



## 9 AM Contemporary Service • Sunday, February 1, 2026

### Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

Invitation to Worship

Ben Vergote

Leader: Jesus teaches us that God's blessings don't always look the way we might expect. In God's kingdom, the way to new life is really the way of kindness, humility, and love.

**All: Come, let us worship the living God!**

Worship Song - **"Grace Like Rain"**

Video Reflection

**"The Beatitudes"**

from The Chosen

Worship Song - **"Holy Forever"**

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!)*

Message to the Children

Tara DenHerder

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

Scripture Reading – Matthew 5:1-12

Sermon

**"The Gift of Poetic Challenge:  
The Way Up Is Really the Way Down"**

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Song - **"Available"**

Celebration of Communion

*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 – **"From The Inside Out"**

## Mission Statement

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.**

## Charge to the Congregation

Leader: Go now into the world, not to climb over others, but to walk alongside them. Go, blessed when you are poor in spirit, gentle in strength, hungry for what is right, and courageous in mercy. Trust that the way down—the way of humility, compassion, and love—is the way that leads most deeply into God's kingdom. And may the blessing of God—Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit—go with you, beneath you, and before you, now and always.

**All: Amen.**

## Benediction

## Postlude

### Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Lorraine Berak & Shelia Conrad, our snack volunteer, and our coffee volunteer: Lorraine Berak.

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



**10:30 AM Traditional Service • Sunday, February 1, 2026**

## Order of Worship

### Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *“O Magnify the Lord”* by Fettke

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

Video Reflection

*“The Beatitudes”*

from The Chosen

### Invitation and Centering Words

Before Jesus speaks commands, He offers blessing. Before he tells us what to do, he tells us who we are becoming. In these blessings, the world is turned upside down—or perhaps, finally, right-side up.

### Ringling of the Historic Church Bell

### Call to Worship

Sandi Gray

Leader: After climbing up a mountainside with his disciples, Jesus sat down and began to teach them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit,

**People: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Leader: Blessed are those who mourn,

**People: for they shall be comforted.**

Leader: Blessed are the meek,

**People: for they shall inherit the earth.**

Leader: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

**People: for they shall be filled.**

Leader: Come, worship the God who meets us not in our perfection,  
but in the depths of God's grace.

**All: Come, let worship the living God!**

Opening Prayer

Sandi Gray

**All: God of surprising grace, Your blessings unsettle our assumptions and challenge our measures of success. You meet us not in strength alone, but in vulnerability; not in self-promotion, but in humility and mercy. Open our hearts today to hear what we resist, to receive what we do not expect, and to trust that your way—the way of love poured out—is the truest path to life. Through Christ, who walked the way down for our sake, we pray. Amen.**

Opening Hymn 267 – *“Come, Christians, Join to Sing”*

Prayer of Confession

Sandi Gray

**All: Merciful God, we confess that we often chase blessings as the world defines them—power, security, recognition, and control. We hunger for success more than righteousness, and seek comfort more than justice. Forgive us when we measure life by the climb upward instead of the call to love and serve others, especially the “least of these.” Shape us again by your grace. Teach us the wisdom of humility, the courage of mercy, and the hope of those who trust in your kingdom more than our own. In the quiet of this moment, hear our prayers...**

*(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)*

Assurance of Pardon

Sandi Gray

Leader: Hear the good news: Jesus does not bless us because we have arrived, but because we are beloved. In Christ, God meets us in our poverty of spirit, our grief, our longing, our need—and calls us blessed. By the grace of God, our sins are forgiven, our life is renewed, and our way is made new. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

Passing of the Peace

Sandi Gray

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you!**

*(Let us share signs of Christ's peace with one another. 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 – *“This is the Body and Blood of Christ”* by Lupinski

Scripture Reading – Matthew 5:1-12

Sermon

**“The Gift of Poetic Challenge:  
The Way Up Is Really the Way Down”**

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Hymn 522 – *“I Am the Bread of Life”*

Celebration of Communion

*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.
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## 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: Generous God, all that we have is gift—not earned, not secured, but received through your mercy. Receive these offerings and use them to bless a world hungry for justice, thirsty for compassion, and longing for peace. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.**

## Closing Hymn 817 – ***“We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight”***

## Mission Statement

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;  
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## Charge to the Congregation

Leader: Go now into the world, not to climb over others, but to walk alongside them. Go, blessed when you are poor in spirit, gentle in strength, hungry for what is right, and courageous in mercy. Trust that the way down—the way of humility, compassion, and love—is the way that leads most deeply into God’s kingdom. And may the blessing of God—Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit—go with you, beneath you, and before you, now and always.

**All: Amen.**

## Benediction

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

## Postlude

### **Worship Concludes – Service Begins!**

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Kevin & Kim Hoch, our snack volunteer, and our coffee volunteer: Lorraine Berak.

Thank you to our communion servers: Betsy Argo, Peggy Bushnell, Sandi Gray, and Don Reynolds.

**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](http://www.erfpc.org) (click “Giving”), or by contacting Treasurer Mike Husby at [finmanager@erfpc.org](mailto:finmanager@erfpc.org). Thank you!

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

### **ONE Service at 10:30AM on Sunday, February 8**

Join us on Sunday, February 8 for ONE blended service at 10:30 a.m., featuring both the choir and praise team, with a lighter liturgy. Following the service, we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting. Make plans to join us for this special Sunday!

### **Annual Meeting – Sunday, February 8**

Session Calls an All Congregation Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 8 in person and via Zoom immediately following worship at approximately 11:45 a.m. to (1) approve the minutes of the 2025

Congregational meetings as printed, or with additions and/or corrections, and receive the 2025 Ministry Teams' and Committees' Annual Reports, (2) approve the pastor's terms of call for 2026, (3) receive the Session-approved 2026 operating budget, and (4) conduct any other business that needs to come before the congregation.

Non-members are welcome to attend. Members are asked to attend. Please remember that our bylaws require that 10 percent (32 people) of our active membership be present for a quorum.

### **Youth Group SUPERSERVE Sunday – February 8 from Noon-3:00PM**

All youth are invited to SUPERSERVE Sunday on February 8. Come for youth group, stay for lunch at the Lighthouse, and then catch a ride with us to serve lunch to the homeless at Grace Episcopal Church in downtown Traverse City from 12 noon – 3:00 p.m.

### **Season 5 of *The Chosen* – Mondays**

To accommodate for our cancelled session on January 12, we will meet on Monday, February 2 ONLY beginning at 5:00 PM and will run no later than 8:00 PM. We will watch and discuss two episodes. A light dinner will be provided, just bring a beverage of choice. We will resume meeting at 6:00 PM on Monday, February 9.

### **Free Community Dinner – Tuesday, February 10 from 5-6:30PM**

Join us on Tuesday, February 10, from 5:00–6:30 PM for our Free Community Dinner featuring Comfort Food Casserole Night. Everyone is welcome to enjoy a hearty, home-style meal and good fellowship! Also plan to join us for the rest of the spring dinners – March 10, April 21, and May 19. Come as you are and bring a friend!

### **Help Us Share Comfort at Our Free Community Dinner – Tuesday, February 10**

Our next Free Community Dinner is Comfort Food Casserole Night on Tuesday, February 10, and we'd love your help! You can be part of this welcoming ministry by signing up to bring a casserole or dessert to share with our neighbors. Homemade comfort food makes a big difference, and every dish helps us extend hospitality and care to our community. Sign up at the Activity Center in the narthex and thank you for being the hands and heart of Christ through food and fellowship.

### **Lent Is Coming—Small Group Leaders Needed**

Lent begins soon with Ash Wednesday on February 18, and we are preparing for this meaningful season of reflection and growth. As part of our Lenten experience, we will be forming small groups to gather for conversation, prayer, and connection. We are currently looking for individuals willing to help facilitate these groups. No special expertise is required—just a willingness to help guide discussion and create a welcoming space. Resources and support will be provided. If you are interested in serving as a small group facilitator this Lent, please reach out to the church office. More details will be shared soon as Lent approaches.

**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.

### **Alzheimer's & Dementia Caregiver Support Group – 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**Resources for Grief Care – Stephen Ministry** offers one-on-one support and grief resources, including pamphlets and a display in the narthex.

### **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

Information on local counseling options is also available. To meet with a Stephen Minister, please contact the office or a Stephen Minister directly.

**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](http://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](http://volunteeraccelerator.ministryarchitects.com/ERFPC/survey.html) Thanks for your willingness to help out!



#### **This Week's Activities**

**Sun. 2/1**

9:00 a Contemporary Service  
10:00 a SS & Youth – LH  
10:30 a Traditional Service

**Mon. 2/2**

5:00 p The Chosen

**Tues. 2/3**

**Wed. 2/4**

3:00 p Service at Autumn House  
6:30 p Praise Team Prac.

**Thurs. 2/5**

7:30 a Men's Bible Study – AE

**Fri. 2/6**

10:30 a Choir Rehearsal – FH