



**105 E. Main
Street**

**Ionia, MI
48846**

Service

9:30 am

**www.ioniafirst.
com**

**July
2022**

Newsletter



Message from the Pastor

First UMC Family,

For those whom I haven't met yet, I'm Rev Mark Vorenkamp, and I'm excited to be your new pastor. I wanted to use this newsletter as an opportunity to introduce myself properly. Firstly, and most importantly to my life, I'm a father. I have a seven-year-old daughter named Lillian whom I share custody of with my first wife. Because of the stipulations of that custody order, I'll be living in Lansing and commuting to Ionia. Both myself and Lillian, however, are excited to find ways that we can integrate into the Ionia community.

I grew up in a town called Brighton, roughly halfway between Ann Arbor and Novi, and after graduating High School moved to East Lansing to attend Michigan State. I have a Bachelors of English from MSU, a Masters of Fine Arts in Writing from Spalding University in Louisville, and a Masters of Divinity from United Theological Seminary in Dayton. I am currently a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary, studying Fresh Expressions and Church Renewal under Rev Dr. Michael Beck. The program focuses on how smaller bodies of the Church, created in contextual ways (similar to how recovery ministries become small churches) can be the secret to reinvigorating the Church in these post-Church times.

I'm especially excited to be working with Ionia First, after hearing about your vote to become an Open and Affirming congregation. The focus of my specific dissertation project is how these Fresh Expressions (small, contextual churches) can become a safe and effective way to integrate the LGBTQIA+ community, given the amount of religious trauma that many have experienced. I truly believe that Ionia First can be a place of safety and hope to the LGBTQIA+ community in both Ionia and the surrounding communities.

With all this talk of new and exciting things, I wanted to assure you that I see and value your history. I view history as both the foundation that we can build upon and the source of encouragement for us to continue moving and changing. I want to love and respect the long and beautiful history you have, while also remembering that the surest hope your foremothers and forefathers would have for you would be to continue bringing the Kingdom to Earth in Ionia, whatever that looks like in our time.

Be patient with me as I get up to speed on your history, traditions, and those specific elements that make Ionia First UMC what it is. I look forward to meeting all of you and eventually learning your names!

Blessings,

Rev Mark A Vorenkamp

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**First United Methodist
Church**

**105 E Main
Ionia, MI 48846**

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Music on the Green

July 13 6:30 p.m. **Joel Kilgore, The Trommeters**

Honoring Communities of Faith

July 27, 6:30 p.m. **Brian Brill Trio**

Honoring The Business Community

August 3, 6:30 p.m. **Harmony**

Honoring Friends & Loved Ones

Lost & Found & Good Samaritans

July 27, and August 3 will be in the Sanctuary, July 13 will be on the Green weather permitting.

Come and enjoy some great music!

Community Drawers

First a very big THANK YOU to every person who helped on the Treasures Sale. Without your help, we would be struggling at Community Drawers. Come winter we will need warmer items for our neighbors and believe me the warmer the item, the more expensive it is.

So thank YOU. The name was changed last year to Treasures Sales. Our no longer wanted or needed items are treasures. Everyone who has come to our Wednesday distribution days always say "God Bless". Just try for a minute to think of the little guy we had this past Wednesday who was excited because he got a real pillow. A pillow.

I am including a short report from Annual Conference. Joe and I were not allowed to go; Dr. orders. I just want to hit the high points. The entire report is on the bulletin board as you go into the coffee room on your left.

The District Working Group has recommended that we go from nine separate districts to seven, effective July 1, 2023.

Six months after the school shooting in Oxford Michigan, the Conference voted to participate in a movement called "End Gun Violence Now".

Conference also voted to start a fund raising campaign called "Readers to Leaders" believing that education should be a priority in the world especially in the inner cities.

The following is a list of the churches who asked to be closed: Genesis, Grand Rapids; Chapel Hill United Methodist, Kent City; First United, Lansing; First United Methodist, Lulu; United Methodist, Minden City; Calvary, Monroe; New Beginnings United Methodist, Redford; United Methodist, Fenwick; United Methodist, Vickeryville; United Methodist, Palo.

I think we need to pray for all the people on the list of closed churches to keep believing in God and that they find a new Church family to love and care for them.

Thanks again for everyone's help.

Becky

AD Board

The board is working through issues we are having with setting up the new church website.

The board wishes to thank Becky Brown, Ann Feline, Linda Ciangi, & Jan Powell for organizing and tidying up the church office.

New Office Hours

The new office hours for the church are M, W, F 9:00 am - noon. You may leave messages by email, phone, or slip a note under the office door.

PLEASE PRAY IN THE NAME OF THE LORD FOR:

(E-mail prayer requests to
bluebirdm66@yahoo.com)

Prayers for those in the military:

Ross Marshall, Navy, Submarine, Groton, CT

Daniel Zander-Major U.S. Army retired

Duane Baliff

Austin Campbell - Air Force

Brent Spencer - Air Force

Prayers for:

Jim Van Sycle

Katherine Asher

Phil Kahl

Elisha & Crystal Stock

Becky Brown

Marge Bowne

Dave & Gloria Cook

Ann Felice

Trustees News

Hope everyone is having a safe and pleasant summer.

Trustees are working on several issues dealing with the Church Building. The carpet in the Office area is in need of replacement. It has stretched and is a tripping hazard. This carpet has been well used and has been down for some time so it is time to look at replacement. Information is being gathered and prices and options are being looked at.

The Handi-cap stall in the downstairs ladies restroom has a new seat and bars. This stall gets lots of use as other restrooms are not easy to get into especially with a wheel chair. This problem will also be looked at in the future.

We will be getting into the Parsonage to clean and clear out anything which is left. The Charge Conference is scheduled for Sunday July 10, 2022 for 11:00. am You must be a member of the church and present at the meeting to vote. The sole issue for this meeting is the sale of the Parsonage. We have much work which needs to be done to the Parsonage but we do not have funds to repair both the church and the parsonage. The sale of the Parsonage money will be put into an account for a Pastor if he or she needs housing. It can be used for the Church Building with special permission, but at this time, this is not needed. Only the future will tell.

The Parapet on the outside of the building in the back is starting to crumble and needs attention. We are looking at several options for the repair. This is an issue which we need to address as soon as we can. More to come on this problem.

Thanks and have a safe summer.

Joe

S.P.R.C.

This has been a busy month. We were fortunate to have Pastor Tom Fifer fill the pulpit three Sundays and Eric Asher one Sunday in June, as well as in May. We are happy to meet Rev. Mark Vorenkamp who begins his tenure at Ionia First on July 3.

We have received one resume concerning the position of church secretary. We are waiting for any responses to an ad that was in the Shoppers Guide advertising the position 12 -15 hours per week. We will be holding interviews to fill the vacancy soon.

In the meantime, Roxie Stiles and Connie Kretzschmer have done a wonderful job taking care of the office duties. We are so thankful for everyone that has been willing to "go the extra mile" during this time of transition.

Ann Felice

FINANCE REPORT, MAY, 2022

Remaining Balances as of 5/31/2022

Special Funds (Designated Giving)

Memorial Fund	\$5,636.53
Board of Trustees	\$2,911.03
Children's Ministry	\$8,099.48
True to You	\$2,180.00
Camp & School Scholarships	\$3,777.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$296.26
Community Drawers	\$5,789.49
Music on the Green	\$4,174.94
Holiday Concert	\$3,887.99
Soup Kitchen	\$2,661.18
Monthly Mission	\$55.00

General Fund (Church Budget)

Income	\$11,941.49
Expenses	\$9,804.21
Surplus (Deficit)	\$2,137.28
Ending Bank Balance	\$10,041.29

JULY MISSION

Enrich

Enrich of Ionia County serves clients by fulfilling needs of basic household furniture. They are located at 343 West Main Street in the City of Ionia. Financial donations are needed to help support those things that can't be supplied through volunteer labor or donated goods - like the heat and light bill, land contract payment, insurance, staffing, and supplies.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Becky Brown
- 2 Amy Buckingham
- 18 Joel Kilgore
- 23 Andrew Badder
- 26 June Faulkner
- 28 MacKenzie Mercer
- 29 Sue Manciu



July Anniversaries

- 6 AJ & Katie Mayer*
- 25 Mitch & Shari Mercer*

July

Liturgists

July 3	Ann Felice
July 10	Deanna Hotchkin
July 17	Jan Powell
July 24	Eric Asher
July 31	Jan Powell

If you are unable to serve on the day for which you are scheduled, it is up to you to switch with another liturgist, and notify the church office.

*Much of what
weighs you down
is not your to
carry.*

July 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Noisy Offering 11:00 Sales of Par- sonage conference	11	12	13 6:30- 8:30 pm Music on the Green	14	15	16
17 Mission Sunday - Enrich 10:30 am Trustees	18	19	20 1:30 - 4:30 Com- munity Drawers	21	22	23
24	25	26 Newsletter deadline	27 6:30 - 8:30 pm Music on the Green	28 6:30 pm Ad Board	29	30