



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
Brighton · Whitmore Lake

September 10, 2019

Dear Members and Friends of First United Methodist Church,

Poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "Great is the art of beginning, but greater is the art of ending." I began ministry with you in 2008. Now, 11 years later, I take up the "art" of ending well.

I write to share that my last day serving as your pastor will be June 30, 2020. I have come to this decision through prayer and it is not one that I have made lightly. I assure you that it continues to be a joy to be in ministry with you.

My husband Rev. George Lewis who is the pastor at First United Methodist Church of Howell has applied for retirement to begin June 30, 2020. Next June we plan to move to Mattawan, Michigan where we have purchased a home. I am not yet eligible for retirement and it is my hope that Bishop David Bard of the Michigan Annual Conference will appoint me to serve in the Kalamazoo area.

Bishop Bard will appoint a new senior pastor at First United Methodist Church who will begin serving on July 1, 2020. Our Staff-Parish Relations Committee (human resources team) is working to determine the skills and qualities needed for future pastoral leadership at our church. The Committee will be in conversation with our District Superintendent in the coming weeks. Kelly Myers is the chairperson of the SPRC and she is available for any questions you may have.

Until June 2020 I will continue to serve Jesus Christ alongside you. I have been inspired and blessed by your faithfulness, generosity and compassion. It is my prayer that the "art" of my ending here at First United Methodist Church will include sharing my affection and admiration, encouraging our growth as disciples and holding up a vision of what is possible through God's grace.

George and I are thankful for your prayers through the months ahead. Our hearts are heavy, but also full of thanksgiving for this new chapter in our lives. Please also pray for the discernment of the Bishop, District Superintendent and Staff-Parish Relations Committee. Finally, I urge you to begin praying for the next senior pastor who will come to serve this amazing faith community.

Blessings,
Pastor Sherry

Rev. Dr. Sherry Parker-Lewis, Lead Pastor; Rev. Bob Fuchs, Campus Pastor

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