



Faith Connections – March 2025

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

From Our Pastor's Desk:

Hello, Beloved Community!

I find myself reflecting on how to remain loving in a world that often seems intent on erasing kindness. Some days, I struggle to find the answer. When I read, write, and pray in preparation to face the chaos around us, I don't naturally lean toward anger—I tend to lean toward sadness. Yet, I know God does not desire for me, or for any of us, to dwell in sadness for long.

As people of Christ—those who intentionally gather to glorify God in this life—we are called to imitate Christ, to pray, and to notice what exists alongside the chaos. Blessings and beauty surround us, and we have the power to amplify them. It may sound simple, even cliché, but pass on a smile, hold the door for someone, and instead of getting frustrated at a slow driver, take a moment to be grateful that you have a working vehicle. Love is like a garden—it requires care, patience, commitment, and faith.

Parker Palmer writes:

*"If you hope to advance love, truth, and justice, stop asking yourself, 'Was I **effective** today?' MLK's Beloved Community is generational work, and measuring your work by short-term results will lead you to despair.*

*Instead, let **faithfulness** be your standard: 'In what I did today, was I faithful to the values I aspire to embody, and to my opportunities to serve the common good?' If you can say yes to that question more often than not, you'll find the will to do it again another day."*

Let us say **yes** to the work of the kin-dom in these days of our lives. This past week, I witnessed the beauty of swans, geese, ducks, and gulls on the lake—it was glorious. I shared music with two of my grandchildren—it was precious. My daughter prepared a lovely meal—it was blessed. I visited someone in the hospital—it was filled with hope.

As we enter the season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday on March 5th, we are reminded with humility that this is a time to seek deeper closeness with the Lord. To do this, we often must **empty** ourselves of something—hence, fasting. We limit food intake to remember those who have none. We watch our words, knowing that each syllable we speak can be used to praise God. We trade extra screen time for time in Scripture, creating space for the Spirit to work within us.

Beyond giving something up, we can also **add on**. This Lenten season, let's build a new awareness each week—of how God's justice, movement, and blessing reveal themselves when we make space to experience them.

**Together with you in love and faith,
Pastor Robin**



Sundays, 9:00 AM.

Our Lenten Book Study will be "**Believe Like Jesus**" by Rebekah Simon Peter. Find it at <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/believe-like-jesus-rebekah-simon-peter/1146396196>
See you there!

Sermon Series for Lent: Holy Ground

Each week we will visit scripture to witness how God invites us to recognize the sacred in our lives. There may be walls, chaos, or circumstances that attempt to block our view - but God is present in all moments. We are standing on the Creator's Holy Ground and we can honor it with our faith.





Ash Wednesday - Wednesday, March 5th

There will not be a formal service for the Imposition of Ashes, but a time of open church where Pastor Robin will be there & able to accept your confession & share with you the ashes of remembrance to our humility & journey to Jesus.

She will also invite you to help in the creation of a symbol we will build to be used all through Lent in the sanctuary. The times the church will be open will be announced and sent by email to everyone.



Joys in our church

Our new furnaces!

Barb Bennett playing beautiful music every week!

Thank you Don for shoveling our sidewalks!



Family & friends of Ron Bennett who passed away on Feb. 8th.

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.



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 March Birthday!

- 4 Mary A. Bennett
Doris Daniels
- 7 Gary DiGiulio
- 8 Rory Bennett
Lorraine Frelier
- 9 Ron Stonewell, Jr
- 13 Tara Schaefer
Mike Brien
- 16 Russ Kenyon
Carol Ann Pratt
Ed Price
- 19 Peggy Madafferi
- 21 Kathy Maier
Kyler Mohr
- 22 Patrice Sullivan
- 23 Kimberly Tiffany
Joshua Tyo
- 25 David Fraser
- 26 David Frelier
Ashley & Megan Parrish
- 27 Curt Evans
- 28 Mollee Thomas
- 31 Suzann Fryer



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

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>

New! Online donations!

Ionia UMC now offers an option to give 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.



Greetings digital content users!

Please take some time to visit our website & delight in its new design! www.ioniaumc.org We are still a work in progress, so keep checking in!



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



Fellowship Meal

Senior Lunch program in our church!

The Office for Aging & Dept. of Health & I UMC will have a free lunch Tuesdays - coming soon!
Watch for details!

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



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, & fires impact an entire community, causing physical, economic, & emotional damage. UMCOR Early Response Teams (ERT) arrive soon after first responder professionals respond to the disaster. For more information, contact Donna or Roger Cullen. Registration is open: <https://bit.ly/2025ERTbasic>



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

Rev Jeff Child, our pastor's husband, went on a mission trip with his church to Zimbabwe in February! They visited the women's hospital that we donated to in Africa!



Sunday March 9th!



Furnace replacement project news:

Our new furnaces have been installed & are operational! The Church would welcome your donations to offset the financial burden of the replacement project & thank you in advance for your support. Don Frelie, Board of Trustees

Easter Flowers for our Altar April 20th

Begin thinking about Spring & our beautiful altar decked out with lilies & other colorful spring flowers. I don't have any prices yet, but as soon as they are available, you'll know. There will be a sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall or call Jacquie Shellman at 585-755-3825. You may take your flower(s) home after Easter Sunday services. Tentative deadline is Sunday, April 6th.



Transfiguration Sunday March 2nd



In Our Area:

Tues., March 4, 6 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper , All-You-Can-Eat, St. John's Parish House, Honeoye Falls

Sat., March 8: Penny Social, E. Bloomfield UMC - Fun & Fellowship, \$5 buys you 10 tickets plus entry for door prizes from local merchants. Bid on over 100 great items from 5-5:30pm, drawing begins at 5:30pm. Snacks & beverages available at minimal cost.

Sat., March 15 Enchanted Evening 10AM-2PM, Free Event! at Victor UMC in Wesley Hall ALL Prom & Ball Dresses, Suits & Accessories are FREE!!! Open to ALL attending Junior Prom or Senior Ball. Contact: Karen- 585-703-7421 or karenhansen7@hotmail.com

Volunteers Needed at Hospeace House, a Naples hospice home, is seeking compassionate and dedicated volunteers to join our team for companionship to residents, assisting with daily operations, or offering your unique skills, your support makes a meaningful difference in the lives of those in our care. Contact Kathy Mincer at 585-374-2090 for more details on how you can get involved. Your time and generosity are truly appreciated! kathymincr@hospeacehouse.org
www.hospeacehouse.org/volunteer

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

Creation Justice and Creation Care

A relationship with God's creation and a ministry of caring for and healing the earth are integral to what it means to be a United Methodist. We believe that all of creation is God's, and that we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Our natural world is to be valued and conserved because God has called humanity to be its caretakers (Genesis 1:26-31). <https://www.umc.org/en/how-we-serve/social-issues/creation-care>:

Reducing Environmental Impact Through Food Choices

1. Opt for Plant-Based Meals: Reducing the consumption of meat and dairy products can lower greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the amount of land and water used. Even incorporating more plant-based meals a few times a week can make a difference. Let's have meat-free brunch for February!
2. Minimize Food Waste: An estimated one-third of all food produced is wasted, which contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Planning meals carefully, storing food properly, and composting food scraps can help reduce waste.
3. Choose Sustainably Sourced Seafood: Look for labels indicating sustainable fishing practices which ensure fish populations and ocean health are maintained.
4. Grow Your Own Food: home gardening can be a rewarding way to produce fresh food with minimal environmental impact. It also fosters a deeper connection to creation and many of our church members are experts! Who needs help to plan their garden for the spring?

By making thoughtful food choices, we can reduce our environmental impact and live out our call to care for the Earth. This approach not only benefits the planet but also aligns with living a life of gratitude and responsibility for God's gifts.

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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

March 2 Transfiguration Sunday

Weds., March 5: Ash Wednesday - Open

Sunday, March 9th Daylight Saving Time,

Baptism, & Birthday Sunday

Monday, March 17th St. Patrick's Day

Tuesday, March 18th Ad Board meeting

Sunday, March 30th Monthly Brunch &
UMCOR Sunday

