



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

www.ioniafirst.com
616-527-1860

October
2024
Newsletter



THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First — October 2024

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

We are fast entering the fall of the year, and I hope all is well with your body as well as your soul. I and Linda are enjoying the blessing of being in fellowship with the Ionia First congregation and are thankful for each opportunity to be in your company.

As with most church congregations, life together brings its highs and lows, its joys and challenges. We face the wonders and frustrations of life as a people empowered by God, who loves us and resources us with all we need as builders of the divine Kingdom.

I am often encouraged by what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian church as he was held captive in prison awaiting trial, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." I have received this word from Paul as a message to me that God strengthens us to make the difficult and seemingly impossible, possible.

Perhaps, it is also a word to us, the People of God in Ionia, that God will make possible that to which we lend in faith, our hearts and minds. I think this is a great message of hope to carry with us as we engage the challenges and joys that lie ahead.

Saturday Sept. 21, Eric and I attended a gathering hosted by our district superintendent, John Kasper, which provided suggestions and resources for community outreach. I believe ministry and care are at the heart of Christian practice. I have seen much evidence of ministry and care among the Ionia First congregation. You are reaching out into the community and many in the congregation want to do more.

Continued

THE PASTOR'S PEN

Continued

I am hopeful that in the future, more members of our congregation will be able to attend these informational sessions. Perhaps our participation will reveal new ministry opportunities and funding sources for community outreach in Ionia.

Future Events:

Please be in prayer with me for the numerous congregation members who have experienced loss or are facing life difficulties. We will hold a memorial service for Roberta Sterner in our sanctuary October 12 at noon. Roberta was a long-time member of Ionia First, who died at age 103.

Our Charge Conference session will be held Sunday October 13 at 2:00pm in our church. We will elect officers and make other important decisions at our Charge Conference, so please plan to attend and give your vote.

Also, on the first Sunday of November we will have a special worship service in observance of All Saints Day. The following Sunday (November 10) we will conduct a special service of healing in which our district superintendent has been invited to participate. We will also share a Christmas Eve worship service with Easton, time and place to be determined by both church's worship committees.

The new year will bring many blessings, and I am excited to see it unfold. I hope you are as excited as I am about what God will do with us in the coming weeks and months.

Go in God's Peace!

Blessings,
Lamarr



Administration Board Report

This month I'll continue to share information found while sorting through Legacy Room papers and photos. The marble top table now in the office belonged to Mrs. Viggo Nielson. A Kodiak photo from 1969 shows the table placed beneath the Veteran's plaque that is now on display in the Northex. A vase of flowers is placed on the table that Mrs. Nielson describes as "my table." The office table is now home to the lovely lamp donated in memory of Cassie Stewart by the Cassie Stewart Circle.

I also found a 1985 photo of the Ionia First United Methodist Church memorial stone structure located on the North side of the front lawn of the church. The sign attached in the stonework reads as follows: "August 31- Worship 9:30 SINCE WHEN IS GOOD CONDUCT RESERVED FOR WHIMPS? - THE REV KEITH A BOVEE."

Don't we find it interesting that 39 years ago the Methodist minister was moved to post a message in support of good conduct for all to see. Surely, we all understand the need for kindness as we continue to open our doors for the Thursday night supper and for the Community Drawers project. The "Golden Rule" never goes out of style at the Ionia First corner where Methodists have gathered for over 150 years. Still, a gentle reminder is always appropriate. The stone structure referred to here was donated to the church by the family of Olive Sweet and in her memory. Two of the Sweet's daughters and their husbands, Sue Ellen and Russ and Cynthia and Bill were married in our church in a beautiful and memorable double wedding.

Next month I'll share the financial report from the chicken-pie supper of December 14, 1910. You won't believe the prices!

Linda



EVERYONE IS WELCOME
Traditional Worship
Communion Every Sunday
Sunday Morning
Service at 9:00
Coffee Hour following service

SPRC

There is little to report about our staff, but all seems to be going well. We are thankful to have Pastor Larmarr with us, as he has so many good ideas and communicates with us. He will be gone in October, so Eric has been asked to fill the pulpit on October 27th. We wish Pastor a safe trip to Africa. There will be a combined staff meeting at Easton on September 24th at 2 pm. During that time, we will finish planning for the District Conference.

Pray for Sari and her mother, as changes are complex. All other staff are doing their job well.

**"We are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his land." Psalms XCV -7
A thank you to all those who volunteer to keep our church going.**

Blessings,

Anne, Roxie, Virginia, Rebecca, Jack, and Jan

Missions

September mission giving is being sent to the Ionia Crop Walk, Church World Service. I thank everyone who donated. A portion of these funds will help stock the food banks in our community.

As we did last year, Community Awareness will receive our October giving. This organization in Ionia has done marvelous events to raise awareness of the difficulty of dealing with cancer. Check out Facebook to see all of the events being sponsored in the schools and the community. When a person or family asks for help, Community Awareness responds to the survivors and fighters. As you know, Diane Grumet was awarded FOX 17's Person of the Year in 2023.

Jan, Peg, Millie

Trustee News

Contractors are working on the replacement of the roof. The old slate tiles now on the roof are a composite of materials one of which is asbestos. This has required to have an Asbestos Removal company come in and remove the old roof. This is going very well. The new roof is going up as I write this and is looking very well. The project will be running a couple weeks with a good number of machines being used so please be careful when coming into the Church. The church is open for business as usual.

We will be cleaning and painting the metal work on the outside of the church. **Looking for volunteers.** We also need some to get the flowerbeds and window wells cleaned up and ready for Winter. 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. We are going to deliver the first week in October as the pews are filled. Time to start filling pews again. I cannot express to you how much this food is needed. The church (you) should be proud of what you are doing.

Trustee meetings for this month will be on the **First Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.** Everyone is invited. October's Meeting is the 2nd.

See you in Church, be Safe,

Joe

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” James Baldwin

Community Drawers News

Community Drawers has been busy as usual. In September we handled the needs of 11 families. The last family we helped in September was a family of 4 people. Dad and Mom and 2 teens, a boy and a girl, both mentally handicapped.

They lost their home due to a fire and are now living in a pop camper heated by an exterior wood furnace. There is no insulation in the camper and I am sure you all realize how cold it is now let alone later this year I do not believe they were insured. She asked for bedding and couch throws and toweling, underwear, socks and pajamas for all 4. She also got toiletries and I gave her a sheet explaining about our coat giveaway. I am reporting this to you not to make you feel bad or wish we could help more. I am reporting this to you so that we all realize that anything could happen to one or more of us at any time Also to help you realize that this is the face of homelessness in Ionia County.

See you on the October 5, 2024, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please come and help at our coat giveaway, and we will give you a free lunch.

Stay warm and safe



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

October Birthdays

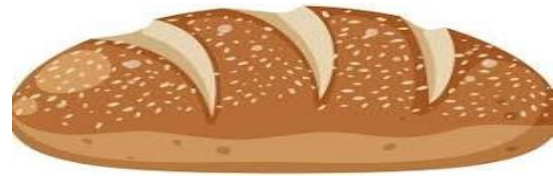
Carrie Felice	12
Chris Felice	13
John Fate	25
Joe Brown	30

October Anniversaries

**Don & Virginia Washburn
10/29**

Breads

**God give us the serenity
To live just day by day
Not borrowing any troubles
That may later come our way
To remember Jesus taught us
To ask for daily bread
We should not ask for flour
To bake for months ahead**



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**

October Liturgists

06	Rebecca Brown
13	Deanna Hotchkin
20	Jan Powell
27	Eric Asher

October 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Trustee @ 10:00 am	3	4	5 Winter Gear Giveaway
6	7	8 Moms support group 7:00	9	10 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	11	12
13 Noisy Offering Church Charge Conference	14	15	16 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	17 Community meal at 6:00 p.m. AD Board 6:00	18	19
20 Mission Sunday	21	22 Moms support group 7:00	23	24 Comm4nity meal at 6:00 p.m.	25 DEADLINE FOR NEWS LETTER ITEMS	26
27 Pastor Gone all week	28	29	30	31 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.		

Finance Report, October 2024
Remaining Balances as of 08/31/2024
Special Funds (Designated Giving)

Memorial fund	1,884.16
Board of Trustees	3,684.80
Children's Ministry	8,099.48
Camp & School Scholarships	1,447.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	767.34
Community Drawers	7,856.49
Music on the Green	998.19
Holiday Concert	3,823.99
Monthly Mission	555.00
General Evangelism	10,930.52
General Outreach	7,297.20
Funeral/Wedding/Flowers	655.62
IM Kids 3rd Meal	100.00

General Fund (Church Budget)

Income	3,896.37
Expenses	5,743.48
Surplus (Deficit)	(1,847.00)
Ending Bank Balance	50,158.98

