



Faith Connections – October 2024

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

From Our Pastor's Desk:

Dear Friends

I greet you with love, peace, joy and hope as we enter the 10th month of the year and commend this October newsletter to you. I pray you will enjoy reading it and will be encouraged by the contents. Read and delight in the work of God through our community of faith!

As we count down the months remaining in 2024, I continue to invite you to the scriptures for strength and inspiration in your daily living. I encourage you have a time of devotion that helps you to set the tone for the day. Each day is filled with its tasks, goals, challenges, and needs, and so we must choose how we will face the world. Do we live through the lens our relationship with God through Jesus Christ, our Savior? Praise be to God, that is exactly what we are invited by the Lord to do!

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matt 11:28-30

A boy and his father were walking along the road when they came to a large stone. The boy said to his father, “Do you think if I use all my strength, I can move this rock?” His father answered, “If you use all your strength, I am sure you can do it.” The boy began to push the rock. Exerting himself as much as he could, he pushed and pushed. The rock did not move. Discouraged, he said to his father, “You were wrong. I can’t do it.” His father placed his arm around the boy’s shoulder and said, “No, son. You didn’t use all your strength — you didn’t ask me to help.” *David J. Wolpe*

We are never without resources in our lives, even when the chips are down. Our Bible is a book filled with so much for our faith and spiritual education. Do you have a question about believing? In scripture, the subject of

“believing” appears 272 times. What about prayer? This spiritual discipline is mentioned 371 times so surely there is something for you! How would you like to be affirmed regarding love? Love is mentioned 714 times. These numbers vary a bit depending on the translation you are reading, but you get the idea; there are verses for the human experience that the Divine can infuse by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Another topic that is often written about in our holy book, is the concept of giving. It is that time of year when we examine our financial budgets, our missional purposes, our capacity to give to God a portion of that which has been given to us whether it is the currency of your time, talents, graciousness, or financial resources. Some folks like to tithe each year a certain sum, which admittedly helps our budget to keep the “lights on”. Some of you give what you can monthly in terms of money, *and* so much of your time and graceful gifts there is that notion of abundance I celebrate with you in Christ’s name. If we look to the scriptures about giving there is a great deal more to offer than the idea of a tithe (10%) of the gross annual income you have at your disposal for the expenses of a life in the 21st century. Consider the notion of “first fruits”:

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce. Prov. 9:3.

You might be surprised to learn that “giving” is mentioned 2,162 times through the scriptures! There are more promises related to giving than to any other subject in our scriptures. I admit that surprised me as well! For example, Jesus talked more about giving than anything else; more than half of the parables have to do with money and worldly goods. The Good Samaritan who helped the wounded stranger to the Inn and paid in advance for his care. The vineyard owner who “paid” the fellow who worked for an hour the same as he paid the worker who was there all day. Or, the wicked slave who begged the master for more time on his debt, was given mercy by the Master but would not give the

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From Our Pastor's Desk: (continued)

same to someone who owed him a sum.

It appears that these stories help us remember in our own context and day and time, that giving is central to our Christian purpose. We give our time as we serve one another, we give our talents when we paint the steps or bake the cake, and we give our financial resources to keep the ministry alive in the context of a building, the presence of a pastor, the public worship experience, and all that underlines the ministry of administration. When the budget allows things in the administration ministry to run smoothly, we are fret-free to be able to get out into the world and serve God's people.

I know it is obvious to nearly all of you, but if you are new to the United Methodist Church, you might not know that each church is its own small, not for profit business with a 501c3 status through the government. The churches run entirely on the donations that come from all of us, not from a central budget of the Upper New York Annual Conference (AC). So bearing in mind what God has given to you, I am asking if we should have a consecration Sunday to celebrate our pledge to the Lord of our time, talents, and treasures. Attached you will find a small pledging card that asks for your covenant of giving. What will you give to God in time, your gracious gifts and talents, time, and finances? Please join me in prayer for this season of discernment and giving.

With love and grace, Pastor Robin



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!



Sundays, 9:00 AM, for all ages!

We are looking for someone to help with the children's class. If you can help out, also contact Pastor Robin.

Who do say that I am? By Rev Robin Blair

"This question was recently in the lectionary and it served as we shared time in worship. Jesus wonders how we identify with him. Jesus is asking us to come to him with a definition in our relationship with him, and if you can find words for that, perhaps you can offer something regarding a vision for the congregation.

- *Remain in me, for without me you can do nothing.... I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last.* — John 15: 5, 16

I am asking you to share with me a vision of who God is calling us to be. What is the fruit that will last that God is speaking to you? The Administration Board and I have talked about many ideas together. Here are some of them: Ionia UMC is a place where Jesus lives in the hearts of the people and inspires us to FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE.

To live this Faith, Hope and Love, we stand in grace to be a:

- Green church - we are faithful and active about Caring for Creation. It is a matter of justice to care about the land, air, water, trees, and natural world - not only because we want our grandchildren to grow up in an environment that will sustain them, but because the tree cannot speak for itself, and its beauty and function on the planet has a purpose beyond its disposal for material goods, only.
- Place of radical hospitality (welcoming, loving, open and inclusive so that these feelings of living faith wander outside the building)
- Center for the heart of missions - domestic, national, and International. (How can we serve the Lord with our neighbors who live nearby, somewhere in our country, or in a place we might never visit and learn a single name of someone helped?)
- Worship center: we desire to build a time of worship that is filled with music and scripture, story and prayer, message and art! People will come to praise God because they cannot stay away from the worship experience as inspires everyone to talk about and be about the good news of Jesus!
- What would each of these take? What are your other ideas?





Joys in our church

Thank you to all who donated school supplies for the Bloomfield Blessing Room. They so appreciated all the supplies!

Donna & Roger Cullen are leading training sessions for the conference on volunteering for their mission projects this month!

Roger & Pete are going to help clean up after the flooding in Canisteo!

Those who assist in our worship service by reading the scriptures!

Thank you to John & Don for power washing, scraping & painting our front porch!

Thank you to those who weeded & mulched our gardens! The grounds are beautiful.



Ron Bennett is in the hospital
Sue, Pat, Kay, Gary, Doris, Shirley, Elaine, Jan, Lola, Cliff & MaryAnn, & 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.

Common Table Podcast

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

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



Birthday Sunday on the 2nd Sunday of each month

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



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

Did you know that your Ionia United Methodist Church (IUMC) is passionate about the local, national and international community? We focus missional funds, volunteer hours, and other giving throughout the year towards ongoing needs and in response to events such as start of school year or holidays or the devastation of a weather event. We join other church-based and community organizations in identifying needs and directing resources. IUMC volunteers know that serving is an incredible opportunity. In the words of Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, *"The quality of mercy is not strained; It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."*

I UMC shares blessings with women and children in a Zimbabwe hospital, with local refugees by teaching English and refurbishing homes, with Bloomfield school district students by providing backpacks and school supplies, with homeowners impacted by the Rome, NY tornado and Woodhull floods, with homeless people living in Canandaigua and Rochester, with women and children escaping domestic violence, with Appalachian people living in one of the poorest counties in the US, and with local families and individuals through a season of extra care. These blessings provide a taste of how IUMC's people extend the love of Christ. You'll find many who serve here, serve the community as individuals or in their workplace. Your friends and neighbors at IUMC invite you to be part of the blessings given and received. We are eager to hear how you serve others. On Sunday, we meet at 9 AM for Bible study and discussion. At 10 AM the worship service begins followed by fellowship. Our hope to see you soon includes a promise of new blessings.





On Sunday, Sept. 22nd we had a wonderful presentation from two medical missionaries serving in Zimbabwe.

Dr. Emmanuel Mefor and Nurse Midwife Florence Mefor. They serve people in need at the Old Mutare Hospital & Maternity Center, a UMC mission hospital. We learned that one of the key ministries aside from the medical needs of the mother, is one of food. The women who come to the maternity center for deliver their babies come 2-4 weeks in advance of due dates, because there is no transportation that can bring them to the Center once labor has begun. The women walk for miles & miles to reach the Center & stay in beds till it is their time. However, the hospital only feeds the ill patients & the women are not ill, so they must find their own food, & these are women who endure poverty with few resources. Florence Mefor is never tiring to help the women be healthy to have their babies, & the food ministry is a big part of that work. There will be newsletters in the future from the Mefors to keep up with their good ministry. Please pray their work continues & about how we might support them. Pastor Robin was happy to host them overnight at home before they were off to Syracuse.



Drop off your clean & empty “NYS deposit 5¢” Pop Cans & Bottles for Missions

Place into the crate or trash containers next to the shed behind the church. Please place them in plastic bags! **(Please NO RECYCLABLE items like plastic milk jugs, etc)**



For our Creation Care Mission: Recycle your soft plastic bags! Please take them to a participating store & place them in their recycling bin.



UMCOR United States Disaster Response Early Response Team (ERT) Training October 5, 2024 in Liverpool.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) helps alleviate suffering when disaster strikes. Within the United States, UMCOR supports local efforts in several ways. One way is through training volunteers in UMCOR’s Early Response Team (ERT) protocols and guidelines. Volunteers learn skills for limiting the impact of flood waters, tornado strikes, and other natural disasters. Once trained, participants are certified for 3 years to join teams responding to disaster across the United States.

The next local UMCOR Early Response Team training takes place at the Upper New York Conference Center in Liverpool on October 5th from 9 AM -5 PM. Registration: \$35/\$45 (includes materials, lunch, background check, and ID badge).

Register here:

<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/vimtraining/event/ertbasic/Questions?Email=kristinaclark@unyumc.org>



Our church is again collecting printer ink cartridges! Place them in the box in Fellowship Hall or in the plastic tote on the back porch. **Staples is also now also collecting used school supplies & batteries!**

Used back packs, lunch bags, binders, crayons, colored pencils, pens, markers, rulers, & drafting tools. Bring them all to our collection box in Fellowship Hall so we can get coupons for our office supplies!



**Holiday Fair Craft Show:
Saturday, November 16th**

9:00AM – 3:00 PM

Bloomfield High School, 21 Oakmount Ave.

Booth Applications are available on our church website: www.ioniaumc.org

120 crafter spaces selling a wide variety of crafts, gifts, & homemade goodies.

Our church will have their candy booth, too!

Free admission & parking

Lunch will be made by & profited by

Hands of Hope Kitchen

Bring your holiday shopping list!



Many thanks to everyone who helped make our festival such a wonderful success! So many people contributed their own special varied talents to make this event a day to remember for so many. From the chairman Mary Tolomay, to all those who organized an event, helped set up &/or worked at an event, brought their tractor to drive in the parade, to all those who made delicious desserts, & all those who attended – **THANK YOU!** People came from far & wide & had a fun, fall day in the country! Our church made a good profit, but all the smiles, chatting & happy people were certainly the best part of the day!

From Pastor Robin: “Thanks from my heart for the organizational skills of Mary Tolomay & Judy Baldwin, along with all who cooked, baked, gathered, played with kids, organized the tractors, make gift baskets & made them ready to share. It was a beautiful day. Amen.”

Photos of our Fall Festival will be included in our November newsletter!

After a six year hiatus, **Shanty Town returns to WB UCC! Sat., Oct., 26th** For those of you who don't know, Shanty town is an event to help raise money for Habitat for Humanity of Ontario County while teaching kids a little about homelessness and housing insecurity. Kids collect sponsorship money to sleep overnight in cardboard "shanties" in the W. Bloomfield Church's parking lot. Also: play games to raise awareness about homelessness & housing insecurity, share a "soup kitchen"-style dinner, & stay warm around a barrel fire.

Our main fundraising efforts benefit Habitat for Humanity of Ontario County, but we also collect items to support HOPE food pantry's Christmas Food giveaway.

This event is open to all area middle and high school students. If your church is planning to send more than a few children to participate, we ask that you provide a chaperone as well.

Attached is a pdf with more information, as well as a flyer. Please let me know if you have any questions or want more information.

Sarah Williams

The registration form can be found here <https://forms.gle/kMon1qtSFAEMbs36A>



Happy October Birthday!

Ross Belding, Richard Albert, Sr., Dorina Hritz, Caylie Sullivan, Alan, Gene & John Tolomay, Mike Cantie, Kathyne Rapp, Ed Schlenker, Nancy Ficarella, Elaine Bennett, Cole Twardokus, Pete Baldwin, Valerie (Parrish) Phillips, Jeff Albert, Sidney Layton, John Tolomay, Erin Weld, Steven Strapp, Ken Washburn



Birthday Sunday on the 2nd Sunday of each month

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





In Our Area:

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.

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 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

2nd, 3rd, 4th Saturdays of each month Free Community Dinner 5:00 – 6:30PM at Victor Presbyterian Church, 70 E. Main St., Sit-down & take-out meals will be available

Fridays & Saturdays 10 a.m. to noon. Seeds of Love Clothing Closet in Honeoye – A clothing closet providing free clothes for community members in need at 8961 Main St., Honeoye, a service of St. Mary & St. Matthew’s churches

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

Saturday, Oct. 19, 3 PM until gone Free Drive-Thru Turkey Dinner United Church of Bristol, turkey in gravy, mashed potatoes, dressing, butternut squash, applesauce, roll & homemade pie.

Sat. Oct. 26 Youth Shanty Town at West Bloomfield United Church of Christ – see article



Make Us Worthy, Lord

“Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.”
Mother Teresa

Some September Altars



Jesus answered, “It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs.” The woman said, “Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.” Then Jesus answered, “Woman, you have great faith!”



“Wait for the Father’s Promise”



“It is only the farmer who faithfully plants seeds in the Spring, who reaps a harvest in Autumn.”

B. C. Forbes



daylight saving time ends

Turn your clocks back on Sunday, November 3rd!

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Church Website: www.ioniaumc.org

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

Sunday Bible Study: 9:00 AM

Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM



Calendar

Sundays, 9:00 AM Bible Study

10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM Coffee Hour

Sunday, October 13th, Birthday Sunday

Tuesday, October 15th Ad Board meeting

Oct. 26-27 Youth Shanty Town

Sunday, October 27th, Monthly Brunch



54th Annual Holiday Fair

Saturday, November 16, 2024

9 AM – 3 PM

Bloomfield High School

Oakmount Avenue



**Lunch made & profited by
Hands of Hope Kitchen**

120 craft spaces

Free admission & parking

Handicap accessible

Bring Your Holiday Shopping List!