



"In Touch" at Hazel Park First UMC

Newsletter for all those who worship at First United Methodist Church of Hazel Park



Organized in 1924 • Incorporated in 1925 • Sanctuary Completed 1953

315 E. Nine Mile Rd. • Hazel Park, Michigan 48030 • 248-546-5955 • www.hpfirst.org



Pastor's Pen

Pastor Brian Steele



Inside the Pastor's Head

Devotional: Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it --Hebrews 13:2

At our last Church Council meeting, we officially adopted our new core values as a church. This is exciting because it allows us to proclaim to those outside our doors who we are and what drives us in ministry for those of us inside our doors. Here is what our core values mean to me. I'd love to hear your thoughts on them, too! So, let's pull up a chair together during our Sunday lunches/coffee hours and talk about it.

- **Hospitality:** In recent years, I've been drawn to this quote from Dr. Crystal Jones, "There's a huge difference between 'All are welcome' and 'This was created with you in mind.'" That means hospitality takes planning and intentionality. It goes beyond friendliness. We are and should be friendly, but a Christian understanding of hospitality is deeper than that. Hospitality means we take time to understand what others need to feel welcome, and what they may not find welcoming. Then we make those adjustments
- **Inclusion and Acceptance:** I am committed toward our church not only welcoming everyone, but including everyone in the full life of the church. Regardless of political persuasion, race, ethnicity, legal status, educational background, economic status, gender identity, sexual orientation and mental or physical abilities, I desire our church to be a representative of God's Kingdom as we see it in our Hazel Park community, an increasingly diverse community
- **Spiritually (and Physically) Hungry:** I've seen people want to grow spiritually. I envision our church being a place where anybody can become all that God dreams they can be. While I can't fill anybody's spiritual hunger, I want to offer opportunities for us to connect with God in a variety of ways. Whether that be through worship, Bible Study, acts of service, or singing, I want our church to be a place that can fill those hungers. Oh, and we do food really well, too.
- **Allow everyone to serve and serve everyone:** When people are fed spiritually, we want our church to be a place where everybody can find a place to participate. We want to serve everyone we can inside and outside our doors. We also want to be a place where others can find a place to serve. Everybody has something to offer

A Look Back:

4/7 Revelation: What is an Apocalypse: Just like our local libraries, the Bible has different genres of books. One of them is called Apocalyptic Literature, which is what Revelation is. Contrary to popular culture, "Apocalyptic" does not mean the end of the world, but is instead an unveiling. Also, calling it literature does not make it fiction. Rather, Apocalyptic Literature holds the space in between the spiritual and physical realms. The author of Revelation, John of Patmos, is describing a spiritual vision he had amidst real-world struggles people of faith were having.

4/14 Revelation: Drop it like it's Hot: Some of the churches of the first-century world were thriving spiritually but suffering materially at the hands of the Roman empire. Some of the churches were a mess spiritually but thriving materially because they were in bed with the Roman empire. Sometimes just because we are thriving materially does not mean we are being faithful spiritually.

4/21 Revelation: Lamb Theology: Christian Nationalism can sound like a good idea on paper, but it is not in line with Jesus, the slain lamb of God who sits on the throne. While our faith should influence our political beliefs, seeking political power and using our faith as a tool to do so is a perversion of the Gospel and harms our witness as Christians. Christian Nationalism makes our faith a servant of the state and gives the state the power to encapsulate our faith. That is neither helpful for our faith or country.

4/28 Revelation: We are not Left Behind: The rapture is a cultural phenomenon, but it has only been believed by a sect of Christians since the 1820s. That means that for about 90% of Christian history, they have not believed in the rapture as it is talked about in culture. Therefore, in the words of professor Dr. Ben Witherington, "The 'Left Behind' theology needs to be left behind."

Top 3 Things I'm Working On

- 1) Finishing up learning everything I can about the book of Revelation.
- 2) Preparing worship series for the rest of the year.
- 3) Preparing to be a parent (Wowzer!)

What I'm reading and listening to:

- For Spiritual Development: A lot of books on Revelation. Like, a lot.
- Podcasts I try to listen to regularly: The Bible for Normal People, Evolving Faith, Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership

Upcoming Events



Saturday, May 4th ~ Women's group meets in the fellowship hall at 1pm
Saturday, May 4th ~ Men's group meets at Coney island at 10pm
Saturday, May 11th ~ Letter Carrier's Food drive @9am
Thursday, May 16th ~ Church Council Meeting @7pm

Things to Keep in Mind



The Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive will be held on Saturday, May 11, 2024.

As we have done for the past few years, we will be receiving food from this effort to re-stock our food pantry.

Volunteers will be needed to work all or just a portion of the day from 9:30 AM - 5:00 PM. We will meet behind the Hazel Park Post Office at 9:30 AM and sort food throughout the day.

Sorters will also be needed in the church house pantry as food is brought over from the Post Office.

Finally, we are in need of cardboard boxes which can be used to transport the food from the Post Office to the church house. Even if you can't help on the 11th, you can contribute by donating cardboard boxes.

Health/Life Concerns: Jackie M., Healthy pregnancy for Brienne , The Wilfong and Harrison Families, Amy G's friend Mike, Brienne S. And family on the loss of her grandmother. Sandy S for back issues,

Comfort for the friends and families of: Prayers for Leota Gee's family on her passing..

Serving in the Armed Forces: Emma Hardy, Sean Redd, Casey Allen, Brendan Schemers, Ronald Turner & Chris Collis

Gratitude's and Joys: The hospitality of our church, grandkids in church and grandparents.

Church Leaders: Pastor-Rev. Brian Steele, Al Holland-SPRC Chair, John Sarns-Ad Council Chair, Frank Cox-Lay Leader, Ashley Detoledo-Secretary, Lisa Johnson-Treasurer, Matt Sarns-Music Director, and Harriet Hardy-Organist.



'You did it for me': Serving others

On a crisp, fall day in 1973, I was a college junior, and I was feeling rather anxious about the things going on in the world. The technological developments in the mass media had made it possible to be instantly aware of the many threats and problems we faced around the globe. I came across a book that day by Gary R. Collins, "A Psychologist Looks at Life." He, along with other mental health professionals of the time, conceded that we were officially living in "the age of anxiety."

If 1973 ushered in the "age of anxiety," then we have taken that anxiety monster and made it even bigger. The American Psychological Association recently published findings that spokesperson Dr. Lynn Bufka describes as the most alarming stress report in their 15-year history.

Everyone has a problem with fear, worry and anxiety

Mental health professionals tell us that it is natural for us to experience fear, worry and anxiety from time to time. The Bible also reflects this understanding. God created us as emotional beings.

Christian psychologist Dr. Tim Allchin says our emotions are given by God to put us "into motion." For instance, he says that fear is a God-given emotion that alerts our minds to danger, be it real or perceived. He states that anxiety is what we feel when our body is responding to the emotion of fear, and worry is the thought process that mulls over and gives power to the object of our fear.

When we read the Scriptures, we see a God that does not want us to be hurt by emotions that were designed to help us survive and thrive. If there's one thing Jesus tried to teach his disciples, it is that they learn to master their emotions. We can make these God-given emotions work for us instead of against us. When you feel fearful, take a minute to analyze what exactly is causing the fear. Ask yourself, "Am I experiencing a real threat or is it just imagined? Are my spiritual priorities in line? Am I worried about things that are temporary in nature? Is my life based on love of neighbor? Am I worried about things I can't control?"

Our fear, worry and anxiety reflect our understanding of God

When we fundamentally do not believe God is a loving God that is present with us in all we do, we, of course, are going to live fearful, anxious lives. If your view of God is one of a detached, uncaring God, then I strongly urge you to dig into the Scriptures and see for yourself what kind of God our God really is. There are numerous times and varied ways God says to us, "Don't be afraid. I'm right here with you. Let me help you. You need peace? I'll give you peace. You need calm? I'll give you calm. You need strength? I've got more than enough for you! You need wisdom to plan your course of action? Let me help you think through that. Put it on me! Trust me with it! Let's find a way together."

We can't do life by ourselves—at least not very well. When we spend quality time in prayer and meditation with the One who made us, we find our source of power to overcome fear, worry and anxiety in complicated, challenging times.

Jesus said in [John 15 \(CEB\)](#), "Remain in me as I remain in you...because apart from me you can do nothing." Another way Jesus could have said this is, "You want my power? Connect yourself tightly to me. Be my branch! I'll be your vine. Stop worrying about tomorrow. Let me show you how to live one day at a time." When we spend time in the Scriptures, when we remain in Christ Jesus the Lord, we will have a right view of God—a God who is faithful and just, a God who wishes us to do great and marvelous things...starting with overcoming our fears and anxieties.

The best way to redirect our fears and anxieties is to look beyond ourselves

We must spend less time worrying about our own wants and needs and more time figuring out how to help our neighbor. A young lawyer asked Jesus what he needed to do to fulfill his purpose in life. Jesus confirmed for that young man what he already knew: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." [Luke 10:27 \(CEB\)](#)

This is who we were made to be, what we were made to do. This is God's prescription for us to operate at our optimum. Anxiety left unchecked will paralyze us. It will isolate us. It will cause self-doubt. But when we learn to focus our energy and our thoughts on someone else's problem, our anxieties seem to drain right out of us.

This emptying of our anxious energy has a great and blessed effect. It makes room for God to fill us with a renewed spirit of purpose and resolve, an inspired new vision for our lives. When we love God with everything we've got, and love our neighbor as ourselves, a great spiritual mystery occurs. We are at our best because we are being made holy. We are living life as God designed it to be lived. We are channeling God's mind, heart and spirit.

Remember God's promises

The Scriptures make one thing perfectly clear to the people of God, no matter what era or what circumstance, and that is this: The God of creation, the Great I Am, did not create us to live lives crippled by fear, worry and anxiety.

[Isaiah 41:10 \(CEB\)](#) proclaims, "Don't fear, because I am with you; don't be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous strong hand."



FOLLOWING OUR FATHER'S WILL

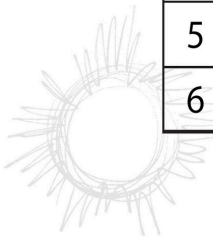
Jesus always did his Father's will. What does our heavenly Father desire of us?

Directions: Using the coordinates, circle the corresponding words. Then add those to the blanks below to complete John 6:40, NIV.

Coordinates

T3, R1, F6, E2, T1, H5, A6, R4, F5, T5, H3, F2, A4, E6

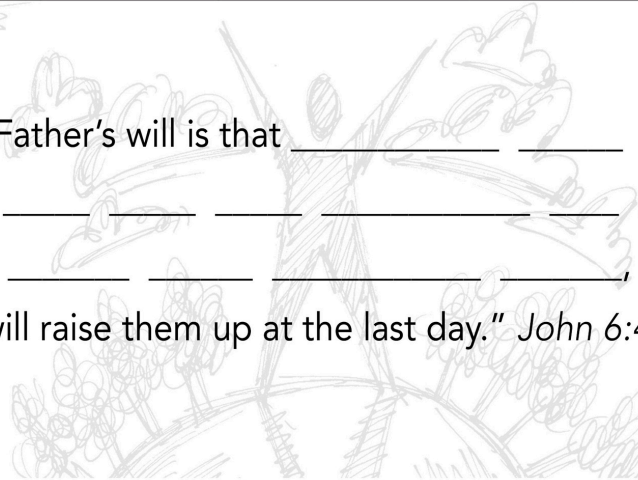
	F	A	T	H	E	R
1	Father	them	the	believe	that	who
2	have	will	if	heart	to	live
3	perish	whoever	everyone	shall	shall	give
4	God	eternal	send	into	Him	believes
5	in	come	him	Son	rest	with
6	looks	and	forever	Where	life	hope



"For my Father's will is that _____

 _____"

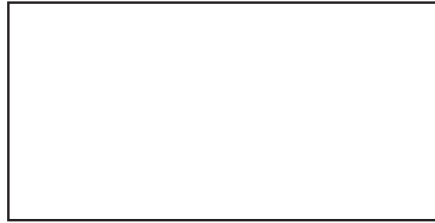
and I will raise them up at the last day." *John 6:40, NIV*



Answer: everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life

Hazel Park First United Methodist Church
315 E. Nine Mile Rd.
Hazel Park, MI 48030

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Sunday Morning Service: 11:15 am
Church Office: 248-546-5955
E-mail: Hazelparkfirst@wowway.com
Website: www.hpfirst.org



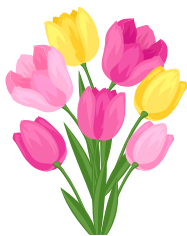
May Birthdays

Dawn Williams - 2 Kathy Rogers - 7
Jackie Robertson - 8 Harriet Hardy - 9
George Gebo - 10 Heidi Ulanowski - 12
Gabriel Hernandez - 12 Amy Evans - 13



May Anniversaries

Ron & Sue Anderson - 13



May 2024



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

May Birthdays

Dawn Williams - 2 Kathy Rogers - 7 Jackie Robertson - 8
Harriet Hardy - 9 George Gebo - 10 Heidi Ulanowski - 12
Gabriel Hernandez - 12 Amy Evans - 13

1

2

3

4

Men's group meets at the Coney island at 10pm

Women's group meets in the fellowship hall at 1pm

Bible Study @ 7

5

6

7

8

9

10

11



9:30-5:00 at the Hazel Park Post Office

Worship Service w/communion @ 11:15

2

Praise Team 4:00

Bible Study @ 7

12

13

14

15

16

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18



Worship Service @ 11:15

Praise Team 4:00

Church Council Meeting @ 7:00

19

20

21

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Worship Service @ 11:15

Praise Team 4:00

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31



Worship Service @ 11:15

Praise Team 4:00