

# Brighton First News

First United Methodist Church of Brighton March 2017



## Learning Forgiveness

Forgiveness is not a natural inclination for human beings. As Anne Lamott, author of *Small Victories*, writes, if we could will ourselves or think ourselves into forgiveness, we wouldn't be in the state we're in. God's Spirit moving in us, around us and in this world empowers us for forgiveness. God's stunning act of forgiveness through Jesus Christ is our encouragement and inspiration.



Through Christ's death and resurrection, we have been forgiven of our sins, both those that we freely admit and those we keep concealed in our hearts. God loves us beyond measure and wants to be in whole and right relationship with us. God initiates that relationship by saying through Jesus, "I love you; you are mine. You are of great value; you are forgiven."

The season of Lent is a time that lends itself to examining forgiveness, both the gift of God's forgiveness and our own practices of forgiveness. While we yearn for the cleansing and life-giving forgiveness of God, we struggle to offer the same to others. However, Jesus told his disciples that we are to forgive as we have been forgiven. This task may seem impossible, but it is Jesus' desire for us.

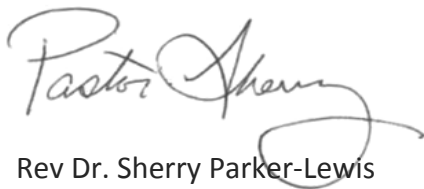
So, where do we start? We begin by acknowledging and accepting that the forgiveness of God is possible in our lives and in the lives of others. I remember a man sharing with me that he suspected that God would not forgive him for past actions. It was clear that his struggle was not with whether or not God was forgiving, but whether or not he was worthy of forgiveness.

The Gospel of John (Chapter 3) tells us that God sent Jesus, his only son, to bring salvation to the world. God's forgiveness is not intended for just the very good or the people who have figured out how to be perfect. God's forgiveness does not flow like a trickle from a stingy faucet; it is a free flowing spray that can cover all who choose to step into it.



Join me this Lenten season, as we celebrate, explore and learn forgiveness.

Blessings,

  
Rev Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis

## Keeping Connected



*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.*

March 2 – Vital Church Initiative Clergy Group, Brighton

March 2 – Lunch meeting with Brighton Ministerial Association, St. Paul Episcopal, Brighton

March 14 – Ministry Mentor Group, First UMC, Troy

March 14 – Lunch meeting of Livingston County United Methodist Clergy

March 23 – One-Eighty Conference, Redeemer UMC, Dewitt

March 25 – Facilitate Vital Church Initiative Training, First UMC Howell

March 25 – Lay Servant Commissioning and Closing Worship, Commerce UMC

April 6 – Vital Church Initiative Clergy Group, Brighton

April 6 – Lunch meeting with Brighton Ministerial Association, St. Paul Episcopal, Brighton

April 22 – Vital Church Initiative Clergy Group, Brighton



## Court Whist Card Party



The Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis and the Fellowship Committee invite you to the Seventh Annual Court Whist Party. This grand event will be held at the Senior Parsonage on Saturday, March 4th beginning promptly at 6:00 p.m.

No card playing skill is necessary, only a snack to share. Please sign up in the Community Room, as participation will be limited to the first 32 to sign up. Yes there will be Prizes and a guaranteed fun-filled evening of round robin fellowship.

Should you have any questions, contact any Fellowship Committee member, Pat Moore at [mooredw1@chartermi.net](mailto:mooredw1@chartermi.net) or Penny Karaska at 810-231-1321 or [pbkaraska@gmail.com](mailto:pbkaraska@gmail.com).

## What is Lent and Why does It Last 40 days?

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" and the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-is-lent-and-why-does-it-last-forty-days>





## Forgiving Others and Asking for Forgiveness—2017 Lenten Theme Worship

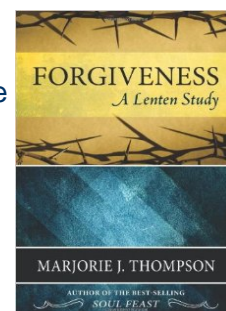
During the Sundays in Lent, beginning March 5, we will “learn forgiveness”, how to forgive and ask forgiveness and how to welcome the forgiveness of God.

Sunday worship themes include:

- Forgiveness as faith practice
- Forgiveness and self-examination
- Repentance
- Freedom in forgiveness

## All-Church Lenten Study Group—Starts March 5

There will be opportunities to be part of an all-church study. This description is from the cover of the study book *Forgiveness* by Marjorie Thompson: Forgiving others and humbly asking for forgiveness are central disciplines for all Christian believers. Lent is an appropriate time to deepen our understanding and practice of forgiveness. In six brief chapters, we will address such questions as: Is forgiveness a Christian duty under all circumstances? Or are there situations when Christians do not need to forgive? Is forgiveness a matter between individuals, or is it meaningful only in the context of community? Is forgiving the best route to healing for the injured? How do we get past emotional barriers to real forgiveness? Sign up online at [www.brightonfumc.org](http://www.brightonfumc.org) or email Pastor Bob at [bob@brightonfumc.org](mailto:bob@brightonfumc.org)



## Daily Lenten Devotional: Meditations on Forgiveness

*Lent*  
Devotional

Pastor Sherry is providing a daily devotional by email through the weeks of Lent. Each devotion will connect with our Lenten focus on forgiveness. This is the fourth year that she has provided these daily devotions. You can sign up to receive the devotional by contacting the church office. If you received last year's emailed Lenten readings, you are already on the list. This year, members of the congregation will also contribute reflections to the daily devotional. Please consider making reading this devotional part of your Lenten practice. Send email devotion requests to [terry@brightonfumc.org](mailto:terry@brightonfumc.org).

## LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY

**Worship Services, Noon & 7 p.m., March 1**

In the tradition of the church, the faithful set aside the 40 days before Easter as a time of preparation. During this Lenten season, we will prepare our hearts for full and genuine gratitude. 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.



## Tiny House Project

Cass Community Social Services is building a neighborhood in Detroit! Imagine the excitement that owning a home can generate. Imagine having an asset and a stake in your community. That's what home ownership can give. It's a game changer for those who once thought that owning their home was just a dream.

Cass Community Social Services is in the process of building 25 homes and during Lent we will support this project by raising funds for six front doors. Each door costs \$500. Your contributions to this very worthy cause is greatly appreciated.



## HOLY WEEK

(the week before Easter Sunday)

### **Prayer Vigil, Thursday, April 13, 9:00 am – 7:00 pm**

Volunteer to participate in a Prayer Vigil in the chapel at Brighton First on the Thursday of Holy Week. The vigil will begin at 9:00 am and continue through the day until the Holy Thursday worship service begins. The chapel will be open for all who would like to make a designated prayer time part of their Holy Week observance. Sign up for a prayer vigil time in the Community Room or express interest on your worship Connection Card and a member of the Prayer Team will contact you. You are welcome to join others in the prayer vigil anytime during the day even if you do not designate a specific time.

### **Holy Thursday, April 13, 7:00 pm**

We will worship and observe Holy Communion together the evening of April 13. In the tradition of the church, this is the evening we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples and his arrest in the garden of Gethsemane.

### **Good Friday, April 14**

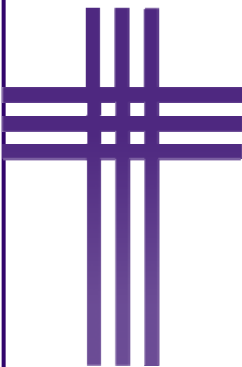
**Community Worship at noon and at 1:00 p.m.**

**Evening Worship at Brighton First at 7:00 p.m.**

As part of the Brighton Ministerial Association, we have three opportunities for Good Friday worship. At noon, on April 14, there will be a worship service at St. Paul Episcopal Church in Brighton. The second opportunity to worship will be at a Ecumenical Stations of the Cross worship service at St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church. Finally, we will host a worship service at 7:00 in the evening in our sanctuary. Clergy and members of our congregation will participate in each of these services. Please choose at least one worship service to attend, as we remember the solemn occasion of Jesus giving his life for us and for the world.

### **Garden Sunrise Service at 7:30 am. on Easter Sunday**

Before our full worship service begins at 8:00 am, we will gather at 7:30 am in the Memorial Garden for a brief service celebrating resurrection and reaffirming our baptism as the promise of new life.







## COUPLES CONNECTION 2017



GUEST SPEAKER

GREAT FOOD

CHILDCARE

LIVE MUSIC

### Camp Changes Lives

Walk in the woods, swim in the lake, and make s'mores over the campfire. Talk about God and how His love transforms us. Try new activities, make friends and sing silly camp songs! Yes! Michigan Area United Methodist Camping offers all this and more. Your children or grandchildren can have all the fun of summer camp and grow in their faith as well.

The new camp brochure is available in the community room. You'll also find special events for adults and families (choir retreat anyone?), as well as RV/tent campgrounds you can visit on your own schedule.

Learn more and register online at [umcamping.org](http://umcamping.org). If you have questions or want to hear from local kids who have been to one of these camps, contact Suzanne Everett, [bseverett@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bseverett@sbcglobal.net).



# First Steps Preschool



## CLASSROOM NEWS

On February 6th, currently-enrolled students and their siblings had an opportunity to enroll for the 2017-2018 school year at First Steps Preschool and on February 13<sup>th</sup>, children of Brighton First United Methodist church members, and siblings of previously enrolled families had an opportunity to enroll. Remaining openings are being filled with children from the general public.

An Open House will be held on May 11, 2017 from 6-8 p.m. Teachers will be available to greet students and answer questions regarding preschool enrollment.

The Spring Parent & Tot Preschool program has enrolled 10 students. This class begins on March 7 and will meet every Tuesday from 9:15 -11:15 until May 9 in rooms 105-107.

During March, Dr. Suess' birthday, transportation, space, teddy bear picnics, Spring and weather will be some of the highlights. Soccer Shots will provide an indoor soccer program for the preschoolers in mid-March. Summer Camp registration begins the week of March 6, 2017. Camp dates are June 5-8 and August 7-10. The "leprechaun" always makes his way into the classrooms near St. Patrick's Day.



Brighton's Legacy Center will do a soccer demo with all the classes on March 16 and 17. The Preschool will celebrate Spring Break during the week of March 27-31.

Classes will resume on April 3, 2017 and Easter preparations will begin. Lisa Guise, Director



*Sue and I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and cards. I continue to rehab from my hip replacement surgery Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. I may be a bit behind, but everything continues to go well. Just like our faith, it is a journey. Russ & Sue Ruhnow*

## YOUTH GROUPS—All Meet at 5:00 pm

### 4th-6th grade Youth Group:

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the lower level of the church! Meeting Dates: March 12th; April 9th, & 23rd; May 7th.

### 7th-12th grade Youth Groups:

Meets every Sunday at The Well . The 7th-12th grades meet at the same time, same location, but split into smaller groups by grades. Meeting Dates: March 5th, 12th, 19th; April 2nd, 9th, 23rd, 30th; May: 7th, 21st, 28th .

**Dinner is provided each Sunday from 6pm-6:30pm for ALL YOUTH GROUPS.** Want more information? Email Alyssa Tumolo at [alyssa@brightonfumc.org](mailto:alyssa@brightonfumc.org)



**Easter Egg Hunt-Saturday, April 8th**  
**Bring the children in your life to hunt eggs throughout the church. There will also be crafts and games to play.**  
**April 8<sup>th</sup> 10-11 am**

### Family Movie Night—

March 11<sup>th</sup> 6-8 pm Wear your comfy jammies, bring a chair, pillow, or blanket and join us for a family friendly movie. Movie "Finding Dory".



### LEGO camp

LEGO camps will return to Brighton First this summer. Two camps will be offered, one in the morning and one in the afternoon during the week of June 26<sup>th</sup>. Themes will be announced soon.



### Sunday School News –

There will be Sunday School on March 26<sup>th</sup> and April 2<sup>st</sup>, but all ages will be working together to complete a service project. The 3 year olds – 6<sup>th</sup> graders will meet in room 124 on these dates.

There will be NO Sunday School on Easter Sunday.



**Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in July – the 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>.**  
**The theme is Maker Fun Factory. Sign ups coming soon.**

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORSHIP ARTS:

**The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Musical Theatre Project** – This Summer our Music Theatre (Camp) will kick-off with a read-through and casting on **Friday, July 21 at 1 p.m.** (the last day of Vacation Bible School). Musical Theatre students will receive all materials for "camp" at this time . The "camp" will be from Monday, **August 7-Saturday, August 12 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. each day with performances on Sunday, August 13 during worship.** If you cannot attend on Friday, July 21<sup>st</sup> but would like to participate, or you would like more information, please contact Susan Snow, Music Director, at 517-376-2215 (text) or [susan@brightonfumc.org](mailto:susan@brightonfumc.org). Registrations will be taken beginning in March.



## Warming Center at Brighton First from March 6-April 2

Brighton FUMC has offered the use of The Well for this program to house the homeless and needy in our community. Our church will staff the program for the week starting March 6<sup>th</sup>. The program is simply to provide shelter and a hot meal to those who have passed the intake screening by the Salvation Army and other agencies. The shelter (The Well) will be opened at 7pm and the guests will leave at 7am.

There are four teams we have to recruit for our week. Other churches will staff the remaining weeks of the month of March through April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The primary need is to have evening chaperones to be present from 7pm until 7am. The next need is for hot meal preparation, to be self-served by the guests. A crock pot type meal (soup, stew, sloppy joes) is to be delivered to the well by 7pm. The third team is to provide laundry services. This is a once per week service to clean bedding. The fourth team will take care of the cleaning. Contact coordinator Mike Barrett with questions at 810-599-7727.

### Helping the Homeless



## Youth Appalachia Service Project (ASP) Mission Trip



Join us on the 2017 Youth ASP mission trip. We are heading to Kentucky July 9th-15th. ASP is a Christian ministry, open to those age 14 and up, that inspires hope and service through volunteer home repair in central Appalachia. We have 28 spots available-reserve yours! . Can't join us this year? We are always looking for donations to support our trip. Contact Laura Kelly at [laurakelly21@me.com](mailto:laurakelly21@me.com) with questions.

## Cass Community Social Service Missions

Cass Community Social Services ([www.casscommunity.org](http://www.casscommunity.org)) fights poverty and creates opportunity in the city of Detroit, and we can continue supporting their efforts in 2017. Please consider joining one of our

Saturday missions. Winter and Spring 2016 opportunities include March 18, April 15 and May 20. Each month we depart from the church at approximately 8:00 a.m. and return by approximately 4:00 p.m. Sign up in the community room or contact Greg Guise at 810.772.9970/[gguise@gmail.com](mailto:gguise@gmail.com).





## United Methodist Women March 2017

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. For information about UMW or any of these meetings please call Pauline Schaffer (810)229-4643 bp6340@gmail.com

### March Calendar of Events

March 1 (Wed)      **Sarah Lewis Circle**—9:30 am, Church Fellowship Hall  
Program: VINA Clinic —Barb Colley  
Hostess: J. Tobel, J. Todt  
Devotions: S. Weiss

March 1 (Wed)      **Sojourner Truth Circle**—1:00 pm, Room 127  
Program: VCI and Strategic Plan Update  
Chris Attarian, Marsha Ikle  
Devotions: G. Harkiewicz



March 2 (Thurs)      **Rebekah Circle**—10:00 am, Church Fellowship Hall  
Hostess: S. Everett

March 2 (Thurs)      **Phoebe Circle**  
Dine Out —O. Karaska

March 7 (Tues)      **Dorcas Circle**—7:00 Church Library  
Program: Climate Justice—Sue Urban  
Hostess: R. Lepatourel, C. Riffe, L. Martin  
Devotions: R. LePatourel

March 16 (Thurs)      **Luncheon/ General Meeting** 12 pm Noon  
Program: Gardening —Gretchen Voyle  
Hosts – Sojourner Truth Circle

March 17 (Fri)      **Hickory Haven Monthly Birthday Party**—2:00 pm  
G. Harkiewicz, A. McPeck, J. Tobel, J. Plumley, L. Hoover, S. Ruhnow

March 23 (Thurs)      **Seekers Book Club**—1:00 pm, room 127  
Book—"Broken and Blessed" – Una Couch



The next newsletter deadline is Sunday, **March 11, 2017** This is for the April 2017 newsletter. Please send news articles to Laurie Titlow, newsletter editor at [laurie@brightonfumc.org](mailto:laurie@brightonfumc.org)

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 **BRIGHTON FIRST**  
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*Learning*  
**FORGIVENESS**

*Forgiving Others and Asking For Forgiveness*  
**BEGINS MARCH 5TH**

