



105 E. Main  
Street

Ionia, MI  
48846

Service

9:00 am

[www.ioniafirst.com](http://www.ioniafirst.com)

616-527-1860

**April  
2025  
Newsletter**



## THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First — April 2025

*“And he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen. He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, that he is going before you to Galilee.”*

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

Mark recalls the experience of two women disciples of Jesus who traveled to the tomb of Jesus, planning to perform the important task of anointing the corpse they believed they would find. The women arrived at the tomb and much to their surprise the tomb entrance was open and the body of Jesus was nowhere to be found. Alarmingly, instead a young man in a white robe was sitting where Jesus should have been. The young man informed the women that Jesus had risen and was headed to Galilee. They and the other disciples were to meet Jesus there. At this the women fled the tomb as they were very afraid.

What a way to end the story. But the women's fear of course, is not the end of the story. The story instead ends with a word of hope. They and the disciples are to meet Jesus in Galilee. Perhaps for a new beginning, the old story has ended, a new story is to begin. The crucifixion of Jesus has resulted in new life. Thanks to the wonder of resurrection.

Spring is here and we will soon be in the wondrous season of Easter. Spring is filled with promises of new life as plants push up from the ground, ending their long winter sleep, flowers bloom, and singing birds return. Easter likewise reminds us of life resurrected, bringing forth something new from what has perished. God is the source and sustainer of it all.

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## THE PASTOR'S PEN

### (Continued from Page 1)

March was Women's History Month, and we received the gift of hearing the Word preached by two gifted speakers, Bishop Linda Lee and Eric Asher. As Women's History Month began, so also did the season of Lent. Our weekly Lent study began the week after Ash Wednesday. We have had many lively and enriching discussions. There is still time to participate. A schedule for our Lenten activities is posted in the church office and café area.

Reminder: Our Church Council has approved a budget for 2025 which includes a deficit of about \$44,600.00. Our leadership is doing much to manage church operations and ministries well, and we have capital assets to fund the deficit. But reserves will be eventually exhausted and we need to find ways to increase our income now rather than later. I am hopeful that in addition to planning for stewardship and membership growth in our visioning process, we can conduct 4 fund-raisers in 2025 to assist in reducing our deficit. Please be in prayer for this. In addition, I am asking each member to increase their giving by 6%. For me, it will mean giving an extra \$12.00 each month. Every little bit helps.

Looking forward to:

- Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services (April 17 and 18)
- 
- Easter (this will be a celebratory service with an expanded communion service)
- 
- Mother's Day (mothers will get flowers)
- 
- Father's Day (a special men's brunch will be served)
- 
- Pentecost Sunday (a big birthday celebration)
- 

I am proposing that the Ionia First and Easton churches hold a joint worship service on Pentecost at 10:00 am with a birthday feast and celebration afterwards. I am also seeking a few persons who play musical instruments to join me in a small ensemble to play special music for Pentecost Sunday (I can play either clarinet or sax). Let's have some fun!

Remember, we are in God's hands and each day, God blesses us. Stay confident and keep your faith firmly in God.

Blessings,

Lamarr

**Blessings,**

**Lamarr**

**April 3, 2025**

**Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ**

**This is being written to inform you that this is how our monthly newsletter is evolving into a quarterly calendar and information paper. We as a church here at First United Methodist in Ionia have made many changes in the last year, this is but one. If you would like to continue to receive this informational paper you need to do nothing. Just if your address changes please tell us or if you get a new email address please let us know. If you do not wish to receive this paper please be kind and let us know your wishes.**

**Thank you.**

**If there is an event you would like to see us print something about please let us know far enough in advance so we can do that for you.**

**The First Event we have been asked to print something about is the Big Treasure Sale we do every spring. This year it will be on Saturday, May 3, 2025 time is 8:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m. If you have items you would like to donate to this sale and you need help getting the items to the church just call at 517-927-5346 or 517-285-2737. These are Joe and Rebecca Brown's cell numbers. So you can call anytime. They will arrange a time to pickup your items. This sale helps to support Community Drawers here at First Church so please help with this worthy cause. Last year alone we were able to help over 1000 people. We gave away from October thru December over 600 coats.**

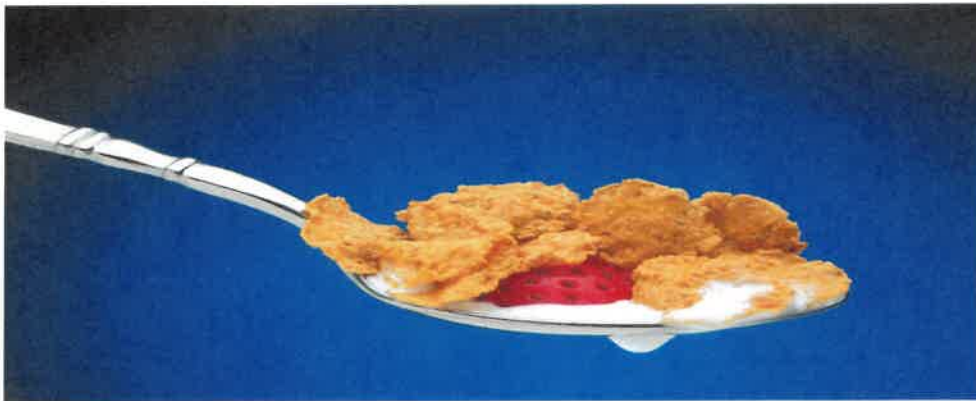
**Trustees are having a cleanup day here at the church on Monday, April 25 at 10:00 a.m. There will be many chores outside and inside that need to be done. Many hands will make light work.**

**Please come and help us with this work.**

## Reminders

# IM KIDS 3rd Meal

- This is an ongoing mission. We are helping to feed over 844 kids 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
  - 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

# April 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Trustee @ 10:00 am Lenten Study 6:30 here	3 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	4	5
6	7	8 Moms support group 7:00	9	10 AD Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	11	13
13 Palm Sunday Palms are available  Noisy Offering	14	15	16 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	17 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.  Maundy Thursday @ 7:00 last Supper Dinner	18 Good Friday Church open from 12 to 4	19
20 Mission Sunday Habitat for Humanity Sunday  Easter Sunday	21	22	23	24 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	25	26
27 Blue Water Cafe	28 Setup for treasure Sale Church Clean up 10:00	29 Setup for treasure Sale	30 Setup for treasure Sale			

# May 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m. Setup for treasure Sale	2 Setup for treasure Sale Trustee @ 10:00 am Worship Meeting 11:00	3 Treasure Sale from 8:00 to 4:00
4	5	6 Moms support group 7:00	7	8 AD Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	9	:10
11 Palm Sunday Palms are available  Noisy Offering	12	13	14 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	15 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.  Maundy Thursday @ 7:00 last Supper Dinner	16 Good Friday Church open from 12 to 4	17
18 Mission Sunday IMSafe Advocacy  Easter Sunday	19	20 Mother Day flowers given to Mothers	21	22 .Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	23 Worship Meeting 11:00	24
25 Blue Water Cafe	26	27	28	29 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	30	31

# June 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	6 Trustee @ 10:00 am	7
8 Noisy Offering  Pentecost Sunday Potluck after service	9	10 Moms support group 7:00	11	12 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	13	14
15 Mission Sunday UMCOR  Fathers Day	16	17	18 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	19 Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 .Zion Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	27	28
29 Blue Water Cafe	30					