



The Beacon



Resolve To Know God's Grace

The Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker
Lead Pastor

Last January, I made a New Year's resolution. While I generally avoid the practice because I've failed at resolution keeping in the past, I am happy to report that I kept this one. I resolved 12 months ago that I would have guests at my home at least once per month.

Hospitality is not something that comes easily for me. I am not a skilled or experienced cook. Fortunately, a few times this year, I was blessed to rely on the talents of "chef" friends in the kitchen. While it would have been easier to avoid all of it, I wanted to incorporate genuine, personal hospitality into my spiritual practices. I celebrate that spiritual practices are a way to experience God's grace.

I have been blessed by evenings of good conversation and fun, and my prayer is that my guests have been, as well. My prayer is that my acts of hospitality might move from being calendared events, to a natural part of the way I interact with the world.

Jesus experienced hospitality from those who sensed that the reign of God was near. He offered food to the hungry in the abundance of bread and fish. He offered hospitality to the marginalized and outcast when he heard their cries, spoke to them, and healed them.

I'm not simply talking about good manners, here, or making sure that every guest has a place to sit. The spiritual practice of hospitality is seeing the face of Christ in everyone we encounter and leaving the door open for authentic relationship.

Who might we visit with openness and care? Who might we invite into our lives, trusting that Christ is between us?

1 Peter 4:9 says that we are to "offer hospitality without grumbling." But not complaining is the minimum requirement for the practice. Hospitality is an act of love for one another. Paul told the church in Roman, "Share with the Lord's people in need. Practice hospitality." (Romans 12:13)

You may be making resolutions as 2012 begins. My hope is that you will resolve to find God's grace in a spiritual practice. It may be hospitality or another, like Holy Communion, worship, prayer, Bible study or Sabbath keeping. Whatever your choice, may your practice not be a calendared duty, but a joyous part of your life.

Blessings,

In keeping with the United Methodist tradition of community involvement and connection to the greater church family, some of Pastor Sherry's pastoral activity extends beyond First United Methodist Church.

January 9 – Leadership Seminar Presenter, Saginaw

January 14 – Retreat Presenter, Dundee

January 21 – Presenter, Ann Arbor District Leadership Training Day, Chelsea

January 23-26 – Large Church Initiative Conference, Dallas, Texas

January 28 – General/Jurisdictional Delegate Meeting, Lansing

February 9 – Leadership Seminar Presenter, Saginaw

January Sermon Series “A New Way to Be Human”

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 8th we’ll talk about genuinely embracing others without judgment. On January 15th we’ll seek ways to engage in another person’s journey. On January 22nd and 29th we will examine how we might empower others and keep our relationships dynamic.

February Sermon Series “What Matters?”

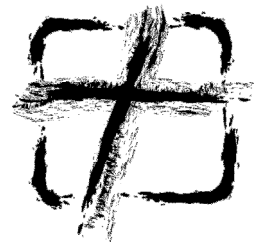


John Wesley referred to spiritual practices as “means of grace.” By participating in acts of worship, prayer, study and fellowship we can experience the grace of God. Grace is also centered in the sacraments of our church, Holy Communion and Baptism and in the historical legacy of our church, social justice. Each of these practices invites God’s grace into our lives. These practices really matter.

On February 5th, we will take an in depth look at Holy Communion, a core practice of our faith. On February 12th, we’ll consider the gift of Baptism for each of us and in the life of the church. We will be reminded that our faith takes us outside the church, when we consider the spiritual practice of seeking social justice on February 19th.

Lent Begins with Ash Wednesday February 22, 7:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.

In the tradition of the church, the faithful set aside the 40 days before Easter as a time of preparation. Lent begins with the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday. The ash reminds us of our mortal nature and is a symbol of our repentance before God and our desire for reconciliation. We will receive communion as a celebration of Christ’s life-giving presence in our lives. This traditional service will begin our journey of thanksgiving toward Easter Day.



There will be three services offered on Ash Wednesday at 7:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

The January newsletter deadline is a little later in the month than usual. The next newsletter deadline: January 29, 2012



Prayers For Our Church Family

Please check the Sunday bulletin for ongoing prayer concerns.

Barbara Killewald, 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, Jack Hartkop, Stan Tarrant,
Betty Dobar, Harry Davis, Kate Muir, Joan Armistead, Veronica Chapman,
Bob Peterson, Dave DuFresne, Bill McCririe, Dietlind Lawrence, Gerald Tilles,
Kim Tath, Ruth Width, Larry Kipp, Jan Lewis, Dan Victory, Helen Sutton

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.

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



CrossRoads Cooks—Help Wanted

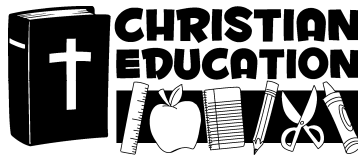


CrossRoads Dinners – we are in need of cooks for January and February CrossRoads dinners. We have an able bodied staff of people willing to help. Please sign up in the community room, or contact Suzy Hutchison at suzy@brightonfumc.org

Kid's Worship Arts-Wednesday Nights

6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

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 music director, Susan Snow at susan@brightonfumc.org.



Confirmation 2012

Confirmation 2012—For students 8th grade and older interested in learning more about their faith and making a decision to join the United Methodist Church. Our first meeting is January 5th at 6:00 p.m. All other meetings will be on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. Confirmation Service will be Sunday, May 6th. This class will be led by Carolyn Combs and Suzy Hutchison. Please contact Suzy Hutchison to register in advance at suzy@brightonfumc.org.



Super Bowl Bake Sale

Super Bowl Bake Sale – On Sunday February 5th, our 5th and 6th 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 a.m. on Sunday, 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.



Monday

Seekers, 1:00p.m. in the Library

“Becoming the Answer to Our Prayers: Prayer for Ordinary Radicals” by Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. “Prayer is not so much about convincing God to do what we want God to do as it is about convincing ourselves to do what God wants us to do.” —from the introduction. Claiborne and Wilson-Hartgrove show how prayer and action must go together. Their exposition of key Bible passages provides concrete examples of how a life of prayer fuels social engagement and the work of justice. If you hope to see God change society, you must be an ordinary radical who prays—and then is ready to become the answer to your own prayers.

Tuesday

Men with Tools, 8:30a.m. in the Library

Lead by Pastor John the men continue to meet for meaningful conversation, laughter and mutual support. They also work on projects around the church facilities to keep us looking good.

Wednesday

CrossRoads, all classes meet 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

- Living the Questions—Pastor Sherry will lead discussion as we consider what it means to “Reclaim the World” in the name of Jesus. This seven week class will include the topics: Restoring Relationships, Evil and Suffering, The Myth of Redemptive Violence and Practicing Resurrection.
- Bruce Stark will continue to lead the drop in group who focus on great conversation, building relationships and finding God in everyday life.
- Sue Pethoud will lead High School youth and young adults in conversation about current events and living as a Christian in today’s world.
- Pastor John will lead discussion on a the book “Falling Upward,” by Father Richard Rohr. Father Richard Rohr offers a new paradigm for understanding one of the most profound of life's mysteries: how our failings can be the foundation for our ongoing spiritual growth. Pastor John invites all who have experienced or are experiencing failure and disappointment to join him in the study of Rohr’s powerful perspective of hope in the midst of the challenges that life brings.

Thursday

W.O.W. (Women of the Word) 9:15 a.m., childcare provided

Beginning January 5th, W.O.W. will be using the study: "Frappe with Philippians". This study takes readers on a journey back to first-century Philippi, bringing them face to face with the Son of God who "emptied Himself" and unites them as a community. In this study, present-day believers get a glimpse of the joy they can experience when the church is united with one focus: seeing humanity's need and making known God's solution in the person of Jesus Christ.

Saturday

Men of Faith, 8:00 a.m. in the Library

John Phillips leads discussion on a new book, “Game Plan for Life” by Joe Gibbs. Written with the sports fan in mind, Game Plan for Life is an “average Joe’s” guide to what the Bible has to say about such topics as relationships; finances; physical, emotional, and spiritual health; finding the right vocation; living a life of purpose; and overcoming sin and addiction.

Friends in Faith, 5:30p.m. in the Library

Friends in Faith meets for fellowship, prayer and bible study. There is always a chair open for visitors!

Sunday

Ray’s Bible Study, 7:30 p.m. at the home of Rich and Mary Ray

Study one book of the bible at a time with a group of engaging, spirit-filled folks. New comers are always welcome!

Missions



& Outreach

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.

Fish and Loaves Community Dinner

Sunday, January 22nd and 29th, at 5:30 p.m.



First United Methodist Church of Brighton will be hosting Fish & Loaves dinner on January 22nd and on January 29th, 2012. There is a sign up sheet in the Community Room. Volunteer to prepare or serve our guests a meal. Any questions, contact Steve & Becky Stanford at 810-632-9508 (home), 248-860-8922 (cell) or at hartlandstanfords@hotmail.com. Thank you for the continued support for this ministry.

St. Andrew's Breakfast Program

We will be serving breakfast at St. Andrew's Soup Kitchen in Ann Arbor on Saturday, January 14th. Please contact Bill Drabing w_drabing@yahoo.com. We meet at the church parking lot and leave at 6:30 a.m.

Red Bird Mission

Beverly, Kentucky

Red Bird Mission – Building on a Legacy of Faith Since 1921 – This United Methodist mission in Beverly Kentucky has been serving the people of Appalachia for 90 years. They have work camps, a medical clinic, a school, a food bank, a clothing store and much more. This summer we hope to take a group of missionaries there to serve. Whether you can sew buttons on shirts, clip coupons, repair houses or provide medical or dental care, there is a place for you on this mission. They will cater the trip to optimize the skills of the people signed up to serve. This trip is open to people from birth to 100+ years old. It's about a six hour drive by car. Lodging can be in your motor home or in a cabin. On JANUARY 15th following both the 9:30 and 11:00 services, Fred and Donna Thompson will hold informational meetings about this trip. Please contact the Fred Thompsons at derf510@comcast.net or Donna Thompson at donnat610@comcast.net if you have any

Port au Prince Haiti 2012

Port au Prince Haiti 2012 – On March 11th we will be taking a team of medical professionals to King's Hospital. It will be approximately a one week trip. The cost will be \$1000 to \$1100, depending on airfare. We will also be taking a smaller contingent of non-medical people to work at the orphanage and school on site. If you are interested in more information, please contact Suzy Hutchison at suzy@brightonfumc.org.

Cass Community Social Services Mission

Cass Mission - Many thanks to our 2011 volunteers! Your efforts to help fight poverty and create opportunity in Michigan are appreciated. Cass Community Social Services still needs our help, and our next Saturday missions will be on **Saturday, January 21st and Saturday, February 25th**. Each month, we will depart from the church at approximately 8:00 a.m. and return by 4:00 p.m. Please sign up in the Community Room or contact Greg Guise at 810.772.9970/gguise@gmail.com.

United Methodist Women (U.M.W.)

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 January 2012

Executive Committee – No Meeting

Rebekah – No Meeting

- Jan 4 (Wed) 9:30 a.m. - **Sarah Lewis** - Church Fellowship Hall
Hands-On Program: Stamping Cards For Missionaries
(H) S. Anderson, N. Stanton, J. Todt
(D) Carlene May
- Jan 4 (Wed) 1:00 p.m. **Sojourner Truth** –Church Room 127
UMW Program Book – Barb Terry
(D) JoAnn Richardson
Jan 11 – Connection Wednesday Dinner
Jan 29 – Fishes and Loaves
- Jan 10 (Tues) 7:00 p.m. - **Dorcas** – Church Quilting Room
Program: Bible Trivia Jeopardy Game – Judy Lytwynec
(H) Kim Tath, Liz Hoover (D) Mary LaValley – Prayer and Self Denial
- Jan 12 (Thurs) – **Phoebe** – Cook dinner for REACH
- Jan 19 (Thurs) Noon Luncheon & **General Meeting**
Program: Haiti – An Update- Ruth Hetherington
Hostesses: Sarah Lewis
- Jan 20 (Fri) **Hickory Haven** visit
Cookies – Carolyn Morrison, Sandra Everett
Visitors – Heather Kostov, Susan Snow, Barb Terry, Baiba Jensen



Echoes of Praise Handbell Choir

Echoes of Praise Handbell Choir will be participating in the 18th "Bells in Concert". This event will take place on Sunday, January 22, 2012 at 3:00 PM at the Highland United Methodist Church, 680 W. Livingston Rd., Highland, MI 48357. Come and enjoy beautiful music by a number of bell choirs ringing together and as individual choirs. Please contact handbell choir director Barb Terry with any questions at: barb@brightonfumc.org.

First Steps Preschool News

First Steps January news—We begin 2012 with an Open House for our Junior Preschool Class. One new student will join the MWF 4-year-old class.

During January, students will learn about animals preparing for winter. There will be opportunities to explore properties of snow and learn about the winter season. A parent get-together on Thursday, February 9th, 2012 (6:30-8:00 p.m.) in the preschool rooms and Fellowship Hall will engage dads and their preschooler(s) in an evening of “Tool Time Fun.” Parents and others from the community will share their hobbies and occupations with students in February. Valentine’s Day parties with card exchanges and games are being planned for all classes.



Registration for the 2012-2013 school year begins in February. Church families with children between the ages of 3 and 4 will be mailed information, and registration packets will be available at the Preschool office. Current students and their siblings will have first priority in registering for classes. Next, we will register children of First United Methodist Church members and children of previously-enrolled families. Remaining spots will be filled by children from the general public beginning on March 8th. In addition to 2-day three-year-old classes and 3-day four-year-old classes, we are offering a 3-day three-year-old class and a 4-day four-year-old class. We look forward to serving the community with a high quality program for young children and their families. Please contact the Director, Lisa Guise, at (810) 227-0262 or firststeps@brightonfumc.org if you would like more information about our program.

To the Congregation at First United Methodist Church of Brighton
(forwarded from a caseworker at the Livingston County Department of Human Services),

Thank you so much for including our foster daughter in the Gifts of Hope program. We really appreciate your support. We have already enjoyed the snow suit that she was given, it came at just the right time! Please let the Methodist church know it was greatly appreciated, Foster Mom (name withheld for privacy).

Newsletter Editor Needed

Beacon Newsletter Editor **volunteer** needed. The newsletter takes about 5-6 hours each month to complete. If you enjoy editing and graphic design, you will enjoy this ministry. If interested in becoming the editor of the church monthly newsletter, call or email Pastor Sherry at 810-229-8561 or sherry@brightonfumc.org for more information.

Learning Better Ways To “Do Church” with Friends

Saturday, January 21st

Where: First UMC Chelsea

When: Saturday, January 21, 2012

Time: 9:00 a.m. —12:15 p.m.

For all members of the United Methodist church, come and learn how to grow your church and ministry. Additional information will be available on the table outside the church office. Contact Suzy Hutchison with any questions at suzy@brightonfumc.org.

First United Methodist Church

"Transformed By God To Transform the World"

400 E. Grand River Ave.

Brighton, MI 48116

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January 2012



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www.brightonfumc.org

FUMC 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
Sunday School Nursery Director	Kelly White
First Steps Preschool Director	Lisa Guise
Director of Music	Susan Snow
Handbell Director	Barb Terry
Multimedia Coordinator	Chris Attarian
Office Manager	Terry Keefe
Administrative Assistant	Thyra Babcock
Housekeeper	Stacy Hnatowich

Next Newsletter Deadline: January 29, 2012

Articles may be dropped off at the church office or emailed to terry@brightonfumc.org.

God sent the Spirit
of his Son
into our hearts ...
Galatians 4:6

A stylized graphic featuring a large white star with radiating lines above a silhouette of a church building with a steeple.