



105 E. Main  
Street  
Ionia, MI  
48846  
Service  
9:00 am

[www.ioniafirst.com](http://www.ioniafirst.com)  
616-527-1860

January  
2025  
Newsletter



## THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First — January 2025

*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means the least of the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to be shepherd my people Israel (Matthew 2:6).*

**Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ!**

**Happy New Year!**

I am hopeful that by now you have had an opportunity to rest from the busyness of Christmas and New Year's activities. Much was accomplished in the past year and the new year brings the possibility to accomplish much more.

Our church has been a beacon of light to the community, opening its doors to persons in need and hosting significant community events some of which were worthy fund-raisers for the community. Our congregation has been a vehicle of God's love through the charitable services provided by Community Drawers, the providing of space for the Zion UMC community meal.

Our congregation raised funds to assist the Ionia Department of Aging and provided ministry funds to the Rwanda Conference in Africa to help in the construction of a church parking lot that enabled pastors to attend school.

The Trustees and maintenance staff have been diligent in attending to the health of our church building, keeping it clean, in good repair, and spruced up. A new front entrance door was installed, necessary painting was done, and a new roof has replaced our old one.

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**THE PASTOR'S PEN**  
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**Our committees have functioned well, with Church Council, Trustees, Staff Parish, and Worship Teams functioning well. We hosted the annual District Charge Conference session, and our worship services are conducted well by competent liturgists and an exemplary AV Team! We were blessed to conduct a service of healing to which our District Superintendent gave leadership. God is good.**

**You have been faithful in many ways and the Ionia community has been blessed. I think God is doing a good work through our congregation.**

**I believe this year, 2025, is filled with much promise and I believe we will see the mighty hand of God at work as we continue to be in mission to our community and the world. So, it will be important for us to begin the year by planning and with prayer.**

**I am hopeful we can set goals and objectives for 2025 and a plan to achieve them. This will be the work of our Visioning Team. I pray also that we can establish a base of support for persons experiencing grief or distress, by conducting monthly grief support sessions. I pray also that we can do a healing worship service twice each year and find ways to make our worship services more profound, meaningful and memorable.**

**Please remain confident and trust that God will see us through every situation. God will prosper and grow us in the coming year if we are faithful, trusting God to provide the resources we need and to guide our feet each step of the way.**

**I look forward to a great new year with you!**

**Blessings,**

**Lamarr**

## Administration Board Report

The AD Board is sending out a big “Thank You” to Eric Asher, Dave McCord, the Boy Scouts of Troop #85, Andrew Badder and Jeffery Mitchner who volunteered to move items from one storage area of the church to another.

Two sofas stored in the room with coats and boots in the lower level, have been relocated to the “Sun Rise Café”.

The numerous Bibles that were stored throughout the church building have been brought together in Pastor’s office closet. Assorted books are now on his office book shelves.

The conference room closet has been emptied and it will be used to store supplies for the café. Carpeting and lighting issues will be addressed.

Several large totes of Choir robes and other seldom used items were stored in the small room in the Northeast corner of Fellowship hall. These items are now stored in the Tower storage area to the West of the balcony. Numerous file Cabinets filled with sheet music are also in the tower.

These volunteers have made it possible to make more efficient use of our storage areas and accomplished the mission in a few hours!!

Anyone who wants a tour of the above changes can call me at 616-527-4945

Linda

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**  
Traditional Worship  
Communion Every Sunday  
Sunday Morning



Service at 9:00 Coffee Hour following service

105 East Main Street, Ionia, Michigan 48846

## SPRC

I trust all of you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year's Day. The calendar is turning its pages a bit too quickly. Where did 2024 go?

There is not too much to report. Rebecca Brown has been hired to be our secretary as she has been in place for two years. All other employees have been or are being evaluated as the year is coming to an end. Be sure to thank them for their excellent work.

Keeping the church going is the job of all of us, not just the employees. A special thank you to our volunteer Ronda, who keeps our books, and David and Deanna who writes those crucial checks.

Thank you, too, to Lamarr, who continues to teach us daily.

Jan

## Missions

Missions for January is Community Drawers. Keeping this mission going is an enormous task, as we have had so many request for help. Please read Rebecca's report for all the information. December proved to show us the need for many in our community.

Also, do not forget IMKids. School will be starting soon, and the need continues to increase. Lists of goods needed are always posted on the bulletin board outside the café.

Jan, Peg and Millie



## Trustee News

Most of the projects which we started months ago are wrapping up. The painting of the several areas in the church, will be going on for a while. Things are going along smoothly. If you see the painter, please give her a big thank you.

We will be cleaning and painting the metal work on the outside of the church. **Looking for volunteers.** We also need some one to get the flowerbeds and window wells cleaned up and ready when spring arrives. Any and all help is greatly appreciated.

We have delivered the food for IM Kids. They are feeding **850** kids per day five days a week approximately 70% which comes back to Ionia Schools. Time to start filling pews again. I cannot express to you how much this food is needed and they have told me that donations are way down. The church (you) should be proud of what you are doing.

Trustee meetings for this month will be on the **Second Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.** Everyone is invited. January's Meeting is the 8th.

Be Safe and Happy New Year

Joe

**“People who know little are usually great talkers, while men who know much say little.”**      **Jean Rousseau**

# Community Drawers News

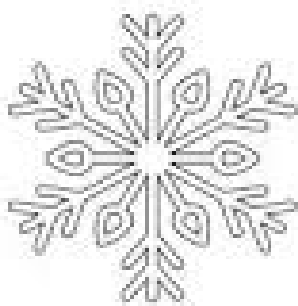
I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and that we all enjoy a kind, gracious, healthy New Year.

Community Drawers was again busy 18 total families, almost 90 people. We again gave away almost 40 coats. We are in need of XL and 1, 2, 3 x-large men's and ladies Coats We are also having trouble locating Towels, Bath, Hand, Wash cloths all 3 sizes and Kitchen Towels and Kitchen Dish Cloths. So, when you are busy this winter cleaning out cupboards and closets think about Community Drawers and if the things you are purging out still have a lot of life left in them please give them to Community Drawers.

We did help a foster mom who had been given 3 children just before the Christmas Holiday. Foster children generally come with just the clothing they are wearing at the time they are put into the system. So this mom needed our help desperately. She asked us for all the basic things. Then I asked her what about laundry items. She said she would be reimbursed for those things in a few weeks I gave her enough product just to last her and her own family of 6 plus 3 more children to last her for 20 loads of laundry. I hope you can understand why I did this and I also gave her extra toilet paper. Merry Christmas.

**Stay warm and safe and have a Happy New Year!!!**

**Rebecca Brown**



## Reminders

# IM KIDS 3rd Meal

- ♦ This is an ongoing mission. We are helping to feed over **850** kids 70% being returned to Ionia Schools each day for their third meal. They are accepting the following items:
  - Peanut butter
  - Jelly or jam
  - Fruit bars
  - Applesauce cups
  - Fruit boxes
  - Snack packs
  - Juice boxes - must be 100 % juice
  - Sandwich size bags
  - Dry cereal
  - Brown paper lunch bags
- **Please Help fill the two Front Pews of our Church. We will deliver it to where it needs to go.**



IM SAFE CAC

Ionia Montcalm Secure and Friendly Environment  
Child Advocacy Center

## January Birthdays

**Marge Irby 01/02**

**Miller Hotchkin 01/08**

## January Anniversaries

**Eric & Renee Asher 01/09**



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## Prayer Requests

**Brent Spencer - Airforce**

**Phil Kahl**

**Family of Roberta Sterner**

**Ethel Clark & Family**

**Please send prayer requests to  
616-527-1860 or Email to  
Bluebirdm66@yahoo.com**

## January Liturgists

**05 Deanna Hotchkin**

**12 Jan Powell**

**19 Rebecca Brown**

**26 Eric Asher**



# January 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	3 Worship 11:00	4
5	6	7	8 Trustee @ 10:00 am	9 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	10	11
12 Noisy Offering  Joint Potluck with Easton 12:30	13	14 Moms support group 7:00	15 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	16 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.  AD Board 6:00	17	18
19 Mission Sunday	20 AD Board Meeting 6:00 pm	21	22	23 Comm4nity meal at 6:00 p.m.  SPRC Joint 2:00	24 DEADLINE FOR NEWS  LETTER ITEMS	25
26	27	28 Moms support group 7:00	29	30 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	31	

**Finance Report**  
**Special Funds (Designated Giving)**

<b>Memorial fund</b>	<b>4,425.66</b>
<b>Board of Trustees</b>	<b>-13,009.77</b>
<b>Children's Ministry</b>	<b>8,099.48</b>
<b>Camp &amp; School Scholarships</b>	<b>1,395.07</b>
<b>Pastor's Discretionary Fund</b>	<b>782.34</b>
<b>Community Drawers</b>	<b>5,266.16</b>
<b>Music on the Green</b>	<b>998.19</b>
<b>Holiday Concert</b>	<b>3,823.99</b>
<b>Monthly Mission</b>	<b>1,070.00</b>
<b>General Evangelism</b>	<b>9,193.79</b>
<b>General Outreach</b>	<b>5,797.23</b>
<b>Funeral/Wedding/Flowers</b>	<b>1881.36</b>
<b>IM Kids 3rd Meal</b>	<b>400.00</b>

**General Fund (Church Budget)**

<b>Income</b>	<b>6,212.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>5,426.64</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>785.36</b>
<b>Ending Bank Balance</b>	<b>20,987.97</b>

