

Brighton First News

First United Methodist Church of Brighton August 2017



Methodists in Brighton for over 180 Years

The City of Brighton celebrates its 150th anniversary on August 13. I recently read again the history of First United Methodist Church of Brighton.

Methodist preachers started visiting Ore Creek (later to be named Brighton) in 1830. Methodists formed a class meeting and gathered in each other's homes. Their first worship services were in a school house on Grand River Avenue. In 1856, the Methodists built the first church on the same property as our current church building. Visitors to the new city of Brighton were greeted by the large brick Methodist-Episcopal church as they came from the east.

In 1867, the founding year for the City of Brighton, Rev. Thomas Nichols was pastor of the church. He reported earning \$675 annually. The church building was valued at \$3,000. The Ladies Aid Society, a forerunner of the United Methodist Women, was an active part of the church's ministry.

Here are some fun facts about the history of Brighton First:

- Traveling by horseback, Washington Jackson helped to found Methodist classes in 1836, including Brighton, Fowlerville, Fenton and Milford.
- A Methodist evangelist came to town in the late 1830's. He preached from a balcony of a blacksmith shop. People flocked to hear him. The building filled up and the balcony gave way. Several people were injured. A few days later, more people signed up for the Methodist class.
- The first pastor appointed in Brighton was Rev. George King (1843). He was the junior preacher from Milford. In 1844, King's 4-year-old daughter died and was the fourth person buried in the local cemetery. King was buried there 6 years later.
- The first church building (1856) cost \$1,600.
- In 1870, Rev. John Levington refused communion to Elia Withey, a member of the Brighton congregation because he was a Mason. The dispute went to the Annual Conference and Levington was forced to retire.
- In 1873, Mrs. York, wife of the pastor, was granted a local preacher's license. It was very unusual that a woman be given license to preach.
- With plans to build a new church, the old church was torn down in 1904. This is what the *Brighton Argus* reported, "On account of the busy times, the ladies of the Methodist Episcopal Aid Society turned out Tuesday to help tear down the old church. It is said the brick flew like hailstones."
- The church closed from 1915 – 1920. The parsonage was rented and the church building was used by the Boys' Christian Association and the Red Cross.
- The church reopened in 1920 after the Ladies Aid Society raised enough money to pay a pastor for one year.

Methodists have been witnessing for Jesus Christ in the City of Brighton for over 180 years. We continue our commitment to making disciples for Jesus Christ and the transformation of the world!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Sherry".

Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis, Lead Pastor



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.

August 16—Livingston County United Way Day of Caring—Brighton First staff volunteering as a service team

August 22 & 23—School for Pastoral Ministry—Lansing

Building a Place for People to Grow

October 2017 is Stewardship Month



The congregation of Brighton First is committed to building a place for faith to grow. In 2017, we are redesigning our children's Sunday School area in order to strengthen disciple making. We are intentionally growing small groups and other opportunities for adults to grow in faith. In this last year, we have seen over 10% growth in adult faith formation participation.

In worship, we have grown in devotion and praise with a new band-led worship service and greater participation of laity leadership. Our average attendance for the first 6 months of 2017 has increased from 2016. This is the first change in attendance decline since 2009. Brighton First is a place to grow and we are growing!

In 2018, our strategic plan calls for a remodel of the library and the continued emphasis on small groups. Our outreach to the residents of Mill Pond Manor Apartments is bearing fruit and this summer we begin a partnership with the Torch Food Truck, a non-profit that will deliver food to Mill Pond residents.

This October we begin our 2018 financial pledge campaign. The financial support of the congregation allows Christ's work to continue through Brighton First. It supports us as we build a place for people to grow.

Each year, our church community offers individual commitments for God's ministry. Through regular worship attendance and daily prayer, we grow our capability to Know God. With joyful witness and heartfelt compassion, we continue to demonstrate our eagerness to Love God. By our volunteering and caring missions, we show our desire to Serve God. Our financial gifts demonstrate our commitment to being faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Participating with a financial commitment is an important step. You will be receiving more information by mail about "Building a Place for People to Grow." We'll ask that financial pledges be turned in by October 25 and on October 29, we will celebrate the total commitments we have received.

An Invitation to Impact the Future

In January 2012, our congregation initiated a plan to pay off our mortgage by 2022. Since then, we have significantly reduced the balance on the mortgage. We accomplished this by paying an extra \$1,000 on the principal each month with a "13th payment". Each year congregation members have given for an additional mortgage payment (\$8,723). We continue to exceed our annual goal. We give thanks to God for the generosity of the congregation. We are on track to reach our debt retirement goal or even surpass it.

We have designated August and September as 13th payment months. We give thanks for those who have contributed to the 13th payment in the past and hope that you will continue this generous practice. We are also thankful for those who will prayerfully consider being part of this special giving for the first time. It is our goal to reach \$8,723 in 13th mortgage payment giving by the end of September.



All gifts given to this special project benefit our ministry today and are a gift to future generations. When reduced interest costs are calculated, every \$100 given for debt retirement is like giving \$128.

Participating in making the 13th payment is saying "yes" to the future ministry of First United Methodist Church. You are invited to mark your gifts, "Mortgage".



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

Calendar of Events

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| August | Dorcas Circle — No meeting |
| | Sarah Lewis Circle — No meeting |
| Aug 2 (Wed) | 1:00 pm Sojourner Truth Circle Human Trafficking – Judy Longcore |
| Aug 3 (Thurs) | 10:00 am Rebekah Circle Hostess: L. Dufresne |
| August 17 (Thurs) | Phoebe Circle Family Pool Party at Laurie Cockerill's |
| August 18 (Fri) | 11:30 am—1:00 pm Salad Buffet Luncheon 2:00 pm Hickory Haven Monthly Birthday Party Gail Harkiewicz, Marsha Ikle, Barb Terry |
| August 17-19 | Mission U—Lake Huron Retreat Center One Day—Thursday; Two Day Friday-Saturday |

Summer Worship Series—Reel to Real

As we finish out the summer our worship series we continue to bring the movies into the sanctuary, as we explore what Christian truths we might discover in popular movies. We will combine a fun look at movies, new and old, with theological examination and practical application. Each week we will move from “reel to real”.



August 6: Gone with the Wind
August 20: Shawshank Redemption
August 27: Star Wars (overview)
September 3: Godzilla versus King Kong



Men's Appalachia Service Mission Trip

September 28-October 1



This year's Men's Appalachia Service Project mission trip is in Jonesville, VA. We will work on various construction projects. If you are looking for a great mission experience, check the box on your connection card.

No construction skills needed, just the desire to serve others in the name of Jesus Christ. Contact Mike Barrett, coordinator at 810-599-7727 or 6453barrett@gmail.com

Brighton First Communications Task Force Completes Work

The Communications Task Force, formed as part of Brighton First's strategic plan has completed its work and submitted a report to the Administrative Board for approval in August. The Communications Team was tasked with reviewing communication practices at Brighton First and creating policy and guidelines.

Key recommendations from the Communications Task Force include:

- Continue to use the current Brighton First logo in publications. After consulting with Mark Doyle, the director of communications for the Michigan Area United Methodist Church, the team determined that our current logo is most effective for our context.
- Completely update the website by November 2017. The communication goal is that the website be the primary source for information for both visitors and regular attenders at Brighton First. Over the last year, we have made improvements, providing more information. The website will be redesigned to reflect current trends and enhanced usability.
- Change format of Brighton First newsletter. The newsletter in its current format will end in September, and we will send five mailings per year with an emphasis on our vision and mission as a church. The revised newsletter will accompany Christmas and Easter letters, as well as three giving statement mailings. Church members will continue to receive news of upcoming events through the worship bulletin, weekly e-news, Facebook and the website. For those who do not attend church and/or rely on the newsletter for information, we will mail bulletins (which contain letters from Pastor Sherry and news of upcoming events) monthly.
- Provide a concise description of communications channels that church groups may use to get their news and announcements out. This information is included in the Policy and Guideline document that will be available on line by mid-August.



We are grateful for the work of Joanne Schmidt, Terry Keefe, Alyssa Tumolo and Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis, who worked over several months to create the communications guidelines. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Sherry at 810-229-8561/sherry@brightonfumc.org



This summer we will move our children's ministry program to one area on the lower level, creating an inviting and dynamic space. Support the remodel of our lower level for our children and youth with your prayers and donations. Donate on our website using PayPal or our donation page. Together, we carry on the work of hundreds who have been witnesses to the grace of Jesus Christ. Ask an usher for a specially marked envelope.

September newsletter deadline—email editor laurie@brightonfumc.org by August 13

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

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 **BRIGHTON FIRST**
United Methodist Church

**Young People's Musical Theater
Day Camp!**

**Monday-Saturday August 7-12
9:00am-3:00pm**
Performances on Sunday August 13

For young people entering K-8th grade who love to sing, dance, or
act! For more information or to sign up visit our website or email
Music Director Susan Snow at susan@brightonfumc.org

www.brightonfumc.org

Sign-up your child online !!!!!