

"A Symphony of Praise  
and Service to God"



**105 E. Main  
Street  
Ionia, MI  
48846  
Service  
9:30 am  
www.ioniafirst.  
com**

**February  
2017  
Newsletter**



## From the desk of Pastor Jon

### What Have You Done in Your Faith Life That Scares You?

I recently had an email exchange with someone who mentioned something that I had once told them about faith. Namely, it's scary. A lot of the time, taking a step of faith moves us out of our comfort zone until we are completely comfortable trusting in God. I told her, if there isn't fear involved, we're probably just trusting in our own abilities and wisdom. If we're afraid (and we do it anyway) God might be in there somewhere.

My question for you to meditate on is simply this:

"What have you done in your faith life that scares you?"

The Apostle Paul tells us that we live by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7) as we anticipate being with God forever. We want to be with God, but for this life, we live with temptation and struggles of many kinds. Those can be scary and sometimes doing the right thing is scary too. Sometimes, following God's call on our lives seems like it might not be the right choice. Yet, as people of faith, we're called to move in the ways that God leads.

My challenge for you this month is to lean into your discomfort. Maybe you're uncomfortable tithing. Maybe you're uncomfortable sharing your faith and what God has done for you. Maybe you're uncomfortable reading the Bible. Maybe you're uncomfortable with prayer. Maybe you're uncomfortable surrendering a secret sin. I don't know what it is for you, but I don't have to know. You know. God knows. So, follow God in the next step that you're being led.

Sometimes people come ready to make major changes in their lives and want to know what God's will is for them. The baseline answer to their question is holiness. God wants us to, by faith, be more like God. The most distilled version of this is loving God with all our heart, soul and strength and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

So lean into that, even if it makes us a little scared. Trust that God will hold us in his hands when things are uncertain. Trust that God loves us.

Peace

Pastor Jon

#### Inside this issue:

UMW News	2
Opportunities	3
Cassie Stewart/Creative in Christ	4
Prayers & Prayer Tree	5
Reports	6
Schedules, Birthdays, Anniversaries	7
February Calendar	8
Fun Page	9

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**First United Methodist  
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## UMW NEWS

My morning devotional shared the thought that we should all become more aware of the Many blessings that surround us. Then we should give thanks for all the gifts and blessings bestowed upon us. We should also pray we all can find joy and satisfaction in every amazing moment. It brought to mind a statement Don made earlier this week. His therapist asked him if he were depressed. Without hesitation, he replied "No, no! There are many people in worse condition than I am." Then I thought about the nurses and how they cope with all their patients, some just not "happy campers" and others so weak or ill that they don't respond to much of anything. It has been amazing to witness Don maintaining his sense of humor, and actually giving the nurses an opportunity to smile and laugh.

As your UMW board prepares for the coming year, it is one of our goals to bring joy and laughter into the lives of others who really have little to be joyful about. One of the upcoming projects will be to create Health Kits. These kits are composed of necessities for people who have been forced to leave their homes because of human conflict or natural disasters. The health kits are also used as learning tools in personal hygiene, literacy, nutrition and cooking classes.

So that you may be able to take advantage of sales, the following is a list of items we will be collecting. Each kit will contain:

**1 hand towel**, 15 x 25 inches to 17 x 27 inches. Kitchen, cleaning and microfiber towels are not acceptable.

**1 washcloth**

**1 comb** It needs to be sturdy and longer than 6 inches. Pocket combs and picks are not acceptable. Rat-tail combs and combs without handles are acceptable if there is 6 inches of teeth.

**1 metal nail file or clippers.** Emery boards are not acceptable.

**1 Bath-size bar of soap, 3 oz. and large size only. No Ivory or Jergens because of moisture content.**

Do not remove from original packaging.

**1 adult size toothbrush.** Do not remove from original packaging.

**6 adhesive bandages**, 1/4 to 1 inch size. Common household Band-Aids.

**1 plastic bag.** One-gallon size, sealable bag.

**One dollar** for toothpaste.

All items must be new. Do not wash any items because they will be considered used. These emergency kits are carefully planned to make them useable in the greatest number of situations. Due to the fact that strict rules often govern product entry into international countries. It is important that kits contain only the requested items, nothing more.

Our schedule for collecting the items and sending them to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) will BE DETERMINED AT OUR February meeting. Watch the bulletin board and bulletins for further information.

Peg Fell

## OPPORTUNITIES

### **UMW BOARD**

The UMW Board has openings for several new members. Meetings are scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30p.m. No particular talents are essential. Input of new ideas and incentives are needed for traditional and new events.

### **FIELD TRIP**

The Creative in Christ team is planning a trip to Fulton St. (1st) UMC on Sunday afternoon Feb. 19. The event will be planned around a Vocal Chamber Ensemble Concert. We will car pool to Grand Rapids. Anyone interested in going can contact Marie in the church office. 527-1860

### **ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD**

Several positions are open on this board which meets the 2nd Monday of every other month at 7:00 p.m. For details as to qualifications, please make an appointment with Pastor Jon by calling the office (527-1860).

### **SUNDAY MORNING SMALL GROUP**

Would anyone be interested in having an adult small group for Bible study on Sunday mornings after church service. If so, please contact the church office. 527-1860.

### **ENVELOPES**

If you have not picked up your offering envelopes yet, please do so. They are on the information stand by the chapel. They are expensive to mail.

### **CASSIE STEWART CIRCLE**

To volunteer to participate in Hands on Mission Projects, plan to join the Cassie Stewart Circle which meets at 1:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month September through June. Attendance at each meeting is not a requirement. Just come and assist whenever convenient. We promise a great fellowship, a time to share and get acquainted in addition to participating in a mission project. Activities vary each month.

### **NURSERY**

We are in need of ladies to help in the nursery on Sunday mornings at 9:30. The more volunteers we have, the less often you will be asked to help. Contact Marie in the church office (527-1860)

### **MALAWI MISSION**

I have recently learned that the Malawi Mission for prescription bottles has been closed. They have received over a million bottles. Praise God for caring people. There are, however, other missions that need these bottles, so we will continue to collect them. I have a list that I will be checking into to see where the need is the greatest, and I will also contact Elisha and Crystal Stock to see if there is a need that they know of in their area of Africa.

### **MEN'S GROUP**

We have several opportunities for the women of this church to meet with each other, I wondered if there might be some men interested in starting a men's group. Perhaps getting together for breakfast and maybe a Bible study on Saturday or Sunday morning. Any men interested can contact the church office (527-1860).

## Cassie Stewart News

The number of members attending our January meeting was rather small...just Sarah Hamilton and myself. You know there is a saying that it's not quantity but quality that counts. We lamented that so many had doctor's appointments or were physically curtailed. However, Sarah and I made good use of our time together. Heartland had requested lap robes. The quilters generously donated five beautiful lap robes which have been delivered. Sarah and I experimented with making a fleece tied robe. We learned that the process was not difficult and the result great. At this month's meeting, while enjoying each other's company and also planning the future mission projects, we will complete another three robes. Again, we invite anyone who wishes to join us in our knot-tying session. Mark your calendar.

1:30 p.m.

Second Monday of the month

February 13, 2017



Al Irby joined us for our January meeting. He thanked us for the positive impact the Creative in Christ team's initiatives have had for Ionia First, and challenged us to provide our talents to generate connectedness, enthusiasm and participation within and beyond our church family.

We have provided a field trip for the congregation to Celebration of the Arts at Fulton St. (1st) UMC in Grand Rapids for the past two years. This year we would like to invite all who would like to join us to hear a Vocal Chamber Ensemble Concert on Sunday February 19th. We will carpool from our parking lot. Check your bulletin for more information coming soon.

### Answers to January Fun Page

1. Genesis 42:21,
2. Genesis 42:22,
3. 1 Samuel 24:9,
4. 2 Samuel 20:17,
5. Matthew 18:15,
6. Luke 2:46,
7. John 6:60,
8. Acts 26:3,
9. 2 Timothy 3:7



During the Celebration of Creativity worship weekend in May, the Community Prayer Tree initiative was launched. This endeavor is growing and developing organically through the leadership of Amy Buckingham.

**Purpose:** Ionia First UMC working in our community to create a deeper experience and a beautiful way to connect with others via the practice of "Prayer".

*The tradition of creating a prayer tree -- was noted in Sandra Ingerman's book "How to Thrive in Changing Times" -- comes out of Siberia.*

*When we can experience our gratefulness for life we transform our perspective about what is happening in our own lives, our church, our community, our state, our country, and around the world. When we feel grateful, we can experience the beauty instead of the pain. We want to acknowledge those who are suffering and feel compassion. At the same time it's important to experience the beauty and the gifts that life brings us. This comes from ancient teaching that has been passed down through many cultures and many generations.*

*Let us together hold a positive vision for our community. Let us embrace ourselves, our loved ones and all of life with love. Love heals!*

The Community Prayer Tree has been introduced to the audiences during the "Music & Art on the Green" events in June. Your participation is welcomed and we trust that you will encourage friends and strangers in our community to visit this place. . .and take the opportunity to add their prayer to the tree.

*Please pray that the people of our country can come together and solve our differences peacefully.*

Maybelle Drake would love to hear from us.

201 Allred Rd.

Apt. 501

Byron, GA 31008

Phone: (478)654-6899

Email: maybelle.drake@yahoo.com

**PLEASE PRAY IN THE NAME OF THE LORD FOR:**

(E-mail prayer requests to sharron67@charter.net)

**Prayers for those in the military:**

- Adam Cook-Green Beret, Afghanistan
- Nick Murray-Aircraft Carrier, Bremerton WA
- Andy Hoort-Nurse, Ret. Royal Oak, MI
- Ross Marshall, Navy, Submarine, Groton, CT
- Daniel Zander-Major U.S. Army Ft. Lewis-McChord
- Duane Baliff
- Austin Campbell - Air Force

**Prayers for:**

- |                                   |                          |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Rick Borup</b>                 | <b>Carol Newkirk</b>     |
| <b>Doris Simpson</b>              | <b>Arlene Rowland</b>    |
| <b>Stuart Weisgerber</b>          | <b>Elizabeth Smith</b>   |
| <b>Jane Ransom</b>                | <b>Phyllis Whitelock</b> |
| <b>Ron Beach</b>                  | <b>Lucy Dickenson</b>    |
| <b>Steve Lampman</b>              | <b>Jimmy Griffith</b>    |
| <b>Julie Englehart</b>            | <b>Jack Unger</b>        |
| <b>Ken Keyt</b>                   | <b>James Ruehs</b>       |
| <b>Don Wickerham</b>              | <b>Gladys Stout</b>      |
| <b>Amanda Stewart</b>             | <b>Jean Clark</b>        |
| <b>Darren Stewart</b>             | <b>Don Fell</b>          |
| <b>Mark Workman</b>               | <b>Mary Cusack</b>       |
| <b>Elisha &amp; Crystal Stock</b> |                          |

	Attendance	Giving	Needed
January 1	46	\$1,134.00	\$3,000
January 8	70	\$1,274.00	\$3,000
January 15	62	\$2,333.00	\$3,000
January 22	58	\$ 558.00	\$3,000
January 29	18		\$3,000

### Missions Report

The Missions Committee met on January 30th.

The mission giving was set for the year.

We discussed the possibility of another trip to the P.E.T. factory in Holland, MI perhaps late summer or early fall for anyone in the congregation who would like to see how the P.E.T.s are made. Last year's trip was very interesting. There will be more information on this as the time draws nearer.

Because of a generous gift, the soup kitchen is doing much better.

We discussed the Easter Egg Hunt for the children, and thought that this year we may do something a little different. Stay tuned.

Our next meeting will be May 22nd.

"The command of Jesus is to make disciples, not church members"

Nathan Stearman

Alaska Conference SDA

## BIRTHDAYS

### February

1 Andy Badder  
8 Jan Powell  
9 Jessica Teunissen  
10 Marie Church  
13 Joan MacDonald  
14 Adam Frost  
15 John Ransom  
16 Lois Johnson  
16 Lucille Leslie  
17 Janice Fate  
18 Jerry Winter  
21 Roberta Sterner  
23 Robert Zander  
23 Jenifer Stout  
24 Sharon Hartman  
27 Larry Ransom



## *Anniversaries*

### February

#### Greeters

Feb. 5 Al & Joan MacDonald  
Feb. 12 Miller & Deanna Hotchkin  
Feb. 19 Ron & Judy Roseboom  
Feb. 26 Sharon Hartman

Note: If you have agreed to serve as a greeter on a Sunday morning, but find that you cannot do so, please call Peg (527-2433) or the church office (527-1860).

### February

#### Nursery

Feb. 5 Sue Manciu  
Feb. 12 Darcie Van Dop  
Feb. 19 Melissa Wagner & Noelle Podoll  
Feb. 26 Marie Church

We can always use more people to help in the nursery. If you would like to volunteer, please call Marie Church (616-755-3207) or the church office (527-1860).

# February 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen	7 9:30 am Friend- ship Committee 1:30 pm UMW	8	9	10	11
12	13 1:30 pm Cassie Stewart 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen 7:00 Ad Board	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen	21	22 Newsletter Dead- line	23	24	25
26	27 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen	28				Mission R.A.V.E.



# Fun Page

Some multiple choice questions on the prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos and Micah.

## Hosea

1. Hear the word of the Lord, O people of \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Judah b) Israel c) Egypt d) Assyria
2. A wind has wrapped them in it's wings and they shall be ashamed because of their \_\_\_\_\_  
a) altars b) pride c) evilness d) idols
3. For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the \_\_\_\_\_  
a) hurricane b) lightning c) thunderstorm d) whirlwind

## Joel

1. Between the vestibule and altar let the priests \_\_\_\_\_  
a) dance b) shout c) weep d) laugh
2. And it shall come to pass afterword, that I will pour out my spirit on \_\_\_\_\_  
a) the prophets b) all flesh c) Israel d) my people
3. Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Jehoshaphat b) decision c) war d) vindication

## Amos

1. So I will send a fire upon Teman, and it shall devour the strongholds of \_\_\_\_\_  
a) Edom b) Gaza c) Damascus d) Bozrah
2. They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks \_\_\_\_\_  
a) lies b) the truth c) loud d) rumors
3. Thus the Lord God showed me: behold a basket of \_\_\_\_\_  
a) spring flowers b) autumn wheat c) summer fruit d) eggs

## Micah

1. Behold, against this family I am devising evil, from which you cannot remove your \_\_\_\_\_  
a) name b) hands c) necks d) reputation
2. It's heads give judgment for a bribe, it's priests teach for hire, it's prophets divine for \_\_\_\_\_  
a) power b) money c) favors d) popularity
3. But as for me, I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my \_\_\_\_\_  
a) people b) salvation c) nation d) fathers.



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**Service 9:30am**

**Check it out!**

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

*God's love is  
Unconditional  
Unending  
&  
Unmistakable*





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