



"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

Dear Friends,

Lent is here. This is a time of returning to God. This is a time of spiritual formation. This is a time of renewal, and I believe God is inviting us to do some deep work this year. It is time to be honest about some of our struggles as a church. As a church, we struggle with faithfully walking through conflict. That is why we are going to be having a class on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 called "Making Peace." If you consider Hazel Park UMC your home church, I ask that you please attend this 5-week class. It is the most important class I have perhaps ever taught in class. Lent is a time for hard spiritual work. It is a time of honesty, and we need to be honest about some of our struggles.



Pastors Pen Continued

In this class we are going to learn the steps to take when there is conflict, how to handle that conflict in a peaceful way and commit toward a covenant on how we will do life together. This is important work, and I believe God will meet us in the midst of it. Conflict is a human experience. It cannot be avoided, and it can actually be a tool God uses to grow us into people. Our church has many wonderful qualities as a community, but it has saddened me to see how our inability to handle conflict well has damaged our Christian witness. At the same time, God can redeem us through this work. God can take us and bring reconciliation. After all, if Jesus can bridge the gap between us broken humans and God, Jesus can certainly bring reconciliation in our church. But it's up to us to partner with the Holy One in doing this work.

So, please attend this class that starts Wednesday, March 5th at 7:00. I believe God will do a good work in all of us should we commit to this. It won't be easy. But it will be worth it. And best of all, God will be with us as we do it.

In grace,
Brian

A Look Back:

2/2 The Gospel in Children's Books: The Little Blue Truck: The previous week we learned about boundaries. This week we learned that boundaries and helping go together. We are called to carry each other's burdens, and we let each individual do what they are capable of doing. None of us should be afraid to ask for help because we all need help at some point.

2/9 The Gospel in Children's Books: Ferdinand the Bull: Ferdinand stayed true to who he was no matter what went on around him. Being who we are honors God, and when we stay true to who we are, that equips us to do what God has called us to do. When David battled Goliath, he didn't wear armor that others thought he should wear. He stayed true to his skills as a shepherd, and God gave him the victory because of that.

2/16 The Gospel in Children's Books: Corduroy Corduroy: Corduroy thought he had to go and fix himself in order for someone to buy him. He believed he wasn't good enough with a lost button. But Jesus doesn't need lost sheep to fix themselves to be found. Corduroy finds out that the little guy who bought him still loved him just as much even without a button. That's how God views us. Even amidst all our baggage and flaws, God still looks at us with love and comes to find us because Jesus is our Good Shepherd.

2/23 Our faithful Lay Leader Frank Cox filled in for me while I was on vacation. Thanks, Frank!

Top 3 Things I'm Working On:

- 1) Preparing our "Making Peace" class
- 2) Reading various books to keep me growing as your pastor and to write effective sermons.
- 3) Deepening my own spiritual life...and raising a kid!

What I'm reading and listening to:

- For Spiritual Development: Boundaries by Henry Cloud, NonViolent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg, People Pleasing Pastors by Charles Stone, Metanoia by Alan Hirsch
- 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



Wed. March 12 at 7:00 PM ~ Lent Bible Class
Wed. March 19 at 7:00 PM ~ Lent Bible Class
Thurs. March 20th at 7:00pm ~ Church Council Meeting
Wed. March 26 at 7:00 PM ~ Lent Bible Class
Sat. April 5th at 10:00 AM ~ Men's Breakfast at John R. Grill in Madison Heights.
Saturday, April 5th ~ Women's Meeting @1pm

Things to Keep in Mind



YOUR birthday and anniversary is important to us! If you are unsure if your birthday or anniversary is on our list, please let us know! We want to celebrate YOU! Send an email to the office, or leave a note in the mailbox, so we can get you added!



What is Lent?

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, meaning "lengthen" and refers to the lengthening days of spring. The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

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 began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by new converts and then became a time of penance by all Christians. Today, Christians focus on relationship with God, growing as disciples and extending ourselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of ourselves for others.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter." This is why you will see the designation "Sunday in Lent" rather than "Sunday of Lent" in the naming of these Sundays. On each Lord's Day in Lent, while Lenten fasts continue, the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.



What Do **YOU** Want to See More of?

The church newsletter is for YOU! What do you want to see more of in the newsletter? Recap of events that the church did, bible quotes, devotionals, getting to know the members of the church, and/or activities. I need your help to make this what you need it to be! Send me an email with your ideas or what you would like to see

40 Days of Lent: Find your own spiritual path

During Ash Wednesday services on the first day of Lent, many United Methodist pastors invite their congregations "to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word" (from the United Methodist Book of Worship). While you may be aware of this season leading up to Easter, you may wonder how you might "observe a holy Lent." There is no one prescribed way. Instead, we are each encouraged to find our own method of confronting our sinfulness, remembering our mortality, and giving thanks for the gift of salvation we receive through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Fasting

One of the more common practices is to give something up for Lent. Some abstain from chocolate, social media, shopping or something else through the season. This is a religious practice known as fasting. We fast to reorient ourselves away from the distraction of those things, and back toward God. Another way to reorient your life toward God, is to focus on devotional practices like Bible study and prayer during the season.

Bible reading

If you do not know where to begin when reading the Bible, the Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide can serve as a wonderful guide. It provides a scripture passage and wonderfully thought-provoking and spirit-enriching material to read and think about each day.

Prayer

In the busyness of our everyday lives, prayer can sometimes get squeezed out. Lent is a wonderful time to intentionally work toward finding more time in your life for prayer. You can experiment with different ways to pray during the season or really delve into a new-to-you way of praying. Enriching your prayer life is a great way to spend Lent.

Service

Another way to observe a holy Lent is to take on a new way of serving. Throughout the forty days of the season, you can adopt a new habit of volunteering in the community, making special financial gifts to service organizations, singing in the choir, or participating in a small group.

Rest

An important practice with which many of us struggle is the spiritual discipline of rest or Sabbath. We don't have to rest on Saturday, the traditional Sabbath day, or even Sunday. You can instead find moments during an ordinary day to be still in God's presence. You might choose to spend a few minutes during lunch with a desktop meditation or listen to sermons during your commute. Each can be a great way of enriching your Lent.

Child resources

You will also want to find ways to share the meaning of the season with the children in your life. While their focus may be on Easter baskets and new clothes, you can enter into special times to help them find deeper meaning to the season. Consider trying some traditions from other cultures to enhance your Easter celebration. Make instruments during Lent that you can use to celebrate the resurrection in song on Easter Sunday, similar to Christians in Zimbabwe. Or try some special Easter foods, like the Easter breakfast cakes of Poland.

Even while dyeing Easter Eggs you can creatively teach children about your faith by sharing The Importance of the Egg: Children and Easter video, which tells of the symbolism of the Easter Egg in a wonderfully lively way.

Learning

You may also use Lent as a time to learn about the seasons of Lent and Easter, and some of the practices of the Christian church. Learning about rituals specific to the season can enhance your worship. You may want to know more about the ashes used on Ash Wednesday, a Maundy Thursday footwashing service you're considering attending, or the Tenebrae service your congregation is planning for Good Friday. You may also choose to learn more about baptism and communion, the sacraments of the church. Each has a connection to Lent and Easter.

Worship

Many United Methodist churches offer services on Ash Wednesday to begin of Lent, and other special services during Holy Week, the final days leading up to Easter. There may also be special times of prayer, study, and other gatherings that will help you continue your journey throughout the season. If you are not connected to a United Methodist congregation, use Find-A-Church to locate one close to you.

Observe a holy Lent

This 40-day journey called Lent is a wonderful opportunity to grow in your faith. Find your path of self-reflection and spiritual discovery and invite others to join you as you seek to observe a holy Lent.



Be Prepared

So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.
Matthew 24:44 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 36-44



W S O N Q R C B W A T C H W V
 L Z K H E X P E C T S E U O D
 N L V Q F E R G J L E M T V U
 F M V E M A K N I C G A H R W
 Y D H O U S E H Y K M J I W Z
 Z F C N O V W G O O W N E R U
 X Q R P A N A C T U H J F L V
 U Z L E J O G Y M Y R L R H Q
 A I H M B E L H K C E W P S R
 N M O X I K N O W X J J F R E
 G Z X R E A D Y Y T T F C M V
 E B V F C P D I H P W O I T L
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KNOW	SON	EXPECT	HEAVEN	HOUR
ANGELS	HOUSE	WATCH	TIME	THIEF
OWNER	READY	COME	NIGHT	DAY

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: hpfirstumc@gmail.com
Website: www.hpfirst.org



March Birthday's

Ashley DeToledo - 3 Micheal McGhee - 9
Tege French - 15 John Sarns - 16
Charlie Connelly - 17 Lisa Edwards - 22
Shannon Hardy - 23 Lisa Johnson - 25
Emilee Wellwood - 26 Diane Watson - 27 Brenda Frickey - 31



March 2025



SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

2 Worship Service w/communion @ 11:15	3	4 Choir Practice @4pm	5 Lent Study @7	6	7	8
9 Worship Service @ 11:15	10	11 Choir Practice @4pm	12 Lent Study @7	13	14	15
16 Worship Service @ 11:15	17 Happy St. Patrick's Day	18 Choir Practice @4pm	19 Lent Study @7	20 Church Council Meeting @7pm	21	22
23 Worship Service @ 11:15	24	25 Choir Practice @4pm	26 Lent Study @7	27	28	29
30 Worship Service @ 11:15	31	<p>March Birthday's</p> <p>Ashley DeToledo - 3 Micheal McGhee - 9 Tege French - 15 John Sarns - 16 Charlie Connelly - 17 Lisa Edwards - 22 Shannon Hardy - 23 Lisa Johnson - 25 Emilee Wellwood - 26 Diane Watson - 27 Brenda Frickey - 31</p> 				