



“A Faithful, Caring and Joyful  
Community of God”

**January/February  
2012  
Newsletter**

*A publication of*  
**First United Methodist  
Church**  
**105 E Main**  
**Ionia, MI 48846**  
616.527.1860  
ioniafirst@sbcglobal.net



**From the Pastor:**

Holiday Worship  
Christmas Eve 7pm  
Christmas morn caroling 10am  
New Year’s Day 10:15am  
Office Hours  
Monday 9am-3pm  
Tue-Thurs. 9am-Noon

### **A recent prayer**

Thank you God for answering my prayer about the weather. No snow and ice have made getting around to all the wonderful church events so much easier. But, now I think Beverly and our Texas kids are getting a little upset that we might have a snowless Christmas holiday. So, if you could bring just a little dusting (but no ice for the elderly) that would be just great! Amen P.S. The lower heating bills are going to really help the church budget, too!



### **Holiday Worship Schedule Changes!**

Because Christmas and New Year’s Day both land on Sundays, we are going to adjust our worship services accordingly. Our traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service at 7pm will be the main service for the weekend. A sermon and the regular church offering will be added to the candlelight service, with nursery care provided. On Christmas morning, we will gather at 10am to split into 3 groups to sing Christmas carols at 3 locations in Ionia (Co. Jail, Green Acres, and Heartlands). Come share the joy of our Savior’s birth! On Sunday, January 1, we will have a combined worship service at 10:15am with communion. Hope this is clear to all (The church office will be closed from Christmas Day through New Year’s Day. If an emergency arises, call Pastor Larry 527-4654).

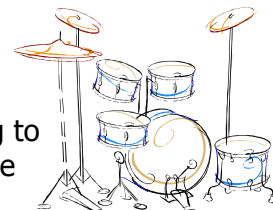
### **Where’s the darn checkbook?**



It is nice to not have to dig around the house on Sunday morning to write a check for the church offering (10 other families apparently feel the same). It is as simple as they said it would be to fill out the Electronic Giving Form and have our tithe automatically deducted from our checking account each month (Yep, there it is on the bank statement!). The service is free to the church and it really does help us give regularly throughout the year. Perhaps you might give it a try. Now where are my shoes?

### **Marcelino Ceballos is giving free drum lessons**

Ever wanted to learn the basics of drumming? Think you’ve got rhythm? Marcelino is offering to teach a drum clinic on Saturday, January 14 at 10am at the church for anyone who would like to try it. Just come.



### **A special thank you**

To all of you who helped advance the upside-down Kingdom of God in Ionia this holiday season. The Christmas basket helpers (17 families have a brighter Christmas), the Cantata Choir, the Children’s Play, the Messiah Choir (\$479 was raised for the “Jesus Fund” at the Messiah concert!), and all those who helped anyone, anywhere with anything! Glory to God in the highest!



## YOUTH GROUP

Hope your Christmas was good! Our Christmas Party with you all was a lot of fun. And we hope that your break from school is relaxing. We look forward to start meeting again on **January 15th at 3:00**. You are a great group of teens and it is always good to get together with you!

So, you haven't ever been to Youth Group? Or you've only come once? Come the 15th! We'd love to have you join us. It is never too late. Bring a friend or just show up at 3:00. We've got a new youth group room to show you. We are anyone from middle school through high school. See ya'.

## PARENTS OF YOUTH

Crystal and Elisha love meeting with your kids and have organized activities and great Bible Studies for each youth group meeting. They plan games, music, ways to interact, and a place to let your teens really share and have fun.

Hopefully, your kids are getting to know Elisha and Crystal better as well as each other.

But, parents, your help is needed in a simple way. Don't worry, you don't have to think about being in charge of anything. But if you could bake your favorite cookies or grab a simple treat from the grocery for a youth group meeting, that would really help. Not a meal, just a treat. Crystal and Elisha are busy on Sunday with other responsibilities besides youth group and would love to not

*Ionia First  
Youth*



Come join the fun in our church nursery!

Imogene and Kelly have great lessons for during the 1st worship service. They help our preschoolers learn about God's love through stories, crafts, acting, and singing.

During the 2nd service at 11am, Zelma joins them & all the children learn another lesson. Our children are learning, having a fun time, and being cared for by loving hands and hearts. Whether you have a baby or a preschooler, our nursery is the perfect spot for experiencing God in gentle caring ways.

## BIBLE VENTURES

We love our elementary kids! Bible Ventures is a room full of great kids who are learning all about the book of Exodus. We've seen God work through Moses and Aaron and just wait 'til you see what happens next!

- EVERY ONE of the Israelites gets to hear God's voice!
  - They camp out by a very scary mountain.
- But God loves His people SO MUCH that He shows them how to live A GREAT LIFE!



Come join us each Sunday morning at 9:30 to learn what happens next and to really learn about the 10 Commandments. We have fun and get to eat, play games, and see that our God is an awesome God. **We will be starting on Sunday, Jan. 8th.**

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Would you like to learn HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE? Starting Jan. 8th our Adult Sunday School (9:30 AM) will start back up again, and we will be following Pastor Larry in his Luke Sermon Series. Using the same Biblical Text that he uses, we study that passage and then directly afterwards we listen to the sermon from second service. Please join us as we get to know each other better and support each other in digging into the Word of God together.

Ted & Kim Paton

### A.S.A.P.

**There's work to do, deadlines to meet;**

**You've got no time to spare, But as you hurry and scurry –**

**A.S.A.P. – ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.**

**In the midst of family chaos, "Quality time" is rare. Do your best; let God do the rest –**

**A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.**

**It may seem like your worries are more than you can bear. Slow down and take a breather –**

**A.S.A.P. - ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.**

**God knows how stressful life is, He wants to ease our cares, and He'll respond to all your needs.**

**A.S.A.P. – ALWAYS SAY A PRAYER.**



## Greeters/Ushers

Please greet at the parking lot door from 9:15am to 9:35am and then again from 10:45am to 11:00am before the second service.

In case something happens that prevents you from greeting, please call the church office 527-1860.



### GREETERS

#### January

Peg Fell

#### February

5 Gladys and Clyde Stout

12 Mary and Jack Hausserman

19 Joan and Al MacDonald

26 Janet and Jerry Winter



United  
Methodist  
Women

Again, it is that time of year when everyone seems to think about making New Year's Resolutions and it is reported that very few are kept even through January. Why? Because usually the resolutions are overly-ambitious and they are made with haste. So, instead of making resolutions, perhaps it would be much more useful to "set goals." The thing that makes a goal a goal is that it is a concrete, reachable plan with logical and do-able steps. We probably all have heard it said, "A goal without a plan is just a dream." So where do we start?

I always like to reflect or review the past year and then use it to plan the next. Our past UMW year has been a terrifically busy and eventful one. January was our planning and "getting our second breath" month and we hosted the Church Women United Annual Meeting and Potluck. In February we focused on missions and in March participated in the World Day of Prayer held at Sts. Peter and Paul. In April, we hosted our annual Lenten Breakfast with Sally Wilcox as our presenter. May was filled with activities supporting the up-coming Vacation Bible School. In June the UMW hosted all the Sunday morning Coffee Hours. The fall started with the Cassis Stewart Circle hosting a Mission's Guest Night with Dr. Edmundson speaking on Haiti. Also in September the West MI Conference Annual Celebration was held in Clare and the following day we hosted the District General Federation of Women's Club Annual Fall Meeting. Because of the distance and the meeting being held at night, we had no one attending the "Women's Night Out" held in Clare in October. However, we were busy planning our UMW Sunday and honoring our members for outstanding participation in various activities of the church. Estelle Buys was named Dove Recipient of the Year; gifts were given in memory of Alberta Yeomans, Martha Dunn and Sharron McCargar. Stuart Church and Joel Kilgore were thanked for all their assistance. November was dedicated to organizing the Festival of Tables Celebration with special guests, The Heaven Bound Gospel Quartette. We also hosted the All-Church Bazaar with seven groups participating, Margie First and her daughter, Lindsey, did a terrific job chairing the food service.

We began planning our most challenging project this year in September, the Christmas Basket Mission Project and culminated with delivery of food and gifts on December 17<sup>th</sup>. 17 families this year were recipients of food, clothing and personal gifts and toys. The UMW thank all those who participated in the project: donating food, purchasing gifts, telephoning, wrapping, shopping and all the other incidentals that made the effort a rewarding success. One of the most heart-warming remarks heard was, "Oh! Milk." when the groceries were delivered to one family. The cooperation of our church members and the team-work witnessed were tremendous. The project could not have resulted in bringing of joy and hope, smiles and tears, and all the gratifying experiences without the support and assistance of all of you. Yes, it was a challenging project this year but so rewarding!

We review all these activities of 2011 and look forward setting our goals for 2012. We do know that the Lutheran Church has expressed a desire to host the Bazaar and that the women at Easton are interested in hosting the Festival of Tables. And "Yes", this is the year of our "Trash and Treasure Sale." Remember, your trash can become someone else's treasure. As you clean and are tempted to toss, just put items aside for our late summer event. Just keep watch of the bulletin board, bulletins and newsletters for the up-to-date announcements.

Let us remember the purpose of the UMW: *We are not just keeping busy, but we are working to make a better world in the name of Christ our Savior. We are blessed, and as I mentioned once before, "If you see someone without a smile, give him yours."* (Joel Osteen)

-Peg Fell

## Cassie Stewart Circle

The Circle concluded the 2011 year with the giving of poinsettias to the United Methodist Women who are homebound, ill or incapacitated physically. Though attendance was down in December, those present enjoyed the book reviews presented by Pat Zander.

In January we will be privileged to have as our guest, Nancy Patera. Nancy, once a member of our church, is now the pastor of Easton United Methodist Church. She will be sharing her experiences of becoming a pastor. The circle members cordially invite all our church women to attend the meeting scheduled for January 9 at 1:30pm. Just let Peg Fell know so that adequate refreshments will be prepared.

On February 13th, Millie Bartholomew will be our guest speaker and she will be sharing her hobby, wood-carving with us. Again, we emphasize that guests are very welcome. Come join us for an hour of fellowship.



## CHURCH CALENDAR

*\*The 1st Sunday of each month is always Communion Sunday. Prayer Group meets every Tuesday at 9am.*

### January

1 *Happy New Year!*

*Combined worship at 10:15am*

3 Friendship Group 9:30am

3 UMW 2pm

5 Investment Fund Committee 2pm

9 Cassie Stewart 1:30pm

9 Trustees 7pm

9 Ad Board 8pm

14 Percussion class with Marcelino 10am here

15 Youth Group 3-5pm

22 Youth Group 3-5pm

29 Youth Group 3-5 pm

30 Missions Committee 7pm

### February

5 Youth Group 3-5 pm

7 Friendship Group 9:30am

7 UMW 2pm

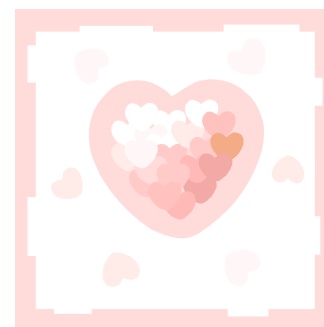
12 Youth Group 3-5 pm

13 Cassie Stewart 1:30pm

19 Youth Group 3-5 pm

22 Ash Wednesday

26 Youth Group 2-5pm





A Special Prayer

Lord, make the New Year a happy one...

Not by shielding us from sorrow and pain, but  
by strengthening us to bear if it comes,

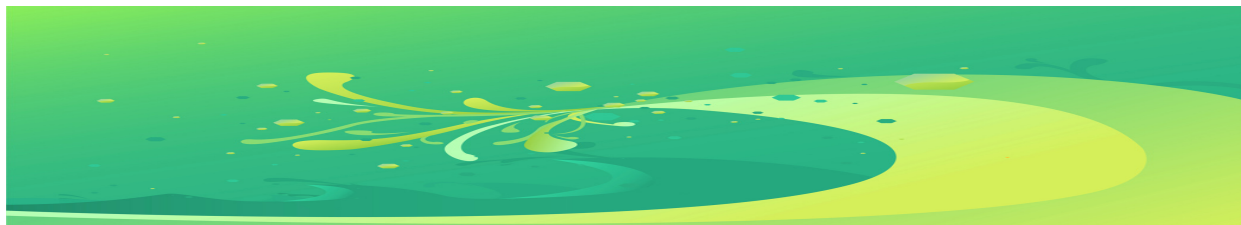
Not by taking hardship from us, but by taking  
all cowardice and fear from our hearts as we  
meet hardships.

Not by making our paths easy, but by making  
us sturdy enough to tread any path.

Not by granting unbroken sunshine, but by  
keeping our faces bright even in the shadows.

Not by making our lives always pleasant, but  
by showing us where others and your cause  
needs us most and by making us zealous to  
be there and to help...

God, make our year a happy one!



Turning the Tide ... Prayer Team at Ionia First United Methodist Church

**BELIEVE!**

*The Father may have allowed us to face the difficulties in our nation and community in order to warn us of the deeper spiritual issues we face. However, when we turn back to HIM and acknowledge HIM as our Lord God, HE will stem the tide and lead us to our desired haven.*

Several individuals from our congregation have taken the challenge to intercede in prayer, very specifically, on behalf of our nation for the next 140 days. We are following a 20-week Turning the Tide prayer guide, which includes topics such as God's Ability to Help Us, Revival and Spiritual Awakening, The Financial Crisis, Unemployment, Terrorism, The Erosion of Our Liberties, etc. We are committed to personal prayer on a given topic each week and in gathering together for corporate prayer once a month, beginning in January. The timing of this prayer series will also lead us into the National Day of Prayer in May.

We join prayer groups of this type throughout our nation who are interceding on behalf of our fellow Americans, and see what the Lord will do.

Our journey has begun, however, if you are interested in participating in this initiative, feel free to contact Marilyn Nash @ marilynn1@charter.net or via phone 527-7456 for details.

# THANK YOU


Thank you to the Ionia First church members for the care, love and support and prayer given to my mother. She loved her home church and the people here showed that amazing support at her memorial service December 13. Pastor Larry's visits to Lansing, his message that day, the memorials and the luncheon are all most appreciated.

Jane Smith

Trudie Hooper's daughter


## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### January Birthdays



1 Mark Hotchkin  
2 Marge Irby  
8 Miller Hotchkin  
10 Adam Frost  
14 Jack Manciu  
16 Frances Carr  
24 Forest Schumacher  
27 Al Irby  
27 Katherine Lincoln

### February Birthdays



1 Andy Badder	17 Jan Fate
3 Mary Monger	18 Jerry Winter
8 Virginia Nelson	21 Roberta Sterner
8 Jan Powell	23 Jenifer Stout
9 Andrew Badder	24 Sharon Hartman
10 Marie Church	27 Larry Ransom
11 James Martin	
13 Joan MacDonald	
14 Abby Frost	
15 John Ransom	
16 Lois Johnson	
16 Lucille Leslie	

### January Anniversaries



4 Al and Joan MacDonald  
28 Bill and Frances Carr

**Administrative Council**

Janet Winter (chair)  
 Pastor Larry Brown  
 Peg Fell  
 Jean Clark  
 Gladys Stout  
 Chris Bennett  
 Al MacDonald  
 Joan MacDonald  
 Bev Brown  
 June Faulkner  
 Al Irby  
 Miller Hotchkin  
 Ted Paton

**Finance**

Al Irby (co-chair)  
 Pastor Larry (co-chair)  
 Al MacDonald  
 Mindy Talbot  
 Ethel Clark  
 Ron Beach

**Staff/Parish Relations**

Ted Paton (chair)  
 Nancy Haight  
 Jan Powell  
 Mary Hausserman  
 Margie First

*2011 Budget Report  
 End of November*

Income     \$149,501.10

Expenses \$152,974.82

Short         -\$3,473.72

**Trustees**

Jack Hausserman  
 Stuart Church  
 John Fate  
 Jerry Winter  
 Miller Hotchkin  
 Dorothy Beach  
 Ken Felice

**Investment Fund Committee**

Mindy Talbot  
 Miller Hotchkin  
 Jerry Winter (Chair)  
 Marge Irby  
 Janet Winter  
 Avis White

**Keep in your prayers:**

**Lucille Leslie**  
**Ron Beach**  
**Matt Robinson**  
**Coalette Schumacher**  
**Judy Hoffman**  
**Cooper Wedmayer**  
**Corey Lanz**  
**David Kilgore**  
**Tom Whitelock**  
**John Clark**

**Harold Buys**  
**Rick Borup**  
**Don Emelander**  
**Wilma Bailey**  
**Ken Badder**  
**Phil Perry**  
**Maggie Vinette**  
**Nancy Rowan**  
**Jean Clark**  
**Kelly Wieber**

**Carol Adkinson**  
**Marilyn Klinessmith**  
**Delores Felice**  
**Lois Johnson**  
**Dale Peterson**  
**Helen Pentz**  
**Lucy Gray**  
**Carol Newkirk**  
**Penny Wineman**  
**Mayeileen Bartosh**  
**Luella Nash**



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