



105 E. Main
Street

Ionia, MI
48846

Service

9:00 am

www.ioniafirst.com

616-527-1860

**September
2024
Newsletter**



THE PASTOR'S PEN

Ionia First — August 2024

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Time flies! I am feeling blessed.

It is now two months since I have become part of the Ionia First UMC faith community. Time has moved rapidly, and much has been happening. Thanks to the efforts of Joe and Becky, I have been able to visit and share communion with a number of members who are confined to their homes. I have also had the privilege of learning about the many ministry efforts of the Ionia First congregation and of your rich history in Ionia.

I thank Linda for walking me through much of Ionia First's history and legacy and for sharing with me her rich history of Elvis Presley, something that really opened my eyes. I am going to sample some of his Gospel hits.

Some of my ministry time is taken up with Conference and District activities, since I am appointed ½ time. I am expected to share with you upcoming conference and district initiatives and encourage your participation. So, here is a brief update.

Our Conference has adopted the Connexion Zone ministry sharing model as a means to bring church congregations in closer communication with each other and encourage collaborative activities that can increase each congregation's ministry outreach activities.

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Continuation of “Pastor’s Pen”

I attended our Zone 5 meeting Monday and have scheduled myself to attend the “Love Reaching Out” event Saturday September 21 in Mt. Pleasant to learn more about Connexion Zone possibilities. Our district superintendent has asked that 2 members of Easton UMC also come and participate in this event. The registration cost is \$25.00. If you are interested in attending, you can register on the Central Bay District web site (www.centralbay.michiganums.org)

I appreciate the generous support received for my plea for donations to assist church repairs in the Rwanda Provisional Conference Your assistance is important in the efforts to open 42 Methodist churches that were closed by the Rwandan government for safety and sound reasons. My travel to Rwanda is rescheduled for Oct. 26-Nov. 2.

Please remember that our annual Charge Conference will be held with other Zone 5 churches here at Ionia UMC Sunday October 13 at 2:00pm. I am excited that we have chosen to host this Zone 5 Charge Conference event. Yea!

I am hoping in the near future that we can begin a process of assessment and visioning that will help us decide the best course of progress for our congregation in the coming years. I am hopeful for a good outcome, because I know God will guide our efforts.

Please keep in mind as we progress into the year, the words of the Apostle Paul, “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.” People of Ionia First, remember you have the strength of God! Keep the faith and know that because you trust God, doors will be opened, and your efforts will bear wondrous fruit.

Go in God’s peace!

**Blessings,
Lamarr**

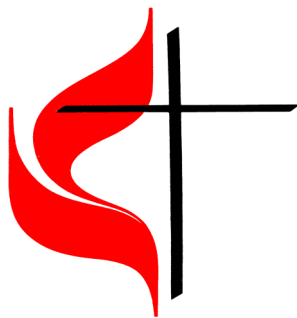
Administration Board Report

Here's the latest on the Legacy Room project. The west wall exhibit has been put in place by David and Annette McCord. The printing was done at S&K and looks beautiful! The picture tells the story of our church and its location on the corner of Main and Judson streets. Many prominent early pioneers and church members are pictured.

Also, I found a 1990 form from a group of players who inquired about visiting Ionia First and presenting a mission program. The form asked Pastor Keith Bovee to describe the Ionia First congregation and his reply was as follows: "We are a typical main-line Protestant congregation. There are a majority of older people in the pews. We do have young families and children in attendance. We despise the work "Liberal", yet our critics would describe us as such. Although we have a healthy respect for our tradition of formal worship, we have been known to try new things."

Certainly we recall fondly the days of young families and children (who have since grown up and have families of their own) but we can say that twenty-four years after Pastor Bovee's comments, we are who we were, Members of the Methodist church that has opened its doors for worship for more than 150 years, on the same corner.

Linda



EVERYONE IS WELCOME
Traditional Worship
Communion Every Sunday
Sunday Morning
Service at 9:00
Coffee Hour following service



Missions

I hope all of you had a chance to give to the Appalachia Service Project last month. We also had news that the Elisha Stock family welcomed a new baby boy, Zion. Keep both of these worthwhile projects in your prayers.

For September, we usually give to the CROP Hunger Walk. The local community leads an interfaith event that raises funds for hunger locally and our own Commission on Aging. So far, I have no information as to when the Walk will occur in October. Just to let you know that the time for the Walk is getting closer. The Walk supports 1,600 US-Based hunger-fighting organizations, water systems that provide increased access to safe drinking water, tools and training for families to grow what they need, and livestock to provide food security and economic stability.

“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat: and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals on fire on his head, and the lord will reward you.” Proverbs 25: 21-22

Jan, Peg, Millie

Trustee News

Painting in different areas of the Church is coming along. We have started in the basement of the Church and will be working up the stairwell. This will clean up the appearance and we are doing all the little fixes as we go.

We will be cleaning and painting the steel work on the outside of the church. There are bars along the East side of the church to protect the window wells, and a handrail on the front steps. **Looking for volunteers.** We also need some to get the flowerbeds and window wells cleaned up and ready for Winter. Any and all help is greatly appreciated.

We have delivered the food for IM Kids. They are feeding **850** kids per day five days a week. Because we have delivered, the front pews are empty and need to be filled up again. I cannot express to you how much this food is needed. For some kids this is the only meal they have.

Trustee meetings for this month will be on the **First Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m.** Everyone is invited. September's Meeting is the 4th.

See you in Church, be Safe,

Joe

“Change, But start slowly, because direction is more important than speed.” Paulo Coelho

Community Drawers News

Huge thank you to everyone who came to work at Community Drawers in August. We had 17 families and several of these families had large families. 10, 8, and 12 people, which come out to over 60 individuals who were helped.

We are starting to plan for our Annual Sharing God's Warmth Project. This year it will be held on October 5, 2024 from 9 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon. Lunch will be provided for workers. Just think a free lunch and a chance to visit with friends and help your community all in one day. Last year we helped over 600 people in that one day. We have also reconnected with the charity that has helped us so very much in the past called the Healing Loft. They have already contacted us and have asked what we need to do this successfully again this year. As a source of how they found Community Drawers is, they found us two years ago by looking up charities in Michigan's poorest counties. Community Drawers came up for Ionia County, faith based charities. They so very graciously decided they could help us and have they ever. They always come in the week of our coat drive with brand new coats, tags still on them and gave us 25 to 30 coats and last year they added blankets. So, if you see a couple of strangers wandering around the day of the Winter Giveaway just smile they are our Angels you never know when they are among us.

I know that sometimes it seems like all I ever do is ask for donations and physical help but please remember as the Hymn number 558 says, "I am the church, You are the church, We are the church together". And as a church of fellow Christians, Brothers and sisters this endeavor called Christian Life is about supporting one another and our community. Please, believe me I know how tired we all get and how hard the tasks we do are so hard, but with God all things are possible. And besides all that it is just good to get out and come and see your friends and enjoy the afternoon even if just to stop in and say hello and have a good lunch.

I see that the Trustees are asking for some help doing some outside painting of the step railings and we can always use a couple of hands in the flower beds. If you are able and willing to give a couple of hours I am sure it would be great fully appreciated. Thank you.

Another date to put on your calendars. Start Setup for Winter Gear Giveaway and Shoe sorting and cleaning is 10:00 is September 30 and please so not forget Community Drawers on September 18.

Please try and enjoy everyday and count your blessings

Rebecca

Reminders

IM KIDS 3rd Meal

- ◆ This is an ongoing mission. We are helping to feed over **850** kids 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 it to where it needs to go.**



IM SAFE CAC

Ionia Montcalm Secure and Friendly Environment
Child Advocacy Center

September Birthdays

Roxanne Stiles 02
Millie Bartholomew 05
Janet Winters 14
Dave Stiles 24

September Anniversaries

Dale & Deborah Parius 01



Prayer Requests

Brent Spencer - Airforce

Phil Kahl
Roberta Sterner
Ethel Clark & Family

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

September Liturgists

01 Eric Asher
08 Rebecca Brown
15 Deanna Hotchkin
22 Jan Powell
29 Eric Asher

September 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 Office Closed	3	4 Trustee @ 10:00 am	5 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	6	7
8 Noisy Offering	9	10 Moms support group 7:00	11	12 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	13	14
15 Mission Sunday	16	17	18 1:30 to 4:30 - Community Drawers	19 Community meal at 6:00 p.m.	20	21
22	23	24 SPRC at Easton 2:00 Moms support group 7:00	25 Shoe & boot cleaning party 1:00	26 Community meal at 6:00 p.m. AD Board 6:00	27 DEADLINE FOR NEWS LETTER ITEMS	28
29	30 Start Setut up for coat giveaway and shoe cleaning 10:00					

Finance Report, July 2024
Remaining Balances as of 06/31/2024
Special Funds (Designated Giving)

Memorial fund	1,879.16
Board of Trustees	8,058.90
Children's Ministry	8,099.48
Camp & School Scholarships	1,447.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	767.34
Community Drawers	8,352.60
Music on the Green	998.19
Holiday Concert	3,823.99
Monthly Mission	1,730.00
General Evangelism	10,930.52
General Outreach	7,797.20
Funeral/Wedding/Flowers	655.62
IM Kids 3rd Meal	400.00

General Fund (Church Budget)

Income	5,447.00
Expenses	18,613.35
Surplus (Deficit)	(13,166.35)
Ending Bank Balance	52,006.07