



**105 E. Main
Street**

**Ionia, MI
48846**

Service

11:00 am

**www.ioniafirst.
com**

616-527-1860

**March
2024
Newsletter**



THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First

March 2024

God's People,

If you've ever traveled with kids, the question, "Are we there yet?" is inevitable, and you know how it can be annoying to hear the same question over and over and over again. When my kids were young, and asked me that question, I would always answer, "No, we're not over there, we're over here," followed with, "We're never 'there,' we're always 'here.'" It didn't take very long for them to stop asking because my answer was annoying to them as their question was to me.

Well, now that we have begun our Lenten Journey, are we there yet?

Another question that tends to come up while traveling is, "Do you know where you're going?" I always answer, "Of course I know where I'm going. And if you've led a good Christian life, you would know where you're going too."

Well, now that we have begun our Lenten Journey, do you know where you're going?

(Continue next Page)

Continuation of “Pastors Pen”

Remember that Lent is many things, among them a journey. We commemorate Lent by remembering Jesus’s journey of 40 days in the wilderness. But we are on a journey too. As we look ahead to the end of the Lenten Journey and the celebration of Easter, let us not worry about whether or not we are “there,” when we are “here,” as in the here and now. And let us not lose sight of the fact that we do know where we are going, and we know how to get there.

Let the Journey begin.

**In His Service,
Pastor Terry**



In Memoriam

In the course of one weeks time, our Church lost three ladies who have been pillars over the years.

Marge Bowne, Margaret (Peg) Christopher Fell, and Gladys Stout are with our Lord now. It is fitting to memorialize them for their generous service. Each used her unique gifts to serve First United Methodist and its missions in the community and the world. They contributed in so many ways, it would be impossible to enumerate them all. By agreeing to lead and by quietly donating their time and talents in the background, they supported our programs and projects.

As the families of these amazing women cherish precious memories, we too shall always remember them as very special members of our Church Family.

Contributed By Deanna Hotchkin



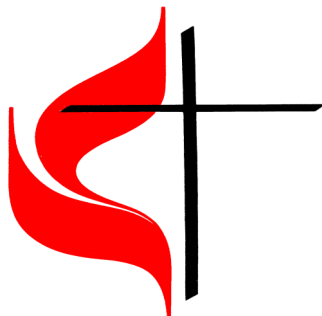
Administration Board Report

The next AD Board meeting will be March 14, 2024, Thursday, at 6 P.M. and held in the Community Drawers Room. As always, everyone is welcome and your ideas and questions are appreciated as we make plans for the coming year.

Our Sunday brunch gatherings are at the Blue Water Café and have been enjoyed by all attending as we share fellowship with the community. When someone asked, “what group is this?” We are proud to say “We are from Ionia First”. It’s another way to celebrate a history of 150 years on the corner of E. Main Street and Hudson Street. Our next brunch will be on Palm Sunday at 12:30 again at the Blue Water Café. Call the Church office to be counted in.

With the coming of Spring, may we be ever mindful of the blessing of sunshine and the gift of new life as flowers bloom and song birds share their unique sound of the season.

Linda Ciangi,
Ad. Board Chair



EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Traditional Worship

Communion Every Sunday

Sunday Morning

Coffee Hour 10:00 Service at 11:00

SRC -

Jan Powell

Our staff continues to do a fine job. We think of our musicians as we continue through Advent. Sari, A.J, and Ann continue to make our services better each Sunday. Do not forget to thank them for their efforts. David is such a faithful worker, taking on projects above and beyond what is necessary. He is so helpful whenever we ask him to help carry, shovel, and clean. Continue to pray that David's health remains good. Then there is Joel who is responsible for the bulletin and getting that AV work done so Pastor and the congregation can continue to enjoy the service. Remember, Joel is often at church when there are special concerts in the afternoon or at night. Joel provides us with musical talents, also. I want to thank Joel for being so available when people like me cannot figure out what needs to be done on my computer. He is so good to step up. I like to reward him with root beer.

Finally, I am hoping that all the kinks are being worked out with Terry. It is not an easy transition for him and his wife. Stop in, attend a bible study, bring a sandwich, or just wish him the best. It is not easy trying to satisfy two churches.

Jan

Missions

This month's mission is Mobility Worldwide. It is a mission that we have supported for some time as it gives the recipients of the PET the ability to move about. Many PETS are distributed in the United States and throughout the world. Our monies go to the warehouse in Holland, Michigan. We thank these faithful volunteers for their amazing dedication to this project. Polio in many regions continues to leave victims paralyzed. That paralysis mars a child or adult forever. PET gives them the ability to shop, go to school, or visit family. The PET is completely constructed in Holland. God Bless this crew.

Jan



Trustee News

The office computer has been updated . This seems to be working well so far and has made it much easier and quicker to do what has to be done. The new machine is much faster and user-friendly.

The sink in the Sacristy Room was plugged completely. The sink drain has been unplugged and the piping made to eliminate the cause of the problem. This sink is used to dispose of the remaining liquid after Communion Service. This takes the liquid to a place in the flower garden.

We will be replacing the carpet in the Office starting on May 6, 2024 which is a Monday. We will be clearing out anything moveable from the office starting on Saturday May 4. Any and all help will be appreciated. We will be starting sometime around 9:30 a.m.

I also have ben in contact with a plumber to get costs for three new toilets which will be ADA compliant, and sinks with new faucets. There will also be some work in the Kitchen. The ladies restroom downstairs and the men's restrooms also down stairs are in need of lots of TLC.

Some of the lighting has been changed and more will be worked on as time is available. Hopefully it is much brighter in some areas.

If you see anything which needs attention please let someone know. We are doing our best to repair and replace needed items, but sometimes overlook the small stuff.

Trustee meetings will be on the [First Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.](#) Everyone is invited. March's Meeting is the 6th.

See you in Church

Be Safe

Joe

Community Drawers News

Hi Friends,

Hello everyone. Spring is on its way can you feel it. I thought this was an exceptionally cold winter I am personally happy it is almost over. Yeah!!!

It is wonderful to have Michell back after her foot surgery. She still has to take it slow but we are just happy that it went well. She has been busy organizing our storage room where all the clothing items are kept and she has asked that she be allowed to do this herself as she knows how she wants it done. Go Michell.

Grants have all been sent in to finance Community Drawers. Please say an extra prayer that some of these grants go through as this is our main source of income besides private donations which we do accept anytime. I know you must be tired of me talking about grants and asking for funding all the time, I do not care to do this either, however we have no other way to help our COMMUNITY except by asking. Please remember you do not have to just give money, we also accept the gift of time and volunteering.

Speaking of volunteering our major fundraiser for the year our annual TREASURE SALE is fast approaching. It will be Saturday, April 13, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bring your treasures either down to the church starting now or if the items are too large and heavy please call me at 517-927-5346 and I can arrange a pickup. We do have a few things we are not accepting. Please no huge entertainment center units and no huge TVs and no big storage hutches unless they are wood not composite board items. Thank You. Please bring us lots of items, what is leftover will go to Volunteers of America. We at Community Drawers shop there a lot and we feel that will be the best for our leftovers.

We do have an announcement to make concerning a fundraiser we will be doing the early part of December. The Date is still being worked out with the entertainment group which is the GREAT LAKES CHORUS from Grand Rapids. We will have the chorus upstairs and following that FESTIVAL of TABLES will be in fellowship hall following the performance. We would like to have at least 2 more ladies to volunteer to do a table and we will need 8 hosts or hostesses. I know this sounds like a lot of work but we have as a church many times in the past have done much harder work. We have all been working all year to spiffy up this old building so we want to show it off a bit. I am proud this it is still a church doing the WILL OF GOD. COMMUNITY DRAWERS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF GOD'S WILL. Please find time in your busy schedule to help. Thank you.

Please do not forget our on going returnable can drive. I have said before that this money really helps us an awful lot in Community Drawers. The last 2 times we took cans back we bought dish detergent and deodorant both men's and women's.

Thank you all for all you do to help us,

Becky Brown, Chairperson Community Drawers,

Reminders

IM KIDS 3rd Meal

- This is an ongoing mission. We are helping to feed over 812 kids each day 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
- 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



March Birthdays

Kendra Badder	7
Deanna Hotchkin	8
Gene Clark	22
Katie Maer	29



Attention

Treasure sale April 13

***Get your treasures to
the church***

Prayer Requests

Brent Spencer - Airforce

Phil Kahl

Roberta Sterner

Ethel Clark & Family

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

March Liturgists

4	Deanna Hotchkin
11	Jan Powell
18	Eric Asher
25	Rebecca Brown
31	Deanna Hotchkin

March 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Trustee @ 10:00 am Bible Study 2:30a @ First Mom's Cooking class 5:30	7 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m. New member class 11:00 @ Easton	8	9
10 Noisy Offering	11	12 Moms support group 7:00	13 Bible Study 2:30 @ first Mom's Cooking class 5:30	14 AD Board Meeting 6:00 p.m Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m. New member class 11:00 @ Easton	15 !	16
17 Mission Sunday	18		20 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers Bible Study 2:30a @ First Mom's Cooking class 5:30	21 .Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m. New member class 11:00 @ Easton	22	23
24 Blue Water Cafe	25 DEADLINE FOR NEWS LETTER ITEMS	26 Moms support group 7:00	27 Bible Study 2:30a @ First Mom's Cooking class 5:30	28 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	29 Tenebrae Service 6:00 joint @ First	30
31						

Finance Report, January 2024
Remaining Balances as of 01/31/2024
Special Funds (Designated Giving)

Memorial fund	1,829.16
Board of Trustees	30,877.14
Children's Ministry	8,099.48
Camp & School Scholarships	1,777.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	615.64
Community Drawers	2,528.35
Music on the Green	1,898.19
Holiday Concert	3,823.99
Monthly Mission	520.00
General Evangelism	5,541.46
General Outreach	5,708.14
Funeral/Wedding/Flowers	235.04
IM Kids 3rd Meal	100.00

General Fund (Church Budget)

Income	16,850.49
Expenses	10,493.42
Surplus (Deficit)	6,357.07
Ending Bank Balance	16,499.09