



"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



Dear Friends,

For most of 2024, we have been in the New Testament. I keep track of how many sermons I do per year on the New Testament versus the Old Testament. Currently, the New outnumbers the Old 21-4. It's understandable if you say, "That's a good thing!" The New Testament is all about Jesus, and that's what matters. Indeed, Jesus is what matters. Also, the Old Testament is long, complicated and, to put it nicely, a little dry in parts. The Old Testament can be overwhelming to understand because of its size and underwhelming to read. Many also read the violence and get very turned off by it. But let's not forget that the Old Testament was Jesus' Bible and it's what spiritually formed Him. While dealing with the violence is a discussion for another time, the Old Testament is also a deeply formative group of books when we are able to take it part by part. This may surprise you, but I actually prefer to read the Old Testament compared to the New. In it I find a God of justice and a God who desires equity and wholeness for people. Then we see that brought to completion in Jesus. That's part of the reason why we are doing a series and class on the 10 Commandments.

We need to engage the Old Testament! We need to embrace it as part of our faith. While it is certainly understandable to have questions, we should always have questions when we are learning. God embraces those questions, and so do I. I'd encourage you to start reading some of the Old Testament. The Minor Prophets are some of my favorite and most influential books in the Bible. Then, if you have questions or want to discuss or maybe even study them more, I'd be happy to do so!

Let's embrace all sources of our faith, and that includes the Old Testament.

In grace,

Brian

A Look Back:

Thank you to all who filled in while I was on parental leave!

Top 3 Things I'm Working On:

- 1) Worship series for the rest of the year
- 2) Church Conference on October 13th
- 3) Planning our class on the 10 Commandments and future Advent and membership classes

What I'm reading and listening to:

- For Spiritual Development: The 10 Commandments from the Backside by Ellsworth Kalas, Words of Life by Adam Hamilton, Ten by Sean Gladding
- Podcasts I try to listen to regularly: The Bible for Normal People, Evolving Faith, Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership, The Emotionally Healthy Leader

Upcoming Events

Mark
YOUR
Calendar

Wednesday, Oct. 2nd ~ Bible Study starts at 7pm
Wednesday Oct 2nd ~Special Church Council Meeting at 6pm
Saturday, Oct 5th ~ Women's group meets in the fellowship hall at 1pm
Saturday, Oct 5th ~ Men's group meets at 10pm
Sunday, Oct. 13, 2024 ~ Annual charge conference at 3pm
Thursday, Oct. 17th ~ Church Council Meeting @7pm
Saturday, Oct 26th ~ Trunk or Treat from 1 - 3pm

Things to Keep in Mind



We are taking donations of candy to participate in this community event! Please see Ashley or Pastor Brian if you have any questions or like to help in the event!

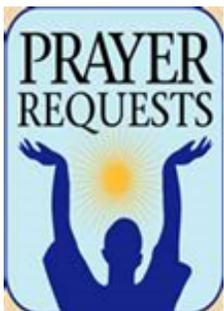


Health/Life Concerns: Pastor Brians Aunt and my cousin (her son), Amber F's cousin, Matthew, who is serving in the national guard at the border, Michael O'Connor,

Comfort for the friends and families of: The family for Flora B. Jones in her passing. The Grace family on their recent loss.

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

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.





What makes you feel spiritually alive?

Faith can be a fickle thing. In the lives of many people, myself included, it can come in waves. Some days we feel really connected and firm in our faith, while at other times, it can be hard to hold on to our beliefs. Like any other thing, the key is practice.

When most people think of spiritual practices they imagine some sort of routine or discipline. For people of many faiths this can also look like prayer, meditation, fasting, or even a life as a nun or monk on the more extreme end. Routine can bring order to people's lives and there is real value in that. For others such as myself, routine isn't always the best way to remain deeply connected in our faith. What keeps me grounded is my commitment to God's people; and to be clear that means all people.

I fully support doing whatever makes your faith feel lived in and whole no matter what form that takes. The closest I ever get to a routine is remembering to do my morning and evening prayers as well as always remembering to give thanks for any meals I consume. Those are important things to do but they aren't exactly invigorating. What makes me feel most alive is caring for my neighbors as Jesus has called me to do and in today's world this can look so many different ways.

Feeling like a Christian

When I was a college student, I had fallen far away from any sense of faith. Through coincidence or divine intervention, I ended up at my university's Wesley Foundation, a United Methodist campus ministry. It was with this group that I began to find my way again. In my early days with this campus ministry I signed up for some spring break service days. It was during these spring break service projects that I began to rebuild my faith, unbeknownst to me. It was so simple and so profound, simultaneously.

This spring break experience was the first time I felt like I was 'being' a Christian. We stocked shelves, served food, cooked, and cleaned at a shelter for the unhoused. We did some landscaping at a local park. We did yard work, scraped gunk off floors, and shared a meal at a battered women's shelter. The service projects we engaged in were quite simple but they taught me something about myself that I had not realized up to that point: doing good in the world and helping others made me feel alive. All of a sudden God was not abstract. I was doing the work of God with my hands and feet.

I never anticipated the fullness I would feel from something so simple as caring for a garden, cleaning, serving, and landscaping. I walked into that campus ministry estranged from God, at least on my end, and I walked out of there on my way to seminary. This week of service projects was nothing less than transformational for me. Serving others the way Jesus modeled for us is what makes me feel spiritually alive. It restored my faith when I was close to giving up. It makes me feel passionately faithful because those moments are when I am most in touch with God.

Who is living their faith?

When I think of people who actively live out their faith, I think of the people who make a difference in the world. I often wonder how different the world could be if caring for others was a consistent spiritual practice. Seeing the faces of my neighbors and meeting their needs is a sacred act in a sense. What better way is there for a person of faith to be the hands and feet of Christ?

I am not a 'holy roller' by a long shot but I do believe that God calls on us in today's world. I also believe that when we rise to the occasion of living out this call we come closer to the Kingdom of God on Earth. Our rituals and practices help give our lives order and freedom but this doesn't necessarily equate to structure or rigidity for all people. For some people, care is a ritual in and of itself. It constitutes a continual choice, on a regular basis, to do something about the brokenness in the world instead of accepting a passive fate for the condition of the world

Intentionally choosing God and God's work on a daily basis is core to the proliferation of my faith. It brings me order and clarity. It reminds me of my purpose; and in the end, what is that if not a ritual or practice?



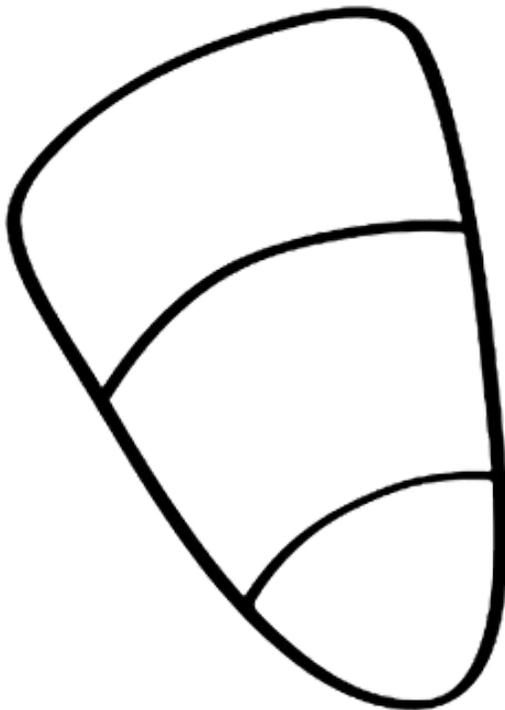
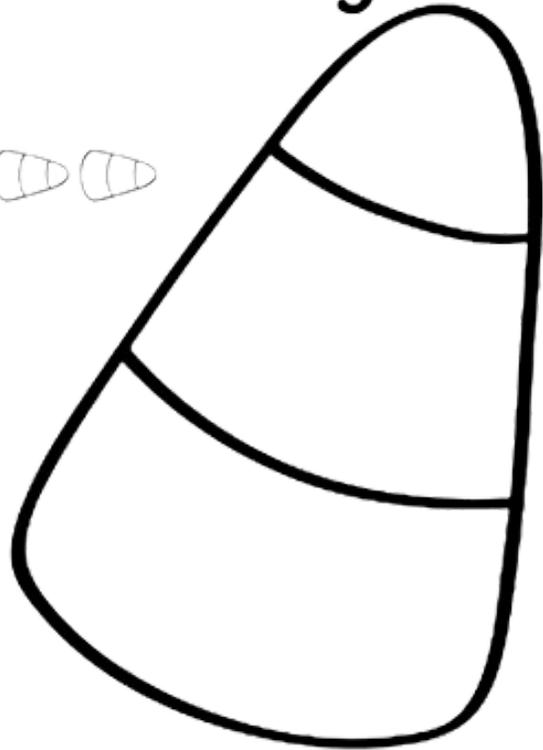
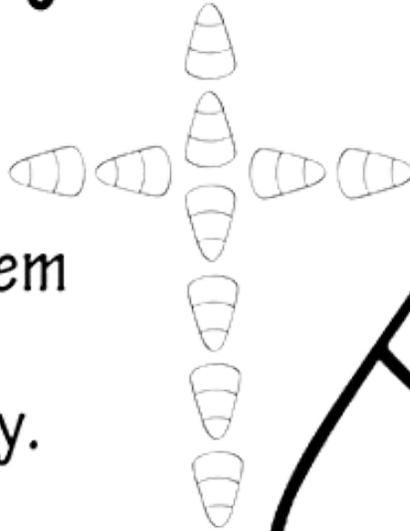
Count your Blessings

And

Name them

Day by day.

You'll be reminded



Ghrist Jesus' love

Overflows to you,

Right now, in

Nearly every way.

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

Happy Birthday

October Birthdays

Jackie Martin 2 Danny Edwards 13
Jade Haller 13 Al Holland 14
Adrien LaChapelle 22



October 2024



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
October Birthdays Jackie Martin 2 Danny Edwards 13 Jade Haller 13 Al Holland 14 Adrien LaChapelle 22		1	2 Special Church Council Meeting @6pm Bible Study @7pm	3	4	5 Men's group meets at the John R Grill at 10pm Women's group meets in the fellowship hall at 1pm
6 Worship Service w/communion @ 11:15	7	8	9 Bible Study @7pm	10	11	12
13 Worship Service @ 11:15	14	15	16 Bible Study @7pm	17 Church Council Meeting @7pm	18	19
20 Worship Service @ 11:15	21	22	23 Bible Study @7pm	24	25	26 Trunk or Treat 1-3
27 Worship Service @ 11:15	28	29	30	31 HAPPY HALLOWEEN		