



The Spire

The Newsletter of Maple Street Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
November, 2011



Pastor Kevin's Corner

Abundance and Gratitude

God, You Are Enough

God,
You are enough for us;
you give us rest in soft fields
and beside whispering streams;
you restore and renew us,
and lead us into life-giving ways;

When death and evil come close to us,
you carry us through,
you protect and comfort us;
when others seek to do us harm,
your grace uplifts and provides for us
in public view;
you fill us with your
strength
and we enjoy
overflowing
abundance;

We have confidence
that your goodness and
compassion
will fill our days,

and we will stay immersed in your life and
presence
forever.

Amen.

--John van de Laar

*May grace and peace be yours in abundance.
(1 Peter 1:2)*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...and
with gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms, hymns,
and spiritual songs to God. (Col. 3:16)*

Abundance and gratitude. In the tough economic times we are experiencing in this nation, and indeed the world, I'm sure it's hard for many people to be feeling that their life is filled with abundance. Gratitude may be in short supply. We see young people all over the world "occupying" Wall Street and other financial districts expressing their grief and frustration that the dream of meaningful work and financial security is passing them by. They have felt ignored by
(continued on next page)

Holly Berry Fair
Saturday, November 12
9am to 3 pm

Baked Bean Supper to Follow
5 to 6:30 pm

(continued from page 1)

governments who seem to lavish tax breaks on the rich. The gap between the rich and poor has grown. Governments, and families, are deep in debt. Even the “American Dream” of owning a home and having a family wage job is far out of reach for so many in our country and many people are re-evaluating just what is the American Dream.

Here in Danvers we have seen our city government and schools shouldered with the financial responsibilities that housing families without homes in our local hotels brings. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts uses Danvers’ hotels as temporary shelter for people without homes and Danvers pays for some of their costs, including transportation and schooling. I know this is a burden on our local tax bases, but frankly I’m proud of Danvers for being willing to take a role in helping out families who have lost their shelter. I’m also proud of Danvers for its Danvers Cares program and the Food Pantry. These are just two programs that our church family supports. Maple Street Church also hosts our regular Thursday Welcome Table meals and we support the Common Cathedral ministry to the homeless in Boston. I’m also hoping we can lend our assistance and support to the Outdoor Church in Cambridge which I helped start and which provides a weekly church service, socks, and sandwiches to the folks who live on the streets in our sister urban area.

Jesus told people when we see and help the “least of these” we are seeing and helping him. Jesus said, ‘for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ (Matthew 25:35-40) My friends, perhaps we should base the new “dream” for our lives on these words of Jesus. *Rather than basing our dream on things we can own, perhaps a better dream would be a life filled with such a sense of spiritual abundance and gratitude that our dream is based on how much we give to one another, how much we care for one another, and how deep is our relationship with God.*

In this month when we celebrate Thanksgiving and begin to look toward the celebration of the birth of Jesus, let us dream about and nurture the real priorities in our life—our relationships with God, family, and our community. Let us make decisions based on the abundance of life and love that we receive through our relationships and act together in gratitude to a God who loves everyone. Amen.

—Pastor Kevin

From Elsa Marshall

Fall Song (excerpt)

*I try to remember when time's measure
painfully chafes, for instance when autumn
flares out at the last, boisterous and like us longing
to stay - how everything lives, shifting
from one bright vision to another, forever
in these momentary pastures. ---Mary Oliver, American Primitive*

As time's measure painfully chafes, I am mindful that this time last year I was devastated by the loss of my husband. I longed for him to stay but his life ended shifting him from one bright vision to another forever placed in my hearts' pastures of love. And so I began to try to live into this chapter of life gratefully held by the love and care of this church family. I have learned several lessons this past year, but one which is a real blessing for me is that I cannot be grateful and fearful at the same time. As I reflect, I realize not once during this past year was I truly afraid. I lived with gratitude for the blessings given to me by this church family who were walking beside me in so many ways. Lovingly, I was given a gratitude journal from one member for Christmas. As I wrote in my new gratitude journal, I realized that though I might be facing struggles of my own, when my thoughts were gently guided toward thoughts and places of gratitude I felt joy for whatever I had just written and reflected upon. What a great gift - for gratitude's close cousin is joy! Joy brings with it an awareness of who we are and an acknowledgement that all we have are gifts from a generous, loving God. I have discovered that being grateful for all of the good gifts in my life displaces my fears and dissatisfactions and opens me to receive God's guidance and presence. Jesus was a serious practitioner of gratitude who charted for all who encounter him a path of focusing on gifts and blessings. This past year I have been practicing gratitude as a faith practice. I am convinced that gratitude is "a life-giving practice" that brings joy, peace and grace. I commend it to you as well. As Thanksgiving approaches and we all take time to acknowledge the abundance in our lives perhaps this might be a time for you to enjoy cultivating gratitude. Let us together have our lives and hearts sing "Now Thank Thee We All Our God".

Here are a few "practices" I have been using that might be helpful as you get started. Please share your discoveries and ideas from your practice with me. I look forward to your gleanings.

- Make a gratitude list. Write down seven to ten things on the list each day. Use a blank book for keeping your gratitude list.
- At the beginning of the day, ask God to help you be the face of joy to someone today.
- Say grace before each meal.
- Each time you receive or send a text, email, letter or phone call, give thanks for that person. Say a prayer of thanks at the end of the day.

Thank you beloved church family for walking this incredibly difficult and grief ridden year with me. I live in a place of gratitude for you, for your love, support, care and compassion. I am GRATEFUL beyond words. Happy Thanksgiving to you and those you love. Shalom with love, Elsa

Confirmation class is for all students in grade ten or older. If you have a tenth grader or older youth who is considering participating in this year's confirmation class, there will be a parent and student information planning meeting on Dec 4th at 11:30 in the High School room in the "tunnel". At this meeting the class time and dates will be determined. Confirmation is a "rite of passage" offered our youth. Confirmands are invited to join centuries upon centuries of Christians who have answered for themselves Jesus' question of his disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" while participating fully in a Christian community that is intended to be a dwelling place for God. It is hoped, that like Jacob in Genesis, each confirmand will wrestle with the past, present and future hearing our still speaking God while experiencing their blessings and hearing God calling them by name.

WORSHIP MUSIC – AND ALL THAT JAZZ!!

The Music Committee and I are excited to announce our next event of the 2011-2012 Artist Series. **Willie Sordillo and his three-piece ensemble** will return on **Sunday, November 13 at 10 a.m.** to lead **jazz worship** – back by the request of many of you! With four UCC ministers, Willie co-founded a creative worship service called OpenSpirit, which offers to churches in Massachusetts the opportunity to celebrate faith and community through the idiom of jazz. A songwriter, jazz musician, teacher, and composer, Willie also serves as music coordinator for Thursday evening jazz worship at Old South Church in Boston. We hope you will all be present to share in the inspiration and joy of Willie Sordillo's music for this special Sunday worship service.

HERE'S YOUR INVITATION

(3 verses, to be sung to the tune *Christmas Is Coming, the Goose Is Getting Fat*)

Christmas is coming, and so is Thanksgiving,
Off'ring opportunities for you to sing.

If your voice is low or medium or even a bit higher,
We have a place just for you in the Chancel Choir!

Join us this December, sing once or twice or thrice,
To celebrate God's gift, the birth of Jesus Christ.
If you like it, we'll be happy if you would like to stay
And continue singing with us well past New Year's Day.

Here's your invitation, please come and join the fun
At 7:30 each Thursday for the season.
You needn't read the music, just come and sing along –
For those who love to sing should always find a song.

ALL ARE WELCOME

All are welcome, cont.

All are invited and welcome throughout the year in each of our choirs, so don't hesitate to join us whenever the timing is good for you. Below are our choirs and rehearsal times. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to e-mail me at candk144@gis.net.

The New Kids on the Rock – Grades K through 2. Wednesdays, 4:30 to 5:30.

The Good News Choir – Grades 3 through 8. Thursdays, 4:30 to 5:30.

The Dreamcatchers – treble voices, Grades 9 through 12. Rehearsal time to be announced soon!

The Chancel Choir – grade 9 through adults of all ages. Thursdays, 7:30 to 9.

All rehearsals are held in the music room, downstairs.

Kathy Gross

UPDATE ON WORK VISA APPLICATION:

Working with Immigration is a loooong process that has just become loooooonger! We have recently learned that the deadline for submission of the additional evidence requested for Ji Hye's work visa application has been extended to January! That Immigration is willing to give us this extra time is positive, but we are still far from a final decision. We ask your continued prayers and support through the days ahead, so that Ji Hye might continue among us, in the beauty and spirit of her music ministry, as a beloved member of our church family.

Thank you to all who have contributed toward the expense of the work visa application and filing costs, about \$5,500. We have received over half that amount and hope to close the gap significantly in the coming weeks. If you wish to make a contribution, please make your check payable to Maple Street Congregational Church, and write VISA APP in the memo line.

Church Growth

Church Growth will be setting up a live Nativity scene in the Memory Garden on Sat. Dec. 3 from 3 p.m.- 5 p.m. during the downtown Family Christmas Walk. We will be needing volunteers to act as Mary, Joseph, shepherds and kings. Each person will be asked to do a 1/2 hour shift and costumes will be provided. There will be sign up sheets in the Social Hall for anyone who would like to help out during this 1st annual event at MSC. We will also be serving cocoa and cookies in the Social Hall. Santa will be there to hear what is on all the good boys and girls Christmas lists.

Church Growth, Cont.

We want you---for four all new Pictorial Directory. Our last directory was in 2004 and we have lots of new faces in the congregation. Donna Eovacious, along with the help of Jeff Sauer, will be taking your pictures before and after church starting Nov. 27 and going through Jan. Please don't be left out. We need all MSC members to make the directory complete.

WORLD SERVICE NEWS AND NOTES

Mission I: is here! The World Service Committee hopes you have found a way to participate in this very special 11 day shared mission of the United Church of Christ to feed the hungry and to confront food related injustice. Living into our UCC motto, **“That They May All Be One”**, we seek to work as “I” church to make a difference locally, nationally and internationally.

Goals of **Mission I:** are to:

Collect over **1 million** items of healthy food and household items for local food banks

Gather online contributions of more than **\$111,111** for Neighbors in Need food related ministries

Write more than **11,111** letters to Congress asking the government to reform US foreign assistance in a way that more effectively benefits hungry and poor people worldwide.

Look for the **“Mission I: Tree”** in the Social Hall starting October 30th. On the tree will be special leaves with ways you can participate in **Mission I**. Pass the word on to your friends, co-workers, and neighbors - see if they can help you meet the tasks on the leaves. You can make a difference by helping others understand the issues of hungry, poverty and food related injustice and how they can get involved here in Danvers and around the world.

Other world Service News...we are looking forward to our **2nd Annual Fair Trade Advent Fair** coming up very soon! The dates of the Fair will be:

Sunday November 27 from 9:00 – 1:30 pm

Saturday December 3 from 9:00 - 1:30 pm

Sunday December 4 from 9:00 – 1:30 pm

We will again be offering handcrafts made by artisans from around the world from **SERRV**, jewelry from **Bead for Life**, Guatemalan handcrafts and textiles from **Colores del Pueblo**, and homemade crafts made by several church members to support **Re-Member** in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. We also hope to have artwork, note cards from **Ecclesia Ministries' Common Art** artists, as well as the beloved silver crosses made especially for Ecclesia Ministries. This year we will be encouraging people to log onto **Heifer International's** website to select “alternative gifts” for the holiday season. By purchasing animals through Heifer, you can help lift a family out of poverty. We encourage you to preview options online at www.heifer.org/catalog prior to the Fair. You may also purchase gifts from your own home as well!

Food Collection Sundays continue to be the **2nd Sunday of the month**, but are welcome **ANYTIME!** All food collected goes to the People to People Food Pantry in Danvers.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with any of our mission events this year or are interested in learning more about the World Service Committee, please contact Donna Mandriota or Mercy Duffill.

Youth Ministry News

The youth had a busy start to the season in October. A couple of the GLEE members helped Karen and Frank Kilty at Lifebridge serving the MSC *world famous* Meatloaf and Rice dinner! We had lots of fun.

Our Combined GNG & GLEE Groups got together to make Brownies for Faye and a few of the GLEE members went to visit her during her recovery on World Communion Sunday where we presented the brownies and took Communion together. As mentioned in another article, the combined group also made Called to Care meals to stock up our freezer. We all went to Conner's Farm to try out the Corn Maze (no... no one called 911!) and had Apple Cider and Donuts. Thanks Conner's!

November Offerings are:

G.N.G. 4th – 6th graders (recommended) will meet Tuesdays from 4:30 – 6:00

Nov. 1 Meeting
Sun., Nov. 13 Meeting
Nov. 15 Shopping for the People to People Food Pantry
Please bring \$11. Permission needed.
Nov. 29 Meeting

GLEE 7th – 12th grades (recommended) will meet on Sunday from 11:30 – 1
(unless other wise stated)

Nov. 6 Shopping for the People to People Food Pantry
Please bring \$11. Permission needed.
Sat., Nov. 12 9-3 Holly Berry Fair at MSC – Take care of the “Children’s
Room” leading Games, Face Painting and Fun
Nov. 13
Nov. 20 4 – 6 ARC Game Night!!! Meet and Pick Up at Southside Road, Danvers
Nov. 27 10:30-3 Common Cathedral – permission needed.

Youth Council

Sat., Nov. 5 5 - 7 Shop for Holly Berry Fair Basket & dinner
Nov. 6 10am Present basket in MSC Chapel for children to see.
Nov. 20 9 – 10 & 11:15 – 12 Intake for Pictorial Directory
Nov. 27 9 – 10 & 11:15 – 12 Intake for Pictorial Directory

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to speak to Elsa Marshall or a member of the Youth Ministry Team. If you haven't already, please provide us with your cell numbers and e-mails, as well as your child's (if you are comfortable with that) so that we can communicate through **texting and e-mail**. You can contact Donna Olds, our “Keeper of the Records” at Dolds@Centurybank.com. MSC has a Facebook page now so if you type in Maple Street Church and “Like” us you will be made aware of things that are happening in Youth Ministry! Also, go on our web site, maplestreetchurch.org and go to the Youth page.

Thank You to Gio's!!

The Youth Ministry Team would like to say a big "Thank You" to Gio's for extending their "2 large pizza's for \$10.99" deal from Sundays & Wednesdays to anytime for the youth of MSC. It is really appreciated!

FC/MSC Youth Council

The Youth Council, consisting of a representative from grades 9, 10, 11 and 12, along with our Youth Administrator/Chaplin and one Member at Large, met on Sunday, October 16 to discuss their vision and purpose and goals. During the meeting it was decided that they would help with the Holly Berry Fair by taking charge of a Basket for the raffle, working with each classroom in both First Church and MSC to make it. They will also man the intake table at the MSC "Yearbook for the Church" endeavor during November/December. And they are discussing the option of going to the National Youth Event at Purdue University in Indiana for their Mission Trip in July. It was decided that they would talk to all that are potentially involved before making their final decision.

Called To Care

The combined Good News Group (grades 4-6) and GLEE (grades 7-12) got together on Sunday, October 16 and made 3 different types of dinner dishes for the freezer. We made Meatloaf; Chicken Casserole and Pasta Pizza! There are @ 35 meals for 2 and anyone who needs one is welcome to help themselves. Whether you have no time to cook a meal, are not feeling well or someone wants to bring a meal to a friend who needs one, please take what you need. When we see the freezer getting empty we will make more. The Chicken and pasta dishes have been fully cooked and need re-heating and the meatloaf, which is half cooked, needs to be cooked until done. The directions are on the meals.

NOTES FROM COUNCIL:

The Church Council met in June, July, September, and in October. Highlights include:

- affirming the role of the hiring committee for the sexton to look for the best candidate for the job, regardless of church affiliation, while requesting that church members who apply be made aware of the duality of roles as a member and employee,
- affirming the Flower Committee's decision to explore alternative florists,
- affirming Lori Dupont as a temporary substitute for our beloved secretary Linda Blair as Linda undergoes and recovers from shoulder surgery,
- affirming offering Elsa Marshall, our beloved minister of faith formation, dental insurance instead of just dental reimbursement, and

new monthly expense reports from the treasurer, which detail how much money each committee has spent and what percentage of the budget has been used.

Most importantly, as we look ahead, we plan to enter a period of visioning for our congregation. In this our year themed Extravagant Welcome, we welcome you to vision with us.

Notes from Council, cont.

What is church visioning? Pastor Kevin and Elsa have already been alluding to this in their Spire notes. Council will, this year, engage in a series of conversations that examine our congregation's past (focusing on the work we have done as a congregation) and uses that information to inform us as we choose our direction for our future.

You can imagine such work may take more than a year – we think so too! That's why it's important that everyone be informed and involved. Expect updates from us, more general invitations, and possibly even specific invitations to visioning events in the future.

(As a reminder, the Council meeting minutes are posted in the social hall and offer a more complete depiction of points considered along the path to Council decisions.)

Church Council meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Reception Room

FROM THE DEACONS BENCH:

This year I am a new member of the Board of Deacons. I was Deacon of the Month for October and can say that so far it has been a very good experience. As I become familiar with the duties and responsibilities of a Deacon in our church, I see more and more that it is a very caring role, similar to that of a good neighbor or a friend. Let me share with you some of the Deacon duties and perhaps you will see why.

On Sunday mornings, ***the Deacon of the Month lovingly prepares the Sanctuary*** for your arrival. He or she turns on the lights, opens the shutters and puts out the candles and flowers. The Deacon is there to greet you at the front door with a smile and is truly happy to see you!

Deacons feed your body and soul. On the first Sunday of each month you will find the Deacons busily working in the kitchen preparing the Lord's Supper. They then have the honor of serving Communion. And yes, they also clean up too! Another important role of the Deacons is to support the pastoral staff and share in nourishing the spiritual growth of the Congregation through the various church ministries.

Deacons watch over the church family. This includes both members and those people beyond the ordinary reach of the church. Deacons are called to pray and care for the poor, the sick, the sorrowing and the stranger. During holidays, we bring small gifts and greetings from the church to those who are unable to attend worship with us. Through these visits we maintain the church's connection with these friends and let them know that they are always in the hearts of the Congregation.

To me, being a Deacon is about being committed to the church through presence and devotion and not about being wise and all knowing. Whether it is assisting with a Baptism or supporting a young adult in their Confirmation journey, a Deacon must have a willingness to pray and ponder our church mission and to guide, encourage and walk alongside one another as we discover our spiritual needs together.

Blessings,

Pam Spearing

Holly Berry Fair – November 12, 2011

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Co-Chairs – Deb Sauer and Karen Kilty

Many people have been working all summer on the Holly Berry Fair and much more help is needed to make this a successful event for our church. Please note the categories that need donations and contact the chairmen.

A sign up sheet is in the Social Hall for help needed on Friday, Nov. 11 for set up and for Nov. 12 for the Fair. PLEASE HELP

Bake Sale - Co-Chairs: Adrienne Bradstreet and Priscilla Curda – this table needs donations of seasonal breads and daily breads, your best cookie recipe, small pies and cakes, bars, etc. We will also have home baked beans and Indian pudding for sale.

Brown Bag Auction - Chair: Sheila Crotts – Theme baskets – Items are needed for baskets or a group or committee can assemble a basket. Tickets are placed in brown bag in front of each basket and the winners will be notified.

Cake Walk - Chair: Pam Spearing – Cakes are needed for this variation of musical chairs, but you get a cake when you win! Cakes are needed for this event.

Jewelry Table - Co-Chairs: Donna Eovacious and Grace Phinney – Gently used and new jewelry are needed for this table. Gently used jewelry should be in good condition.

Nana's Attic – Chair: Marj Simpson – Need bric-a-brac, decorations, dishes, small appliances, kitchen items, CD's, DVD's, frames, new toiletries, puzzles, toys desk items. Everything needs to be clean and ready to price. NO LARGE ITEMS.

SPECIAL NOTICE

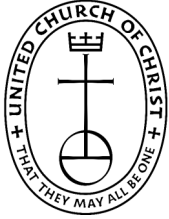
Bean Supper – Co-Chairs: Frank and Karen Kilty – Old Fashion Baked Bean Supper
Tickets will be on sale two weeks prior to event after church, and at Welcome Table. Serving starts at 5 PM.



Our prayers continue to be with families who have suffered the loss of a loved one in recent months.

A Memorial Service was held on October 4th for Andrew Chase, long-time Maple Street member.

Blessings to the family of Dylan Porter Macsata, son of Julie and Anthony Macsata and Reese Leighton Cormier, daughter of Courtney and Todd, who were Baptized on October 23.



Maple Street Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
90 Maple Street, Danvers, MA 01923
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Rev. Kevin Smith <i>Minister</i>	978-774-4510, ext. 3	revkevmsc@gmail.com
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Ms. Kathy Gross <i>Director of Music Ministry</i>	978-774-4510, ext. 5	candk144@gis.net
Ms. Ji-Hye Jung <i>Asst. Director of Music Ministry</i>	978-774-4510, ext 0	jihye87@gmail.com
Ms. Linda Blair <i>Office Administrator</i>	978-774-4510, ext. 0	info@maplestreetchurch.org

Our Worship Services are aired on Danvers Comcast Channel 99 and Verizon Channel 36,
Sunday 10:00 am and 7:00 pm (one week delay)

Our lighted steeple is an important symbol of our presence in the community. Your contributions in memory of loved ones and friends or to commemorate a special event help keep the steeple lighted. If you would like to have the steeple lighted for one or more weeks, please fill out the form below and send it with \$15 per week to the church office.

I would like the steeple lighted in memory of: _____

I would like the steeple lighted in honor of: _____

Requested date (if available) to light: _____

(signed) _____ Telephone Number: _____



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 you are welcome here!*

The Spire is a regular publication of Maple Street Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 90 Maple Street, Danvers, MA 01923.

The due date for contributions to the November issue of **The Spire** is November 15 at noon.

Fully composed items can be e-mailed to info@maplestreetchurch.org. Items may be edited for length and or delivered to the church office. Grammar.

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