond with care and compassion. The Heifer Project empowers families around the world by providing livestock, education, and resources to help end hunger and poverty.

Bring your spare change (or dollar bills) and join us in supporting this life-changing mission. Let's make some holy noise together!

Happening This Week

SUNDAY, JULY 20
9:00AM - Worship @ Paris Campus
10:00AM - Worship @ First Church Campus
Fellowship & Coffee immediately After Worship, Fellowship Hall
11AM - Worship @ Third Ave Campus

MONDAY, JULY 21
12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

TUESDAY, JULY 22
12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave
7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23
11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave

THURSDAY, JULY 24
5:30PM - Community Dinner @ First
7PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris

FRIDAY, JULY 25
12PM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Third Ave

SATURDAY, JULY 26
11AM - Alcoholics Anonymous @ Paris
11:30AM - Community Lunch @ Third Ave

**NOTE - THERE IS NO EUCHRE NIGHT THIS MONTH
(WE'LL BE BACK SOON, THOUGH)**

JULY PERSONAL HYGIENE PANTRY NEEDS LIST:
Donated items can be put in the basket in Fellowship Hall, under the bulletin boards.

- Deodorant
 - Paper Towel
 - Toilet Paper
 - Feminine Hygiene Products
 - Shampoo & Conditioners
- Body Wash
 - Cleaning Products
 - Laundry detergent
 - Adult Toothpaste

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Barbara Erb - Director of Administrative Services
barbara@ummecosta.org - (231) 796-7771

Julie Setlock - Director of Family Ministry
julie@ummecosta.org - (231) 796-7771

Kathy Bell - Director of Congregational Care
kathy@ummecosta.org - (231) 224-6177

Rev. Jeremy Wicks - Executive Pastor / Campus Pastor @ First
jeremy@ummecosta.org / (231) 224-6545

Week of July 20 - July 26, 2025
Family News



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

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

Worship Gathering
Sundays @ 9AM

**FIRST CHURCH
CAMPUS**
304 Elm Street
Big Rapids, MI 49307
bigrapidsfirst.org

Worship Gathering
in-person and online
Sundays @ 10AM

THIRD AVE CAMPUS
226 North Third Ave
Big Rapids, MI 49307
ummecosta.org/third

Worship Gathering
Sundays @ 11AM

Order of Worship - July 20, 2025

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

* Call to Worship

Come, people of God—come with your wounds,
your weariness, your walls.

We come as we are, carrying stories too heavy to hold alone.

God meets us here—not with shame, but with mercy.
Not with judgment, but with grace.

Here, forgiveness is possible. Here, joy can be restored.

In a world that tells us to choose sides, Jesus invites us to
love across every divide.

*We are not “us vs. them.” We are God’s beloved community,
called to healing and wholeness.*

*Let us worship the One who tears down walls, builds up peace,
and leads us into joy.*

* Hymn - “All Things Bright and Beautiful”, UMH #147

Children’s Message

Scripture Reading - Matthew 6:14-15 (NRSVUE)

The word of God, for the people of God. *Thanks be to God!*

Special Music - “God Knows All About Tomorrow”, Donna Drake

Message - “Walls That Steal Our Joy”, Ray Setlock

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

* “*The Doxology*”, UMH #95

* Hymn - “Amazing Grace”, UMH #378, vs. 1-4

* Benediction

* Hymn - “Amazing Grace”, UMH #378, vs. 5-6

Postlude

*PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

Altar flowers are given in celebration of Rick Hult’s 80th birthday.

NOTES:



Check In Here

SERVING TODAY - JULY 20

Preacher: Ray Setlock

Reader: Doug Fitzgerald

Ushers: Mike and Jana Pisani

Greeter: Kathi Parker

Nursery: Paige Madden, Julie Setlock

Sunday School: Kathi Parker, Laurie Daniels

Fellowship Host: Pat Little

SERVING NEXT WEEK - JULY 27

Preacher: Ray Setlock

Reader: Suzette Compton

Ushers: Rex and Cheryl Richardson

Greeter: Barbara Ross

Nursery: Kati Wheeler, Julie Setlock

Sunday School: Pam Fleming and Julie Setlock

Fellowship Host: Cheryl Richardson

Welcome to First Church!

Welcome to Big Rapids First United Methodist Church, an inclusive and affirming congregation (you can read our welcome statement here: bigrapidsfirst.org/welcome) - we are so happy you're here! If this is your first visit, or you're not familiar with us, check out our “First Visit” page @ bigrapidsfirst.org/firstvisit.

If you require additional assistance, please ask any of our welcome team members, and they will be happy to help!

THINK ABOUT IT THIS WEEK

Forgiveness isn't easy. It isn't neat. And it certainly isn't always quick. But it is one of the most radical, joy-restoring acts we are invited to practice. Jesus taught that forgiveness is not just something we receive—it's something we extend. Not because the other person always deserves it. Not because the harm didn't matter. But because carrying the weight of it alone slowly steals our joy.

Sometimes, forgiveness means letting go of resentment. Sometimes it means setting a boundary. And sometimes it means releasing someone from your heart—not to excuse what they did, but to reclaim your own peace.

Jesus never asked us to pretend the pain isn't real. But He did show us that love always moves toward healing. Even when it's slow. Even when it's hard.

Reflection Questions

- What hurt or resentment are you still holding on to—and how is it affecting your joy?
- Have you mistaken forgiveness for reconciliation? How might those be different in your life?
- Where might God be nudging you toward healing—not to forget, but to be free?

Prayer for This Week

God of mercy and truth, You know the wounds we carry and the walls we've built to protect them. Sometimes, those walls have kept us safe. But sometimes, they've kept us stuck. Teach us the way of healing—not through denial, but through grace. Show us how to forgive in ways that honor truth and dignity. And when it feels impossible, remind us that You walk with us, every step. Amen.

Final Thought

Forgiveness doesn't mean pretending the hurt never happened. It means choosing not to let it define your future. Let God do the heavy lifting—your job is simply to stay open to the possibility of joy.

PASTOR JEREMY ON VACATION

Pastor Jeremy will be out of the office on vacation from Monday, July 14 through Saturday, August 2. During this time, if you have a need for pastoral care or support, please don't hesitate to call the church office. Our team will ensure you're connected with someone who can help. Thank you for respecting this time of rest and renewal!

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!