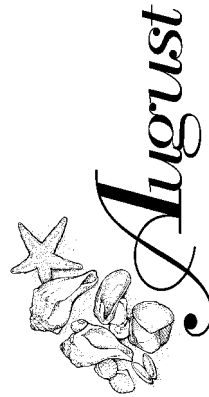


First Congregational Church
100 Maple Street
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

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48879



This Month's Highlights:
Cover, *Mint Festival & 150th Celebration*
Pg. 2 *Rev. Olson*
Pg. 3 *150th Crosses*
Pg. 6 *Children and Youth News*
Pg. 7 *August Schedules, Church Records and Dedication*
Pg. 9 *Member Profile*

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

AUGUST 2010

The Congregational Connection...



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

2010 Mint Festival

Are you interested in finding an "Act of Service" that you can do for the church? Why not step out of your comfort zone and sign up to work with the St. Johns Mint Festival Food Booth Ministry Team?

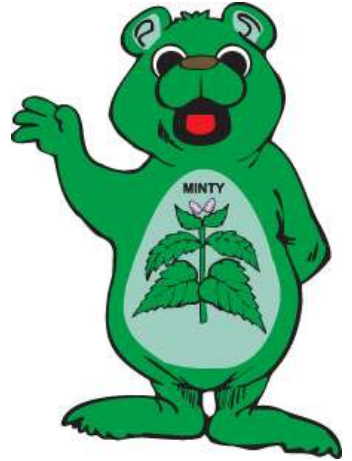
You can work a shift, or two, selling at the booth, helping prepare food, cleaning up, or any job that needs to be done.

Barb Sherman is still seeking people to sign up and help her with all aspects of this fundraiser.

The team does need the following donations: bottled water, any brand of pop and Capri Sun juice for the children. They can be delivered to the church at any time. Please put the donation in the first Sunday School room, upper lever of the Carson Wing.

The Mint Festival is being held August 13th, 14th and 15th.

Please give Barb a call at 1-517-242-1234 to let her know you are interested in helping to make this the best food booth yet!



The **150th ANNIVERSARY MINISTRY TEAM** is also looking for participants to ride on the float in the Mint Festival Parade or to walk along side handing out treats to children. Contact Teresa Zuker if you are interested at 989-682-4966.

Do Christians and Muslims Worship the Same God?

While discussing the differences between Christianity and Islam my son made the observation; *“The difference is the God. Islam’s God makes you earn his love, while the Christian God just gives it too you.”*

Certainly there are similarities between the Gods of Islam and Christianity, at least if you keep the view lofty and abstract enough. Both agree that God is holy, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, just, and loving. But when you get into divine operations on the ground, the scene changes. Here both traditions charge the other with seriously misidentifying and misunderstanding how God acts.

In Islam Mohammed is considered the prophet of the true God; he speaks with authority. Although the Qur’an speaks respectfully and appreciatively of Jesus, it insists that he is only a man, not God or the Son of God, and Jesus’ followers are wrong to consider him divine. Mohammed corrects and supersedes Christian teachings that Jesus died on the cross as atonement for sin. Instead he espouses the setting up an orderly way of life that leads to the fierce holiness expected by God. This way is to be spread, if necessary through jihad, which traditionally has meant using force to extend the area in which Islam rule is in force. Through living this life one earns the loving acceptance of God and entry into paradise.

Jesus, coming before Mohammed, had of course nothing to say about him. Jesus did claim that he himself was the Messiah, the presence of God in the world; forecast by the Jewish prophets but not a prophet only. He proclaimed the Kingdom of God as a place of compassion, forgiveness, and love reflecting the essential character of God. He calls his followers not to jihad, but to self-giving service following the example of God himself through Jesus. Because Christ has died for your sins, you are saved from sin; God’s loving forgiveness is just given to you by a God you can address as “Father”. You simply need to receive it.

So do Christians and Muslims worship the same God? From my limited understanding of both Gods, I don’t think so. They don’t seem to have much in common, and it is wrong to paper over the differences. Could you explain your Christian God to a Muslim?

Rev. Matt Olson

THE CHURCH STAFF

Senior Minister, Matthew Olson
Church Administrator, Susan Larsen
Treasurer, Jim Beagle
Financial Secretary, Paul Martis
Chancel Choir Director, Dr. Charles Graham
Director of Music Ministry, Rachael Short
Hands of Harmony Director, Susan Kilmer

First Congregational Church

100 Maple Street
 St. Johns, MI 48879

Telephone: 989-224-2636

Fax: 989-224-8306

E-Mail: fccsj@4wbi.net

Web Site: www.fccsj.com

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.

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.*

THE BOARD OF MINISTRY

Moderator: Marianne Harris

Vice Moderator:
 Shirleyan Lake

Board of Ministry Members:

David Elms

Tom Flynn

Gary Larsen

Eugene Livingston

Melanie Lounds

Keith Mino

Denise Palmer

Randy Root

Cali Sackrider

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.

COMMUNITY NEWS

“PROJECT CONNECT” is sponsored by the Clinton County Housing and Homeless Coalition and MSU Extension. They are collection new books for children in need. The collection box is in the upper Carson Wing.

2010 CONCERT IN THE PARK

August 4 Johnny Cash Impersonator,
Rock Harley

August 11 Band Concert,
St. Johns Community Band

August 18 Metro Jazz Voices,
Carl Cafagna’s Detroit Group

August 25 Elvis Impersonator, Matt King
All shows begin at 7:00 p.m. rain or shine.
Bring your own seating.

FUN FAMILY FRIDAYS

6—8 p.m. at the St. Johns Depot:
August 6: Jump-a-Palooza and the Mint City Jammers

August 13: Yas, the Mountain Man and the DMB band for the Mint Festival

August 20: Pet Parade and Bethany Perkins, singer followed by Nacho Bidness!

August 27: Scavenger Hunt and the Mint City Jammers

4th Annual Teen Dance For Those Who Can’t Dance A Thon

This annual dance for teens has brought in over \$19,000.00 in the past three years for different charities. The dance for this year is on Friday, August 6th, starting at 10:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning at St. Joseph’s gym. The cost per student is \$15.00 which includes a DAT t-shirt and water bottle. This dance is supervised by authorized personnel. For more information please contact Nancy Poff from St. Joseph Church at njpoff@gmail.com.

MEN’S MINISTRY, in collaboration with Dunamia.org, is inviting all men in need of personal support, to meet at Community Christian Church (400 East State Street) every fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Please call Mike Stedry for further information at 517-449-5349

The Clinton County Department of Human Services needs safe and caring homes for children of all ages. Especially teenagers in all areas of Clinton County. **FOSTER PARENTS** can make a difference in the lives of children in crisis. Contact Christine Sisung with the Department of Human Services at 989-224-5548 for information packets.

Alzheimer’s Association Caregiver Support Group, 3rd Wednesday of every month, 3:00-4:30 p.m. at Grace Haven Assisted Living, 1507 Glastonbury Drive, St. Johns. Respite Care available on site. Please call ahead at 224-1650.

DID YOU KNOW?

Your pledge to the church:

- Helps pay for a substitute Pastor/ Minister on occasion and gives Rev. Olson a Sunday off.
- It pays for the postage and envelopes that we use to keep shut-ins informed with the Sunday bulletin each week. It also pays to mail your newsletters and send birthday cards to all members and friends.

WORD OF THE WEEK

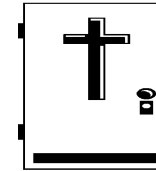
Are you interested in receiving an introduction to the sermon text the week prior to it being delivered to the congregation? You can sign up by calling the church office. We would e-mail, or mail, the “Word of the Week” to you each week. Please call 224-2636.

OFFICE HOURS

The Church office will have new hours from Monday, August 2nd, through Tuesday the 10th. The hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The office will be closed on Friday, August 6th.

The Church Office



Will Be Closed:

**1860– 2010
COMMEMORATIVE CROSS**

April 1, 1860, a small group of individuals met and organized the First Congregational Church of St. Johns. They held worship services in various places throughout the village until they built their own structure in 1865. It stood just west of the current church. By 1896 they had outgrown that building and began to talk of another building. On October 13, 1899 the cornerstone was laid for the current church, with the dedication held on March 17, 1901. The basement of that building included amber-colored, pebbled glass windows. In 2005 those windows were replaced and the old windows salvaged.



The cross is constructed of glass from those windows; a commemorative keepsake in celebration of the 150th anniversary of First Congregational Church of St. Johns in 2010. The 150th Anniversary Team have been making these crosses available for sale during celebratory events at church and will continue to do so. If it is more convenient for you, you may purchase a cross (\$10.00) from the church office or by contacting Peg Lehnen at 224-6405.

**DONATIONS TO THE
BABY PANTRY**

1. Next "Throw Down Sunday" is on August 15th.
2. Bring your donation of any canned or boxed food, baby food, diapers, baby products, or cash to be donated to the Baby Pantry.

More information? Contact John Fitch at 224-3565.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ST. JOHNS, MI



**150TH ANNIVERSARY
1860-2010**

150TH EVENT

The August event in celebration of our church's 150th anniversary is being held in conjunction with the St. Johns Mint Festival. Throughout the Festival, FCCSJ will have a food booth at the City Park offering for sale delicious food to the public. Always in past years, the FCSJ food booth has been praised for the selection of food choices. This will also be the case this year, as Barb Sherman and her team have given much thought to the menu.

The second function FCCSJ will have a presence in is the Mint Parade. This is taking place on Saturday, August 14, 2010 starting at 10:00 a.m. We will have a float in the parade highlighting 150 years of worship in our community. We plan to have members of our congregation riding on the float depicting a worship service. There will also be members walking beside the float distributing items to spectator children. Volunteers are needed to help at the food booth, riders on the float and walkers to accompany the float. If you have an interest in any of these needs, please call the church office (989)224-2636.

The Mint Festival, and First Congregational Church's participation in it, offers an excellent opportunity for many people to be aware of our church's 150 year history.

Ruth Nihart,
150th Anniversary Ministry Team

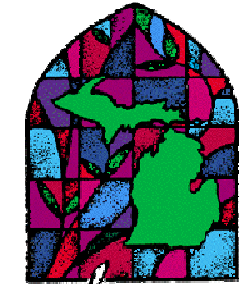
**YOUR PLEDGE:
MAKING IT EASY**

Are you at the cottage and happen to remember that you did not get your pledge in to the church!

Keep your pledge up to date all year long by signing up for Electronic Funds Transfer. We have authorization forms available in the church office. This system makes it very easy for you to keep up with your pledge to the church. You can determine when you want to give and the amount you pledge and it will automatically be taken care of. Please, stop in and pick up a form at your convenience.

**MICHIGAN STAINED GLASS
CENSUS**

The stained glass windows of First Congregational Church of St. Johns are now registered with the Michigan Stained Glass Census at Michigan State University Museum.



Our stained glass windows are the featured "Windows of the Month" for July 2010 on the Michigan Stained



Glass Census web site at:

<http://museum.msu.edu/museum/msgc/index.html>

THE FLYNN FAMILY!



Tom and Dawn Flynn moved to St. Johns from Pennsylvania shortly after their daughter Holly was born. They lived at Autumn Ridge Apartments where their neighbor was Fran Eberly. (Fran was a life long member of our church and the grandmother of Jim Beagle). She invited the Flynn's to come to church and they stayed! Tom and Dawn became members in 2001 and their daughter Holly was confirmed and became a member in 2010.

Tom is a sales representative for Stanley National Hardware and Dawn is a second grade teacher for St. Johns Public Schools. Their second daughter Danielle is in 6th grade and is very involved in Tumbling. Holly is now a 9th grader and has been in ballet for a number of years. Tom is quite the hockey fan and player, while the whole family loves camping.

We are so happy to have the Flynn family here at First Congregational! They are a great family!



FALL BEGINS!



Outdoor Worship

MARK YOUR CALENDERS!

Homecoming Sunday

Sunday, September 12, 2010
at the Thurston Farm
5512 West M-21
(look for the FCC sign)

Worship service at 11:00 a.m.
Hog Roast and Pot Luck Dinner at 12:00
p.m. Bring a dish to pass and your own table
service. Everyone is welcome to attend, so
ask a friend or neighbor to come and enjoy
this special morning with us.

WEEKLY EVENTS

All men from our church and community are invited to attend the TUESDAY MORNING
MEN'S BIBLE STUDY. They open with a prayer at 7:00 a.m. sharp and always try to close the
study time by 7:50 a.m. with time for prayer until 8:00 a.m. They are now studying 1 Peter!
Come and join them!

Rev. Olson is leading a BIBLE STUDY/DISCUSSION CLASS on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. in
Wilcox Hall. You can join the group at any time. This is a good chance to meet new people and
grow in your Christian faith. This group is studying Jonah.

Taking a break and going away for a few days? Stop in and sign out a book from our CHURCH
LIBRARY to read. We have a good selection of fiction books for your enjoyment.

LITERATURE RACK

The racks at the back of the sanctuary are
filled with materials on a variety of subjects.
They range from children's books to books
on dealing with grief. They are for you to
enjoy then pass on to others who would
benefit from the literature.

GREETERS AND
FELLOWSHIP HOUR

The sign up schedules for Greeters and Fel-
lowship Hour Hosts are posted in the Wilcox
Hall corridor. This is the way we are filling
spots for Greeters and Coffee Hours. Please
be aware that you do not need to spend
money on cookies or snacks. The coffee
and necessary condiments are always avail-
able in the kitchen.

If you have any questions, or can not make it
downstairs to sign up, please call the church
office at 224-2636.

Stephen Ministry Team Reaches Out

On Tuesday, July 7th, several members of the Stephen Ministry Team traveled to Ovid
to visit with a number of the residents at the Ovid Healthcare Center, which provides
eldercare services.

Rachael Short engaged and mesmerized about
15 of the residents/patients for more than an
hour with her wonderful musical talent. She
made great use of the skills she learned while
participating in the Music Therapy program she
recently completed. She produced dozens of
warm smiles, giggles and hearty laughs during
the visit. She also completely "wowed" her fel-
low ministry team members.



The theme of the program was "summer time"
and most of the songs led by Rachael had a distinct summer flavor. Cali Sackrider also
read two pleasing and thought provoking poems that were thoroughly enjoyed by the
group.

It was apparent that many of the inhabitants of the facility are not able to travel much, if
at all, outside the confines of the grounds. The gratitude for a visit from "outsiders" was
evident from their body language. It was an afternoon that will not be soon forgotten by
either the people who live there or the visitors.



The Stephen Ministry program is traditionally
thought of as consisting of one-on-one visits where
comfort and assistance is provided for those who are
hurting or otherwise in need. The current Stephen
Ministry team has made a decision to get involved
with community outreach when possible. If you
have interest in joining their outreach efforts or have
more questions about Stephen Ministry, please con-
tact Ruth Nihart.

Children and Youth News

AUGUST CHILDREN AND YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Allyse Johnson
- 7 Troy Cramer
- 15 Logan Johnson
- 16 Keegan Elms
- 16 Danielle Flynn



MISSION TRIP

Our ASP team for this year is Zachary Zucker, Jamie Cheeney, Trisha Cheeney and Brad Tooker. John Fitch and Craig Smith are the leaders of this group. They will be leaving from church on August 1st, and returning on the 8th. They are traveling to Perry County, Kentucky. We all wish them a safe journey.



SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS SEPTEMBER 19TH!

Ages 4-12! 10:00-10:45 a.m.

4 & 5 Year olds: The caring leaders of the preschool children will teach them how to build loving relationships with other kids and discover the Bible pure and simple.

Leaders, Randy & Cynthia Howell

K & 1st Graders: These leaders will be making the most of their emerging readers skills by helping them explore Bible stories and verses that they are able to understand and recall. Kids learn that God wants our trust and obedience which leads them to Jesus, the Savior.

Leaders, Tom & Ellen Doppke

2nd & 3rd Graders: Using a variety of fun learning activities, meaningful discussion questions and more, Dave and Michele will help this lively group become wholehearted followers of Jesus.

Leaders, David & Michele Elms

4th & 5th Graders: How do you keep preteens engaged? Rod, along with the curriculum will help develop meaningful mentoring relationships with his students that will lead to a strong foundation of faith. Based on 24 key Bible passages, this program leads students to discover what the Bible says about popularity, success, failure, friendship, rules and more.

Leader, Rod

Fuller

Get ready for another fun and exciting year!

AUGUST SIGN UP SCHEDULES

<u>Altar Flowers</u>	<u>Nursery Care</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Fellowship Hour</u>
1 Jan Quist	1 Shanna Bond	1 Jan Quist	1 *
8 *	8 Shanna Bond	8 *	8 *
15 Dave & Molly Minnick	15 Cheeney	15 *	15 *
22 *	22 Shanna Bond	22 Doris Swatman Fritz Thurston	22 *
29 *	29 Shanna Bond	29 *	29 *

***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

Death:

Doyle Bancroft, June 24, 2010



4th Sunday Supper Host/Hostess

The 4th Sunday Supper will resume on September 26th.

THE AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEDICATION

The Congregational Connection for this month is in celebration of the

25th Wedding Anniversary of

Dave and Molly Minnick

Congratulations!

