



Faith Connections – June 2025

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

From Our Pastor's Desk:

Greetings beloved,

It is an honor to serve God through the spiritual leadership of this congregation at Ionia UMC; as of Annual conference this year, we are still appointed to be together in the spiritual journey called this life. We continue to be challenged in this life by its extraordinary moments - those we have planned and those we could not have imagined. And in the human family in this place and moment in time, called by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are together. We pray, learn, worship, study, read, grow, travel, serve, and worship together as we see God in the people we meet, the places we go, and the experiences we share.

This experience of life as a spiritual thing is unique in the world of folks who never attend a worship experience, do not confess their faith to one another, cannot find a path to hope in their lives, and do not lean on one another through Christ when the chips are down.

It is a faithful delight to have this relationship with Christ and one another as a central part of our living and lifted specifically when we share Holy Communion together. I praise God for the appointment of another year, together; let us share a wonderful and loving spring and summer together, once again!

Peace with justice and love,
Pastor Robin



A little bit about Palestine and Israel:

In John's gospel, 14th chapter: "If a person loves me, they will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and **we** will come to them and make our home with them. Those who do not love me will not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. "These things I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

I returned from Palestine, Israel, and Jordan on May 17, 2025. I was there as part of a group of 18 pilgrims, including Christian clergy and laity, scholars, Jews, and agnostics. We were all curious with compassion for what was happening in the place of the birth, life, and death, of Jesus. I heard the voices of people from all over the world with sounds I did not recognize but whose warmth was universally recognizable. We were blessed with perspectives from Christians, Jews, and Muslims. We attended worship, visited holy mosques, and sacred Jewish sites. Because of the current war the tension was very real in the communities we populated, and the peace of Christ was evident in the hearts of the Christian communities we attended. The notion that Christ was present in the "rubble" of war was repeated to us and that faith was present even in the killing because in this Holy Land, God himself/herself, had appeared; God was present in this place in the person of Jesus. It is promised that He will come again to redeem the world, and it is a faithful hope we felt in those that took the time and

showed courage to share their stories with us. We had specific interviews and visits in our 13 days of wandering. I will be podcasting many of those voices in the weeks ahead, so you can hear what they actually say about their circumstances, their will, the purpose of living in a place that is bombed and where they are made to suffer, and how some believe their authority is God-given, only theirs and no one else's.

As John's gospel states: *"I do not give as the world gives – do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."* When we witnessed so much that has been taken – land, homes, orchards, vineyards, and lives, at the hands of the Zionist Israeli military and led by the government, my implicit bias of entitlement as a white American woman kicked in; I was seeking justice where injustice was the rule of the day (my frame of reference being in a white male-dominant culture as patriarchal and misogynist trying to exclude my self-determination at every turn); their current war/conflict/catastrophe was not a simple thing that was easily understood in this government, historic truth, and pluralistic religious cultural experience. I kept praying this phrase – "you do not give as the world gives, Lord? My heart is very troubled..."

Nor did I grow up in this culture of ancient stone streets and 1700-year-old buildings built by the sweat of men and women who literally cut giant stones from the Earth's rock, to understand or have context for the culture's nuances and curvy shapes. The daily witness to the injustice was attacking my imagination of what I held to be the "holy land" causing me something called, "cognitive dissonance". In other words, in the world of my understanding – this made no sense.

Why would farmers, teachers, vendors, tourist guides, restaurant owners and hoteliers, nurses and medical clinicians and parents (and children) be made to suffer for their faith, their living in the land of their birth (for generations), because another group of people from a different faith perspective yet

worshipping the same God but having big guns and bombs get to claim authority as the only authority?

And what is "defending ourselves" vs. hostile offensive attacking and killing? And why did the ruling governmental authority of the state of Israel, now condemned by the international community for war crimes, get to "turn off the water" in the Palestinian cities walled off by this concrete wall topped by barbed wire, at will? We were told, "...because they could, and it is the slow squeeze to push us to leave. But we will not leave because our Christian (and Muslim) Palestinian presence is our truth too, and it is non-violent resistance to the Zionist Israeli government. We know this will end someday, and we will still be here, somehow. We believe we act in faith, and this is the land of our birth and spiritual truth, too. God knows what God knows. We cannot abandon what God has for us in the land of His human birth as a truth." That was the Christian conversation that was constantly in our ears. I found it to be so very courageous in their faith as they faced armed checkpoints, limited rights, and not even the ability to fly the Palestinian flag without being arrested. The watermelon becomes the symbol for Palestine because of its colors, red, green, and black, like the flag.

In the weeks and months ahead we will be asking ourselves these questions and more because God has impassioned my heart with not only justice as a "cause for and experience of Christ", but because this particular cause of justice through our faith in Christ has been seen by your pastor firsthand. Please ask me questions, give me a call, invite me to coffee, and get engaged with this dialogue that seeks understanding. Praise be to God!

**this is a reminder that if you relate to God as a Father, or Mother, or Spirit of love, or however you relate to the God-head of the Trinity in our traditional language, good for you.*



Sundays 9:00AM

Will resume in the Fall



Let us all keep the family and friends of Patty Chapple Willis who passed away on Thursday, May 22nd in our prayers!

Sue, Pat, Kay, Gary, Doris, Elaine, Jan, Lola, Cliff & MaryAnn, & all our home-bound members

Our nation & the world & all countries in war
Our military men & women

All those battling cancer, COVID, & chronic diseases.



Joys in our church

Pastor Robin went to Israel and Palestine May 2-16 with an Upper NY Conference group trip!



Our Upcoming Dates:



Fall Festival

September 20th See separate article!



Holiday Fair Craft Show:

November 15th

9:00AM – 3:00 PM

Bloomfield High School

Applications available after July 1st on our church website: www.ioniaumc.org

IONIA UMC INVITES YOU:

Open Table Senior Lunch
Every Tuesday
at Ionia UMC
2021 Elton Road, Ionia, NY 14475
with Ontario Cty OFA
Free-will offering accepted, no one turned away.
call to reserve your spot: 585-396-4047

12:15 PM **IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL**



Fellowship Meal

Senior Lunch program at Ionia UMC!

The Office for Aging & Dept. of Health & Ionia UMC hold a lunch on every Tuesday of the month!

You will need to register for the meals with the onsite Food Site Aide, or call the Office for the Aging at 585-396-4040.

Once registered, you may call 585-919-2773 to make reservations, or let the Food Site Aide know when you plan to dine.

The Senior Lunch Program has a suggested donation of \$ 3.50, or more, or whatever you can afford.

Register today for a great meal, fellowship, greeting good neighbors in your community.

Spread the good news!

Common Table Podcast UMC

Sponsored by the Creation Justice Team of the UNY AC UMC, this podcast features interviews that speak to matters of justice & how justice serves God through Creation Care. Find it on Spotify or your favorite podcast platform, or this link: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1940809>



Congratulations to our 2025 graduates!

Sydney Layton – St. Bonaventure University
Magna Cum Laude Bachelors in Inclusive
Childhood Education and Spanish!
Alex Kenyon – Air Force Academy, and
commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant to report
to Laughlin Air Force Base at the end of July
for Pilot Training!



Happy June Birthday!

- 2 James Garling
Robert Parrish
- 3 Carlie Layton
- 4 Cindi Thomas
- 5 Elizabeth Bennett
Sharon Gilbride
- 6 Jeff O'Brien
Ciera Sullivan
Alice Wells
- 7 Vivian Schaefer
Bill Weld
- 9 Sarah O'Brien
- 10 David Fraser
- 12 Lori Stein
- 13 Jonathan Erb
Meredith O'Brien Green
- 19 Hailey Willis
Linda Parrish Breese
- 20 Sherri Baylor
John Bennett
- 23 Donald Dunlap
- 24 Morgan Knapp
- 26 Celina Stonewell
- 27 Lola Harloff
- 29 Sandra Parrish



Birthday Sunday

Is 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



Strawberry Social

Thursday, June 19th , 4:30 – 6:30pm

Enjoy seating inside the church (& outdoors –
weather permitting), & take-outs!

Our traditional menu: Hot dogs, hamburgers,
sausages, salads, baked beans, goulash, &
strawberry desserts (Strawberry Shortcake;
Strawberry Sundae, the works (Strawberry
Shortcake, & ice cream) & Hot Fudge sundaes)
All items are priced a-la-carte

We will need volunteers to work or cook so if
you are able to help out, sign up with our new
online option:

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Click this link to see our SignUp on
SignUp: <https://signup.com/go/AnyBPwg>
- 2) Review the options listed and choose the
spot(s) you like.
- 3) Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to
register an account or keep a password on
"Sign-Up" (Note: SignUp does not share your
email address with anyone.)
Or sign up in Fellowship Hall, or call 657-6984 or
email ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com, for the jobs
& food donations!



Online donations!

You now can donate to the Ionia UMC online
at: <https://www.ioniaumc.org/donating>
We hope that you will find it simple & useful to
use when giving to God through the Ionia UMC
even if you cannot make it to worship. Thank
you!



Website users!

Visit our new website! www.ioniaumc.org It is
still a work in progress, so keep checking in!



Our Church's Mission Is to serve the Lord our God through Faith, Hope, & Love. To do this we care for our neighbors near & far, as for ourselves. We care deeply for one another in the needs of our membership.



Collections for the Blessing Room Needs are: Canned foods, diapers, paper products personal items, & feminine products are welcome donations that can be placed into the wooden boxes in Fellowship Hall



Our church still collects printer ink cartridges! Place them in the box in Fellowship Hall or in the plastic tote on the back porch. We get coupons for these cartridges to go for our office supplies!



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

Place into the crate or trash containers behind the church. Please place them in plastic bags!



Recycle your soft plastic bags at a participating store



In Our Area:

Thurs.,-Sat., June 5th - 7th, 9am-2pm all three days Heavenly Treasures Rummage Sale at East Bloomfield UMC On Saturday there is a Youth Bake Sale, \$5 Bag Sale, & 50% Larger Items

Grace Choir, Friday, June 6, 7:30PM at Aldersgate UMC, 4115 Dewey Ave, Rochester and Sunday, June 8, 4PM at Edgewood Church, 111 East Jefferson Rd, Pittsford

Volunteers Needed at Hospice House, a Naples hospice home, is seeking compassionate & dedicated volunteers to join our team for companionship to residents, Contact Kathy Mincer at 585-374-2090 for more details kathymincr@hospicehouse.org www.hospicehouse.org/volunteer

Friday, June 27th, 6:45pm District United Methodist Night at the Redwings Ball Park at \$16 ,Ticket deadline: : June 15th _Contact: : Rush UMC, 533-2170 or email rumc@rushumc.org or Leon 749-2735 or email: lfperkins@me.org

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

Friday, April 25th, 5pm Free Friday Supper (will be the last one) at 1st E. Bloomfield Congregational Church

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



Fall Festival– Sat., Sept. 20th !

on our church grounds
Tractor parade, Chow Hut, BBQ, games,
displays, demonstrations, & more!

Desserts of many kinds are needed for our Dessert Wheel! Cakes, Cupcakes, hand-held desserts are always a hit! Drop your donations off at the church Friday Sept. 19th or before 10AM on Sat. June 20th

Seeking donations of glassware and dishes suitable for our fall festival dish pitch. The dish pitch is such a fun game for all ages & has been a fan favorite at FF for a number of years! They may be dropped off in fellowship hall or in the tote on the back porch .

We also need everyone who has a facebook account to post our flyer and information!



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 long, where Rev. Blair interviews a guest about something happening in our beautiful Finger Lakes area that could be of interest to the folks like us who live here!



In Gratitude to Fathers

"Fathers were sent from heaven above to protect us and guide us with strength, faith and love.

We thank you, dear fathers, for always coming through. God bless you and keep you in al that you do!"



Pastor Robin invites you on Tuesday, June 3, to stay after our Senior Lunch at church stay for a presentation of some details of the Holy War and Conflict in the Holy Land of Palestine and Israel. "

The presentation will begin about 1:00PM, or as lunch has concluded. I will show slides, video, and explain some of what I saw and experienced so you can bring your questions and share your thoughts. I will be advocating for justice and freedom for the people of Palestine, and a peaceful resolution in the name of Christ, to the killing, entitlement, and injustice claimed by Zionist Israel for every square inch of land at any cost. I will be praying for the notion that there is room for everyone vs. the ethnic cleansing that is currently taking place.

Scripture is consistent in the call for followers of Christ to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44-45a), forgive others their trespasses (Matthew 6:14-15), to overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21), and to seek peace and pursue it (Psalm 34:14). Peacemakers are blessed and called the children of God (Matthew 5:9).

For more resources:

<https://www.umcjustice.org/what-we-care-about/peace-with-justice/conflicts>

<https://bit.ly/4js0evz>

bit.ly/4kaJ3Qf



Our musical guest of faith, Sam Waltemeyer, Sunday May 25th during worship! He sings, plays, and witnesses to the power of faith in Christ in his life.

www.facebook.com/SamWPiano/videos/?_rdar

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PO Box 8
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Church Website: www.ioniaumc.org

Email: ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com

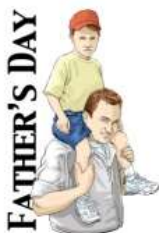
Facebook: "IoniaUMCNY"

Church Phone: 585-657-6984

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robin Blair

Pastor's Email: revrobinblair@gmail.com

Pastor's Phone: 315-729-4485



Calendar

Sundays, 9:00 AM Lenten Study

10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM Coffee Hour

Sunday, June 1st Ascension Sunday

Sunday, June 8th Pentecost Sunday and
Birthday Sunday

Sunday, June 15th Fathers' day, &

Trinity Sunday peace with justice

Tuesday, June 17th Ad Board meeting, 7pm

Thurs., June 19th Strawberry Social

Sunday, June 29th Monthly Brunch





T Pastor Robin was thinking how to reduce our paper addition to landfill - what if we were to all make a bunch of napkins from leftover fabric at home? We gave these away at Annual Conference UMC last week.



Pastor Robin at the Gloria Hotel in Old City Jerusalem



The Wall around Palestine with an armed military outpost,

Pastor Robin's Photos of Israel & Palestine



A Fruit Vendor in Bethlehem



Pastor Robin at Annual Conference

