



THE PARCHMENT

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC
2001 NILES AVENUE, ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

SEPTEMBER 2011

Kick Off to Life

Our vocabulary word for the day is *CONgruous*. It sounds like *congress*, with another short vowel stuck in it after the g. It means *consistent, harmonious*.

So *incongruous* means *inconsistent, lacking harmony*. That's what I thought when I realized what is happening on the second Sunday of this month, September 11. On that day we will do two things: 1) We will celebrate Kick Off Sunday for our fresh season of Christian education offerings, our new Wednesday night dinner and activities, rehearsals for Chancel Choir and Handbell Choirs, Men's Ministry, Women's Bible Study, and the list goes on. 2) And we will recognize the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attack in which passenger jets were used as instruments of death and destruction on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in a Pennsylvania field.

I've been wondering how we could possibly celebrate the first and recognize the second. They seem so incongruous. But they're not. They are both about our worldview. The Christian faith embraces a worldview in which God shapes us into people of promise, hope, healing, and restoration. Christians major in forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing. The horror of 9/11/01 was perpetrated by those who embrace a worldview that encourages the annihilation of those who disagree with them, and forces everyone to be just like them.

Kick Off Sunday points out that we believe in teaching and learning, equipping and serving, singing and ringing, worshiping and praying in ways that will drive home the truth of creating rather than annihilating, of reconciling rather than dividing, of loving rather than hating. It is our inoculation against those who teach the opposite. It is our spiritual preventive medicine. It is our way of saying, "We were created for life, not death, and we will love our neighbor, even our enemies, because God loves us."

That is why Kick Off Sunday is not just a good thing to do; it is essential. For the day we stop believing and acting upon what Jesus Christ has called us to be, we give up and give in. Let us make this Kick Off Sunday a day to remember, rekindle, and recommit. In Jesus' name.

Dr. Bob

Greetings from Pastor Katie

MINISTERIAL STAFF

Senior Minister
Rev. Dr. Bob Braman

Associate Minister
Rev. Kathryn Nix

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

September to May

9:15 a.m.

Adult Classes

9:15 a.m.

Jr. & Sr. High Classes

Held During Worship

Children & Worship
Ages 4 to 2nd grade

DIVE Class
For 3rd—5th graders

Worship

10:25 a.m.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
8 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Phone:

(269) 983-5519

WEBSITE

fccstjoseph.org

EMAIL

office@fccstjoseph.org

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30 NRSV

Come Wednesday nights to find rest from the demands and expectations of everyday life. The evening begins with a free dinner; no cost, no dishes, no requirements, just a chance to fellowship with your family. After dinner there are opportunities for the whole family including: two different classes for adults, two Bell Choirs (one for 5th-8th grades and another for adults), games and activities for ages K-4th grade and 5th-8th grade, and an open study hall for high schoolers. Everything begins September 14. Come join us, as we rest in God's love and grow as disciples of Jesus!

5:45 p.m. - Dinner

6:15 p.m. - Opening

6:30 p.m.

- **K-4th grade:** Bible lessons with Pastor Katie
- **5th-8th grade:** Games & activities, or Alleluia Ringers Bell Choir with Paul Flyger
- **High School:** Study hall or Bell Choir with Paul Flyger
- **Adults:** Dr. Bob's class (The Bible's Big Story - Our Story) Teaching Your Kids Faith (Parent lessons that match Sunday School curriculum.)

7:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

- **K-4th grade:** Games & activities
- **5th-8th grade:** Bible lessons with Pastor Katie
- **High School:** Study hall
- **Adults:** Class continues
- **Jubilate Ringers** Bell Choir with Paul Flyger

7:30 p.m.

- **Chancel Choir Rehearsal** Jubilate Ringers Bell Choir runs until 7:45 p.m. but ringers can still attend Chancel Choir rehearsal.

Adult Christian Education Opportunities

As we have been discussing the future of our church and our proposed mission and vision statements, one of the big feedbacks has been the need for a strong Christian Education program for all ages. As we continue to grow and strengthen our faith family, the CE Board has been working hard behind the scenes to provide several different opportunities for all ages starting this fall on two different days. I whole-heartedly believe that our invitation to discipleship is an invitation to learning and deepening our relationship with God. This is the goal and purpose of Christian Education, to help equip one another on this faith journey. So I invite you to come, on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings, to discover a personal God, to be equipped for life, and to find opportunities to reach inward and outward to serve.

Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Gathering Room The Bible's Big Story - Our Story

with Dr. Bob

The Bible's Big Story - Our Story is a colorful, symbol-rich chart depicting all major stories in the Bible, how they relate to one another, and how they relate to your personal life story. This is an excellent short course we have offered before. We even use it in Confirmation. It's a winner!

Wednesday evenings, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Library Genesis—Teaching Our Kids Faith

with Diana Seaman

For parents who have children in the Sunday School program. This class follows the same stories from Genesis that will be taught in every Sunday School class, as well as offers ideas and suggestions for how to integrate themes from the lesson into everyday family life. It's a great class for encouraging parents to help teach their children about God!

Sundays 9:15 a.m. Parlor (Starting October 2) Discipleship and the Invitation to Genesis

with Tom Fowler

"In the beginning . . ." Many readers of the Bible recognize Genesis as a book that describes the beginning of all things: the Creation. This is certainly true but is only part of the story—the creation of the world only takes up the first two chapters of a 50 chapter book. This study approaches the Book of Genesis not simply as a story of the beginning but as a story of beginnings from start to finish. This class is for those who want to really sink their teeth into Genesis!

Sundays 9:15 a.m. Gathering Room (Starting October 2) The Prodigal God by Timothy Keller

with Dennis Thompson

Taking his trademark intellectual approach to understanding Christianity, Keller uncovers the essential message of Jesus, locked inside his most familiar parable. Within that parable Jesus reveals God's prodigal grace toward both the irreligious and the moralistic. This book will challenge both the devout and skeptics to see Christianity in a whole new way.



Balance and Preventing Falls

Janel Groth, RN, FCN

Department of Community Health, falling is the leading cause of injury deaths in older adults.

Did you know that more than one-third of healthy adults over age 65 fall every year? According to the National Institutes of Health and the Michigan

Who is at Risk?

Talk with your physician about your risk factors, which include: Older age, Chronic disease, such as Arthritis, Parkinson's disease, or Stroke, Hearing or Vision problems, Balance problems, Muscle weakness, use of an assistive device, (such as a cane or walker) taking multiple medications or a fall in the past year.

If you have fallen 2 or more times in the last 6 months, your risk of falling is higher. Talk to your doctor to find out why this is happening.

Take Steps to Avoid Falls

There are things you can do to help reduce your risk of falling such as:

- Examine your home for hazards such as throw rugs, and unnecessary clutter.
- Keep your home well-lit. Night lights in bathrooms and hallways may also be helpful.
- Have your vision and hearing checked regularly.
- Ask your doctor to review all your medications.
- Always wear supportive, low-heeled shoes that offer good traction.
- Use your cane, crutches or walker correctly. Ask a rehabilitation professional for help.
- Get your doctor's permission to begin a regular exercise program that improves balance and coordination.



Special Tips for Pet Owners

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that every year, more than 86,000 fall injuries are caused by pets. Here are some tips to help prevent pet related falls:

- Be aware of where your pet is, and be careful when visiting others who have pets.
- Watch where your pet is sleeping or lying down.
- Place your pet's toys in a basket to avoid stepping on them.
- Move your pet into a separate area of the house when you are carrying heavy objects.
- Look into obedience training for your dog. This can help prevent behaviors that lead to falls, such as pulling on the leash.

These are a few general suggestions to keep you safer in your home. For more help, ask your doctor if an occupational therapy home evaluation would be right for you. If you are interested in programs to help with balancing and preventing falls, talk with your doctor about your options, or contact Lakeland Rehabilitation Services for more information at (269) 428-2799.

Looking for a great place to work?

Are you, or someone you know, looking for a rewarding place to share your talents with others?

Our church is currently hiring four part-time positions: two nursery workers, a part-time family coordinator, and a part-time dinner coordinator. If you would like to know more or view the job description, please visit our church website or go to: <https://fccstjoseph.publishpath.com/employment>.

Women's Bible Study Fall Session

Join this vibrant group of women as we embark on a study of the book of James using a ten-week online study augmented by the Serendipity bible. The group **will meet on Thursday afternoons from 1:30—3:00 p.m.** in the Library. Our **first meeting** will be **September 8**.

The link to the study <http://www.swapmeetdave.com/Bible/JamesIntro.htm> will take you to a couple pages of intro information and then links to each of the 10 lessons. In the lesson links there are two choices, Handout (Questions) and Leader's Guide (Answers). **We ask participants to print the handout for the lesson and complete the questions prior to coming to the meeting.**

If you would like to join the group but don't have internet access we can print the lesson for you. Please contact Deb Teuteberg at 428-2957 for information.

Women's Book Study

The Women's Book Study meets once each month for lively discussion of a variety of books, both fiction and non-fiction. From current best-sellers like ***The Help*** to spiritual classics like ***Mere Christianity***, we read books that inform, challenge, and inspire us. Book recommendations and new readers are always welcomed! Contact: Beth Kenagy 428-3347.

Deeply appreciated

The family of Gordon & Niki Schreiber, wishes to thank our church family for their heartfelt kindness upon the death of Niki's mother, Lila Govatos. The food, cards and prayers were deeply appreciated.

In Christ,

The family of Lila Govatos

Christian Education News

Your Board of Christian Education has been very busy this summer. We are moving in the direction of family ministry. Our offerings for CE will include a variety of ways for you and your family to learn about God. As you know, the family is the heart of education and this includes Christian Education. Our Nursery/Preschool Rooms will offer curriculum for our youngest learners. Our Children and Worship program is being modified and is growing into two rooms. Our DIVE program has a brand new curriculum. Confirmation class will begin for our 7th & 8th graders. One of our biggest, most exciting changes is our new Wednesday night format. This includes games, Bible time, bells, free dinner, and adult learning opportunities. We know families are busy so we are doing as much as we can to accommodate day to day challenges. We hope you and your family will find a place that feels right at First Congregational Church.

SEPTEMBER 11 - COME JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST! KICK-OFF THE 2011 FALL YEAR

Fill your tummy with us on Sunday, September 11 for 9 a.m. breakfast.

Attend a helpful introduction to the fall classes for adults, children, and youth.

Meet your teachers, group leaders, and pastors.

Introduction to the new Wednesday night program.

Let the church office know you will be coming.

You will enjoy a great time of fellowship.

and it's for the whole **FAMILY**; young and mature.

Handbells

I'm Paul Flyger, and I'm very excited about our two new Ringing Choirs that will be enriching our worship this fall! Each Handbell choir will perform once each month, with 6-9 rehearsals before performances. I look forward to directing and making music with all interested handbell ringers, beginning on Wednesday, September 14, following our Wednesday night dinner together.

Alleluia Ringers is a beginning handbell choir for ringers grades 5-8, as well as interested family members or beginning adult ringers. You don't need to read music to begin ringing bells. You can learn as you go. It will rehearse on Wednesdays from 6:30 - 7:00 p.m. in the Handbell Room, and on the Sunday on which we are scheduled to ring. Please sign up with Judy, Pastor Katie or myself and we will get you a full rehearsal schedule.

The **Jubilate Ringers** rehearsal will follow the **Alleluia Ringers** on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 - 7:45 pm (Chancel Choir members can still ring and just be 15 minutes late to Chancel Choir rehearsal, as I will be). This will be our advanced handbell choir for adults who have some experience ringing handbells, or who can read some music and would like to join a ringing choir. We need strong ringers for the biggest bells!

Please mark your calendars, sign up, or simply show up. I'm looking forward to ringing in this new church year with you.

Rummage Sale ~ October 6 - 7

We **need you** to come out and lend a hand to our **fall** sale! It takes many “hands” to get tables and racks set-up, items sorted and priced, rooms arranged, and numerous other things need to take place before the doors open at noon on the 6th. Once the doors open, a considerable number of volunteers are needed to assist with the sale. If you can't help with the sale we have other ways for you to be of assistance. Do you like to cook? Bake? Sign up to donate food (about 25-30 share lunch daily; up to twice as many on Thursday at noon with around 20 for supper that evening.) Sign up sheets are located at the end of the main hallway.

HOURS

Thursday, September 29 ~ 9 a.m. – 12 noon	Put racks together, set up tables Need about a dozen volunteers
Friday, September 30 ~ 9 a.m. - 12 noon	Items dropped off , sorted & sizing
Saturday, October 1 ~ 9 a.m. – 12 noon	Items dropped off , sorting & sizing
Sunday ~ after church till 1 p.m.	Clear class & choir rooms and accept donations
Monday ~ 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Accept donations, sort & place items
Tuesday ~ 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Accept donations, sort & place items
Wednesday ~ 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.	Test items, price, place items, get everything finished up. <u>NO ITEMS ACCEPTED ON WEDNESDAY.</u>
Wednesday ~ 12 Noon – 6 p.m.	Members may shop before the sale.
Thursday ~ 10:00 a.m. – 7 p.m.	Parking lot duties****
On Thursday the ‘parking attendants’ are busy by 10 a.m. with crowd control!	
Thursday ~ 11 a.m.	Outside yard items may be purchased if it is not raining.
Thursday ~ 12 noon – 7 p.m.	Sell, bag & load merchandise
Friday ~ 9 a.m. – 12 noon	Half price sale
Friday ~ 12 noon – 2 p.m.	Bag Sale
Friday ~ 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.	Pack up left over items

When the sale actually begins (noon on Thursday) until around 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. it takes **EVERYBODY** and then it slows down a little and we can catch our breath until the sale closes at 7 p.m.

Friday is half-price day from 9 a.m. – 12 noon and the bag sale until 2 p.m. Then **EVERYBODY** pitches in to pack up the left-overs! The more hands the sooner we can **GO HOME**. All the remaining items are given to many agencies in our community.

Other opportunities to help:

Place ads and distribute flyers to grocery stores, laundromats, etc., obtain the rummage sale permit and organize supplies.

**Yes, it's a LOT of WORK, but it's also LOTS of FUN
along with GREAT FELLOWSHIP.**

Please be sure that your clothing is clean and clearly marked with sizes.
Household appliances need to be in good working condition.

(NO TV's, telephones or computers accepted.)

It is helpful to the workers if you bag your donations separately.



New Pew Bibles Available for Dedication

New pew Bibles have been ordered to replace the current worn ones (purchased in 1985). After much investigation and review of numerous Bibles, **The Message** was chosen. The Bibles cost \$20 each and by sponsoring a Bible you can have a book plate placed on the inside front cover dedicating the Bible to a person/s of your choice. We have ordered 224 Bibles, so there are ample opportunities for you to dedicate one or more. If you would like to sponsor a Bible, please complete the form below and return it the church office with cash or a check made out to First Congregational Church. (Please note Bible donation on the check memo line.)

PLEASE PRINT

**Sponsorships are due in the office by September 19.
Monies received will be returned to the Remembrance Fund.**

Your Name _____

Phone Number _____

Inscription on the Name Plate:

Circle one: In Honor of In Memory of

Name of Person/s being honored or memorialized _____

Given by _____

NOTE: If you purchased one of the older Bibles in memory or honor of someone, you are welcome to take that Bible. Once the new Bibles have been placed in the pews, you will find the old ones on a table by the Chapel.

<u>July Statistical Information</u>			
Income for July	\$ 36,217.36	Year-to-Date Income	\$ 259,955.05
Expenses for July	<u>46,769.21</u>	Year-to-Date Expense	<u>267,438.59</u>
Gain/Loss for July	\$ -10,551.85	Year-to-Date Gain/Loss	\$ -7,483.54

September Birthdays



- 01 ~ Sara Collum
- 01 ~ Luke Iddings
- 02 ~ Mary Eppelheimer
- 02 ~ Dean Gerbel
- 03 ~ Camy Cronin
- 03 ~ Chuck Philip
- 03 ~ Mike Ryan
- 03 ~ LeAnn Waide
- 04 ~ Anne Gottlieb
- 04 ~ Stephen Upton
- 05 ~ Patt Johnson
- 07 ~ Jeff Schmidt
- 08 ~ JoAnn Sprayberry
- 09 ~ Bink Seaburg
- 10 ~ Katherine Ort
- 11 ~ Burt Baker
- 11 ~ Carol Syles
- 12 ~ John Hammond
- 12 ~ Chuck Worthington
- 13 ~ Rhys Conybeare
- 14 ~ Sue Plummer
- 15 ~ Bill Bock
- 15 ~ Karen Laetz
- 15 ~ Ron Zacha
- 17 ~ Bea Starke
- 18 ~ Larry Morrow
- 18 ~ Bethany Teifke
- 18 ~ Kevin Yircott
- 20 ~ Andrea Barowicz
- 22 ~ Diana Seaman
- 22 ~ Betty Simons
- 23 ~ Dick Linden
- 28 ~ Gary Lulenski
- 29 ~ Janel Groth
- 29 ~ A.J. Jaeger-Heiden
- 29 ~ Elizabeth Upton
- 30 ~ Jeanne Atwood

“Young at Hearts”



Join us on Thursday, September 15 as Dr. Bob and Pastor Katie bring us up-to-date on events for this coming fall and winter. We'll meet for lunch at noon. Call the church office (983-5519) with your reservations by the 13th. Invite a friend to join you!

Women's News

Women's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, September 21 at 10:30 a.m. in the Parlor. All women of the church are invited to attend.

Mary Martha Circle will hold their kick-off potluck on Tuesday, September 13 at 6:00 p.m. in the Gathering Room.

Mary Preston Guild will meet Wednesday, September 14. Time and place to be announced.

Men's Ministry

Will begin their fall session on Saturday, September 10 at 8:00 a.m. with breakfast. The topic this year will be “Heaven.” Watch the Sunday bulletin for more information.

Calling All Bakers!

If you have recently enjoyed a treat during Fellowship Hour on Sunday, it is because one of our members has volunteered to provide them for your enjoyment. We have opportunities during the months of September, October and November for you to return the favor.

Email Betty Westmaas (bettyw115@sbcglobal.net) and she will be happy to sign you up. You only need to provide four dozen cookies.

Thanks for taking time to help!!

Women's Book Group - *Mountain of Crumbs* by Elena Gorokhova

In this honest and captivating memoir, Gorokhova describes her life growing up in a middle class Soviet family during the Cold War. The author is a wonderful storyteller and her poetic prose beautifully conveys the central theme of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity and oppression. Join us for a great discussion of a book which has been described as a Russian *Angela's Ashes*. Ruthann Miller will lead the discussion on Tuesday, September 27 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor. We hope that you will join us!

Adopt-A-Beach

Join us on Saturday, September 17 from 9:00 a.m.—12Noon at the Lincoln Township Beach. This adopt-a-beach is part of the International Coastal Cleanup. In 2010, our team was part of 7,000 volunteers who collected 20,540 pounds of trash from 255 locations around the Great Lakes. See JoAnn Sprayberry after worship or contact her at 921-1659 for more information.

Family Farewells

In August the following families bid farewell to family members, so we keep them in our prayers as they adjust to their loss.

- † Ron Griffin and his family on the death of his brother, John. He died in LaPorte, IN on August 1.
- † Niki Schreiber and her family on the death of her mother, Lila Govatos. She died on August 17 in St. Joseph.

Chancel Choir Resumes

The Chancel Choir rehearsal will begin on Wednesday, September 7 at 7:30 p.m. If you have thought of singing in the Choir but never took that first step, come on down! (Downstairs, that is, to the Choir Room.)



Nursery Schedule for September

4th ~ Infant ~ Mary Goff & Lauren Buckingham
Toddler ~ Mia Johnson & Teylor Collum

11th ~ Infant ~ Laura Fletty & Elissa Capes
Toddler ~ Mia Johnson & Teylor Collum

18th ~ Infant ~ Cynthia Schlipp & Rowan Conybeare
Toddler ~ Teylor Collum & Patty Nordberg

25th ~ Infant ~ Krista & Adam Parin & Emily Morrow
Toddler ~ Teylor Collum & Carla Morrow

Questions regarding the nursery schedule, please call Patty Nordberg at 429-7297 or email her at pnordberg@comcast.net.