

FROM THE PASTOR

There is an old European story about a traveler who came upon a barn where the devil had stored seeds which he planned to sow in the hearts of the people. There were bags of seeds variously marked "Hatred," "Fear," "Doubt," "Despair," "Unforgiveness," "Pride," "Greed," etc.

The devil appeared and struck up a conversation with the traveler. He gleefully told the traveler how easily the seeds he sowed sprouted in the hearts of men and women.

"Are there any hearts in which these seeds will not sprout? The traveler asked.

A melancholy look appeared on the devil's face. "These seeds will not sprout in the heart of a thankful and joyful person," he confessed.

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever," proclaims the "Psalmist.

We can all be thankful that our area, the state of Florida, and the United States was spared from hurricanes this year. How important it is, though, to take time to count your blessings. Think about the blessings of our nation. Think about the blessings of living in south Florida. Think about the blessings of our church. Think about the blessings of your own life and that of your family. Throughout the past year there probably have been difficulties of some kind you can pick out, such as going through an illness or medical procedure, but don't focus on those times. Think, instead, about the good times, the positive things you experienced and how God has been with you, with our church and with our nation during this past year. Then give thanks to God, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but every day! **Dr. Marshall Cook**

Marshall's Office Hours...

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 1-4pm; Wednesdays Noon-2pm

You may also feel free to contact him anytime at 772/340-0472. Please call before stopping by church in case he is out calling on people.

Please plan to join us for the Christmas Eve Candlelight service—and bring a friend along to welcome the birth of our Savior!

**Christmas Eve
Service at 7:00 pm**



Birthdays & Anniversaries

**...for
December**

1st	Howard Reed	19th	Emerson Fairbanks
5th	Mary Ann Hower	20th	Mary Sternal
7th	Ida Cram	21st	Jerry Steelman
9th	Christel Espinosa	29th	Jean Donahue
18th	Sal Alibrio Betty Reed		

and ANNIVERSARIES —

19th Antio & Christel Espinosa

21st Bob & Sue Schwertfeger



Sunday, December 13th...

I need your help and input to make this newsletter happen so please send/drop-off your articles. As usual, articles can be dropped in the Treasurer's mailbox at church, e-mailed to candc@webbplace.com; or faxed to (561)348-9909.

Upcoming Dates...

ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR—Sat. Dec. 5th
CHRISTMAS POTLUCK—Sat. Dec. 12th at 6pm
HAM & BEAN SUPPER - Sat. Jan 16th at 6pm

Pet Blessing... Our first annual pet blessing was held in the sanctuary on October 10th. There were 21 animals and 19 people in attendance. All the animals were well behaved as Marshall blessed each pet. All those present enjoyed the new tradition!

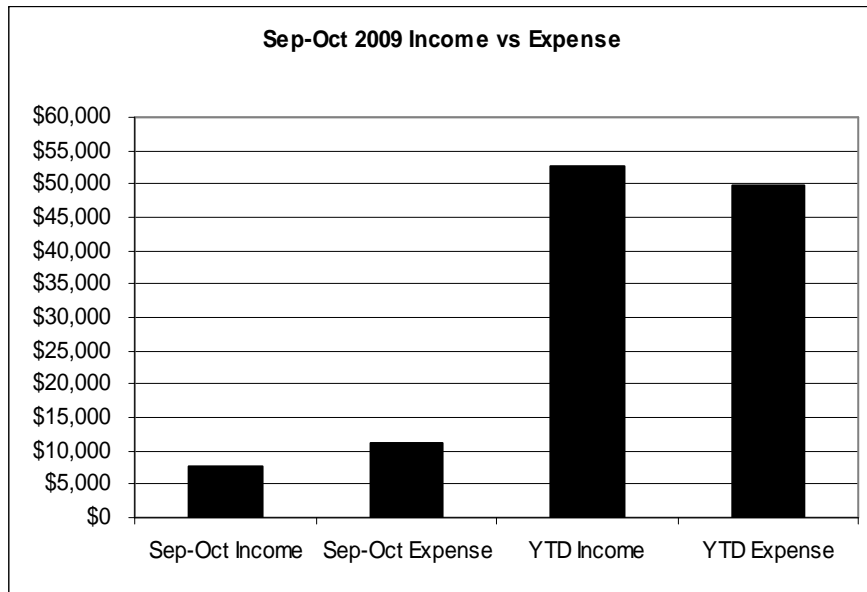
Looking for Advent Helpers...

Advent starts Sunday Nov. 29th. We are looking for people to read while lighting the candles each week.

Sign up sheet available or see Rev. Marshall

Treasurer's Report...

September was not a good financial month for the church. A slow summer month, September also had several larger bills come due which contributed to the deficit. October was better with the church nearly breaking even. However, year-to-date income thru October still exceeds expenses by about \$2,900.00.

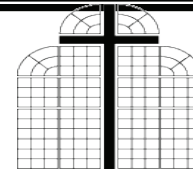


Fund transfers were not included in the numbers above. This is money gifted from Memorial and Designated Gifts funds and typically used for major purchases. These transfers increase the income over expense amounts to nearly \$6,000.00 (YTD).

As usual, all bills are current. As CDs mature, the reinvested interest rate is much lower. This will reduce interest income in 2010.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Webb, Treasurer

Prayer



List...

Sal Alibrio, Jim Allan, Richie Allen, Fred Aniello, Wanda Bartoy, Carol Brooks, Stephen Burke, Gail Cook, Ida Cram, Gertrude Dovey, Alex & Dee Ford, Ted Fowler, Jim Fritz, Family of Chet Gill, Jennifer Goldacker, Katharine Gordon, Jennifer Gray, Shirley Hage, Diane Harrison, Dennis Hower, Pastor David Huels, Debbie Knapp, Ruth Livingston, Diane MacWilliam, Dick Magown, Diane Millard, Chuck St. John, Kathy Schaaf, Carol Strunk, and Lillian Williams

NOTE: If any names contained here should be removed, or new ones added, please see one of our Deacons.

Our Sympathy...

To Betsy Wolmer and her family. Betsy's sister passed away at age 56 in mid-September.

Also, our sympathy goes out to Helen Boyd's husband Dick on the passing of his sister this past October. Helen and Dick traveled to New Hampshire for her memorial service.

Our condolences to Alice & Ted Fowler on their son-in-law's passing as well.

First Congregational Church of Ft. Pierce

(772) 465-2082 3601 Kirby Loop Road, Ft. Pierce, FL 34981

Pastor: Marshall Cook (772/340-0472); **Organist:** Janis Gonzales

Church Officers & Leaders—**Moderator:** Diane MacWilliam; **Vice Moderator:** Tom Maybury; **Clerk:** Carol Sinotte; **Treasurer:** Charlie Webb; **Asst. Treasurer:** Kim Sinotte; **Financial Secretary:** Diane MacWilliam; **Member-at-Large:** Bob Bater

Board & Committee Chairs—Trustees, **Don Locke**; Property, **John Souza**; Christian Education, **Becky Miller**; Deacons, **Tom Maybury**; Memorial, **Joyce Maybury**; Missions, **Audrey Magown**; Music, **Gerry Brown**; Nominating, **Diana Junker**; Auditors, **Bob Bater, Don Rogers**; Evangelism, **Cyndy Webb**; Women's Fellowship, **Carolyn Rogers**.

Thank you's...

This note from **Gail Cook**... *"I want to thank everyone for their cards, prayers and calls following my recent surgery. I'm glad to be part of such a caring church. Thank you."*

A big thank you to **John Souza** for arranging to have veterans and auxiliary from the VFW Post 8058 at the service on November 8th. The flag ceremony, special music and sermon were a nice tribute to all veterans. John Gonzales had a reading for each branch of the service and the congregation stood to honor whatever service branch was meaningful to them. Thank you all for a special service.

Member news...

This note from **Marge Hauer**...*"My 1-year anniversary living up here in GA was November 10th...and I'm still a happy camper! Love to you all and good luck with the bazaar."*

We've had some hospitalizations and folks to remember...Gail Cook had a hip replacement and is doing very well, Dick Magown was hospitalized this week and anticipates moving to a rehab facility, Ted Fowler and Dottie Klein were hospitalized briefly but now out and back to church.

From the Moderator...

We are coming upon the busiest time of our church year with special events, special messages and music. We hope those of you involved will keep the congregation up to date with articles in the newsletters and announcements in church.

We welcome all those returning to the Sunny South and hope that you will join right in with us again as you have in the past. If there is any particular project you would like to help with, just ask me and I will put you in touch with the right person.

Diane MacWilliam

From the
Moderator



Monthly Meetings Underway...

Women's Fellowship will meet next for a Tea Party hosted by our President Carolyn Rogers on December 1st. All women of the church are invited and most welcome to attend at Noon, at the church.



Welcome to our new Organist & Choir Director, Janis Gonzales!

Here at First Congregational, Jan begins her 41st year (season—she counts it like the school year) as a church musician. In childhood she lived on a dairy farm south of Pittsburgh, PA in Brownsville. Jan earned a BS in Education from California State College and a Masters of Music from Catholic University. She taught school for 35 years, 30 of them in music; retiring from Martin County Schools in 2000, and returning in 2002 to the music classroom for 3 more years at Port Salerno Elementary.

Jan's father, a private music teacher, gave Jan her first lessons beginning at age 4 on a small 12-bass accordion and then on to the piano. At 12, she took pipe organ lessons from Henrietta Pollock of Pittsburgh. The Catholic Church paid for her lessons as "the priest at my church thought I had the talent to learn the pipes!" Jan was the church organist until graduation from college and moving to Washington D.C.

Her first job was organist/choir director at the Moravian Church in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. She married an Army man and traveled, working as a pianist for the Protestant Chapel in Darmstadt, Germany, and involved with the Catholic music program at Fort Hood, Texas, eventually retiring to Port St Lucie in 1978.

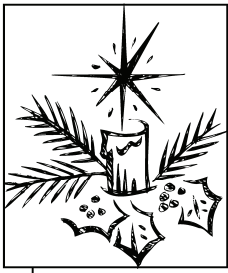
Arlo Vandlen's church, First Congregational Church of Port St Lucie was her next stop where Jan became choir director and served there 13 years. Here she met her second husband John (you know...our new bass choir member!); they married in 2000 and have been a team every since! Eventually moving on, she was Organist at First Presbyterian Church in Stuart; Music Director of Holy Faith Episcopal Church in north PSL; Director of Music for Stuart Congregational Church, and Choir Director for First United Methodist Church in PSL.

In 2006 Jan and John moved to Tallahassee where she was Music Director for Covenant Presbyterian Church, playing the organ, directing the choir, and playing keyboard in the praise band.

This year their road brought them back to PSL in September when she saw the ad in the paper and called for an interview. The rest is history!

Jan's own words say it best... *"I love being a part of First Congregational Church of Fort Pierce. The choir is filled with many fine voices and people who enjoy singing. I am honored to be able to work with such a good group! It is a church filled with wonderful people, and I am happy to lead the congregation praising God through music."*

Choir Practice...Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm. Come join us!



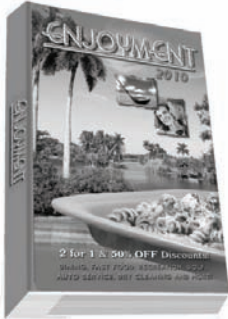
Reminder...Annual HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Saturday, Dec. 5th ~ 8:00am-1:00pm
Lunch will be available to purchase.

Have you bought your raffle tickets? Have you seen all the great raffle items on display in the narthex?

More than \$500.00 has already been raised from raffle ticket sales.

- If you items to donate for the silent auction please bring them out to the church.
- Also, items for the "Good as New" table can be brought into the church on Sundays or on Wednesdays from Noon-2pm.
- Please, only bring items you would buy yourself. No rummage please.
- A meeting will be held Sunday Nov. 22nd for those chairing tables.



Enjoyment Books...

Now on sale...be sure and get yours today! Only \$35 again this year with loads of 2-for-1 coupons. \$10 from every book sold comes back to the church.

We have sold 37 books thus far. Coupons are good now through Oct. 31st 2010. And what better money saver for the person looking to stretch their entertainment dollars, or perfect gift for someone this holiday season!

This is a great fund raiser for us, so please, if you know someone in your neighborhood or community who would enjoy a book—why not sell them one! So, we have plenty of books on hand and will be very happy to sell them!! If you are not back to Florida yet and would like one set aside for you, please let Cyndy or Charlie Webb know.

Church's 25th Anniversary - Celebrate!!

Plans are underway to celebrate our 25th anniversary in grand style. It will be held this winter when most of our members and friends are back.

At a recent meeting, **Marshall & Gail Cook, Diann & David Holtje, Carol & Dick Sinotte** and **Diane MacWilliam** started making preliminary plans for this event. We hope that everyone will be able to attend as we are planning a dinner with entertainment; recognition of our charter members, former ministers and lay leaders.

Watch here for more details!! You won't want to miss this!!



Mission Efforts have many looks...

• **Christmas Fund Offering:** As Advent approaches, UCC congregations get ready for the Christmas Fund Special Offering. Administered by the Pension Boards of the United

Church of Christ, your gifts provide supplemental pension and health benefits to low-income retirees who have served the church, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas gift checks to hundreds of annuitants. Your gifts are needed more than ever to help the growing number of retirees whose low-income annuities make it difficult to meet increasing living costs. A special envelope is enclosed for the offering. We will receive our Christmas Fund offering on Sunday, December 20, or whenever you choose to bring it.

• **Christmas Giving:** Hazel From the *Image of Christ* stopped in to ask us if we would bring toys for children this year rather than adopting one family. We will be able to reach more children this way. She is expecting over 500 children at their Christmas party this year. The ages will run from 2-years to 12-years. A box will be placed at the entrance doors. Wrap with a tag denoting for a boy or a girl, and appropriate ages. Un-wrapped gifts are fine too.

• **Food Pantry:** There is always a container sitting right by the inside of the front door of the church...waiting and ready to be filled with non-perishable food and toiletry items. These are delivered to a local ministry "In The Image of Christ". Whatever you can spare is most appreciated by many!

• Bring in your "**Box Tops**" and "**Labels**" for Education". There is a bin and container located by the front door for your convenience.

• **Bring refreshments** for after-church fellowship.

• **Be a Lay Reader, Usher or Greeter:** When you return this winter, perhaps you will consider helping to spell our "year-rounders" who have served all summer long. Currently we are looking for participants for the Advent Wreath litany. We need a family or couple of people each Sunday during Advent to read and light the candles.

• **Join the Crafty Ladies:** Come at noon on Wednesdays or make something at home.

• Plan to be a part of **CROP Walk** next February.