



9 AM Contemporary Service • Sunday, September 20, 2026

Order of Worship

THE GATHERING:

Countdown

Welcome

Kyle Ripley

Invitation to Worship

Arden Ruedi

Leader: Jesus does not invite us to produce more, achieve more, or prove ourselves. He simply says, "Abide in me" and invites us to follow Him. So today, we invite you to come away from the hurry and demands of life, and rest for a while in the presence of Christ, the true Vine.

All: Come, let us worship God together.

Praise Songs – ***"Graves Into Gardens"***
"Hallelujah (Your Love Is Amazing)"

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!)

Children's Message

Paul Wonacott

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

THE WORD:

Scripture Reading – John 15:1-17

Message – "Connected to the Vine"

Rev. Jim Porter

RESPONSE & SENDING:

Time for Reflection and Song of Response – ***"In The Light"***

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

Rev. Jim Porter

- The Art of Vinemaking Small Group begins tomorrow, Monday, September 21 at 7PM
- Fireside Worship – Sunday, September 27 at 5PM

Closing Song – ***"Big House"***

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 and Benediction

Leader: Jesus says:

"I am the vine; you are the branches.

Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit.

For apart from me, you can do nothing."

So go from this place

not striving to prove your worth,

not measuring your life by how much you accomplish,

or the things you possess,

but by simply abiding in Christ.

Stay connected to the Vine.

Rest in God's love.

Make room for the Spirit.

And trust God to grow fruit in you!

All: Amen.

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Jerry & Felicia Blight, our snack volunteer: Judy Husby, and our coffee volunteer: Judy Husby.



10:30 AM Traditional Service • Sunday, September 20, 2026

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *"Jesu Bambino"*

Ann Murray, Piano and Cheryl Knight, Organ

Welcome and Announcements

Rev. Jim Porter

- The Art of Vinemaking Small Group begins tomorrow, Monday, September 21 at 7PM
- Fireside Worship – Sunday, September 27 at 5:00PM

Invitation and Centering Words

Leader: Jesus does not invite us to produce more, achieve more, or prove ourselves. He simply says, "Abide in me" and invites us to follow Him. So today, we invite you to come away from the hurry and demands of life, and rest for a while in the presence of Christ, the true Vine.

Ringling of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship

Ginny Dorner

Leader: Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches."

People: Apart from Christ, we can do nothing.

Leader: When we are weary from striving,

People: Christ invites us to abide in him.

Leader: When life feels hurried and demanding,

People: Christ invites us to remain in his love.

Leader: Connected to the Vine, we receive the life we need.

People: Connected to Christ, our lives bear good fruit.

Leader: Come, let us abide in the presence and love of God.

All: Let us worship God together.

Opening Prayer

Ginny Dorner

All: Gracious God, you are the source of our life and the giver of every good gift. Yet we so easily become caught in the pressure to do more, accomplish more, and become more. Quiet our restless hearts today. Help us release the things we carry and become present to you. Draw us again to Jesus, the true Vine, and remind us that our deepest calling is not to continually strive for more, but rather to abide—to remain rooted in your love and open to your Spirit. As we worship, nourish us with your grace, prune away whatever keeps us from you, and grow within us the fruit of lives deeply connected to Christ. Amen.

Opening Hymn 36 – *“For the Fruit of All Creation”*

Prayer of Confession

Ginny Dorner

All: Merciful God, you invite us to abide in you, but we confess that we often try to live by our own strength. We measure our lives by what we accomplish and what we possess. We fill our days with countless activities and often leave little room for you. We confuse busyness with faithfulness and productivity with fruitfulness. Forgive us when we forget that you are the true Vine and we are the branches. Prune away the habits, fears, and distractions that keep us from receiving the abundant life you freely offer. Reconnect us to Christ. Teach us to rest in your love, listen for your voice, and trust that the fruit you desire will grow as we abide in you.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon

Ginny Dorner

Leader: Hear the good news: Jesus says, “Abide in my love.” God's grace is not something we earn through greater effort. It is a gift we receive. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, loved, and welcomed again into the life of God. Friends, believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Ginny Dorner

Leader: Because we are branches of the same Vine, we are joined not only to Christ but also to one another. The peace we receive from Christ is the peace we are called to share. The peace of Christ be with you!

People: And also with you!

Leader: Let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

(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 – *“In the Sweet By and By”* arr. by Helvey

Scripture Reading – John 15:1-17

Sermon

“Connected to the Vine”

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Hymn 43 – *“You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord”*

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

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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: God of abundant life, everything we have begins with You. Receive these gifts as an expression of our gratitude and trust. As branches connected to Christ, use our lives, our resources, our time, and our gifts to bear fruit in this community and throughout your world. Keep us rooted in your love so that everything we offer might grow from our life with You. Through Christ, the true Vine, we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn 187 – ***“Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”***

Mission Statement

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or the things you possess,
but by simply abiding in Christ.
Stay connected to the Vine.
Rest in God's love.
Make room for the Spirit.
And trust God to grow fruit in you!

All: Amen.

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

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Don Reynolds, Karen Blanchard & Scott Martin, our snack volunteer, and our coffee volunteer: Judy Husby.

Celebrating Pastor Jim’s Birthday! The Deacons are providing cookies in the narthex this Sunday in celebration of Pastor Jim’s birthday! Stop by between services, enjoy a cookie, and help us wish Pastor Jim a very happy birthday!

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 Treasurer@erfpc.org. Thank you!

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

The Art of Vinemaking – New Sermon Series Begins Today & Small Group Begins Tomorrow

A new sermon series begins September 20 through Oct 18 based on the book *The Art of Vinemaking* by Bette Dickinson. Books are available on Amazon for \$18.99 or on Kindle through Amazon for \$7.99. We also will have copies available in the narthex for \$20. In addition to the sermons on Sundays, we will be having a small group discussion on Monday evenings beginning Sept 21 at 7 pm for those that want to explore the deeper meaning of John 15 "I am the vine, you are the branches, if you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit." Monday evenings will be a video and discussion format. Please sign up in the narthex.

Save the Date: The Art of Vinemaking Retreat – Saturday, October 24

Save the date for The Art of Vinemaking Retreat, a half-day spiritual formation retreat led by Bette Dickinson. Come for a meaningful time of reflection, creativity, and spiritual renewal as we explore the art of growing and tending our faith. More details coming soon!

Men's Bible Study – Thursdays at 7:30AM Beginning September 17

The Men's Bible Study will begin meeting again on Thursday, September 17, at 7:30 a.m. This fall, the group will explore "A Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel, examining the evidence for Jesus and the foundations of the Christian faith. All men are welcome! Come for meaningful conversation, fellowship, and an opportunity to grow together in faith.

Fireside Worship – Sunday, September 27 at 5:00PM

Join us for a relaxed evening of dinner, fellowship, and worship around the fire pit at the Lighthouse on Sunday, September 27, from 5:00–7:00 p.m. We'll share a meal, gather around the fire, enjoy worship and music, and spend time together in faith and fellowship. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend and come enjoy an evening of good food, worship, and community around the fire.

Listening for God – Contemplative Prayer Gathering

All are invited to join *Listening for God*, our contemplative prayer gathering, as we seek a deeper awareness of God's presence through silence, prayer, and reflection. **The next gathering will be Tuesday, September 22 at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary.** We normally meet 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 – It's Community Cash time again! Save those Village Market receipts dated Sep 7, 2026 through May 31, 2027 and turn them into the Community Cupboard Food Pantry. Please put them in the basket in the lower left corner of the mail slots in the Narthex, mail them to Box 572, Elk Rapids, MI 49629 or give them to Pam Coleman. Thank you for supporting this important mission!

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. 9/20
9:00 a Contemporary Service
10:00 a SS & Youth – LH
10:30 a Traditional Service
Mon. 9/21
7:00 p Vinemaking Small Grp – AE
Tues. 9/22
10:00 a Bible Girls – AE
12:00 p Contemplative Prayer
Wed. 9/23
7:00 p Session Meeting – FH
Thurs. 9/24
7:30 a Men's Bible Study – AE
6:30 p Praise Team Prac.
Fri. 9/25
10:30 a Choir Rehearsal – FH