



The Herald

A Publication of the First Church in Salem, Unitarian

The Ames Covenant

*In the love of truth
and the spirit of Jesus,
we unite for the worship of God
and the service of humankind.*

NOVEMBER 2010

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In this issue Pg.

November Schedule	2
New Member Orientation	2
Thanksgiving Sunday	2
Calendar	3
Flowers	3
The Alliance	3
RE News	4
Youth Group News	4
Music News	5
Henny Penny News	5
Stewardship	6
Around the Parish	6
Paul Madore Chorale	6
Community Events	7
Welcoming Congregations	8
Lifefridge Needs	8
Thanks	9
MPIC Update	10

Minister's Musings

Over the last year, I have developed a sort of “built-in” prompt for counting my blessings. Twelve months ago my youngest son had open-heart surgery for the second time in order to correct a congenital and fatal heart defect. He responded well to both surgeries and now has in front of him the prospects of a long life with no physical restrictions. That enough is cause for any parent to want to give thanks: for high-tech medicine, for a supportive community and family, for living here in the 21st century.

If history is the judge, I should have one less child than I do. Before 30 years ago, children born with “Transposition of the Great Vessels” and related heart defects would die shortly after childbirth. “Blue Babies,” as they were called, were a rare but known phenomenon, causing heartbreak and duress. It amazes me all the details that have to go just right as an embryo develops for a healthy baby to be born. A slight miscue at a sensitive point in gestation can lead to a dire set of circumstances.

In an odd sort of way, I have spent the last twelve months with this awareness in the back of my mind. Each time my son smiles, each time he takes off running down the sidewalk, each time he rides his bike, and yes, each time he says something obnoxious or misbehaves like a normal five-year-old boy, I find feelings of profound gratitude welling up from deep inside. I feel as though I have been given a gift never available to previous generations. I am keenly aware that things could be otherwise.

All of us have experiences that I think similarly prompt us to count our blessings. They are those events, people or situations that remind us of the many gifts we have in this life, the ones that we didn't earn and quite often take for granted. Those moments and experiences can be doorways to finding the world – and ourselves – transformed. The Rev Forrester Church, the well-known UU minister from All Souls Church in New York City who passed away last year, was fond of saying “Life is a gift, not a given.” Much duress and frustration in this life can be avoided—and much happiness is possible—by heeding this one insight.

We have a busy November and Holiday Season ahead of us. I wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving.

See you in church,

*Daylight Savings Time ends on
November 7. Be sure to remember
to reset your clock back one hour
on Saturday evening, November 6.*



November Schedule of Events

November 2

- ▲ Alliance luncheon, noon
- ▲ Spirit Journey at 7:30 pm

November 3

- ▲ RE Committee, 7 pm

November 6

- ▲ Salem Literary Panel with locals authors, 4 pm

November 7 (Daylight Savings Time ends)

- ▲ All Souls Sunday Candlelighting Service, with choir, 10:30 am.
- ▲ Youth Group meets, 7–8:30 pm



November 9

- ▲ Alliance luncheon, noon

November 10

- ▲ Lifebridge (Salem Mission) Dinner. 4:45 pm
- ▲ Standing Committee, 7:15 pm

November 11

- ▲ Becoming a Welcoming Congregation Workshop, 7:30 pm

November 14

- ▲ Pancake Breakfast, 9–10:15 am
- ▲ Sunday Service, 10:30 am
- ▲ New Member Orientation, around 12:15 pm
- ▲ Youth Group meets, 7–8:30 pm

New Member Orientation

Are you interested in deepening your affiliation with this liberal religious community by becoming a member of The First Church?



Now is the time to have your questions answered, and learn about the merits of membership. The next opportunity to join will be on **Sunday, December 12** during the service, followed by a Special Meeting of the Society to Welcome New Members. We will be offering New Member Orientation sessions following the service on both **Sunday, November 14** and **Sunday, November 28**, around 12:15 pm each day. If you would like more information, please talk to Rev. Jeff Barz-Snell or Thomas Mac Donald.

November 16

- ▲ Alliance lunch-and-learn series on Islam, 11 am

November 18

- ▲ Welcoming Congregations Committee, 7:30 pm

November 21

- ▲ Thanksgiving Sunday Service, 10:30 am, followed by Potluck Fellowship
- ▲ Youth Group meets, 7–8:30 pm



November 23

- ▲ Alliance luncheon, noon

November 24

- ▲ MPIC, 6:30

November 25 – Happy Thanksgiving

November 27

- ▲ Lifebridge (Salem Mission) Dinner, 4:45 pm

November 28

- ▲ Sunday Service, 10:30 pm
- ▲ New Member Orientation, around 12:15 pm
- ▲ Christmas pageant rehearsal (casting), noon

Looking Ahead —

December 5

- ▲ ?? Sunday Service, 10:30 am

December 12

- ▲ New Member Sunday

November 21 — Thanksgiving Sunday



Sunday, November 21 will be Thanksgiving Sunday at the First Church. The choir will be singing and the service will include a presentation on the UU Service Committee's Guest at Your Table program with info about how our small support locally can make a huge difference globally.

Following the service will be our annual special Thanksgiving Fellowship Hour, a community fellowship with contributions from First Church members and friends. Please sign up in the Barnard Room to bring a food item with you that morning, or contact the church office at 978.744.1551/firstchurch@nii.net to let us know what you would like to bring.

N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 0

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<i>All Sunday Services begin at 10:30am</i>	1	2 - Alliance, noon - Spirit Journey, 7pm	3 - RE Cmte, 7pm	4	5	6 - Salem Literary Event, 4-5:30pm
7 (Reset clocks) - All Souls Candlelighting Service, with choir - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	8	9 - Alliance, noon	10 - Standing Cmte, 7:15pm - Salem Mission dinner, 4:45pm	11 - Welcoming Congregation Workshop, 7:30pm	12	13
14 - Pancake Breakfast, 9-10:15am - Sunday Service - New Member Orientation, 12:15pm - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	15	16 - Alliance lunch-and-learn series, 11am	17	18 - Welcoming Congregation Cmte., 7:30pm	19	20
21 - Thanksgiving Sunday Service, with choir - Youth Group, 7-8:30pm	22	23 - Alliance, noon	24 - MPIC, 6:30pm	25 Thanksgiving	26	27 - Salem Mission dinner, 4:45pm;
28 - Sunday Service - New Member Orientation, 12:15pm	29	30 - Alliance, noon				

Flowers



Sign up to provide flowers for our services this fall. Special wording can be placed in our weekly Order of Service in honor or memory of a loved one, or to commemorate an important event. You can use the church florist for a cost of \$45, or bring your own creation. Arrangements can be simple or elaborate — the choice is yours! See the sign up sheet in The Barnard Room on Sundays during Fellowship, or contact the church office if you have questions: 978-744-1551 / firstchurch@nii.net.

News from The Alliance

The Alliance continues its Lunch-and-Learn series on Islam on Tuesday, November 16 with special guest Dr. Majed Ashy, an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Merrimack College and a research affiliate at the Developmental Bio-psychiatry Research program at McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School. Born in Beirut, Dr. Ashy studied in Saudi Arabia until he finished high school.

The Alliance normally meets at noon, but on November 16 will be meeting at 11:00 am.

From Religious Education

Gratitude consists of being more aware of what you have than what you don't. – anonymous

Halloween is over and November is here. We have a few quiet weeks before the frenzy of December. Thanksgiving is the perfect time to discuss the wonderful gifts we share all year as a family. A time to highlight the blessings we have but don't always think about.

It is hard to avoid the huge amount of toy commercials and other materialistic messages our children will be bombarded by in just a few weeks. One way to counteract the message of commercialism our children will be exposed to is by helping them be actively engaged in giving to others. The *Guest at Our Table* program, sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, is an excellent way of keeping the needs of others in mind. Each family gets a donation box to keep on their dinner table and uses the box to contribute to the unseen "guest" at each meal. The *Guest at Our Table* box helps children to think of the needs of others. They understand that something as simple as the food before them at mealtime is a gift for which to be grateful.

And from the Youth Advisor:

Friends, I have been youth director at the First Church for almost two months now, and it's been a wonderful, crazy time. Just before I started, I got married and moved to Massachusetts, and started at a new school. Being able to work with the youth of this church has been something familiar for me in a sea of changes. Yes, it's a different group than I've worked with before, but working with Unitarian Universalist youth has been a passion of mine for years, and something I did plenty of at my home church in Texas.

Thus far, our group has been doing some serious bonding at our weekly meetings. To the untrained eye, that bonding can look a lot like playing games. It is. Spending time together as a youth group playing games is vital to the development of youth groups. That, and our sharing ritual, in which each of us talk about what's go-

Another way to help children be actively engaged in giving is to serve dinner at Lifebridge as a family. Or by discussing the beauties of handmade gifts and beginning a holiday gift project together. Planning and anticipating activities which bring the family together and promote Unitarian Universalist values will give children positive alternatives to commercialism. Let us show our children how valuable and important love, compassion and spirituality are to all of us.

In November our First Church Religious Education students will take time each week to reflect upon what we are grateful for. Each Sunday for a few moments in class we will look at our lives and think about the positive things we have. In age appropriate ways we will strive to recognize and reflect on the intangible gifts of love, spirituality, and compassion. We will find joy in the wonderful the "things" we already possess. We will be grateful.

Happy Thanksgiving,

Deb DiGiulio, RE Director

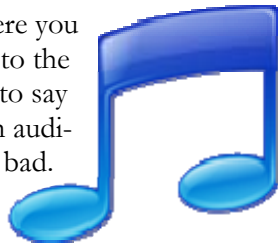
ing on in our life, is the beginning of successful formation of youth groups. As the year goes on, we will add activities -- last week we began planning some of our major activities for the rest of the year. We will soon begin a UU curriculum about being a good person, something that all of us might do well to consider. As the year goes on, our group hopes to deepen its bonds and engage in activities both with each other, the Salem community, and perhaps with other UU youth groups in the area.

As always, I invite any member or friend of the church to contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached at the.christian.schmidt@gmail.com or at 979-450-2477.

Christian Schmidt, Youth Advisor

From the Music Director

I write this in anticipation of Salem's biggest weekend, God help us all! Any sane person would say, what, Christmas? Easter? The city's 500th anniversary? But, of course, any savvy person knows it's Halloween. How did this all happen? Was it our fortuitous position in history regarding witches, or was it simply Americans needing to go nuts for a day (sorry, for a month)? It was very interesting to talk to Jeff Brody and Scott Brumit this week. They are the directors who put on the opera *Hansel and Gretel* last weekend at First Church. Before the Sunday afternoon performance, they were outside advertising by saying that they were about to burn a witch inside the meeting house (I trust you all know the story of Hansel and Gretel). Anyway, the general response was no thanks, it's much more fun just being nuts in the street. There you have it. Never mind that access to the city was probably hell on earth, to say nothing of parking. They had an audience of ten (10) for which I felt bad.



This whole first paragraph was kind of a preamble leading up to our Sunday service on the 31st of October (how fortuitous is that)? By the time you get this, I'm sure that Sunday will have passed, but my personal philosophy formulated a few years ago is that, if you can't lick'em, join'em.

So, I'm pulling out all the bells and whistles and you're getting a service you won't quickly forget – all in the spirit of a pretty darn good religious experience with Rev. Jeff and our resident guru of all things occult, Rose Wolf.

Thank God that November 7 will roll around with a sober All Souls Day liturgy, when our First Church Choir will shine and bring us back to some form of sanity.

Don't you love living in Salem?

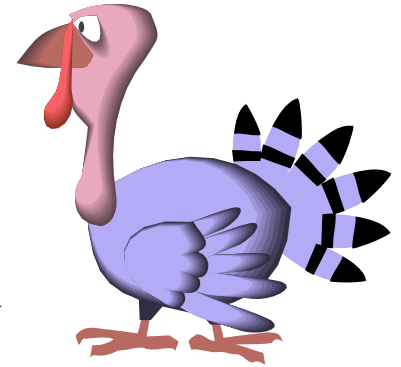
See you in church,

Paul Madore
Director of Music

From Henny Penny

Greetings,

Halloween Celebrations are just around the corner as we gear up for the Henny Penny Halloween Party. In just two days, the children will participate in a host of activities from jewelry making, sparkle Playdoh, cookie decorating, pin the nose on the pumpkin and golf-tee pumpkin hammering. Our morning will culminate with a parade through the Ropes Mansion Garden. We'll have our freshly decorated Halloween goody bags in hand, ready to collect an assortment of treats sent in by our classroom volunteers.



The Henny Penny Thanksgiving Feast is just around the corner. This year, we will be celebrating it on Thursday, November 18, 10:45-noon. We welcome and encourage all of the senior members and friends of The First Church to attend this extra special event. The children play a large role in the preparations for our meal together – from peeling potatoes to setting the tables and even making the cornbread. This top-notch gourmet meal, coupled with the extra special company of little ones, shouldn't be missed. Barbara Hermann and I cook the turkeys in the early morning and Mr. St. Pierre, Chef Extraordinaire, leads the cooking and preparations for the remainder of the morning. This all takes place shortly after our traditional early breakfast (7:00 am) at Red's Sandwich Shop on the day of our feast.

Please feel free to call Kerry or Barbara if you are interested in attending our feast – 978-745-7315. If necessary, we will be happy to coordinate transportation for you to attend this exciting event.

All best,

Kerry Martin
Director of Henny Penny Nursery School

Stewardship Update

With the arrival of fall's cool, crisp evenings, The First Church Stewardship Committee has two important tasks in front of it:

1. Are we on track to reach our 2010 member/friend contribution goal of \$100,000?
2. With the budget process for 2011 getting underway, what should the member/friend contribution goal be for next year?

Contributions through September 2010

To begin, we extend a hearty THANK YOU to the 17 members and friends who have already met their pledge goal for the year! The Stewardship Committee recently sent out contribution statements to all members giving them an update on their giving through September. If you have any questions about your statement, please contact Jim Singletary in the church office for assistance (firstchurch@nii.net, 978-744-1551). Even if you didn't submit a pledge for 2010, it is vitally important that **all members** consider fulfilling one of the basic responsibilities that comes with being a part of this wonderful community.

Through the fourth Sunday of October (October 24), the church has received the following in Member/Friend contributions as compared to 2008 and 2009:

2010: \$60,193 60% to our goal of \$100,000
 2009: \$65,069 75% of total 2009 giving of \$87,000
 2008: \$63,701 66% of total 2008 giving of \$97,000

Around the Parish

Rachel Kenney, daughter of longtime church member Eric Kenney and his wife Suzanne, was married in October. Word has it that it was a wonderful service and certainly has resulted in one proud father of the bride.

John Newhall, Sarah Newhall, Jacob Barz-Snell, Leah Barz-Snell and **Jeff Barz-Snell** are all in this month's production of *Willy Wonka* at the Marblehead Little Theater.



"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

Although we are still running slightly behind the giving of 2008 and 2009, we still have nine weeks left to go! We hope that each one of you will take the time to consider what this church has meant to you and then give generously.

2011 Pledge Campaign

In the next few weeks, all members of the church will receive information about making a financial pledge to help "steward" this church through 2011. Once again, we will ask you to consider the importance of The First Church in your **life** and the **life** of the greater community and then to plan your prospective giving for 2011. Just like your personal budget, the First Church must plan how it will use its limited resources to meet the needs of this growing congregation. In addition to meeting our every day expenses of heat, electricity, maintenance and salaries, we would like to budget for new activities and increasing social outreach.

As a special encouragement this year, we will be announcing an "incentive" to return your pledge card before the end of the year! Stay tuned for more details.

If you have any questions about Stewardship at First Church, please feel free to contact any one of us. The Stewardship Committee: Robyn Giannopolo, Bill Henning, Eric Kenney, and Steve Palmer

Respectfully Submitted:

Joe Deegan Bill Henning Eric Kenney
 Robyn Knights-Giannopolo Steve Palmer

The Paul Madore Chorale presents
A Classical Thanksgiving

Sunday, November 14, 3:00 pm
Tabernacle Church
 50 Washington Street, Salem, MA

The Paul Madore Chorale will present performances of Franz Josef Haydn's **Lord Nelson Mass** and Ralph Vaughn Williams's **A Song of Thanksgiving**. Soloists include Rebecca Hains, soprano; Holly Zagaria, mezzo-soprano; Sean O'Donnell, tenor; and John David Adams, bass.

Tickets: \$22 general admission; 18 for seniors and students.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

A Report from Afghanistan



Fahima Vorgetts Report from Afghanistan: Women, Children and War

Friday, November 5, 7 pm
Tabernacle Church, 50 Washington Street,
Salem, MA

Fahima Vorgetts, winner of the 2004 Salem Award for Human Rights and Social Justice, returns to Salem to share her experiences from a life's work spent helping to improve the lives of women and girls in Afghanistan. Vorgetts heads the Afghan Women's Fund, a program of Women for Afghan Women and is an honorary member of Afghanistan Organization for Human Rights and Environmental Protection. She has addressed the United Nations and traveled widely speaking to university conferences and religious organizations. She has appeared on national and international television and radio stations, including BBC and NPR. A reception follows the lecture. Presented by the Salem Award Foundation for Human Rights and Social Justice and the Salem Athenæum.

\$15 for adults; \$5 for students; online: www.salemaward.org
For more information, call the Salem Athenæum at 978-744-2540.

Real Costs of Coal

On November 7, at 7 pm, Salem Alliance for the Environment (SAFE) and Healthlink will host at the First Church *Real Costs of Coal: Colombia to Salem*, a free forum exploring the impact of coal on the environment, our health, and our state's economy. Speakers will include Jeff Deyette, the Assistant Director of Energy and Analysis at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), and Prof. Avi Chomsky of Salem State University, a noted expert on Colombia and the coal mines that supply coal to Salem Harbor Power Station. In addition, two union representatives who work in Colombia's largest "open-pit" coal mines, will participate.

Mystic Chorale's Fall Concert

The 200 voices of The Mystic Chorale, led by founder and song leader Nick Page, join the acclaimed Zamir Chorale of Boston, directed by Joshua Jacobson, for a fall concert, 'UPWARD'. Together and separately the choruses will bring joyous offerings from the rich and diverse traditions of Jewish choral music. The theme of the concert, *L'Eyla U' L'Eyla*, can be translated as "to the upward and upward." Join the choruses on an ascending musical spiral celebrating compassion, spirit, and joy!

Saturday, November 20, at 8:00 pm

and

Sunday, November 21, at 3:30 pm

Converse Hall, Tremont Temple

88 Tremont Street, Boston MA

(one block from the Park Street MBTA station; parking nearby)

TICKETS: Order from Lynn Taggart before November 9 to save \$3 per ticket (and be guaranteed a seat) —

Adults: \$15 (\$18 full price)

Students & Seniors: \$12 (\$15 full price)

Children under 5 free

Tickets are also available online and at the door one half hour before each concert.

A Salem Literary Event at the First Church



On Saturday, November 6, 4–5:30 pm, there will be a local authors panel with Kathleen Kent (*The Wolves of Andover*), Brunonia Barry (*The Lace Reader*), Katherine Howe (*The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane*), and Elyssa East (*Dogtown, Death and Enchantment in a New England Town*). The event is free and open to the public.

Becoming a Welcoming Congregation Workshops

The Welcoming Congregation Committee is hosting workshops every second Thursday of the month, 7:30–9 pm, as part of the process to gain the “Welcoming Congregation” status for our already very welcoming church. This month (November 11) Tommy Leon and Claire Donaldson will be sharing their personal coming-out stories, along with guests from the community



We were very happy to have so many people attend October’s workshop! Why should you come?

- * Discussions about LGBT issues that are funny, thought-provoking, and introspective
- * Group activities and arts-&-crafts
- * Time to reflect on your own thoughts, feelings and biases (we all have ‘em!) about LGBT
- * Reaching for an understanding between others who might think or feel differently than you.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee also has a question box on the piano in the Cleveland Room to receive anonymous questions that will be answered during the workshops. And, check out our blog on <http://becomewelcomingcongregation.blogspot.com/> for information on previous and upcoming workshops, as well as links to interesting articles!

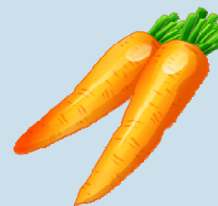
Child care is available. Please contact Jessica Kane beforehand to schedule.

A Shopping List

As we approach the time of year when our thoughts turn to the appreciation of home and family, we encourage all to remember those in our own community who cannot take such things for granted. Donations are needed to help support the good work of Lifebridge (formerly the Salem Mission)! A list of their “most needed” items are below. Donations will be used for the meals program and shelter. Thanks again for your generosity - please know it is appreciated!

Meals Program

- ★ Powdered drink mix
- ★ Potatoes
- ★ Butter
- ★ Cheddar/Parmesan cheese
- ★ Bananas/fresh fruit
- ★ Salad ingredients
- ★ Salad dressing
- ★ Rice (brown preferred)
- ★ Shelf safe milk



Shelter

- ★ Tooth brushes/toothpaste
- ★ Bar soap
- ★ Disposable razors
- ★ Hand sanitizer
- ★ Socks/underwear (men’s and women’s)



We have received the following “help wanted” from a member of another UU congregation who now lives out of the area, seeking a person to provide assistance to her elderly mother:

Courteous, helpful and dependable person sought to assist elderly woman in Salem. Miscellaneous occasional errands, and about one hour to assemble a light supper 3 to 4 evenings per week. \$20.00 per hour. People who enjoy listening to NPR are encouraged to apply. Please reply to email or telephone, scarletanager@gmail.com, or (802) 728-5525.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Fellowship

Thanks to all those who hosted or contributed to Fellowship in October:

October 3: *Shelley Thomas* and the *Fritz* and *Jaeger families*.

October 10: Annual Localvore Fellowship. Thanks to all who contributed and to *Charlene Long* for coordinating.

October 17: *Katherine Palmer, Patti Roka,* and the *Barz-Snell family*

October 24: *Toni Duffy, Denise Graniss,* and the *Burbank family*

October 31: *Trish and Charlie Newball, Alicia Diozzi* and *Mike Masoclo,* and the *Kane family*



Lifebridge

Thanks to the following who signed up to volunteer to shop or to serve at Lifebridge in October:

George and Ellen Brandenburg, Claire Donaldson, Larry Fine, Alan Hanscom, Russell Lane, Peter LeBlanc, Richard l'Heureux, Betty Nichols, Peter Nugent, Lynn Taggart.

Volunteers are needed on a monthly basis at Lifebridge (formerly the Salem Mission). Members and friends of the First Church serve dinner twice a month—on the second Wednesday and on the fourth Saturday, 4:45–6:45 pm. You can help out by shopping, or serving dinner that night, or both—the choice is yours! Contact the church office at 978-744-1551 / firstchurch@nii.net to volunteer, or see the sign up sheet in the Barnard Room during Fellowship hour.

Chalice Lighters and Readers

Thanks to those who served as Chalice Lighters and Readers during services in October:

October 3: *Claire Donaldson*

October 10: *Bill Grover*

October 17: *Steve Palmer*

October 24: *Bill Henning*

October 31: *Jeff Barz-Snell*

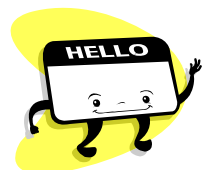


A special thanks from the RE Director

Our Fall Family Fun Night was a great success. Members and children had great fun. We could not have such wonderful events without the talent, dedication and support of all our members and friends. Special thanks this year to *Bob Soucy*, event coordinator, *Valentina Burbank, Claire Donaldson, Jim Ognibene, Alicia Diozzi, Mike Cluck,* and youth group members and alumni *Alina Usmanova, Dylan Ruelle, Zack DiGiulio,* and *Andrew Truong*. Thanks to everyone who helped serve, clean up and craft.

— Deb DiGiulio

REMINDER: Nametags are a great way for First Church members and friends to become better acquainted during Fellowship Hour. If you do not have a pre-printed nametag (or can't find yours) then we invite you to sign the request sheet located in the hall outside the Cleveland Room. You can also use one of adhesive nametags provided.



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ONE OF THE OLDEST PROTESTANT CHURCHES
GATHERED IN NORTH AMERICA, SINCE 1629

Master Plan Implementation Committee Update

There are moments when it is appropriate to celebrate accomplishments as we envision our future. I was pleased to have an opportunity to acknowledge from the pulpit the very significant progress embodied in the two MPPF grants, the second of which was completed this summer. I hope that I conveyed a sense of satisfaction and gratitude, but also optimism and a sense of commitment to our future.

Now, an update on activities leading to that future:

- A Capital Campaign start-up meeting, scheduled for early November, will begin the process of organizing this critical effort.
- Our application for variance is on the agenda at the Zoning Board of Appeals, Wednesday, November 17. First Church members are welcome to attend to offer support.
- We have solicited opinions on the overall water infiltration problem, which we expect will lead to

an effective solution to water management that can be incorporated into the Phase 1 plan.

- We are undertaking an analysis of energy use to inform the upcoming decisions on heating/cooling systems.

These activities are aimed at preparing us to start the Phase 1 project next June. A decision point will arise very early in the new year as to whether we will be ready to proceed. Your input will be invited; please feel free to ask any questions along the way.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Palmer

