



The Spire

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

Pastor's Page

**Blest be the tie that binds,
The sharing of a common life is like to that above
Before our God we come and share our ardent
prayers,
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts
and our cares.**

Dear Friends,

This season of Lent we are seeking to grow in our fellowship ties with God and with one another by **focusing on our Church Covenant**. The Covenant tells us how we are "tied together" with God and one another at Maple Street Church. See below for a short version of the covenant.

We will be gathering in **cottage meetings** to reflect on the many ways we live out our Covenant at Maple Street Church and to consider the call of the Covenant "to support our church financially". The meetings will take place on Sundays, **beginning this Sunday February 28th**, after church for forty-five minutes. Our time of consideration of this call will culminate with **Stewardship Sunday on March 21**. See the articles by Stewardship for more details.

We gathered on the first Sunday of Lent for an **Intergenerational Prayer Workshop** in response to the call of our Covenant "to support our church with our prayers" and to fulfill our pledge to the Search Committee to "pray for you, and offer our support and words of encouragement throughout this time".

Those who came to the workshop received prayer resources, experienced "embodiment prayer", learned a model for morning and evening prayer based on the Lord's Prayer, and were challenged to practice prayer during Lent.

During the week of March 21, we will gather again for sharing and supporting one another in prayer practices. There will be **three "Prayer Gatherings"**. One will be another opportunity for learning about "embodiment prayer". On **Tuesday night, March 23rd**, we will gather at our church at 6:15 to prepare for walking the prayer labyrinth in West Medford, which begins at 7:30. On **Wednesday, March 24th** we will gather to discuss morning and evening prayer, either at 10:00 a.m., and at 7:00 p.m., Choose whichever time frame works best for you. You do not need to have come to the Intergenerational Prayer Workshop to attend and benefit from these prayer gatherings.

The culmination of Lent is **Holy Week, March 28 – April 3**. We will gather for a night of sacred fellowship ties on **Maundy Thursday, April 1**, with a Service of Holy Communion and Tenebrae. On Good Friday, April 2, we will gather for worship with the other churches in Danvers at noontime at Trinity United Methodist Church. Then, we will be ready to celebrate the joy and resurrection hope of **Easter on Sunday, April 4th**! There will be two services, at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. The 9:00 service will be family-oriented. There will not be Holy Communion on Easter Sunday.

**As the people of Maple Street Church,
we respond to God's love as revealed in Jesus Christ,
by uniting in Christian fellowship that:
is guided by the Scriptures,
gathers for the public worship of God and the
Sacraments,
and seeks to advance the kingdom of God.
We are responsible for upholding its By-Laws
and supporting it by: financial giving, our presence at
worship,
our talents, our prayers, and living together in love.**

Peace - Steve

From Elsa Marshall

Meyers Lecture Series on March 7th at 4PM.

The Rev. Bert Marshall, Biblical Storyteller is going to share the Gospel of Mark. A light Lenten supper will follow in the social hall. Sign-up sheet for the supper is in the social hall. Read the review of this extraordinary opportunity to encounter Scripture and these great stories of our faith ---

“To hear Bert Marshall proclaim the entire Gospel of Mark from start to finish is to partake of a sacramental experience, something that lifts us out of ourselves and links us to God’s heart. Those of us who were present on December 14th at the Haydenville UCC witnessed an incredible event . . . I had to hold Alice Pannoni by the arm and help her out of the sanctuary as her legs didn’t move very well. She kept murmuring, “I’ve never heard anything so wonderful in all my life! Never!” Her words echoed the sentiments of most of us in the sanctuary that evening . . . This tiny report hardly begins to encompass what it was like to hear the words of Mark’s Gospel proclaimed in such a direct and powerful way. I suspect that for many of us, we will never quite be the same again.” - Ann Turner, Children’s book author and speaker

Barbara Brown Taylor says, “The whole purpose of the Bible, it seems to me, is to convince people to set the written word down in order to become living words in the world for God’s sake. For me, this willing conversion of ink back to blood is the full substance of faith.” Come experience the Gospel of Mark in the oral tradition. May it come alive in your life through this telling. In Jesus, God came to live among us and to show us God’s way. By God’s Spirit we continue to be led and empowered to follow that way. Listen for the Spirit’s whisper in your spirit. Watch for the Spirit’s coming in the quiet moments.

Don’t forget that S.M.Y.L. (SENIOR MENTORS AND YOUTH LEADERS) are making meals for anyone who needs one. The meals are available for delivery or pick up in the freezer in the church kitchen. If you would like a meal please contact either Pastor Steve, Elsa Marshall, Alden Duffill, or Linda Reilly (chairs of Deacons). Kids R Called to Care 2!

The church school is again participating in creating Easter baskets for those on the Deacon’s visitation list. Be sure to have your youth and children remember to bring their weekly additions to the baskets. The baskets are delivered on Palm Sunday by the Deacons.

Did you know that the Church ministerial staff is praying daily for both the Stewardship Committee and the Search Committee? Join us in this faith practice during Lent as part of our common life together. Blest be the tie that binds.

..... Shalom - Elsa Marshall

COTTAGE MEETINGS

Beginning February 28, the Stewardship Committee will host a series of after-church Cottage Meetings. The meetings will last for 45 minutes, and child care will be provided. We will start out in the chapel at 11:30 for a power point presentation of the many ways we live out our Covenant at Maple Street Church. Then we will break into two small groups for fellowship and a discussion of the call of the second paragraph of our Covenant “to support our church financially.” We will distribute pledge cards for 2010-11 along with a brochure called *The Portrait of a Biblical Giver*. The brochure explains the six key values for growing in our fellowship ties with God and with one another through stewardship. Portions of this have appeared in the Spire in recent months.

- **On February 28** those with last names **A thru G** are invited to the cottage meetings
- **On March 7** those with last names **H thru O** are invited
- **On March 14** those with last names **P thru Z** are invited.

If you cannot attend on your designated Sunday, you are welcome to switch to another Sunday.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

“Babyland” as you all know has a new name “Kids Corner” and guess what – it is now located where the 3rd Grade class used to be and the 3rd Grade class is now located where “Babyland” used to be.



On Sunday, February 21st, Maple Street Church had a Lenten Prayer Event which ran from 4-6 PM and was followed by a “Bread and Soup Meal”. The meal was put on by the Mission Possible 2010 leaders and all donations went to that leadership team to help them in funding their trip to the Oglala Lakota people on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, which will be occurring in July 2010. There were 2 workshops held and a good time was had by all. The workshops offered insight and learning regarding the subject of prayer and meditation. There were also some craft events occurring if one did not want to attend the workshops.



Our Teacher Appreciation Breakfast on January 24th was well attended and we had a good turnout. We did manage to get teachers for all our classes for the 2nd half of the year.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature intervened and our Shrove Tuesday Supper on February 16th had to be canceled.

On February 21st, communion for the 5th graders began.

OWL (Our Whole Lives) kicked off again on February 24th for the 2nd session.

On Sunday, March 7th, Bert Marshall will be at Maple Street Church to do some biblical story telling that will be centered on the “Gospel of Mark”. This will be an all-church event that will run from 4-7 PM. There will be light Lenten supper following the story telling.

We will be renaming “Sunday School” in March and we need your help with the voting. Here will be the 3 options - help us pick one:

- JAM Time (Jesus and Me)
- Faith Walkers
- Sunday JAM



CHOIR NOTES



The **Cherub Choir** will begin rehearsals for our spring session on Sunday, March 7. We rehearse on Sundays before worship from 9 to 9:45 in the children’s choir room upstairs. The Cherub Choir will sing for worship on Palm Sunday (March 28), Mother’s Day (May 9), and Family Worship (June 13). All interested children in kindergarten through grade two are invited to join this special group. (And we have a snack each Sunday, too!)

The **Intergenerational Choir** is in preparation for our special music Sunday on April 11. It is not too late to join us! Rehearsals will be held after worship, from 11:15 to 12:15, on March 7, 14, 21, and 28, and we will have a special dress rehearsal on Saturday, April 10 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. If you love to sing and enjoy sharing music with others, this group is just right for you! All singers, grade 3 to age 93, are welcome!

Please contact me at candk144@gis.net if you would like more information about the graded choir program or our Intergenerational Choir.

Kids R Called to Care Too!

The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes have been involved with the Called to Care program this school year. We have written and sent cards to our members who cannot be with us.

To date we have visited with Ruth Barber, Virginia Merrill, Jeanne Hapgood, Connie Blomerth, Ruth Martin, and Florence Mackie. We have been in contact with Dorothy Brown, June Burwen, Gloria Evans, June Halladay, and Marilyn Bowers (who recently passed away in December).

The children have been able to ask questions and hear stories from our wonderful church members. This has been a great experience for our children, and our church members love our kids and love our/their church.

Kids can do what adults do—kids are called to care too!

On behalf of the Called to Care Ministry Team,

- Paul Pepper

DEACON'S BENCH

One of the important activities that the Deacon's undertake at the church is to visit members who would come to church, if they could. These visits are undertaken three times a year: at Christmas, St. Valentine's Day, and Easter. Such visits by the Deacons have roots within the Protestant church that go back several hundred years to Europe. The Deacons have received assistance from many others in the church in preparing for the St. Valentine's Day visits. The Nursery School students, under the leadership of Lynne Hathaway, have prepared Valentines in class the old-fashioned way, cutting out and pasting layers of different colored paper hearts together and then writing a message from the class. Karen Kilty arranged for other cards to be made available at the coffee social hour after church for members of the congregation to write messages and sign. The three women's fellowship groups: the Sandwichers, the Sisterhood, and Maple Eves, baked a wonderful variety of cookies that were placed in colorful Valentine's Day bags along with the cards and delivered to the following nineteen people.

Ruth Barber	Emeline Liacos
Connie Blomerth	Florence Mackie
Dorothy (Dot) Brown	Doris Mackenzie
June Burwen	Ruth Martin
Virginia Duffill	Ellen Merriam
Gloria Evans	Virginia Merrill
June Halladay	Lula Parsons
Jeanne Hapgood	Priscilla Pepper
Edith Harper	Josephine (Jo) Spates
Kay Langley	

If you know a church member who lives in the Danvers area and is unable to come to church because of illness, age or some other reason, please let one of the ministers or deacons know so we can include them in the visits at Easter.

Larry Goss
Deacon of the Month

FROM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

We have begun!

This is a most exciting time in the life of Maple Street Church. After more than a year and a half since the retirement of Rev. Chuck Gross we have started the process of selecting a new settled pastor. The Church Council has engaged seven very dynamic and devoted individuals to serve as the selection committee. This was a difficult process for the Council as we had to choose from many talented and committed people who would have added much to the group. After much discussion, we selected an intentionally small, compatible group that represented the diversity of the congregation.

Now their hard work will begin. They have elected Deb Sauer as the chair and are planning to meet every Monday morning for the foreseeable future. The group will meet with our Area Conference Minister, Don Remick, on February 21st to get his input into the process. The current plan is for the group to publish our call in the March 10 UCC publication. The church should begin to receive candidate profiles soon thereafter. This is as early as we could reasonably expect and should keep us on schedule to be calling our new minister in the fall of 2010.

I am grateful that these talented, committed people accepted the call and responsibility for this important task. Please keep them in your prayers. Please direct any questions, comments, or suggestions about this process to me. I will write next month to keep everyone up to date.

Peace and grace
Bruce Billingham, Moderator

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Stewardship Sunday is March 21, 2010!



Please join us for Sunday, March 21, 2010, and welcome Mr. Andrew Gustafson, Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, who will be preaching. The title of his sermon is "Getting to Macedonia. After his sermon, we will ask everyone to bring their completed pledge cards forward as an offering to God.



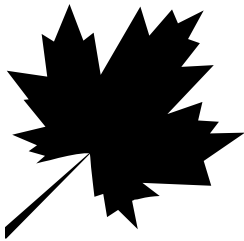
World Service

Your World Service Committee has chosen HAWC (Healing Abuse, Working for Change) as the recipient of the Lenten Coin Folders this year. Some of the services that this Gloucester-based non-profit provides are shelter, short-term counseling and children's programs. In order to save on postage the folders are being passed out at church. If you are unable to pick one up at the church, please call the office and one will be mailed out to you.

Maple Street Church will be sponsoring an American Red Cross Blood Drive on Thursday March 25 from 12 noon to 7p.m. at 99 Rosewood Drive in Danvers. Blood donations are always needed and we hope to have your support. More information about this worthy cause will be coming soon.

Don't forget that Food Collection Sunday will be March 14. Your donations are always welcome and can be left in the shopping cart in the Social Hall any time.

Maple Eves



Maple Eves Women's Group will hold it's March meeting on Wednesday March 10, 2010 at 7:00 PM in the Reception Room. The program will be a presentation by Patricia Bade on Native American Indians focusing on Native Americans of the North East. The hostesses for the evening are Priscilla Curda and Jan Moller. Dessert and coffee will be served. Devotions will be led by Norma Gates. 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.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING, MARCH 14, 2010

Each year during Lent, we take a One Great Hour of Sharing offering, which supports the refugees, relief, and development fund of the UCC. In the past, it has assisted the victims of the Tsunami in Asia; this year the fund is being used to continue to assist the people of Haiti. **After one month in Haiti, United Church of Christ donations reach 150,000+ people.**

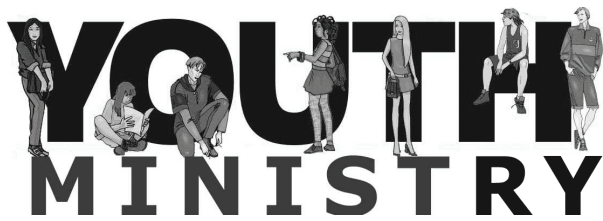


Since the earthquake hit parts of Haiti January 12, the UCC supported ACT Alliance has assisted more than 150,000 people. The majority of people are assisted with ongoing support such as water, sanitation, shelter or regular food supplies/meals. Others have received relief items such as cash, family kits or hygiene sets. Others have benefited from medical assistance and supplies to health clinics. **Our special collection for Haiti, as of February 7, totaled \$4,336.** For more information, visit www.ucc.org/disaster/haiti/.

The Sisterhood

Our next gathering will be on Monday March 15th at 7:00. Lee Anne Pellergini, Yoga Instructor will be joining us for an evening of Introduction to Gentle Yoga. Yoga is an amazing process of gentle stretches which benefits include stress reduction, increase energy, helps with sleeplessness and assists in easing aches and pains when done regularly. The cost will be \$10.00/person. Please contact Karen at k.kilty@verizon.net or 978-777-7785 to RSVP. The Sisterhood meets on the third Monday of the month.





YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministry News

Jesus asked, "Peter, do you love me?"... then "Feed my Sheep". Jesus went on to ask this twice more and twice more Jesus told Peter to "Feed my Sheep." I feel as though the Youth lived that command. As you may have heard, in the world wide "Souper Bowl of Caring" collection our church families, First church and MSC, donated total of \$341.61 to the People to People Food Pantry and as of 2/22/2010 we have joined 8,925 other groups in donating a grand total of \$8,006,491.00 to worthy causes all around the world, as stated on their web site. It just goes to prove that all it takes is one group/church at a time and look what we accomplish as a whole! We did as Jesus taught us, his young disciples of faith and action, on that day! Thanks again to all who donated to our annual project.

We had a great Lock-In during the vacation in which we wrote the prayers that were offered up on Youth Sunday, Feb. 28th. Thank you to all who brought in white sox and snacks so that we could have our mission project after the service.

Youth Group

Sun., March 7, 4 - 7 **Entire Family Event!!!**

Youth, bring your family, and don't miss Bert Marshall, a wonderful Biblical Storyteller who will bring the Gospel of Mark to life in front of our eyes. We will end with a light Lenten Supper.

Sun., March 14, 4 - 6 **Arc Game Night**

We will be joined by the S.M.Y.L. group playing BINGO with our guests. Please meet us and get picked at 6 Southside Road (right off of Centre Street near the highway). Dues are \$1.00.

Sun., March 21 **No Youth Group** - Leadership Team attending classes.

Sun., March 28, 4 - 6 **Star Singers**

Once again we will support Mrs. Gross and the choir we see coming and going every Sunday during Youth Group.

Friday Night Flicks

Dues \$1.00 Parents, please come in and sign in your youth.

Fri., March 5, 6 - 8 Bridge to Tarabithia

Fri., March 19, 6 - 8 Up!

Saturday Night Flicks

Dues \$1.00

A special time for 3rd and 4th graders. Your friends are also welcome, so bring them too! We serve popcorn and have a blast. Parents, please come in and sign in your youth.

Sat., March 13 **Astroboy**

S.M.Y.L.

Sun., March 7, 4 - 7 **Entire Family Event!!!**

Don't miss Bert Marshall, a wonderful Biblical Storyteller who will bring the Gospel of Mark to life in front of our eyes. We will end with a light Lenten Supper. This will be a great time so please come!

Sun., March 14, 4 - 6 **Arc Game Night**

We will be Mentoring our Youth Group while playing BINGO with our guests. Please meet us at and get picked from 6 Southside Road (right off of Centre Street near the highway). Dues are \$1.00.

Sun., March 28, 4 - 6 **Star Singers**

Once again we will support Mrs. Gross and the Star Singers Choir. Join us for some wonderful music.

MP2010: Re-Member

Sun., March 28, 6 - 8:30 The trip attendees will meet in the Reception Room and get familiar with the Ogala people of the Lakota Nation, as well as with each other!

The third installment of \$150.00 is due 3/15/10. You can mail it to Maple Street Church, 90 Maples St., Danvers, Attn: Donna Olds with MP2010 in the memo line, or, of course, give it to Elsa or Donna personally. Again, if finances are a problem, please contact Elsa Marshall at 978-774-4510.

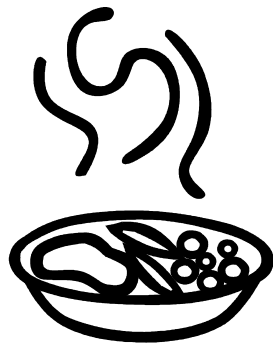
Please visit our website at

www.maplestreetchurch.org Click "Youth Ministry" on right, then "Youth Group Specific" Web site.

There are several tabs with lots of information that is updated regularly. Also, our pictures are updated constantly thanks to Dick!! If there is a cancellation due to weather please visit the MSC calendar found as a link on the cover page.

Salem Mission

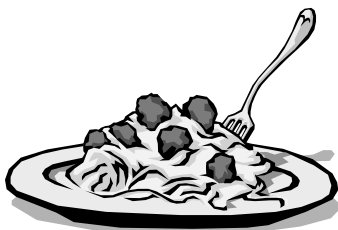
We are in need of volunteers for the upcoming months to serve meals at the Salem Mission. It is a wonderful opportunity to serve, and a great way to get to know really special people of our church family. We serve anywhere from 60-90 grateful people, it is a true blessing to serve but there is so much that we receive in return. You can plan to gather at the mission around 5:00 and dinner is served at 6:30.



We have committed to the second Saturday of the month, March 13, April 10 and May 8. Please check your calendars.

Thank you to Pam and Scott Spearing, Sherie and Warren Parr, Lee Ann and Jim Donovan, Peggy Coyne, Marge Hardwick, and Sheila and Dick Crofts for serving in past months. It has been a joy to serve along side of all of you.

Contact Karen Kilty k.kilty@verizon.net or 978-777-7785 or sign up in the social hall.



WELCOME TABLE UPDATE



We have had four Thursday Night Dinners to date. Things have gone well. We are seeing an increase each week of those attending. Maple Street, Polish Club, St. Mary's, Holy Trinity, United Methodist, and the Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church have all hosted a dinner (more to follow).

Thanks to you all for your support and to all those who have helped and assisted so far.

Questions and thoughts are always welcome. Please contact Paul Pepper at 978-774-4611 or at papapepper@juno.com.

Maple Street Church is making a difference, one dinner at a time!



From the Trustees

I want to thank and congratulate Tom Manuel for his successful negotiations with Sprint on upgrades to their cell phone antenna system in the Steeple. Tom has gotten Sprint to agree to repaint the steeple and repair some existing water damage from previous leaks. They will also be installing some Plexiglas shields on the interior of the steeple to prevent wind blown rain from entering the steeple (the source of the previous water problems.) Thanks to Tom's great work, the Church will be receiving some additional income from Sprint and will get the steeple painted. The work is slated to begin shortly after Easter.

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: _____

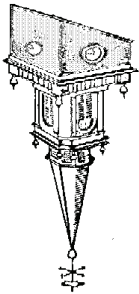
I would like the steeple lighted in honor of: _____

(signed) _____



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 Maple Street Congregational Church
 United Church of Christ
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The 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 March issue of **The Spire** is March 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.