



Faith Connections – January 2023

Ionia United Methodist Church
2120 Elton Rd., Ionia, NY 14475
585-657-6984 www.ioniaumc.org

From Our Pastor's Desk:

Grace and peace to you in 2023!

It is clear to me that the Lord our God Incarnate, who took the holy name of Jesus, loves you. He was born of a woman and raised by a community. He was baptized in water and spirit walked the dusty roads of Palestine and Judea along the Jordan. With each step he imagined the days He would have walking with you, too. He loves you, dearly. We worship a Savior that is unstoppable in His desire for your love, too.

When I think about the ways God imagined how love would make itself known, ideas run around in my head like a singing blue bird on a fresh spring day over a sunny mountain! It seems new and wide open; each day to reach out for God's love; and so in this new and wonderful year of turning a calendar page, can we remember the freshness of the love of Jesus? Fresh every day is His love and grace for you!

If we can imagine that we are indeed as loved as scripture speaks, do you ever ask yourself if you would be able to share it? I know you share with spouse, friends, sibling, children and even grandchildren. And if you name how grateful to God you are for the beauty of love in your relationships, you have made love, relational. We do not actually care deeply for pizza, or football games, or vehicles – even though we say – Oh! I love that (pizza, sport or car)! Real love is about God and how we have been blessed and loved, first. In this new year, I am asking that we truly revisit what that means.

Ponder your prayer quietly, alone with God for a few minutes a day. Ask God, “while I know I love you, Lord, do you actually love me? I am a slob – just a person, nothing special. I am not a star of a TV reality show, not a soccer beast, not a person with great monetary wealth. I just have lived this life and tried to be decent, to love you, love my friends and family, and come to worship (as often

as I can). I support the church with my humble offering, and I volunteer as I can. That's it – is that worthy of your love?”

Then sit in the quiet and listen for God's response. Keep this prayer practice going every day for a few minutes until you sense the Presence. This is a precious moment. If you can sense the Presence, keep it going, day by day! You might never believe that you are loved and forgiven by the God of all creation, unless you hear it for yourself – and to hear it, you have to ask. This is the experience of God's love between the two of you. It's precious.

And even as the scripture speaks of God's great care for you, I am hopeful that you will truly believe it. Once you do your world will open up to a freedom like no other. You have to experience it to understand what it is like (for you). I know we have all been loved in more ways than we can count. In this new year, will you be able to absorb this truth? God's spiritual reality? I pray so.

In love and peace,
Pastor Robin



.....relational with radical hospitality = Jesus' love for you.....



Happy January Birthdays

Kevin, Pastor Robin's nephew
Louise Childs, Pastor Robin's mother-in-law, is in hospice.
Mel & Shorty Inglesby, who have been in the hospital
A parishioner's son
The people of Ukraine and Russia
Our nation & the world
Doris Daniels
Jean Frelier
Elaine Parrish
MaryAnn & Cliff Pimm
All youth in today's world
All those battling COVID 19, cancer, & diseases



Our Church Joys!

All those who helped decorate our church!
Jim Marianacci built wood boxes for all our donation collections!
Don Frelier who installed the new sanctuary tv!
There were 9 participants in the Advent book study!
We collected 26 shoeboxes for the children & adults served by Red Bird!!! Thank you to all who donated!
Thank you to everyone who contributed to our church in 2022 to fulfill our budget!
Thank you to everyone who supported our 2022 fundraisers by providing food/supplies, &/or working, &/or attending!



Jacquie Shellman –the new member of our church family!

A Thank you from Elaine Parrish:
"Thank you to my Ionia Church Family from the bottom of my heart for thinking of me and sending the box of wonderful miscellaneous gifts to me, including the tree which is very happy in my window!"



If you wish to receive this newsletter by mail or by email, please reply or call 657-6984 leaving a message with your address or email. Or if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, do the same.

- 1 Sheila Weld
- 2 Mary Twardokus
- 3 Luke Bastian
- Gwendolyn Vary
- 6 Mel Inglesby
- 8 Rodney Belding
- 9 Sue Garling
- Scott Layton
- Hannah Tyo
- 13 Sam M. Fryer
- 15 James Tiffany
- 16 Gary Evans
- Samantha Layton
- 17 Mary Tolomay
- 18 Alex Kenyon
- 20 James Schlenker
- 23 Donald Dunlap
- Sue Washburn
- 24 Melissa Price
- 25 Susan Fraser
- Sandra Hritz
- Jim Marianacci
- 27 Hal Giessler
- 28 Vicki Smith
- 29 Lydia Paddock
- 31 Wayne Twardokus

Birthday List Update: If I do not have you or a family member's birthday, please call 657-7722 or email me at mt2152@hotmail.com. Thank you!



And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.
Ephesians 3:18-19

God's love is so great that we, as mere humans, cannot fully understand it. Humans' love for one another often depends at least partly on the behavior of the person being loved. God's love for us does not.

Do you long to be known and loved for who you are? God is the only one who can truly do that.



New Bishop for our UNY Conference

Bishop Hector Burgos will be our new Upper NY Conference Bishop beginning January 1, 2023. He comes to us from the Central District in the Greater New Jersey Conference where he was district superintendent. With his election, he became the first Hispanic/Latino bishop elected in the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference. We welcome him to our conference and will keep him in our prayers.



LOCAL MISSIONS Our church's mission is to serve our church family & community.

Mission Team: Carol Hinds, Pastor Robin, and of course the body of Christ!

Spreading our Christmas joy beyond our church this season:



This year the Christmas Offering is being matched by the church so twice as much as was collected will go to Water for South Sudan and Heifer Project's Water Project.



All the Mitten Tree donations of hats, socks, and much more will go to the Open Door Mission in Rochester.



10 Christmas boxes were distributed to our home-bound! All kinds of useful items were collected from our church family & then distributed.



Food Donations for 9 Christmas Dinners were collected & distributed to area people!



Drop off your clean "NYS deposit" Pop Cans & Bottles for Missions
Place into the crate next to the shed behind the church. Please drain the bottles & cans & place them in plastic bags! Thank you for all your donations! Pop cans and bottles do add up... The first week of January we collected 1,667 more cans & bottles for \$ 100.02!



is continuing to provide relief to Ukraine & its citizens. To donate at this time, all gifts to UMCOR's International Disaster Response & Recovery Advance will be used to assist those who remain in Ukraine & those who have fled the violence to neighboring nations. Gifts can be made in the following ways:

** Online at <https://umcmission.org/advance-project/982450>

**By toll-free telephone call: 1-888-252-6174

**By check made out to Global Ministries/UMCOR with "Advance #982450-Ukraine" written on the memo line and mailed to Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY, 10087-9068
** By check made out to Global Ministries/UMCOR with "Advance #982450-Ukraine" written on the memo line and placed in our offering plate



Check our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/IoniaUMCNY>



www.ioniaumc.org

Check out all the information on our website! Newsletters, event information, etc.



KEEP SEEKING HIM

God loves you so much that He sacrificed His Son for you.

For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

But God loves you so much that He was willing to let His Son come to earth, be mistreated, and ultimately die for your sins so that you could become His child too. That is love that's beyond understanding.

But God loves you so much that He was willing to let His Son come to earth, be mistreated, and ultimately die for your sins so that you could become His child too. That is love that's beyond understanding.



Church Directory

UPDATE



We would like to update our church directory and then distribute it to our church family. They would not be on our church website or for public viewing. We would not print your information in the directory if you so wish. If you know (or want us to confirm) that your information needs to be updated, please complete the form at church, or email the church at ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com, or give the information to Judy Baldwin or Mary Twardokus. Thank you!



GAME NIGHT

Church Family Game Night **(for everyone, families, couples, & singles!)** **Saturday, January 21, 6-9pm**

A fun evening get-together!
We will play games & cards after dinner.
Bring a dish-to-pass and if you have a favorite game/cards bring them, too.
Plates, silverware & beverages will be provided.
Bring a friend!

Some New Year's Thoughts from Dr. Norman Vincent Peale:

"Start and end every day, and in between times, too, by thanking God for everything."

"Sing at least one song every day."

"Do your best and leave the results to God."



Ray Van Der Laan & Max Lucado DVD
Studies – after Sunday Worship

Your love, LORD,
reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

-Psalm 36:5



God will not let you down because His love cannot fail.

Your unfailing love, O LORD, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, Your justice like the ocean depths. You care for people and animals alike, O LORD. How precious is Your unfailing love, O God! All humanity finds shelter in the shadow of Your wings. (Psalm 36:5-7)

You have probably been hurt or betrayed by someone you love at some point in your life. Maybe you have experienced this more than once. Loving and trusting other people is risky. Once one person hurts you, it becomes harder to open up to others.

In contrast, God's love is truly unconditional. He never fails you or betrays you. You do not need to hold back in your relationship with God, because He is totally trustworthy.

When you feel let down by people, read these verses and remember this: Though people may let you down, God never will.



Your questions, answered.

Do you have questions about The United Methodist Church? "Ask The UMC" can help you find answers or the best contact for your question.

Chat live with us, submit your question at umc.org/en/ask-the-umc-form or email directly to asktheumc@umc.org.

Ionia United Methodist Church

PO Box 8
2120 Elton Rd.
Ionia, NY 14475



Ionia United Methodist Church
2120 Elton Road, P. O. Box 8
Ionia, New York 14475

Sunday Worship Service:
9:30AM AM

Church Website: www.ioniaumc.org
Church Email: ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com
Facebook: "IoniaUMCNY"
Church Phone: 585-657-6984
Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robin Blair
Pastor's Email: revrobinblair@gmail.com
Pastor's Phone: 315-729-4485
Pastor Robin's Sabbath is Friday.



JANUARY Calendar

Sundays, 10:30 AM Coffee Hour & DVD Studies
Tuesday 3rd : Trustees meeting
Friday, 6th: Epiphany
Sunday, 8th: Baptism of Jesus
Sunday, 8th: Birthday Sunday
Wed., 11th : Ad Board meeting
Sunday, 15th: Human Relations Sunday
Monday, 16th: Martin L. King Day
Sat., 21st: Game Night & Pot-Luck
Sunday, 29th Pot-Luck Brunch

Happy New Year ♥ *Happy New Year* ♥ *Happy New Year*

*"God believes in me; therefore my situation is never hopeless.
God walks with me; therefore I am never alone.
God is on my side; therefore I can never lose."*
A. Philip Parham