

The Courier

April

First Congregational Church of Almont

2007



Have you ever tried to cut through something, whether it was a piece of meat on your dinner plate or a piece of cardboard out in your garage, but the utensil you were using to do the job was not sharp

enough? I have found myself in that position many times, and it was frustrating. What I found myself having to do was sharpen the tool I was trying to use.

Well, God gives us a similar analogy with respect to men. Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." While many of our wives might leap at the opportunity to point out that their husband may not be the sharpest knife in the drawer (in love of course), I think most of us men, if we were going

to be honest with ourselves and each other, would have to admit that we could all stand a little sharpening.

We have been given by God the responsibility of being Christ-like leaders in our homes and in the church, and it is therefore paramount that we be "men of integrity".

Integrity is not something that comes easily to us; it is something that needs to be painstakingly cultivated through much effort and time. It is something we must envision, plan for and strive to attain. It requires humility, vulnerability, teachability and accountability. However difficult it proves to be, the return on the investment is priceless.

This month we are starting a men's discipleship and accountability group for the purpose of developing "men of integrity". We will be meeting on a weekly basis from April 4th to May 30th (that's nine weeks) from 6:30 to 8:00 pm.

We will be in the back room of the church's office house, right next door to the church sanctuary building. We will then break for the summer months of June thru August and Lord willing pick back

up again in September.

The issues we will be discussing together in detail are:

- How to cultivate a growing relationship with your Savior
- How to cultivate personal purity in an impure world
- How to be a man that truly loves his wife
- How to be a man that sacrifices for and leads his family
- How to be a man that demonstrates Christ-like character in his community
- How to successfully communicate one's personal faith to the lost

None of us is perfect in any one of these areas, but we all need to be striving for excellence!

**MEN'S
DISCIPLESHIP AND
ACCOUNTABILITY
GROUP**

Wednesdays
April 4 - May 30

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
In the church office

In today's world we face a host of enemies that would love to see us fail in our role as men whose job it is to love, lead and protect our families. We need to band together and hold one another up in prayer, encouragement, accountability and Biblical instruction. I invite all the men of First Congregational Church to come on

Wednesday nights and be a part of this discipleship/accountability group.

God bless you and I hope to see you there.

Inside this Issue

Calendar	Insert
Children's Ministries	5
Mission Moment	7
Trustee Update	2
Women's Ministries	6
Youth Ministry News	3

TRUSTEE UPDATE:

YOUR TRUSTEES ARE EXCITED

By George Spear

What are you excited about? Life can get rather dull and mundane especially during the cold and sometimes dreary winter months. Presently I am seeing and hearing people express excitement about the spring season as it will be here by the time this article is printed. It is 4:50 a.m. and I'm excited about writing this article as I sense God's Spirit encouraging me to accomplish this assignment. If you're just a little glum as a result of cold winter days, maybe the following scenario will put a smile on your face.

I have two brothers. One stopped by to see me yesterday and since it was late afternoon I ask him if he had been up to the farm to visit our older brother who is 88 years old. He said he had stopped by to see him but he wasn't home because someone had transported him over to see his friend who is 89. I had to smile as I realized they are excited to see one another and seemingly, God must smile too, since he made us social beings.

Most of you know there are several rather expensive projects/repairs that need to be done at the church and office building and historically, whenever the Board discussed these needs, we wondered just how to raise the necessary funds. We are excited to report

that God has provided those funds through a gift from an estate. FCC has indeed received a special blessing from this family and we certainly extend our deepest thanks for their faithfulness to our Lord.

You may have noticed the absence of eave troughs on the church. The result has been considerable damage to the brick. We expect to spend over \$60,000 on brick repair and eave troughs. Steeple repair is expected to be around \$10,000. We will be getting estimates on exterior painting for both the church and office building. We need new windows in the office building and fellowship hall. The parking lot needs repair and yellow lines redone. New carpet in the sanctuary is past due. Our heating system is ancient and could fail at any time during the winter months. (If you know someone who specializes in any of these jobs please contact a trustee.) Once again let me say, your trustees are excited about getting many of these projects done this summer and I believe God will be pleased to see our worship facilities repaired for His glory.

Did you ever wonder what God gets excited about? As I said earlier, I believe He is pleased when we as His followers/worshipers focus our attention on repairing buildings

that are used for His glory. When we read the Genesis account regarding the six days of creation, it would seem God must have been not only pleased but excited about His creation. However, we are all aware that God's first and foremost goal is to glorify Himself and that all people might know Him and enjoy Him forever. We read in Luke 15:10 where Jesus said, "there is rejoicing in the presence of the Angels of God over one sinner who repents." If the angels of God are excited and rejoice over the salvation of one sinner, God Himself rejoices.

As we enter into the spring and summer months let us remember to praise God for His faithfulness by telling others how God is blessing FCC with expected building repairs. When people see our excitement over what God is doing at FCC it is our prayer that they will see their need for a savior.

AWANA ANSWERS

1. Want to Build (AWANA), Sparks, & Ephesians 2:8
2. Right when we get there
3. To praise Jesus!

Youth Ministry News

By Pastor Keith

Do you know about the “One Anothers?” You know those passages in scripture that tell us how we are to treat our fellow Christians? The Bible has a great way of showing us what the Christian Community is supposed to be like. If you ever do a search in scripture for “one another” or “each other” in the New Testament, you will be amazed at the multitude of ways that God expects us to treat our fellow Christians.

Most of us know that we are to “love one another.” Many of us know we should “forgive one another.” Allow me to show you a few “one anothers” that you may not be aware of:

- Submit to one another – Ephesians 5:21
- Working together with one mind and purpose – Philippians 2:2
- Serve one another – I Peter 4:10; Galatians 5:13
- Honor one another – Romans 12:10
- Greet one another – Romans 16:16
- Pray for one another – Galatians 6:2; James 5:16

Recently we have been talking about the “one anothers” with the teenagers on Sunday nights. We have looked to see what God’s Word says about each of a list of fourteen one anothers (so far, we have more to add), and talked about what they mean. Then, we try to take each one another and envision what the youth ministry would look like if we really did follow through on these commands from God. Did I say “commands?” I believe I did. That’s what they are. These are not God’s suggestions for how He would like for us to treat each other, they are His commands as to how

we behave toward other Christians.

The most recent challenge we have laid down before the youth ministry has to do with greeting one another, and praying for one another. For the next several weeks, when someone comes in for our Sunday evening time together, we stop what we are doing, greet them, and genuinely ask them if there is anything we can pray for them about. If they say yes, we pray right then and there. We don’t wait. We don’t make promises to ourselves that we will pray and then only possibly pray if we remember later on. We stop whatever we are doing, and pray for our friend immediately.

Can you imagine with me the revolution that can start if we take those two one anothers (greet and pray) and sincerely apply them on a regular basis. The change in our attitude toward prayer. The change in how people become encouraged by others caring enough to stop what they are doing and pray with them for their needs. The encouragement that comes from warmly and genuinely greeting our brothers and sisters in Christ EVERY time they come to church. WOW!

Soon we will be wrapping up our study on the one anothers. We will turn our attention toward evangelism, and a method called the “3 Story” way of evangelism. It combines God’s story, our story, and the story of the person with whom we are talking. While we are excited for that to begin, I am even more excited by the impact that exercising the one anothers will have on our group, and on our church.

Allow me to say “thank you” to all those who contributed to the cake auction. I especially want to thank Tim and Colleen Young for heading

up the kitchen duties, the cooking, and the purchasing of all that we needed. Thanks to our wonderful church body, we raised \$2,300.00 plus toward the mission trip this year. Thank you so much everyone!

What does the future hold for the Youth Ministry? Well, we have a special worship night planned by some of our teens to be held on April 1st. We will be taking the Sr. High to Taylor University for the annual retreat, for which we could use your help. How? We are looking for scholarships to help defray the cost for each student. A full scholarship would be \$40 per student. We have ten students attending this year. If you are able and would like to help with the cost, please talk with Pastor Keith.

Again, thanks for being such a wonderful church that is so very supportive. Your support in finances and especially prayers is a huge blessing for any ministry. Keep up the great work!

ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Drop Off your unwanted treasures April 22-25. If you have large items that need to be picked up, please call the church office to make arrangements.

Sale Dates: April 26-28

Thurs-Fri 9:00-4:00

Sat 9:00-12:00

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE
SUMMER MISSION TRIP

EASTER SERVICES

Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Morning Services:

*Worship Service at 8:30 a.m.

*Brunch at 10:00 a.m.

*Worship Service at 11:00 a.m.

Join us as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES

April 22 - May 6

Sundays from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. (between services)

Sermons Available

Miss a sermon? Want to hear one again? Or share it with a friend? You can now do just that! Visit the Online Sermons page of our website (www.almontfcc.org) to listen to or download sermons. Sermons are available for high-speed and dial-up connections. You may even subscribe to our podcast and take a sermon with you on your mp3 player. Check it out!

Not tech savvy? Sermons are also available on CD in our church library.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

America UNITE in Prayer

"On Thursday, May 3, millions of believers from across America will join together to celebrate the 56th annual **National Day of Prayer**. Since 1952, the National Day of Prayer has been a powerful reminder of our need to kneel before God's throne in the public square - regardless of cultural and denominational differences.

There's never been a better time to get involved.

We're living in challenging times. But God is moving through the prayers of His people! II Chronicles 7:14 states; 'If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.' That's why we've chosen "**America, Unite in Prayer**" as our 2007 theme for the National Day of Prayer. We are confident that as we kneel before the Lord - both as individuals and one body - He will bring healing and restoration to our families, our communities, and to our nation." (Dr. Charles Swindoll, *Honorary Chairman, National Day of Prayer*)

Please plan to join us and people across this great country for prayer at 7:00 p.m., Thursday May 3, here at FCC.

Children's Ministries!

April AWANA News

This month we would like to recognize Mrs. Rachel Owen! She is the leader that helps us learn praise songs for Jesus. She is also the one who got us up in front of the congregation to sing! We were a little shy with an audience - usually we are much louder!! We would just like to thank her for all of her hard work! If you see her tell her thanks.



Reminder that there is a movie on April 22. The children are asked to decorate a box as a car. The best car will be awarded a prize. The movie will be Veggie Tales: Moe and the Big Exit. We will have popcorn and drinks as refreshments!

JUST FOR OUR AWANA CLUBBERS...

AWANA Challenge - Here are some questions for Sparks and T&T



1. Name the three songs that were sung for the church.
2. When do we sing worship songs at Awana?
3. What is the purpose of singing at Awana?



Answers on page 2



NOT THAT I HAVE ALREADY ATTAINED, OR AM ALREADY PERFECTED; BUT I PRESS ON, THAT I MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS HAS ALSO LAID HOLD OF ME.

PHILIPPIANS 3:12

Women's Ministries

Helping Women Reach Their Full Potential in Christ

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

April 3 First Tuesday Ladies Prayer at 11:00 a.m.

April 14 Ladies Tea to welcome Sherri Melillo to her new church family 1:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room

Tuesdays beginning April 19 First Place: *Begin Again* 6:30 p.m.

Sundays and Tuesdays Ladies Bible Study: *For Women Only: The Bible Study* by Shaunti Feldhahn

Monday, April 2, 16, 23, 30 Little Lambs and Ewe 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.

Prayer Chain Requests:

If you have a prayer request that you would like to add to our Prayer Chain, please call Shirley Wallace at 798-3208.

If Shirley is unavailable, please call Shelli Bourque at 798-8168.

Or you may submit a request at our website, www.almontfcc.org.



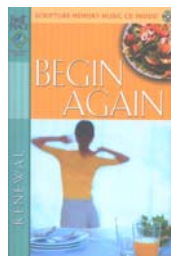
First Place is a Christ-centered health program for men and women of all ages. Using a support system that incorporates Bible study, Scripture memorization, prayer and balanced eating and exercise plans, First Place provides the opportunity to change your life, not only physically but spiritually and emotionally.

Our First Place Group meets on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. For more information please visit the First Place website or contact Beth Haney-Heckart at (810) 798-8898.

A new session will begin April 19th - a perfect time to join us! We'll be studying *Begin Again*.

Begin Again

The First Place *Begin Again* Bible study provides inspiration and motivation for everyone who struggles with insecurity and failure, particularly when trying to reach weight-loss goals. As this study makes clear, falling is not failing—failing to get back up is failing. Most important, we must remember that through faith in Jesus Christ we have become a new creation—one that can always turn to God to pick us back up and get us back on the track to success!



Ladies Tea
Saturday, April 14
at 1:00 p.m.

All ladies are invited to join us in welcoming our pastor's wife, Sherri, to her new church family. We'll be having tea and a light lunch at 1:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room.

Contact Betty Walton, Delphine Beaumont or Sally Lashbrook for more information.

Mother-Daughter Banquet

Friday, May 11 at 6:30 p.m.

If you are a mother or a daughter you are invited to join us for this special evening. Plan on a full sit-down meal (prepared and served by the men), a 4x6 family portrait (portrait packages available), gifts and some old-fashioned fellowship. Tickets will be available beginning Sunday, April 15th. The cost is FREE, but you do need a ticket to reserve your place.

Mission Moment

Board of Deacons - by Stacy Kmetz

On behalf of the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses, I'd like to welcome our new members Cindi Schaeffer and Brian Richardson, both of whom have worked faithfully behind the scenes in other areas of service and are a wonderful addition to the board. With that, I'd like to give a full list of those serving on the 2007 board:

Terry Wallace - Chair	Ken Hough
Dave Shall - Vice Chair	Brian Richardson
Stacy Kmetz - Secretary	Karen Richie
Bob Bacholzky	Cindi Schaeffer
Cindy Baden	Betty Walton
Keith Braidwood	

We have been working diligently in restoring some of our areas of worship and ministry, as well as encouraging some new outreach ideas and fellowship opportunities.

As these areas are being strengthened and developed, we encourage you to prayerfully consider the areas where God leads you to serve. There are several opportunities now and there will be more in the near future for you to get plugged in and involved. Not only are there opportunities to attend and fellowship, but also to serve your brothers and sisters in Christ at FCC. You don't need special talent to serve the Lord, (although there may be times where it would certainly be helpful) just a willing heart and helping hands to serve Jesus by

servicing each other. Some service opportunities I can think of off hand are following:

- Helping record sermons so the Deacons can get the Word to our shut-ins. It really is as easy as pressing a button. Contact Terry Wallace (798-3208) or Dave Shall (798-2596) if you will be willing to serve in this area and would like more details.
- Helping serve and clean up for the Mother/Daughter Banquet May 11. If you are a grandpa, father, son, or grandson we would really appreciate your help in the kitchen! Contact Stacy Kmetz (798-7266) if you can help!
- Ushers are needed for both services and would be greatly appreciated! No prior experience is necessary! Contact Terry Wallace (798-3208) or sign up under an available month in the Heritage Room.
- Greeters are needed before each service. Sign up is in the Heritage Room. Smiles, handshakes or hugs – whatever your forte, we encourage you to sign up!
- Special music for either worship service would be ... well, special! Contact Llewellyn Moyer (798-2386) if you have a heart to sing and wish to share your gift of song!

Also, please look in the bulletin and future editions of the Courier for upcoming service opportunities! We look forward to serving with you!

COMPASSION SUNDAY APRIL 22, 2007

Compassion International is a Christian child development ministry that works to release children from their spiritual, economic, social, and physical poverty. Plant a seed of hope in the heart of an impoverished boy or girl in a developing country by sponsoring a child through Compassion International.

Your sponsorship of \$32 per month provides educational, social, and health benefits through a local church in the community where the child lives. Your child will be involved in Christian training and learn that Jesus deeply loves him or her. Visit the sign-up table after services on April 22nd and select a child who needs your help!

LOVE PACKAGES

Love Packages is a ministry aimed at putting Christian literature and bibles into the hands of people around the world. Used bibles, devotionals, and Sunday School materials are sent to ministries in many poor countries to be distributed freely to people hungry for the Word of God. These are materials that sit on our shelves collecting dust, destined to be thrown away. FCC has participated in this ministry for the last couple of years. This year we will be collecting materials during the months of **April, May & June**. A container for these items will be located in Taylor Chapel. So lets recycle our bibles, devotionals, tracts, reference books, dictionaries, commentaries, Christian magazines, and Christian books (fiction and nonfiction) and be a part of this ministry to spread the Word of God.

The Courier

First Congregational Church
201 E. St. Clair / P.O. Box 423
Almont, MI 48003

OUR VISION IS
TO FOSTER A
COMMUNITY OF
DISCIPLES WHO ARE:

Communing
with God

Connecting
with each other

Cultivating
our commitment

Communicating
the love of God

Caring
for our community

Non Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ALMONT, MI
Permit No. 1

*We exist to SERVE God by SHARING the
Good News of Jesus Christ and His
unconditional LOVE for all.*



Sunday Worship Schedule

Worship Service @ 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School @ 10:00 a.m.

Worship Service @ 11:15 a.m.
Jr. Church and Child Care available

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH *of Almont*

AN INDEPENDENT EVANGELICAL CHURCH

CHURCH STAFF:

Mark Melillo, Senior Pastor
Keith Langley, Youth Pastor
Melody Webber, Dir. of
Children's Ministries
Audrey Minter, Secretary
Rob & Mary Kalmanir,
Custodians

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday- Friday

9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Phone: 810-798-8855

Fax: 810-798-7092

www.almontfcc.org
office@almontfcc.org