



9 AM Contemporary Service • Sunday, September 7, 2025

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Welcome

Kyle Ripley

Invitation to Worship

Marie Zendler

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made

People: Indeed this is the day the Lord has made

Leader: Let us rejoice and be glad in it

People: We will rejoice and be glad in it

Leader: Let us rejoice and worship God.

Worship Songs - ***“Praise”***
“Freedom In This House”

Greeting One Another in Christian Love

(Before you sit down, please turn and greet your neighbor. Also, please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad located at the end of each pew and pass it along to the person next to you. Thanks!)

Blessing of New Beginnings

Wayne Potter

For our students: Lord bless the students of our community. Help us to demonstrate your love to them. Keep them safe and excited to learn, growing both in knowledge and faith knowing they are loved.

For our teachers, support staff and administrators: Lord thank you for the gift of knowledge they give our children. Give our educators a spirit of grace and compassion; strength and endurance for the year ahead. Bless them as they perform the many tasks ahead this year.

For our parents, grandparents and caregivers: Lord, help parents, grandparents, and caregivers as they begin this new school year. Allow them to feel your presence and blessing every day. Allow them to find peace in the assurance that they are not alone, You are with them. Amen.

Scripture Readings – Matthew 22:34-40

Mark 12:28-34

Sermon

“The challenge and the gift of Love”

Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard

Responsive Song - ***“Thank You Jesus For The Blood”***

Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

For Communion today everyone is invited to come forward by the center aisle to receive the gluten free bread and juice. After partaking of the elements, you may return to your seat by the side aisle.

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Giving Back to God

- Our Offering- Your gifts honor God and help provide financial support of the ministries and mission of this church.
- Our Service- Get connected! Fill out a Connection Card to get more involved in the life and ministries of the church.
- Our Prayers- How can we help you in prayer today? Fill out a prayer card and let us know.
Please place your financial gift, Connection Card, or Prayer Card in the Offering Box in the narthex.

Closing Song – “*Let’s Trust In Jesus*”

Charge and Blessing

Leader: In the coming week what does God call us to do?

**People: We are called to: Introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him;
deepen the faith and commitment of those who already know Him;
and demonstrate Christ’s way of love in service to the world.**

*For anyone desiring special prayers today, Shelia Conrad will be at the front of the sanctuary to pray for you.
Please come forward after the service.*

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Deb Broderick & Judy Matchett, and our snack volunteer: Elise Keaton.

Thank you to our communion servers: Laura Asiala, Shelia Conrad, Judy Husby, and Mel Matchett.



10:30 AM Traditional Service • Sunday, September 7, 2025

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – “*Our God*” arr. by Rouse

Welcome

Cheryl Knight

Invitation and Centering Words

Cheryl Knight

We come this day to worship and remember that our lives are to be lived in community with others— God, our neighbors and ourselves. May we continue to remember that it is in serving others, that we also serve the God whom we love and adore.

Ring of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship (Based on Psalm 103)

Sandi Gray

Leader: Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

People: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all God’s benefits—

Leader: The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

People: God does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities.

Leader: For the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting to those who fear God,

People: Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Leader: Let us worship God this day in gratitude and thanksgiving.

Opening Prayer

Sandi Gray

All: Gracious God, we are called to love and to serve, to honor and to have compassion for our neighbors. May we be reminded today that neighbor does not mean only those we know, but all your people. May we, in the breaking of the bread and hearing of your Word, live more fully with open eyes, open minds and open hearts to respond to one another with respect and compassion.

Opening Hymn 49 – *“The God of Abraham Praise”*

Prayer of Confession

Sandi Gray

All: Holy one, you call us each by name to a life of love and service. But we do not always listen to your call. We would rather focus on ourselves, than respond to the call to serve others. Open our hearts to the power of your Spirit moving among us. Help us to talk less and listen more, to judge less and serve more graciously. By your Spirit moving among us, teach us to be those with evermore open hands and hearts. Give us the wisdom to be those who build up the body of Christ in love and in service. It is in the name of your Son that we pray. Amen.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon

Sandi Gray

Leader: Our God is a god of mercy and grace. As we confess our sins, may we trust that by God’s mercy the past is finished and gone and the future lies before us filled with new possibilities.

All: For in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

Passing of the Peace

Sandi Gray

Leader: As you experience the Peace of God in your own life, so let us share that Peace with others. Please greet those around you with the words, “Peace be with you.”

Responding: “And also with you.”

(Also, please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad at the end of the pew and pass it along to those sitting beside you.)

Anthem – *“With This Bread, With This Wine”* by Medema

Scripture Readings – Matthew 22:34-40

Mark 12:28-34

Sermon

“The challenge and the gift of Love”

Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard

Responsive Hymn 498 – *“Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken”*

Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Leader: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts,

People: We lift them up to the Lord

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: Holy and gracious God, creator of the universe....

All who place trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to share the goodness set before us on this table and to participate fully in this celebration

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Giving Back to God

- Our Offering- Your gifts honor God and help provide financial support of the ministries and mission of this church.
- Our Service- Get connected! Fill out a Connection Card to get more involved in the life and ministries of the church.
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Please place your financial gift, Connection Card, or Prayer Card in the Offering Box in the narthex.

Doxology – ***“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”***

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Offering Prayer

All: Gracious God, we have been blessed by the gift of life and the promise of your never-ending love. We are called to respond with thanksgiving to all your blessings with the gifts of our hands, our hearts and our treasures. Help us to use these gifts to serve you and to serve your people in ways that bring hope and healing and reflect your love. It is in the name of your Son that we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn 754 – ***“Help Us Accept Each Other”***

Charge and Blessing

Leader: In the coming week what does God call us to do?

People: **We are called to: Introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him;
deepen the faith and commitment of those who already know Him;
and demonstrate Christ’s way of love in service to the world.**

Benediction

Benediction Response – ***“Let There Be Peace On Earth”***

For anyone desiring special prayers today, Sandi Gray will be at the front of the sanctuary to pray for you. Please come forward after the service.

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Scott Martin & Don Reynolds, and our snack volunteer.

Thank you to our communion servers: Betsy Argo, Lynda Nichols, Don Reynolds, and Eunice Thompson.

Thank you for your generous support! Your gifts help sustain the ministries and mission of our church. You can give by mail (404 Spruce St., Elk Rapids, MI 49629), online at www.erfpc.org (click “Giving”), or by contacting Treasurer Mike Husby at finmanager@erfpc.org. Thank you!

Nursery – Qualified caregivers welcome infants and children during the service.

Sunday School Kickoff – Today at 10:00 AM at the Lighthouse

Join us for the start of a new Sunday School year! We’ll begin with a family breakfast at 10:00 a.m. (right after the 9:00 a.m. service) at the Lighthouse. After breakfast, parents, grandparents, and anyone interested are invited to a meeting to hear about plans for the year ahead, while children and youth enjoy fun activities. For questions, contact Wayne Potter at 517-416-2813.

Celebrating Our 90+ Church Family Members

The Deacons would like to acknowledge all our 90 plus people in our church family. Jim Lagowski, Thelma Orzechowski, Eunice Thompson, Jean Schurch, Adam Schuler, Joanne Hoezee, Don Mullen, Ramona Nelson, Phyllis Staley, Kenneth Klynstra, Bill and Lou Letsche, Jane Lund and Phyllis May. We want to honor Barbara White and Dick Claar joining the group this year. We have bags in the narthex for Barb and Dick if you would like to give them a card. On September 21st we will have a bakery treat for Barb and Dick. Please wish all these special people a Happy Birthday!

“Sabbath” Class Beginning Monday, September 29 at 7PM

Beginning Monday, Sept 29 at 7PM we will be reading the book "Sabbath, finding rest, renewal, and delight in our busy lives." We will be taking a Sabbatical along with Pastor Jim and will explore how we can slow down and rest and renew ourselves. Depending on numbers we will either be in the adult education room in the basement or in Fellowship Hall. Books will be available in the Narthex along with a sign up starting this Sunday Sept 7. Please take a book and begin preparing for the first class with the introduction and the first three parts of the chapter on Rest. That's the intro and the first 34 pages of the book. We will collect your donation of \$10 starting on the 29th. Hope you will join us as we find rest and delight in our busy lives.

Outreach and Mission Volunteer Opportunity – Gleaning

Did you know that 35% of households struggle with access to healthy food while 40% of good food goes to waste? One way to help is through gleaning—gathering leftover fruits and vegetables after harvest for local food pantries. Programs like **Food Rescue's Healthy Harvest** and **Do A Little Good** partner with area farmers to make this possible.

Opportunities often come with only 1–2 days' notice. If you'd like to receive updates, contact Janice London (London.janice6@gmail.com or 330-936-5942) or sign up in the narthex. This is not a commitment, just a way to stay informed.

Antrim County Women's Conference – Saturday, September 13

Ladies mark your calendars now for the women's conference on Saturday, Sept 13 from 9-2pm. It is being held at the Bellaire High School auditorium. The featured speaker is Robyn Dykstra, an inspirational author, public speaker and Bible teacher. There are two morning sessions and one afternoon session. Pre-registration cost is \$20 per person with an optional \$10 box lunch available. Sign up in the narthex so we can share rides to Bellaire. Sign up for the conference directly by scanning the QR code on the cards available in the narthex or by calling 231-350-1244.

New Directory Available! Our new directory is now available online and a print version will be available by October 1. The directory is meant for our family of faith; it is not publicly available (like Facebook or other social media).

You can access the directory via the web or via your mobile device:

1. A free mobile app is available in the Apple® App Store and the Google Play™ Store. Search for “Instant Church Directory” to download. Important: Your email address must be listed in the directory before you can log in. This is for your phone, kindle or iPad.
2. To access the directory on your computer, go to <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/> and enter your email address as listed in the directory. Click on “Send Secure Sign-In Link.” Then check your email and click on the “Log in to Instant Church Directory” button found in your email.

If you have difficulty logging in, please contact Peg Burns at kpccburns@gmail.com for assistance. You must have a valid email address on file with the church office to be able to log in to the new directory.

We will have Tech Help Sundays on September 21 and September 28 between services to help you download the app to your phone, iPad, Kindle, or other mobile devices.

The directory is designed so that you can add (and change!) your picture or your family's picture at any time. There are 2 ways to do that:

1. Upload your own favorite photo using the mobile app or website. Under the menu setting, you will find an option to “Edit My Family”. This is where you can upload a photo, correct directory information, add additional information and make phone numbers or email addresses private.
2. Send a favorite family photo via e-mail or text to Peg Burns at kpccburns@gmail.com or (616) 901-0960. It doesn't have to be a formal picture – just one that you love of your family or yourself!

Would you like a printed directory? Sign up at the Activity Center. To ensure copies are ready by October 1, please submit your photo (if you'd like one included) by September 20.

If you have any questions, please contact Peg Burns at kpccburns@gmail.com or (616) 901-0960.

Pastor Jim's Sabbatical - Pastor Jim began a 12-week sabbatical on August 4. We're grateful for his faithful ministry and pray this time offers rest, renewal, and deeper connection to God. While he

is away, we're pleased to welcome a lineup of gifted and familiar guest preachers, including Rev. Dr. Tom Cook, Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, Author Bette Dickinson, Rev. Homer Nye, and Rev. Peter Moore. During this time, please direct all questions or concerns to the church office at info@erfpc.org or 231-264-8167 rather than contacting Pastor Jim directly.

Share Your Gifts in Worship! Do you enjoy singing, playing an instrument, or offering special music? Or are you more comfortable behind the scenes with tech and AV? We're looking for people to join our worship and tech teams! If you're interested or want to learn more, contact Kyle Ripley at 616-888-9788 or ksripley@gmail.com.

Our new van needs you! We are looking for members who are, well, driven to serve. Specifically, serving behind the wheel. Our Transportation Ministry is expanding and it is important to have a team of alternate drivers to be effective in serving the needs of the ERFPC youth and community. Sign up at the Activity Center. Questions? Contact: Deb McGee at 702-810-6995 or dmcgee24@gmail.com.

Resources for Grief Care – The Stephen Ministry has obtained the following information concerning grief counseling in Traverse City with several being related to specific loss. Your Stephen Ministry continues to be available for one on one support as well as contact via mailing of pamphlets throughout the year after a loss. There is a small display in the narthex with resources available. If you wish to have a Stephen Minister meet with you, please contact the office or a Stephen Minister.

LIVING ON - LOSS SPECIFIC GROUPS

Living On - Young Adults

An open, ongoing support group for people in their 20s and 30s who are mourning any loss. Each group will consist of a time of education, sharing and support. This group is facilitated by Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice Grief Counselors and is largely peer-supported.

1st Monday of the month ☞
6pm - 7:15pm
RSVP with Ryan Miller
616-356-5228 • rymiller@hom.org

Living On - Loss of Parents

An open, ongoing group that meets monthly to discuss grief and loss as it pertains to the death of a parent.

2nd Monday of the month ☞
6:30pm - 8pm
RSVP with Melissa McCreedy
734-794-5127
mmccreedy@arborhospice.org

Living On - Sudden/Traumatic Loss

An open, ongoing group for those that have suffered a sudden loss.

1st Tuesday of the month ☞
5:30pm - 6:45pm
RSVP with Kirsten Boeve
231-929-1557 • kboeve@hom.org

Living On - Loss of Spouse/Partner

Come and share, or simply listen, as we discuss the various intricacies and many facets of grief after the loss of a spouse or partner.

1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month • 6pm - 7:15pm ☞
RSVP with Stacy Malenfant
989-358-4295
smalenfa@hom.org

2nd Thursday of the month • 6pm - 7:15pm ☞
Hospice of Michigan office
5177 US-10 Ste. B, Ludington
RSVP with Alexandra Irwin
231-527-0915 • airwin@hom.org

2nd & 4th Thursday of the month • 2pm - 3:30pm ☞
RSVP with Kirsten Boeve
231-929-1557 • kboeve@hom.org

3rd Thursday of the month • 3pm ☞
Burkholder Family Funeral Home
211 N. Pine St., McBain
RSVP with Will Gasper
231-444-3350 • wgasper@hom.org

Living On - Adult Child

An open, ongoing group that meets monthly to discuss grief and loss as it pertains to the death of an adult child.

2nd Thursday of the month • 10:30am - 11:30am ☞
RSVP with Will Gasper
231-444-3350 • wgasper@hom.org

Early News for Upcoming Safety & Security Events

A CPR and basic first aid class will be held Saturday, Sept. 27 at 8:00 a.m. All are welcome—certification is available for the first 9 to sign up; others may attend as observers. Learn to use an AED and respond to emergencies. Sign-up at the Activity Center.

Due to high interest, a second 15-minute pepper spray orientation will also be offered on Sunday, September 14 from 10:00-10:20 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Sign-up at the Activity Center.

Alzheimer's & Dementia Caregiver Support Group – 3rd Friday of Each Month at 2PM

For those caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Share support, encouragement, and guidance in a welcoming environment. The group meets on the 3rd Friday of each month from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Please contact facilitator Kathy Dork at 248-568-4651 if you'd like to attend or if you have questions. **Please note that the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 26.**

Community Cupboard – Village Market Community Cash starts September 1st and runs through May 31st. Save those receipts and turn them in by dropping them off at our donation box at First Presbyterian Church (lower left corner of the mail boxes in the Narthex) or by mailing them to PO Box 572, Elk Rapids, MI 49629. Those receipts help us purchase up to 3 months of food for our families. Thank you!

The Community Cupboard is open every other Tuesday and Friday with a "shop for yourself system" for those in need. Check out the website:

<https://www.elkrapidscommunitycupboard.com>. Call Pam Coleman at 847-445-8239 for more information or to set up an appointment.

Take the Survey! Not sure where your gifts and talents lay? Or where you might be best suited to serve? Take our Volunteer Accelerator Survey! It's fun, informative, and easy to do! Scan the QR code or use the link: <https://volunteeraccelerator.ministryarchitects.com/ERFPC/survey.html>
Thanks for your willingness to help out!



This Week's Activities

Sun. 9/7

9:00 a Contemporary Service
10:00 a Sunday School Kickoff - LH
10:30 a Traditional Service

Mon. 9/8

9:00 a PEO - FH

Tues. 9/9

Wed. 9/10
6:30 p Praise Team Practice

Thurs. 9/11

7:30 a Men's Bible Study - AE

Fri. 9/12

10:30 a Choir Rehearsal - FH