



in Spire

The Newsletter of Maple Street Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

December 2015/January 2016



Pastor Kevin's Corner

Lord, give us the grace to be counted among your "little flock." You often said to your disciples, "Be not afraid." May your message sink into our hearts and offer us merciful consolation and joyful assurances of your unending care and concern. Amen.

*From "Advent and Christmas:
Wisdom from Henri J. Nouwen," p. 49*

We Christians posit that one way God came to us was in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who later became known as Jesus, The Christ, or Messiah. Imagine, if you will, the poorest person on the face of the earth who had known their share of both joy and tragedy in their life, but mostly hard times. Then imagine that you loved this person so much that you arranged to trade places with them, in fact to become that person! This meant that you would give up whatever power you had, whatever wealth you possessed, whatever peace and



*Adoration of the Shepherds
by Francois Boucher*

control over your own life that you owned. We Christians believe that is exactly what God did.

My friends, that is the most profound love there is and ever was! And this is what we celebrate at Christmas. We are not celebrating our iPhones or Amazon gifts that arrive from family and friends; we are not celebrating highly decorated evergreen trees and

funny guys running around in St. Nicholas' costumes. Those are just the human accouterments that down through our collective human history we have overlaid on the simple, yet most powerful message of the Christian faith—that *God was in Jesus and Jesus is in us*. As you enjoy and relish the secular images and events surrounding this Christmas season take time every day to remember, *God was in Jesus and Jesus is in us*. And, let us not forget, especially in this time when some religious fundamentalists have become

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terrorists in order to attempt to frighten us into submission to thinking that God is vengeful and violent, that the one, true God, worshipped by Christians, Jews, and Muslims alike is a God that is of ultimate love, grace, and mercy. In the face of all that is wrong with the world, *be not afraid*. And, remember, *Jesus does his best work within and through you!*

**Amen and Merry Christmas,
--Rev Kev**

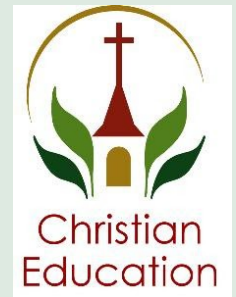


The **World Service Committee** sends it's thanks for the generous contributions of food that were brought to the Thanksgiving Ingathering. We would also like to give a shout out to Lorne Hersey and his team for transporting the many bags of groceries to the food pantry!

The 5-7th grade students are also supporting the People to People food pantry by selecting them as the recipients of this years Mission Muffin project. They are leading the program and mentoring the younger students. To date they have raised over \$100! You can track their progress on the 'mission' section of the bulletin board in the social hall. Great job kids! We are proud of your mission!



Exciting News from Christian Education



The Christmas Pageant is coming, The Christmas Pageant is coming! Sunday, December 13th we will be (and I did say we) participating in this year's version of the Christmas Story. Prior to church we will be gathering church members of all ages, shapes and sizes to dress as Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, Kings, Angels and all sorts of animals to visualize the story of the birth of Jesus to the rest of the Congregation! A good time will be had by all.

After church we will be in the Social Hall decorating Gingerbread people made by



Karen Kilty and the High School Class. (Heard it through the church grapevine that Karen has a killer recipe for gingerbread, but

don't worry--Lynne and I won't tell them who I heard it from!

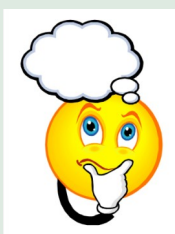
On Sunday, December 27th and January 17th we will celebrate the holiday season with a one-room schoolhouse in the Social Hall for all grades. We will be doing crafts, telling a Biblical story and creating a fun snack, so kids don't miss this fun event. All youth are welcome and the older youth will be mentoring the kids! As always, the Christian Education Committee wishes the entire Congregation a Happy, Healthy and safe Holiday Season.



The Deacons' Bench

During the October Deacons' meeting, it was brought up that this past summer a number of parishioners suggested that a time change of the summer church services might be a convenient adjustment to our summer schedule. Currently summer services are in the chapel from 10AM to 11AM, just as they are in the Sanctuary during the rest of the year. It was suggested that if the services were moved **from 10AM to 9AM**, it would give everyone more time for summer activities later in the day. In addition to the suggestions about the schedule, there was also interest expressed in having more summer services outside on the church grounds when the weather is nice.

If anyone has any thoughts regarding these two suggestions, would you please contact a Deacon and let them know your ideas.



As always, please let the Deacons know if there is anything we can do to improve your worship experience during services.

Thank you.

First Sundays

December 6 and January 3

Our next First Sunday service, *Our Fears and Our Dreaming*, will be held on December 6th. The New Kids on the Rock will present the morning message, which also features a few guest participants from the congregation. The message is one of the prophet Zechariah and of his admonishment not to fear but to rejoice and be glad. It is also one of stars, of the star of Bethlehem that shines our way through these Advent days and reminds us to keep faith, hope, and love as we await the coming of the Christ Child.

Remember our *first* First Sunday?
"Gather Us In"--the story of Jesus' making



fishers of men--come and follow Me.

Our First Sunday service on January 3rd is still in the planning stages at this write. The theme is *Called to Be Light*. The morning message will focus on how our light can affect and change the world for the better.

Advent and Christmas at Maple Street Church

www.maplestreetchurch.org

Worship is every Sunday morning at 10 am

Sunday, November 29: **FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

Bible Study After Worship

Saturday, December 5, 2:30 pm: **LIVING NATIVITY,**

Cocoa, Cookies and Photos

Sunday, December 6: **“FIRST SUNDAY,”**

COMMUNION SERVICE

Bible Study After Worship

Sunday, December 13: **A CHRISTMAS PAGEANT for all ages
(come at 9:15--choose your part!)**

Bible Study After Worship

Sunday, December 20: **SPECIAL CHRISTMAS**

MUSIC WORSHIP SERVICE,

Greeting of the Sanctuary, Christmas Fund Offering

Bible Study After Worship

December 24: **Christmas Eve**

FAMILY SERVICE, ALL AGES at 5 pm

11 pm LESSONS, CAROLS AND CANDLE LIGHTING

December 25: **Christmas Day!**

No services: Family Time!

JOIN US IN WORSHIP AND HAVE A RICH AND FULL ADVENT
AS WE PREPARE FOR OUR **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS!**

Friday, December 25, Church Offices closed for the Holiday

Friday, January 1, Church Offices closed for the Holiday

LIVING NATIVITY DECEMBER 5

**NEEDED: SHEPHERDS, WISEMEN,
KINGS, ANGELS**



A reminder that the Living Nativity is on again this year in conjunction with the Downtown Holiday Festival on **December 5**. We will have our **Living Nativity** on the front lawn of the church from 2:45-4:30 pm. Those participating in the Living Nativity will be asked to be in the enclosure for 40 minutes. Many people have already signed up, but more are needed.

Everyone who participated last year enjoyed the unique experience very much. Kings, Shepherds, Wisemen, Angels and Shepherd boys and girls are all needed to make this successful.

Please sign up on the sign-up sheet in the social hall after worship.

Any questions, please speak with or call Priscilla Curda, 978-777-0793.

The **Maple Eves Women's Group** wants to say a big "THANKS" to all who donated white cotton socks to our "Let's Warm Their Feet" yearly fall collection. We donated 372 pair of socks to the men and women at Life Bridge in Salem, Mass!



Maple Eves Annual

COOKIE WALK FUNDRAISER

December 20th after church
at 11:00AM in the Social Hall

If you need or just want cookies for Christmas but don't have time to bake all those fancy cookies, here is your solution. Come and pick up a bag full of the homemade cookies of your choice.

These cookies are lovingly made by the Cookie Bakers of Maple Eves for your gifting or just for eating yourself. We love to bake cookies-You love to eat and gift cookies. What a perfect combination!

See you in the Social Hall on **December 20th at 11:00 AM** for the Christmas Cookie Walk.

Brought to you by
the Cookie Bakers of Maple Eves





**MAPLE EVES
EARLY WINTER
MEETINGS
DECEMBER 9 and
JANUARY 13**

'Tis The Season

Our annual December meeting will be held on Wednesday, **DECEMBER 9, 2015**, in the **Social Hall at 7:00 pm** and we will be entertained by the wonderful *Danvers High School Chamber Singers* with a holiday music program. They are always a delight to hear, so be sure to come and bring a friend if you would like. Phyllis Boyd, Beverly Hayward and Donna Graves will host and Eileen Russell will lead devotions. Dessert and coffee will be served.

Bring in the New Year at our **Wednesday, January 13, 2016**, meeting in the **Social Hall at 7:00 PM**. This meeting is not to be missed! It is our annual **Yankee Swap Re-gift** and is always such fun! Wrap up that “not just right for you gift” and help it find a new home. The hostesses for the evening are Maddie Berube and Eileen Thomas. Peggy Coyne will lead devotions. Coffee and dessert will be served.



If you are not on the Maple Eves call list but would like to join us for one or both of our meetings, please call Marge Hathaway at 978-774-5848. All are welcome to join in these celebrations of the end of the old year and the bringing in of the New Year.



Music Notes

On **Saturday, December 5, at 7:30 pm** the **Back Bay Ringers** will present their holiday concert in the sanctuary. This group is always a joy to hear and see. The cost for this concert is \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors. There is no charge for children 10 and under. This event is not a part of our Artist Series. (See flyer on page 9)



Sunday, December 20, is our **Special Music Sunday**. If you are interested in singing with the choir during this special season, we will be delighted to welcome you! Please plan on attending rehearsals on Thursdays, December 3, 10, and 17 from 7 to 9 pm. If you have any questions, please email Kathy Gross at candk144@gmail.com. **All are invited, and all are welcome!**

The annual Instant Christmas Pageant is scheduled for worship on **December 13th**. That morning we will be singing a favorite anthem, “**Jesus, What a Wonderful Child**” by Rollo Dilworth. All ages from grade three to age 93 interested in singing this special intergenerational anthem are welcome! If you would like to sing, please join us in the sanctuary that morning at 9:15 to rehearse. **All are invited, and all are welcome!**

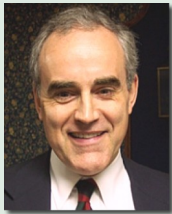


Maple Street Church CINEMA!



Come one, come all to our **FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT on Saturday, January 23, at 7:15 p.m.**, when the social hall will be transformed into a movie theater, complete with popcorn, refreshments, and drinks. This was such a delightful event for all ages last year that we just had to offer an encore this year!

Pianist Robert Humphreville will provide live accompaniment for the film (title to be announced). Robert is renowned for his playing for silent movies in Boston and Cambridge – to great reviews! He is an excellent musician, one of our favorite substitute organists, and a great friend of Maple Street Church.



This fun family event is appropriate for adults and children of all ages. Admission fees are \$5 per person and \$15 per family. Since this a part of our Artist Series, all sponsors will be admitted free of charge! Refreshments will be available for purchase before the movie begins. The length of the movie is 75 to 90 minutes.



We look forward to sharing the joy and laughter – and great piano music – of this silent movie night with you.

DON'T MISS IT!

Kathy Gross and the Music Committee

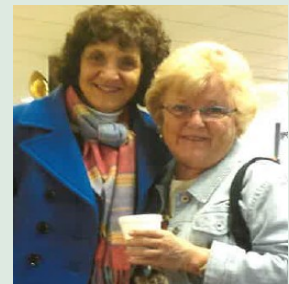
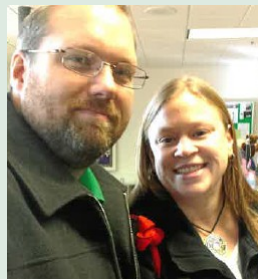
COOKIES NEEDED!



Church Growth will be hosting Cocoa and Cookies at Maple Street Church on Saturday, December 5, at 1:00-4:00. Help us make it a success by donating cookies for us to hand out to the many who come to warm up. As an added attraction, D-Cat "Elves" will take photographs!



If you would like to participate, just show up or email Karen Kilty at kakilty@verizon.net. We would welcome any extra help!



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

Our prayers are with the families of Mary Johnson Barnes and Connie Blomerth, both long-time beloved members of Maple Street Church, who were memorialized here in October.

We also keep in our prayers the family of Alan Dix, who, before moving to Montana, was a 35-year member of Maple Street Church.

Blessings to the families of Sadie Elizabeth Shafner, child of Lauren and Jamie Shafner and Tessa Mary Kiegel, child of Jane and Matthew Kiegel, both of whom were Baptized here in November.

Fun at the Holly Berry Fair!



REACH OUT....

Upcoming mission opportunities

Christmas Card Fund December



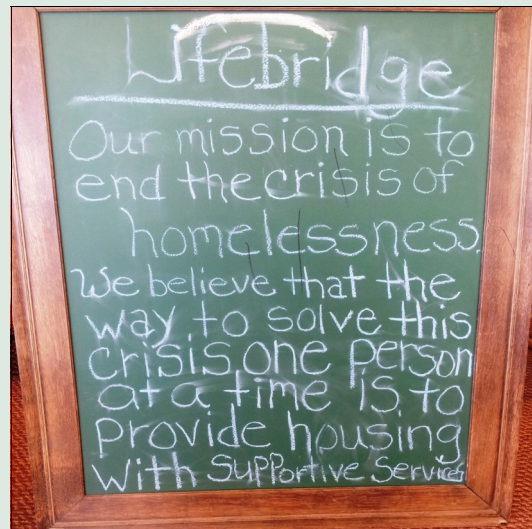
Want to send your church family a special Christmas wish and contribute to a good cause at the same time? Consider placing a card on the Christmas tree instead of sending one out by mail and donate some of your postage. All



monies collected will be donated to the River House in Beverly. Christmas cards will be available or you can bring your own.

Lifebridge Dinner in Salem

Saturday, Jan 9th 5:30-7:00



help feed those in need alongside Karen and Frank Kilty. Contact Pam at spearing-family@comcast.net

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There is no news this month from the Church Council, the Trustees, the Stewardship and Membership and Leadership Committees.

A Note from the Treasurer As of November 19, 2015

Fiscal Year to Date Pledges:

<u>Actual Received</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>
\$72,362	\$140,0000

% of Budgeted Pledge Receipts
51.7% (should be at 55.8%)

The **back bay ringers** invite you to a

Handbell Concert

featuring holiday favorites, beloved carols,
and music celebrating the winter season.

Songs of Good Cheer

CHRISTMAS WITH THE BACK BAY RINGERS

Saturday, December 5th at 7:30 PM

Maple Street Church
90 Maple Street, Danvers, MA

Admission: \$15 adults / \$12 students and seniors



back bay ringers

Boston's community handbell ensemble

For more information about our organization and full event details, please visit www.backbayringers.org



Keep Our Steeple Shining!

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 on page 11 or on the back page of the weekly church bulletin and

send it with \$15 per week to the church office.

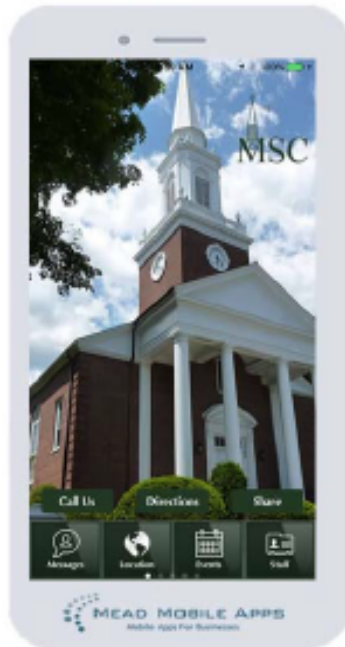
To
Our Maple Street Church Family:

*May you have an Advent fulfilling
for your soul,
a blessed, Merry Christmas
and a
Happy and Healthy New Year!*

*From the Staff and
Church Leaders*



Maple Street Congregational Church, UCC



Mobile Application

Available In iTunes &
Google Play Store



Scan The Appropriate QR Code For Your
Device To Download OR search for
"Maple Street Church" in either the Apple
Store or Android Play Store!

Mobile App Developed By Mead Mobile Apps
www.meadmobileapps.com

MOBILE APPLICATION FEATURES

- Push Notifications For Events, Cancellations, Weekly Message
- E Docs – Weekly Update, Sermons, Bulletins & inSpire
- Weekly Message From Reverend Kevin
- Event Calendar
- Directions & Map
- One Touch Calling
- Staff Bios
- Donate Button – via Pay Pal
- Podcasts & Videos – Sermons & Services
- Send A Voice Message
- Facebook
- Prayer Request Form & Prayer Wall
- Photo Booth & Photo Gallery
- Quick Contact Form
- & More



Maple Street Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
90 Maple Street, Danvers, MA 01923
www.maplestreetchurch.org

Rev. Kevin Smith <i>Minister</i>	978-774-4510, ext. 3 978-968-5020 (cell)	revkevmsc@gmail.com
Ms. Kathy Gross <i>Director of Music Ministry</i>	978-774-4510, ext 5	candk144@gmail.com
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
Mrs. Lynne Hathaway <i>Nursery School Director</i>	978-774-4510, ext. 6	lynnehathaway@verizon.net

Our Worship Services are recorded every Sunday and 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: _____



The Spire
Maple Street Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
90 Maple Street
Danvers, MA 01923

No matter who you are or where you are on your faith journey, 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 February/March issue of *The inSpire* is January 19 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.

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