

Please join us for Sunday worship at 8:30 and 11:00; Sunday school at 9:45

the LUMC March 2007

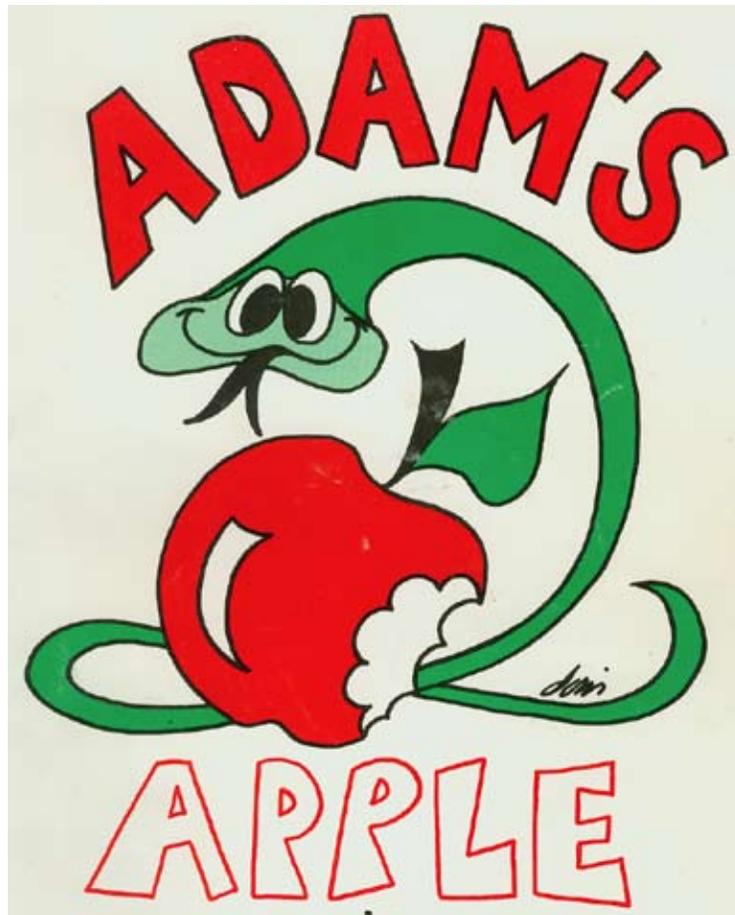
Sunbeam

lansingunited.org



Lansing United Methodist Church
Route 34B and Brickyard Road, South Lansing

Pastor: Bill Gottschalk-Fielding • Program Associate: Marilyn Paradise



LUMC Children's Musical
March 11, 8:30 and 11:00



Lent: Connecting with Jesus

The other night while pushing my shopping cart past the canned pineapple at the grocery store, a college-age woman standing near me called out to her boyfriend, "So what are you planning to give up for Lent?" He indicated he didn't really know. "I want to do something different this year than give up 'chocolate' or something," the young woman said.

You just never know when or where things will get theological! The young woman's comments got me thinking about how I'd spend Lent and what Lent was intended for in the first place. I wonder, though, how many of us "in or out" of the Church know why the Church sets aside this forty-day period called Lent. My sense is the difference between experiencing Lent as a meaningless ritual or as a transforming practice depends a great deal on whether we know the background and purpose behind our observances.

As with most of the Church's practices, Lent has a story behind it: the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert. As Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell the story, Jesus, after his baptism in the River Jordan, was guided by the Spirit into the desert, where for 40 days he went without food and was tempted or challenged by the devil. When we looked at this story the First Sunday in Lent, we noted how the devil's primary purpose was to wear Jesus down and convince him to abandon his God-given vocation and identity. In the end, Jesus remained faithful to God and banishes the devil.

The Church sees this story as metaphor for our struggle to live a life faithful to the way God names and claims of us amid all the

competing voices in our culture. Each of us is a daughter or son of God. The problem is we are easily tempted to settle for some lesser version of ourselves. We've all made compromises when it comes to living out our best selves. We've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God—the image of God we each bear. The Church's "40 Days of Lent" attempts to link us with Jesus' story and his struggle and invites us to reclaim, with Jesus as our helper and guide, our true baptismal calling and identity.

The spiritual practices of Lent—worship, study, prayer, fasting (giving up food for a time)—are all intended to help us hear and follow God's voice, whether we're pushing a cart down a grocery store aisle, finishing up a test at school or caring for a loved one at home.

As for giving up chocolate for Lent, do it if it helps you remember what Lent is about. Frankly, there are probably better things to "give up," things which are greater impediments to spiritual health and well-being. How about fasting from "gossip" or "ethnic jokes?" Or instead of giving up some thing or activity, how about engaging in some act of kindness? There's a lot of hurt in our world; why not spend Lent offering your life as one channel of healing.

You can still give up chocolate, if you like. But now that we know the story and the purpose behind Lent's forty days, why not be a bit bolder and imagine how our personal stories might be different as a result of our practices during Lent.

+Grace and Peace,

Pastor Bin

Nursery Coordinator Hired. We are pleased to announce the appointment of *Stacey Wilder* as our new nursery coordinator. Stacey and her husband, Grant, are members and have attended LUMC regularly for the past year and a half. Stacey comes to us with wonderful qualifications—she is a certified day care provider for the past 6 years and was formerly an elementary school teacher. We are pleased to have her on staff. We will begin recruiting and training some new volunteers including some of our youth to help assist in the Nursery. Please stop by the nursery and welcome Stacey.—*Marilyn Paradise*



Haiti Vitamins

It is not unusual for a Haitian student to pass part of his or her lunch to a sibling, who is standing outside an open window. I like to think of us as their siblings, putting our donations together for their vitamins. Thank you! Harriet Larin, 533-8605



Goods and Talents Auction

March 11, 3:00 PM

Be good or be talented, but be sure to attend the Goods and Talents Auction on Sunday afternoon, March 11.

In addition to attending, consider donating your time, talents, or goods for this effort. The proceeds will support both Haiti Mission and Youth Mission.

For more information, contact Steve Palladino (533-4114), Debbie Cretney (533-0655), or Sandy Conlon (533-7698).



Mark your calendar for March 9 for the Lansing Youth Services spaghetti dinner. This is another form of mission, based in the school, to support our town's young people.

Prayer Chain

- Deloris Babcock, 2549 No. Triphammer Rd., Ithaca
- Roberta Beach, 57 Jersey Hill Rd., Ithaca
- Clarence Benson, 100 Woodsedge Dr., Apt. 119
- Bishop Violet Fisher, 1010 East Ave. Rochester, 14607
- Keith and Kristen Hansen, 21 Manchester Dr., Clifton Park 12065
- Deforest Heffron, Elcor Health Center, Horseheads, 14845
- Amber Heimbuecher, Anne Czymmek's sister
- Phil Hopkins, 5054 Erron Hill Rd., Locke, 13092
- Russell Nalley, 261 Myers Rd.
- Tom Payne, 30 E. Meadow Dr., Ithaca
- Erma Powell, RD5, Box 5338, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
- Frannie Sampson, 1138 Auburn Rd., Groton, 13073
- Ed Trainer, 8 E. Meadow Dr., Ithaca
- Barb White, 96 Auburn Rd.

Please pray for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other locations, including these family members and friends:

- Shawn Butler,
- Matthew Cornell,
- David Ferris
- Robert Gudbranson,
- Daniel LaBar,
- Trevor Judd,
- Shaun McCray,
- Travis Potter,
- Nick Prabhavat
- Josh Randles
- Matthew Ravas
- Eric Tee
- Vanessa Valentine
- Monica Van Every
- Michael Wolfe

Worship during March

The entire month of March falls within the season of Lent and so each Sunday will definitely have a “Lenten” feel to it. But don’t think for a minute this necessarily means dreary or somber. Lent is about renewal. It’s about gaining a proper focus on what’s really life-giving and re-routing our lives in that direction. I chose to focus on the gospel passages this month, trusting Jesus to lead us in that life-giving direction. If you’re keeping track of how we’re telling the grand story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, March’s episode is “Christ.” We’ll look at our Lord from a variety of different vantage points these Sundays. Of course, as we look at Jesus, we are apt to gain a new perspective on ourselves.

March 4—Second Sunday in Lent: We’ll examine how Jesus took on the role of a prophet this Sunday. Read: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; and Luke 13:31-35.

March 11—Third Sunday in Lent: This morning’s worship is highlighted by the children’s performance of “Adam’s Apple,” a musical retelling of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. As you sit in the “garden,” this morning you will be able to reflect on the Lenten themes of repentance and redemption. Reread Genesis 1, 2, and 3 to set the scene of God’s creation and the subsequent conflict.

March 18—Fourth Sunday in Lent: Using the wonderful parable of the prodigal son, we’ll examine what it means to say Jesus is our *reconciler*. Expect to see and hear this story in a new way. Read: Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; and Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

March 25—Fifth Sunday in Lent: This morning we’ll wonder together what it means to claim that Jesus is our *redeemer*. To say this about Jesus says much about him, but also much about us! Read: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; and John 12:1-8.

One Great Hour of Sharing

We will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering on March 18.

This offering has a specific purpose of making possible all the mission work done by the United Methodist Church through the United Methodist Committee on Relief, UMCOR.

When you give a gift to UMCOR for a specific purpose, such as Gulf Coast storm relief, every penny of that donation goes to the purpose you designate. UMCOR does not take out one cent for overhead expenses. It’s hard to find any charity that can make that claim.

This magic occurs because of the One Great Hour of Sharing. This offering covers UMCOR’s expenses, but it also does other things. It helps support UMCOR’s standing mission activities.

So, when March 18 rolls around (or even March 25), you can support One Great Hour of Sharing, and know that you have helped directly to support the church’s mission work around the world.

Women of the Bible

Edith Deen was a famous author and commentator on women’s affairs. For more than 30 years, she wrote a daily column on women’s issues. She began writing a series of articles “Great Women of the Bible” which inspired her to write *All the Women of the Bible*. In the very first chapter of the book she writes, “That God did not give man dominion until he had woman standing beside him is evidence enough of her exalted place in Creation.” Doesn’t that just say it all? As you know women in biblical times had their share of struggles and oppression. Women were restricted to roles of little or no authority. They had little or no value in society. Yet women played an important part in biblical history and life as we know it.

The way Jesus dealt with women of his day gave evidence that the oppressive treatment was ending. Jesus nullified many centuries of oppressive Jewish laws and customs. His relationship with women was probably considered radical for his day. Here are some examples of his involvement with women: Jesus taught female students (Luke 10:38); He accepted women in his inner circle (Luke 8:1); Women were present at Jesus’ death (Mark 15:40); Jesus appeared first to a women after his res-

urrection (Matthew 28:1); Jesus reportedly expressed concern for widows (Luke 20:46); and After Jesus’ resurrection, a woman receives the first apostolic commission of any human (Matthew 28:5).

Women today are in a better place for sure, yet the struggles and successes of past times may still resonate. Come and join us on Thursday, March 29, in the Fellowship Hall for a **salad supper** and hear Dorothea Schrader review a new book entitled *All the Women of the Bible*, this one by M.L. del Mastro. You will hear the great stories of Rebekah, Rachel, Ruth, Jezebel, Mary of Nazareth, and Mary Magdalene, to name a few. Please bring a salad to share. Dessert will be provided.

We begin a new **book study** in April with the sequel to the Mary and Martha saga, entitled *Having a Mary Spirit*, by Joanna Weaver. Books are on order. Let me know if you wish to join us.

Each women in the Bible is there for a reason. Each made a difference in her world either for good or for bad. Each of us will make a difference in our own world. Maybe by studying these women we may find something of ourselves in them.—*Marilyn Paradise*

Church World Service Health Kits

You can help us create more of these kits, which are sent to Church World Service for distribution wherever they are needed, both in the United States and other countries. When you’re in the store, just pick up a few of the items at right. Thanks.

Health Kit

- One hand towel
- One washcloth
- One comb
- One metal nail file
- One bath size bar of soap
- One toothbrush
- One tube of toothpaste
- Six Band-aids

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|--|
|  | <p><i>March 2007</i></p> | <p>Note: This calendar is current as of February 23. For updates to all LUMC events, visit lansingunited.org and see our virtual church calendar and check the Sunday Bulletin.</p> | | <p>1 MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) 10:00 Senior High Gathering 7:00</p> | <p>2 World Day of Prayer</p> | <p>3 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday at Linda's in North Lansing 7:00 Adam's Apple rehearsal 9:30</p> |
| <p>4 SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT COMMUNION Worship 8:30 Sunday school 9:45 Worship 11:00 Adam's Apple rehearsal 12:00 Parents and Youth Bible Study 4:00 Lectionary at Bakers 6:30</p> | <p>5</p> | <p>6 Quilt Bee 9:30 Caregivers 10:00 Staff-Parish 7:00 Youth Ministry 7:00</p> | <p>7 Women's Bible Study 9:30 Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p> | <p>8 Senior High Gathering 7:00 Trustees 7:30</p> | <p>9 Lansing Youth Services Spaghetti Dinner 5:00-7:00 at school Confirmation Retreat</p> | <p>10 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday at Linda's in North Lansing 7:00 Adam's Apple rehearsal and set up 9:30</p> |
| <p>11 THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT ADAM'S APPLE CHILDREN'S MUSICAL Worship 8:30 Sunday school 9:45 Worship 11:00 Goods and Talents Auction 3:00 Parents and Youth Bible Study 4:00 Hard to believe Daylight Time begins !</p> | <p>12</p> | <p>13 Co-Op Food Workshop Quilt Bee 9:30</p> | <p>14 Women's Bible Study 9:30 Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p> | <p>15 MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) 10:00 Senior High Gathering 7:00 SUNBEAM DEADLINE 12:00 Midnight</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>17 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday at Linda's in North Lansing 7:00</p> |
| <p>18 FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING Worship 8:30 Sunday school 9:45 Worship 11:00 Parents and Youth Bible Study 4:00 Lectionary at Bakers 6:30</p> | <p>19 Membership 7:00 Haiti Committee 7:00</p> | <p>20 Co-Op Food Workshop Quilt Bee 9:30</p> | <p>21 Women's Bible Study 9:30 Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p> | <p>22 Senior High Gathering 7:00 Worship Committee 7:00</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday at Linda's in North Lansing 7:00 Blood Drive 8:30</p> |
| <p>25 FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT Worship 8:30 Sunday school 9:45 Worship 11:00 Food Pantry Setup 12:00 Parents and Youth Bible Study 4:00</p> | <p>26 Food Pantry 4:00</p> | <p>27 Co-Op Food Workshop Quilt Bee 9:30</p> | <p>28 Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p> | <p>29 Salad Supper and Book Talk Senior High Gathering 7:00</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>31 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday at Linda's in North Lansing 7:00</p> |



Reflections on a Mission Trip

Since returning from my first trip to Haiti as a member of a recent work team (January 2007), several people have asked me, "Was it what you expected?" Knowing very little about Haiti and having only heard experiences shared by others who have been members of mission trips, I had no preconceived notion of Haiti the country, its people, its culture, and least of all the little community of Banique. As I traveled to Haiti for the first time I was preoccupied with my role on the team and the objectives of the mission. With my work gloves packed, I had an eager intent to help wherever I could be most useful though I was not prepared for the knowledge I would gain, the friendships I would make, the faith I would witness or the moving of my own heart.

Meeting the men, women and, children of Banique opened my eyes to a world that I had only seen in pictures. The realization that the people in those pictures have hopes and aspirations similar to ours but that they must look beyond their poverty into the eyes of people like us to find this hope was overwhelming. I consider myself blessed to have been able to start close friendships in Banique that I can

only anticipate will grow in the years to come. I had the opportunity to see the rewards of the efforts on behalf of the Lansing United Methodist Church and, moreover, the work of Jesus Christ reflected in the lives of the people who have been touched by this mission. Banique is a small village in Haiti with people who have so very little, and yet they carry with them an unyielding sense of hope and faith. Sitting on a wooden bench in a three-hour church service presented in a language not my own did not hinder my ability to feel God's presence in their midst. It was felt in their welcoming looks and smiles, the small hand of a child in mine, and their enthusiastic songs of worship.

This visit allowed me to share my heart's passion to help people that I would otherwise never have had the chance to meet. My experience in Haiti has far surpassed any expectations that I could have had and has left me with a desire to return, to reach out, to touch and be touched by these wonderful people. While attempting to serve Christ by changing lives we find that we, ourselves, are greatly changed.—*Mahima Walter, Student, St. John Fisher College*

Low-Carb Donations for Rural Mission

As many of you know, Jeff Sandsted will once again travel in mission to Johns Island, South Carolina, to work with Rural Mission there on improving the residents' houses. Depending on when you read this, the last of three bake sales to raise funds for this mission was or will be on March 4. If you missed it or gave up goodies for Lent, here's good news! You can make a carb- and calorie-free donation. Just write a check to LUMC and note Rural Mission, or put some cash in the collection plate with a Rural Mission notation.

An Opportunity to Serve

Lansing Residents Sharon Dean and Rich Chrappa, 156 Ridge Road, are dealing with Sharon's increasing MS limitations. Their Unitarian Church has formed a "Share the Care" group and has asked if some LUMC friends would like to participate as friendly visitors to Sharon. This might be to visit and converse, play games, read, help around the house, or do errands. It does not entail physical care such as feeding, lifting, or moving. If you are interested in helping in this way or would like more information, please contact Pastor Bill or Connie Conlon (533-4175). Volunteers complete a questionnaire and identify what they would like to do to help, what they feel they do best, and when they are available. The coordinator then tries to match the volunteer's skills, preferences, and time available to Sharon's needs. Schedules, made out monthly, are available via Google or other means as necessary. It is a well-organized program and has proven to be as enjoyable for the volunteers as it is for Sharon. Thank you for considering this opportunity to serve and to benefit as well.—*Connie Conlon*

Bring a Donation for Food Pantry

One way to remember to bring donations for Food Pantry is to bring a can or other nonperishable food on Communion Sunday. That's March 4 this month. Another thing you can do is take note of Food Pantry Monday and bring a donation the day before (and even help with setup). Since the next Food Pantry is Monday, March 26, make a note to bring cans and other donations on Sunday, March 25. The Food Pantry would particularly appreciate the following hard-to-get items: tuna (packed in water), peanut butter, macaroni and cheese dinners, and spaghetti, macaroni, or other pastas.

Promise Sunday—March 25th

Last month Pastor Bill wrote the congregation to address the "giving gap" between what's been promised for mission and ministry in 2007 and what we actually need to fund these needs. He asked every household to reconsider what they are able to contribute financially this year to overcome this \$20,000 gap:

1. *Make an "estimate-of-giving" pledge for 2007 if you didn't do this last October.* Pledge cards are available on the table outside the sanctuary. Remember: filling out a pledge card helps you make a commitment and helps your church to budget, but it doesn't mean you're locked into your pledge if your financial circumstances change.
2. *Increase your existing 2007 pledge by some amount effective immediately.* Fill out a pledge card and mark "revised pledge" on the card with your new pledge and start date. Even an additional \$10 a week would make a world of difference.
3. *Make a one time financial gift to help fill the gap.* Doing what you are able will enable your church to do what God is asking. Please put "One Time Gift" on the check's memo line.

We will receive and give thanks to God for our new pledges, revised pledges and one-time gifts during worship Sunday, March 25th. (You are free to turn in your gift early, of course.) This is our church; these are our ministries. We can take care of these needs during this one Sunday, keeping our promise to God and each other and living into the Promise of God's future.—*Finance Committee*

Children's Musical #20

Adam's Apple

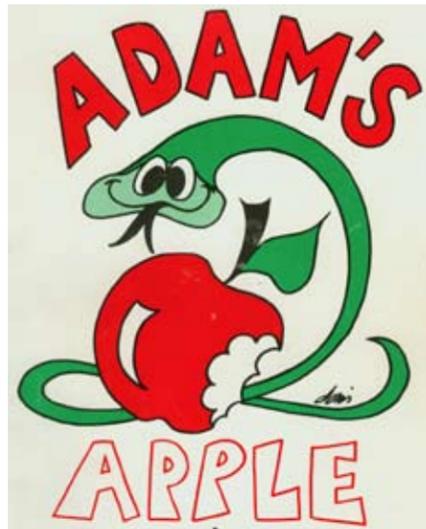
Twelve kids and their assistants are preparing to tell the story of Adam and Eve in "Adam's Apple", to be presented to the congregation in both worship services on Sunday, March 11. "Adam's Apple" was presented twice before, in 1990 and 1997.

LUMC has hosted kids' musicals for 20 years, since our first kids' musical "St. Francis: Poor Little Man of God," in 1987. Over those years, 126 kids and one puppet have taken the "stage" (along with eight adults in one production that included kids and adults). Twelve different adults and teens have taken on roles in directing productions and more than 56 different adults and teens have helped behind the scenes with scenery, costumes, props, accompaniment, and other forms of support.

Ross Munson (no longer a kid) holds a record in having acted in nine different musicals. Check out a posting on the choir room door to see the complete listing of participants.

Our kids have brought to the congregation the stories of: Francis of Assisi ("St. Francis: Poor Little Man of God," 1987); Jonah ("Oh, Jonah!", 1988, 1994); Zerubbabel ("The Troubbabel of Zerubbabel," 1989, 1996, 2004); Paul ("Paul & Co.," 1991, 1998); Noah ("100% Chance of Rain, 1992); Moses ("Moses and the Freedom Fanatics," 1992, 2000); Joseph ("Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat", 1993, 2001); Christmas pageants ("The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," 1993); the parables ("Dr. Nuwine's Traveling Show," 1995, and "Once Upon a Parable," 2002); David ("The Rock Slinger and His Greatest Hit," 1999); Daniel ("Rescue in the Night," 2003); and the disciples of Jesus ("By the Sea," 2005).

Our 2007 kids' musical, "Adam's Apple," to be presented on March 11, is set in the garden of Eden. We need help in creating the garden. If you have live or artificial plants that to create the garden, or if you have any spare (artificial) leaves, vines, flowers, etc, please contact Diane Withiam (dwithiam@msn.com) or Lisa Ryan (lar4@cornell.edu). Or leave your plant material to the choir room (with labels on anything that you will expect to be returned) before Sunday, March 4.—*Diane Withiam*



Meditations for Lent

The NCNY Conference is posting a daily meditation and prayer during Lent. Find them at <http://ncnyumc.org/prayers/index.php>.

As an example, here is the meditation from early in Lent, written by Sharon Fulmer, our conference communications person.

Thursday, February 22, 2007

The Word of Forgiveness

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." —Luke 23:34

Forgiveness is freeing up and putting to better use the energy once consumed by holding grudges, harboring resentments, and nursing unhealed wounds. It is rediscovering the strengths we always had and relocating our limitless capacity to understand and accept other people and ourselves.

Those are the words of Sidney and Suzanne Simon, authors of a book on *Forgiveness*. They sound logical, they make sense, but somehow, when you come right down to it, forgiving is not as easy as it seems.

I know. Forgiving has never come easy to me. Writing comes easy to me. Planning a trip, driving a car, taking photographs, enjoying the company of family and friends—all come easy to me. Not forgiving.

It is interesting that when I volunteered to do a devotional, I would find myself writing about something so difficult for me to understand, to accept as an important facet of life. So, while writing comes easy, this particular piece does not. I have started and stopped and started again. Finally, I had to admit that this essay has forced me to face the need to look at myself and try to understand why I find it difficult to forgive.

I asked a friend to help me think about this forgiveness thing. "Forgiveness frees the soul," she said. "It takes out the garbage that eats away at us." Seems pretty simple. Jesus said to forgive. Maybe that's where I need to start in my desire to become more forgiving. The Lenten season provides an opportunity to reflect on how our lives can better serve ourselves and our world.

I will begin with forgiveness.

Prayer:

Forgive and forget are words that crop up in our everyday life, but words that have such special meaning during the period of Lent. God, help us to hear these words, to live the words of your Son as we walk through these days ahead. Amen.—*Sharon Fulmer, Liverpool First UMC*



The Sunbeam

March 2007

**Lansing United
Methodist Church**

*Adam's Apple
March 11*

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***One Great Hour of Sharing
March 18***

Lansing United Methodist Church

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The Sunbeam is published each month by
Lansing United Methodist Church.

Please send your news to Glenn Withiam, editor, at
grw4@cornell.edu, or use the Sunbeam folder near
the church office. Please sign your contributions!

Deadline for the next issue is March 15, 2007.

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