

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

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September

This Month's Highlights:
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

SEPTEMBER 2010



The Congregational Connection...

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

150TH ANNIVERSARY HOMECOMING CELEBRATION!

The September 150th anniversary event is the annual Homecoming Service. The date is Sunday, September 12, 2010 and will be held at Lake Denise on the Thurston Farm. The farm is located at 5512 West M-21, west of St. Johns. There will be signs showing you how to get to the Lake. The outdoor worship service begins at 11:00 a.m., followed by a delicious potluck dinner. The meat and beverages are furnished, so all you need to bring is a dish to pass and your own table service. There is swimming for the children, yard games and a few board games that will challenge your knowledge of the history of FCCSJ. Everyone who has attended this outdoor worship service in years past has always commented how meaningful it was to them to worship in this tranquil setting and enjoy the fellowship of others. If you have never attended this Homecoming Service, why not plan to make this your first year to do so? Bring all your family and friends. All are welcome. If you need a ride, call the church office (224-2636) and arrangements will be made to pick you up.

*Ruth Nihart
150th Anniversary Ministry Team*



Come and join us!

“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.

**ATTIC TREASURE
Early Alert!**

The dates are set for the next sale on May 2nd and 3rd, 2011.

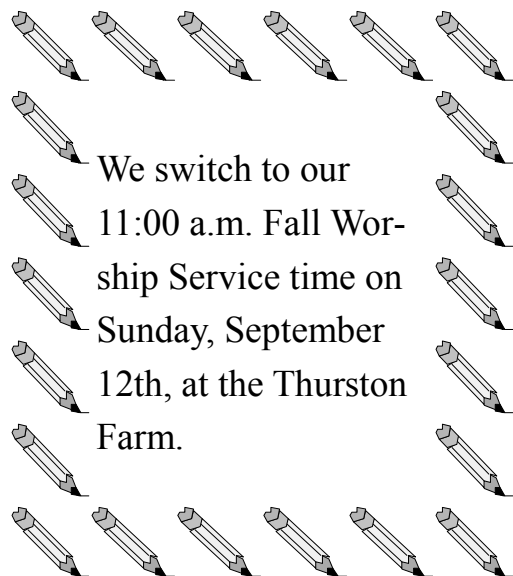
Due to the late Easter in 2011 the sale has to be held the first week of May. Also, we find the allocated space in our storage building is now almost filled with early donations.

We also find we are slowly losing our reputation of a unique attic sale full of older and unusual items.

We don't want to become just another sale of leftover garage sale items or items that just have to be given to other agencies.

Please be selective of items you want to donate to this yearly fund raiser sale. Thank you for your consideration.

Attic Sale Ministry Team



We switch to our 11:00 a.m. Fall Worship Service time on Sunday, September 12th, at the Thurston Farm.

COMMUNITY NEWS

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.

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ST. JOHNS, MI**



**150TH ANNIVERSARY
1860-2010**

THANK YOU!

We would all like to thank **Barb Sherman** for all of the hard work she put into planning, setting up and running the Mint Festival Food Booth in August. She had help from many members of the congregation, particularly John Fitch and Tom Doppke.



This is a huge responsibility and she did a wonderful job.

Thanks from all of us Barb!

Thanks are also extended to **Barbara Bulard** for the donation of a new vacuum cleaner for the church. It will be put to good use!

Barb also donated the flowers in the pots on the north entrance, Maple Street, the parking lot entrance and the basket by the bench on Maple Street.

Thanks Barb!

Thank you to the **Flynn** family for the donation of a Jesus doll. This gift will be put in a Sunday School room for all the children to enjoy. Thanks Tom, Dawn, Holly and Danielle!

WILCOX HALL DONATIONS

You may have noticed the new tables and chairs in Wilcox Hall. The tables were a gift from the **Spring Tea Ministry Team**. They were purchased from the profit they made at the tea this year.

The chairs are a gift from the memorial fund in memory of **Joyce Garrison**. Tom Garrison thought it would be a wonderful way to use the funds.

We would like to thank the Spring Tea Ministry Team and the Garrison Family for their generous gifts to the church.

**INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS
FUNDRAISER**

This Mission Team will return to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in the spring of 2011. They will be having a fundraising Tupperware "party" at the coffee hour on September 19th. Tupperware will be on display downstairs and books will be available for placing orders. Proceeds from these sales will go towards the cost of the Mexico trip. Please plan on supporting our mission team. Upcoming events include a Pampered Chef "party" on October 17th and Rwanda baskets in November (date to be determined).

SING, SING, SING!

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 office.



MEET OUR NEW INTERN MINISTER!

Kathy Farnum is beginning her third year at Ecumenical Theological Seminary in the Masters of Divinity program and was recently accepted as a student in the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies program. She and her family have been members of Plymouth Congregational Church for 34 years.

Kathy is employed full-time with the Michigan State Police Office of Highway Safety Planning as a manager of the Planning and Administration Section. Her husband, Ron, is an attorney with the Michigan Department of Attorney General.

They have two children, a daughter Kristin and a son, Adam. Kristin is a neonatal nurse at Sparrow Hospital. She and her husband live in Holt and have a very active and inquisitive four-year old daughter named Hannah. Kristin's husband is a Captain in the Army National Guard and is currently stationed in Grand Rapids.

Their son, Adam, is a graduate of Michigan State University and is completing his teaching internship this year. His plans are to teach history, social studies, and political science at the high school level. He and his fiancée, Zoe, are engaged to be married on June 17, 2011.

In her spare time, Kathy enjoys reading, doing crafts, riding her horse, and taking care of her saltwater aquariums. But by far, her most favorite activity is spending time with her granddaughter.

At this point, Kathy is not sure what she will do upon completion of her Master of Divinity Degree. She will be able to retire within a few years of graduation and knows that God will lead her when the time comes.



CHURCH SECURITY

Gary Larsen and the Board of Ministry would like to inform the congregation that we have installed the first part of our new security system.

The office is now able to see and speak to who is at the door (Maple Street and the parking lot) and then unlock the door from the office. This is a needed security program to insure the safety of anyone working in the office alone during the week.

The second phase will be installed this Fall. We are moving ahead with a night time security system that will record movements in the building at night and notify the police of any unauthorized activity. It will also keep a log of authorized people who enter and exit the building at night. With the breaking and entering and destructive behavior at other churches, we at FCC need to be prepared for the future.

If you would like to know more about the new systems contact Gary at 224-3538.

150TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

Set the evening of October 10th. aside now to attend the dinner/theater production celebrating the 150th anniversary of our church. The dinner portion of this event is under the excellent capability of John Cheeney and his crew. The theater portion is under the direction of Jim Gunther and his crew. This promises to be a fun event that you will not want to miss. This is open to the public, so plan on bringing your friends with you. This will be held in Wilcox Hall at the church. More details to follow later.

Ruth Nihart, 150th Anniversary Team

MEET DAVE AND PEG



The Lehnens have attended First Congregational Church for 36 years. They moved here from Royal Oak when Dave took a job in St. Johns. They previously attended a Presbyterian Church and other Congregational Churches so the fit here was natural.

Dave and Peg have three daughters, Susan who lives in Maine, Diane in Battle Creek and Barbie in Midland. They also have nine grandchildren. They are both now retired and enjoy traveling, camping, gardening and spending time with friends and family.

Dave and Peg have both been chairman of the Board of Trustees. Dave has served on the Pastoral Board and House Committee. He also is involved with Boy Scouts and has worked with the Sr. High Youth Group. Dave is still on the Building and Grounds Ministry Team and helps out around the church with various projects. Peg was the Chairman of the House Committee, Nominating Committee, Christian Education, Moderator and is a member of the Hands of Harmony Handbell Choir. Both Dave and Peg are currently Ushers and members of Doublets, Etc. The Lehnens are a very valuable asset to our congregation.



NEW ARRIVALS

Joy Bergen Kissa, March 18, 2010
Daughter of Karl and Rev. Wendy Sue Earle Kissa and sister of Emily.

Joy Marie Root, July 22, 2010
Daughter of Charlie and Karen Root, grand-daughter of Kim and Randy Root

Aylin Grace Ellickson, August 10, 2010
Daughter of Ted and Sarah Ellickson, grand-daughter of Jim and Mary Ann Ellickson

Leah Jean Forbes, August 15, 2010
Daughter of Courtney and Wade Forbes, granddaughter of Dave and Darlene Barber



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

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.

GIVING MADE EASY

Now that the school year is about to begin, it's time to get back on a schedule. It also is a good time to sign up for **ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS** to take care of your church offering.

You can determine when you want to give and the amount of your offering. It will automatically be taken care of for you. No more writing checks!

GREETERS AND FELLOWSHIP HOUR

The sign up schedules for Greeters and Fellowship 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 available 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.

DONATIONS TO THE BABY PANTRY

1. Next "Throw Down Sunday" is on September 19th.
2. Bring your donation of any canned or boxed food, baby food, diapers, baby products, or cash to be donated to the Baby Pantry.

Need more information? Contact John Fitch at 224-3565.

FALL SCHEDULES BEGIN!

HANDS OF HARMONY

The Hands of Harmony will start rehearsal on Wednesday, September 1st, 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.



HOLY MAMAS

Holy Mamas – weekly practices are on Sundays from 12:30-1:30 pm, beginning Sept. 19. On the fourth Sunday of each month, they will have time to attend the 4th Sunday potluck, then "Hit the Road" and go visit and sing for a person or group.

CHANCEL CHOIR

If you like to sing, why not join our choir? You are welcome to join even if you cannot read music but love to sing. Choir rehearsals begin on Thursday, September 9th, at 7:30 p.m. The choir, under the direction of Dr. Charles Graham, is waiting to welcome you.



4th SUNDAY SUPPER

The "FOURTH SUNDAY SUPPER" will be held, Sunday, September 26th, 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.

ALL LADIES ARE INVITED!

All ladies are invited to join the Linda Scott Division. This women's fellowship will be meeting for the first time this church year on September 14th, at 5:30 p.m. at the home of Judy Cramer. This will be a pot luck dinner with devotions led by Joann Martis. Please RSVP to Joann Martis at 224-4165.



Children and Youth News

SEPTEMBER CHILDREN AND YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Sean Morse
- 7 Cameron Hyde
- 13 Rachel Rademacher
- 23 Brecken Simon
- 28 Hannah Scranton
- 28 Lindsey Palmer



KID'S PRACTICE

CHILDREN'S CHOIR, under the direction of Rachael Short, will begin meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 19th, in the Choir Room. Children of all ages are encouraged to attend.



APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

This is a letter the church received from the family our ASP Mission Team helped on their trip to Perry County, Jeff, Kentucky in August.

"Hello, we are the family that your ASP group worked with this past week. We would like to say thank you so much for all the work that each and every one of you did. Thank you for the friendship, thank you for the fellowship, and thank you for just being here. We will cherish the memories we have of you all. So to Zack (Zucker), Trish (Cheeney), Jamie (Cheeney), Brad (Tooker), John (Fitch) and Craig (Smith), we thank you."

The Epperson Family
Ancil, Kris, Katie, Koby, and Paige



Making Homes Warmer, Safer and Drier
Transforming Lives

SEPTEMBER SIGN UP SCHEDULES

Altar Flowers	Nursery Care	Greeters	Fellowship Hour
5 Martis	5 Trisha Cheeney	5 *	5 *
12 Larsen	12 No Nursery	12 No Greeters	12 Picnic
19 *	19 Brooke Witchell	19 *	19 International Missions
26 *	26 *	26 Doris Swatman & Fritz Thurston	26 4th 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

Reactivated membership:
Pat Weaver

4th Sunday Supper Host/Hostess

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

Host/Hostess-*

THE SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEDICATION

The Congregational Connection this month

"Is in honor and appreciation of the Hands of Harmony Bell Choir"

Given by
Susan Kilmer

