



# The SPIRE

**First United Methodist Church**

[www.albionfirst.org](http://www.albionfirst.org)

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600 East Michigan Avenue

Albion, MI 49224

In the last ten days, I've lost two dear friends and former colleagues. Though both were members of the Michigan legislature, the legacies they leave have little to do with their electoral success.

I met Burton Leland and Maxine Berman at the tail-end of their legislative careers. I knew them as legendary advocates for social justice, strong voices for women and the poor and fierce champions of their districts (Detroit and Southfield, respectively) long before I ever met either one. I knew that both would teach me a lot about politics and policy. And they did.

What I never expected was how much they would teach me about faith. If you knew either one, you probably laughed at that thought. After all, both were Jewish. And both were outspoken and irreverent, bombastic and bawdy. Burton and Max lived life on their own terms. Neither one ever apologized for refusing to be confined by social politeness.

And it was in their unique characters that I found unique inspiration. Burton and Max were motivated by their unwavering belief in justice, by their belief that we have an obligation to care for, to fight for and to protect one another. They believed that if we demand justice and equality, without backing down, we can make a difference. And they didn't hesitate to demand what they believed was right, even if it made other people uncomfortable, even if it made them unpopular, even if they didn't succeed.

God calls all of us to be advocates for justice and mercy just like Burton and Max were. They will always be a reminder to me that it is more important to do what is right, than what is popular.

## March 2018

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*Follow Jesus; Love Everyone*

If you've been in church these last few weeks, you know we've been talking a lot about how God sends people. God sends people in answer to our prayers. God sends people to remind us how loved we are. I will always be blessed because God sent me a couple of hard-nosed, tough-talking Jews from greater Detroit to remind me how I am called to live on behalf of the Kingdom. I pray that you are blessed with people like Burton Leland and Maxine Berman who will inspire you on your journey.

Pastor Leslee

## Lenten Fellowship Opportunities

The season of Lent is a time of spiritual renewal and rebirth for believers. In that spirit, we will gather as a church community for fellowship, reflection, and of course, great food!

**March 7**      ***Lenten Dinner & Reflection***  
Join us for dinner and a time of conversation and reflection. Dinner begins at 5:30pm with the program at 6pm.

**March 18**      ***Town & Country Chorus Worship & All-Church Potluck***  
Our own Bob Dininny and more than 20 of his musical partners will lead us in worship filled with harmony and song.

**April 1**      ***Easter Sunday Brunch***  
Join us for brunch, starting at 8:30am, before our Easter worship.

## Prayers

Pastor Tom Hollowood, Heather Fourn, Scott Tuthill, Jim Deal, Bev Bentley, Ken Bentley, Sherry Wyma, Hilda Ebbinghaus and Rev. Gary Wyma @ home

Allison Roesti @ Sparrow Hospital, Lansing

Jerry Rugg @ U of M Hospital, Ann Arbor

Betty Beese @ Glazier Assisted Living, Chelsea

## Leadership

Lay Leader	Lois Fennimore glfennimore@yahoo.com
Church Council Chair	Mark Robison majerobi@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sally Ammerman sallya@wowway.com
Trustees Chair (Building & Property)	Barbara Rafaill plantgirl@rafaill.com
Staff-Parish Chair (Personnel)	Barbara Lange langehome.2@gmail.com
Finance Committee	Rick Lange langehome.1@gmail.com
Pastor	Leslee Fritz pastorleslee1@gmail.com
Missions Co-Chairs	John Williams Donna Williams
Memorial Chair	Carol Maynard
Choir Director	Drew Dunham
Music Director /Pianist	Jan Fourn
Administrative Assistant	Cindi Klingel albionfumc@gmail.com
Housekeeper	Lynn Markovich
Custodian	Larry Maynard

## Easter Flowers

As in previous years, we hope to adorn our worship space with lilies, tulips and daffodils on Easter morning. Flowers may be given in memory, in honor, or to the Glory of God. If you are interested in providing flowers, forms are available in the office and in Wesley Lounge on the guest book stand. You may also call the office to place your order. Costs are:

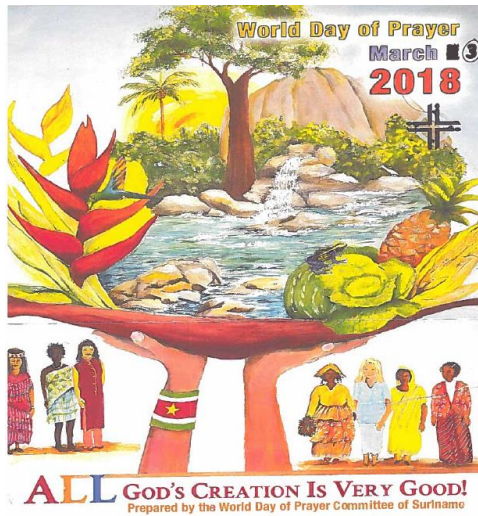
Lilies	\$10 ea.
Tulips	\$13 ea.
Daffodils	\$16 ea.

The order **deadline** is **Thursday, March 15.**

## UMW Women and Beyond!

What a wonderful day on Saturday when Albion celebrated World Day of Prayer. It is hard for me to believe that it first began in 1953. I think it is one of the things that has brought town and gown together over the years, as well as all races.

Several of our women were involved in planning and carrying out the service. We all learned a lot about Suriname, the country responsible for the program this year. The women wore colorful costumes typical of the country.



The neatest thing was the theme: "All God's Creation is Very Good!" And it was all about saving what we know of God's creation for future generations. That's something we really need to be working at, and they gave several ideas and invited the congregation to share their ideas. Wish you could have been there! (It is for all people, men and women! So, next year when you hear about it, put it on your calendar! We might even be hosting it!

As for our UMW, the Evening Circle is having a program on Bell Ringing with Bonnie Bauman as presenter, on Tuesday, March 20, at 7:00 p.m., upstairs in Room 205. Everyone is welcome!

The Afternoon Circle meets on Thursdays and is continuing their mission studies. We were sorry to hear of the passing of Pat Brown, one of their long time members and leaders.

Barb Stowell



## Town and Country Chorus

The Town and Country Chorus is made up of about 25 members of the Barbershop Harmony Society. The chorus meets at the Perennial Park Senior Center in Hillsdale. The singers come from as far north as Springport, Michigan; as far south as Bryan, Ohio; as far east as Adrian, Michigan, and West Unity, Ohio; and as far west as Coldwater, Michigan. The chorus is composed of male singers who sing unaccompanied 4-part harmony. One of the group's favorite activities is singing in churches for Sunday morning services as they will be doing at FUMC, Albion, on March 18. They have performed such services in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan.

There will be an ALL CHURCH POTLUCK following the service on March 18. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.



## Big Band Show Coming Soon!

Don't Miss This! Saturday evening, April 14, from 6 to 9 pm, we will have the Big Band Dance and Dessert Buffet. This event will feature the *Sounds Appropriate* Big Band and is being co-sponsored by the Forks Senior Center. It's Free!! No tickets, No reservations required. Seating is First Come First Served. Hope to see you there!



## Thank You

Thanks to all those who donated to Friends of Albion's Animals during our recent fundraisers;

our Christmas present wrapping events at the Albion District Library and our fundraising letter.

Since January 1st, our ongoing efforts to reduce the stray and feral cat population in the City of Albion and the surrounding area have allowed us to help an older gentleman on F Dr. South get the 8 strays he feeds neutered (6 down, 2 to go!), a lady on Devereaux Rd. who has a big heart for the strays around her house get cat number 11 and 12 fixed (we have already paid for cats 1-10), and we are able to provide a vouchers to help a lady on Gibbs Rd. get the first 2 of the many cats she feeds that get dropped off at her house fixed and also provide 2 vouchers to help a woman on B Dr. North get the first 2 of the many stray cats that roam around her house fixed.

Our recent efforts to help people get their pets neutered have allowed us to help a family on S. Superior St. get the male kitten they took in fixed, a lady on N. Superior St. get the female cat she took in this winter fixed, and a girl on Bidwell get the 2 male cats she took in fixed. We've just provided a woman on Adams St. with vouchers to take 2 of the cats she feeds around her house in to get fixed. This will be an ongoing project as there are many stray cats. They pay half the discounted cost, which is \$29 for a male and \$36.50 for a female. If they qualify for any government subsidies, or are on a fixed income such as SSDI or Social Security, they qualify for the vouchers.

The City of Albion ordinance prohibits citizens from feeding stray and feral cats unless they are also members of an approved TNR (Trap-Neuter-Release) program. Friends of Albion's Animals was formed due to this ordinance.

Members of our organization pay a \$24 per year membership and in return are able to continue to feed stray cats as long as they neuter them to control the population. A rabies shot is required when the cat is neutered. We know a cat has been neutered by the tip of its ear, which gets clipped to indicate it has been fixed.

Our members continue to neuter, feed and provide shelters and medical care for stray cats around the City of Albion, including the old Union Steel building. Our goal is to soon begin providing low-income citizens of Albion with a low-cost way to get their dogs neutered as well. Our belief is that if their pets are prevented from becoming a nuisance with more kittens and puppies than they can afford, there is less likelihood of them getting "dumped". We require an Albion mailing address to qualify for the vouchers and we use Irwin Avenue vets for the stray and feral cats, and Five Points vet for the low-income spay and neuters.

Your generous donations allow us to continue our mission. Thank you!

Amy Plassman  
Treasurer, Friends of Albion  
Animals  
PO Box 753, Albion



## Holy Week Events

Thursday, March 29, 5:30 p.m.  
**Community Maundy Thursday worship @**  
St. James Episcopal Church

Friday, March 30, 12:00 p.m.  
**Community Good Friday worship @**  
Lewis Chapel AME

Friday, March 30, 7:00 p.m.  
**Good Friday worship @ Wesley Chapel**

Sunday, April 1, 8:30 a.m.  
**Easter Brunch @ Fellowship Lounge**



# Sunday Schedule:

## Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8:00 am - 12:30 pm

Friday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

9:00 Band


9:30 Refreshments

10:00 Worship

11:00 Refreshments

11:30 Sermon Discussion

# March 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>4</b> Sunday Schedule 1p Lectionary Group 5:30p WU Leadership 7p Boy Scouts	<b>5</b> 1p Lectionary Group 5:30p WU Leadership 7p Boy Scouts	<b>6</b> 8a Biggby Bible Study	<b>7</b> 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30p Lenten Supper 5:30p WU/SIS Mentoring 6:30p Bell Choir	<b>8</b> 2p UMW Exec Team	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> Sunday Schedule Communion 11:30 Sermon Discussion	<b>12</b> 12p First Church Seniors 5p Spanish Class 7p Boy Scouts	<b>13</b> 8a Biggby Bible Study 9a SAP Coalition 7p Trustees	<b>14</b> 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 6:30p Bell Choir	<b>15</b> 9:30a AALL 1p UMW Afternoon Circle 6p Albion Community Leadership Meeting	<b>16</b> 10a Marshall School Superintendent Meeting 6p IVCF Worship	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> Sunday Schedule - Town and Country Chorus 11:30 All Church Potluck 2:00p AC Chapel	<b>19</b> 1:30p Entre Nous 5p Spanish Class 5:30p Women United 7p Boy Scouts	<b>20</b> 8a Biggby Bible Study 7p UMW Evening Circle @ FUMC, Room 205	<b>21</b> 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 5:30p WU/SIS Mentoring 6:30p Bell Choir	<b>22</b> 5p Chili Dinner Benefit	<b>23</b> 2:30p Albion Health Care Alliance 6p IVCF Worship	<b>24</b> 12p Boy Scout Court of Honor
<b>25</b> Sunday Schedule 11:30 Sermon Discussion 2:00p AC Chapel	<b>26</b> 5p Spanish Class 5:30p SPRC Meeting 7p Boy Scouts	<b>27</b> 8a Biggby Bible Study 10a Piecemakers	<b>28</b> 1:15p Sheldon Place Bible Study 6:30p Bell Choir	<b>29</b> 12p  Blood Drive 5:30p Community Maundy Thursday Service @ St. James Episcopal	<b>30</b> 5:30p Community Good Friday Service @ Lewis Chapel AME 6p IVCF Worship 7p Good Friday Service	<b>31</b>