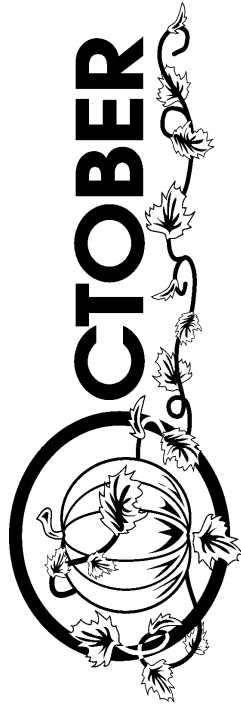


First Congregational Church  
100 Maple Street  
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

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48879



**This Month's Highlights:**  
*Cover, Dinner Theater/150th Event*  
*Pg. 2 2011 Giving Form*  
*Pg. 3 Electronic Giving*  
*Pg. 6 Children and Youth News*  
*Pg. 7 October Schedules, Church Records and Dedication*  
*Pg. 9 Member Profile*

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**OCTOBER 2010**

**The Congregational Connection...**

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

## **150th Anniversary Event**

### **The Master's Peace Dinner Theater**

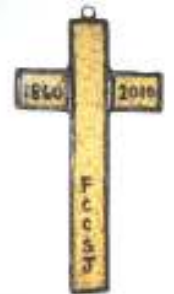
**Sunday, October 10, 2010  
Wilcox Hall  
5:00 p.m.**



**1860-2010**

**Adults \$10.00  
Children 12 and under \$5.00**

**Tickets can be purchased before and after  
church on Sundays or by calling the church  
office at 224-2636.**



More information on page 8

*“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”* 2 Corinthians 9:7

Dear Congregational Family,

It is the time of year when sports practices are starting and parents and their kids are looking forward to the coming school year and the fall season. Here at First Congregational Church of St. Johns we look forward to this new season and begin making plans for next year’s spending needs.

We come before you now to explain our needs and ask you to give thought to your financial support to our church. We will not be sending out pledge letters this year. We want to take a new approach to giving. At the bottom of this page is a giving form which we will encourage you to fill out. This form will be available throughout the next few months in the bulletin, newsletter and available in the office. We will also make it available on our web site: FCCSJ.com

Our church has an annual budget of approximately \$205,000.00 Take into account that we have about 105 giving families and the need becomes clear.

The need is great. Our ministry teams do Christian outreach during the Appalachia Service Project and trips to international missions. As a congregation we support the Southern Sudan Health Care Foundation, RAVE, Meals on Wheels, and our local community through the Baby Pantry, Hospice and other organizations.

In closing we would ask that you take a leap of faith and increase your support of FCCSJ. We are all stewards of God’s house in St. Johns and of His faith in this world.

*Board of Ministry*

**2011 OFFERING** Please fill out and return to the church.

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

2011 Giving Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (please check one) per week \_\_\_\_\_ per month \_\_\_\_\_ per year \_\_\_\_\_

Please check this space if you would like to have weekly offering envelopes ordered for you \_\_\_\_\_

**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.

<b>STEPHEN MINISTRY MESSAGE</b>
---------------------------------

Last month we solemnly observed the ninth anniversary of one of the darkest days of our nation's history, the September 11 attacks. People across the country undoubtedly experienced a multitude of emotions, but at least 60 people from churches across mid-Michigan tried to give the day a constructive spin. They gathered at University Methodist Church in East Lansing to learn more about Stephen Ministries.

"There's something as disastrous as 9/11, a one-time event that causes tragedy," said Barb Doyal, a Stephen volunteer and coordinator of the workshop. "And then there are the bumps and bruises we go through in a typical, normal day or life."

The four hour workshop included a sample of the training, and organizers hope that those who attended will go on to establish Stephen Ministries at their churches.

Stephen Ministries is a growing national program that trains church members to help others through grief, loss, life changes, and other difficulties. It is based in St. Louis, Mo., and was founded in 1975 by the Rev. Kenneth Haugk, a pastor and clinical psychologist. It's named after St. Stephen, the first lay person commissioned by the 12 apostles of Jesus to minister to those in need.

After 50 hours of training, Stephen volunteers make a two-year commitment to the program and are matched with those who need help. They are not counselors and don't give advice, Doyal said. Instead, they listen and offer support. "A listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, an open heart," Doyal said. "It's a walk with the care receiver on their journey to wholeness." They also learn to judge when someone they're working with may need counseling or other services.

Cindy Matheny of DeWitt trained with the program last fall at Riverview Church in Holt. She said it's rewarding to help others. "For me it was really life-changing," she said of the Stephen training. "It's a great way to live."

There is a broad spectrum of issues that people might want to talk to someone about that Stephen Ministers are trained to help with including;

Death of a loved one, Physical disability, Job loss, Miscarriage, Divorce,  
Hospitalization, Life-threatening illness, Empty Nest, Caregiver burnout,  
Legal troubles

One of our own Stephen Ministers recently shared a story about the power of listening. One of her friends called while she happened to be in the grocery store. Her friend was upset about an issue in her life. Our SM caregiver used her trained listening skills and simply let her friend talk. She offered her friend empathy and support only. At the end of their conversation the friend said, "It was so great to talk to you, thanks so much."

Stephen Ministers are taught there are two messages that must be clearly communicated; "You are not alone" and "Somebody cares about you."

If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister or feel you or someone you know could benefit from the care giving help from one, please contact Matt Olson or Ruth Nihart.

*Jerry Harte*, Stephen Minister

<b>ELECTRONIC GIVING QUESTIONS</b>
------------------------------------

**QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED:****Q. What is electronic giving?**

**A.** Electronic giving is an automatic transfer program which allows you to make contributions without writing checks.

**Q. What is the advantage of electronic giving?**

**A.** It saves time. You also help the church stabilize its budget and save money.

**Q. How is my electronic giving automatically deducted from my account?**

**A.** Once you authorize the transfer, your specified contribution is electronically transferred directly from your checking or savings account to the church's account.

**Q. When will my giving be deducted from my account?**

**A.** On the date you authorize.

**Q. If I do not write checks, how do I balance my checkbook?**

**A.** Since your contribution is made at a pre-established time, you simply record it in your check register on the appropriate date.

**Q. Without a canceled check, how can I prove I made my contribution?**

**A.** Your bank statement gives you an itemized list of electronic transfers. It is your proof of contribution.

**HOW DO I GET STARTED:**

To set up electronic donations, simply complete the authorization form available in the church office and return it in a sealed envelope back to the church office, or giving plate. Donations can be debited automatically from either a checking or savings account.

**Q. Is electronic contribution risky?**

**A.** Electronic contribution is less risky than a check contribution. It cannot be lost, stolen, or destroyed. It has an extremely high rate of accuracy.

**Q. What if I change bank accounts?**

**A.** Notify us and we will give you a new authorization form to complete.

**Q. How much does electronic giving cost?**

**A.** For you, nothing!

**Q. What if I try electronic giving and don't like it?**

**A.** You can cancel your authorization by notifying us any time. But, once you've enjoyed the convenience of electronic giving, we doubt you will want to go back to making contributions the way you did before.

**Q. How do I sign up for electronic giving?**

**A.** Complete and sign the authorization form available in the church office and return it to the church office or in the giving plate, along with a voided check or voided savings deposit slip.

*An easy way to make your 2011 Offering to the church!*

## COME TO FRIEND DAY AND OUR ANNUAL HAY RIDE



Participants in our church are encouraged to invite their friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to our Annual Hay Ride at the Eugene and Carole Livingston Farm, 2204 Livingston Road. The farm is just north of St. Johns on the west side of the expressway (look for the blue silos). The Hayride is on Sunday, October 17th. We will begin the **first ride promptly at 5 p.m.** for those with small children or any participants who need to get home early. Guests waiting for the later ride can enjoy the treats, fire, and the fellowship. Rain Cancels.

## MUSIC THERAPY

Over the last four years, my FCC family has shared my journey on the path to Music Therapy Board Certification. Along with your friendship, support, and prayers, you have provided a place for me to grow spiritually and to develop many skills necessary to be an effective music therapist. I am still on the journey, but as I transition from student to professional, I would like to share with you some information about this exciting field.

**Historical Context:** The use of music to achieve therapeutic goals is not a new trend, but it is a relatively young organized professional discipline. We read in 1 Samuel 16 that King Saul was plagued by “an evil spirit” (vs14), and that David “... would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul ...” (vs23) Over centuries and across cultures, medicine men united music with the physical art of healing. In the United States, the study, practice, and codification of music therapy began when musicians visited veterans of World Wars I and II, playing music to enhance an environment of healing. The impact of their efforts prompted a movement to explore the potential of music as a supportive therapy.

**Definition:** The American Music Therapy Association defines music therapy as “the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.” ([www.musictherapy.org](http://www.musictherapy.org))

In future newsletters, I'll examine the components of this definition, identify populations served, and relate highlights from my recent internship.

*Rachael Short*

## MISSIONS PROJECT

**WINTER COAT DRIVE** - This year the Missions Ministry Team will be sponsoring a winter coat drive. We will be collecting winter coats, gloves, mittens and scarves. No boots, please! We will be collecting them on October 3rd, 10th and 17th. A coat rack and baskets will be set up on Sunday mornings in the Narthex which is the room directly behind the Sanctuary. The winter paraphernalia will be donated to a local organization. As always we thank you, the members and friends, for your wonderful participation.

You can help by:

- \*Donating
- \*Praying for those that are in need



## THE PALMER FAMILY



Mark and Denise moved to St. Johns, 10 years ago from Lake Orion, when Mark was offered the St. Johns High School Principal position. Denise is the VP of Business Development for Eclipse Healthcare Consulting, Inc. Since moving to St. Johns they have since been blessed with the addition of two daughters. Grace who is 9 years old and in the 4th grade, loves to dance and play soccer. Jada is 8 years old and in the 3rd grade. She loves tumbling and drawing. Both girls enjoy camping, swimming and dogs. The Palmers' foster son Marquis is a freshman at Michigan Technological University. Mark likes to go camping and spending time with friends and family. Denise is a runner, enjoys scrapbooking, playing the piano, camping, coaching soccer and also spending time with friends and family. Gary and Sue Larsen invited them to church when they first moved to St. Johns and they have stayed ever since! They have always felt at home here at FCC and think of the church as their extended family. When you see the Palmer family be sure to tell them how happy we are to have them in our church family.

## DINNER THEATER

You won't want to miss the 150th ANNIVERSARY DINNER THEATER event to be held on October 10, 2010 being held at FCCSJ in Wilcox Hall. The event begins at 5:00 PM with dinner deliciously prepared and served by John Cheeny and his crew. The dinner included appetizers, salad, chicken cordon bleu, smashed red skin potatoes, vegetables, home-made dinner rolls and home made carrot or German chocolate cake. The theater portion of this event follows the dinner. You are sure to be entertained and learn things about FCCSJ's history you never knew, or have forgotten. This performance will be keenly narrated by Jim Gunther. He will be assisted by Rachael Short on the piano, musical groups from our church and other performers.

Tickets for the dinner and theater presentation are only \$10.00 for each adult and \$5.00 for children age 12 and under. You can purchase your tickets before and after each Sunday worship service through October 3, 2010. You can also call the church office (224-2636) and let Sue know how many tickets you want. The 150th Anniversary Team members also have tickets for sale. The members are: Gary Carpenter, Mary Ann Ellickson, Peg Lehnen, Joann Martis, Ruth Nihart or Bonnie Wickerham. You are sure to leave this event having been entertained.

**Ruth Nihart**

*150th Anniversary Ministry Team*

## FELLOWSHIP HOUR

Our Mission Team will return to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in the spring of 2011. They are having fund raisers to help with the cost of the trip. They will be hosting a "Pampered Chef" Fellowship Hour on October 17th. Proceeds from these sales will go towards the cost of this mission outreach. Please plan on supporting our mission team. They will also be hosting a Rwanda baskets Fellowship Hour in November (date to be determined).



## DONATIONS TO THE FOOD BANK

Next "Throw Down Sunday" is on October 17th. Bring your donation of any canned or boxed food or cash to be donated to Mt. Hope Food Bank here in St. Johns. Need more information? Contact John Fitch at 224-3565.

## MUSIC READING

Would you like to develop your music reading skills? Would you like to strengthen your singing voice? Consider taking a sight-singing class with Rachael Short here at FCC. Target goals would include learning fundamentals of music notation, singing a variety of familiar and "new" music, and having fun. For more information and to sign up, please call the church.



## FALL!

### HANDS OF HARMONY

The Hands of Harmony is having rehearsals on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. The bell choir participates in the worship service on the 3rd Sunday of each month, the Christmas Eve service, and other special events. If you are interested in joining this ministry team, please contact Susan Kilmer at 224-2950.



### ALL LADIES ARE INVITED!

All ladies are invited to join the Linda Scott Division. This women's fellowship meets on the second Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is Tuesday, October 12th, 12:30 p.m. at The Mint. Please RSVP to Joann Martis at 224-4165.

### 4th SUNDAY SUPPER

The "FOURTH SUNDAY SUPPER" will be held, Sunday, October 24th, immediately after church in Wilcox Hall. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. Coffee and milk will be provided. This "Supper" is held on the fourth Sunday of each month during the church year. The sign up sheet for hosting the Supper is on the board in the Wilcox Hall corridor. Hosting consists of making coffee, providing the milk and cleaning up after the meal.

The Hosts for the October Supper are the members of the Senior High Youth Group who went to Alaska.

### THANKSGIVING DINNER

The Senior High PF Group at First Congregational Church is coordinating a community-wide Thanksgiving Dinner which will be held on November 25, 2010. The dinner will be held at First Congregational Church with the assistance of the youth groups from other churches in our community. In addition to hosting the event, our congregation will be providing the meat for the meal. We will serve anyone who might otherwise be alone or in need. The meal will be held on



### THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving Day with two seatings of 100 people each. We are very excited about this opportunity to serve others in our community and invite members and friends of First Congregational Church to join us. Ways that you might consider being involved include:

- \* Donating a turkey or a ham for the meal
- \* Volunteering to make center pieces for the tables
- \* Volunteering to cook on the day of meal
- \* Volunteering to serve on the day of the meal
- \* Keeping us in your prayers as we undertake this project

We will have an organizational meeting on Sunday, October 3, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at our church. Please feel free to attend if you would like more information. You can contact Molly Minnick at (989) 307-9936 or [mminnick@gccmha.org](mailto:mminnick@gccmha.org) with any questions or to volunteer!



**Children and Youth News**

**OCTOBER CHILDREN AND YOUTH BIRTHDAYS**

- 8 Peter Olson
- 15 Mackenzie Mayes
- 17 Andrew Rademacher
- 18 Adam Morse
- 24 Quintin Lounds
- 25 Andrew Beagle



**KID'S PRACTICE**

**CHILDREN'S CHOIR,** under the direction of Rachael Short and Denise Palmer, is meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings in the Choir Room. Children of all ages are encouraged to attend.



**OCTOBER SIGN UP SCHEDULES**

<u>Altar Flowers</u>	<u>Nursery Care</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Fellowship Hour</u>
3 *	3 Patti Mayes	3 *	3 Lake, Gunther & Root
10 Olson Family	10 Becca Stevens	10 150th Team	10 150th Anniversary Ministry Team
17 Jan Myers	17 Becca Stevens	17 *	17 International Missions
24 *	24 Karen Tooker	24 Doris Swatman & Fritz Thurston	24 4th Sunday Supper
31 *	31 Stevens	31 *	31 Junior High P.F.

**\*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.

**4th Sunday Supper Host/Hostess**

October 24th:  
Alaska Trip Sr. High Youth

November 28th  
\*

December 26th  
\*

**CHURCH RECORDS**

**Weddings:**

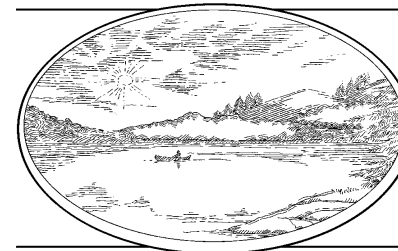
Taryn Rapelje & Spencer Keck , September 17, 2010

**Deaths:**

Melvin Warren, September 8, 2010

**THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER DEDICATION**

IN LOVING



MEMORY

The Congregational Connection this month

is dedicated in loving memory of

**Paul Bullard**

by Alice Bullard, Barbara Bullard,  
Joe and Marilyn Armbrustmacher

**COME AND JOIN US  
AT ANY TIME!**

**Sunday School & Youth Groups  
10:00-10:45 a.m.**

**4 & 5 Year Olds:** Children participate in small-group activities. They listen to the Bible story in large-group time. Teacher lead small groups of children to complete Talk Time activity pages, letting them talk, making sure they understand the Bible Story and verse.  
*Leaders, Randy & Cynthia Howell*

**K & 1st Graders:** will learn about Moses' and Jesus' births.  
*Leaders, Tom & Ellen Doppke*

**2nd & 3rd Graders:** The Children will learn about stories of freedom. They will learn about Bible passages in Exodus, Numbers, Michah and John.  
*Leaders, David & Michele Elms*

**4th & 5th Graders:** : The Gifts, Integrity, and Failure will be title of the lessons for the first quarter by this class. They will learn of Jesus' birth fulfilled, Old Testament prophecies and living a life of integrity.  
*Leader, Rod Fuller*