

The Open Door

October 2011

Love for Truth

Passion for Righteousness

Enthusiasm for Service



*The door is open at
First Congregational Church*

All are Welcome

*Knocking on heaven's
door is always a treat!*

Trial and Trial



Pastor Jamey Nichols

One clever expression concerning the will of God is: "God can't steer a parked car." To appreciate the insight of the expression, you have to imagine a person who is stuck between two decision. On the one hand is the possibility of option A and the other hand, option B. To choose option A might bring some reward, but it will also cost something. On the other hand, option B would also bring some measure of reward, but it, too, would cost something. We've all been there. If you choose one path, you'll head down one road with its positives and negatives. If you choose a different path, you'll head down an entirely different road with an entirely different set of positives and negatives. What is a person to do? There you stand at the fork in the road, and you can't see far enough down either path to fully know everything that lies ahead. As Yogi Berra used to say, "If you come to a fork in the road, take it." He may have been on to something.

Many folks I've known over the years, including yours truly, have stood paralyzed in the face of a necessary choice. We weigh the pros and cons; we pray for guidance and ask for advice; and STILL, we stand, frozen in a situation of indecision. Our steady progress becomes abruptly halted once we realize that to go one way means not going the other way. In our uncertainty, we wind up making no decision at all; we strand ourselves somewhere in the alternate universe of "I'm still thinking about it." Making no decision at all makes for a really lousy decision.

I have begun to learn that God's will for my life involves moving forward, and when I don't know whether I should move forward this way or that, I simply decide—*MOVE*. "But what if it's the wrong way" part of my brain objects. Ha! As if fear of making the wrong decision about something I can't possibly know is a tragedy. Not at all! The greater tragedy would be to sit stewing on the sidelines and getting absolutely nowhere. And, therein lies the insight of the clever little statement.

There is no one who wants you in God's will more than God himself. We know that he will guide you into the path you should go. When I don't know exactly what that path is, and when I see the fork up ahead and know I'll need to make a choice, I do the best I can and put my hope in the Best. If both alternatives appear equally positive or negative, I simply pick one. Sure, it may be the wrong one, but how can I have know? I figure that if I'm making forward progress, at least then God can guide ("steer") me where I need to be. In the end, it will all work out. To pull off the road and throw my decision into <Park> will indefinitely stall progress. It's in that position that God—yes, Bob, even God—cannot steer a parked car.

In cases like these, there is no such thing as trial and error. I see it as trial and trial. I try this, and if it quits working, I try that. *Nothing ventured, nothing gained. No skin off my nose. Can't win if ya' don't try.* You get the idea!

—continued on next page

We're back - The E100 Challenge readings for the month of October are listed below:



The Church is Born:

October 2, 2011 - #75 - Good News for All (Acts 10:1 - 11:18)
Sermon title is: "The Rainbow Coalition"

The Travels of Paul:

October 9, 2011 - #76 - The Road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-31)
Sermon title is: "The Only Question That Matters"

October 16, 2011 - #77 - The First Missionary Journey (Acts 13:1 - 14:28)
Sermon title is: "The 'P' Word"

October 23, 2011 - #78 - The Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-41)
Sermon title is: "Who Is the Church For?"

October 30, 2011 - #79 - More Missionary Journeys (Acts 16:1 - 20:38)
Sermon title is: "Knowing God's Will"

Pastor Jamey's column continued ...

So what decision are you sitting on right now? Well, then, quit *sitting* on your decision and start *moving* on your decision. It may be right; it may be wrong; but at least it isn't static. The Bible says to commit your WAY unto the Lord. It doesn't say commit your STAY unto the Lord. Once you're underway, commit your advancing position to God and ask him to put you on the path he wants you to go. In my way of thinking, a minor course correction from time to time is lots better than stagnation. You think about that—AMEN!!

Pastor Jamey

Let's hear it from the youth . . .



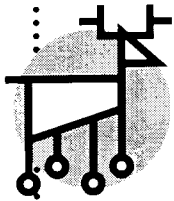
WOW! God is moving in our community, our church, and in our youth ministry, REVOLT. We've been quite busy and have seen God's blessings. Monday night meetings began three weeks ago with over 20 teens showing up each time. This last week our room was filled with 28! We have enjoyed time together eating fabulous meals provided by parents, going roller skating for Christian Skate Night at Rainbow Gardens in Crystal, playing games that relate to our lessons, and listening, learning, and discussing our lessons based on the book, *More Than a High*. Students are engaging in conversation and asking questions within the whole group and our small groups. Veteran students are commenting on how excited they are to see their youth ministry grow, both in numbers and spiritually.

We have had three "overtime" events—post-game hangout times after Friday night home football games. The goal for these events is to provide area teens with an alternative to sitting at home, going to parties, or engaging in other risky behaviors. Over 30 teens have attended the events each time with a total of 56 walking through our church doors to play games, dance, and fellowship with each other and our adult volunteers.

In the coming weeks, we have several concerts and events coming up, including an All-Area Youth Hayride on Sunday, October 2—a partnership event with other area youth ministries that is expected to include over 200 teens. We thank you for your prayers and support and ask that you will continue to pray for REVOLT, other area youth ministries, and all area teens.

—Pastor Tara

Donate Your Deer . . .



A number of people have asked about donating venison to area food pantries. Two processors, Blanchard's Thriftway in Crystal and the Carson City Village Market, are prepared for those requests now.

Our Church at Work ...

Diaconate Notes/September 2011

- Pastor Tara was present and outlined the goals for REVOLT Youth Ministry.
- An update was given on the new Splashdown program—a total of seven participants to date.

Trustee Notes/September 2011 meeting

- Plans to repair the outside ramp to Fellowship Hall are underway.
- Preparations for Pledge Sunday were discussed.

FINANCIAL NOTES

Income/August 2011 \$ 11,040

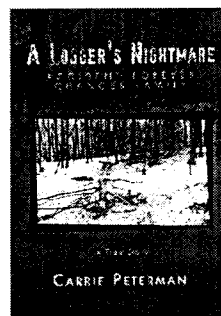
Expenses/August 2011 \$ 17,461

Parking lot update as of 09.27.11:
\$45,930.84

A Logger's Nightmare ...

On Sunday, September 28, the FCC congregation was privileged to welcome Branden and Carrie Peterman to the morning worship service. Carrie and Branden shared their tragic and uplifting faith journey, which stirred our hearts and caused us to think about life and our purpose on this earth.

Their determination and fortitude is remarkable—what a witness they are to the Christian faith and to how God leads through extremely difficult times. Their life is not easy, but they seem to have been able to meet the challenges that have come since Branden's accident. They continue to have many challenges—one being the completion of their new home which will be more accessible for Branden.



Several of their books were purchased, and more paper back books are available in the church office. DVD, CD, or tape copies of the church service are available.

Keep the Petermans in your prayers!

Strangers in the Pew ...



Drew and Bev Stowell can usually be found on Sundays in the balcony section of the church. They reside on Lake Stanton and have lived there for about 36 years. They have three children: Carrie Hallihan, Brandon Stowell, and Kami Alexander and two grandchildren, Kelsie and Kavin.

With the children all grown and gone from home, they still have the company of two cats—Oscar, who is a slim, yellow tiger, and Reiko, a grey tiger weighing 20 pounds.

Drew retired from Tower Automotive in Greenville after 30 years and worked as a tool and die maker. He now spends his time working on his collection of classic cars ranging from a 31 Ford Model A to a 67 Chevelle SS. In addition to his cars, he also maintains a collection of various guns and dabbles a little with ham radio. You will sometimes find him keeping up his tool and die skills by helping son Brandon work on metal projects in the barn.

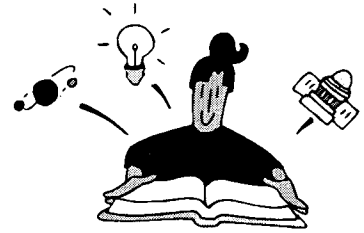
Bev has spent most of her working career in healthcare—from office manager at United Memorial Hospital in Greenville to director of IT at Mid Michigan District Health Department to currently being self-employed, working in the Detroit area for the past 11 years as a health data management consultant. She enjoys nature and occasionally can be found walking up the road or through the woods with her trusty walking stick no matter what the season. She takes great pleasure and joy in taking care of her family, which is somewhat easy because two of their children, Carrie and Brandon, live about three or four houses down from her on either side of the street. To make things easier to travel between their homes, the family got her a three-wheel bike with a basket on the back for carrying various items or giving granddaughter Kelsie “cycle” rides.

Somebody said . . .

It takes about six weeks to get back to normal after you've had a baby . . . Somebody doesn't know that once you're a mother, "normal" is history!

The Community Bible Study continues . . .

Steve Billock is leading the weekly Bible study on the **Book of James - Faith—It Works!** The study meets weekly on Tuesday night at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church. Bring your Bibles, a notebook, yourself, your spouse, and your friends for an interesting opportunity to study and fellowship with the FCC family and our community churches. It's never too late to join the group.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD - DONATIONS DUE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6 . . .



The FCC Missions Committee will join forces with Operation Christmas Child again this fall and is asking for your help. The following gift items are suggested:

School supplies: Pens, pencil sharpeners, scissors, markers, glue sticks, stamp and ink pad sets, solar calculators, coloring and picture books

Toys: Small cars, small dolls, small stuffed animals, balls, flashlights, kazoos and harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch-A-Sketch, Slinkys (please include extra batteries for battery-operated toys)

Hygiene items: Combs, hairbrushes for girls, Ivory soap, washcloths, toothpaste, toothbrushes

Other: Gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair accessories, toy jewelry, watches.

Not needed: candy, no liquids, or glass items - Plastic shipping boxes will be furnished. Look for more information in the Sunday bulletin.

Dear God,

Life can be hard. Sometimes I do not understand “why” the people I love have to suffer illness and death; “why” some will lose their jobs and struggle financially; “why” neighbors have to move because they can’t afford their homes anymore; “why” the world thinks divorce is okay; and “why” families can’t get along.

However, I move forward knowing that your way is sovereign. Do I still want answers? Yes, of course, but that is where my faith comes in. I do not need the answers to know that what you place in my life is because you love me. I may not always understand how the plan will work, but you are the Potter, and I am the clay. May you mold me, Lord. How scary that sounds to me, but I trust you will give me strength to continue, courage to do your will, and hope that your glory will be revealed through me.

In Jesus’ precious name,

Amen!

Elementary Bible School Test Results . . . (spelling not corrected)

1. Solomon, one of David’s sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.
2. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
3. Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the apostles.
4. The epistels were the wives of the apostles.
5. In the first book of the Bible, Guinnessis. God got tired of creating the world so he took the Sabbath off.
6. Saint Paul cavorted to Christianity; he preached holy acrimony which is another name for marriage.

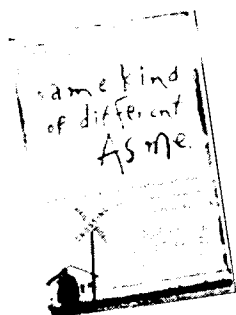
Women's Fellowship ...

Women's Fellowship met at the church for their September meeting. They also met on September 15 to make more greeting cards which are available on the rack in the Fellowship Hallway for \$1/each or 6/\$5. Check them out!

Their next meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 6, 2011, at FCC.

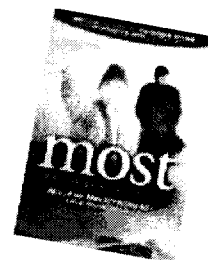
Contact persons for Women's Fellowship are:
Janet Brundage, coordinator (989.831.4405)
Pam Russell, treasurer (989.831.0867)
Martha Turnbull, secretary (989.831.4217)

DVD AND BOOK OF THE MONTH . . .



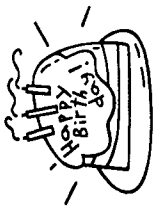
same kind of different as Me by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, and Lynn Vincent has been chosen by the Diaconate as the Book of the Month. This is a New York bestseller and a true, incredible story of a homeless drifter who grew up picking cotton under virtual slavery.

THE DVD OF THE MONTH IS "MOST." This is a heart-wrenching story portraying great measures of love, sacrifice, hope, and forgiveness through a modern-day parable.



The selections are available for loan for one week and may be checked out through the church office.

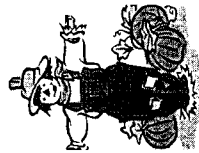
A wife invited some people to dinner. At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"
"I wouldn't know what to say," the girl replied.
"Just say what you hear Mommy say," the wife answered.
The daughter bowed her head and said, "Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"



- 03 Bill Lawrence
- 03 Paxton Wirtz
- 06 Randy Cook
- 07 LaVerie McGill
- 07 Megan Thelen
- 09 Milinda Wilson
- 11 Alice Sackett
- 11 Elizabeth Thornburg
- 13 Drew Stowell
- 14 David Swanson
- 15 Linda Swanson
- 16 Phyllis Wells
- 17 Shad Morgan
- 17 Kathy Rasmussen
- 18 Chloe Herzog
- 18 Aaron Seaver
- 19 Linda Bussell
- 21 Joseph Baldwin
- 21 Martha Turnbull
- 22 Aiden Wells
- 23 Carmen Teegardin
- 23 Claud Tift
- 24 Meredith Hansen
- 25 Madison Probyn
- 26 Sue Bowlin
- 26 Chad Doolittle
- 27 Art Wirtz
- 28 Emily Jorgensen

Anniversaries

- 06 Tad/Heather Simon
- 21 James/Shawn Blum
- 23 Kim/Cindy Ritter
- 25 Steve/Bonnie Billock
- 28 Rick/Kate Zimbelman



October 2011

First Congregational Church of Stanton
 Worship Service: 11 a.m.
 Phone: 989.831.5240
 Email address: beverlyb@fccstanton.org
 Website: www.fccstanton.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 11 am - Morning Worship 9:30 am - Adult Choir Practice 9:45 am - Morning Fellowship 4 - 9 pm - Area Youth Hayride	3 6 - 8 pm REVOLT Youth Ministry	4 Two-By-Twos Lunch at Noon 7 pm Bible Study at FCC	5	6 9:30 am Women's Fellowship 12 n Rotary	7	1 Youth to "Music w/a Mission Tour/ Muskegon
9 11 am - Morning Worship 9:30 am - Adult Choir Practice 9:45 am - Morning Fellowship	10 6 - 8 pm REVOLT Youth Ministry	11 7 pm Bible Study at FCC	12 6 pm Diaconate Board	13 12 n Rotary	14 9:30 - 11 pm. Youth "Overtime"	15
16 11 am - Morning Worship 9:30 am - Adult Choir Practice 9:45 am - Morning Fellowship 12:15 pm - Board of Trustees	17 6 - 8 pm Christian Skate Night Rainbow Gardens REVOLT Youth Ministry	18 7 pm Bible Study at FCC	19	20 12 n Rotary 6:30 - 9 pm MAARC	21	22
23 11 am - Morning Worship 9:30 am - Adult Choir Practice 9:45 am - Morning Fellowship	24 OPEN DOOR DEADLINE 7 pm - OFD Committee 6 - 8 pm REVOLT Youth Ministry	25 7 pm Bible Study at FCC	26	27 12 n Rotary	28	29
NOISY CHANGE SUNDAY 30 11 am - Morning Worship 9:30 am - Adult Choir Practice 9:45 am - Morning Fellowship	31 Happy Halloween!!! 6 - 8 pm REVOLT Youth Ministry	Note:!! Splashdown meets from 3:30 to 6 p.m. daily on regular school days!	Gentle words fall lightly, But they have great weight. —Complete Book of Zingers Craft M. Pentz			