



105 E. Main
Street

Ionia, MI
48846

Service
9:00 am

www.ioniafirst.com

616-527-1860

**November
2024
Newsletter**



THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First — November 2024

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

I am writing from Rwanda, where I have traveled to teach a class on reconciliation. Overall, the trip has been fine. I flew from O'Hare Field in Chicago to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, a flight of about 14 hours. Fortunately, the flight was not full, and I had good legroom. I spent five hours at the Addis Ababa's airport, and then flew to Kigali in Rwanda, a 2.5 hour flight.

I received a great welcome in Rwanda Sunday, and presented two keyboards and a laptop computer to the Conference lead clergy person. Monday, I began teaching the class on reconciliation.

Grounded in the New Testament teachings of Jesus and Paul, reconciliation is a thoroughly Christian concept. In Matthew 5, Jesus warns his followers to reconcile their differences before making their offering to God, In Romans 4: 8-11, Paul argues that because of Christ's righteousness, humanity has been reconciled to God, and II Corinthians 5:16-20, Paul calls Christian believers to a ministry of reconciliation.

Currently, the concept of reconciliation has grown and broadened, with applications around the world, especially in areas where violence and war fracture social relationships. Although they do good work, unfortunately, many practitioners of reconciliation have forgotten or neglected its biblical roots.

Continued

THE PASTOR'S PEN

Continued

I am teaching reconciliation using biblical and secular means to pastors in Rwanda who have been mandated by their government to learn reconciliation processes. One significant hurdle faced by these pastors is their unwillingness to engage in reconciliation activities with people of a sexual orientation other than heterosexual. This takes integrity from their work because God's grace is not being extended to all persons. I am hopeful that over time they will grow to embrace all persons in God's love.

We are fast approaching year end and the Season of Advent and Christmas. We are planning for a joint Ionia First/Easton Christmas Eve worship service to be held at Ionia First on Dec. 24. I am hopeful you can attend. Also, we will hold a service of healing Sunday, Nov. 10. Our district superintendent will participate in this event.

The Ionia First and Easton churches have many congregation members who have lost loved ones over the past year. The journey of grief is often long, and support can be a helpful gift. The Easton Church is exploring the possibility of hosting a grief support group for persons who have lost loved ones. I hope this group may be also of interest to members of Ionia First.

Also, please be in prayer for Sally Flanders, Easton's musician. She had eye surgery Oct. 30 and has a recovery period of over six weeks. We pray for her complete recovery and a successful operation. Remain in prayer also, for the members of our churches who are experiencing health challenges and are in need of God's healing mercies.

The people of the Methodist Church in Rwanda send their greetings. With your continued prayers, this conference can overcome old prejudices and truly be a source of reconciliation for all people.

God be with you.

Blessings,

Lamarr



Administration Board Report

The storage area next to the office, (under the stairway) has been cleared out and is ready for painting. Thanks to everyone who assisted with shredding the out-of-date papers following the advice of John Kasper. This area will now be used to store items such as a large assortment of colored pictures, DVDs of church services and memorial services, the funeral pall donated by the Ray Monte family and other historical items not kept in the Legacy room. Please remember Ad. Board meetings are open to everyone and your opinions determine the decisions made by the Board. You can also call me personally at (616) 527-4945.

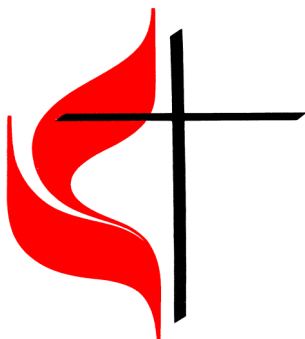
Legacy Room update.

As promised, the results of the Chicken-pie Supper of December 14, 1910 are as follows. The report states the supper brought in \$151.07 and expenses were \$48.00. That \$48.00 bought a lot of items, including 6 pounds of coffee for \$2.25; 7 quarts of milk for 45 cents; 36 loaves of bread for 6 cents each; one and a half bushes of potatoes for 45 cents; 18 quarts of cranberries for \$2.00; 20 cakes for \$8.00; 12 quarts of pickles for \$1.80. As you can see, the dollar went a long way in 1910.

Thank God for dirty dishes,
They have a tale to tell,
While others may go hungry
We've eaten very well.

With home, health and happiness
I shouldn't want to fuss.
By the stack of evidence
God's been very good to us.

Linda



EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Traditional Worship

Communion Every Sunday

Sunday Morning

Service at 9:00

Coffee Hour following service

105 East Main Street, Ionia, Michigan 48846

SPRC

The Staff Pastor Relations Committee has been busy with the Church Conference, Lamarr flying to Africa, Eric's service in Lamarr's absence, and the fantastic work of our custodian, David Fedewa, organist Sari and our I.T. person Joel during October. All four of these employees went above and beyond what was asked of them. We have had funerals, the coat giveaway, Community Drawers, and meetings. The extra help from all was terrific. Thank you. Be sure to thank these individuals when you see them.

"All service rands the same with God:

With God, whose puppets, best and worst,

Are we; there is no last or first." Pippa Passes," Robert Browing

Ann, Roxie, Virginia, Rebecca, Jack, and Jan

In Memoriam

Our Church Family has said Good-bye to two amazing ladies in this past month. We all feel very honored to have been able to know and work with them, Roberta Sterner and Ethel Clark.

Roberta Sterner was an active member of our choir for many, many years. She always was ready to share the bounties of either her flower gardens and or her vegetable garden for all to share. Her bounty was enjoyed by us all.

Ethel was the Church treasurer for many, many years and also a founding member of the Ladies who used our basement to make such beautiful quilts for those in need.

We will all cherish the memories we share of both Roberta and Ethel. Their dedication to supporting our Church as they gave of their time and talents for the Glory of God. Heaven has gained two wonderful Saints. They were truly Good and Faithful servants. They will be missed.

Deanna Hotchkin

Trustee News

The new Roof on the church is complete. It looks great and seals up the roof. The contractor (Lifestyle) is very professional and is easy to work with.

Painting inside the church is continuing. We are working in the Café now. This is going to take several weeks.

We have delivered the food for IM Kids. They are feeding over **830** kids per day five days a week approximately 70% which comes back to Ionia Schools. Time to start filling pews again. I cannot express to you how much this food is needed. The church (you) should be proud of what you are doing.

Trustee meetings in every month will be on the **First Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.** Everyone is invited. November's Meeting is the 6th.

See you in Church, be Safe,
Joe

“The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.”

Albert Einstein

Community Drawers News

News Will Resume in December

We will be open November 20, 2024

1 to 4:30 p.m.

Rebecca Brown

Missions

Hello Everyone,

The mission for November is P.E.T., better known now as Mobility Worldwide. In October, the workshop in Holland, Michigan, had an open house to celebrate the completion of 7,000 mobility carts. In the past, our congregation went to see the workshop in action. We admired the carts that were specially created for boys, girls and adults who no longer have the use of their legs. The paint they use for the children's carts is so colorful. The Mobility group was created in 1994. Carts are sent all over the world, even the United States. Locally, the Holland workshop will finish its 700th cart this year. The workshop is so amazing. Our money will be used to buy lumber, bicycle parts, and paint.

"Be kind and merciful. Let no one ever come to you without going away better and happier." Mother Teresa

Jan, Millie, Peg and Marilyn

Reminders

IM KIDS 3rd Meal

- ♦ This is an ongoing mission. We are helping to feed over **830** kids 70% being returned to Ionia Schools each day for their third meal. They are accepting the following items:
 - Peanut butter
 - Jelly or jam
 - Fruit bars
 - Applesauce cups
 - Fruit boxes
 - Snack packs
 - Juice boxes - must be 100 % juice
 - Sandwich size bags
 - Dry cereal
 - Brown paper lunch bags
- Please Help fill the two Front Pews of our Church. We will deliver the items to where it needs to be.



IM SAFE CAC

Ionia Montcalm Secure and Friendly Environment
Child Advocacy Center

November Birthdays

Phil Kahl **11/04**
Don Washburn **11/27**
Mitch Mercer **11/29**

Carrie Stout **12/01**

November Anniversaries

Jim & Carrie Stout **11/10**



Prayer Requests

Brent Spencer - Airforce

Phil Kahl
Ethel Clark Family

Please send prayer requests to
616-527-1860 or Email to
Bluebirdm66@yahoo.com

November Liturgists

03 **Rebecca Brown**
10 **Deanna Hotchkin**
17 **Jan Powell**
24 **Eric Asher**

November 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3 All Saints Day	4	5	6 Trustee @ 10:00 am	7 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	8	9
10 Noisy Offering Healing Worship Service	11	12 Moms support group 7:00	13	14 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	15	16
17 Mission Sunday Veterans Recognition Service	18	19	20 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	21 Comm4nity meal at 6:00 p.m. Joint SPRC with Easton here	22 AD Board 6:00	23
24	25	26 Moms support group 7:00	27	28 Community meal at 6:00 p.m. Thanksgiving	29	30

Finance Report
Remaining Balances as of 09/30/2024
Special Funds (Designated Giving)

Memorial fund	1,884.16
Board of Trustees	108,548.09
Children's Ministry	8,099.48
Camp & School Scholarships	1,447.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	720.41
Community Drawers	6,591.25
Music on the Green	998.19
Holiday Concert	3,823.99
Monthly Mission	955.00
General Evangelism	9,905.02
General Outreach	6,797.25
Funeral/Wedding/Flowers	605.62
IM Kids 3rd Meal	200.00

General Fund (Church Budget)

Income	22,379.00
Expenses	35,792.30
Surplus (Deficit)	(13,413.30)
Ending Bank Balance	36,745.68

