

The Spire

Informing Members and Friends - Encouraging Fellowship and Spiritual Growth

Monthly Newsletter

December 2011

A Newsletter of the First Congregational Church of Sutton – Victoria Snow, Pastor

Pastor's Desk...

Christmas time is such a magical time of year. People decorate their homes with bright lights, which symbolize the bright light of Christ returning to our world. The malls are full as people purchase gifts for their loved ones, just as the wise men brought gifts to baby Jesus. The Fed-Ex, UPS, and mail-people are all working frantically to deliver our packages on time. We find ourselves making lists, planning ahead, and wrapping presents, and preparing for the big day. We buy wrapping paper, bows, and tags to put on our presents that will sit proudly under our Christmas trees, for our loved ones. We buy presents for our children, spouses, neighbors, colleague, aunts, uncles, parents, the garbage man and paper-boy. But where is Jesus' present? Do we purchase a gift for him? Isn't Christmas about His birthday and shouldn't we be offering the babe of Bethlehem a gift or two?

As I sit here at my desk, I find myself looking over the financial reports for our church. Every Sunday there seems to be more and more people in church, and yet we are still struggling with our finances. Our Sunday School is full of happy, engaged children who are learning the joy of being children of God. But our finances continue to be in the red. Our Junior Youth Group welcomes new members and we have just started a new Senior Youth Group. We have over ten youth in our confirmation class. We have a large number of youth ready and willing to serve the homeless in Boston and to give a week of their summer vacation to help the people in Pennsylvania, again this year. Yet, the

number of pledging units is smaller than last year. We have an active adult choir who blesses us with wonderful music each week during worship and who is preparing to fill us with the wonder of Christmas during their concert on December 18th. As a church, we voted for a deficit budget last year, and if I am not mistaken we are even behind on this budget. The music committee has just started a new chime choir, which will teach people how to read music and allow more members to be involved in the ministry of music, here in our church. But each month it is increasingly more difficult to meet our bills. We simply need more financial resources to complete the ministry God has placed before us. We are blessed to have such an active church. We are blessed to have so many people who are willing to share their time with the church. We are blessed to have a safe place to worship each week and to offer our children a welcoming, loving, and nurturing environment to develop their faith. We are blessed to have each other. But, our blessings also need financial nurturing to grow and multiply.

As you make your Christmas list this year, I am asking each family to consider making a gift to baby Jesus, by making a financial gift to the church. Scripture tells us that God loved us so much that God sent us Jesus, to teach us, guide us, and to die on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Scripture also tells us that when Jesus returned to the Father, he left his faithful followers the gift of the church to nurture and grow in His name. The wise men brought gifts to the newborn King, now it is our turn to offer the Christ Child our gifts to help His church

grow and to help His light shine in our world. Let's all sit down with our families this year to discuss the true meaning of the season and to discuss the gifts we can offer to the Christ Child. The gifts you bring to the Babe of Bethlehem will be true blessings for the King.

Merry Christmas! May the blessing of the babe of Bethlehem shine in your hearts and homes this season. May you walk in His light and know His love. Merry Christmas to all!
Peace: *Victoria*

Book of Life

Please keep all of our service men and women, Joan, Ruth, Cheryl, Doug, the all those who are unemployed, homeless, grieving, ill, lost and lonely.



Remember our Shut-ins with a note or call....

Bert Helgerson
112 Town Farm Rd.
Sutton, Ma. 01590

Ruth Putnam
St. Camillus Health Care
Hill St.
Whitinsville, Ma. 01588

Joan Smith
16 Bashaw Road
Sutton, Ma. 01590

December Birthdays

1st Kaidyn Flagg
1st Anthony Fraioli
3rd Barbara Daigneault
3rd Heidi Woll
3rd Matthew Zaluski
3rd Timothy Zaluski
4th DJ Emco-Phaneuf
6th Timothy Turner
7th Lauren Arthaud
8th Kimberly Vaillancourt
9th Andrew Coggins

11th Dillon Hovagimian
13th Nicole Wagner
14th Ruth Putnam
15th Caitlin Burke
15th Jill O'Connor
16th Sarah Breen
16th Willaim Eklund
16th William Hastings IV
18th Nancy Johnson
19th Andrew Barch
19th Elisabeth Gerr
20th Stuart Anderson
21st Patricia Ainsley-Baker
23rd Marc Guild
23rd Katherine Shaw
24th Judith Peladeau
24th Robert Shaw
25th Samuel Funari
26th Debra Edgerton
28th James Locurto
29th Randy Bock
30th June Eklund
31st Brendan Burke
31st Scarlet Gervais
31st Scott Paul

Deacons News

The Sutton Food Pantry

Still needs our help, items that are in great demand are: Pancake Mix, Syrup, Soup, Canned Chicken, Spam, Canned Ham, Beef Stews, Spaghetti Sauce and Laundry Detergent.

Please remember that no outdated products can be accepted, so please check the expiration dates.

Please let us know....

If you know someone who is sick or home bound for any reason, please let either the church office or a member of the Diaconate know. Please have someone let us know if it is you that is sick too. Sometimes we don't hear of an illness or accident until it is over and done with. We would like to be able to provide meals if appropriate or help in any way we can. There is a list of the Deacons on the bulletin board across from the church office and on the bulletin board in the narthex with phone numbers and email addressee.

Loose Change Jug

Empty your pockets.... Look in the sofa cushions....collect the loose change in your cars!! The JUG has returned. This initiative was started by the Schaefer's and soon became a center of conversation! The goal is for us to bring our loose change from home and fill the jug over several months. The jug got VERY HEAVY during the last campaign. The Deacon's observed the passion of our church family's young people when they brought their PowerAde bottles filled with change. It was a great example for all of us of faith in action and how the "little things" make a difference.

The monies collected benefit the church in meeting a unique need within our church. The JUG donations last year helped replace some of our aged metal chairs and purchase 3 new chairs in the sanctuary. The chairs in the sanctuary are intended for anyone unable to sit in the pews because of a physical circumstance or chronic condition of pain.

The JUG will be located in the Fellowship Hall on worship Sundays during December.

As always, please contact a Deacon if you have a personal need or question about the First Church of Sutton. Our numbers are available on the church communication boards or by contacting Marie Rochon.

Sunday School News

The Nativity Family Service....

WATCH the children bring the story of the birth of our Lord Jesus to life! **The Nativity Family Service will be held Sunday, December 18th at 10:00a.m.**



Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011 the children will finish their figures and learn more about Advent.

Please make sure your children don't miss these Sundays. This is an important part of the true meaning of the Christmas season.

Please email Cheryl Alderman @ alderman56@charter.net OR call 508-865-4921 with any questions.

A Carol for the King

**December 18th 7:00 p.m.
In the Sanctuary**

Under the direction of our organist Erik Johnson an evening of sacred music performed by the choirs of First Church and our friends from local churches.



This year's special guests will be the Southborough Bell Ringers under the direction of Carla Mason.

Come and enjoy the meaning of Christmas through song. Bring family and friends, all are welcome. A free-will offering will be taken. Refreshments will be served.

Youth Group

"Comings & Goings"

The Jr. Youth Group at the First Church of Sutton is for anyone who is in 6th - 8th grade. We do mean anyone....the children of members, friends, cousins and anyone young person in our community at large looking for a place to hang on Friday nights.

The Comings...

12//16 7-9:30 pm Youth Group meeting

We will be taking 2 names from the tree for Brighten a Child's Christmas, and we will go shopping to get presents for these children. If possible we would like to have a \$5 donation per member to help purchase these gifts.

Please contact either Heather Sprague (508-330-0723) or Kevin Martus (508-981-3250) about the Jr. Youth Group or any of the upcoming meetings.

Peace to All,

Kevin Martus & Heather Sprague

Sr. Youth Group... will be taken orders for their Holiday Baked Good Project on Sunday, December 11th at worship.

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, this worthy cause is working to help ensure low-income children can have a good night's sleep. A bed for Every Child is working to raise financial support to purchase beds for children who do not have one.

This holiday season you are able to choose a delicious holiday treats to share with special people in your life while making a difference in a child's life.

Order pick up will be December 16th thru 17th.

December 11th Sr. Youth Christmas shopping for Brighten a Child's Christmas.

Confirmation Class will be sleeping over December 16th-17th at the church.



*Christmas
Eve Services*

**5 pm
Family Service**

**11 pm
Candlelight
Service**

*There will be no service
on Christmas Day.*

Moving beyond

As we move once more through the Christmas season, may you allow yourself to move beyond the routine to discover an understanding of what God seeks to communicate through the celebration of his Son's birth.

Move beyond the hustle and bustle of busy days...

to moments of quiet communion with the Lord of all life, to discovery of your roots;

Move beyond the cookies, cakes and dinners with family and friends...

to recognition of our place in the family of God and a concern for needy brothers and sisters, to hear a call to share;

Move beyond the giving and receiving of gifts...

to thanks to God for his gift of a Son, to praise generosity unlimited;

Move beyond the times of worship with carols and candlelight...

to openness to the birth of Christ within, to experience new life in you!

Pastor Allan Zagray
New Concord, OH UMC



The
Christmas
tree reminds
us of the Christ;
it's top pointing to
heaven, its lights denoting
the Light of the World, and all
the presents beneath it reminding us
that every good gift comes from above.

Thanks
be to
God

St. Luke's United Church of Christ
Lititz, PA