

The Spire

The Newsletter of Maple Street Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
June 2010

Pastor's Page

Dear Friends,

The summer is here. In my Annual Report for last month, I described this past year as “intense”. For many of us, with the noted exception of the Search Committee and Mission Possible 2010 who we will keep in prayer, it is time for a breather. So far there is no indication of a pattern of rainy-ness that dominated last spring and well into July, so it looks like the great outdoors will be a source of renewal for our spirits! I am tentatively hoping to do some “biking visiting” around Danvers this summer, as I had planned to do last summer. Let me know if you would like a visit.

On Pentecost Sunday, May 23rd, we reflected on the **birth story** of the church of Jesus Christ. We focused on the **“fire of inspiration”** that is released in us through the movement of the Spirit. I compared the elements of inspiration to the elements of fire by looking at a visual that is used in fire education called “The Fire Triangle”. In this season of Pentecost in the summer and fall, let us continue to be open to Spirit-inspiration.



One leg of the Triangle is HEAT. For those who are followers of Christ, the HEAT comes from recalling the **passion** of Jesus for his ministry of bringing hope to the

world, which was kindled in him by the heavenly dove of his baptism. The HEAT also comes from the **promise** that Jesus made to us after his resurrection, that we also would have the Spirit kindled within us, inspiring us to continue Jesus' redemptive ministry. That promise was fulfilled in the fire of Pentecost.

The base of the triangle is FUEL. Through our spiritual practices we make our whole selves available to the call of Christ and to the inspiration of the Spirit. As the disciples were gathered for **morning prayer** on the day of Pentecost, using the Lord's Prayer as a guide, so we too mark our mornings by opening our hearts and minds to the will of God. And each Sabbath Sunday morning when we gather as a faith community, we begin our worship service with a hymn of praise followed by the Prayer of Invocation.

Finally, the other leg of the triangle is OXYGEN. Just as the disciples had no influence over the coming of the wind on Pentecost, bringing spiritual oxygen for the spiritual fire, this is the element of inspiration that is least under our control. It is the sovereign **will of God** as to when to “move” in the lives of his followers, inspiring spiritual new phases of spiritual growth.

Move among us, Spirit, and gather us together with you. Take our many selves—our lives, our loves, our ideas, our questions, our speech, our silence—and unite us as your people. Give us the gifts of perception and understanding, so that even as we dream your dreams and see your visions, we may be able to witness to your presence in our common life. Amen.

Peace - Steve

From Elsa Marshall

Mother Teresa is famous for her memorable one-liners, her short and direct statements of truth, built upon her short and direct acts of Christian mercy, those acts and pronouncements which make her a true twentieth-century saint. I love the story about a time one of her frequent newspaper interviewers was finishing up his questions to her, when he decided to ask a question meant to be practical, meant to involve us back in America enjoying our good lives. He asked her, "Given your ministry, what can we do to live out the good life?" She did not say "Go, sell all you have and work with the poor, like me." Perhaps he, and we, would have expected her to say that. But, instead, she said simply and directly, "Smile at the people you live with." The reporter was a bit surprised and he pressed the issue. "That's easy for you to say. You don't face family pressures, and the workplace." "Oh," said Mother Teresa, "I live with Jesus. Believe me, he's a hard person to live with."

This summer as we hopefully move into a time of lazier, hazier days let's stop and take time to smile not only at the people we live with, but the people we worship with, the people we meet while on the golf course, the beach, the grocery store or anywhere we find ourselves. We too "live with Jesus" as his disciples, called to love our neighbors as well as ourselves and we too can spread goodwill with a heartfelt smile while living out our good lives. I have been told my whole life that it takes fewer muscles to smile than it does to frown so Mother's Theresa's advice should be easy to follow. And the further good news about smiles is that the smile -- transmitted either consciously or subconsciously -- is viewed across cultures as a sign of friendliness, especially when greeting someone.

If you are home on Sunday mornings, don't forget that we offer a special summer program for children based upon the multiple intelligences and experiential learning. This year's program begins on June 27th. We will be Faith Walkers each week learning something different, i.e., the Parts of Worship, the Lord's Prayer, the 23d Psalm, the Ten Commandments, The Beatitudes, and Jesus' Commandment. If you and your children cannot join us on any given Sunday there will be Good News To Go bags filled with the lesson of the week for you to take with you and share together. They will contain Scripture and activities. We hope you will find these helpful.

As we continue to be in a transition time let us remember, "in my father's house are many rooms." That was what Jesus said. We find ourselves in the room called "wait." God has led us to this room. God has given us the room, tasks to complete, each other, some new companions, and God continues to say "wait here." Here we are, waiting, hoping the door will be opened a crack offering us hope. It is there. We can know it through our prayers, our care for one another, in our waiting. Many rooms. Ours is called 'wait'. It too is a good room for God has led us here, let us be grateful.

Have a blessed, relaxing, renewing, hope filled summer!

Shalom,
Elsa Marshall

A New Addition This Summer:



We will be offering families that are on the go, away or travelling, summer church school lessons all prepared and ready for pick up. A take out if you will. We are calling our program

Good News To Go! Not only will they be good to go but they will be this year's summer church school lessons in a bag. No need to call ahead. Parking is free. Please grab a brown bag filled with **Good News To Go** and while away share the lesson with your children and family. Help your children remember and experience that God is with them anywhere they go and everywhere they go.

Congratulations to This Year's Confirmands:

David Barnett
Richard Glazier
Theodore Kazan
Jacob Soper
Michael Spearing

And a big Thank You to their Mentors:

Robert McBride
Glen Thompson
David Phinney
Larry Goss
Alden Duffill

Deacon's Bench

As Deacon of the Month and one leaving the Board of Deacons, I'm glad to have this opportunity to reflect on this important ministry. Also completing terms as of our Annual Meeting are Bob Wilkinson, Linda Leonard, and Sandi Bogel. As co-chair, with Alden Duffill, I want to offer my thanks and appreciation for their contributions and service to the church. The Deacons welcome Sandra Sears, Sherrie Parr and Scott Spearing for the coming year.



Bob continues to assist in preparing the sanctuary for worship and opening the elevator each week. Linda Leonard served as liaison with the video team to get our worship back on local Cable TV. During visits with our shut-ins, several of us heard concerns that they were not able to participate in worship through the Cable broadcast. We are happy to announce that has been resolved and our thanks to Linda as well as Tom Manuel who heads up the video team and to Jen Napolitano who has graciously offered to do the editing and preparation of the broadcast. Sandi has, in addition to her other Deacon duties, been an integral part of the worship education for the kindergarten class. All of these special ministries above and beyond the Deacon's many responsibilities are representative of the many gifts of time and talent blessing Maple St Church.

We were recently made aware that in the by-laws it is a Deacon responsibility to appoint delegates to the Essex Association and Mass Conference United Church of Christ. It has been a personal concern of mine that Maple St. Church has not had these regular and consistent delegates to provide contact with the wider church and has not always been represented. This could be any number of people from 2-4. The same people could serve as delegates to both groups or we could have separate delegates to each group. I have written a description of the duties for delegates and would be happy to share it with anyone interested in learning more about serving in these positions. I am happy to partner with, mentor, train, and accompany our lay delegation.

The Deacons have a very important role in the life of the church, and many hands make light work. The Board is still short members, so if you feel God

directing you toward serving in this way please make that known. It has been a privilege for me to serve you as a Deacon over the last 3 years.

Peace and Blessings – Linda Reilly

Mission Possible 2010 – A Learning and Serving Experience



Twenty three youth and adults from Maple Street Church and First Church will be traveling from July 2nd until the 10th to visit RE-MEMBER which is an independent non-profit organization on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. RE-MEMBER seeks to improve the quality of reservation life through relationships, shared resources and volunteer services. While there we will encounter the beauty and culture of the Oglala Lakota Nation while offering us a chance to work on the new home building projects across Pine Ridge with the Lakota people. We will be immersed in Lakota culture learning about the people we will be working with and meeting the people who we are serving as we understand their lives and their customs. More than 5,000 homes are needed of rehabilitation and/or renovation. Going to Pine Ridge will be a life changing experience. We hope our mission there will also have some positive impact on the lives of the Lakota people we serve as well. The group going will be commissioned into ministry during worship on **June 27th**. Please join us, offer us your prayers to travel with us, and your blessings.

Stewardship

As we begin the new church year, I am pleased to introduce the newest members of our Stewardship Committee: Art Johnson, Peggy Coyne, Sharon Goss, and Peter Hess. They join our other sitting members, Steve Horn, Lynn Horn, and Tammy Marini. I will act as the committee chair this year.

If you attended the church's annual meeting on May 16, you know that our budget for FY10-11 presents several challenges. Pledges represent 48% of our income, and are critical to keeping the budget balanced. The Trustees set a target pledge income of \$170,000, but our current forecast shows we will fall approximately \$20,000 short of that target. Our committee will explore several ways to raise our pledged support to the church, and we will strive to keep the congregation informed of our progress to that goal.

– Jeff Crum

ALL CHURCH LOBSTER PICNIC

Sunday, September 5, 2010

Endicott Park, Danvers MA

RSVP to church office by August 15!

Our own Lobsterman Robert Donovan will provide the Lobsters

Lobsters.....\$8.00 each

Hamburgers/Hotdogs.....\$5.00 each

All other food (salads, chips, drinks etc.) will be provided by the Church Growth Committee

Family Name _____

Number of Lobsters _____

Number of Hamburgers _____

Number of Hotdogs _____

Please send your check to the church office made out to Maple Street Church with summer picnic written on the memo line.

Tear out the above and include it with your check.

We have reserved area I at Endicott Park. There will be games and fun for all.



On Memorial Day weekend Sunday, May 30th, we will celebrate the baptism of Logan Edward Travers, born 10/5/08, and Jalin Alexander Travers, born 4/20/10, son and daughter of Amy Travers and Jared Hebert.

On June 18th, we will celebrate with joy the wedding of Courtney Bartnicki and Todd Cormier. Courtney and Todd have been worshipping with us this spring. Todd grew up in the Pilgrim Congregational Church in Leominster, MA. And on June 20, we will celebrate with joy the wedding of Bruce Billingham and Valerie Nelson. Many blessings to both couples.

The first recipients of the Rev. Charles N. Gross Scholarship on Sunday, May 23rd, were Megan McIlroy who will be attending Stonehill College, and Mariah Prescott who will be attending Smith College. The presentation was made by Church Moderator, Bruce Billingham, and retired Senior Minister of Maple Street Church, Rev. Charles N. Gross.

With sadness we note the passing of Don Thomas, Jr., the son of Don and Eileen Thomas. Our prayers will continue for the Thomas family in the upcoming weeks and months.

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Our Graduating Seniors:

Sara Bates

Kevin Davis

Rachel Hicks

Megan McIlroy

Heather McLeod

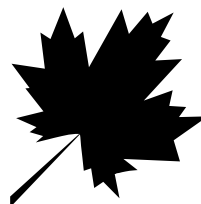
Dylan Supino

Eric West

Gavin Winchell

Mariah Prescott

Ryan Shallow



Maple Eves

The June meeting of Maple Eves will be "The End of the Year Get Together" picnic dinner on Wednesday June 9th at 6:00 PM at the home of Grace Phinney at 22 Wadsworth St. The picnic will take place, "rain or shine". The hostesses for evening are the members of the Executive Board of Maple Eves. The hostesses will be providing everything for the picnic. Come, relax and enjoy time with friends this final evening of our year. If you are not on the Maple Eves call list and would like to attend, please call Marge Hathaway at 978-774-5848. All are welcome to attend.

MEMORY GARDEN Maple Street Church

I'm sure all of you at one time or another strolled through our Memory Garden in front of the church, looked at the beautiful plants and flowering shrubs, walked on the stone walkway and sat on the benches. But did you ever wonder how it all started?

About seven years ago a small group of volunteers had a vision of a colorful, welcoming garden leading up to the chapel door as well as a place for outdoor fellowship instead of just the plain walkway and lawn. As plans were made and discussed as to size and structure, it became clear that this area could be meaningful for our church as a Memory Garden. And so it is today.

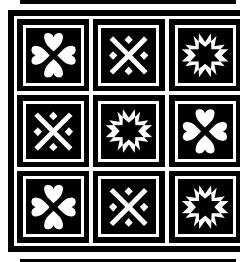
A garden, as you know, evolves in many stages and first, a general plan is outlined. We were very fortunate to have Josh Clark, a Landscape Architect, design the hardscape, (stone patio/benches) and base plants (trees and shrubs) that would enhance the location. When this was accomplished, the construction and planting began. The work of a garden does not end there, of course. Each spring the garden is evaluated as to what survived the winter, which plants need to be replaced, and annuals are planted. All summer as the plants grow and blossom, volunteers share the maintenance of watering, raking, weeding, and fertilizing.

What makes our Memory Garden most meaningful are the names listed on the back of the church sign, in whose memory the garden is dedicated to. After an initial gift, many more church members and friends donated funds for the garden's upkeep in memory of a loved one. Their names have been added to the sign, and it will be updated every 5 years.

The funds to maintain this garden do not come from the church budget, but from the many individuals who have made donations in memory of loved ones, as well as the garden lovers who realize what an asset this Memory Garden is to our church as well as to the beauty of our community.

If you would like to give a donation, please make your check out to "Maple Street Church" with "Memory Garden" in the memo line.

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL



CONGRATULATIONS to the Lindsey Family, who won the Heifer Quilt. And thanks to all who generously donated money so that Heifer can buy animals. \$300.00 was raised which could buy 2 sheep.

Heifer's mission is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the earth. With gifts of livestock and training, Heifer helps families improve their nutrition and generate income in sustainable ways. They refer to the animals as "living loans" because in exchange for their livestock and training, families agree to give one of its animal's offspring to another family in need.

Thank you again,
June Baser



Christian Education Committee

New Name for Sunday School

Well, the votes are in and have been tallied—and the winner is "**Faith Walkers**".

The committee would like to thank all those who voted. Look for our new name as we start out our new year on Rally Day, September 12th

Also, the results of our recent survey regarding the new classroom arrangement are back, and they were positive and informative. Thanks to those who took the time to participate.

Our theme for the 2010-2011 church year is **HOPE**. This will be an appropriate theme as we anticipate our search and call of a settled Pastor and look forward to an exciting new time in our Church.

LEADERSHIP RETREAT —SEPTEMBER 17-18 — SAVE THE DATES!

This year's Leadership Retreat will be held again at the Danvers Senior Center on September 17-18, 2010. This retreat is for all committee members and any other interested persons.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministry

The DanversCares project, Healthy Congregation - Healthy Bodies; Healthy Minds; Healthy Living! is now complete. The youth had a showing for their families on May 23 and our church family had a chance to see it on May 30. We will display it again in the fall as it was such a great project. The youth *as well as* the leaders learned a lot. We will spend some time next year going over topics that the youth are interested in or have questions about.

MP2010 - Re-Member

The only thing that needs completing now is the MP2010 (Mission Possible)... Re-Member trip coming up. We are leaving on Friday, July 2, and returning on Saturday, July 10. As always we, the participants, would like you to think about us in your prayers at 9:00am every day as we will be thinking about you when we take our time of silent prayer. I think that what we are going to experience is just starting to sink in, but will be a long time of debriefing once we return before we finally "get it".

There are a couple of mandatory meetings for Parents **and** Participants:

Sunday, June 13 Meet in the MSC Social Hall (plenty of parking in the rear of the church and down stairs) at 11:30 a.m. Pizza will be served for \$1.00/slice. Soda & drinks will be available as well. We are going to be meeting the other participants and their leaders so everyone is comfortable. Please e-mail Elsa at elsa@maplestreetchurch.org with a slice count for your party. We are going to meet everyone else going on the trip (there are 75 of us all together).

Sunday, June 27th is Dedication Sunday. We will sit in the Sanctuary with our parents (or with your friends - however you want) and we will be called forward to have the congregation dedicate us into Mission and Service. Immediately following worship there will be a final parent/participant meeting in the Reception Room. If there are any questions, or you feel that you are missing something, please feel free to contact Elsa.

World Service Notes



The church year may be drawing to a close, but the World Service Committee continues to reach out to the needs of the local community as well as to areas around the world.

The monthly food collections will continue on the second Sunday of the month during the summer. The children are on school vacation, and they are in need of juice, cereal, peanut butter and jelly, and good things for snacks.

With the apt help of the Sisterhood, we continued to support the dinners at Lifebridge in Salem. We have received letters from the three children we support through Global Ministries, thanking us for our support. Look for their letters on the World Service bulletin board.

We have made donations to HAWC, Operation Troop Support, Inn Between, and Haitian Relief. Local families in need have also received our help as well as the Welcome Table.

Have a wonderful summer, and don't forget the doors of the church are still open every Sunday.

Massachusetts Conference
United Church of Christ
211th ANNUAL MEETING
June 19, 2010
DCU Center
Worcester, Massachusetts

The theme of this year's Annual Meeting, "Provoke One Another...to Love and Good Deeds," encourages our deep commitment to the community of the United Church of Christ. As always, and more importantly in these challenging times, we need one another to do the work of Jesus in the world.

On **October 2, 2010** in Franklin, MA, and on **March 5, 2011**, in Ludlow, MA, hundreds of delegates, pastors, and church leaders from all over the Conference will gather for our first two **SUPER SATURDAYS** - full days of workshops and networking around best practices for church leaders.

THE WELCOME TABLE



What started as a possibility in February 2009 has become a reality at Maple Street Church.

Our first dinner began with 11 guests on January 28, 2010. Since then, many groups such as Maple Street Church, the Polish Club, St. Mary's of the Annunciation Church, Holy Trinity United Methodist Church, Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church, Calvary Episcopal Church, First Church, Cranney Home Services, Danvers Rotary, Job Seekers Networking Group, Danvers Council on Aging, St. Richard's Church, and Danvers Kiwanis have sponsored dinners. We are now up to 51 guests, and the dinners have been well received throughout the community. To date, The Welcome Table has served 514 dinners and more than 189 volunteers.

A big "thank you" to this church, which has supported us fully. Many thanks go out to Eunice Knowlton, Marian Vallette, and Frank and Karen Kilty for cooking for our Maple Street dinners. Also to World Service for their donation allowing Maple Street to sponsor dinners.

We owe much appreciation and gratitude to Paul and Donna Eovacious, who have been with us faithfully since we began warmly greeting our guests, collecting money and always helping with cleanup.

We also want to offer many thanks to Elsa Marshall, Rev. Stephen Alspach, and Cheryl Ward, who have been behind this ministry since the beginning, and we couldn't have done it without them.

Maple Street Church is making a difference in our community, through the help of our neighbors and friends, One Dinner at a Time.

Maple Street is doing a meal on June 3. Anyone who would like to help out on this, please let us know. You may contact us through e-mail at papapepper@juno.com or 978-774-4611.

Paul & Donna Pepper

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: _____

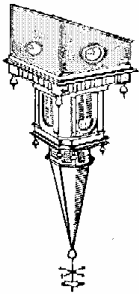
I would like the steeple lighted in honor of: _____

(signed) _____



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 Maple Street Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
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The due date for contributions to the August issue of **The Spire** is July 18 at noon.
 Fully composed items can be e-mailed to info@maplestreetchurch.org, or delivered to the church office. Items may be edited for length and grammar.