

"A Symphony of Praise
and Service to God"



**105 E. Main
Street
Ionia, MI
48846**

**Traditional
Service 9:30am**

**Contemporary
Service 11am**

**www.ioniafirst.
com**

**November
December
2015
Newsletter**



From the desk of Pastor Jon

Faithful New Year!

**Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen.**

Hebrews 11:1

Have you ever had a time in your life in which you were unsure
about what you were supposed to do?

Have you ever been ashamed of something that you did or said,
or perhaps failed to do or say?

Have you ever felt that God had a plan for your life, but you struggled to understand what that
might be?

Are you caught up with the wrong crowd?

Are you tired?

Do you harbor anger in your heart?

Do you cry yourself to sleep at night?

Most nights?

Do you watch the news and wonder where God is?

Do the pressures of life overwhelm you?

Are you afraid or anxious about what might happen if you do something?

(Or if you don't)

Are you afraid for someone else?

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden. I will give you rest. – Jesus

Matthew 11:28

This year, let us grow in a life of faith in Jesus together and find that rest that He promises.

Peace – Jon

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| UMW News | 2 |
| Cassie Stewart News | 3 |
| Women's Retreat | 4 |
| Prayers, Announcements | 5 |
| Library Events | 6 |
| Schedules, Birthdays, Anniversaries | 7 |
| Sept./Oct. Calendars | 8-9 |
| | |
| | |

A publication of
**First United Methodist
Church**

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United
Methodist



Women

UMW NEWS

Last year I made the suggestion that we resolve to try to improve our lines of communication and stay in closer contact with one another. Looking back now, I cannot see that we really accomplished that goal. We still have problems due to the fact that we are not “communicating.” Well, I am not going to give up. I am going to keep trying. However, I am also going to try at the end of each day to name five good, positive things that happened during the day. I am finding that each day is filled with so many “things” that I often let the “little” joys go unobserved or easily forgotten. I am going to make an effort to “stop, look, and listen.”

Often when a project is culminated and we quickly proceed to a new interest, we forget to evaluate what we have done, did we do the best we could, and how could we have improved. Also, many times a “thank you” goes unsaid or credit “due” is over-looked. Your UMW board has been very active this last year and we certainly do want to thank each and every one who has supported our efforts and assisted in any way to accomplish our goals. We particularly want to say a big, hearty “Thank you” to all who participated in the Christmas Basket Mission Project. We do want the youth to know that we really appreciated their help. We served a total of over 60 people this year. Again it was a lot of hard work, but a wonderful time of fellowship and sharing. It was a learning experience for all, but also very gratifying and rewarding.

It is amazing when we reflect on the last the year to realize how busy we have been and how much we have accomplished. January is always our time to review what has happened during the past year, and then plan our upcoming year. Some things happen because they are traditional but we also aim to improve and seek new interests and missions. Last year, for your information, I attempted to explain how we are a connectional church. Our Heartland’s District Board plans many events for us and also offers to assist us in many ways. So as we begin the new year, it is my hope that we can be more active in districts events and be more active participants. Please check the District Calendar elsewhere in this newsletter.

Ash Wednesday this year is February 10th and if things proceed as usual, this will be the date of the first of our **Lenten Potlucks**. We will then have potlucks every Wednesday for the next six weeks. Palm Sunday is March 20th, our Lenten Breakfast will be Saturday, March 19th, and we will celebrate Easter on March 27th. Plans for the programs at the potlucks and the breakfast have yet to be finalized.

We do want to remind all of you that this is the year of the “Trash and Treasure” sale. That date is usually the Saturday prior to Vacation Bible School. Planning is just in the beginning stages for this event. However, as you enjoy whatever winter may bring and into the spring house cleaning time, remember to start your donation pile for the sale. We take anything but clothes and shoes.

Then as fall approaches again, we will have an All-Church Bazaar, a Festival of Tables and the annual Christmas Basket Mission.

This year, your UMW board and your Cassie Stewart Circle will be working very closely with Jan Powell and the Missions Committee. It is anticipated that by combining forces, we can strengthen our efforts and benefits. Just watch the bulletin boards and bulletin announcements for current events updates. The UMW board meets the first Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m. and the Cassie Stewart Circle meets the second Monday of each month at 1:30 p.m. Both groups welcome new members. Come join us in our passion for mission.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RECYCLE YOUR POP CAN TABS, YOUR CEREAL BOXES, YOUR EMPTY COMPUTER

CARTRIDGES, YOUR SOUP LABELS, YOUR ITEMS FOR RAVE. THE DEPOSIT BINS ARE NOW IN FELLOWSHIP HALL.

The Cassie Stewart Circle, though few in number, have had a very eventful and rewarding year. With our mission oriented goals we have almost completely changed our format. We postponed our meeting in January because of the weather and sickness. In February we assisted Marilyn Nash by sorting historical clippings and pictures for filing and display in the Legacy Room. We found that “digging into the archives” was really quite an interesting learning experience. Then in March we became more internationally minded and cut out hospital gowns for UMCOR. We also spent one meeting trimming and cutting boxes for Haiti. In our June meeting, we focused on making name tags for Vacation Bible School. We opened our September potluck to the church and hosted a very informational meeting with Judy Huynh and a state trooper on Human Trafficking. In other sessions, we made bookmarks for our children. One session was a test of our artistic skills as we decorated lunch bags for I M Kids. The November meeting was devoted to making gift request tags for the Christmas Basket Christmas tree. In the last meeting of the year we sorted gifts and donations for the Christmas Baskets.

Now as we continue our mission work, we will be working more closely with Jan Powell and the Mission Committee. We will also support and assist with District mission projects, and our own church related needs. If you feel the urge to assist us, just come and join us. We have plenty to do and we would really appreciate your company and helping hand.

We are going to be working on 2-Handle Bags for School Kits for Church World Service, U.M.C.O R. and the Mid- West Mission Distribution Center. We are in need of pieces of heavy fabric such as denim, corduroy, sailcloth, med-heavy drapery fabric, light weight upholstery (sorry we cannot use double-knit) that are 20 inches by 32 inches in size. If you have any remnants that you would like to contribute, please deposit them in a recycle bin in Fellowship Hall. We really will appreciate your donations very, very much. Thanks.



2016 DISTRICT UMW CALENDAR

February 13 **A VALENTINE TEA-** 1:30 – 3:30 (registration begins at 1:30) No reservations necessary. \$3.00 at the door. Two locations Lowe UMC and Farwell UMC. Lowe is at St. Johns and would be most convenient for us. Program details have not yet been announced but usually the program is very interesting and entertaining. Desserts are great! We can car pool. Look for sign-up sheet on the UMW bulletin board.

April 16 **KEEP MAKING PEACE UNIVERSITY** E. Lansing UMC

April 29-30 **SPIRITUAL GROWTH RETREAT AT WESLEY WOODS.** The leader will be Pastor Deon Herrell, who is currently the Director of the Wesley Foundation at Ferris State University. “Happiness” will be her topic. She comes very highly recommended. Again, watch the bulletin board for registration forms and more information.

June 24-26 **NORTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION IN GRAND RAPIDS.** This is a “must do” event. More information to come.

July 14-16 **MISSION U** at Albion College. A great opportunity. The Spiritual Growth Study is entitled “The Bible and Human Spirituality” and will be led by the author of the study, Rev. Ellen Brubaker. It is fascinating and challenging material. The geographic study will be “Latin America, People and Faith.” and the social issue study will be “Climate Change.” You can choose which of these two to attend. There will also be a Youth study group. Children and youth are FREE when accompanied by a registered UMW. There is no charge for child care (pre-school age). Scholarships are available.

In 2016 the In-Gathering will be UMCOR School Kits. There will be a silent auction, a used book sale, videos and some surprise fun and festivities also.

WATCH FOR UP-DATED ANNOUNCEMENTS. QUESTIONS? CONTACT PEG FELL

The recycling bins have been relocated to Fellowship Hall where they are more visible and accessible. Remember we collect soup labels for the schools, ink cartridges and small sample bottles of grooming supplies such as you get when staying at hotels for RAVE, empty cereal and other boxes for Haiti, and pop can tabs for Community House in Grand Rapids. These are all worthy causes and every donation helps someone.

Do you have a heart to serve?

Do you want to add more purpose to your life?

Heartland Hospice is seeking volunteers to visit, read and provide companionship to patients.

If you would like more information on how you can enrich other's lives call: Julie Dindorf/Volunteer Coordinator at 231-924-0153

Cassie Stewart Circle,

I wish to thank the Cassie Stewart Circle for the bright and beautiful Christmas plant. It has certainly helped to bring a glow of Christ's love to our home during this Advent and Christmas season.

Thank you very much,

Jack Bartholomew

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-Helicopter pilot, Key West

Andy Hoort-Nurse, Walter Reed

Daniel Zander-Major U.S. Army Ft. Lewis-McChord

Duane Baliff

Austin Campbell - Air Force

**Marion Wray
Colleen Thompson
Lucy Dickinson
Julie Englehart
Randy McCoy
Kay Gardner
Carol Bookie
James Ruehs
Carol Newkirk
Arlene Rowland
Jack Unger
Betty Keading**

**Dave Stiles
Rick Borup
Stuart Weisgerber
Cammy Fike
Phyllis Whitelock
Ken Felice
Gary Brownell
Steve Lampman
Ken Keyt
Jimmy Griffith
Lisa Dvorak**

The Daniel Plan

FAITH—Before you can make any healthy changes in your life, you must first believe those changes are possible.

FOOD—Food is medicine. It has the power to heal us.

FITNESS—Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit...? Therefore honor God with your bodies. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

FOCUS—With one decision—an action made by your brain—you will begin a journey to wellness that will offer you increased energy, lower stress, and better sleep.

FRIENDS—Two are better than one, because they have a good return on their labor. (Ecclesiastes 4:9)

Where there is love, there are always miracles

Willa Cather

*Love is the only thing that
Is OK to do in excess.*

BIRTHDAYS

January

1 Mark Hotchkin
2 Marge Irby
8 Miller Hotchkin
10 Adam Frost
10 Michelle Castle
14 Jack Manciu
16 Frances Carr
24 Forest Schumacher
27 Al Irby

February

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



ANNIVERSARIES

January

*4 Al & Joan MacDonald
28 Bill & Frances Carr*

January

Greeters

Jan. 3 Al & Marge Irby
Jan. 10 Ted Paton
Jan. 17 Ruth French
Jan. 24 Nancy Haight
Jan. 31 Lucille Leslie

Nursery

Jan. 3
Jan. 10
Jan. 17
Jan. 24
Jan. 31

VOLUNTEERS

February

Greeters

Feb. 7 Mark Workman
Feb. 14 Al & Joan MacDonald
Feb. 21 Ron & Judy Roseboom
Feb. 28 Dick & Jackie Christiansen

Note: We thank you very much for volunteering to greet. If something prevents you from fulfilling your commitment, please contact Peg Christopher-Fell at 527-2433 or pegchr@charter.net so that a replacement can be secured. Remember that we now have only one service, and that it begins at 9:00 a.m. which means that greeters should be at the parking lot door at least by 8:45 a.m. Thank you. Peg

Nursery

Feb. 7
Feb. 14
Feb. 21
Feb. 28

VOLUNTEERS

January 2016

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|---|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Mission The Groves | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 Communion 1-2:30 Youth Group | 4 7:00pm Trustees | 5 9:30am Friendship 1:30pm UMW 7:00pm Grief Share | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 1:30 pm Cassie Stewart 7:00 pm Ad Board | 12 7:00pm ICLA 7:00pm Grief Share | 13 7:00pm SPRC | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 1-2:30 Youth Group | 18 | 19 7:00pm Grief Share | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 1-2:30 Youth Group | 25 | 26 7:00 Grief Share | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

February 2016

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Mission Community House | 1 | 2 9:30 am Friendship 1:30 pm UMW 7:00 pm Grief Share | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 1:30 pm Cassie Stewart | 9 7:00 pm Grief Share | 10 1:00 pm Investment Committee | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 7:00 pm Grief Share | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 7:00 pm Grief Share | 24 7:00 pm Library Event "Purple Gary" | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | | | | | |



**105 E. Main Street
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**Traditional Service 9:30am
Contemporary Service 11am
Check it out!
www.ioniafirst.com**

Are you interested in a healthier, happier life in 2016?

**Come join us starting January 10th at 9:00 a.m.
For the Daniel Plan**

Faith

Food

Fitness

Focus

Friends