



## ***Faith Connections – February 2025***

Ionia United Methodist Church  
2120 Elton Rd., Ionia, NY 14475  
585-657-6984 [www.ioniaumc.org](http://www.ioniaumc.org)

### **From Our Pastor's Desk:**

Dear Ones,

We were truly blessed during the Advent season, and like many of you, I have been reflecting on hope, joy, peace, and love. As your Pastor, I often consider my privilege in receiving these gifts through my relationship with Jesus, alongside my responsibility to extend them—holding them for a moment, and then sharing them outwardly with the congregation and community.

As some of you may know, I am involved in hospital chaplaincy and participate in the Annual Conference on the Creation Care team. I also chair the Committee on the Role and Status of Women. Additionally, God calls me to spread uplifting messages on WYLF AM 850, which broadcasts each Sunday morning at 8:30 AM (available online too!). Through each interview, I strive to emphasize the importance of being "good neighbors." It is all about God and sharing the grace of Christ through our gifts and blessings so that others may receive the good work the Holy Spirit has for their lives too.

I continue to hold onto hope, joy, peace, and love, and knowing that you do too fills my heart with life! Your spiritual health and connection to Jesus light up the world like a candle in a dark room, and we are committed to carrying that light with us wherever we go.

During Advent, we sought tangible ways to carry these fruits of the spirit into our community and UMC connection. With great success, we reached out to many: Open Door Mission, the Maternal Hospital in Mutare, Zimbabwe, and the Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, where 40% of the population lives below the poverty line. We achieved much more too, including providing

food baskets for Christmas dinners and contributing to our local food shelf at the Blessing Room in East Bloomfield. Inside, you will find a missions report, but beyond what the Missions team offers, know that every visit you make—bringing a gift, baked goods, the bulletin from Sunday, or simply your smiling face—lights up those in need. You are the candle in the dark room because of the light Jesus has given you. I praise God for every moment you spend as that light, reflecting the beauty of our faith and the joy of the Lord our God.

This connectional system we cherish in the UMC is knitted through the love and truth of Jesus Christ, prompting us to imitate His ways, His love, and His grace. Let's keep praying for the light to be revealed in all we do—speaking, sharing, protesting, affirming, praying, and seeking. These are the actions of the faithful people of Jesus Christ. This is who we are, beloved, as Christians.

With love and faith,

Pastor Robin



### **From Staff/Pastor/Relations Committee:**

In consultation with SPR, Pastor will be taking off 1 Sunday a month: Feb 2, Mar 16, Apr 27, May 4, May 11, Jun 15, Jul 6, Aug 17, Sep 7, Oct 19, Nov 16, & Dec 14.



**Sundays, 9:00 AM**, Study on the book of Acts will continue.

Our Lenten Book Study will begin in March after Ash Wednesday. Watch for details.



### **Joys in our church**

Our new furnaces will be installed the week of Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>!

Ontario Co. Office for Aging Weekly Senior Lunches to be offered in our Fellowship Hall!



Families, friends & first responders of those involved in the airplane crash in Washington  
All those impacted by the wild fires in California  
& all those fighting those fires! (donation info in an article below)

For the Holy Land & the cease fire

Our new president & his cabinet

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

Our nation & the world & all countries engaged in war

Our military men & women

All those battling cancer, COVID, & chronic diseases.



**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!



### **Happy February Birthday!**

- 1 John Price
- 2 Lynn Parrish  
Robin Talley Schwartz
- 5 Norene Adams  
Amanda Smith
- 6 Brian Miller  
Caroline Burse
- 7 Jeffrey Stahl
- 9 Patricia Bennett
- 10 Ron Bennett
- 11 Heather Fraser Brainard
- 13 Adam Weld
- 14 Renee Kugris
- 16 Michael Madafferi
- 17 Lynnsie Bennett  
Connor Green
- 18 Hannah Ritorto
- 19 Jerry Thomas
- 20 Jessica Segar  
Ian Talley
- 21 Madison Baldwin
- 23 Ethan Parrish
- 25 Marna Evans  
Paul Inglesby, Jr  
Lauren Tiffany
- 26 Gary Smith  
Sue Vary
- 27 Brian Bennett  
Caitrin Miller



### **Birthday Sunday**

**Is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

### **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>



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



Donations toward the California wildfires online: [bit.ly/umcorusdr](https://bit.ly/umcorusdr); by phone: 888-252-6174; or by mail : on memo line: UMCOR Advance 901670 Cal. Fires & mail to: Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO PO Box 9068, NY,NY 10087-9068



**Fellowship Meal**

### **Senior Lunch program in our church!**

The Office for Aging & Dept. of Health have approved our kitchen for weekly lunches.! This new ministry will serve our neighbors by feeding them with food and fellowship.

I UMC is partnering with the Ontario County Office for the Aging to host the Senior Lunch Program. Beginning at the end of February we will have a delicious lunch available in our fellowship hall, weekly, on Tuesdays. Approval by the Administration Board & OCOA is finalized & approved. More details will be coming, but the cost is only \$3,50 per meal and in addition to delicious food plated and served, you will have the fellowship of friends and neighbors. There will be a sign up sheet for a weekly "host" from our congregation each Tuesday to welcome people to our lovely building and model the radical hospitality of Jesus. Amen!

### **Upper NY Conference Global Ministries team With the Conference Council on Youth Ministries hosting May Mission Weekend May 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>**

Individual churches can participate in their own self-run missional activity or signup through CCYM to help out at one of the campsites. They will ask churches to complete a form of what they did so that CCYM can see how many churches participated. We might consider a work day at a local mission!



**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. We can get coupons for our office supplies!



### **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!

### **Disaster Response Training March 29, 9 am – 5 pm, Rush UMC**

Floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, snowstorms, and fires impact an entire community, causing physical, economic, and emotional damage. United Methodists UMCOR Early Response Teams (ERT) arrive soon after first responder professionals respond to the disaster. ERTs provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of a disaster. ERT help listen to the survivors. Further tasks might include assessing damage, tarping roofs, removing damaged household items, cleaning, and removing wet sheetrock. Teams stay for three days, replaced by another team as needed. Teams are self-sufficient and self-sustaining. Upper New York conference maintains several tool trailers. Individual team members pay for their own personal protective gear, food, & transportation. Team members should be in good physical and mental health. The training credentials you to enter disaster zones. An ERT badge is issued by UMCOR to applicants over the age of 18 following the successful completion of a background check and the course. Badges are valid for 3 years. Individuals need not be United Methodist to take the training.

Cost (\$35/45 person) includes a light lunch, snacks, and a digital or printed ERT manual. The course is open to ERT whose certification has expired as well as other volunteers interested in responding to natural disasters. *Registration is open: <https://bit.ly/2025ERTbasic>*





**For our Creation Care Mission: Recycle your soft plastic bags** at participating store

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



### **Furnace replacement project news:**

Our new furnaces will be installed the week of Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>! The Church would welcome your donations to offset the financial burden of the replacement project & thank you in advance for your support. Don Frelier, Board of Trustees



### **In Our Area:**

Sat., Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> In "the spirit of Chautauqua" the local Congregational UCC church will honor its longstanding heritage of intellectual discernment and public entertainment by offering a "Day of Curiosity," say event coordinators & will host a series of expert presentations on an eclectic range of subjects including Mindfulness in Mindless Times, Eat Lovingly!, Cultivating Indigenous Knowledge and Gratitude, Choose Your Own Climate Change Adventure, Artificial Intelligence, Poetic Expressions, The Story of 716 Wheels for Workers, Nature Communion, and Dances of Universal Peace.

The Day of Curiosity event is secular, non-denominational and open to everyone. The day isn't about religion, it's about experiencing new ideas, cracking open your mind, having fun, and maybe making a new friend or two. Our faith and church value curiosity as a way of building peace and more understanding in our world. Join us for an hour or a whole day packed with learning and interacting in body, mind, and spirit! 9am-4pm on February 8, 2025. Vegetarian Lunch included. We encourage you to invite many friends! Registration link can be

found on the church website [wbccucc.org](http://wbccucc.org). You can register the day of the event, but some workshops may be full. Suggested donation \$10-20 & a donation to our HOPE Food Pantry if feasible, but no one will be turned away.

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.

2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

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

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> 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

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



### **Greetings digital content users!**

Please take some time to visit our website & delight in its new design! [www.ioniaumc.org](http://www.ioniaumc.org) We are still a work in progress, so keep checking in & send thanks to Wayne Parrish for his persistent, patient (with Pastor) & faithful work for seeing that we have a welcoming, faithful, & beautiful online presence as a community of faith. The goal is to provide all of you with information about your faith community at IUMC, but also to reach those who aren't involved in a faith community too. If you have a suggestion for the website, contact Pastor Robin



2025 Upper New York Annual Conference

## **AC2025 theme and logo revealed: "Believe....and See the Glory of God" May 22-24 in Syracuse**

The theme for the 2025 Annual Conference session is "Believe... and see the Glory of God." The theme is based on John 11:1-45 (the death and resurrection of Lazarus) with companion verses of Luke 1:47 (my spirit rejoices in God my savior) and Philippians 4:13 (I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me). Our faith in Jesus Christ opens our spiritual vision, allowing us to perceive God at work in our lives and the world. Faith allows us to trust in God's purpose and timing, even when circumstances seem difficult or unclear. Our faith is not simply an intellectual assent but an active, trusting relationship with God through Christ that, in the power of the Holy Spirit, leads to transformative experiences of God's glory. As we continue moving toward God's future, we are invited to seek the kind of faith that, when put into action, manifests God's unlimited power to bring new life to our communities and congregations through the healing and liberating love of Jesus Christ. More Details to come.



**Planning for VALENTINES DAY?** After Worship in the fellowship hall, come & make a postcard to send to all your friends and loved ones in the name of the One who is LOVE Materials will be supplied.



## **Missions Report**

The purpose of our church is to warmly invite everyone into a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ, who fills our lives with grace and mercy. As believers, we are commissioned to share the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ, as emphasized in Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8. This mission calls us to faithfully share the gospel through both our words and actions. Our church community is dedicated to ministering to those in need—not just spiritually, but by offering practical support such as food, clothing, and shelter when needed. We also strive to equip believers with the knowledge and fellowship necessary to overcome sin and navigate life's challenges, staying true to biblical teachings.

As Paul beautifully illustrated to the Corinthians, the church is the living embodiment of Christ's work on earth (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). We are called to be His hands, mouth, and feet—living out what it means to be truly "Christian," by following His example in all we do.

With God's purpose for the God's church in mind, know that our actions as a community of faith reach beyond our local community to statewide, regionally, nationally, and internationally. We tend to focus on food, shelter, and safety in purpose and love. The missions fund money comes from individuals and the soda can fund. In 2024 we distributed over \$10,000.00 to organizations and individuals. Some of the organizations we contributed to through work on the ground and financial contributions include:

Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes; Ionia Fire Dept; The Blessing Room; Family Promise of the Finger Lakes ; Open Door Mission; UNY UMC Disaster Fund; Keeping our Promise; FISH; UMCOR (& Special Sundays of the UMC); UMC for recovery in North Carolina Habitat for Humanity; Water for South Sudan; GBGM Missionary hospital in Zimbabwe for Maternal Health; Red Bird Missionary Annual Conference of the UMC; Heifer Project We praise God for the generosity of the congregation to be able to contribute to the aid of persons in need through the grace and love of Jesus Christ. May God continue to bless all God's people.



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Church Website: [www.ioniaumc.org](http://www.ioniaumc.org)

Email: [ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com](mailto:ioniaumc2120@hotmail.com)

Facebook: "IoniaUMCNY"

Church Phone: 585-657-6984

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robin Blair

Pastor's Email: [revrobinblair@gmail.com](mailto: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, February 9<sup>th</sup> Birthday Sunday

Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>: Valentine's Day

Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup> Presidents' Day

Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> Ad Board meeting

Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> Monthly Brunch

Weds., March 5: Ash Wednesday

