

"A Symphony of Praise  
and Service to God"



**105 E. Main  
Street**

**Ionia, MI  
48846**

**Service**

**9:00 am**

**www.ioniafirst.  
com**

**March**

**April**

**2016**

**Newsletter**



# From the desk of Pastor Jon

## THE JOURNEY

Easter is a funny holiday. It moves around. Unlike Christmas, we can't say it's always going to be on a specific date. I suppose that makes it interesting in one regard and a bit of a pain on the other. Be that as it may, Easter is at the end of March this year, and we are in the thick of preparing for it.

Christ came to earth to give us a way back to God. He preached love. He demonstrated love. He showed that love is more powerful than our sinful nature. He resisted sin and showed that even in the middle of a whole bunch of human junk, it's possible to love. But some people can't handle that and they crucified him for it.

Jesus knew who he was and why he was here. This Lenten season (the forty days approaching Holy Week and Easter) we are examining what it means to be human. We are looking in a metaphorical mirror to ask ourselves whether or not we see Jesus living in us.

So, do you see Jesus there?

If not, have you been introduced?

If so, what is the next step for you? Do you have dark corners of your soul that you haven't invited Jesus to shine light in? Are you being called to a ministry? Is there a step of faith God is calling you to make?

Each of us is on a journey with Christ. The paradox is that we're on that journey together and yet are at different points along the road. Sometimes we stray from the road and need to be encouraged to return. Sometimes we shine joy so vibrant it encourages others to come to the road as well.

This Lenten season, make sure to take time to reflect upon how Christ is living in you so that others may see Christ in you.

May you be blessed on the journey.

With all my prayers,

Pastor Jon

### Inside this issue:

UMW News	2
Cassie Stewart News	3
UMW District Calendar	4
Prayers, Announcements	5
Daniel Plan Sermon Series	6
Schedules, Birthdays, Anniversaries	7
Mar./Apr. Calendars	8-9

*A publication of*  
**First United Methodist  
Church**

**105 E Main**

**Ionia, MI 48846**

616.527.1860

www.ioniafirst.com

ioniafirst@gmail.com

United  
Methodist



Women

## UMW NEWS

This last week I was introduced to a Hebrew word, *ezer*. Perhaps this is a new word for you also. After God created Adam and placed him in the garden, he determined that it was not good for man to be alone. He then created a woman to fill the void in his life. She was called an *ezer* in the Hebrew-the original language of the Old Testament. Most translations render the word *ezer* as helper, however, the word means much more than that according to some. The word appears 21 times in the Old Testament: twice in Genesis describing the woman, 16 referring to Yahweh as the helper of his people, and 3 in the books of the prophets referring to military. *Ezer* is a strong helper. Some interpret *ezer* as in helping to rescue, save or support..

How can we use the word?

I want to think of our United Methodist Women as strong helpers, using our time and talents to help those around us to be all that God created them to be, speaking and doing acts of encouragement, kindness, and caring.

As you UMW board diligently strives to be an *ezer* for others, we sincerely offer the opportunity for others to join us in efforts to do God's will. As you know, we consider each woman in our congregation a member of the United Methodist Women because we realize that each and every one of you are participating in some way in our work of the church.....serving in the soup kitchen, quilting, ushering, greeting, being a member of a committee, teaching, donating to various missions, assisting with special events, hosting coffee hours, gardening, decorating, calling, chauffeuring and visiting shut-ins.

But.....yes, there's that word again.....BUT, someone has to organize, plan, and coordinate all these activities. We have several new projects that we desire to pursue, but we need "advice, in-put, and suggestions" before we can undertake the challenges. If you would pray about this opportunity and perhaps feel that this is where you could be an *ezer*, please plan on attending the next United Methodist Women's Board meeting. We meet the first Tuesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. You don't need to attend each and every meeting, but just drop in sometime. You will be more than welcome. Or perhaps you would rather attend a Cassie Stewart meeting. The circle meets the second Monday of each month and is focused on "hands-on mission." You can be a part of both groups if you wish.

At present UMW is in a "lull". We are in the planning stages for the up-coming "School Kit" project in which we will be collecting items for school kits to be sent to UMCOR and forwarded to wherever the need is greatest. We are also beginning to plan for our special recognitions and for the late summer Trash and Treasure Sale. The pay is to feel and sense the satisfaction experienced when you have reached out and improved someone else's life, knowing that you perhaps have been that "one little candle." The bonus is that you have bonded more closely with members of your own church family and enjoyed a priceless fellowship, that you have received and given support to those with whom you have worked.

## CASSIE STEWART UPDATE

In March, the Cassie Stewart Circle will be meeting at the regular scheduled time, second Monday at 1:30 p.m., but at the Service Center. We were supposed to have done so in January, but the weather was not conducive. So we are going to try to make up for lost time.

If you, as members of our church, have not visited the new facility, I invite you to do so. It is located at the corner of Washington and Depot Streets, across from the hotel. We have a tremendous amount of space which we are using fully. The Service Center is open Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Center is supervised and operated by a complete volunteer staff, workers coming from various churches, including St. Peter and Paul, Berlin Center, First Christian, First Presbyterian, LeValley, Lyons-Muir, and Zion. Our church usually works on the fourth Wednesday of each month. There is a tremendous amount of work to do to serve the needy and less fortunate than ourselves, so if you would like to volunteer some time, check with Virginia Carter.

Donations of clothes, shoes, household items, small appliances, bedding, dishes, books and other miscellaneous items are always needed. The “drop-off” door is on Washington Street.

---

# 2016 DISTRICT UMW CALENDAR

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

To the ladies who are the quilters,  
I cannot say thank you enough for the lap robes I donated in your name to the infusion center at the hospital. If you ever have any more you would like to donate, they would be happy to have them.  
Thank you again,  
Rebecca and Joseph Brown

**PLEASE PRAY IN THE NAME OF THE LORD FOR:**  
(E-mail prayer requests to [sharron67@charter.net](mailto: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

<b>Marion Wray</b>	<b>Dave Stiles</b>
<b>Colleen Thompson</b>	<b>Rick Borup</b>
<b>Lucy Dickinson</b>	<b>Stuart Weisgerber</b>
<b>Julie Englehart</b>	<b>Becky Brown</b>
<b>Randy McCoy</b>	<b>Phyllis Whitelock</b>
<b>Kay Gardner</b>	<b>Ron Beach</b>
<b>Carol Bookie</b>	<b>Steve Lampman</b>
<b>James Ruehs</b>	<b>Ken Keyt</b>
<b>Carol Newkirk</b>	<b>Jimmy Griffith</b>
<b>Arlene Rowland</b>	<b>Lisa Dvorak</b>
<b>Jack Unger</b>	<b>Waneta Bell</b>

Ionia Community Library Event  
"The Purple Gang's Ties to Albion"  
With Dick Lewin

An otherwise small, college town in the south of Michigan, the location of Albion—midway between Chicago and Detroit—made it a critical junction for gangsters smuggling booze during Prohibition. Detroit's Purple Gang even opened a "satellite office" in town and held clandestine meetings with Windy City gangsters in the balcony of the local theatre.

Dick Lewin, a *Friends of the Bohm Theatre* member, gives lectures on the Purple Gang and we invite you to hear his program that explains this unusual chapter in Albion's history.

This program will be presented March 30th at 7:00 p.m. in the Son Rise Café.

*Always remember God holds you in his  
hands.*

*The God who created all things and  
sees them as good is with us always.*

## BIRTHDAYS

### March

4 Dick Christiansen  
6 Pat Arnold  
6 Mayeillleen Bartosh  
7 Kendra Badder  
8 Deanna Hotchkin  
9 Karson Hagen  
10 Marge Bowne  
13 Billie Horwood  
14 Nancy Haight  
14 Kimberly Paton  
16 Charley Frost  
20 Josh First  
20 Steven Manciu  
22 Gene Clark  
29 Katie Felice

### April

5 Isaiah Manning  
11 Henry Castle  
17 Sue Curtis  
17 Ruth French  
21 Savanna Curtis  
25 Stuart Church  
26 Diana Whitelock  
30 Ava England



## ANNIVERSARIES

### March

29 Al & Marge Irby

### April

2 Jerry & Judy Gregory  
20 Eric & Lacy Fulcher

## January

### Greeters

Mar. 6 Phil Kahl  
Mar. 13 June Faulkner  
Mar. 20 Avis White  
Mar. 27 Don & Peg Fell

### Nursery

Mar. 6 Amber Campbell & Lauren Curtis  
Mar. 13 Sue Manciu & Marie Church  
Mar. 20 Deanna Hotchkin & Marie Church  
Mar. 27 Darcie VanDop & Jackie Christiansen

If you would like to volunteer to work in the nursery, we would welcome the help. Just contact Marie in the church office.

## February

### Greeters

Apr. 3 David and Roxanne Stiles  
Apr. 10 Ken & Ann Felice  
Apr. 17 Jack & Sue Manciu  
Apr. 24 Jim & Melissa Wagner

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](mailto: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

Apr. 3 Amber Campbell & Lauren Curtis  
Apr. 10 Marie Church  
Apr. 17 Deanna Hotchkin & Sue Manciu  
Apr. 24 Darcie VanDop & Jackie Christiansen

### **VOLUNTEERS**

# March 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>Mission P.E.T.</b>		1 9:30 am Friendship Comm. 1:30pm UMW 7:00pm Grief Share	2 6:00pm Lenten Potluck 7:15pm Choir Practice	3	4	5 10:00am Music on the Green Meeting
<b>6</b>	7 6:00pm Soup Kitchen 7:00pm Trustees	8 7:00pm Grief Share	9 6:00pm Lenten Potluck 7:15pm Choir Practice	10	11	12
<b>13</b>	14 1:30pm Cassie Stewart 6:00pm Soup Kitchen 7:00pm Ad Board	15 7:00pm Grief Share	16 6:00pm Lenten Potluck 7:15pm Choir Practice	17	18	19 9:00am Lenten Breakfast
<b>20</b>	21 6:00pm Soup Kitchen 7:00pm VBS Meeting	22 7:00pm Grief Share	23 6:00pm Lenten Potluck 7:15pm Choir Practice	24 Maundy Thursday	25 Good Friday	26
<b>27 Easter Sunday</b>	28 7:00pm Financial Peace University  Pastor Jon Vacation	29 7:00pm Grief Share	30 7:00pm Library Event rescheduled "The Purple Gang"	31		



# April 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Mission Community House					1	2
3 Pastor Jon Vacation	4 7:00pm Financial Peace University	5 9:30am Friendship Committee 1:30pm UMW	6 1:00 pm Investment Committee	7	8	9
10 Pastor Jon Vacation	11 1:30pm Cassie Stewart Circle 7:00pm Financial Peace University	12	13	14 7:00pm Chrysalis Meeting	15	16
17	18 7:00pm Financial Peace University 7:00pm VBS Meeting	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 7:00pm Financial Peace University Newsletter Deadline	26	27	28	29	30



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

**Service 9:00am**

**Check it out!**

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

DAVE RAMSEY'S

# FINANCIAL *Peace*<sup>®</sup> UNIVERSITY

- This isn't your typical "money class." *Financial Peace University* is practical, entertaining and fun
- More than 1.5 million families and individuals have taken FPU.
- The average family completing the course pays off \$5,300 and saves \$2,700 in just 90 days. That's an \$8,000 change in position!
- Whether you're struggling to make ends meet or you're a millionaire, FPU has something for you.

FPU is based on more than 800 verses of Scripture and is a proven plan that will work for you.

Come join us for this 9 week study beginning Monday, March 28th at 7:00 p.m.