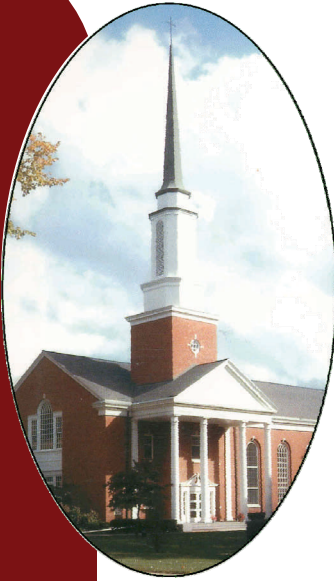


# THE PARCHMENT

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May 2009



## Fire!

Fire. Don't you love to sit in front of one on a cold winter or spring evening, a cup of tea, some Pepperidge Farm cookies, a good book. Nothing equals wood logs crackling, or even gas logs whispering.

Fire. Don't you hate to see its aftermath when it's left a family homeless. A California wildfire leaves in its wake charred remains, being sifted by heart-broken people vainly seeking something of value, at least to heart and soul.

Fire. Don't you truly appreciate when you turn the key in your ignition and the engine comes to life, because gasoline has been sprayed into a metal cylinder and a spark plug has flashed and there's a fiery explosion that drives a piston and its brothers and sisters into a frenetic yet coordinated dance that makes the wheels go around! It's not noisy. You don't hear the explosion. But you feel the power.

Warm people. Don't you love to be around them, the friendly and inviting ones? They make you feel good inside, which can change the way you act on the outside.

Warmer people. Don't you cringe when you see the hot head coming?! Driven, and driving you crazy with their temper, their demands, the way they burn in one direction or all directions at once, scorching you and everyone around them.

Warmest people. Don't you truly appreciate the ones who burn with love? Like the bush surprising Moses in the desert, they neither consume nor are consumed by the fire, rather they radiate something real. Instead of gasoline they have experienced the spark of the Holy Spirit that has exploded inside, and they have discovered that life is about loving God and loving people. They have immeasurable energy to believe, care, and forgive. No two are exactly the same, but their purpose is a common one. You can't always see their hearts dance, but you can feel the power. With controlled passion they travel through life, stopping to help those with flat tires, empty checkbooks, broken hearts, or who are just simply out of gas.

(See inside cover.)

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC**  
**2001 Niles Ave • Saint Joseph, MI • 49085**

<b><u>SUNDAY</u></b>			
<b><u>SCHEDULE</u></b>			
<b><u>September</u></b>			
<b><u>to May</u></b>			
<b>9:15 a.m.</b>			
<b>Adult Classes</b>			
<b>9:30 a.m.</b>			
<b>Children's Choir</b>			
<b>&amp;</b>			
<b>Middle High</b>			
<b>Youth Class</b>			
<b>10:25 a.m.</b>			
<b>Worship</b>			
<b><u>June</u></b>			
<b><u>to August</u></b>			
<b>9:55 a.m.</b>			
<b>Worship</b>			
<b><u>OFFICE</u></b>			
<b><u>HOURS</u></b>			
<b>Monday ~</b>			
<b>Thursday</b>			
<b>8 a.m. ~</b>			
<b>3:45 p.m.</b>			

That's supposed to be you and me. Christians, united as the Church. It began on Pentecost, which we'll celebrate on Sunday, May 31. It means fiftieth. Originally it meant fifty days after Passover. For Christians it is fifty days after Easter. For forty days after rising Jesus readied them for this dance. He left, they waited, and then down came the fiery Spirit of God. It even landed on the head of some. What a sight! Like human candles, birthday candles, for it was the day the Church was called into being. The Church? Nothing more, or less, than people of God touched by the Spirit of God for the healing of self, neighbor, and the world.

Read about it in Acts 2. Help God's Church have a Happy Pentecost. Get lit. Spread the warmth.

Dr. Bob

### **Our Church Family Fund**

The OCFF is a way to help one another when someone is down but not out. Here's what you can do:

**Contribute** - Make your check out to *First Congregational Church*. Write *Our Church Family Fund* on the memo line. It will show on your giving statement.

**Inform** - Tell one of the 3 fund overseers that you know someone who might benefit: Dr. Bob, Bill Bock, and Brad Waide.

**Ask**- Ask one of the three if you have a need or know someone who does. There's not much in there yet. Not many have contributed. Hope you'll consider. All is confidential.

Give thanks.

## Hi Friends!

Check out this article about anger. It is geared towards the parents of teenagers, but others may also find it helpful. Have a blessed May!

In Christ, PK (Pastor Karen)

### **Angry Much? An Article for Parents about Teen Anger from [realworldparents.com](http://realworldparents.com)**

A lot of the drama in the lives of students revolves around anger issues. That's partly because we live in an anger-driven world and partly because adolescent hormones make angry feelings rise to the surface more easily. In their lives, teens must navigate unresolved conflicts within their circle of friends, anger directed toward them (rightly or not) from those in authority, and their own feelings of resentment or outbursts of rage. Much of that anger has to do with perceptions of fairness, respect, and betrayal. Some also wonder if maybe God is angry with them. Sometimes they feel like He probably should be. At other times, they may resent Him for His anger based on a wrong understanding of who God is. These years can be a time when a person learns to recognize, respect, and control anger. A few of the following questions (and related Bible passages) may help you have a helpful conversation with your student about anger.

#### **Talking Points:**

- ▮ Do you think of God as being angry, in general, or angry with you? The Bible describes Him as being slow to get angry; does that fit with your picture of Him? (See Psalm 145:8.)
  - ▮ For Christians, why do you think God is NOT angry with us about our sinful choices? (Emphasize the fact that God gives us credit for Jesus' perfect choices. Think about reading Romans 8:1-2 together if there's any question about this.)
  - ▮ God warns us to avoid making friends with people who are quick to get angry. (See Proverbs 22:24-25.) Why do you think that is?
  - ▮ Would you describe any of your good friends as angry or "hot tempered" people? Has any one else's anger problem ever caused you pain or trouble?
  - ▮ Everyone gets angry sometimes, including parents. (Think about talking about the issue of anger between you and your child and trying to clear the air about any unresolved anger questions between you. If it seems healthy, you might consider bringing up Ephesians 6:4 and talking about how dads can sometimes help their kids to feel more or less angry over time.)
  - ▮ Would you say it ever feels good to get really angry? Why or why not?
  - ▮ God's Word makes a big deal about how quickly we get angry. We're told that love is not easily angered and that God is slow to get angry. On a scale from 1 to 10—with 10 being the fastest—how quickly do you tend to get angry? (See Ecclesiastes 7:9. Think about being honest about your own anger speed.)
  - ▮ Do you think getting angry is a sin all by itself? (No! Emphasize this idea strongly and think about reading Ephesians 4:26 together.)
  - ▮ The Bible commands us not let anger lead us into sin and not to hold onto our anger overnight. Once you get angry, how hard is it to let go of anger? (Think about sharing some ways you might have learned for letting go of anger.)
  - ▮ How is letting go of anger similar to making a choice to trust God? (Emphasize that when we let go of anger we're deciding to believe that God is in control, that He is good and powerful and loving, and that He will bring about the best possible result in the situation in the long run.)
- [http://www.realworldparents.com/starters/article/angry\\_much/](http://www.realworldparents.com/starters/article/angry_much/)

## Health News from Janel

Greetings! I hope all of you experienced a blessed Easter, and the confidence and joy of the Resurrection continues to be a blessing to you every day. As we approach this month, we are aware of the beauties of May, as well as the busy schedule associated with confirmations, graduations and Mother's Day. In addition, May is also recognized as **National Blood Pressure Month** by the National Institute of Health.

### **What is High Blood Pressure?**

Blood pressure is the force of blood against the walls of arteries. Blood pressure rises and falls during the day. When blood pressure stays elevated over time, it is called *high blood pressure*. A blood pressure level of 140/90 mmHg or higher is considered high. If your blood pressure is between 120/80mmHg and 139/89 mmHg, then you have *prehypertension*.

High blood pressure is dangerous because it makes the heart work too hard and contributes to atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). It increases the risk of heart disease and stroke, which are the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> leading causes of death among Americans. High blood pressure can result in other conditions, such as congestive heart failure, kidney disease, and blindness.

### **What do my blood pressure numbers mean?**

Blood pressure is reported in two numbers, such as 120/80. The top number (*systolic blood pressure*) is the force of blood in the arteries as the heart beats. The bottom number (*diastolic blood pressure*) is the force of blood in the arteries as the heart relaxes between beats.

The systolic number can be elevated while the bottom number is not high. When that happens, the condition is called "isolated systolic hypertension," or ISH. This is common for older Americans. The diastolic blood pressure has been and remains, especially for younger people, an important hypertension number. The higher the diastolic blood pressure the greater risk for heart attacks, strokes and kidney failure.

### **What are the symptoms of high blood pressure?**

High blood pressure has no clear symptoms. This is why it is so important to have your blood pressure checked frequently. So, why not celebrate the month by giving yourself the gift of a blood pressure check-up. The Parish Nurse is having a special sale this month on blood pressure check-ups! See me for the exciting details or stop by after worship service on May 17, 2009.

## Check it out!!

We have a newly designed WEBSITE: [www.fccstjoseph.org](http://www.fccstjoseph.org). It's so easy to navigate and contains up-to-date information. Check out the calendar by clicking on INFO CENTER and then calendar: All monthly events. Note that several staff members have new email addresses. New addresses are [drbob@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:drbob@fccstjoseph.org), [nursej@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:nursej@fccstjoseph.org), [jhoffman@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:jhoffman@fccstjoseph.org) and Pastor Karen's as remained the same, [karenpotter37@gmail.com](mailto:karenpotter37@gmail.com). Enjoy! Feedback wanted!

## Congratulations to all of our graduates!

We would like to welcome you and your family to join us on Sunday, June 7 at 8:30 a.m. for our annual Graduation Sunday Breakfast. **It is very important that you RSVP to the church office by May 18** and let us know how many family members will be joining you. We also ask that you write a paragraph or two to let us know what you have been doing for the last four years as well as your future plans. Please email the information to the church at [jhoffman@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:jhoffman@fccstjoseph.org).

## "Young at Hearts"



Come join us for lunch on Thursday, May 21 at noon.

"Heart & Soul" (Wil & Marilyn Smaka) will be entertaining us with a wide variety of songs. It should be a great program.

Invite a friend to join you. Call the office (983-5519) with your reservation by the 19th.

## Circle News

**Women's Fellowship** will meet Wednesday, May 20 at 10 a.m. in the Parlor. All women of the church are invited.

**Mary Martha Circle** will meet Tuesday, May 12 at the home of Joanne Averill for a catered meal.

**Mary Preston Guild** will meet Wednesday, May 13 at 5:30 p.m. at Papa Vino's for dinner. Guests welcome. Please call Mary Goff (983-1328) for reservations.

## Bridge Club

We will meet Wednesday, May 13 at 1:00 p.m. in the Gathering Room.



Bill Benner and family on the death of Sally.

## Women's Book Group

We will be reading the national best-seller and Oprah's Book Club pick: *Stolen Lives* by Malika Oufkir and Michele Fitoussi. This is the true story of Malika Oufkir who was born into extreme privilege as the daughter of the king of Morocco's closest aide. But in 1972 her life of luxury came to a crashing halt. Her father was executed for attempting to assassinate the king, and she and her family were imprisoned for two decades. *Stolen Lives* is the story of their resilience and their resolve to live in freedom. This book is available through Amazon.com and most book stores and libraries. Our group will meet at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 26 in the Parlor to discuss this gripping memoir. All women are invited to attend. Diana Seaman will be leading the discussion.

## LET'S HARVEST THE BIGGEST CROP WALK EVER!

**What is a CROP Hunger Walk?** Neighbors walking together to take a stand against hunger in our world. Together we raise awareness and funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger-fighting. These Walks take place all around our nation.

**Are any of the funds used locally?** Yes, 25 cents of every dollar stays local. None is for administration.

**Where is a CROP Hunger Walk near me?** Our local Walk leaves *from our church!*

**When?** Sunday, May 17. Registration begins at 1:30, WALK begins at 2:30.

**Route?** There's a long and a short: 6 miles from St. Joe to Benton Harbor and back. Or 2 miles around St. Joe.

**Who?** Walkers from many area churches.

**Sign Up?** After the worship service from now till May 17. Mission Board reps will be near the main entrance and the one by Pastor Karen's office. You'll get a packet of info and an envelope to record and collect your pledges.

**OR**

Sign up on line at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org). Click on the *CROP Hunger Walk* tab > *SIGN UP* > *Michigan* > *Blossomland* > *Join a Team* and find our church. Simple!

**Can I raise CROP Hunger Walk funds online?**

Set up your own Walker page! How?

Go to [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org). Click on the *CROP Hunger Walk* tab. At bottom, look for **Can I raise....** Click on *Walk on the Web* and follow the directions.

**More info?** Log onto [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org) and click on the CROP Hunger Walk tab. You can also call Roger Bertsch (422-2545), CROP Coordinator for our church.

**Where did CROP Come From?**

CROP is a missions outreach of the National Council of Churches.



## May Birthdays

- 01—Barbara Callendar
- 01—Les Miller
- 03—Betty Braman
- 03—Katie Koch
- 05—Judy Bertsch
- 05—Kyle Thomas
- 07—Pat Hoffman
- 07—Steve Upton
- 11—DeWayne Hellenga
- 12—Henry Klos
- 13—Stephen Schalk
- 14—John Bannow
- 14—Nicole Havenaar
- 15—Bruce Molineaux
- 16—Melissa Buckingham
- 16—Kaye Lulenski
- 16—Ginny Steinman
- 17—Jeff Richards
- 21—Sheldon Lee
- 22—Margaret Klos
- 23—Vic Vukorpa
- 24—Matthew Burkhard
- 24—Amy Kurtz
- 25—Kathy MacTavish
- 26—Sarah Kurtz
- 26—Jan Polmanteer
- 27—Doris Tippet
- 29—Maddie Burkhard
- 29—Ron Drews
- 29—Mary Goff
- 29—Carl Viehe
- 30—David Laetz

## New address

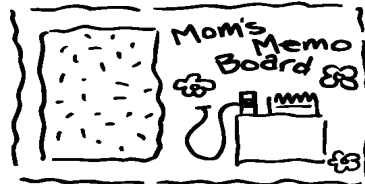
Jan Polmanteer has recently moved. Her new information: 721 State Street, Apt. 1, St. Joseph 269-921-2052.

## Make a Memo Board for Mother's Day

Make a memo board and give it to your mom on Mother's Day.

### What you need:

- a canvas board approximately 14" x 10" (available at art and craft stores in various sizes)
- a piece of corkboard about half the size of the canvas board (available in self-adhesive rolls or sheets at art and craft stores)
- permanent marker
- colored tissue paper
- 1 sheet of construction paper
- 2 pieces of string or yarn, each about as long as your arm
- glue ■ small notepad
- scissors ■ pencil ■ stapler



### How to make it:

1. Cut a piece of corkboard about half the size of the canvas board. Attach it to the left side of the board with glue (or the adhesive backing).
2. Write "Mom's Memo Board" on the top right side of the canvas board.
3. Cut the tissue paper into flower shapes and glue them onto the canvas board.
4. Fold the construction paper into a pocket big enough to hold the small notepad and pencil. Glue the pocket's side and bottom edges to the canvas board. Let it dry.
5. Tie one piece of string or yarn to the pencil and staple the other end to the board near the notepad pocket. Put the pencil in the pocket.
6. Staple the last piece of string or yarn to the back of the board as a hanger.
7. Write a special message to your mother on the first page of the notepad.



## Are your kids ready to sink their teeth into BIG fun?

That's just what they'll do at Crocodile Dock, where fearless kids shine God's light! Crocodile Dock is filled with incredible Bible-learning that kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Bible Point crafts, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the Crocodile Dock activities that help faith flow into real life. (Since everything is hands-on, kids might get a little messy. Be sure to send them in play clothes and safe shoes.) Plus, we'll help kids discover how to see God in everyday life—something we call God sightings. Get ready to hear that phrase a lot!

Your kids will also participate in a hands-on mission project called, Operation Kid-to-Kid that involves millions of other children across North America!

Parents, grandparents, and friends are invited to join us each day at 11:45 a.m. at the church because that's when we'll be having Firefly Finale—a daily celebration of God's love you won't want to miss.

So, mark these dates on your calendar: July 20–24. The fun starts at 9:30 a.m. and will end at 12:00 p.m. You can register your children via the church website at [www.fccstjoseph.org](http://www.fccstjoseph.org) or you can go directly to our VBS website at [www.groupvbs.com/webtoybox/myvbs/fccstjoseph2009](http://www.groupvbs.com/webtoybox/myvbs/fccstjoseph2009) to start your children on this life-changing adventure! While you're there don't forget to register yourself as a volunteer so that you can share in the experience with your children.

## Congratulations!

Women's Fellowship will award scholarships on Honors Night to the following graduating seniors who are members of our congregation: Katie Thomas (Coloma High School), Scott Fowler, Sarah Kurtz, and Zach Fetters (all St. Joe High School). The scholarships are based on their involvement with our church over the past years.

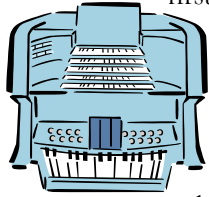
We congratulate and wish them much success in the years ahead and we hope that they will always think of us as their home church.

## Rummage Sale

Do you have your items ready for the big sale? You can start dropping off items after worship until 1 p.m. on May 3 and from 9 a.m.–7 p.m. on the 4th & 5th. Please be sure that your clothing is clean and properly marked with the size and your household items are in working condition. If you have any extra paper or plastic bags, we'll be happy to take them off your hands. **Church members** may shop **early only on Wednesday the 6th** from 4 p.m.–8 p.m. There will be no shopping on Thursday morning so the workers can put the final touches on everything before the sale begins.

If you haven't signed up to help yet, please stop by the church and volunteer an hour or two of your time. It takes many hands to make the sale a success! We hope to see you there!!

## Organ Renovation Status Report



It was an exciting experience to observe the George Buck crew disassembling our pipe organ. The first three days, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday were spent removing the pipes. Some of them were no larger than a pencil in length and diameter, others eight feet long or more with diameters of a foot or so. Every pipe was handled with great care, wrapped in plastic cushioning material so they couldn't touch and run the risk of abrasion, and placed in wooden boxes which were fabricated on site. This phase was very impressive and had the most visual impact. I would encourage all of you to take a look at the photo gallery on the bulletin board across the hall from Dr. Bob's office. I think you will get a very good idea of the magnitude of the undertaking.

The workers, including George Buck and his wife Cindy were well taken care of by our members. Lodging, including breakfasts, was provided by Joanne Averill, Walt and Mary Jane Waldenmaier and Dr. Bob and Betty Braman. Lunches were prepared and served by Keith Thomas, Dr. Bill and Ginny Bock, Margaret and David Hilbink and Kay Welch with Dottie Neller. The George Buck crew was well taken care of and was deeply appreciative of the warm reception by all.

The following week, Monday/Wednesday was spent executing the extremely complex job of disassembling the wind chests, regulators and all the fixtures, tubes, stands and supports which are the items that control and distribute the air flow for the instrument. The chancel and sanctuary were packed with all kinds of strange looking objects including numerous boards filled with the famous deteriorating leather valves. Some how, all of that was cleaned up by Wednesday evening. All the organ components are now in the Buck facility in Grand Rapids.

## Visit to Grand Rapids

I plan to visit the George Buck facility at least twice during the summer to photograph important steps in the renovation process. I suggested to George Buck that some of our congregation might like to accompany me to see what is actually being done to the instrument. George welcomed the idea.

If anyone is interested in going to Grand Rapids, please let me know so I can give you advance notice of the date. Please call me at (269) 422-2630 or E-Mail: [davidB7550@AOL.com](mailto:davidB7550@AOL.com).

Dave Brockway

## The Lord Is For Me

*The LORD is on my side;  
I will not fear.*

*What can man do to me?*

*The LORD is for me among those who help me.*

Psalm 118:6-7

You've probably noticed that the circumstances of life in this fallen world can bring us to the brink of collapse. But we read in the Bible—and you have probably experienced this truth in your own life—that God always provides the strength we need to continue on His path.

Sometimes, though, we are merely putting one foot forward at a time; sometimes that's all the light we can see on our path at the moment (119:105).

Sometimes others are believing in God—and in His goodness and His power—for us when we can't believe for ourselves.

Sometimes others are praying for us when we struggle to pray on our own.

When God brings us through seasons like that—and He does see us through them—we realize that He truly is the champion for His children. Then we can sing with the psalmist, "The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation" (118:14).

That song may not be on your lips right now, but it will be someday as it has been in the past... because the Lord is for you.

Vol. 85—No. 170



God is  
still speaking,



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