The Spire

From Your Pastor

January 2008

Which is correct: *debts* or *trespasses*?

At funerals, I frequently use *trespasses* in the Lord's Prayer. In worship, we use *debts*. *"Why?"* I was asked. Which is correct? Both words are a bit odd: *Debt* sounds like a financial term. *Trespass* sounds like a real estate term… "No trespassing."

Actually, my reasons are not very scholarly. When an audience is primarily not from our tradition, I find *trespasses* rolls off the tongue more easily so that listeners can follow with minimal stumbling. Visitors who come to funerals or weddings at our church frequently come from a high church tradition (Catholic or Anglican) which favors *trespasses*.

The verse comes from the Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew 6:12:

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

That's the New Revised Standard Version, the translation used by the Kingston Congregational Church. Older translations started the confusion: Apparently, John Wycliffe, in 1395, translated the Greek word as *debts*. In 1526, William Tyndale translated the same Greek word as *trespasses*. The first *Book of Common Prayer*, published in 1549, used the word *trespasses*. That became the official Anglican version. You know how the Pilgrims (our Congregational forbearers) felt about the Anglicans. If the Anglicans choose right, the Pilgrims went left.

There are five words the New Testament uses for *sin*. The one in the Lord's Prayer means a debt owed to God… to be indebted. However, and here's why both words mean basically the same thing: When Jesus finished teaching the Lord's Prayer, he kept right on talking about forgiveness. It's the only part of the prayer he explained further:

> *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Jesus spoke this to explain what he meant by "forgive us our debts," but this time he used a different word for sin. The second word means to commit an unintentional error or a willful transgression… a fault, offense, or sin. In other words, *debts* = *trespasses*.

It was common for Jesus to say the same thing twice. This is known as a "parallelism," which was a middle-eastern teaching technique and shows that either *debt* or *trespass* captures Jesus' intention. He used both words in the same breath.

To complicate matters just a bit more, Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer uses a third word for sin:

> *And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.* (Luke 11:4)

From this we see that *debts* = *trespasses* = *sins*.

May I suggest an exercise to make it clearer? When you think of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, omit either of the words. Just pray *"Forgive us, as we forgive others."* That covers the same territory, means the same thing, and reminds us that we need to ask God for forgiveness.

The title *"Lord's Prayer"* is actually a misnomer. It does not appear in the Bible. It is not really the LORD'S prayer. It is a prayer which only a disciple can pray. It is a prayer which only one who is committed to following Jesus can take upon his or her lips with any meaning. Before this petition can honestly be prayed, a person must realize that he or she needs to pray it. She or he must have a sense of indebtedness to God.

The word used in the prayer means a failure to pay that which is due or a failure in duty. None of us who follow Jesus would dare to claim that we have perfectly fulfilled our duty to others or to God. Such perfection does not exist. And so, we are indebted to God for God's grace to us and for his forgiveness.

Out of that indebtedness, we are led to forgive others the same way.

John Zehring

Welcome *to new visitors and to old friends.* ***Welcome*** *to grandparents, to mothers, fathers, single people and children.* ***Welcome*** *to people of all colors, cultures, abilities, and sexual orientation, to young and old, to believers and questioners, and welcome to questioning believers.* ***Welcome*** *to all who have no church home, need strength, want to follow Christ, have doubts, or do not believe. We joyfully and unconditionally welcome you. We hope you find peace and inspiration in our service.* ***YOU are welcome here!***

(Voted on and approved by the congregation January 28, 2007)

Sundays in January

January 6	Epiphany. Message: *"Oh, I get it!"* Communion. The Baptism of Caroline Strough.
January 13	SERIES, part 1: *Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God*. Today: *Justice*. Choir will offer a musical tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr.: *"I Have Been To The Mountain."* Activity Period for K – 2nd grade. Older children will enjoy remaining in the worship service.
January 20	SERIES, part 2: *Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God*. Today: "*Kindness is Never for Nothing."* Pastor's Survey. Sermon Talk-back following worship. Confirmation class meets 5 p.m.
January 27	SERIES, part 3: *Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God*. Today: *Walk Humbly*. Annual Meeting of the Congregation.
February 3	Message: *"Even there shall thy hand lead me."* Communion. Installation of Board members and officers. Second hour: Jeff Richardson, on World Religions.

January's Deacon of the Month is Nancy Ross.

In Sympathy

The congregation extends deepest condolences to Sue Macy and family on the death of Sue's mother, Eleanor Schweickert. A service will be held on February 9th.

CONFIRMATION CLASS meets January 20. Assistant to the Pastor Kevin Munroe will lead a discussion on "The Christian Way of Life."

LET'S FINISH UP STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN WITH A BANG!!

As of this writing 142 pledging units have responded to our call for funding the proposed 2008 budget, but there are at least 60 more who are just waiting to drop their pledge in the mail to the Church or into a collection plate next week. We need your help to raise the necessary funds to start the new budget year on a solid footing. If you need another pledge card, please call Ken Kermes at 782-8914 and it will be mailed to you, or look in the pew card holders the next time you are in Church.

Thanks for your generous and prompt response….your Stewardship Committee

Welcome to New Members who joined the church on December 2nd:

Earl Baker. Earl retired from 40 years in radio and TV sales and management. He lives in East Greenwich with his wife Earlene and two west highland white terriers. Earl enjoys yard work, cooking, and music.

Jonathan Strough. Jonathan is an account manager for the Brady Corporation and lives in Hope Valley. He and Meghan are parents to Caroline, who will be baptized on January 6.

Meghan Strough is a second grade teacher in Warwick, on leave this year to care for new daughter Caroline. She is wife to Jonathan and lives in Hope Valley.

Phyllis Whitehead is well-known to the congregation as a musician, who has substituted during Enrico's absences and who is the beloved wife of Jack Whitehead. She is an educator and for many years Phyllis taught middle school students in Foxboro, Massachusetts. When she and Jack moved to Rhode Island, she served as a substitute organist for many churches in southern Rhode Island.

Erin Trodson rose to fame recently as one of our Thanksgiving Sunday preachers. She teaches in our church school, which is why you only see her in the beginning of the worship service, and also is currently a substitute teacher assistant at Narragansett elementary school. She serves as part of our casserole committee which prepares meals for those returning from hospital or facing a death in the family. Erin enjoys reading, walking, cooking, and caring full-time for daughter Lily.

Brad Trodson, husband to Erin, resides in Narragansett and is proud and happy father to Lily. Brad is Sales Manager at a medical device firm in North Attleboro and enjoys working in the yard, spending time with Lily, and likes to watch the Patriots play football. Brad has also served as a teacher in our church school.

Mike Gallagher, husband to Susan, is father of 8-year-old twins Hillary and Allison. Originally from Vermont, he has lived in Rhode Island for 15 years and is employed as the Assistant Director of Athletics at Roger Williams University. Mike, who lives in Saunderstown, enjoys the outdoors and spending time with his family and their dog, Athena.

Susan Gallagher, wife to Michael and mother to Hillary and Allison, is also sister to new member Kathleen Wyllie. Susan lives in Saunderstown and is employed as the Purchasing Agent for the Town of Narragansett. Susan enjoys sports, including coaching the girls' basketball team, and she enjoys scrapbooking. Originally from Vermont, she received her undergraduate and M.B.A. degree from Bryant University.

Kathleen Wyllie, sister to Susan Gallagher, lives in West Warwick with her two orange tabby cats Maverick and Brady and is an Attorney for MetLife. Formerly from Vermont, Kathleen enjoys reading, traveling, and is an avid Patriots and Red Sox fan. (is Brady named for…?)

Matthew Simeone lives in Kingston with his wife, Sarah and their two sons Luca (6) and Nicholas (2). He is a native of Rhode Island and a chemical engineer, a graduate of the University of Rhode Island. Matt enjoys cycling and woodworking and previously worked as an engineer for Amgen.

Sarah Simeone, wife to Matt and mother to Luca and Nicholas, lives in Kingston. She grew up in East Providence and Scituate and then attended Keene State College to earn a BA in Geography. Sarah worked as an architectural drafter, although she now tends full-time to Matt and Luca. Sarah notes that she feels *"this is a very healthy faith place for our whole family to be and we are very excited about Kingston Congregational Church."*

The Annual Meeting

Of

The Kingston Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Will be Held in the Church Sanctuary
Immediately Following the Worship Service.
Child care will be available.

Sunday, January 27, 2008

10:30 a.m.
Nancy Holland, Clerk

Tentative Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of Quarterly Meeting October 14, 2007 (see enclosed insert)
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Stewardship Committee Report
6. Discussion and Adoption of a 2008 Budget
7. Nominating Committee Report: Election
8. President's Report
9. Old Business – KCC Mission Statement (see below)
10. New Business
11. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

KCC Mission Statement

"We are a Christian church that supports each person's personal, spiritual journey through the communal pursuit of worship, learning, and service."

KCC ANNUAL MEETING

The Church's Annual Meeting will be held immediately after (10:45) the Sunday Service on January 27. The Agenda is enclosed. This is a very important meeting in the life of KCC. Specifically, we will discuss and adopt the 2008 Church Budget, which in many ways reflects our goals, priorities, and commitments for this church community. Child Care will be provided. Please make your attendance and participation in the Annual Meeting a priority for that day.

Tom Butcher, Moderator

The Kingston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2007

Moderator Tom Butcher called the meeting to order at 10:55AM

Information distributed: Agenda for 10/14/07
Minutes for 6/24/07
Proposed budget for 2008
Treasurer's report

It was moved, seconded and passed (M/S/P) to adopt the agenda.
It was moved, seconded and passed (M/S/P) to accept the corrected minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT-*Dick Shaw said there is a deficit on pledges and encouraged everyone to get their pledge up to date.*
It is anticipated that the silent auction will raise enough money to cover the fund raising line in the budget.
Proposed Budget for 2008 includes a need to increase pledges by $34,000.00 (about 10-12% per unit). We also need to increase pledge units. We currently have about 580 members and about 300 pledge units. The painting escrow for $10,000.00 is back in the 2008 budget. Salaries for staff are proposed to be increased 3%, however, the Senior Pastor wants only 2%.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES—Dick Shaw
Blue Jean Sunday is October 21, 2007. There is a need to clean and shine for the Autumnal Meeting of the Rhode Conference of the UCC which will be held at KCC on October 27, 2007.
The final report says that the steeple is leaning but is not in danger of falling.
There is wood rot that needs to be addressed by stabilizing or reinforcing it.
Both chimneys need work, but the one attached to the boiler needs immediate attention.

BOARD OF DEACONS-Frank Lenox
Deacons are preparing for the Autumnal meeting of the UCC on Saturday. Angelo Mendillo and Deb Shaw are in charge. Volunteers are needed for parking, baking for coffee hour, set up on Friday afternoon, serving lunch for 150 people and clean up at 3:30.
There is still a search on for a librarian for the church library.
John Zehring will continue his sabbatical in 2008 and Kevin Munroe will be here to fill in.
The Deacons are looking for someone to lead the casserole crew.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION—Jack Beliveau
There is an enthusiastic youth program in place. There are activities planned for every month for Junior and Senior high.. There are plans for family events.
The adult series on the Psalms will begin on October 30 with Tom Butcher leading it.

BOARD OF MISSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE—Tina Letcher
There are several new members on the Board. The board is planning for the year ahead. There will be a questionnaire about where the mission money will go. Church bells will ring on Church World Communion Sunday. The board collected 100 signatures for the UCC petition for peace.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP -Helen Rowe Drake
There was a great response to the appeal letter sent out to members.
October 15, 2007 there will be a program on grief and depression
November 11, 2007 is the Mother-Daughter luncheon with the Gingerbread houses.
December 9, 2007 is the Christmas sale and cookies by the pound
December 14, 2007 is the Christmas Dinner with a slide show of Antarctica by Prentice and Patty Stout.

OLD BUSINESS-
None

PRESIDENT'S REPORT-Marcus Ferrelli
Marcus needs volunteers for the Strategic Planning Committee and some sub-committees.
Mission statement presented will be adopted at the Annual meeting in January..

It was M/S/P to adjourn at 11:45AM

The meeting adjourned with a prayer led by Pastor Zehring

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Holland, Clerk

"I Have Been to the Mountain"

……so speaks Martin Luther King in the musical rendition of the same name. The Senior Choir has already been practicing for the January 13, 2008 Sunday morning service that will be featuring King's words and ideas. Narrated by Marissa McMahon and Nathan Bartels with Jim Findlay as one of the readers of MLK's famous words, this piece also features two trumpets and our own Sharon Davis as the soprano soloist.

Performed here in Rhode Island at a UCC Conference meeting in the early nineties by the Talladega College Chorus, "I Have Been to the Mountain" is an unforgettable piece. The service at KCC begins with an introit by our Junior Choir followed by the third and fourth graders "instructing" us about this wonderful man, Martin Luther King. Grade 3 and up will be attending the entire service.

Please put this date on your calendar to hear messages that are just as relevant today as they were in the fifties and sixties.

Adult Education

"THE PSALMS IN OUR DAILY LIVES"

During our exploration of the Psalms in the Fall Adult Ed. class, we discussed how specific Psalms/verses could be drawn upon for support and inspiration for our daily lives. The group has taken on the project of compiling a "Guide" of Psalms/verses that can be shared with the congregation. **We want to include any of your favorites in the "Psalms Guide".**

If you want to submit any favorites, please do so by February 1. These can be forwarded to the Church Office, mailed to Tom Butcher at 128 South Rd, Wakefield 02879, or emailed to him at thomas.butcher@nmfn.com.

We found that a given Psalm/verse may respond to multiple situations. Nevertheless, we have developed the following list of life situations that can serve as a starting point for organizing the "Guide". If possible, please assign your submission(s) to one of these situations; it will make editing easier. However, if you feel another heading is appropriate, then please suggest it.

- Beauty of God's Creation
- Praising God
- Trusting God
- Celebration of God
- Searching for God
- Sharing Feelings/Confession with God
- Celebration of Life (Thankfulness/Prosperity)
- Spiritual Fulfillment, Spiritual Hunger
- Dealing with Stress, Difficult Times
- Accident or Illness
- Own Death
- Death of Loved One
- Depression

We look forward to receiving your contributions to the "Psalms Guide" and, in turn, editing and publishing it for your use.

S. P. N. M. Thank You

THANKS for a great THANKSGIVING at South Providence Neighborhood Ministries: 366 families received the makings for their holiday dinner which fed 703 children, 496 adults, and 36 elderly folks for a total of 1235 individuals.

People ask: "Why does the hunger continue in South Providence?" Hunger never ends because if families "make it" they often move on to other communities or states. Then the next group seeking the lowest rents (which aren't very low) move in. You can bet that whenever Middle Eastern families move to the Northeast, they will come to South Providence. For example, many Southeast Asians have now moved to Texas where they can return to their beloved farming culture.

Other reasons for increasing poverty and hunger are the loss of many jobs in RI. The number of families requesting help increases every week.

SPNM Spelling Bee in January

South Providence Neighborhood Ministries will hold an annual fundraiser on Saturday, January 19, 2008 from 1:30 to 4:30 pm – an ADULT spelling bee! Guaranteed to bring participants' competitive juices to a boil, and to produce delight (or groans of defeat) from those who come as supporters, this event will be held at the SPNM headquarters at 747 Broad Street, in South Providence.

Three-person teams drawn from churches or other groups and interested individuals will compete in a round robin tournament led by Mistress of Ceremonies Barbara Morse Silva, well-known Channel 10 TV News personality. The cost is $200 per team; general admission is $5 per person. Onlookers and team supporters are encouraged to watch and urge on (with restraint and some reason!) their favorites. There will be soups, snacks, and other munchies, donated by local delis and sandwich shops, available for a nominal price for those who feel hunger pangs coming on. There will also be "beehive" games of chance (very small fees!) available to divert the onlookers' attention if the Spelling Bee slows down occasionally. A "Queen Bee" trophy prize will be awarded to the winning team, to be held and coveted for a year before being handed on to next year's winner. We assume that Kingston UCC will both field a team and bring supporters. Don't forget this fun event for a good cause!

A Great Idea from the National UCC

*Today, we'd like to invite you and your local church to demonstrate -- in yet another powerful way -- the hundreds of thousands of prayers that are growing from across our "100,000 for Peace" movement. We're asking that your church consider circulating a "**prayer journal**" among your members -- either before or after Sunday worship, or as part of the service itself -- in order to collect prayers and encouragements that we will forward on to troops on your behalf. **We've created a short how-to guide to help you create your own prayer journal**.*

*If we receive your prayer journals by Tuesday, January 15, we'll bless them during weekly worship in the Amistad Chapel on Wednesday, January 16, and then ship them to our UCC military chaplains serving in Iraq. They should receive them during the season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 6. What a great way to bridge these two major seasons of the church year with prayers of peace, love and goodwill. **Get started on your prayer journal this Sunday**. Thank you for your continued witness for peace this Christmas.*

Our Missions Board and Peace and Justice Task Force endorse this follow-up to the "100,000 for Peace" movement, especially since we have been able to include Iranian Refugees in our Christmas Offering. The Peace and Justice Task Force will supply the prayer journal and invite people to write in it during Fellowship Hour on January 6 and 13.

Let's all participate!

Many thanks,
Kennie Geary from the Task Force

Golden Oldies Cabaret Sing Along

Arranged by Marilyn Goodman and Patty Stout
With Patty at the Piano

Refreshments and ambiance thanks to Claudia Smith

Fellowship Hall

January 27, 2-5 PM

Join us for refreshments and sing along if you like.
All singers and non-singers are welcome.

A suggested donation of $10.00
to benefit the Kingston Congregational Church will be gratefully received.

Two Upcoming Concerts in the Spring 2008 KCC Music Series

1. Sunday, February 3, 2008 at 3pm, Theresa Patton, Jane Murray and Susan Wood of the celebrated Northeast Chamber Trio will feature pieces for Flute, Oboe and Bassoon

2. Saturday, May 10, 2008, 7pm, Valerie Nicolosi, mezzo soprano, will give a solo voice recital featuring A Celebration of Motherhood in Song

Note: The Music Series would like to thank Delight Carpenter, the past chair, for her years of tireless and joyous contributions to the KCC concert series. Her membership on the committee will be dearly missed as she steps down for a well earned leave.

Mexican Dinner Coming February First!

Mark your calendars now for our **Second Annual Mexican Potluck Dinner, February 1 at 6 p.m.** We've decided to repeat this popular event: good fellowship, great food--and $5 admission will help us raise some badly needed dollars for school uniforms for the girls who live at "Angelina's Shelter" in Chiapas, Mexico. You'll also have an opportunity to purchase Free Trade craft items from Guatemala from Susan Letendre and to hear about her latest trip.

Women's Fellowship Meeting

Monday, January 7th at 7:00 pm
In the Fireplace Room

Program: A panel consisting of

Margaret Bradley	Dottie Leduc	Mark Tortolani
Cliff Falby	Mike McMahon	Ingrid Yogaratnum
Norma Hagist	Wayne Svehlik	

Topic: "Good Will Hunting"

Women and Men are Welcome!

Men's Fellowship 2008

Saturday Seminar

Saturday, March 15, 2008
9 – 11 AM in the Fireplace Room
George Fitzelle presents: About Cognitive Emotional Therapy
Join other men of the congregation as we explore this topic
Limited number: Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall

Coming in April

Retreat at Irons Homestead
We are trying to arrange this for April 25 – 26
In combination with a work day on April 26th
Stay tuned for particulars

Suggestions?
Contact: Gary Harlow (2008 Men's Fellowship Coordinator)
gary.harlow@yahoo.com or 295-2747
for the Men's Fellowship Planning Group:
Tom Brillat, Tom Butcher, Marc Ferrelli, Frank Lenox, Jim Ross

Junior High Fellowship

The Junior High Students were each given portions of the 23rd Psalm by their teacher, Carol Shilling. They were asked to come up with their own interpretation of their section, and then to work together to write a new version of the Psalm. Here is their Psalm, "If the Lord is Like a Friend"

"If the Lord is like a friend, I'd be glad,
The Lord would help me,
Would make me feel calm,
Would make me feel better,
Would steer me the right way.

When life is hard the Lord would comfort me,
Would help me get out of a bad situation,
Or keep me from getting into a bad situation,
Would share lunch if I'd forgotten to bring mine,
Would get me ice or a band aid if I am hurting.

Having a friend makes life better,
A friend is always there for me,
And I will always be God's friend."

Confirmands and Senior High

Deb Harig of S. K. Prevention will discuss substance abuse with the Confirmands and Senior High Fellowship on Sunday, January 6th at 10:45 a.m. in the Fireplace Room.

Senior High Fellowship

Happy New Years!

The Senior High Fellowship will be staying out overnight on Saturday, January 12th to raise awareness of the problem of homelessness. If anyone in the congregation would like to sponsor us, we will have a display in Fellowship Hall with a sign-up sheet. All donations will benefit FaithBuild, a cooperative church effort to raise funds for the building of a house in Charlestown. If people want to stop by and talk to us during the sleep out or drop off goodies, we would certainly appreciate it!

Also, mark your calendars for February 8th for a Pasta Dinner. More information will be provided in the Church bulletin as we get closer.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

Praise God from whom all blessings flow…. We sing this each Sunday, in praise of God, for the blessings He has bestowed upon us. We give praise to God for this place, where we can come together, and worship, as a church family.

I am particularly thankful for knowing that when I come to this place I will feel comforted. I am thankful for the many people who have helped Doug and me in the last 9 months, while we dealt with his illness. We are truly blessed, to be a part of this church community. When you face adversity and the unknown and you are just going from day to day, the really important things in life come into focus. I have become more thankful for the real simple blessings in my life, and have learned to feel more at ease in asking for help and comfort from others.

God helps us to realize that it is alright to ask for help. Many times we are so accustomed to managing on our own, and being self sufficient. It is not easy to admit that we are overwhelmed, tired, need encouragement, or comfort. We can hesitate to ask others because they will see us when we are venerable and burdened.

But it is alright to let others know that everything is not going well. We can still be considered strong and capable individuals even if we cannot do it all on our own. Just ask and it will be given to you. Knock and the door will be opened. Consider yourself blessed by the offers of help from others.

During this time of thanksgiving be thankful for your real blessings. Be giving and pass on a blessing you have to someone else. You can do this with simple and small gestures of comfort, in words of encouragement, by giving a gentle touch, in offering a smile. Where there is despair offer your hope. Where there is sadness, offer your joy. Pass your blessings on and help another person feel blessed by you. For it is in giving that we receive and are blessed in return.

AMEN

This prayer was written by Janet Kraus and presented by her to the congregation at the Thanksgiving Sunday service on November 18, 2007.