

# Welcome to First Church!

Welcome to Big Rapids First United Methodist, an inclusive and affirming congregation - we are so happy you're here! If this is your first visit, or you're not familiar with us, we hope the information below will be helpful. If you require additional assistance, please ask any of our welcome team members, and they will be happy to help!

## BATHROOM LOCATIONS:

- Main Sanctuary Level - Through the double doors at the back of the Sanctuary (Elm St), opposite the balcony stairs, you will find one of our two "all gender" single stall restrooms. There is a baby changing station in this restroom.
- Balcony - Through the south door (toward the elevator) and down the hallway, you will find another "all gender" single stall restroom.
- Fellowship Hall - As you are heading toward the Warren St Lobby, across from the coffee station, you'll find separate men's and women's restrooms.
- Basement - To the left side of the large classroom at the bottom of the Warren St Lobby stairs you'll find separate men's and women's restrooms.

## OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN DURING WORSHIP:

- The sound of children is welcome during worship at First Church! If you prefer to have your children with you during worship, please do!
- Nursery - We staff a nursery for those parents who might need a little "break" from their infants through four-year-olds.
- "Pray Ground" - In the back of the sanctuary, near the organ, there is an area with a play mat and toys where kids are welcome to wiggle!
- Parent's Lounge - Located across from the nursery is a quiet place that gives caregivers a place to address the needs of the littlest among us. There is a changing table, rocking chairs, and complimentary supplies in the lounge for your convenience.
- Sunday School for K-6th grade meets upstairs and gives our younger friends a place to learn about Jesus. Kids can be picked up in the upstairs classroom after worship.

Worship Celebration - Sundays @ 10:00AM

Nursery Available - Infant - 4y/o @ 9:50AM

Children's Sunday School @ 10:15AM

(Kindergarten - 6th Grade, start in the Sanctuary)

Coffee and light refreshments are served immediately after worship, and everyone is welcome!

## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Closed / Tues - Friday, 9AM - 3PM

Pastor Jeremy is at the church by appointment and is not available on Friday except in emergency situations.



Big Rapids First United Methodist Church is an inclusive and affirming community. To read our welcome statement, please visit us online @ [www.bigrapidsfirst.org/welcome](http://www.bigrapidsfirst.org/welcome).

# This Week @ First Church

## SUNDAY, APRIL 14

10AM - Worship Celebration (Sanctuary)  
10AM - Child Care for Infants - 4 years old (Nursery)  
11AM - Fellowship / Coffee Hour

## TUESDAY, APRIL 16

10AM - Worship Design (Fellowship Hall)  
5:30PM - Youth Group Discussion (Youth Room)  
6PM - Lyrics in Motion Rehearsal (Sanctuary)  
6PM - Community Outreach / Family Ministry Team Mtg (FH)

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

6PM - Bell Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)  
7PM - Chancel Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)

## THURSDAY, APRIL 18

5:30PM - Community Meal (Fellowship Hall)  
7:30PM - Building & Property Team (Fellowship Hall)

## CHURCH YARD SALE TO BENEFIT KITCHEN

Members of our Community Meal Team, Cheryl Richardson and Nancy Spedowski, are coordinating a church yard sale May 17-18 in Fellowship Hall (and the back parking lot). Proceeds from the sale will be applied toward the cost of purchasing new equipment for the kitchen. You may drop off your sale items in Fellowship Hall during office hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday the week of the sale. Questions? Please contact Barbara in the church office (231-796-7771).

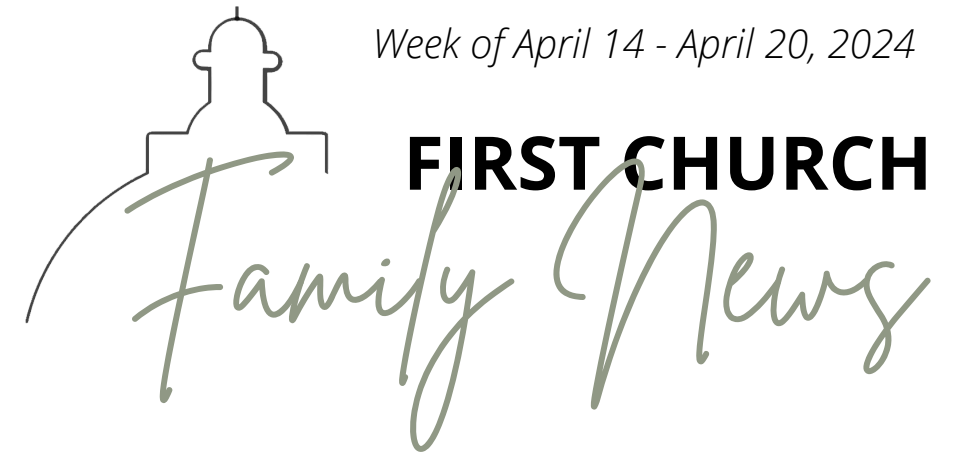
## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - MEMORIAL GARDEN

Spring is right around the corner, which means it's time to start thinking about getting the Memorial Garden up and running - and maintaining that beautiful space throughout the spring / summer seasons. If you are interested in serving as a part of the Memorial Garden care team, please contact Barbara in the church office, or reach out to Toinette Wicks.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE

The United Methodist Church has no pope, but it does have a General Conference — the only body that can set official policy and speak for the international denomination, this includes making edits to The Book of Discipline. General Conference brings together lay and clergy delegates from across the globe whose decisions will affect how millions of United Methodists do church for years to come. Think of the two-week gathering as a combination of a United Nations General Assembly, a U.S. congressional session and a time of rousing Christian worship. The coming General Conference, scheduled for April 23 - May 3 in Charlotte, North Carolina, comes at a particularly momentous time. General Conference typically gathers every four years, but because of the COVID pandemic, the assembly could not meet in 2020. That means the last regular session was in May 2016 — nearly eight years ago. In the interim, the denomination has seen a quarter of its U.S. churches depart under a disaffiliation policy that began in 2019 and expired at the end of 2023. To say we, as a denomination, as in a state of flux is a ridiculous understatement. Please be in prayer for the delegates, as they prepare to do the work of the church.

Week of April 14 - April 20, 2024



**SLOW  
Down**  
Big Creek, Ky 2024  
Mission Trip  
Take Over!

## BIG RAPIDS FIRST UMC

304 Elm St Big Rapids, MI 49307

(231) 796-7771 / [www.bigrapidsfirst.org](http://www.bigrapidsfirst.org)

Pastor - Rev. Jeremy Wicks  
Voice / Text - (517) 851-1494  
Email - [jeremy@bigrapidsfirst.org](mailto:jeremy@bigrapidsfirst.org)

Order of Worship - April 14, 2024  
THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

We gather this morning to share stories, to bear witness.

*We gather to celebrate where we have moved  
and where God is still moving.*

We come to this space knowing that this world is  
not as God intended it.

*We come knowing that, as the people of God,  
it is us who will put things right.*

As we worship together, let us turn from distractions and division.

*Let us listen for the Holy Spirit. Let us look  
for how we can do justice and love mercy Amen.*

**\* Opening Song - "This Is Amazing Grace"**

**Children's Message**

**Mission Trip Slideshow**

**Scripture Reading -** Isaiah 1:11-17 & Micah 6:6-8 (NRSVUE)

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

**Song - "Crowded Table"**

**Message - "Slow Down!"**

**Micro Messages from the Mission Trip Team**

**Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer**

**\* Closing Song - "Plowshare Prayer"**

**\* Benediction**

**Postlude**

*\*Please stand as you are able.*

*Flowers are given in honor of:  
Dave & Patsy Eisler's Mothers: Irene Johnson & Sarah K Eisler  
& Jeramey King's Heavenly 44th birthday*

**NOTES:**



**Check In Here**

*Serving Today - April 14*

Reader: Devin Bearer  
Worship Leader: Camryn Grant  
Children's Message: Quinn Dinda  
Sermon: Rev. Kim Bos  
Ushers: Pete Andrus and Milly Shepherd  
Greeter: Quinn Dinda, Wil Olson  
Children's Sunday School: Julie Setlock, Casey Leavelle  
*"Peter & John" - Acts 3:1-10*  
Nursery: Diane Parrish, Kati Wheeler

*Serving Next Week - April 21*

Reader: Shelby Fate  
Ushers: Mike & Jana Pisani  
Greeter: Mike Gibson  
Children's Sunday School: Larisa Draves, Thomas Wheeler  
*"Believers Share" - Acts 4:32-37*  
Nursery: Diane Parrish, Katie Aris

**WESLEY FOUNDATION @ FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY**

Wesley House is a Christian community rooted in the radical love of Christ that is for all. Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you can belong and be celebrated here as you become whoever you are made to be.

Belong. Whoever you are, you matter to us! However you identify, you are welcome, and celebrated here. Through active participation, The Wesley House can become your home away from home, and family when you need family.

Believe. The Wesley House is a Christian ministry, and we engage in theological exploration and study. So, whatever you believe (or don't believe), we are here to encourage you to deeply engage in your faith and develop leadership skills.

Become. We want to help you discover your purpose and passions, so that you can become the person God has called and created you to be.

**SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL HELP**

Throughout the school year our Sunday School Leaders and Assistants have dedicated their Sunday mornings working with our children. We continue Sunday School during the summer months, and we need extra help to cover vacations and to give our regular helpers a break. All lessons are completely planned and prepared. You will be emailed a copy of the lesson the week before and all you have to do is show up on your Sunday. If you have one Sunday or several when you'd be available to help, please contact our Director of Family Ministries, Julie Setlock, at [julie@bigrapidsfirst.org](mailto:julie@bigrapidsfirst.org).

**MEMBERSHIP AUDIT UNDERWAY**

As you should be aware, last Sunday the members of First, Third Avenue, and Paris United Methodist Churches voted to merge into a new church called United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County. While we celebrate the results of the merger vote, there is significant work to be done in order to facilitate this merger process. One of the major steps we need to take is to audit the membership of the three churches to find out who would like to be a member of the new church. You will be receiving a letter in the next few days explaining this process, and offering you the opportunity to do one of three things:

- Transfer your membership to United Methodist Ministries of Mecosta County
- Transfer your membership to:
- Withdraw your membership

When you receive your letter, with your Membership Audit Response Card, please take a minute to complete the Audit Response card and send it back in the self-addressed return envelope. This will be very helpful during this time of transition. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 231-796-7771.