



# The Beacon



## A Child-like Advent

The Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker  
Lead Pastor

My memories of Christmas Day mornings as a child are foggy and nostalgic. I remember being up before dawn and certainly before my parents. My brothers, sister and I would look through the presents and dump out our stockings, because the stocking gifts were the only gifts we were allowed to look at before Mom and Dad got up.

I have a much clearer memory of the days and traditions that led up to Christmas Day. Mom made dozens of sugar cookies and I helped to decorate them. We went shopping for Dad's Christmas present with Mom and then for Mom's Christmas present with Dad. We would go to a tree farm and search through the snowy fields for the right Christmas tree to cut down. There were Christmas parties at church, at school and at Grandma's house.

When I think of my childhood memories of the Christmas season, the ones I cherish are of anticipation and preparation. It was a time of excitement, activity and wonder. Perhaps, more than adults, children understand what it truly means to live in Advent. To be in a place of anticipation and hope, to know that something wonderful is coming.

Living in Advent isn't like it used to be as a child. Today, I am responsible for the activities that filled my childhood imagination with wonder. I'm shopping for Christmas presents and hosting the parties. The tree is no longer fresh cut and wet with snow. I haul it up from the basement and take it out of a box.

What would Christmas be like if we reclaimed the wonder, the surprise, and the anticipation? The Nativity story tells us that those emotions ran high in an unexpected pregnancy, angels singing from the heavens and magi seeking a king.

I invite you to take time this Advent season to anticipate the hope of God in Jesus, to wonder at God's love for the world, and to anticipate the Light of the World anew in our lives.



## "A New Way to Be Human"

### January Preaching Series

In January, Pastor Sherry and Pastor John will introduce a preaching series about building Christ-like relationships. We want to offer biblically-based ways to be "human" with one another in a holy way. On January 8 we'll talk about genuinely embracing others without judgment. On January 15 we'll seek ways to engage in another person's journey. On January 22 and 29 we will examine how we might empower others and keep our relationships dynamic.

## Faith Journey

Rev. Loretta Job, Deacon

Director of Adult Faith Formation and Congregational Care

Alex Trebek: *"Faith formation is for everyone!"*

Contestant: *"Who should develop their faith?"*

It may seem silly to have to say that, but you would be surprised how often I am asked "What is adult faith formation?". I was recently at a retreat day where the presenter gave this definition of faith. "Faith is what I give my heart to, who I develop a relationship with". In John's gospel Jesus invited his first followers to "come and see" who he was and what he was about. That was the beginning of their relationship and the beginning of a new faith journey for them. But that relationship took time to grow and develop and it took intentional effort on the part of the disciples, they had to leave some things behind in order to have the time and energy to follow and build up their faith.

All of us need to leave some things behind in order to build our faith. What are you willing to leave, postpone or reprioritize in order to 'come and see'? There are a variety of places and styles of classes, fellowship and ministry that you can participate in here at First Church. As we leave Thanksgiving and approach the season of Advent take some time to offer thanks for the faith you currently have and think about how you can grow and develop it even more.



Also at the retreat the leader reminded us that our lives were a gift from God and at the end of our lives our goal should be to return to God fully developed, giving the gift of who we are back to God. I know I have more work to do on my development, how about joining me in that goal?

Peace,

*Deacon Loretta*



### Prayers For Our Church Family

Florence Robinson, Mary Houston, Jim Glenn, Mark Wood, David Osterhoff,  
Marge Horner, Maria & Eduardo Cartes, Nora Blackwell, Tom Marx, Angela  
Niswander, Yvonne Taylor, Ray Maxey, Don Horner, Anne McClements,  
Jack Hartkop, Stan Tarrant, Betty Dobar, Harry Davis, Kate Muir,  
Joan Armistead, Veronica Chapman, Bob Peterson, Dave DuFresne,  
Bill McCririe, Dietlind Lawrence, Gerald Tilles, Grace Washington, Kim Tath,  
Ruth Width, Bruce Stark, Larry Kipp, Jan Lewis

*Please check the Sunday bulletin for ongoing prayer concerns.*

## **CROSSROADS—Wednesdays from 5:45-8:00 p.m.**

Please join us for CrossRoads! Have dinner first, followed by classes and groups for all ages.

**CrossRoads Café—5:45 p.m.** Recommended donations: \$4.00/adults -\$3.00/kids.

**Children—***Music and Dramatic Arts* for 2nd-8th graders in the Choir Room (**6:30-8:00 pm**); *Creative Expressions* (**6:30-8:00 p.m.**) for kindergarten–8th grade students; *Childcare* birth to 48 months. Questions? Contact

**Young Adults—6:30 p.m.**—Current events for high school youth and college aged young adults. (The Well)

**CrossRoads Adult Faith Formation (6:30 p.m.)**—The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem; Haiti: Challenges and Hope; Disciple III: Remember Who You Are; The Evolution of Faith: How God is Creating a Better Christianity; & a Drop In Class. Questions? Contact Deacon Loretta at [loretta@brightonfumc.org](mailto:loretta@brightonfumc.org). Sign up in the Community Room.



## **CrossRoads Dinner Hosts**

CrossRoads Dinners – we are in need of hosts for January and February CrossRoads dinners. We have an able bodied staff of people willing to help. Please sign up in the community room, or contact Suzy Hutchison at

## **Confirmation 2012**

Confirmation 2012 – For students 8<sup>th</sup> grade and older interested in learning more about their faith and making a decision to join the UMC. Our first meeting is January 15 at 6PM. All other meetings will be on Sunday mornings at 11:00. Please contact Suzy Hutchison to register in advance at [suzy@brightonfumc.org](mailto:suzy@brightonfumc.org).



## **Super Bowl bake Sale**

Super Bowl Bake Sale – On February 5 our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will have a bake sale in the Community room. Buy a treat for your Super Bowl party and support a mission of Brighton FUMC.



## **Sundae Sunday**

Sundae Sunday- We'll make a super-sized sundae for all the children at 10:30 on February 26. We are in need of toppings and volunteers to make this fun day a success for our children. Contact Suzy at [suzy@brightonfumc.org](mailto:suzy@brightonfumc.org)

## Nativity Exhibit, December 18th

### Share your nativity set with the congregation



If you would like to share your crèche with the people of Brighton FUMC, please label it and drop it off at the church between Wednesday, December 14th and 10 a.m. December 17th. On December 18th we will be exhibiting Nativity sets of congregation members. All crèche sets may be picked up Monday December 19 – Wednesday December 21. Drop off will be in the living crèche in the library.

### Living Creche

Living Creche – On December 18 (during and between services) we will have a living crèche set up in the library. Bring your family and dress up in our costumes. We will have a photographer on hand to take your picture as a keepsake. This is a fun way to experience the nativity for children and adults.



Mitten Tree

### Mitten, Hat and Scarf Tree in Community Room

The United Methodist Women are collecting new hats, mittens, gloves and scarves for donation to the Salvation Army & Spirit Lake Mission this season. Place your items on the **Hat & Mitten Tree** in the Community Room. Thank you for sharing the warming love of Christ with those in need.



### Christmas Altar Poinsettias

One of the annual traditions at FUMC of Brighton is to blanket the altar area with poinsettias on Christmas Eve. If you would like to make a donation toward the Christmas Eve altar flowers, you will find order forms in the Community Room (look for the Poinsettia). The church will pay \$15.00 per plant this year, so your donation (in whatever amount you are able to give) will help to pay for our beautiful flowers.

You may dedicate your gift either in memory of or in honor of someone of your choosing, and your dedication will appear in the Christmas Eve church bulletin. Please fill out the dedication form and put it with your check (made out to F.U.M.C.) in the envelope provided.

### Wesley Heritage Tour September 26 – October 4, 2012

Join Pastor Sherry Parker and Suzy Hutchison for a 9-day tour of England that will take us through historical moments in John Wesley's life. Wesley, the founder of Methodism, began a movement that spread throughout the world. On this tour, we'll experience the roots of Methodism.

English towns in the tour include: London, Bristol, Bath, Birmingham, Coventry, Epworth, Gloucester, Stratford and Oxford. In addition, we will see villages in the Midlands and the Cotswolds. We will visit Wesley's birthplace, churches where he served and places that he preached. In addition, we will visit other historical sites. Brochures for the tour are outside Pastor Sherry's office. Pre and post tours of England and Ireland are also available.



## Advent Season Highlights

This Advent season, we will celebrate the birth of Christ with anticipation and wonder. It is our hope to see this story of hope and light through the eyes of a child. As we worship together, we will playfully consider what Christmas means for a child and hear from children of our congregation. It is our hope that together we might reclaim the innocent awe we felt when we first heard the nativity story.

Sunday, November 27, 2011

*1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent*

Scripture: Isaiah 64:1-9

Sermon: Anticipation, Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker

Sunday, December 4, 2011

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent*

Scripture: Mark 1:1-8

Sermon: Wonder, Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker

Sunday, December 11, 2011

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*

Scripture: Isaiah 40:1-11

Sermon: Peace, Rev. John Ball

Sunday, December 18, 2011

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent*

Scripture: Luke 1:46b-55

Sermon: Birth, Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker

Saturday, December 24, 2011

*Christmas Eve*

5:00 p.m. Children's Service

7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols  
with candlelight

11:00 pm Candlelight Communion Service

Sunday, December 25, 2011

*Christmas Communion Service*

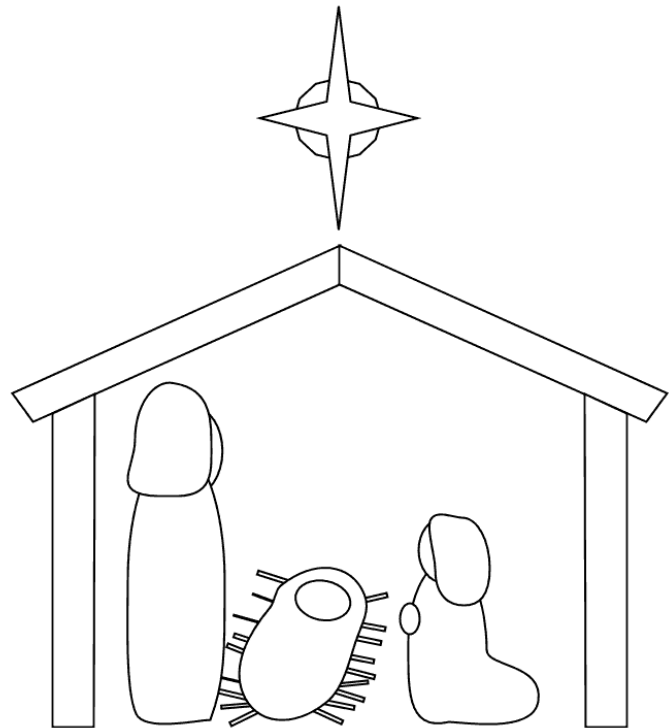
8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.

Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker

Sunday, January 1, 2012

*New Year Covenant Service*

Rev. Loretta Job and Mr. Bob Fuchs



## A Special note about Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Eve at First UMC is an evening filled with traditional carols and candlelight. Worship begins at 5:00 with a children's service. All children in attendance, 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be invited to wear costumes and join the Children's Nativity Parade. The 7:00 pm and 9:00 pm Candlelight services will include the Christmas message, inspiring music and singing Silent Night by candlelight. We will see Christmas Day in with Holy Communion and candlelight at our 11:00 pm worship service.



Please invite neighbors and friends who do not have a church home to join you for Christmas Eve worship.

## Through the Eyes of a Child

Thursday Evening Advent Communion  
December 1, 8 and 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Each Thursday, December 1 through 15, lay speakers and clergy will reflect on the birth of Jesus. Worshippers will receive Holy Communion. Please join us for this intimate mid-week service in our chapel. Together, we'll consider the anticipation, wonder and peace that a child brings to Christmas.



## Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 11, 6:00 p.m.



**Children's Christmas Program**—"Back to the Manger" will be performed on *Sunday, December 11, at 6:00 p.m.* Contact Susan Snow, Music Director for more information at [susan@brightonfumc.org](mailto:susan@brightonfumc.org).

## "Longest Night" Worship Service

Thursday, December 22, 7:00 p.m.

On the evening of Thursday, December 22nd, we will join with the congregation of First Presbyterian Church to lead a special service of hope and light. First Presbyterian will host the worship service. It is a time of scripture, music and prayer offered for those who are seeking the comfort and light of Christ in this holiday season.



We experience the longest night of the year, the winter solstice, on December 22nd. The day is short and darkness comes early. The darkness is a reminder to us that in this Christmas season of celebration and merrymaking, there are those who experience darkness in their lives. They seek the assurance of God's light. In the "Longest Night" service we will acknowledge the "darkness" of loss, loneliness and other burdens that we might be carrying in this holiday season. And we will quietly celebrate the promised light and hope in the coming of Christ. Please prayerfully consider inviting family and friends who would welcome words of comfort and a reminder of God's light in this Christmas season.

## Special Services for Christmas Day and New Year's Day

Because Christmas and New Years fall on Sunday, we have planned special worship services for those days. We will have worship at our regular times, 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00, but each service will be the same.

On Christmas Day, Pastor Sherry will lead a brief service of Holy Communion. While the service will be shorter than our usual worship (1/2 hour), we will have the opportunity to gather around the Lord's Table and remember the blessing of Jesus with us.

On New Year's Day, Deacon Loretta will lead a Wesleyan Covenant Service. It will include a traditional Love Feast, the Methodist practice of celebrating community.





## R.E.A.C.H. Shelter

(Responding Everyday Against Community Homelessness)

REACH Shelter – We will be housing the homeless members of our community from January 9 – January 23. We need lots of volunteers to cook, chaperone, drive, etc... Please sign up on the bulletin board near the upper level restrooms or contact Mike Barrett at [6453Barrett@gmail.com](mailto:6453Barrett@gmail.com).

## Fish and Loaves Community Dinner

**Sunday, December 25th, 5:30 p.m.**



First United Methodist Church of Brighton will be hosting Fish & Loaves dinner on Christmas day. If you will be in the area, please add your name to the sign up sheet in the Community Room & volunteer to serve our guests a meal. If you are attending Christmas Eve services, feel free to drop off your unbaked casserole the night before. Some of our guests have no relatives living locally, so we're the only "family" they will be having dinner with. Any questions, contact Steve & Becky Stanford at 810-632-9508 (home), 248-860-8922 (cell) or at [hartlandstanfords@hotmail.com](mailto:hartlandstanfords@hotmail.com). Thank you for the continued support for this ministry.

## Our Third Annual Blood Drive

**Friday, December 23rd-Give the Gift of Blood**

Brighton FUMC is sponsoring an American Red Cross blood drive on December 23. It will be our third Christmas season blood drive and one of Livingston County's last blood drives for 2011. Have you ever needed blood, or known someone that needed blood? Blood drives help save lives, and they are very important for maintaining supplies around the Christmas holiday. This is an opportunity for us to help give someone the gift of life, but we need volunteers and donors in order to make this blood drive another success!



Gift of Life

Volunteers are asked to help for one of four shifts, 10:45 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., 12:15 p.m. until 2:00 p.m., 1:45 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Unloading at 8:45 a.m. and reloading at 4:45 p.m. assistance is also needed.



**American  
Red Cross**

Juice, cookies and other light refreshments will also be needed for our donors and volunteers. During this season of giving, help us give something the recipient wants and needs! More information is available at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org). To volunteer, please contact Greg Guise at telephone 810-772-9970, or e-mail [greg.guise@redcross.org](mailto:greg.guise@redcross.org).

## St. Andrew's Breakfast Program

January 14th, 2012

We will be serving breakfast at St. Andrew's Soup Kitchen in Ann Arbor on January 14th. Please contact Bill Drabing [w\\_drabing@yahoo.com](mailto:w_drabing@yahoo.com).

## United Methodist Women – November 2011

The purpose of the United Methodist Women's group is to develop a creative, supportive fellowship among our church women, and to participate in the global missions of our church. We look forward to seeing you at any of the following events.



### Calendar of Events



- Nov 28 (Mon) 10 a.m. **Executive Committee**
- Dec 1 (Thurs) 11:30 a.m. **Rebekah**  
Lunch Out – Grand River Grille
- Dec 1 (Thurs) 7:00 p.m. – **Phoebe** – Carolyn Combs' home  
Christmas Ornament Exchange
- Dec 6 (Tues) 6:30 p.m. **Dorcas** Sue Urban's home  
Christmas Dinner  
Program: Agnes Hoshal  
(H) Judy Lytwynec, Sue Urban
- Dec 7 (Wed) 9:30 a.m. **Sarah Lewis** - Church Fellowship Hall  
Program: Christmas Music – Florence Hammer  
(H) B Schuman, Y Taylor, J Tomlinson, (D) Jane Todt
- Dec 7 (Wed) 11:30 a.m. **Sojourner Truth**  
Lunch Out – Breakfast Club - Becky Stanford
- Dec 15 (Thurs) Noon Luncheon & **General Meeting**  
Program: Christmas Fellowship  
(Bring a white elephant gift) – JoAnn Richardson, Ann Ort  
Hostesses: Sojourner Truth  
Potluck – Bring a food item to share
- Dec 16 (Fri) **Hickory Haven** visit  
Cookies – Renee Greene, Joan Tobel  
Visitors – Heather Kostov, Joan Tobel, Susan Snow



### Christmas Card Service

#### *Share Holiday Greetings*

As you prepare your heart for the Christmas season and sharing greetings with your First Church friends, save yourself a stamp and use the United Methodist Women's annual **Christmas Card Service**. A table will be set-up in the community room starting Sunday, Dec. 4th for the exchanging of Christmas cards among fellow churchgoers. Please check the table each week to pick up your cards. (Do not leave cards for "snowbirds" – you must mail cards yourself to those members not in town over the holidays.) Merry Christmas!



## December Preschool News

Lisa Guise, Director First Steps Preschool



In December, teachers and students will prepare for a joyous holiday season as they learn about the birth of Jesus, Christmas traditions and Santa.

Children will bring in new hats and mittens which will later be donated to needy families in Livingston County. They will also provide items for The Box for Me program. The Pastors will share the Christmas story with students.

The children will present a Christmas Nativity Program to parents and friends on Tuesday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church. There will be acting, singing and bell ringing. A cookie social will follow the program in the Community Room.

The Preschool will be celebrating Christmas with a break from classes starting on Monday, December 19, 2011 through Monday, January 2, 2011. Parent-Teacher conferences will take place on January 3-6, 2012. Classes will resume on Monday, January 9, 2012.

Junior Preschool will hold an Open House on Monday, January 3, 2012 from 1-3 p.m. in Rooms 105-107.

Have a joyous holiday season!

Lisa, Sue, Sharon, Tricia, Amy and Heather



## Thank You from Katie Peterson

(God's Country Cooperative Parish)

Brighton UMC, thank you so much for supporting God's Country Cooperative Parish. I had fun sharing the joy of missions with your 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Thank you for your donation of hygiene items. Your prayers and support are greatly felt and appreciated. Shalom, Katie Peterson.

### Newsletter Editor Needed

Beacon Newsletter Editor needed. If interested in becoming the editor of the church monthly newsletter, email Pastor Sherry at [sherry@brightonfumc.org](mailto:sherry@brightonfumc.org) for more information.

## District Leadership Training Day

District Leadership Training Day – January 21, 2012 leaders from United Methodist Churches throughout the Ann Arbor district will gather at Chelsea FUMC for a day of fellowship and enrichment. Everyone is invited. Come and hear leaders talk about church growth and enrichment. Workshops include: Irresistible Worship, Set the Temperature on WARM (the elements of hospitality), Media in Worship, Meetings that Matter, Ministry in Small Churches and Building a Youth Group. Choose the workshop that will enrich your ministry. The day begins with registration at 8:30 and ends by 12:15. To register please email Wendy Everett at [wendy@fumc-a2.org](mailto:wendy@fumc-a2.org)



**First United Methodist Church**  
**400 E. Grand River Ave.**  
**Brighton, MI 48116**

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**December 2011**



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[www.brightonfumc.org](http://www.brightonfumc.org)

**First Church Staff**

Lead Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker
Associate Pastor	The Rev. John Ball
Director of Adult Faith Formation & Director of Congregational Care	The Rev. Loretta Job, Deacon
Christian Education Director & Director of Missions and Outreach	Suzy Hutchison
Christian Education Assistant	Anne Walters
Youth Director	Cory Nanna
Sunday School Nursery Director	Kelly White
First Steps Preschool Director	Lisa Guise
Director of Music	Susan Snow
Handbell Director	Barb Terry
Office Manager	Terry Keefe
Administrative Assistant	Thyra Babcock
Acting Multimedia Coordinator	Chris Attarian
Housekeeper	Stacy Hnatowich

**Next Newsletter Deadline: December 4, 2011**

Articles may be dropped off in the church office or emailed to [terry@brightonfumc.org](mailto:terry@brightonfumc.org).



**Christmas Eve Services:**

**5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m. & 11:00 p.m.**