

First Congregational Church
100 Maple Street
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

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This Month's Highlights:

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



April 2013

The Congregational Connection...

*Our connection to the family and friends of
First Congregational Church, St. Johns, MI*

*18TH ANNUAL
ATTIC TREASURE SALE
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
APRIL 16th & 17th, 2013
10:00 A.M. — 5:00 P.M.*

WILCOX HALL, LOWER LEVEL

*Members and participants are invited to a preview sale on Monday,
April 15th, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.*

~

Donations may be brought to church the week of April 8th.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday 9:00 a.m. until noon.

Clean, gently used items please!

*Dishes, vases, small furniture, glassware, linens, Christmas items,
knick-knacks, toys, books and older costume jewelry.*

A newspaper cartoon showed Moses just come down from the top of the mountain with the tablets in his hands. He is reporting to the children of Israel and says, "It was hard bargaining—we get the milk and honey, but the anti-adultery clause stays in!"

The idea that the rules God sets up for us in his word are a contract that we are to follow has much truth in it; but not the whole truth. The deeper issues are sin and righteousness. There are several words in the New Testament for sin. Two of these words are used most often.

“Harmartia” is used 173 times. Back in ancient Greece this word meant to “miss the mark”; as when, aiming at a target, one fails to hit it. In the New Testament its meaning is expanded, sharpened, and deepened, providing the overarching concept of sin. It denotes sin ultimately directed against God. This is the core idea about what sin is; the rejection of God and the assertion of one’s will over the will of God. In other words sin is rebellion against God and God’s ways, which leads to disorder, suffering, and more sin. In the old Greek translation of Genesis “harmartia” is used for the sin of Adam, which mounts up in a series of fresh outbreaks including the first murder and the building of the Tower of Babel. In the New Testament we find that Jesus, as the righteous opposite number of Adam, breaks the cycle of sin by taking upon himself the curse of sin for all people. (Galatians 3:10-14). He himself has become sin in order to establish God’s righteousness.

Because sin is rebellion against God, it is the opposite of love of God. This notion has been extensively explored in the book, Experiencing God, that we are reading as a congregation. 1 John (Not the Gospel of John, but the first of those little letters of John marked 1,2,3 toward the back of the New Testament) explains that a person who says they love God, and at the same time are in rebellion against God, is deceiving himself.

“Adikema” is the other major word for sin; and related words are used 30 times. It refers to sin in the legal sense; the opposite of being legally in the right. Wrongdoing, injuring someone, the possession of something unjustly obtained, these are all “adikema”.

We legalistic loophole seekers like the notion of “adikema” sin best. It gives us maneuvering room in which we can be, technically and legally righteous while at the same time morally wrong. It allows us, if we are clever, to be deeply in the wrong but legally in the right.

“Harmartia” allows no such wiggle room. It encompasses technical, moral, and relational sin. This sin involves:

- Falling away from a relationship of faithfulness towards God and also disobedience to the commandments and the law.

Cont. on page 3

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in God, the Father; infinite in wisdom, goodness and love, and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Savior, who, for us and our salvation, lived and died and rose again and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who taketh of the things of Christ and revealth them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of men.



COMMUNITY NEWS

This is a reminder that the congregation is invited to **THE WHEEL INN**, St. Johns, on Saturdays and Sundays. Be sure to bring along a copy of our current weekly bulletin. The Wheel will collect those bulletins, attach your bill to it and every quarter they will total those numbers (pre-tax) and make a 5% donation back to our church.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a church open to all. As modern day pilgrims we consider it our privilege and committed responsibility to:
CELEBRATE the glory of God through worship, service and stewardship
NURTURE our relationships with Christian love and truth; and
SERVE others in our daily lives, individually and collectively as Christ’s people.

THE BOARD OF MINISTRY

Sr. Minister: Rev. Matthew Olson
Moderator: Molly Minnick
Vice Moderator: Lois Graham
Treasurer: Ruth Nihart
Board of Ministry Members:
 David Elms, Tom French, Rod Fuller, Bill Kushmaul, Gary Larsen, Eugene Livingston, Melanie Lounds, Dr. Keith Mino, Jr., Charlotte Shoup

CHURCH STAFF

Church Administrator: Susan Larsen
Financial Secretary: Paul Martis
Chancel Choir Director: Dr. Charles Graham
Hands of Harmony Director: Susan Kilmer
Director of Music Ministry: Rachael Short

First Congregational Church

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 St. Johns, MI 48879
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E-Mail: fccsj@4wbi.net
Web Site: www.fccsj.com
Facebook:
 firstcongregationalchurchofst.johns
Hours:
 Monday—Tuesday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
 Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 Thursday—Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

DOUBLETS, ETC

The April meeting of Doublets, Etc. will be held at the Flap Jack Restaurant in DeWitt on Sunday, April 7th, at 1:30 p.m. We will gather for a meal and a short business meeting. For those wishing to carpool, please meet in the church parking lot after church, and we will plan to leave at 1:00 p.m. We welcome new members, singles and doubles. Please call Dick and Charlotte Shoup at 224-6986 or Dennis and Janet Scott at 224-2601, for more information.

FOURTH SUNDAY SUPPER

You are invited to attend our "Fourth Sunday Supper" on April 28th, immediately following the worship service.

Bring a dish to pass and your own table service.

This is a chance to meet other members of our congregation. Come and join us!



NEW ARRIVAL

We would like to announce the birth of Kenai Scott Shoup. Kenai was born on March 8th, and is the first child of Jeffrey and Paula Shoup of Lansing.

Kenai is the newest grandchild of Dick and Charlotte Shoup, long time members of our church.



LINDA SCOTT WOMENS GROUP

All ladies are invited to attend the monthly meeting of "Linda Scott". This month they will be working at the Attic Treasure Sale, April 15th, 16th, and 17th.



EXTREME COUPONING

Jeramie Goetschy, who attends our church, is interested in collecting coupons for the Basic Needs Center. If everyone would bring in their unwanted coupons he could help the center stock their shelves. "If we work together we can help people in St. Johns with out recognition from the people but through God." You can drop your coupons off in the front office. For more information contact Jeramie at 989-640-0010.



HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

Don't forget to bring your food items and gently used, clean clothing for the **THIRD SUNDAY THROW DOWN!** All donations go to the "Basic Needs Center" here in St. Johns. They need our support! Our next collection is Sunday, **April 21st.** Contact John Fitch at 224-3565, or any Missions Team member for more information.



- Everyone, in that individual sin cannot be separated from the sin of the whole nation or church.
- The universal affliction that makes it impossible for us to be holy on our own.
- The disruption of the relations between people as well as the relation between people and God. Without the right relationship with God, the people cannot be in right relationship with each other.
- The inner life and intention of the heart. This kind of sin is not only unjust words and actions, but an unholy state of being.

In the process of experiencing God we come to know his holiness more fully. That can and should be awe inspiring. It also means that we see ourselves, in his holy light, as sinful creatures. Praise be to the God who has granted us liberation from sin through our Lord Jesus Christ. How great is the love of the Lord for us!

Submitted by Rev. Matthew Olson

SENIOR HIGH SUB SALE

F.C.C. Senior High Youth Group

Ham, Hard Salami, Capacola, Provolone Cheese, Romaine Lettuce, Tomatoes, Onions and Seasoning

8 INCH SUBS

5 FOR \$30.00 or \$7.00 each

Pick up after church on Sunday, April 21st.

Order today! Order forms will also be in the bulletin on April 7 & 14
Pay when you order or when you pick up.

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Number of Subs: _____

White or Wheat? _____

Cost: _____

Thank you for your support!

HELLO CHURCH!

We have just celebrated Easter and a new dawn is upon us! Christ has risen from the grave and hope of a life walking beside Christ in eternity has been gifted to us in God's grace! Halleluiah!

Let this new dawn be one of invitation. God is working in our community and in the world around us, and we are invited to join in this work. For those of you journeying through the *Experiencing God* study, you may have read about the need for us, as Christians, to open our eyes and look for where God is at work around us and join in. We have the perfect opportunity ahead of us to come up alongside God's efforts to restore and love on our own community. Ministries such as the Basic Needs Center, the Baby Pantry, Habitat for Humanity, the Safe House, and countless other ministries are working everyday to keep God's greatest commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39) Now is the time for us to hold up those ministries! To take part in their good work!

Will you join us on the Community Day of Service on April 27th? Will you come up alongside God as God seeks to restore and love our community?

In the back of the church sanctuary you will find sign-up sheets that are ready and waiting for you. The Community Day of Service has a team for just about everyone. The Baby Pantry Team will be making layettes for mothers in need. The Sewing Team will be assembling backpacks filled with school and personal hygiene supplies for a couple of different ministries throughout our community. The Knitting Team will be making blankets for the Baby Pantry, and prayer shawls for those who are ill and in need of a hug. The Habitat Team will be joining together to assist Habitat in their rehab project to provide a safe home for a family in need. The Park and Recreations Team will be cleaning up our communities green spaces. The Military Team will be packaging supplies for our troops over seas and be running a veterans services booth to assist veterans in signing up for services. The Stress Buster Team will be relieving stress for our local emergency responders and care givers by offering the healing power of massage. The Care for the Caregivers Team will be delivering treats to our local caregivers so that they can be assured of a community's support and love. The Arts Team will be working on a project that is to be determined. And, last but not least, we will be joining the Kiwanis Club One Day as they seek to care for the grounds out at Sleepy Hollow.

There is a team for everyone! Let this Easter season be one of invitation! Join alongside God's work here in our own beloved community!

Feel free to contact me with any questions of comments:
Sarah Gladstone * (989) 640-1487 * CommunityDayOfService@gmail.com

Submitted by Sarah Gladstone

APRIL SIGN UP SCHEDULES

<u>Altar Flowers</u>	<u>Nursery Care</u>	<u>Fellowship Hour</u>	<u>4th Sunday Supper Host/Hostess</u>
7 *	7 Hannah VanValkenburg	7 *	April 28
14 *	14 Stacie Stevens	14 Jane Jolly and Dick Root	Community Day of Service Group
21 Art Wood Family	21 Stacie Stevens	21 *	May 26*
28 *	28 Hannah VanValkenburg	28 Fourth Sunday Supper	

*Openings that need to be filled.

This page is published to keep you informed of participation in our church on Sundays and of changes in our church records. This also includes the dedication of our monthly newsletter.

CHURCH RECORDS

Baptism:

Chloe Lynn DeRosia, March 3, 2013, daughter of Ben and Kelly, sister of Abby



Friend Death:

Kelly Jo Wells, March 19, 2013, step daughter of Tom Garrison

THE APRIL DEDICATION

*The Congregational Connection
for this month*

Is Dedicated in Loving Memory

of

Alferd Wickerham

Given by his wife,

Bonnie



Children and Youth News

KEEPING THE CONNECTION

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

12	Samuel Sackrider	
21	Mallory Smith	

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH GROUP

We would like to thank everyone who donated to our Annual Book and Bake Sale. We raised \$250.00 Our group will be meeting to discuss where we would like to donate some of our money in the community. We have been studying the Old Testament and are learning so much. We are excited to be part of the Community Service Day in April!

Submitted by Barb Sherman

Save the Dates

Coming up: **GOD LOVES YOU**
 Fun Night, Friday, May 10th, 6-8:30 pm
 Ages 3-12. Older kids and adults are invited to plan and help
 Games, Crafts, Movies, Pizza

Celebrate God

Sunday School Picnic at Motz Park
 Sunday, May 19th, 2:30-5:30pm
 Families are invited
 Swimming, Fishing, Games, and Hot Dogs
 and lots of fun

Fritz Thurston
Prestige Pines
1177 West Solon Road
DeWitt, MI 48820

Bruce MacRae
Hazel Findlay Country Manor
1101 South Scott Road
St. Johns, MI 48879

Jane Knight
Grace Haven Assisted Living
1507 Glastonbury
St. Johns, MI 48879

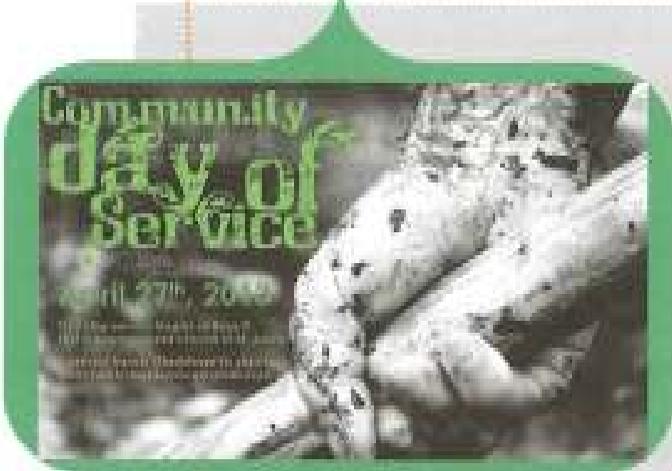
Ruth Sutton
Hazel Findlay Country Manor
1101 South Scott Road, Room E44
St. Johns, MI 48879

Bill Clark
Hazel Findlay Country Manor
1101 South Scott Road, #65
St. Johns, MI 48879

Helen Johnson
Grace Haven Assisted Living
1507 Glastonbury Drive
St. Johns, MI 48879



Join us at the First Congregational Church of St. Johns
 Worship Service @ 8am



Community Day of Service
 APRIL 27, 2013

- Habitat for Humanity Team
- Knitting Team
- Sewing Team
- Military Team
- Baby Pantry Team
- Parks & Recreation Team
- Status Busters Team
- Care for the Caregivers Team
- Arts Team

Community Day of Service

CONTACT PERSON: SARAH GLADSTONE 989-640-1487
 COMMUNITYDAYOFSERVICE@GMAIL.COM

Appalachia Service Project:

The History of the Mission

In 1969 a man with a vision set out to change lives and touch hearts. Minister Tex Evans set out to help the poor with just 50 teens and adult volunteers in Kentucky. By day they repaired homes and by night they worshiped. Once complete, four homes were made warmer for the coming winter and 50 young people's spirits were touched by God. Nearly 45 years later, the mission remains the same: act responsibly in the face of human need and injustice.

This year our teens and adult leaders will be making real change by helping those in need by providing better housing. They will set aside their own needs and desires to be God's hands and feet, God's heart and God's love. Accepting those in need does not involve changing them or judging them. What is gained on this trip is often quite surprising as those who minister return home feeling like they are the ones who have been blessed. By breaking down "cultural, social, and economic barriers" our crew will renew their faith in the goodness of others and broaden their education.

The youth thank you for your continued support of this mission. We couldn't do it without your financial and prayerful support.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Lounds



Making Homes Warmer, Safer and Drier
Transforming Lives

MUSIC WITH A MISSION CONCERT

A concert will be held on Sunday, April 28th, at 4PM to raise funds for the youth and adult leaders who are attending the Appalachia Service Project (ASP) this summer. The ASP is a Christian home repair/home building ministry through which volunteers and staff repair and build homes for low-income families in rural Appalachia (see www.asphome.org). The Music Ministry Team is collaborating with the Sr. High PF to host a concert, featuring many local talents, along with a meal to follow. A free will offering will be collected to help offset the travel costs for the youth and adults to participate in this ministry to serve God by helping others. Bring your friends! See you there!



Submitted by Susan Kilmer

FUND RAISING

Please join me in finding new ways to fund raise for our church. Please contact Barb Sherman if you would like to be part of this exciting new venture. I will be holding a meeting in April to brainstorm and would love to have your input. Please contact me at home 989-292-4029 or on my cell at 1-517-242-1234.

Thank you, Barb Sherman

CAMPING!

Our annual church camping trip is scheduled for June 14th-16th. Some of us will probably go up on Thursday to River Ridge Campground in Breckenridge. I have let the campground know that we will be coming, but everyone needs to make their own reservation by calling 989-842-5184. They are accepting reservations now, so give them a call. Any questions please call me, Kathy Kushmaul, at 224-8482.



WARM WEATHER IS COMING

AIR CONDITIONING UPDATE! The total estimated cost of this project is \$50,000.00. With the matching funds we now have \$24,904.15! We will continually keep you updated on our fund raising progress for this church improvement.

WE NEED A VOLUNTEER

We are looking for a person or team to take over the planting and upkeep of the gardens here at the church. It is a time consuming job and Gary and I just don't have the time to put into it anymore. It involves all of the island areas, the gardens by the sign on US-21 and the Maple Street entrance gardens. Please give me a call at 224-2636 if you are interested.



Thank you, Sue Larsen

MEMBER PROFILE



Our family for this month are the Smith's. Craig grew up in Elsie and Beth is from Saline, MI. Together they have three children. Mary is 20 and attends the University of Michigan. Mallory is 11 years old, is in the 5th grade at Oakview and loves gymnastics. Garrett is 8 years old, in the 2nd grade also at Oakview, and into anything related to trains. Craig is the owner of Main Street Pizza and likes to go biking and hiking. Beth is a former Kindergarten teacher, now a homemaker and part-time baker. She enjoys baking, spending time with her children and taking part in their activities. They were first brought to F.C.C. by a good friend of theirs, Connie Cary, and then invited back by the Palmers. They have been a part of our congregation for five years.

It's a pleasure to know the Smith Family!