

"A Symphony of Praise
and Service to God"



105 E. Main
Street

Ionia, MI
48846

Traditional
Service 9:30am

Contemporary
Service 11am

Check it out!

www.ioniafirst.com

November
December
2014
Newsletter

"Blessed are the
peacemakers, for
they will be called
the children of
God." Matthew 5:9



From the desk of Pastor Jon

Unasked Questions

The story is told of a theology professor who traveled to a distant land to teach at a school established for the natives of that country. It was to be a short class, only a week long, but the students and professor dedicated themselves to long hours every day, covering a large amount of material. When the class was almost over, the professor asked for feedback regarding the content of the class.



One response was, "These are amazing answers to questions that we did not ask."

We can approach this story in one of two ways. First, we might assume that the professor is an expert and thus the student should always simply be grateful for the benefit of expert knowledge. Second, however, we might assume that the expert has a responsibility to know his or her audience and what their needs are. I tend to fall into the second camp and as I am getting to know Ionia, I would like to find out what questions are most important to this community.

Another way of saying that is, "What Ionian needs can the Christian faith meet?" I'm currently facilitating a grief group, but very few people come to it. Thus, I wonder whether such a group is an "amazing answer to a question that isn't being asked." Or is it just not the right time or didn't I do a good job letting people know about it?

My request to you today is to open your eyes and ponder this question as you see your community. Let's start talking about what those needs are and how we can meet them.

-Pastor Jon

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**First United Methodist
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Women's Gathering

Vintage Christmas

Take this afternoon off as a quiet, comforting reflection with us of what Christmas is really all about and enjoy time spent with other women of the church and community. Invite your friends, we're sure they will enjoy themselves. **Saturday, December 13 from 1 to 4 p.m. in the SonRise Café.** We will also be supporting the Christmas baskets by providing the Christmas Cookies for each family's basket. Please bring along two dozen cookies, possibly from a vintage recipe or something that reminds you of your heritage. During our program we will package our cookies so that each family will receive great treats from all. There is no cost except to RSVP to Marilyn Nash at 527-7456, Darcie Van Dop at 527-4654 or Sheila Ransom at 527-1662 or ransomsrsr@yahoo.com.

"For the Lord is good
and his love
endures forever."
Psalm 100:5

Group Publishing, Inc. group.com/women

Whatsoever Drama Ministry for Christ

"Experience Christmas"

is an original music filled adaptation of our traditional Nativity story.

Based on scripture, this is a fresh revisiting of the events surrounding the first Christmas. Music ranges from favorite hymns to newer songs, all chosen to celebrate and honor the birth of Our Lord.

Rehearsals every
Saturday at Noon
Performance date TBA
For more information
contact
Melissa Wagner at
616-523-6318





Relationships were very important to God. Jesus spent most of His time on earth deepening relationships with a few—not the crowds. God created us to need each other and yet, true friendship seems so hard to find. As members of our United Methodist Women, we work together, worship together, in fellowship with each other, we find support and comfort in our relationships. One of the greatest rewards we receive as we diligently work towards various mission projects is the priceless friendships we develop. To quote from our last newsletter, “As we serve God and our church, our church family, our community, we enrich our own lives.

Again we want to remind you that we are still collecting **soup labels for the schools, cereal and other boxes for Haiti, computer cartridges, grooming and personal items for RAVE, and pop can tabs for the Methodist Community House.** Our collection depot is located next to the bulletin board in the down stairs hallway across from the coat rack. We know that this is not the ideal place and that it is easy just to “walk on by” but your contributions to these missions are most important and benefits are many. So please remember to “donate.”

Our annual Heartlands’ United Methodist Women’s Conference held in Greenville on Saturday, September 20th was attended by some 150 women. It is always so rewarding to meet and fellowship with “old” friends at events and again the value of “relationships” is very prevalent. Many have expressed their appreciation of the University of Africa information shared by Judy Huynh on Women’s Sunday and also were interested in how United Methodist support this great educational effort. We also want to thank all those who participated in our “Kitchen Shower.” Our Soup Kitchen Volunteers really appreciate all the donations.

November 15th! That’s the day of the **All Church Bazaar.** We are anticipating least six other churches to participate. Gladys is eagerly awaiting to see all the contributions you are going to bring to stock our booth. Please contact her and bring your donations in on Thursday, November 14th. Roxanne Stiles will serve as our “food” chairman and will need both willing hands and yummy food donations. Watch for details which I will post on the bulletin board.

Marge Irby is beginning her organization of tables for the **Festival of Tables Celebration, December 4, 2014.** Our aim is to have at let 12 tables hosted by women not only from our church but from other churches In Ionia. This has become an ecumenical endeavor. Nancy Crumbaugh from Caledonia has confirmed that she will be with us on that date and will present a most intriguing **Marimba Concert.** For more information check the bulletin board and /or contact Marge Irby or Peg Fell. Remember also that this is the night that some of our men become United Methodist Workers as they take command of the kitchen and serve coffee and dessert. Men, if you wish to volunteer, contact Doris Simpson.

Eight-Cap has already been contacted as we begin work on our 2014 Christmas Basket Mission. The tree with the gift requests will be up the weekend following Thanksgiving. To stay alert as to ways to assist and be a part of this project, watch the bulletins and bulletin board. In the meantime, remember!

ALL CHURCH THNAKSGIVING DINNER, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH.

CASSIE STEWART CIRCLE NEWS: Our annual potluck meeting of the year was highlighted by **Nancy Patera and Marty Culver** as they shared their trip to the Holy Land. Although the attendance was meager, those that were in attendance did enjoy both the information presented and renewing previous “relationships.” Our first “hands-on workshop” meeting was held in October. As eight attendees prepared “shoe boxes” again relationships were strengthened and fellowship was wonderful.

We would like to encourage any of you who can to join us on the second Monday of each month to do so. Yes, we still have devotions, great fellowship, and our hands are doing the Lord’s work. The projects or missions that we work on will vary from month to month but we promise each one will be beneficial to “someone” and that your time spent will be appreciated more that perhaps you will ever realize. So, mark your calendars and come. Your

T – I – M – E equals L – O – V – E

Thank You!

We hope you are all having a great autumn in Ionia. We can envision the football games, all the fall activities at church, seeing the trees turn on Main Street, and just talking to each of you. We miss you but know that you are in good hands.

We wanted you all to take some time to get to know Jon and Darcie and Little Nic. So, now we can interrupt your newsletter with a big THANK YOU to the church for all that you did to make our parting and good-byes so special. We appreciated all the time and effort that went into making us feel so loved. What an emotional time!

But now we are settled in South Haven and loving it. We walk to the lake each evening for the sunset and afterglow. We are busy each Sunday visiting all the different churches in South Haven. Of course, none are Ionia 1st. You are blessed to have a caring and bright pastor and his wonderful family. And you are an alive, loving church. Praise the Lord!

Blessings,
Larry and Bev

**Your job is not to judge.
Your job is not to figure out if
someone deserves something.
Your job is to lift the fallen, to re-
store the broken, and to heal the
hurting.**

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

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

Dominic Essich	Darlene Prestbo
Katie Lincoln	Trevor
Dave Ruehs	Ken Keyt
Don Lawther	Julie Englehart
James Jarosch	Mark Workman
Carol Bookie	Tracey Lhamon
Clyde Stout	Carol Newkirk
Steve Lampman	Arlene Rowland
Lucy Dickinson	Colleen Thompson
James Ruehs	Lucille Leslie

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

JOHN WESLEY "Money never stays with me"

In his late twenties...Wesley decided to live as frugally as possible so that he could give more money to the poor. In 1731 Wesley recorded his yearly income as £30 and his living expenses £28, so he gave £2 away. His income doubled the next year, but he still lived on £28 and gave £32 away. The third year his income was £90 and the fourth year £120, but he still lived on £28, giving the rest to the poor. Even after becoming one of the most famous men in all England, with probably the highest earned income, Wesley did not increase his standard of living but only his standard of giving.

When Wesley died in 1791, he had only a few miscellaneous coins in his pockets and dresser drawers. And the rest of the estimated thirty thousand pounds he earned during his lifetime? He gave it away.

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BIRTHDAYS

November

1 Jim Batista
 4 Phil Kahl
 4 Skyler Fulcher
 5 Chasity Fedon
 8 Peyton Batista
 13 Jodi Hagen
 17 Mike Schumacher
 17 Penny Wineman
 22 Sharron Chapman

December

1 Carrie Stout
 8 Ted Paton
 8 Drew Paton
 9 Doris Simpson
 11 Janessa Shattuck
 12 Paul Frost
 12 Jane Ransom
 16 Matt Felice
 20 Greg Hotchkin
 21 Myrtle Davids
 23 Jackie Christian-
 sen
 31 Eric Fulcher



ANNIVERSARIES

November

2 Ron and Judy Rozeboom
 10 Jim and Carrie Stout
 11 Jodi and Tony Hagen
 22 Mike&Michelle Schumacher

December

11 Dan and Margie First
 13 Jim and Carrie Batista
 27 Ken and Ann Felice



- OUR ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE WILL BE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 1:30 P.M. IN THE CHAPEL.
- OUR ANNUAL ALL CHURCH THANKSGIVING DINNER WILL BE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23 AT NOON. TURKEY, POTATOES, STUFFING ARE PROVIDED. PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE AS PER A SIGN UP SHEET AVAILABLE AT WORSHIP.



Adopt-a-Highway Report: On Sept. 21 and 22, four volunteers picked up 6 bags of trash from 1 1/2 miles of our 3-mile stretch of M-21. The Highway Dept. helped by resurfacing and cleaning the shoulders of our whole area. Diana Whitelock has volunteered to take over leadership of the Adopt-a-Highway team in 2015. Please give her the support the task requires—**twelve volunteers** (like Disciples) three times a year would be nice. Thank you to all the people who have helped me with this work over the last several years. I am still willing to help as long as my hands, feet, and back all work together. Jerry Winter

October/November Volunteer Schedules at Ionia First

NOVEMBER

Ushers
-Phil Kahl, Larry Ransom

Greeters
2-MacDonalds
9-Jan Powell
16-Maybelle Drake
23-Stuart and Marie Church
30-Don and Peg Fell

Nursery
2-Wendy & Nancy Haight 9:30
2-Kiplynn Moore 11
9-Marge Irby 9:30
16-Marge Irby 9:30
16-Kiplynn Moore 11
23-
30-Michelle Castle 11

Café
2-Sheila Ransom
9-Sheila Ransom
16-Sheila Ransom
23-Sheila Ransom
30-Mindy Talbot

Offering Counters
3-Avis White, Ruth French 30-Avis White,
10-Ruth French, Marge Irby Ruth French
17-Avis White, Ruth French

DECEMBER

Ushers
-Al McDonald, Ron Rozeboom, John Fate,
Miller Hotchkin

Greeters
7-Fells
14-Sharron Chapman
21-Fells
28-Fells

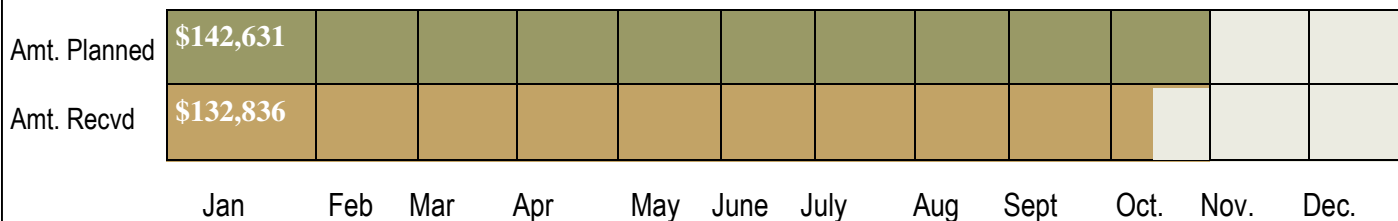
Nursery
7-
14-Kiplynn Moore 11
17
21
24
28

Café
7-Sheila Ransom
14-Sheila Ransom
21-Sheila Ransom
28-Sheila Ransom

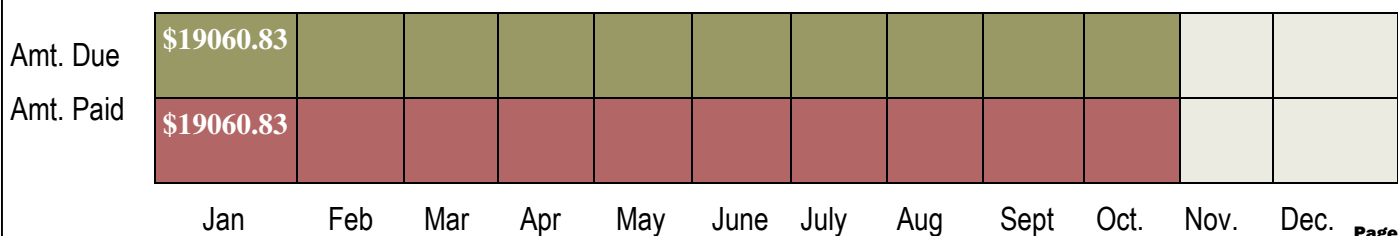
Offering Counters
8-Avis White, Ruth French
15-Avis White, Ruth French
22-Avis White, Ruth French
29-Avis White, Ruth French

Year -to-date Snapshot of Our Financial Stewardship


Income for 2014 Ionia First Ministry-\$172,500 planned




Ionia First 2014 Ministry Shares -\$22,873 Our Share



November 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Missions -Enrich -No More Malaria						1 9am-4pm District Annual Conf New Hope UMC Noon-Play practice
2 All Saints Day	3 7-Trustees	4 9:30 Friend- ship Comm. 1:30 UMW 6:30 Grief Share	5 10-Finance 3-5 CYV 7-Women's Bible Study	6 12:30 Investment Committee	7	8 Noon-Play practice
9 Noisy Offering at worship	10 1:30 Cassie Stewart 7- Ad Board	11 6:30 Grief Share	12 3-5 CYV 7-Women's Bible Study	13	14 Bazaar set-up	15 9am-3pm Annual Christmas Bazaar Noon-Play practice
16 Missions 12:30 SPRC 1:30 Annual Charge Conf.	17	18 6:30 Grief Share	19 3-5 CYV	20	21	22 Noon-Play practice
23 Noon- Thanksgiving Dinner <hr/> 30 1st Sunday in Advent	24 6pm-Library Bookmark cel- ebration	25 6:30 Grief Share	26 3-5 CYV	27 Happy Thanksgiving 	28	29 Noon-Play practice

December 2014

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Missions -RAVE -Haiti Hot Lunch	1	2 9:30 Friendship 1:30 UMW 6:30 Grief Share	3 3-5 CYV	4 7-Festival of Tables	5 6:30 Ionia Christmas Parade	6 Noon-Play Practice
7	8 1:30 Cassie Stewart	9 6:30 Grief Share	10 3-5 CYV	11	12	13 1-4 pm Women's Gathering
14 Noisy Offering 3-Christmas in Ionia @ Ionia Theatre	15	16 6:30 Grief Share	17 3-5 CYV 7-Blue Christmas	18	19	20
21 Missions *Combined Worship	22	23 6:30 Grief Share	24 No CYV 7-Candlelight Service	25 Merry Christmas 	26	27
28 No CYV	29	30 6:30 Grief Share	31 No CYV			



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