



**April 1, 2018**

## **First Things**

A Monthly Newsletter for Members and Friends

*Who We Are: FBC: Where every person matters and relationships with God and neighbors grow.*

*What We Do: We are learning to live the life that Jesus would live if Jesus were living our life through:*

- *meaningful worship and study*
- *valuing and loving others through service*
- *embracing God's created diversity*
- *intentional connections to our community*
- *caring for one another through all of life*

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF THE MONTH**

**Our Personal Relationship with God** (Soul Freedom) This direct personal relationship with God is the privilege and responsibility that each and every one of us has. We have both the ability and the necessity to enter into a direct saving relationship with God through Christ. We may be different in our relationships with God, so we need to recognize and honor these differences.



### **Rev. Lara Freeburg**

joined our pastoral staff, in December 2012, as the Pastor of Preaching and Teaching; in June 2015, Lara transitioned into the role of **Lead Pastor**. Lara has a passion for preaching and teaching God's word and for walking with people as they discover who God has created them to be. Lara is active in the Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, Mid-Michigan Health Advisory Council, and Faithwalking. She has two children: Lola and Devin.

## **PRAYER PARTNERS**

**For those that grieve:** The Caleb Neff Family (infant death), The Marilyn Abbot Family, The John "Jack" Thorsberg Family

**For the health needs of many of our church family:** Elva Blymyer (fell), Thayer Bradish (health needs), Wayne Crosby (bike accident), Dale Green, Betty King, Dave Mitchell (cancer), Ruth O'Dell, Elaine Parsons, Dave Pellegrom, Joyce Phillips, Anne Poindexter, Joyce Poland, Bruce Rogers, Andrea Ross (numbness/chemo/mass in spine), Shirley Sevener, Lou Stickney, Alex Sutherland and Family, Marilyn Walker, Bob Winchester (surgery recovery), and Judy Zeiss (cancer).

**And the needs of loved ones:** Acacia (Walter's granddaughter); Amelia (Nicole Richard's infant niece); The Baker Family: Seth, Emily, Sienna, Andrew & baby Lillian; Mike Dahley (surgery recovery); Domingo Davila (Hitchcock grandson-complications from strep); Kim Francisco (cancer); Gaylene's Dad (stroke-friend of Sharon Cooper-Bussell); Roger Hackett (Ruth O'Dell's nephew-cancer), Tyler Jenkins (great-grandson of Don & Lorraine Raetz - epilepsy); Lewis King (health); Peter Mortensen (cancer); Naomi Potter (Poindexter's friend-fall); Tim Richard (leukemia); Yvette Spiker (recovery); Lily Wint (cancer - Ziess' granddaughter); Cindy Wong's mom (fall); John Yuill (ear tumor); and Dana Zhou (Jessica Hu's mom).

If you know of other folks in our church who need special prayer, please contact the church office by phone: 835-6731 or by email: [office@midlandfbc.com](mailto:office@midlandfbc.com).

## LEAD PASTOR

I have always been a bit nervous about working out at a gym. I, like so many people, get self-conscious working out next to people who are obviously more physically fit than I am. Still after working out for half a year, I knew that it was time to increase the intensity of my routine. Since I felt this would be easier done at a gym, and since my parents had recently made a similar decision, I decided I would try out their gym, Planet Fitness.

As I walked into Planet Fitness that first day, I was amused by their slogan themed décor. On one wall, written in large lettering, was the phrase “NO CRITICS!” and many of the machines said “Judgement free zone.” While I appreciated the messages, I couldn’t help but wonder how true they were. After all, it’s one thing for a company’s board of directors and human resource department to come up with catchy slogans, but in my experience working in retail, that doesn’t always translate to how people actually function!

This experience made me think about the work that we have done as a church for the last two years: affirming guiding principles, creating a new “Who We Are” statement, and writing a “What we do” statement. It is one thing to SAY that we are a church where every person matters, that we value Christ centered caring or that we walk with one another through all of life. But are we truly committed, as a body, to those things?

Years ago the church worked on a covenant, a prayer of commitment which expressed the actions that they would take in order to live out their faith and who God had called them to be as members of First Baptist. The covenant, which I am told in the past was read on Communion Sundays and currently resides in the back of our hymnal, says this: (changed from CAPITAL print type to be easily read)

*Having been led by the Spirit of God to place our trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, we solemnly and joyfully covenant with God and with each other as a fellowship of faith. Believing that God has revealed the truth of Life in Christ, we will seek to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord through Bible reading, prayer, worship and obedience. Believing that the local church serves the cause of Christ on earth, we will give it out financial support and service with gratitude. Striving to live together in Christian love, we will pray for each other, share each other’s joys and help one another in sickness and distress. Believing that God has called us to witness to his saving power and love, we will try to bring our personal, family, and community relationships under the lordship of Christ. We will also aid in proclaiming the gospel to the whole world and work for justice, freedom, dignity, and peace. And now, our Father, we acknowledge our weakness and profess our need of You. We thank You for the contributions of others to our lives. Make us aware of the effects our lives have on others. Help us to*

*be instruments of your peace. Fill us with joy in our faith and with hope for the coming of Your kingdom. Amen.*

It is my desire to see us use our guiding principles, our “Who We Are” statement, and “What we Do” statement to review, and revise if needed, this church covenant and turn it, once again, into an actively used prayer of commitment. It is my hope that the covenant will then become a tool which continues to keep our eyes, hearts, and minds focused on who God made First Baptist to be and where He is leading us. I believe it has the potential to help us grow in our sense of being a unified body with and unified vision that we can all get behind and get excited about!

In order to do this, we will be ending our Spring Sunday school term four weeks early for the adults. Then, starting April 29, we will invite every adult, to join us in the Chapel after service to work on this covenant, which, hopefully will be able to be presented to the church

I hope that everyone will consider joining us for these sessions. I believe this is going to be a valuable tool for our congregation, assisting us in living more fully into the church that God has created us to be! For His glory now and forever!

~Rev. Lara Freeburg



## **Scrapbooker's**

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### **Friday & Saturday**

### **9AM – 5PM**

**Ladies: Bring your craft project,  
knitting, etc., and join us!**

### **April 27 & 28, 2018**



## MUSIC NOTES FROM THE MUSIC MINISTER

The recent hacking and remote use of my iPad by someone speaking a different language and the loss of my ten-year old Tracfone has left me feeling creeped out, confused and at a loss to communicate. I have had to step back and think deeply about many aspects of communication –the ways I communicate, how often I communicate, and the importance of my communication.

A few weeks ago, I opened my iPad to see another entity opening all the apps, scrolling through my photos, podcasts, music, checking my email and looking at my iCloud account. At that moment I was dumbstruck. For several moments I was unsure what was happening. With the prompting of my daughter, I was finally able to wrest control away by turning off the wifi and shutting it down. But how long had this been going on? What was compromised? Where to start? How to fix?

So, after doing the practical things of changing account passwords, deleting all apps, erasing all cookie and histories, calling banks and creditors, I did a little detective work. I was very curious as to whether someone had remote control of my device, and if so, who or what had remote control. I wanted to make sure that I wasn't imagining things, that this wasn't just my old, overworked iPad flipping out, as some folks suggested. I've learned that my iPad is especially vulnerable between dusk and dawn, that Siri and messaging switch to Cantonese at this time, and that I have about a two-minute window after turning on wifi before remote control takes over.

So, after the practical things and the detective work, I did the next not so obvious thing—I looked in scripture for guidance about communication. I was struck by the importance of what we say in these words in Ephesians. *Don't let even one rotten word seep out of your mouths. Instead, offer only fresh words that build others up when they need it most. That way your good word will **communicate** grace to those who hear them. Ephesians 4:29.*

As no damage seems to have been done to my accounts, as no photos or music has been deleted, as what I have in this world seems to have remained intact as this remote control continues when I connect the device to the internet, I am left to wonder, why? Are the reasons nefarious or dangerous? Is this just a prank because they can? Or is it curiosity? Think about it- if a stranger took remote control of your phone, would they see pictures, hear music, read words that communicate grace?

I cannot speak directly to my hacker, but as I move forward to replace devices, I will be more thoughtful about their use, and in a strange way, thank my hacker for reminding me the value of communicating grace.

**CALENDAR Take Note! Elementary and Middle School Choir and Bell Ensemble** continue to meet Monday evenings from 3:30-6PM. Our **dress rehearsal** for the Spring musical, Cool in the Furnace, is Saturday April 21 from 10AM-12NOON. We will present our musical in worship on Sunday, April 22. This is earlier than our usual, so please note that on your calendar. Our last Monday time together is April 23 when we will take our musical to Stratford Pines and have a pizza and cookie decorating party. All kids ages K-8 are invited to take part in choir, handbells, devotions, games and snacks. Almost 2/3 of children attending are either unchurched or attend another church in Midland. Take Note! is truly an outreach of love that just happens to focus on music making. Our other choirs, **Chancel Choir** and **Chancel Bells**, continue to meet on Wednesday evenings. Our **Praise Team** rehearses Sunday mornings before worship.

**MANY THANKS** to our Power point team- Dave Hitchcock, Cindy Kwok, Joey Meilink, Alex and Amelia Sutherland, and to our weekly Take Note! volunteers- Barb Neil, John Walter, Vicki Walter, Sharon Houghton-Ross, Bobbie Baker and Louise Bergman.

**MANY, MANY THANKS** to our office intern, Laura Neil, who, for these past two months, has been invaluable to this Music Minister by doing the mind-numbing tasks of organizing and filing the great volume of music used by various ensembles in worship. And to Pat McCourt and Linda A-O for helping with the mental and physical labor needed to organize and store Take Note! props and costumes in their new homes behind the sanctuary where they are more easily accessible.

As anyone can see, it takes many hands and hearts to weekly provide just one hour of music and beauty in worship.

### **MAKING CONTACT**

Please contact me via email, [jant@tm.net](mailto:jant@tm.net), or by office phone at 989-835-6731. My winter office hours are Monday and Wednesday, and Tuesday and Thursday after 12NOON.

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Jan Sutherland, Music Minister

## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

### **HARLOW FUND REQUESTS – 2018**

**Each year our church provides ministry grants from the Harlow Fund.** The Mission and Ministry Team receives the requests and then prayerfully makes a recommendation to the congregation at the May business meeting based on the amount of money from the funds available for that year.

#### **The criteria used to grant requests:**

The income from the fund:

- should be used in mission, service or seminary related projects
- should not be given to the same effort/project for multiple years (rather used as seed money for projects)
- should not be used for general fund purposes.

**The Missions and Ministry Team is inviting members to submit requests for grants from the fund for 2018.**

Requests must:

- be in writing
- include the name and address of the ministry, the sponsoring group or agency for the ministry and a brief description of the work of the ministry or organization - especially noting how the granted funds will be used.
- include the name of the person(s) making the request.

#### **THE DEADLINE FOR REQUESTS IS APRIL 15!**

Requests may be given to any member of the Missions Team (Cindy Wong, Beverly Babb, Elaine Parsons, Janice Wallace, and Victor Atiem0-Obeng) or you may email your request to Cindy Wong at [cindyhkusa@gmail.com](mailto:cindyhkusa@gmail.com).

The congregation will make the final decision concerning Harlow Fund grants at the May business meeting.

**[CLICK HERE](#) FOR MISSION UPDATES FROM ABC-USA**

The M&M Team is sponsoring a "**Spring Cleaning**" food drive for the **HELP/EFPN food pantry**. The food drive will run from **April 1-29**. We are asking FBC members to drop donated food items in the container near the office. Monetary donations can be made by writing a check to FBC with EFPN/HELP in the comment line.

**Young Life** is looking for **2-4 babysitters, on April 26 and May 3, from 6:30-8:30PM** at the Midland Reformed church. They are having a Young Life monthly teen mothers' gathering. Our service allows teen mothers to drop off their kids, enjoy the gathering, and learn life skills at the same time. Contact Cindy Wong if you'd like to join her in this mission: [cindyhkusa@gmail.com](mailto:cindyhkusa@gmail.com)



## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

*Serving with Love*



### **FAITH IN ACTION by Life Group and Congregation**

#### ***The guiding principals***

**Who We Are, FBC:** where every person matters and relationships with God and neighbors grow

**What We Do:** we are learning to live the life that Jesus would live if Jesus were living our life through: meaningful worship and study, valuing and loving others through service, embracing God's created diversity, intentional connections to our community, and caring for one another through all of life.

To me, the above two guiding principles of who we are and what we do at FBC have always been nice looking phrases in the Sunday bulletin. It was not until the death of my husband and life partner, Tom Moeser, work retirement, three home moves and the recent death of my son, Erik Vance, all within an eight-month period, that I actually experienced my life group\* and church family applying those principals to me in a personal way. I am a witness to tell you that in the midst of my despair in the initial moments and subsequent days, it was the love and support of my Life Group\* and FBC staff and members that sustained me and my family and kept us from harm.

When Tom had surgery and died from a nurse's error it was the "church ladies" (Lois Crosby, Marcia Williams and Sharon Winchester) who supported me. Pastor Lara had supported Tom during his illness but on that fateful morning, since the hospital chose to not have clergy there at the initial chaotic meetings with a business focus, I declined her offer for support. Caring for one another through all of life was demonstrated by Bob and Jo Clarke who approached me at church and took ownership for getting a moving team together and actually moving me to a condo **and** moving Erik to an apartment. A neighbor, Jerry Kapiwada, helped with the move too and both he and Dale Moore had also helped me while preparing the home for sale. These moves and the final one to my new home were not small tasks, and I have given prayers of thankfulness for Jo Clarke having the courage to "have a talk with me" when I resisted taking so much help. Upon reflection I realize how I was blessed to have them in my life. Being emotionally and physically exhausted from the prior seven months, upon Erik's death, my family was made to feel we mattered by actions of the church

family and more importantly their actions made Erik's life important. There was no judgmental attitude because he died of an accidental opioid overdose. Erik was loved immensely by his family in spite of his addiction. By their actions, his life mattered to this Life Group and church family, even though he was not a formal member. For that alone, we have no words to express our gratitude and thankfulness. We actually felt the love around us from the church family and came to **know** on a deep level that we and Erik were loved. Truly FBC is a place where every person matters and relationships with God and neighbors grow.

So, what did the Life Group and church do to create this feeling of love and protection? I cannot begin to list all the actions the Life Group, church staff and members did for us. However, not having another relative in the state to support me, upon receiving the initial call, the Life Group contacts and Pastor Lara came immediately. The Life Group took ownership for all the actions that needed to be done while being protective of me. Just to name a few, Dave and Jenn in addition to initiating and coordinating the Life Group actions and calling Pastor Lara, arranged the funeral home, arranged for food to be brought, and served as ushers and greeters for the funeral. I could not have touched my son one last time without Sharon Winchester standing beside me and holding me up while being on the phone at the same time with Erik's dad. Lois Crosby spent the night with me and drove me to the airport the next morning to pick up my daughter. Bob and Jo Clarke immediately brought food for the house and for those that would be staying in hotels and served as ushers for the funeral. Pastor Lara and staff worked nights and days off to accommodate my family's schedule, and the church body showered us with more delicious food than I thought possible. The "food folks" even made special items for the kids (Louise Bergman) and Deb Hitt made an exceptionally healthy salad for my daughter-in-law who was in training for a half marathon. I had to tell people to not bring any more food since we had so much. It was so wonderful to not have to think of what to make at a time like that while accommodating so many different diet needs. Attending Erik's funeral and offering support to us was such a wonderful expression of love that we will always cherish. Those working the funeral dinner stayed very late on a Saturday night to clean up. Only those who truly care do that! After the burial and everyone went home, Dena Moore helped me close out final details on Erik's apartment which was such an emotional task.

Lastly, the genuine follow up concern and care has aided in grief recovery in a dramatic way. These actions (and many more) demonstrate how our Life Group and the FBC family values and loves others through service and cares for one another through all of life. I am truly blessed to have my FBC Life Group and FBC church family.

~Thank you, Rhonda Vance and family.

\*The Life Group mentioned above is led by Dave and Jenn Hitchcock, though other Life Groups are active within FBC.

## **SHUT-INS**

**Have an hour free this month? Consider visiting one of our Shut-Ins!**

(Another list will be printed in next month's Newsletter)

**Elva Blymyer**

Stone Crest Assisted Living, 255 N. Main St (M-47) #14A, Freeland, MI 48623

**Doreen Cobb**

The Medilodge, 1333 W. Grand River #131, Howell, MI 48842

**Dale Green**

1919 Pinesboro Drive, Sanford, MI 48657

**Emma Mantel**

Stratford, 2121 Rockwell Drive, Midland, MI 48642

**Ruth O'Dell**

521 N. Rustic Drive, Midland, MI 48640

**Lou Stickney** (On Hospice)

Stratford - Woodbridge Wing #251 - 2121 Rockwell Drive, Midland, MI 48642

## **FBC Scholarship Forms**

Scholarship Applications are available in the Narthex, and through the front office either in person or electronically. Funds awarded are to be used in Fall 2018 for either undergraduate or graduate studies.

Please contact Shelley Page at [office@midlandfbc.com](mailto:office@midlandfbc.com) or call 835-6731.

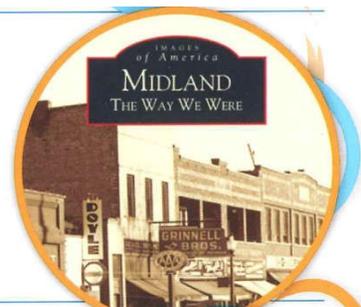
Completed applications must be submitted by April 30, 2018.

## **Come Hear Leona Seamster and her friend Virginia Florey as they share Midland History...**

### **Virginia Florey & Leona Seamster • Midland's History**

**Tuesday, April 17 – 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. \$5**

Virginia and Leona are native Midlanders whose great-grandfathers came here in 1869 from Chemung County, New York. Their fathers worked together at Dow Chemical and were best friends. They didn't really connect until their 45th high school reunion, even though they were in Junior High together. Together, they published two books: *Midland – The Way We Were*, and *Midland – Her Continuing Story*. Join these best friends as they share their fascinating research on the history of Midland beginning when it was known as The Forks.



In honor of National Volunteer Week, **Midland's Open Door is hosting a Volunteer Appreciation Event** to celebrate the dedicated people who serve in the Soup Kitchen and our other ministries. Please join us for a Dessert Social on Wednesday, **April 18 at 7:00PM** in the Barstow Shipps Ballroom at the Midland Community Center, 2205 Jefferson Ave. RSVP to [office@midlandopendoor.org](mailto:office@midlandopendoor.org) or 835-2291 by April 11.



I can't possibly say how much I appreciate my church family. So many people have done so many things to make my life easier during my illness. Thank you to everyone who sent a note or an e-mail, everyone who offered a ride or to pick something up, everyone who called or stopped by. Thank you for the food and for bringing it over. EVERYTHING is very much appreciated.

~Bless you, Elaine Parsons

FBC Church Services and Functions may be Videotaped for Shut-in distribution and broadcast on MCTV. If you are interested in viewing our services, they will be broadcast on Charter Cable MCTV digital box Channel 191 on Wednesdays at 5:30PM and on Thursdays at 2:00PM. Church services in video format may also be viewed at <http://www.awincm.com/church-movies/>

May's Newsletter deadline is **April 23, at Noon.**



**TAKE-NOTE Spring Musical!!!**

**April 22 - 9:30AM**

# April

## April CALENDAR - 2018

### Regular Schedule

Sundays	9:30 AM 11:00 AM	<b>ABIDING SCRIPTURES APRIL — LUKE 4:16-21</b> Worship Service - Communion Service is the 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month Sunday School
Mondays	10-11:30AM 6:30 PM	Staff Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday staff meeting is on Tuesday @ 12:30PM) <b>Team Network Meeting, media room - April 9 (all church invited)</b>
Tuesdays	7:30 AM 5:30 PM 6:30 PM	Men's Breakfast at M's Café at 5103 Eastman Rd. <b>Stewardship &amp; Finance Meeting - April 17</b> <b>LDT Team Meeting - April 10</b>
Wednesdays	6-7:15 PM 6:15 PM 7:15-8:30 PM	Chancel Bells Practice <b>Property Management Meeting - April 4</b> Chancel Choir Practice
Saturdays	10AM-2PM	FBC Serves at Open Door - April 14 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday of Every Month)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Special Event</u>
April 4-13		Pastor Lara at clergy clinic - out of office
April 13	5:30 PM	Boy Scout Spaghetti Supper @ FBC
April 21	10AM-12PM	Take Note! Rehearsal
April 22	9:30 AM	Take Note! Spring Musical
April 23-25		Pastor Lara on retreat - out of office
April 27-28	9AM-5PM	Scrapbookers

UPCOMING EVENT: Guess Who is Coming to Dinner - Date TBA

### CHURCH GREETERS

1 Janice Wallace  
8 Marcia Williams  
15 Keith & Karen Freeburg  
22 Bob & Becky Hodges  
29 Roger & Louise Bergman

### USHERS

Dave Hitchcock  
Jenn Hitchcock





We'd like to send Warm Birthday & Anniversary Wishes  
to all who celebrate in April!

... *HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.*

Wouldn't you love to send those simple powerful words to everyone at FBC?

*YOU CAN!*

Get the card supply and monthly birthday list from Shelley Page in the office. (These can be delivered to you, if needed.) At home, at your leisure, write a celebratory note and address the card. Print the date lightly in the stamp corner. Return the monthly supply of greetings to Shelley and she will post them in a timely manner. (Or stamps can be given with birthday card supplies to be mailed from your home.)

Congregational Care will financially sponsor this BIRTHDAY greeting. Please contact Vicki Walter of Congregational Care (or Shelley Page at 835-6731) for details.

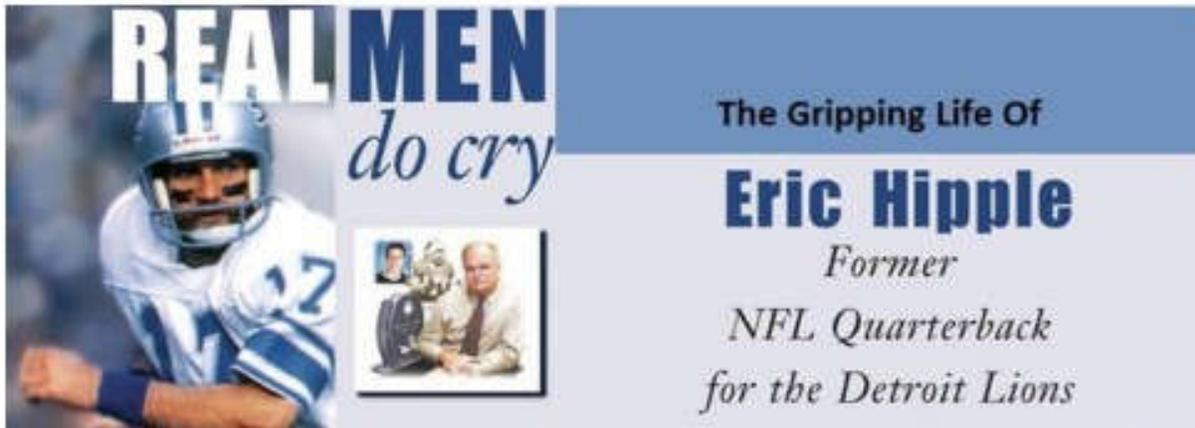
### **April Birthdays:**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1: Gregg Clark     | 14: Nate Poland                         |
| 2: Kelly Zhang     | 16: Ed Suderman, Ada Wong               |
| 3: Lanny Robbins   | 21: Margie Seamster                     |
| 5: Shirley Sevener | 22: Marcellous Rogers                   |
| 6: Devin Heise     | 24: Andrea Ross, Evelyn Wang            |
| 10: Nolan Hitt     | 25: Gary Gibson, Cheri King, Richard Li |
| 12: Hillary Hitt   | 28: Dave Jezowski, Alex Sutherland      |

### **April Anniversaries:**

- 4: Ron & Joyce Trouten
- 30: Ernest & Janet Ofori-Darko

If your name, or that of a loved one, should be here, but isn't, please contact the church office with name and birthdate/anniversary date, so Shelley Page can update church records: [office@midlandfbc.com](mailto:office@midlandfbc.com)



Author and Outreach Coordinator for U of M Depression Center

**An evening with**  
**Eric Hipple**

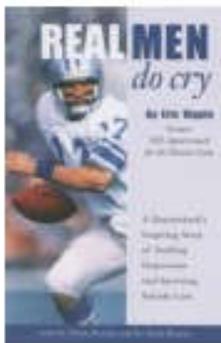
**Wednesday, April 25**  
**7:00 – 8:15 p.m.**

**Midland Reformed Church**  
**1100 N. Saginaw Road, Midland**



Detroit Lions  
 1980-1986 / 1988-1989

**This innovative presentation strives to enhance learning and academic achievement by changing the culture of stigma surrounding mental health. The program emphasizes the power of peer support and bystander intervention in everything from preventing negative behaviors and violence, to identifying serious warning signs of depression, substance abuse, or suicidal intentions.**



Brought to you by area churches and...



Questions: Call Kurt Faust (989) 488-0741





日本から  
**HOST**

Summer 2018  
Hosting  
Opportunities

**MIDLAND-HANDA SISTER CITY**  
**STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM** July 23 - August 12

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**JAPAN**  
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Sister City Program: for details call  
the Midland Communications' Office 989.837.3307  
or visit: [www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/sistercity](http://www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/sistercity)

For more information visit: [www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/sistercity](http://www.cityofmidlandmi.gov/sistercity)

**Sunday Schedule**

9:30AM Worship Service

11:00AM Sunday School



First Baptist Church

915 E. Sugnet Rd.

Midland, MI 48642

Phone: (989) 835-6731

Email: [office@midlandfbc.com](mailto:office@midlandfbc.com)

Website: [www.midlandfbc.com](http://www.midlandfbc.com)

Communion served 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month

*In the spirit of our compassionate Christ, we are a family of growing believers serving all of God's people in an ever-changing world!*

**If you do not wish to receive this mailing, please contact us to remove your name: 989-835-6731 or**

**Email: [office@midlandfbc.com](mailto:office@midlandfbc.com)**

Website: <http://www.midlandfbc.com>

Lara Heise: Lead Pastor (Cell: 815-690-8476)

Jan Sutherland: Music Minister

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