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SUNDAY, JULY 5, 2026

9:00 AM

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

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THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, *July 4, 1776*

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

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THE FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION, *December 15, 1791*

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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Faith. Freedom. Responsibility.

CALLED TO LOVE GOD, LOVE NEIGHBOR, AND SERVE WITH JOY.

Order of Worship

THE GATHERING:

Countdown

Opening Song – ***“My Lighthouse”***

Welcome

Kyle Ripley

Invitation to Worship

Ben Wonacott

Leader: As we prepare our hearts for worship, let us set aside the distractions of the week. Remember that our greatest freedom is found in belonging to Christ, whose love welcomes the weary, strengthens the hopeful, and calls each of us to live as people of grace and truth. Let us be still and know that God is here.

All: Come, let us worship the living God! Amen.

Opening Prayer

Kyle Ripley

Praise Song – ***“Battle Belongs”***

Children’s Message

Paul Wonacott

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

Greet your neighbor!

(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!)

THE WORD:

Scripture Readings – Zechariah 9:9-12

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Meditation – “A Nation of Rejects and Prisoners of Hope”

Rev. Dr. Tom Cook

RESPONSE & SENDING:

Time for Reflection and Song of Response – ***“Oceans (Where Feet May Fall)”***

Apostles’ Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

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.

Announcements

- Celebrating Dr. Robert Morrison's 100th Birthday

Kyle Ripley

Minute for Mission

Judy Husby

Closing Song – ***"All Creatures"***

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.**

Benediction

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

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

Thank you to our communion servers: Lorraine Berak, Shelia Conrad, Judy Husby and Kathy Rogols.



Traditional Service Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *"America"* by Mauldin

Welcome and Announcements

- Congratulations to Dr. Robert Morrison on his 100th Birthday

Cheryl Knight

Minute for Mission

Janice London

Invitation and Centering Words

Cheryl Knight

Leader: As we prepare our hearts for worship, let us set aside the distractions of the week.

Remember that our greatest freedom is found in belonging to Christ, whose love welcomes the weary, strengthens the hopeful, and calls each of us to live as people of grace and truth. Let us be still and know that God is here.

Ringling of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship (adapted from Psalm 119, selections) Lynda Nichols

Leader: Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord.

People: Happy are those who keep his decrees, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways.

Leader: Teach us, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end.

People: We shall walk at liberty, for we have sought your precepts. We will speak of your decrees before leaders, and shall not be put to shame.

Leader: This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Opening Prayer Lynda Nichols

All: You are the way and the truth and the life, Lord and we thank you for the truth for we know that the truth will set us free. We thank you for your sacrifice that has given us the freedom to choose and follow you.

We thank you that we can enjoy the freedom to worship you in this way, when many in this world are prevented from expressing their faith by intolerant governments and religious creeds.

We thank you for our ancestors who laid down their lives in their commitment to you so that we can enjoy the freedoms that faith in you make possible.

We pray Lord that you keep us mindful of the responsibilities of freedom and remind us that freedom at its core is the ability to choose whom we will serve.

In this worship we want to serve you, Lord, and in serving you we need your continued guidance because we know that in serving you we must serve others in your name. Help us to serve the right people. The poor. The hungry. The homeless. The naked. The imprisoned. The sick. Those pushed to the margins of life by a society that does not accept them. By your Holy Spirit help us to witness to your justice and to act in kindness that we may walk humbly before you.

Opening Hymn 354 – *“Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory”*

Prayer of Confession Lynda Nichols

All: Forgive us, Lord, for taking for granted the freedom and liberty we enjoy in our nation, which is denied to many in our world. Pardon us for failing to remember the faithfulness of those who founded our nation, and of the presence of your guiding hand in the development of it. Be merciful to us for forgetting to make the truths of our faith predominant in our lives as citizens in your Kingdom and citizens in this land. Forgive us for failing to pray for those who lead us, that they might always be guided by you, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray this.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon Lynda Nichols

Leader: Hear this good news! The Lord, Who calls us to communion, pours the Holy Spirit into our hearts to reconcile us in mercy and renew us in love.

People: In the assurance of God’s forgiveness in Christ, we celebrate God’s grace with thankful praise and joy.

Leader: Friends: Believe the good news of the gospel!

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Passing of the Peace Lynda Nichols

(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 Do in Remembrance of Me”* by Hunnicutt

Unison Lesson – Zechariah 9:9-12

Gospel Lesson – Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Minister: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Hymn 338 – **"O Beautiful for Spacious Skies"**

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Sacrament of Communion

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

Invitation to the Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise

Communion of the People

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.

Concluding 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: Sovereign God, You hold the history of nations and the humble life of villages in your care. Preserve the people of every nation from tyranny and lead them to peace. Protect them and all of us in this time of upheaval and disaster, that all may enter your Kingdom that cannot be shaken. May these gifts given today be used to continue the work and ministry of Christ in the world today. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn 339 – *“Lift Every Voice and Sing”*

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.**

Benediction

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

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers, our snack volunteer: Joanne Teague, and our coffee volunteer: Lorraine Berak.

Thank you to our communion servers: Ginny Dorner, Sandi Gray, Don Reynolds, and Joanne Teague.

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.

Welcome Rev. Dr. Tom Cook Today

We are delighted to welcome back Rev. Dr. Tom Cook as our guest preacher this Sunday. Rev. Dr. Cook served as interim pastor here at First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids from 2015–2018, and it is a joy to have him return to the pulpit. Since his time with us, he has continued his ministry in several congregations and now enjoys retirement in Harbor Springs with his wife, Martha.

Please note that the church office will observe and be closed on Monday, July 6 for the Independence Day Holiday. Normal office hours will resume on Tuesday, July 7.



Today is Loose Change Sunday – All donations placed in the red bucket today will support Jubilee House in Traverse City, the region’s only daytime shelter for adults experiencing homelessness. Your gifts and prayers help provide care, resources, and Christ’s love to neighbors in need. Thank you for supporting this local ministry.

The Nominating Team needs YOU!

Dear FPC Members:

The 2026 Nominating Team needs YOU! Each year we need disciples of the Lord to serve as church officers—deacons, elders, and trustees—here at FPC. Deacons provide crucial ministries of care and compassion at FPC (e.g., homebound visits, funeral luncheons, Communion, etc.). Elders help guide and govern FPC via critical ministry teams (Finance, Outreach, Worship, Youth, etc.). Trustees manage the church’s physical property, finances, legal matters, etc.).

We need 2 Deacons to serve in the Class of 2029 and 1 Deacon to serve in the Class of 2028. We need 1 possibly 2 Elders to serve in the Class of 2029 and we need 2 or possibly 3 Trustees to serve in the Class of 2029.

Please prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to fill one of these vital positions in our church. You must be a member of FPC to be able to serve.

You may contact any member of the Nominating Team if you are interested or need more information.

Judy Husby (Co-Chair), Joanne Teague, Lynda Nichols, Betty Tezak (Co-Chair), Tom Klingler, Chad Vergote

Listening for God – New Contemplative Prayer Group

All are invited to join *Listening for God*, our contemplative prayer group, as we seek a deeper awareness of God's presence through silence, prayer, and reflection. The next gathering will be Tuesday, July 14 at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary.

The group normally meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Come experience a peaceful time of resting in God's presence and listening for God's guidance.

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.

Community Cupboard – Thank you for supporting the Elk Rapids Community Cupboard! The Cupboard is open twice every other week: Saturday from 9:00–11:00 a.m. and Tuesday from 4:00–6:30 p.m. Visit elkrapidscommunitycupboard.com or call Pam Coleman at 847-445-8239 for more information.



Discover Your Gifts! Take our quick Ministry Match 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. 7/5

9:00 a Contemporary Service
10:30 a Traditional Service

Mon. 7/6

Office Closed to observe
Independence Day Holiday

Tues. 7/7

3:00 p Harbor Voice Prac. – FH
6:30 p Deacons – FH

Wed. 7/8

6:30 p Praise Team Prac.

Thurs. 7/9

7:30 a Men's Bible Study – AE
7:00 p Trustees – FH

Fri. 7/10

10:30 a Choir Rehearsal – FH