

Ministry Team Reports

150th Anniversary Ministry Team

The 150th anniversary of FCCSJ continued throughout the calendar year of 2010 with monthly observations of various functions of our church. The focus for the June 20, 2010 service was the conclusion of “Celebrate Service” theme. The July 18, 2010 worship service was conducted by the youth sharing their faith. This was followed by fun events in the church parking lot with food to eat, musical groups and of course the dousing of Pastor Olson. The August event’s focus was our church’s involvement in the community by taking part in the week-end celebration of the Mint Festival. FCCSJ sponsored a food booth during the entire weekend and entered a float in the Mint Parade on Saturday, August 14, 2010. September 12, 2010 was Homecoming Sunday with our annual service at the Wilbur and Leola Thurston’s park. Our intern minister, Kathy Farnum, was called upon suddenly to conduct that service due to Pastor Olson’s serious injury to his hand. She did an excellent job with the children’s story and leading worship. Who can ever forget our October 10, 2010 dinner/theater program? The dinner portion of the evening could not be exceeded and the program’s focus on the early history of FCCSJ was enlightening and very entertaining. November 7, 2010 was our necrology service remembering not only those of our members and friends to have passed on during the past year, but those who have gone before us many years ago. Without their vision, we would not be as strong a part of our community as we are. It was decided to hold the concluding event on January 16, 2011 to round out the 150th anniversary. Pastor Olson’s sermon reminded us of our history, but also points us to the future of FCCSJ. The worship service was followed by a fellowship hour hosted by the 150th Anniversary Ministry Team with hundreds of photos on display of our members and events that have taken place. Many people in the congregation expressed appreciation of the various functions of the anniversary held throughout the calendar year of 2010, our 150th anniversary. None of these events could have happened without the time, thoughts and efforts of so many people who were willing to give of themselves. The anniversary team says a huge “THANK YOU” to all who helped. We really appreciate it very much. As an outcome of the anniversary team, a team interested in continuing to preserve the history of FCCSJ was formed and is currently discussing appropriate ways to accomplish this goal.

Respectfully submitted,

150th Anniversary Ministry Team member: Gary Carpenter, Mary Ann Ellickson, Peg Lehnen, Joann Martis, Ruth Nihart, Matthew Olson, Bonnie Wickerham

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Nihart, Chair person.

Altar Ministry Team

Members: Teresa Zuker, Arlene Wood, Zach Zuker and Jan Myers

Fall/Thanksgiving Season

Team members decorated the altar area with fall decorations provided and stored at the church. Also, there are window decorations and wreaths for Wilcox Hall.

Christmas Season

For Christmas Eve service team members arranged poinsettias that were purchased by members of the congregation in honor of, in memory of or in dedication of family and friends. Team members put up window decorations and wreaths as well as a Christmas tree for Wilcox Hall. Team members also decorated the sanctuary with garlands, smaller trees and wreaths. It is not the responsibility of the altar team to decorate the sanctuary. It is not far too great a job for such a small number. The expectation is that a larger group of volunteers provide the man hours and muscle that it takes to do this task. There are many boxes of decorations that could be used stored at the church.

Easter Week

Tulips, mums and lilies are arranged the Saturday before Easter (must be done after the Good Friday service) for Easter Sunday. These are purchased by members and participants of the congregation in honor of, in memory of or dedicated to family and friends. These were arranged around the altar area and a few at the entrances.

Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Zuker

Appalachia Service Project

No report

Attic Treasure Ministry Team

More than sixty Attic Treasure Team members worked. Some came back several times to help during the seven-day period. Many new members helped for the first time.

Several non-church members assisted and donated items.

The men's corner was again very popular. Items remaining after the close of the sale were donated to the Briggs Library, Baby Pantry, Volunteers of America and Clinton County Senior Center.

A grand total of \$2,330.00 was realized from the 16th Annual Sale to benefit church projects.

The Attic Treasure Ministry Team would like to thank all of the members and friends of F.C.C. and the V.F.W. for their generous donations of items and time for the benefit of this all church activity.

We had fun and enjoyed the comradery and the Christian spirit that was in evidence.

This sale has grown in size and popularity and we realize we still need more strong backs (men) to help with this once a year project, especially set up and tear down and returning Wilcox Hall to order. We thank Nancy Mino for furnishing and serving the noon day meals for all the workers. We now have a designated area in our new storage building to hold items for the next sale. This year three items for bid added great interest to the sale. The paper dress form was purchased by an antique dealer from Lansing. The set of dinnerware by Spode was purchased by Ruth Nihart (with the money being put in the Gilson Scholarship) and the doll house by Barb Bullard. She generously donated this to "Little Wings Nursery School" at the Wilson Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Joann and Paul Martis, Coordinators

P.S. Our expanded advertising in the Lansing State Journal, T.V. Channel 6, Family Life Radio and locally in the St. Johns Indy, City T.V. Calendar of events brought many new buyers to our sale.

Baby Pantry Ministry Team

The St. Johns Baby Pantry has been a vital part of our ministry to vulnerable mothers, fathers, infants and toddlers for the past 14 years. The success of this program is due, in large part, to the dedicated Baby Pantry volunteers from First Congregational Church and to the fact that we are housed in the church. The dedication of this space and the faith and reliability of our volunteers has allowed us to be one of the busiest and most successful Baby Pantry programs in the State of Michigan.

The Baby Pantry is open to serve needy families each Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Volunteers staff the Baby Pantry for two hour shifts. Most of the volunteers work one-2 hour shift per month. Many of the members of our ministry team have been with us since we opened.

There is also a lot of "behind the scenes" work that must be done in order for the Baby Pantry to operate successfully. Members of our team do the following on a regular basis:

- Set up the Baby Pantry every Monday.

- Unload the Mid-Michigan Food Bank truck two Thursdays a month
- Write grants and letters asking for financial support.
- Meet with groups and individuals about the work of the Baby Pantry.
- Write thank you letters to those who have donated to the Baby Pantry.
- Make presentations in the community about the work of the Baby Pantry.
- Deliver layettes to local hospitals, physician's offices, and the health department.

No one is ever turned away from the Baby Pantry nor do they have to show any proof of need. We have found that, as the present economy has worsened, we serve more and more of the most vulnerable in our community.

Each year the Mid-Michigan Food Bank provides us with statistics on the amount of food that we have purchased through their organization. For the past 10 years, we have distributed an average of 10,000 pounds of food annually. We feel this number shows, in a quantitative way, the scope of our program. We are also very proud of the Annual Christmas Party that we hold for the children involved in our program. Each year the members of our ministry team host a holiday brunch for over 100 children on the first Saturday of December. This is a wonderfully rewarding endeavor for the children as well as the volunteers. Again, many members of our ministry team and our entire congregation make this party a reality for children.

Finally, members of the Baby Pantry Ministry Team work on our layette program. In this program we gather items for newborn babies and put them all together into layettes which are distributed to several local hospitals, physician offices and the health department. They are to be given to mothers who have recently given birth and who might benefit from knowing about the St. Johns Baby Pantry.

We are exceedingly grateful to everyone at First Congregational Church, and especially the members of our ministry team, for their dedication and support.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly A. Minnick

Board of Ministry

Thinking back on this past year I believe that the BOM has made good progress on completing and moving forward with several key projects that it had identified at the beginning of this church year. Some of which were these:

The BOM completed a series of retreats at which we prioritized goals and set vision and direction for the church. An operational church calendar was developed and has been implemented based on the outcomes of those retreats. So far, it seems to have kept us on task with all that we set out to do, but we will continually work on fine tuning the flow of the calendar, adding and removing things as necessary.

- Background checks were completed on all adults who work with our children.
- A welcome CD for people visiting our church to take with them to listen to in their car or at home was created and is now available for distribution.
- Creation of a Church Growth Ministry Team is in the final planning stages.
- BOM members attended a retreat on church leadership with a plan in place for a whole church retreat this coming fall.
- We supported the Building Use Ministry Team with implementation of church repair and upgrades.
- Worked with the Ushers Ministry Team in using their talents to their fullest.
- Completed Senior Minister Evaluation
- Held tri-annual Ministry Team Leader Meetings in an effort to better communicate with church leadership at all levels.

A great deal more work was done, but it's too much to account for at this time; you'd get bored reading the entire list. We have been moving toward performing as an executive entity rather than as a "hands on" entity; the Ministry Teams are better able to accomplish projects directly.

I believe I speak for all board members when I say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ this year. Our goal is to provide vision and direction for our church body so that all members can contribute their individual God-given talents to the success of everyone's spiritual growth. To God be the glory!

2010-2011 Board of Ministry Elected Members: Marianne Harris - Moderator, Shirelyan Lake - Vice-Moderator, Jim Beagle – Treasurer, David Elms, Tom Flynn, Gary Larsen, Eugene Livingston, Melanie Lounds, Keith Mino, Denise Palmer, Randy Root and Cali Sackrider. Contributing members were Rev. Matt Olson - Senior Minister, Paul Martis – Financial Secretary and Susan Larsen – Recording Secretary.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marianne Harris, Moderator

Building and Grounds Ministry Team

Added new closets in Wilcox Hall
Tuck pointing on the steeple and rechecking the entire building
Renovating the interior of the steeple
Set up the food tent at the Mint Festival
Set up for the Attic Treasure Sale
Clean the garden area in the parking lot
Made improvements on the sound system
Electrical work done in the storage building
Landscaping around the storage building area completed

Jobs that need to be done:

Carpeting in all of church main floor
Handicapped bathroom
Roof replaced in the near future

I would like to thank everyone who volunteered to do many jobs around the church. It is much appreciated and it was a great help to me. When I asked you were there.
Thanks!!!!

Building and Grounds Contact Person,
Paul R. Martis

Business Ministry Team

Purpose: To present and approve the paying of bills and discuss financial responsibilities of our church.

Contact Person: Shirleyan Lake

Home telephone: 224-1870

Members: Vice Moderator of the Board of Ministry, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and three Board of Ministry Members. The Minister is an Ad Hoc member.

Meet: The second Monday of each month at 7:00p.m. in Wilcox Hall

Length of Service: As determined by the Board of Ministry

Respectfully Submitted,
Shirleyan Lake

Care and Concern Ministry Team
(AKA Keeping in Touch Ministry Team)

Our team is in contact with those who request our support due to: joyous events, death of a loved one, health concerns, family crisis etc. These contacts are made through the church office (and only with permission of those requesting support). Our visit may be in person at a home, hospital, care facility or by phone. Some contacts are made by written communication only. We have one caring team member who has chosen to acknowledge church family by sending them an annual birthday card. We seek God's guidance as we share time with our church and community family.

If this type of outreach ministry is of interest to you, please contact any of current members as listed below for information. Or, if you prefer, contact our church office at 989-224-2636.

Linda Kentfield, 989-224-4252

Sue Neuder, 989-224-8303

Marilyn Newman 989-227-2333

Mary Ann Ellickson 989-224-8288

Bonnie Wickerham 989-227-5635

Alice Murphy 989-224-8751

Children in Worship Ministry Team

Children in Worship is a program offered to the children in our congregation during the adult worship time each Sunday. The program follows all the elements of the congregation's worship service. The Children in Worship service begins with a welcome from the leader. This often takes the form of a song. A Bible story is then told using the beautiful wooden figures, felt pieces, rocks and other props which allow the children to visual God's word. The story is followed by a time for children to work expressively by doing crafts, playing with the story pieces, painting, drawing or doing Bible-centered activities. A scripture is then read while a candle is lit. The leader then offers a prayer followed by a children's version of the "feast".

Each week the number of children in attendance at Children in Worship varies from about 10-20. The children of First Congregational Church truly enjoy this program and are active participants.

Our leaders and greeters are the key to the success of this program. They rotate through a schedule that runs 12 months a year. They are enthusiastic individuals dedicated to the religious education of the children of First Congregational Church.

In early 2011 we held a training for those serving as leaders and greeter in both the Children in Worship and Follow Me Programs. It was very well received by all who attended. We hope to continue to offer these trainings throughout the coming year.

As we look towards the future, we will seek to find new leaders and greeters in order to ensure the continuation of this valuable program in our church.

Respectfully Submitted,
Molly A. Minnick

Church Administrator

Our annual **All Church Hay Ride** was held on October 17th, at the home of Eugene and Carole Livingston. John and Amy Cheeney brought the ingredients for several food treats that we prepared over the fire. Our thanks go out to the Livingston's for their hospitality and to the Cheeney family for all their hard work. We had a great time!

The **Fellowship Hour** schedule is posted in the Wilcox Hall corridor. This is where we recruit volunteers for each Sunday to host the coffee hour. If no one signs up, we will not have a coffee hour that day.

Membership records are up to date. This includes members, transfers, baptisms and deaths.

Visitors to our church, when they fill out a visitor card, are sent a card from the moderator thanking them for visiting with us.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Larsen

Church Database (5/10/11)

Members 434

- Active members 228
- Inactive members 206

Member Deaths 5 (May 1, 2010 to May 1, 2011)

Transfers 0

Baptism 3

Weddings 7

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Larsen

Communion Ministry Team

The Communion Team supported our worship outdoors and indoors during the past year. The team line-up depends on everyone's schedules, but with backup from ushers and members of the Chancel Choir we have always prepared the Open Table that our church practices. Compared to other ministries, ours is especially defined: we prepare, serve and clear away communion elements during the year. Feel free to share your thoughts and experiences of communion celebrated in other ways elsewhere. We welcome anyone willing to lend a hand. Just call or speak to Guven Witteveen, 224-2768

Respectfully submitted,
Guven Witteveen, sjmi@hotmail.com

Doublets Etc.

Purpose: To provide the opportunity for social interaction for church members as well as educational/religious experiences for the members and guests of the group.

Current Contact Persons:

President 2010-2011

Linda Fitch, President

Home telephone: 224-3565

President 2011-2012

Gary McCampbell, President

Home Telephone, 224-6134

Joann Martis, Treasurer

Home Telephone: 224-4165

Jenny McCampbell, Secretary

Home Telephone: 224-6134

Meet: First Sunday of each month from October through May. Time and place to be announced.

Activities:

- Christmas Pot Luck Dinner
- Remove Christmas decorations from the sanctuary, pot luck dinner in January
- Various guest speakers and programs on relevant topics, followed by dessert.
- Election of officers for the coming year and pizza party in May.

Respectively submitted,

Linda Fitch

“Follow Me” Ministry Team

We enjoyed another year with the “Follow me” Program developed by Sonja Stewart. Attendance averaged between 6-8 children this year since many are now in sixth grade and are attending the adult church service. Parents decided that they wanted their children in church once they entered the sixth grade. My son, Peter, stated that he enjoys the sermons and worshiping in the service.

We are very fortunate to have very dedicated leaders. The leaders are Patti Mayes, Bob and Carri Simon, Beth Olson, and Trish Cramer. Trish is the teacher on the fifth Sundays of the month. We are grateful to Patti who leads twice a month.

We are still in need of additional leaders and will offer training in the fall. Beth Olson led a training session in January which was well attended with about 10 people and she would be willing to do this again. The training was Sunday morning from 9-10:45 am. Molly Minnick provided a continental breakfast.

We also continued to have the children telling the stories with adult supervision. This is developing their confidence to lead either “Follow me” or the “Children in Worship” programs in the future. It is exciting to see our children take leadership roles.

The children are being nurtured spiritually in the program and learning to worship God.

Submitted Prayfully,

Elizabeth Olson, “Follow Me” Coordinator

Friendly Service Ministry Team

The new menu selection has proved to be very popular and it was voted to continue with it. We also decided to leave the prices the same and all committee members will continue next year. Luncheons were provided for five families. We also partnered with the Fitch Team at our Christmas coffee for the Olson’s 25th Wedding Anniversary.

We also wish to give grateful thanks to all who provide delicious food and all of the help to make our ministry to our church family. New members are welcome at any time.

Respectfully submitted,

Arlene Wood, co-chairman

Intern (Student Minister) Ministry Team

The Ministry Practicum Kathy Farnum participated in (also known as Theological Field Education) was an interesting and beneficial ministry designed to assist Kathy Farnum in her calling. The committee included the following members: Hila and Darwin Beaufore, Ruth Nihart, Bill Richards, Chris Harris, Tom Flynn, and chair, Melanie Lounds. This committee met with the seminarian (Kathy Farnum) monthly, conducted Mid-Year and Final Evaluations, acted as a liaison with the Ministry Practicum Director, and facilitated communication between the seminarian and the congregation. We as a lay team served as a "sounding board" and support

and feedback group to Kathy. We supported and assessed her learning and encouraged her in her walk with our Lord. Activities of the lay team included: sharing our faith journeys, discussing a biblical image or story that we identified with, expressing how we view the ministry, getting quiet and listening to the Lord, and assisting the seminarian's learning goals. The areas the seminarian attended to were preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administration, and missionary outreach. We have received many blessings participating in this ministry and hope we have served Kathy with as much love she has shown us.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie Lounds, Chairman

International Missions Ministry Team

We are truly thankful for the support of the congregation. You came through with supplies for us to take, bought Tupperware, Pampered Chef items, Rwandan baskets and jewelry. You came out to Applebee's on a Saturday morning for a pancake fundraiser, brought in pop cans, contributed your talents to a benefit concert, contributed additional monies, and most importantly, prayed for us while we were on our trip.

We also wish to thank the many others who helped us on our trip. The Harpole's and the Davis' from Port Gibson Baptist Church in Mississippi; Jack Santos (our interpreter and guide) from San Ramon, Peru; Jeremy and Nelda Escobar (founders of the Elim Orphanage); the college students who were at the orphanage as part of their own mission trip and helped interpret; and the orphans who made us all feel right at home, welcoming us with open arms.

The Team will be meeting soon to talk about the trip and discuss possibilities for the future. Thank you again for your support!

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Beagle

Junior High Pilgrim Fellowship

It's been a great year for the Jr. High P.F.! This was a terrific group of 6th, 7th and 8th graders and we truly enjoyed getting to know them better. Our class averaged 8-10 kids each Sunday morning and, in fact, at our Lock-in there were 20 kids, including 4 of their friends who joined us for a very fun, energetic and sleepless night. 😊

Each month we explored a different theme, including such things as: what it means to serve others/church family/God, thanksgiving & gratitude, New Year's resolutions, the Ten Commandments, and Christian symbols. We also studied scripture verse that correspond with these themes. In addition, our group participated in many activities and service projects:

- Breakfast & brainstorming sessions
- Fall Rake & Run to assist church families
- Monthly collection of items for the Third Sunday Throwdown
- Distributed re-usable cloth bags to the congregation for the Third Sunday Throwdowns
- Trip to NCG Cinemas
- Hosted a Halloween coffee hour
- Learned about Veterans Day from Veteran and church member, Keith Mino
- Assisted with the Community Thanksgiving Dinner

- Put the tags on the RAVE Giving Trees and shopped together for items to donate
- Cooked and served a meal at the Ronald McDonald House
- Movie night at church during Christmas Break
- Lock-in (with assistance from many parents!)
- New Year's "Pick a Word" project
- Book Sale & Bake Sale
- Assisted the Senior Center with their booth at the Community Expo event

We would like to thank the congregation for its support of the Jr. High P.F. and a special thank you to the parents for sharing their kids with us. We know it "takes a village to raise a child" and we couldn't do what we do without your support. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
 Barb Sherman and Jennifer Beagle
 Jr. High P.F. Co-Leaders

Liturgist Ministry Team

The Liturgist Ministry Team is an active group of people who are dedicated to lay ministry at First Congregational Church.

For the past several years, our team has consisted of approximately 15 people who rotate through a schedule of serving as liturgist for our Sunday services. The role of the liturgist is to assist the Senior Minister in calling the congregation to worship prior to the service. The liturgist also reads the Scripture passages as outlined by the Senior Minister. Often the members of the Liturgist Ministry Team spend time review the passages and learning as much as possible about their meaning so that this information can be passed on to the congregation in preparation to hear the lessons. Finally, the liturgist offers thoughts to be considered prior to receiving the morning offering and says the prayer when the offering is placed on the altar.

Serving the congregation through participation on the Liturgist Ministry Team is a meaningful way to worship. We are always open to new liturgists serving on our ministry team. In the past year, we have added some of our youth to our team. It has been rewarding for the entire congregation to watch these young people grow in their faith by serving as liturgists.

One does not need to possess a vast understanding of the Bible to serve on this ministry team. Rather, we find that by serving, we become more knowledgeable about scripture and the written word of God.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Molly A. Minnick

Meals Ministry Team 2011

The mission of the meals ministry team is to provide meals to fellow members and friends of the congregation during a difficult or stressful time in their life. Whether it is bringing home a new baby, recovering from surgery, or suffering from a serious chronic illness, our purpose is to make the family's life easier by helping out with a few meals.

Our team consists of around 15-20 wonderful people who, sometimes on short notice, are willing to bring a meal to someone in need. We always welcome more volunteers on our team. You don't have to be a great cook or prepare an elaborate dinner. All that is necessary is an open heart and willingness to prepare an extra meal once in a while. It is a great way to get to know your fellow members and friends as well!

Our guideline is to provide up to 5 meals for a family. We will do this over the course of a week, or spread it out during the month. Whatever the family finds most beneficial. In the case of an ongoing chronic illness, we may provide more meals as our resources allow.

Sometimes we don't hear about a need until after the fact. If you know of an individual or family we may be able to assist, please do not hesitate to contact us. We want to reach out to all our members and friends who could benefit from this wonderful service.

Thank you so much to those who have prepared meals for someone in our church family. We truly have a magnificent group of volunteers that are very giving of their time and energy.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Howell

Men's Tuesday Morning Bible Study Ministry Team

The study meets at 7:00 a.m. in the parlor for coffee, study, and prayer. The general format has been to read a passage and discuss it; that way everyone is literally 'on the same page' each week. The meeting ends about 8 a.m. All men are welcome.

Missions Ministry Team

It has been an exciting year for the Missions Team and we would like to thank the congregation for its support. As has been the case in the past, the 2010-11 Missions budget consisted of approximately 10% of the 2010-11 pledges. With this money, we created a budget with more than 25 line items which supported:

- Local organizations such as Capital Area Community Services, Hospice, Meals on Wheels, the Senior Center, Habitat for Humanity of Clinton County, and Clinton County Special Olympics;
- State and National organizations such as the Michigan Conference of Congregational Christian Churches and the Appalachia Service Project (ASP);
- International organizations such as the Congregational Church of South India and Southern Sudan Health Care, founded by Jacob Atem, who has spoken in our church several times.

In addition to sending monetary support to various organizations, the Missions Team also assisted in sending children from our church to Camp Copneconic for a week in August and we coordinated the "3rd Sunday Throwdown" where the congregation donates food and paper products for local food banks. We also sponsored the "Giving Tree" at Christmas to benefit those in need in our community. This year we did something a little different and the gifts benefited the RAVE safe house instead of individual families. This was very successful and, as always, the response from the congregation was very generous. Through the Missions Team, our church also supports the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC or "the NA") by designating money for the Missionary Society and a scholarship for Theological Studies, among other things. In addition, we designate money for our Minister's Discretionary Fund here at FCC. This money is used as the Senior Minister sees fit to assist those in need in our own community.

The Missions Team thanks the congregation for its support. We hope to see this team grow and move forward in the coming year and find new ways to help those who need it most. If you have any questions or concerns about our team, please don't hesitate to contact one of us. We welcome your suggestions and input.

Respectfully submitted,
The Missions Team

Jennifer Beagle	Sue Neuder
John Fitch, Chair	Karen Pontius
Sue Gladstone	Barb Sherman
Jan Myers	

Muriel Gilson Scholarship Fund Ministry Team

A brief synopsis of the recent history of this program;

Several action items were initiated in 2006;

- An informational brochure was produced and is currently available on the free book and pamphlet shelves in the church.
- A new application form was created and given to Sue in the office.
- An additional step was added to the application process (a minimum 500-word essay)
- The award amount was bumped to \$500
- A maximum number of awards per year was established (3)
- A policy of asking the SHPF group to do one fundraiser per year for this fund was established.

Three action items took place in 2010;

- The grade point requirement was lowered to 2.50
- The confirmation requirement was dropped
- A list of church activities has been added to the list of items to be included with the application

For 2011 Jamie Cheeney, Phillip Witteveen and Brooke Witchell are the graduating seniors that applied for and received the Scholarship grant.

The plan for each year:

- Meet with both the Senior High and Junior High PF groups in the fall to explain the scholarship program and ask them to consider doing a fund-raising event during the year.
- Write an article for the church newsletter and make periodic announcements at church to remind everyone of the program.
- Around the time of Muriel's birthday (mid February) solicit applications for the scholarships and donations to the fund.
- Update the brochures and applications.

At the time of this report the balance in the fund is \$6,106.00. After the scholarships are paid out the balance will be \$4,606.00. Donations and interest have slowly diminished since the establishment of the fund. This may possibly be due to Muriel's decreased presence at church as she became more infirmed. It was hoped that Muriel's death would create one more substantial influx of cash but that did not happen. At our current rate of donations to disbursements this fund will be depleted within a few years.

The Board might want to discuss continuing some sort of post high school support for active youth in the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Current team members, Jerry Harte, Shelley Gunther and Dawn Flynn

Music Ministry Team

The mission of the Music Ministry team is to support and sustain ...

- a creative atmosphere that supports worship for each member;
- to encourage active participation for the purpose of worship;
- to proactively develop musical worship experiences that are varied, meaningful, & personal.

In that spirit, the Music Ministry team worked hard to organize special worship services incorporating the gifts of various groups and individuals. The Christmas Eve and following Sunday morning services, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday services head the list. Other special events included, but are not limited to, the International Missions Trip Benefit Concert and the Master's Peace dinner theater event in celebration of our 150th anniversary.

We deeply appreciate the talents and dedication of groups like the Hands of Harmony, Chancel Choir, Silo Singers, Holy Mamas, and Hallelujah Choir. Additionally, we are thankful for the contributions of individuals including current and former members, college students, and friends from the community. We express our gratitude for the overwhelming support of the congregation, our minister, and the entire administrative team.

Respectfully submitted,
Music Ministry Team

Nominating Ministry Team

This is a team appointed by the Board of Ministry on an “as needed” basis.

Nursery Care Ministry Team

Our staff for the Nursery is working out well. The children respond to the continuity of Stacie Stevens and other familiar caregivers in the nursery on Sundays and Carole Livingston for the Board of Ministry Meetings.

Prayer Tree Ministry Team

Our purpose is to do the work God intends by caring for one another. The help you give through your prayers for others is precious and a wonderful gift.

Contact person is Jane Jolly.

Members of the Prayer Tree Ministry Team are:

Peg Lehnen, Virginia Dietrich, Marta Giesecke, Shirley Warstler, Doris Swatman, Joann Martis, Sid and Sue Lounds, Arlene and Jennifer Hoag, Sue Leveck, Blaine Lentz and Bernice Theule.

Respectfully submitted, Jane Jolly

Prison Ministry Report

First Congregational Church’s Prison Ministry has two major components:

- preaching twice monthly at the Handlon Michigan Training Unit in Ionia:
 - Attendance about doubled over the year from about 30 to about 60 per week.
 - With inmate handouts provided by Sue and FCC
 - Serving communion monthly with prepackaged elements provided by FCC
 - Inmates are taking a more active role in leading worship, including with a band.

- teaching a ten-week fathering course at Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility in Ionia:
 - Support for teaching materials from:
 - The FCC Missions Team, and
 - Individual FCC member contributions.

Respectively submitted,
Bill Rockwell

Senior High Pilgrim Fellowship Ministry Team

Senior Pilgrim Fellowship focused on “seeing Jesus more clearly, loving Him more clearly, and following Him more clearly.” Our first activity revolved around “loving Him more clearly” as our youth showed their love in the First Annual Thanksgiving Feast for the needy in our community. We continued this love with our second activity, the Baby Pantry Christmas Party, held in early December for the families in our community. Individual projects were also given to Flint schools with PowerPoints for struggling readers. Students also enjoyed fellowship with several evenings out with each other throughout the year to shine Jesus’ love. These fellowship evenings included movie night, game night, and late night snacks. Seeing Jesus more clearly and following him more clearly was the focus in our Sunday morning time with topics initially on trust, materialism, doubt, anger, abuse, underage drinking, standing for Christ, dating, and witnessing. We also shifted our attention to reading the New Testament starting with Matthew when Rev. Olson started the journey with the Congregation. Students had the opportunity to attend the fall retreat in Wayne and the spring retreat in Portland as they continued to fundraise with the soup and sandwich luncheon, submarine, pizza, and spaghetti meals, and the final pancake breakfast. Our final events, the NAPF retreat and mission work in Arizona this year and ASP, will see ten of our youth show what they have learned this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie Lounds, Sr. P.F. Advisor

Senior Minister

We’ve had another productive year. Important projects concerning the building have been completed or are underway. We’ve greatly enjoyed Kathy Farnum as Intern. Keith Mino and Denise Palmer are in the Lay Ministry Training program. Church Administrator Sue Larsen continues her fine work, as does Director of Music Ministry Rachael Short. Chancel Choir Director Chuck Graham and Hands of Harmony Director Susan Kilmer continue to offer leadership. The Stephen Ministry is going strong. We have much for which to be thankful.

It would be easy for us to sit back comfortable and satisfied. This is exactly what I fear the most.

The “Great Commission” given us by Jesus is that we reach everyone with the good news. There are many in our community who have no church affiliation. We exist to bring them into fellowship with God. What do we need to bring the gospel to those in need?

Most of what is needed to grow the church is largely in place:

- A specific mission.
- A clear understanding of our historic place in the community and the unique identity that is derived from it.
- Active support for the church staff as staff roles change due to the changing ministry of the church.
- Skillful lay leadership
- A loving, accepting congregation.
- An attractive, user friendly facility.
- Something of a long-term strategic vision and plan for church development that envisions our congregation in five, ten, and twenty years.

But we still lack some crucial elements:

- A promotional effort that projects our presence into the community.
- A congregation-wide passion to reach out to others in Christ's name.

This last item is what concerns me the most. My prayer is that God will continue to bless us, and at the same time compel us to use our experience, wisdom, creativity, and spiritual gifts in passionate outreach for Christ.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Matthew Olson

Small Groups

This ministry Team encourages the formation of small groups for bible study and spiritual growth of friends and members of FCC. New leaders and ideas are encouraged and welcome by all. Anyone interested in joining or leading a small group may find it helpful to contact the ministry team, however, to join or start a small group, it is not necessary to notify us.

This last year our Small Group met on Wednesday evenings, from September through April, using the "Upper Room" daily devotional as our guide. The length of each session is also up to the group and depends on the size and participation of the group as well as the material. You are invited to join the group at any time.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim and Jayne French, Jerry Harte, Sid and Sue Lounds, Jacob and Ruth Theule, Paul and Joann Martis, Gene Barnhart and Heather Risselada

Sound Board Ministry Team

The mission of the Sound Board Ministry Team is to operate, and maintain, the sound system in the sanctuary and the portable sound system used in Wilcox Hall. We will operate the systems as they are needed for Sunday Morning Worship Services, funerals, weddings, recitals, pageants and other presentations as needed.

Team Members:
Gary Larsen
Bill Kushmaul
Kyle Cross

Spring Tea

The Spring Tea was held Saturday, April 16, 2011 with 127 in attendance. It was a sold out event. There was a Princess Theme with a photo booth, nail boutique, and jewelry making for guests. Little girls received a gift bag that included crayons and coloring sheets, silly bands, gummy stars, stickers and a crown to decorate.

The Spring Tea Committee members were: Marianne Harris, Christina Leasher, Dawn Flynn, Denise Palmer, and Bridget Serrine Willis. Molly Minnick assisted with refreshments.

This year our profits were \$598.54 and are being donated to FCC for use in children's programming.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bridget Serrine Willis

Stephen Ministry Team

After being dormant for almost twenty years, the Stephen Ministry program was again begun at First Congregational Church of St. Johns. The Stephen Ministry program was started in 1975 by a Lutheran minister, who is also a clinical psychologist. He found over and over again in his psychologist capacity, that people needed spiritual healing in addition to their emotional hurt. The spiritual need for healing was the core of his development of the Stephen Ministry program. This program gives lay persons training as to how to help other lay persons who are facing challenges in life that they feel they cannot handle by themselves.

A trainee for this program is called or led by the Holy Spirit to help others. A trainee commits to a two year periods to receive the initial fifty hours of honing their skills on how to assist others who are in crisis, as well as continuing education through supervision for the remainder of this two year period. In supervision, in addition to continuing education, the Stephen Minister is assisted by other Stephen Ministers in encouragement of caring for their care receivers.

These caring relationships are always kept in strict confidence.

When this program began again at FCCSJ, three individuals committed themselves to this training: Jerry Harte; Cali Sackrider and Rachael Short. Their first class was held June 28, 2009. Their two year commitment is nearing an end, although they can choose to continue being active and giving care to anyone in need. In their two year commitment, six persons have received this ministry; either for a brief time or long term, depending on the need of the care receivers.

The second training class began May 2, 2011, with four women responding to the Spirit's call. They are Carolyn Ballard; Kathy Farnum; Denise Palmer and Linda Weinberger.

The Stephen Ministry Team requests continued prayers on the part of congregants for the current and future lay persons who respond to demonstrate Christ's love to others through their caring.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth L. Nihart, Stephen Leader

Stewardship Ministry Team

This is a team appointed by the Board of Ministry on an "as needed" basis.

Sunday School Ministry Team

Overall, Sunday School went well this year. The teachers are still enthused about the Gospel Light Curriculum since it gives them many ideas on how to present the Bible Lessons. We are fortunate to continue with the same group of teachers. They are as following:

Randy and Cindy Howell- Preschool and Kindergarten
Tom and Ellen Doppke- First Grade
David and Michelle Elms-Second and Third Grade
Rod Fuller-Fourth Grade

We had several meetings during the year to share ideas, discuss needs, and promote Sunday School. We made more frequent announcements about Sunday School during the church service, and had Sue Larsen advertise it in the Sunday Bulletin and monthly newsletter. This year we had a Family Fun Bowling Event to try to get to know the families and have more time with the children outside of church. Saturday, March 26, approximately 50 people participated at the Redwings Bowling Center in St. Johns. The teachers were very happy with the event. I think that we will try to have an activity each quarter next year. The teachers form a great team sharing ideas and working together. They agreed that taking the following time off worked well: the Sunday after Christmas, the Sunday before Spring break, and Easter. I believe that we met our goal of children enjoying Sunday School and learning about God, His love, and Biblical stories to strengthen their faith.

Submitted with Thankfulness for another good year,
Elizabeth Olson, Sunday School Coordinator

Ushers Ministry Team

For this year we currently have twenty four members on the usher schedule and two subs. At this time we have a full staff.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Kushmaul

Web Site Ministry Team

Nathan Lounds has set up a new web site and we also have a Blog.
