## 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 8**
9AM - Worship @ Paris (North) Campus
10AM - Worship @ First Church (Downtown) Campus
*Coffee / Fellowship Immediately Following Worship*

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10**
9AM - Director's Meeting @ Downtown Campus
10AM - Worship Design Team @ Downtown Campus
12PM - Ladies Lunch @ Panera Bread (Big Rapids)

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

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12**
5:30PM - Community Dinner @ Downtown Campus

## OUR NEW CHURCH DIRECTORIES ARE HERE!

We're pleased to announce that our new church directories are now available for pickup! Directories are a wonderful resource for staying connected with one another and strengthening relationships across our church family. Directories are available at First Church in the Fellowship Hall and at Paris at the back of the sanctuary. To ensure that every family has an opportunity to receive a copy, we ask that you *please only take one directory per household*. Thank you for helping us stay connected as one church family!

## 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!

## GOOD COMPANY @ THE LIBRARY

Sometimes it really does take a village! Come for Mr. Howard's Storytime from 11–11:45 AM, then stick around for Good Company from 11:45 AM–12:15 PM. While the kids play, adults can enjoy an iced coffee, a sweet treat, and some relaxed conversation with other parents, grandparents, caregivers, and community members. No program, no pressure—just a chance to meet people, enjoy some good company, and build a little more community together. For more information, or to volunteer to serve, contact Paden at paden@ummecosta.org.

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## STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Barbara Erb - Director of Administrative Services
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Rev. Jeremy Wicks - Executive Pastor
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*Week of November 8 - November 15*

# 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 8, 2026

**Prelude**

**Choral Introit**

**Welcome & Announcements**

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

We gather in gratitude for those who have shared their faith with us.
*Their love still echoes in our lives.*

God calls us to nurture the faith entrusted to us.
*We will pass on a legacy of love and courage.*

God's Spirit equips us to face our fears with love.
*We can encourage one another and stand beside our neighbors.*

Come, let us rekindle the gift of God within us.
*Let us worship God, whose love we are called to share.*

*** Hymn** - *"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"* UMH 384

**Children's Message**
*"This Little Light of Mine"* UMH 585

**Choral Anthem** - *"Never Let Us Go"* Patti Mecklin, Flute

**Old Testament Reading** - Psalm 78:1–7 (NRSVUE)
May these words open our minds and deepen our understanding.
*Thanks be to God!*

**Hymn** - *"The Summons"* TFWS 2130

**New Testament Reading** - 2 Timothy 1:3–7 (NRSVUE)
The word of God, for the people of God.
*Thanks be to God.*

**Message** - *"Echoes: Pass It On"*

**Pastoral Prayer**

**The Lord's Prayer**

*** Doxology**, UMH 95

*** Hymn** - *"Pass It On"* UMH 572, vss 1*-2

*** Blessing and Sending**

*** Hymn** - *"Pass It On"* UMH 572, vs 3*

**Postlude**

* PLEASE RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT

*Altar flowers are given in remembrance of Ron Little; his love, his serving God, and his smile.*

# 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 8

Reader: Rick Hult
Ushers: Colin & Roberta Cline
Greeter: Pete Jensen
Nursery: Catherine Kloack, Julie Tessin
Fellowship Host: Denise Cosper
Choir Director: Linda Rinehart
Accompanist: Kathy Bell
Organist: Shirley Jernstadt
Tech Team: Ken Draves, Gary Poole
Preacher: Rev. Jeremy Wicks

## SERVING NEXT WEEK - NOVEMBER 15

Reader: Suzette Compton
Ushers: Mike & Jana Pisani
Greeter: Kathi Parker
Nursery: Catherine Kloack, Kristin Supanich
Fellowship Host: Cheryl Richardson

## THINK ABOUT IT THIS WEEK: PASS IT ON

Faith takes shape through relationships. In 2 Timothy, the writer remembers the sincere faith of Timothy's grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice—a faith now alive in Timothy himself. Before we hear the call to courage, we hear the names of people whose lives helped nurture that courage. Psalm 78 broadens that responsibility to the whole community. The stories of God's faithfulness are to be shared with children and generations yet to come so that they, too, can place their hope in God.

This is work for all of us, whether or not we are parents or grandparents. Whenever we welcome someone, make room for their questions, or show up when they need support, we help shape their understanding of God and the life of faith.

But passing on faith requires us to consider what we are actually handing down. People learn from our behavior as well as our words. We may speak about grace while responding harshly to mistakes. We may proclaim that everyone belongs while making it difficult for unfamiliar people or ideas to find a place among us. A faithful legacy calls for honest reflection: Does the way we live help others experience the love we proclaim?

The call to rekindle God's gift reminds us that faith needs tending. Each generation must discover how to live it within the realities of its own time. We can share the wisdom we have received while listening to the insights, concerns, and gifts of those who come after us. Their questions can deepen our faith, too.

God's Spirit equips us with power, love, and self-discipline. Courage does not require us to feel unafraid; it helps us act with love even when we are uncertain. That is a legacy worth passing on: a faith that makes room for questions, strengthens us to stand with our neighbors, and helps others trust that they are loved.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who helped you experience God's love? What about their example stays with you?
- What might others learn about faith from watching how you respond to uncertainty or disagreement?
- How can our church help the next generation grow in love and courage while making room for their questions and gifts?

### PUT FAITH INTO PRACTICE

Choose one person to encourage this week. Share a story about someone whose faith shaped you, naming the actions that made a difference. Then offer that same care: listen without rushing to answer, welcome a question, or stand beside someone facing a difficult situation.
If possible, connect with someone from a different generation. Ask what gives them hope, and be open to what they can teach you.

### PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

*Loving God, thank you for those who have helped us know your love. Rekindle the gifts you have placed within us. When fear shapes our reactions, help us pause and choose compassion. Give us courage to welcome questions, stand with our neighbors, and learn from one another. May the faith we share help others discover hope and belonging. Amen.*

### CARRY THIS WITH YOU

The legacy we leave begins with the love we practice today. What will your life echo this week?

**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!**