



Faith Connections – January 2024

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

From Our Pastor's Desk:

Beloved in Christ,

May this new year together be blessed by the grace of God in our lives. Help us, Lord, see you in all there is and all we do.

Araminta Ross was born into slavery in Dorchester county, Maryland, in 1822. She knew God's leading, and it took her to live beyond enslavement of body and soul. She once said, "Twant me, 'twas the Lord. I always told him, 'I trust you. I don't know where to go or what to do, but I expect you to lead me,' and God always did." She was a bold and courageous woman and an abolitionist in the middle 1800s. She tackled injustice and made a difference that echoed in history. How did she find her freedom from slavery, free hundreds of slaves and become a nurse, a spy, and a commanding officer in the US Civil War? She followed the Lord.

What could happen this new year, 2024, if we followed the Lord like Araminta, AKA, Harriet Tubman? The psalmist wrote, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105). In what ways might God's word lead us this year? We might not lead the enslaved from oppression to freedom through swamps and fields by the light of the stars, but God has something for us, too. If we pay attention might we tackle what would seem impossible without the wisdom of God, the truth of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit? Here are three ideas to prepare ourselves as we approach the new year.

Celebrate victories: Celebrate what God has done over the past year in your life and the lives of those you love. This may seem obvious, but did we really praise God for all that went well? It is important to remember that our "victories" are God's blessings. Maybe you saw people make-up and let go of that grudge after years of conflict, maybe you witnessed the congregation growing because more and more people want to know how to love God the way

they have been loved, or maybe you made a commitment to God's creation and will seriously cut back on single-use plastics in your home and your newly formed awareness has turned into activity. All of it is praiseworthy. Thank the Lord for wisdom and grace. Encourage those around you, too, because you can! Celebrate what God has done this past year!

Remember reflection: Give yourself that personal reflection time as you move into 2024. Use the scripture, daily, to seek God's presence in your everyday. Before communion, the Bible says to examine yourself (1 Cor. 11:28). I think before, and at a new year, we should examine ourselves too. If you want a book that helps you reflect, I am going to be reading Brian McLaren's, *We Make the Road by Walking: A Year-Long Quest for Spiritual Formation, Reorientation, and Activation*. Let me know if you like that one and we can talk about it, together. Also consider one of the free programs to read the **Bible in one year**: I am fond of the Bible Project, with programs and lots of videos, all free (they welcome donations)! <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/>

Be the Grace you seek: The apostle Paul called the gospel of first importance (1 Cor. 15:3). Why? Because Christ is the only way to be saved from the sins of our lives. God's grace is the gift we could never earn, but because Jesus atoned for humanity with his own life by dying on the cross, a person innocent of sin, he gave love to people like rain for all living things. Consider how you can grow in your understanding and appreciation of the good news of Jesus Christ this year, because of His grace, by sharing His grace.

Let us follow him boldly, intentionally, and expectantly. We declare our love for the Lord with every breath, and we give thanks. love, Pastor Robin

HAPPY NEW YEAR

From Pastor Robin:

Single-Use Plastics are Killing our planet?

What Are Single-Use Plastics?

Put simply, single-use plastics are goods that are made primarily from fossil fuel-based chemicals (petrochemicals) & are meant to be disposed of right after use—often, in mere minutes. Single-use plastics are most commonly used for packaging & service ware, such as bottles, wrappers, straws, & bags.

Read on

<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/single-use-plastics-101#what>

Can we cut back even more from single-use plastics to care for God's creation? I hope & pray we do! In addition to having detergent sheets (still have many to give away), & encouraging people to stop buying laundry detergent in tubs made of single-use plastics, there are other simple steps.

1. Remember bars of soap? Lose the plastic pump containers of liquid soap & get back to the bars.
2. Dishwashing powder! Comes in a cardboard box!
3. Reuse spray bottles: can you make vinegar & water to spray on your windows in that spray bottle that used to contain blue liquid? It all matters! Tell everybody you do this because you care for God's beautiful planet! Educate yourself through movies!

Movie recommendation: **Dark Waters**

Dark Waters is a 2019 American legal thriller film directed by Todd Haynes and written by Mario Correa & Matthew Michael Carnahan. The story dramatizes Robert Bilott's case against the chemical manufacturing corporation DuPont after they contaminated a town with unregulated chemicals. It stars Mark Ruffalo as Bilott, along with Anne Hathaway, Tim Robbins, Bill Camp, Victor Garber, Mare Winningham, William Jackson Harper, & Bill Pullman.

It is an eye opener, & you will not forget this story.



Epiphany is January 6th



Advent & Christmas Eve services!
Decorations inside & outside our church!
Our collections & gifts to missions!



Each Sunday morning, 8:30

am, Rev. Dr. Robin Blair hosts the, Finger Lakes Journal, radio show, on WYLF, AM 850. It is about 20 minutes in length where Rev. Blair has interviewed a guest about something that is happening in the beautiful Finger Lakes area that could be of interest to the folks like us who live here!



Our prayers are with the family of Mary Dunne who passed on Dec.23rd.

Pat & Ron, Kay, Doris, Shirley, Elaine, Jan, Mary Ann & Cliff, Lola, & all our home-bound members

A parishioner's son & his parents

Our nation & the world & all countries engaged in war

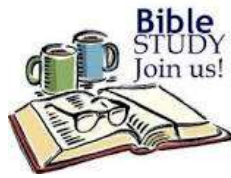
Our military men & women

All those battling cancer, COVID, & chronic diseases



Birthday Sunday

on the 2nd Sunday of each month celebrating all those people with birthdays during that month! To make/buy a cake for this celebration, you may sign up in Fellowship Hall or call Carol 657-7310.



Ray Van Der Laan & Max Lucado DVD

Studies will be held after our Sunday fellowship time, except for on Brunch Sunday.

Monday night Bible study resumes January 8th, 2024, at 7:00 pm. We have been moving through the Revised Common Lectionary and could continue this way. I will be asking through group if they would like to consider moving through a particular book at a time. If so, it will be announced. Zoom, Monday nights, 7:00 pm.

Our next book study will be during Lent, 2024. Look for something in the February Newsletter, Lent begins on Feb 14th!



Common Table Podcast

The Social Holiness Team of UNY AC UMC, (Pastor Robin) offers a variety of podcasts for your information regarding matters of social justice and love. Please visit:

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1940809>



We will not be collecting used ink cartridges any more due to Staples' requirements. **Since 2020**, we have collected a total of 620 cartridges, thus saving the church \$ 1,240 in office supplies using the Staples coupons we received for the cartridges we recycled at Staples! With these coupons, we have supplied our church with **all** our copier paper, poster board, markers & other office supplies! **Thank you so much** to all the people who have donated their cartridges over the years!



Christmas Altar Flowers were given this year in memory of: Jim Adams, Baldwin & Lewis parents, Kathryn Ann Belding, Roger Evans, Bennett Family, Morse & Shellman families, Murphy & Tolomay parents, Pastor Robin's parents, Twardokus & Waterman families, Blaine & Elaine Vary, Tom Wells, Dale & Mary Lou Williams



Favorite Church Recipes

Bean Casserole – a favorite at pot-lucks
Brown: ½ lb bacon, ½ lb. ground beef, 1 large onion.
Add: 1 c. ketchup, 2T Worcestershire sauce, 1T brown mustard, ¾ c. brown sugar, ½ c. white sugar, 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp pepper to mixture. (or from another recipe: 1/3 c. sugar, 1/3 c. brown sugar, ¼ c ketchup, ¼ bbq sauce, 1 T mustard, ½ tsp pepper, ½ tsp chili powder,) Simmer for 20 minutes. Drain 1 can each: pork & beans (or baked beans), kidney beans, great northern beans (or your preference for type beans). Add beans to mixture & put in casserole. Bake 350^o
For 1 hour covered (or uncovered).



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

Christmas Donations collected for:



The Open Door Mission in

Rochester donations for men, women & children: new socks, new hats, new gloves & mittens, & new underwear. new or gently used winter clothes: coats, boots, sweatshirts, sweaters, & sweatpants.



Family Promise of Ontario County

Gifts for two boys in a family served by F.P.



Red Bird Mission donations collected

were doubled by the church



Blessing Room: collections of personal items & canned & boxed food items. Christmas dinners were also provided for some area families.

Thank you for helping make the holidays brighter for our neighbors in need!



Drop off your clean "NYS deposit" Pop Cans & Bottles for Missions

Place into the crate or trash containers next to the shed behind the church. Please drain the bottles & **cans & place them in plastic bags!** Thank you for all for over 17,500 can donations this year, netting **almost 1,000 for missions!!**



In Our Area:

West Bloomfield United Church of Christ at the 4-corners of W. Bloomfield will hold our 2nd Annual Day of Curiosity on Saturday February 3, 2024 9am-4:30pm. We were so happy you joined us for our first Day of Curiosity, and we're working on securing speakers and creating a lot of fun ways to tease our curious minds, hearts, and bodies out of any mid-winter cabin fever. Join us for a fun day of learning and interacting in body, mind, and spirit! We will send a registration link in early January, but mark it on your calendar now!

Confirmed topics so far: Artificial Intelligence, De-carbonization at Home, Methods of Deep Discernment in Times of Transition, Maple Sugaring Workshop Tapping Maples in Front Yard of Church

Every Monday & Thurs.4-6pm & Weds. & Sat. 10am-noon Free Community Clothes Closet in Parsonage House, Victor UMC, 106 E. Main St., shop for free clothing, etc. Also – donation items are needed

2nd Mondays, 7pm Pub Theology at Fanatics in Lima with Honeoye Falls UMC "Beers, Conversations & God." All perspectives are welcome.

Every Wednesday, 11:30 am, free Hands Of Hope Lunch, at St Bridget's Church Hall, Bloomfield.

2nd Weds., 4:30-6 PM (or until sold out).Take-out Spaghetti Dinner at the UMC of Livonia,21 Summer St, Spaghetti, sauce, meatballs, undressed salad, and garlic bread. Donations accepted.

3rd Thurs. of each month 11:30-1:00, Free Community Lunch at East Bloomfield UMC

Last Friday of the month Community Suppers – free 5:00–6:30pm 1st Congregational Church in Bloomfield

Fridays & Saturdays 10 a.m. to noon. Seeds of Love Clothing Closet in Honeoye – A new clothing closet providing free clothes for community members in need at 8961 Main St., Honeoye, a service of St. Mary & St. Matthew's churches For more information, contact Diane Brewer-Hawes at 259-6187 or dbrewerhawes@gmail.com.

In Our Area (continued)

2nd, 3rd, 4th Saturdays of each month Free Community Dinner 5:00 – 6:30PM at Victor Presbyterian Church, 70 E. Main St., A sit down family style wholesome dinner with musical entertainment. . Take-out meals will be available - call the church at 924-2289 during the Community Dinner time & then it will be brought to your car.

4th Saturday of each month Free Breakfast, 9-11AM, at East Bloomfield UMC Pancakes, sausage, fruit, beverages



Happy January Birthdays!

- 1 Sheila Weld
- 2 Mary Twardokus
- 3 Luke Bastian
Gwendolyn Vary
- 6 Mel Inglesby
- 8 Rodney Belding
- 9 Sue Garling
- 11 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



"Lord,
Whether we're leaving behind a year of joy and blessing or trials and difficulties, we pause to give thanks. We thank you that you are always with us, every single day of every single year. Please remind us of your presence in the year ahead, even when life is busy. We are so thankful that we serve a God who makes things new and gives us the grace of fresh starts and new beginnings. Be glorified in our lives this year. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Heather C. King



Our Church on Christmas Eve



Our Christmas Altar



GAME NIGHT

Church Family Game Night
(for everyone, families, couples, & singles!)
Several in the coming months!
Watch for the dates!

Ionia United Methodist Church
PO Box 8
2120 Elton Rd.
Ionia, NY 14475



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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

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Sundays, 9:30 AM Worship Service

10:30 AM Coffee Hour & DVD Study

Saturday, January 6th Epiphany

Sunday, January 7th Jesus' Baptism

Sunday, January 14th: Birthday Sunday

Monday, Jan. 15 Martin Luther King's birthday

Tuesday, January 16th Ad Board meeting

Sunday, January 28th Monthly Brunch

NAME	LOCATIO	FOCUS	Description
Blessing Room	Local	food, school supplies, coats	Serves residents of Bloomfield School District, experiencing a food emergency. Also provides school supplies, winter coats, children's toys, and holiday food baskets.
Family Promise of Ontario County	Local	housing, job connection	Helps homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence in a community-based response.
Habitat For Humanity	Local chapter	housing	Habitat's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live by building strength, stability and self-reliance in partnership with people and families in need of a decent and affordable home.
Heifer Project	International	food security, poverty	Partners with small to improve families' food security and increase income. Offers tools, training, and resources to help farmers work together to build profitable, sustainable businesses with strong market linkages.
Open Door Mission	Local	homeless	provide for spiritual & physical needs of impoverished and homeless men, women and children of Rochester, NY by restoring hope and changing lives.
Red Bird Mission	Kentucky	education, housing, clinical, senior support	mission addresses health care, education, housing, food, and clothing needs in two of the poorest US counties. The mission includes a senior center, K-12 school, health & dental clinics, senior apartments, a 2 nd hand store, a home repair program, meals-on-wheels, mother support, and food bank.
Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services	Local	housing, job training	provides services and opportunities to ensure assimilation of refugees into our society while maintaining their own cultural heritage.
Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes	Local	survivors of domestic abuse	provides services for individuals, children, and families who have experienced sexual violence, domestic violence, child abuse, and human trafficking in Ontario, Seneca, and Yates Counties. Offers counseling, support groups, legal and personal advocacy, referrals to other local agencies, primary prevention services in schools, professional agencies, and communities served.
Water for South Sudan	International	Clean water	provides clean, safe water to communities in South Sudan.
Willow Center	Local	Domestic violence prevention and survivor support	To prevent domestic violence and ensure survivor access to services and supports along the journey to a safe and empowered life.

Special Sundays			
Human Relations	US	Community development	benefits neighborhood ministries, community advocacy programs, at-risk teens
Native American	US	support Indigenous communities	increase the vitality of existing communities of faith, revitalize congregations, and create/repair spaces where indigenous models of ministry can thrive.
Peace with Justice	International	Equity	support programs/ministries to educate, equip and mobilize actions in identified Economic, Health, and Gender Justice Priorities.
UMCOR	International	disaster relief, recovery, and prevention	humanitarian relief and development. Global, direct ministry to persons in need. Provides technical support and training to address emerging and ongoing issues.
United Methodist Student	International	Education	financial aid to United Methodist students
World Communion	International	education	provide scholarships, grants, mentoring and training for leadership development.



Decorating the Sanctuary Tree



1st Sunday of Advent Alter



Children's Time on Christmas Eve