



ONE 10:30 AM Service • Sunday, November 30, 2025

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *“My Lord He Is a Comin’ Soon”* by Drennan

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

Invitation and Centering Words

In the noise of the world and the busyness of our days, God invites us to listen—not just with our ears, but with our hearts. Come, quiet your mind and open your spirit to the still, small voice of God that leads us in love.

Ringling of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship

Doug White

Leader: In the midst of busyness and noise, God whispers—

People: Slow down. Breathe. Pay attention.

Leader: Lift your eyes. Look beyond the distractions.

People: For the Holy One is already near.

Leader: Awake! For God is coming—not with fanfare, but with grace and wonder.

People: We open our hearts. We clear our sight.

All: Today, Let us welcome the coming Christ!

Opening Prayer

Doug White

All: God of hope and holy attentiveness, in this season of waiting, teach us not just to count the days, but to see You in them. Slow us down. Quiet our racing minds. Help us to watch—not with anxiety or fear—but with wonder, trust, and open hearts. Even as we wait for You, remind us that You have already drawn near. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Opening Hymn 82 – *“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”*

Advent Candle Lighting – HOPE

Laura Asiala, Ben Wonacott,

Kathryn Wonacott and Dorothy Wonacott

Reader 1: Today is the First Sunday of Advent. Advent is a season to slow down, pay attention, and draw near. Today, we light the candle of Hope, reminding us to keep awake and watch for God, for God is already drawing near.

Reader 2: In a world full of distractions, God asks: “Where is your field of vision?” Hope is seeing God at work—even when it’s hard to see. Hope is trusting that God has never stopped noticing us.

Reader 1: We light this candle to help us see more clearly. To help us notice God’s presence, stirring hope in our lives again.

(Light the first candle.)

All: O God of Hope, awaken our hearts. Help us see you in the ordinary, the overlooked, and the unexpected. Draw near to us, as we draw near to you. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Doug White

All: Patient and Present God, who is already here, yet not yet fully known, we confess that we rush past Your presence, distracted by noise, schedules, and worry. We strain to see what is next, and miss what is right in front of us. Forgive our hurried hearts. Forgive our blurred vision. Clear our sight, awaken our spirit, and teach us to watch and wait for You—not somewhere out there, but here, now, in the everyday sacredness of life. Amen.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon

Doug White

Leader: Friends, hear the good news: God does not wait for us to get it all right before drawing near. Even when our eyes are clouded, God comes close in mercy and grace. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, restored, and made new.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Doug White

Leader: As forgiven people, let us share the peace of Christ—the peace that slows us down and opens our hearts. The peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you.

(Take a moment to greet one another with the Peace of Christ.)

(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 – “O Come Emmanuel” by Hagenberg

Message to the Children

Wayne Potter

(Children are invited to come forward at this time for the children’s message.)

Scripture Reading – Matthew 24:36–44

Video – “Christmas Is Waiting to Be Born” (Howard Thurman, The Work of the People)

Sermon

“What Is your Field of Vision?”

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Hymn 452 – “Open the Eyes of My Heart”

Prayers of the People & 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.

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: God of watchful hope, use these gifts—and use us—to bring light to those in darkness, clarity to those lost in distraction, and Your presence to those who long to draw near. Amen.

Charge and Benediction

Leader: As you go from this place—Slow down. Pay attention. Lift your eyes. For God is nearer than you think. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you this Advent and always. Amen.

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: Kevin & Kathy Rogols, and our snack volunteer.

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.

Hanging of the Greens – Today After the One 10:30AM Service

Join us for Hanging of the Greens after the One 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, November 30th! We’ll gather to decorate the church and celebrate the start of Advent together. All ages are encouraged to attend—come enjoy fellowship and the joy of preparing our church and our hearts for Advent!

Family Worship Night & Dinner – Today at 5:00PM

Everyone is invited to a Family Worship Night and Dinner at the Lighthouse tonight, November 30 at 5:00 p.m. We’ll gather to have pizza for dinner, enjoy a time of worship for all ages, and have a **meeting about our children and youth program going forward**. All ages are encouraged to attend—especially those interested in our future family programming!

Advent Series & Dinner – Mondays 12/1, 8 & 15 at 5:30PM

This year's Advent Series begins Dec 1 at 5:30 p.m. The birth of Jesus is an exciting time of the year. It is a time of renewal, love and hope. During Advent take a "sabbatical" every Monday night Dec 1, 8 and 15 by joining fellow members in a discussion of the love and hope Christmas brings each year. There is a meal at 5:30 each night followed by a 15 minute video by Max Lucado and concluding with discussion ending no later than 7:30. If you can only make it to one or two that is okay. Each lesson is independent of the previous one. Please sign up in the narthex so we have enough food for everyone. We hope to see you Dec 1st!

Christmas Concert – Saturday, December 6 at 4:00 PM in the Sanctuary

Everyone is invited to a community Christmas Concert in Elk Rapids on Saturday, December 6 at 4:00 p.m. in our sanctuary, and at Church of the Hills in Bellaire on Sunday, December 7 at 4:00 p.m. We’re excited to have good group of local singers, with music directors Dorothy Clore and Cheryl Knight. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors to this special concert!

Join Us for Advent Candle Lighting! Each Sunday morning in Advent, a family, group, or individual lights the candles on our Advent Wreath and shares a short devotional from Pastor Jim. It’s a wonderful way to be part of our worship—kids are more than welcome to join in! **Stop by the Activity Center to sign up for a Sunday that works for you.**

Memorial Plants – Reserve Your Plant by Sunday, December 14

Christmas is a time to honor loved ones with a \$10.00 donation for a poinsettia plant to decorate the church sanctuary. The names of those you wish to remember will be in the Christmas Eve bulletin. To reserve your poinsettia, fill out the form at the Activity Center and return it with your donation to the box by Sunday, December 14.

Christmas Pageant – One 10:30AM Service on December 21

The Christmas Pageant is coming soon—mark your calendars for Sunday, December 21! Practices have already begun during youth group gatherings. Please note that there will be non-speaking roles available for walk-in participants on the day of the pageant. If you have any questions, please contact Tara DenHerder at 231-590-5346.

2025 Annual Reports Due Friday, January 9—Ministry Teams and Group Chairpersons: It's time to begin preparing your Annual Report summarizing your 2025 activities. Please keep your report to one page, format it as a Word document, and email it to the church office (info@erfpc.org) by Friday, January 9, 2026. For questions, contact Ellen in the church office (231-264-8167).

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.

Resources for Grief Care—Stephen Ministry offers one-on-one support and grief resources, including pamphlets and a display in the narthex. Information on local counseling options is also available. To meet with a Stephen Minister, please contact the office or a Stephen Minister directly.

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.

LIVING ON - GENERAL LOSS GROUPS

The focus of Living On support groups is to express feelings and experiences related to the loss of a loved one in a supportive, caring, and non-judgmental environment. Grief and loss topics are addressed as they arise, depending on the interests of those attending the group.

1st Tuesday of the month 📅
6pm - 7pm
RSVP with Cindy Palmer
248-334-1323 • cpalmer@hom.org

2nd Tuesday of the month 📅
6pm - 7:15pm
Hospice of Michigan office
989 Spaulding Ave. SE, Ada
RSVP with Ryan Miller
616-356-5228 • rymiller@hom.org

1st Wednesday of the month 📅
5:30pm - 6:30pm
Hospice of Michigan office
199 Long Rapids Rd., Alpena
RSVP with Stacy Malenfant
989-358-4295 • smalenfa@hom.org

2nd Wednesday of the month 📅
11am - 12pm
Hospice of Michigan office
830 S. Otsego Ave. Gaylord
RSVP with Tavia Mulholland
989-705-2603 • tmulholland@hom.org

2nd Wednesday of the month 📅
1pm - 2:30pm
Hospice of Michigan office
932 N Mitchell St., Cadillac
RSVP with Will Gasper
231-444-3350 • wgasper@hom.org

4th Tuesday of the month 📅
10:30am - 11:30am
RSVP with Meredith Hartmann
734-709-3088
mhartmann@arborhospice.org

Community Cupboard—Village Market Community Cash starts September 1st and runs through May 31st. Save your receipts and drop them in the church donation box (lower left corner of the mail boxes in the Narthex) or mail 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!

Thanks to feedback from a recent client survey, the Elk Rapids Community Cupboard is expanding its hours to ensure greater accessibility. It will now be open every other Saturday from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., starting November 22. These new hours are in addition to existing hours every other week on Tuesdays from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Visit elkrapidscommunitycupboard.com or call Pam Coleman at 847-445-8239 for more information.

Discover Your Gifts! Take our quick Volunteer Accelerator Survey to find where you can best serve. Scan the QR code or use the link: volunteeraccelerator.ministryarchitects.com/ERFPC/survey.html Thanks for your willingness to help out!



This Week's Activities

Sun. 11/30
10:30 a One Service
11:30 a Hanging of the Greens
5:00 p Family Worship & Dinner – LH

Mon. 12/1
5:30 p Advent Series & Dinner

Tues. 12/2

Wed. 12/3
3:00 p Service at Autumn House
6:30 p Praise Team Practice
6:30 p Deacons – FH

Thurs. 12/4
7:30 a Men's Bible Study

Fri. 12/5
10:30 a Choir Rehearsal – FH

Sat. 12/6
4:00 p Christmas Concert