

"A Symphony of Praise
and Service to God"



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

**Service
9:30 am**
**www.ioniafirst.
com**

**November
2017
Newsletter**



From the desk of Pastor Jonathan

"When God Speaks"

Psalm 15:7

"I bless the Lord who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me."

To the Friends of Jesus,

With great joy and humility, I am able to announce the birth of a child in our home. Elliott Thomas Bratt Carle took his first breath at 10:07 a.m. on October 23, and my family and I have entered a period of continuous thanksgiving. I have been meaning to compose this article for days, but have simply been overwhelmed by my inability to put into words the theological significance of the event taking place in my life. Now at nearly midnight on October 26, I find that, though I should be sleeping in order to get ready for the night of feeding and diapers ahead, my heart instructs me to say something to you all about the moments in life when God speaks.

In the beginning, when God began to create the heavens and the earth,

THE-ONE-WHO-IS said....

Let there be....

And there was.

The world was without form and void; Evil would have liked it to remain that way. In fact, the Evil that goes against God's gift of life constantly seeks the nothingness of the Creation which the Father/Mother has called into existence. So I come to this moment in the middle of the night - as the dog and the child and the love of my life all breathe softly together - and I realize that the joy overflowing every portal of my heart has a power unlike any other force I know: it is washing away any last little bit of doubt I've ever had that the God of Love will have the victory in due course.

Beloved in Christ, what I tell you now is the Good News.

When God speaks, it is always to give life to that which has never been - and to give life again to that which has passed away. When my son was born my first feeling was wonder, then joy, then excitement... and then I remembered the horror of the world humans have made. The first thing I said to my son was, "I will always love you." My first prayer for my son was "O God, save him from this terrible world." Now in the middle of the night, my heart instructs me about the kingdom which is at hand... the not-so-far-off eternity in which God will wipe the tear from every eye and remove the veil of Death which haunts the Creation. You see, the very first thing I said to my son was the very answer to my prayer. What I feel for Elliott - an undeniable, unbreakable, indefatigable love - is a drop in the ocean of what the parental God of Love feels for me.... for you...I for all that has come into being through the Word and the Spirit. When God speaks, God always begins and ends by saying, "I love you."

This includes the mystery of God's righteous judgment, the accountability demanded of the

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human race by Jesus the Christ: the High King, High Priest, and Prophet of Israel. God corrects us in a way that leads not to the pain and nothingness which is the desire of Evil, but to the fullness and flourishing for which we were always intended. I know this for sure, because the love I feel for my son is the tide under which all the Pharaohs of my own personal sin and suffering are being drowned.

Christ was born.

Christ lived.

Christ died.

So far we understand. Then the promise of God's eternal love is made:

Christ is risen.

Christ is with us.

Christ is coming.....

In the night, my heart remembers the end of the story of Love. Let us bless the Lord:

Our Father,

Who art in Heaven,

Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done on Earth,

As it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our sins,

As we forgive them that sin against us;

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from Evil:

For thine is the kingdom,

And the power, and the glory forever.

So be it. Amen

Come Lord Jesus.

recognitions and for the late summer trash and treasure sale. The pay is to feel the sense the satisfaction experienced when y
reached out and improved someone else's life, knowing that you perhaps have been that "one little candle." The bonus is that
have bonded more closely with members of you own church family and enjoyed a priceless fellowship, that you have received a
support to those with which you have worked.

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.

BRUNCH POTLUCKS

There will be no potluck brunch this month. Instead on Nov. 19 at 4:00 p.m. we will have a Hymn Sing followed by a Crockpot Soup Buffet. Bring your favorite soup in a Crockpot and join the fun.

THE IONIA COUNTY LITERACY COUNCIL

is looking for volunteer tutors to help adults improve their reading, math or English speaking skills. Are you looking for a meaningful volunteer project? if this sounds like you, please visit our website: www.ioniacountyliteracycouncil.org and call us at 616-389-8529 or email: ionialiteracy@gmail.com We are also reaching out to those who need our services!

St. Joseph, MO Mission

I have found a mission for prescription bottles in St. Joseph, MO. There is a large public clinic that is accepting used prescription bottles. Stripping the labels before washing the bottles makes the labels come off much easier without leaving the bottles sticky.

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. 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)

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

We are now taking orders for Poinsettias and Christmas Cactus to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve. If you would like to place an order see the bulletin insert or call the church office weekdays between 9:00 and 1:00. 527-1860

DO YOU LIKE GARDENING?

Judy Rozeboom has been taking care of our church gardens and picking up around the property for a long time. She would like to have someone who could help with these projects. If you would be interested, please call the church office at 527-1860.

Sunday School News

Our first studies this fall have taken us from Genesis 1 through The Flood.

We are blessed to have committed teachers, Amber Campbell and Eric Asher, who help our children grow in their faith and understanding of their Savior.

Moving into the Advent Season we are HOPING to build a float for both Fellowship and outreach of our congregation. We need a couple more volunteers to help build our float. Please call Jana Fedon at 527-5871 if you are willing to help. ALSO, we need "Walkers" *at* the parade the 1st Friday evening of December. Walkers pass out candy and pamphlets inviting people to worship with us.

A Christmas presentation is being prepared for the children as well. It will not be a "traditional" play, but they will be taking the lead in the telling of Jesus' birth.

Please pray for our children and our program, that our Father help the children receive His Word, take it into their hearts and out into their world when they leave church.

As we are reminded, these children ARE OUR FUTURE. It is our responsibility, each of us, to ensure they understand and know their place in our church and world. This will be THEIR church one day. They will be the leaders and doers. Help them understand their importance to the life of the church.

If you ever have ideas or concerns, please contact Pastor Jonathan or Jana Fedon.



Watch for exciting things to happen over the next few months. There are some things in the planning stages. Stay tuned.

Tears Like Rain

By Mark S. Workman

Rain from the Heavens
Drops like tears from above
Through clouds of Angels
The tears of the Father must fall.

Because of greed and fear his Son must die
Nailed to a cross
Stabbed in the side
Our sins he bore. Our ransom he paid.

A Father's tears fall like rain
The clouds of Angels cry out
The Prophecy is almost complete
A mighty stone is rolled away.

**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:

Carol Newkirk	Mary Vernon
Stuart Weisgerber	Elizabeth Smith-
Bryant Adams	Steve Lampman-
Hunter Wagner	Julie Englehart
Arlene Roland	Don Fell
Mark Workman	Gary Hanson
Elisha & Crystal Stock	Robert Zander
Barb Helmer	Katherine Asher
Penny Wineman	David May
Scott Burkman	Nicole Rhodes
Lucille Leslie	Amanda Bishop
Jerry Lawrence	David May
Nancy & David Carle	

UMW/CASSIE STEWART CIRCLE UPDATE

United
Methodist



Women

Do you remember Bing Crosby, and *Memories, Memories* or Bob Hope and *Thanks for the Memories*?

Build Memories! Make Memories! Create Memories! I keep reading those words over and over again. I have many memories as you probably do. I have found that when I reflect on them, many have to do with "smell". Once when visiting the Canadian Exposition in Toronto, Canada, and we had not eaten all day, we walked by a little alley and the odor of soup wafted by. Oh, my goodness! That soup was ever so good! So delicious! So satisfying! I often recall that night. Another time, we were visiting my Grandfather. He had just had an encounter with a skunk! Oh my! Oh, my! Oh, my! A few days ago, after feeding Don one of his favorite dinners, beef and noodles, I asked him if the noodles were good. He looked at me, his face aglow, winked, and said, "Wonderful." What a memory! Can you remember the smell of a new car, new carpet, brownies fresh out of the oven or newly fallen leaves? How about warm homemade bread? I remember one Sunday several years ago, coming into the church. The smell of a Thanksgiving Dinner greeted us. The congregation, I am sure, did not focus on the sermon that day, but on the anticipated dinner. Well, our old friend, Nigel, (that's another memory) just informed me that we all might have another opportunity to relive that memory. Wouldn't that be great? Now, that would rekindle many other memories.

As the United Methodist Women of Ionia First United Methodist Church continue to pursue their various mission endeavors, they are certainly building memories. Just think how thrilled and elated those children who receive your Samaritan's Purse Shoeboxes will be. Just imagine their delight when they receive an intriguing toy or other fascinating item. Perhaps there is a gift that will enhance their education. That memory will stay with them forever. On the 13th of November, the Cassie Stewart Circle will prepare the boxes for mailing. On behalf of those children, we thank all of you who have participated in this mission. Those boxes will soon be on their way to cheer deserving children.

With the November 18th Harvest Bazaar this month, we are again remembering past All Church Bazaars. Remember the ones held in the K of C Hall? We debated whether or not to sponsor a bazaar this year based on last year's experience. We thought perhaps this might be one of those traditions which should remain only as a memory. However, to date this year, we have over twice the applications we requested. We pray that this will be a worthwhile project for us and those hosting a booth, and that shoppers may enjoy the opportunity to actively participate.

We would also like to share with you that the Christmas Basket Mission is well underway. We are in the process of contacting referred families as to their needs and ways we can contribute to making Christmas a little more enjoyable for them. As many of you know, we work through EightCap and the Headstart Program. Families are screened to prevent "double-dipping". We take into consideration allergies, disabilities, home-conditions, refrigeration, storage space available, likes and dislikes. Beginning right after Thanksgiving, the opportunity for you, our church family, to do some shopping for these "friends" will be presented. Then we will need volunteers to assist in wrapping gifts and packing boxes. The week prior to Christmas, will be a BUSY one. The Cassie Stewart Circle members will be standing by to assist in many ways. Lastly, in the morning of the Saturday before Christmas for about two hours, we will need our Super Shoppers to swing into action. By about 11 AM on the 24th, we will have wrapped up this project knowing that we have done our best to serve our Lord, have brought joy to many, and have created more MEMORIES.

"The memory of the righteous is blessed."

Proverbs 10:7

	Attendance	Giving
Oct. 1	49	\$2,938.22
Oct. 8	69	\$1,773.00
Oct. 15	unknown	\$ 672.00
Oct. 22	50	\$3,103.00
Oct. 29	72	\$2,538.31

STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Congratulations to Pastor Jonathan and Jessica on the birth of their baby boy, Elliott Thomas. We welcome him into our community. God's Blessings to him and his parents.

A special thank you to Reverend Kenneth Harger for bringing a special sermon to us; thanks also to Marge Bowne who arranged his speaking engagement. We also than Joel for his message in song.

On November 5th, Al MacDonald will be our speaker. Greg and Betsy Adamus will be gracing us with music. The Adamuses are new to our community, but are well-known in the musical community.

On November 12th, Al Irby will deliver the message and Harmony will be singing.

Pastor Jonathan will be returning on the 19th of November.

Be sure to welcome our guests and invite them to coffee.

Many fun activities are in store for our congregation this fall and Christmas. Be ready to participate and watch the bulletins.

The next meeting for the SPRC is November 27th, 6:30 in the conference room.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee met Monday, October 30th. The endowment fund money will be spent in the following ways: \$500.00 will be given to First United Methodist Women for the Christmas Basket Campaign. \$1,700.00 will go to UMCOR with the stipulation it will relieve the difficulties of those who were caught in floods and fires here in the United States.

The committee is also looking at our giving over the past year, to determine if we are on the right track, and see if we can partner with other Methodist churches in the area to combine our support of some projects, like the New Life Center in Zambia.

BIRTHDAYS

November

- 4 Phil Kahl
- 4 John Podoll
- 5 Chasity Fedon
- 17 Mike Schumacher
- 17 Penny Wineman
- 22 Sharron Chapman
- 29 Joyce Masengale
- 29 Mitch Mercer



November Anniversaries

- 2 Ron & Judy Rozeboom*
- 10 Jim & Carrie Stout*
- 22 Mike & Michelle Schumacher*

November

Greeters

- Nov. 5 Miller & Deanna Hotchkin
- Nov. 12 Ken & Ann Felice
- Nov. 19 Nancy & Wendy Haight
- Nov. 26 Phil Kahl

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).

November

Nursery

- Nov. 5
- Nov. 12
- Nov. 19
- Nov. 26

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).

November 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Mission: Haiti Grace Hospi- tal			1	2	3 1:00 pm Music on the Green meeting- Conference Room	4
5 Communion Daylight Saving Time ends	6 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen	7 9:30 am Friend- ship Comm. 1:30 pm UMW	8	9	10	11
12 Noisy Offering	13 1:30 pm Cassie Stewart 6:00pm Soup Kit 6:30pm Finance 7:30pm Trustees	14	15	16	17	18 9:00am Harvest Bazaar
19 Mission Sunday 4:00pm Hymn Sing Crockpot Buffet	20 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen 7:00 pm Ad Board	21	22	23 Thanksgiving	24 Newsletter Dead- line	25
26	27 6:00 pm Soup Kitchen 6:00 pm Lay Leadership 7:00 pm SPRC	28	29	30		



**105 E. Main Street
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Service 9:30am

Check it out!

www.ioniafirst.com

*Happy
Thanksgiving*

