



**EDWARDS CHURCH**  
An Open and Affirming Congregation of  
The United Church of Christ  
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Pastor: Rev. Dr. Deborah Clark  
Ministers: All the People of Edwards Church

## THE STEEPLE

July/August 2019

No. 7

Dear friends,

What a glorious surprise! Thank you for the very special celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of my ordination. It means so much to me.

The litany the deacons led was beautiful. It was especially powerful to have the entire congregation offer me the blessing that I am privileged to offer you as the benediction each Sunday. (*May God bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God look upon you with kindness and grant you peace.*)

The gift—new, in-depth commentaries on Luke and Acts—is perfect. I will use them in our upcoming Bible Studies and also in my sermon preparation. The commentaries remind me of the impact our shared Bible Studies have had on my life and my faith. Our thoughtful, dedicated group has helped me develop a deeper appreciation of who Jesus is and a deeper (and more challenging and compassionate) understanding of what it means to follow him.

Then there was the cake! Double chocolate with raspberries; clearly you all know me well! It was delicious, and the opportunity to reminisce with many of you in coffee hour was joyous. I talked with a couple folks from the search committee that called me to Edwards twenty-three years ago. At the time, I had been ordained for seven years and was just beginning to learn how to be a pastor. None of us ever could have imagined the journey we would be on together.

And then when I got home, I opened my cards. There were many beautiful cards, with personal, thoughtful notes of appreciation. As I read them, I

thought about so many shared moments that have shaped my ministry.

Thank you for celebrating my ministry. Thank you for the last twenty-three years of singing, praying, studying, eating, grieving, planning, gardening, stretching, helping and rejoicing together.

Peace, Debbie

### **SUMMER MISSION PROJECTS**

Looking for a way to make a difference? Have a little extra time this summer? Want to spend time with people of all ages? Then join us for two mission opportunities offered this summer:

#### **Daniel's Table Service Day**

*Friday, July 12 from 1:00-4:00pm*

In mid-July we will gather a group of youth and adults to help out at Daniel's Table, a local organization dedicated to ending hunger in Framingham. We might be stocking shelves, chopping vegetables, packing meals, or something else. There's a limit of ten people; sign up soon by contacting Debbie at [pastor@edwardschurch.org](mailto:pastor@edwardschurch.org).

#### **Jewish Family Service Backpack Event**

*Monday, August 26, 10:00am-12:00pm*

In late-August we will bring backpacks that were blessed in worship to the Framingham Public Library. There we will fill them with school supplies to support local school children as they start classes. This will be our second year to participate in Jewish Family Service's Backpack Event. This project is for all ages, and is especially fun with lots of kids! Watch for more details.

## **SUMMER WORSHIP**

### **July 7 Holy Communion; Intergenerational Worship**

Our youth and adults who attended General Synod will lead us in worship

### **July 14 Combined Outdoor Service with Plymouth Church at Edwards!**

This year we will host our annual combined outdoor service. Join us in the shade of our playground for an informal, engaging service for people of all ages!

### **July 21**

Open Spirit Intern Fran Graveson will preach.

### **July 28**

Deacon Chris Leigh-Manuell will preach.

### **August 4 Holy Communion; Intergenerational Worship**

Interim Director of Christian Education Dawn Sorensen will lead worship.

### **August 11**

Debbie Clark preaching.

### **August 18 Intergenerational Brunch Worship**

Join us in the air conditioned Sue Dickerman Hall to worship the way the early church did it: with a meal. Fun music, great food and fellowship, and a message for all ages.

### **August 25 Blessing of the Backpacks**

Bring your own backpack or book bag for a blessing before the school year starts. Bring a second backpack to be blessed and donated to the JFS Backpack Event. Debbie Clark preaching.

## **LUNCH BUNCH THAI FOOD GATHERING**

*Wed., August 21 at noon in Sue Dickerman Hall*

Over the last few years, Lunch Bunch has gathered periodically to try foods from around the world, as prepared by local restaurants. We've made our way around most of the globe, so for August we will circle back for a repeat trip to Thailand. Join us for flavorful (but not hot and spicy) treats. Watch for a sign-up sheet.

## **END-OF-SUMMER PENTECOST DEVOTIONAL: STORIES NEEDED**

During the season of Lent, many of us enjoyed waking up to Lenten Devotionals in our email in-boxes. The stories, photos and reflections by church members were inspiring and helped us get to

know one another better. Many people expressed sadness that they ended when Easter came!

So we decided, at a recent congregational meeting, to do a short Pentecost Devotional toward the end of summer, as we prepare for the new program year. The theme will be a simple one: God Is With Us.

For this devotional we invite you to submit of photo of a place where you experience the presence of the sacred, a story of a time you felt God's presence, a reflection on something special you did or saw this summer. It doesn't have to be dramatic; sometimes the most ordinary moments reveal God's presence profoundly.

Keep it in mind; send your ideas to Debbie (pastor@edwardschurch.org) any time during the summer, or sign up on the Sign-up Genius found on the weekly email.

## **NOTES FROM THE CHOIR DIRECTOR**

In our bidding farewell to the choir this summer we left our music program in the expert hands of Susan and Cheryl until just after Labor Day. Would you be interested in providing special music at some point in July or August as a prelude, offering, or postlude? Summer is a great time to do so! Just contact me (email is best this time of year as I am around less often) and I'll work to get you scheduled in an appropriate service.

Rick Seaholm

rick@edwardschurch.org

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CORNER**

This summer is rockin' for our kids and youth! We're off to Synod with four youth to learn what the governing body of the National Church is all about! When we return, there will be two intergenerational services this summer, one led by Youth@Synod attendees.

The little kids are all set with some amazing teachers volunteering during the summer months! There will be lots of nature time, along with snacks, stories, and projects.

We hope that wherever you may go this summer, you will leave a little happy reminder of your faith journey for someone else to enjoy. Happy Summer! Enjoy the R&R!

Dawn Sorensen

Interim Director of Christian Education

## **SEEDS OF GRACE WORSHIP**

We had our last service led by Rev. Isaac Everett on Sunday, June 16. He has led these services since July 2018 and it was sad to say goodbye. We will be having services this summer, but they are still in the planning stages. More information will be coming in the weekly emails from the church office—so stay tuned!

### **SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE**

We are still meeting several times per month. We have had a variety of candidates sending their profiles to us and have had many interviews. Some candidates are looking for a call for ordination, some are already newly ordained, some have been in ordained ministry for some time. We feel we have met with several viable candidates. We also have a neutral pulpit set up and we are going to hear one of the candidates preach at the end of June. We hope we will have exciting news for you in the near future!

### **KERMIT'S KORNER**

As farmers in the Midwest face the misery of floods and crop loss, we have supported them through a special offering for disaster relief this June. But farmers right here in Massachusetts struggle even in good years to hang onto their land when development beckons and profits are thin. Many of us know little about where our food comes from, or how to grow it ourselves. You can help by buying local, supporting local farms and growers, and even growing your own food. Your taste buds and your planet will thank you. If you have any questions about the following activities, please contact Mary Memmott.

#### **What can you do to support local agriculture?**

- Support the “farm-to-food pantry” share from Stearns Farm through Edwards Church by attending a work day, or to pick up and deliver our weekly share of produce to the Hope food pantry. Visit [edwardschurch.org](http://edwardschurch.org) to sign up.
- Attend the “Locavore Potluck Picnic” sponsored by Transition Framingham on Sat., July 27 at 1:00 p.m. Location to be confirmed, but most likely Farm Pond in Framingham. Visit [transitionframingham.org](http://transitionframingham.org) for more information.
- Visit one of our local summer farmers markets: Thursdays from noon-5:30 p.m. on the Framingham Centre Common; Saturdays from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on Natick Center Common; and Wednesdays from noon-5:00 p.m. at Russell’s Garden Center in Wayland.
- Learn by doing! Volunteer to help at drop-in gardening hours at the Framingham Community

Farm (a vegetable garden right on our campus, providing fresh produce to A Place to Turn food pantry) on Thursdays from 9:00-11:00 a.m. Contact the church office for more information.

- Finally, learn from your neighbors! Join Transition Framingham for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Vegetable Garden Tour of Framingham, Sat., Aug. 24 starting at 9:30 a.m. A special visit to the gardens on our own campus will be included. Plans are still in the works; if you know a home vegetable garden in the Saxonville/Nobscot areas of town that might be good to include on the tour, please contact Mary.

Mary Memmott for the Green Team  
508-788-1826 or [memmottm@gmail.com](mailto:memmottm@gmail.com)

### **LITTLE WOODEN BANKS**

This past month we had two expenditures made from our Wooden Banks Fund. Bank money helped defray the cost of our special lunch bunch with food supplied by the Saxonville Mills coffee shop, and also was used to purchase special new folders used by our choir to hold their music. We had one donation last month for \$4.53. This fund is used for needs of our church which are not included in our annual budget. See me if you would like to have one of our new little church banks. Many thanks to our faithful contributors! Say a little prayer with each penny you add to your bank. Have a peaceful summer!

God bless you all,  
Norma Hart



### **SUMMER OFFICE HOURS**

Leaving some flexibility for long weekends and vacation, these are the July and August church office hours:

Monday, 9:00am-3:00pm  
Wednesday, 9:00am-3:00pm  
Thursday, 9:00am-3:00pm

## **FRAMINGHAM COMMUNITY FARM**

Take a walk past the raised beds at Framingham Community Farm and you will see the beautiful results of sun, rain and human commitment to fight hunger. We are so grateful for the work of our friends from Ma'Yan Tikvah who dedicated their Mitzvah Day with us. Beans and flowers were planted, wood chips were spread along the paths, and weeds were pulled around the Edwards Church campus. We recently made our first donation of produce to the food pantry at A Place to Turn in Natick. Follow @framinghamcommunityfarm on Instagram and Facebook! And stop in during volunteer hours on Thursdays from 9:00-11:00 a.m. to join in the fun!

## **COMING UP AT OPEN SPIRIT**

### **An Evening of Energy Healing**

*Tuesday, July 16, 7:00-9:00pm*

*in the Susan P. Dickerman Education Building*

Join us to experience three modes of energy healing—techniques that draw upon the energy around us to activate the body's own healing potential. Each participant will experience two fifteen-minute individual sessions: Tibetan Bowl healing with Julie Mangini and vibrational energy healing with Maria Dios. In between those sessions, Donna Warren will offer guided relaxation and chakra balancing. Suggested donation of \$25-40; more if you can, less if you can't. Registration is required ([openspiritcenter.org](http://openspiritcenter.org)); limit of eight participants.

### **Celebrating the Spirit of Our Campus**

*Sunday, August 25, 5-7 pm in Edwards Hall*

Have you noticed the beautiful photographs and paintings on the art wall in Edwards Hall? They are all of our campus and the things that happen here! There are photos of flowers from our gardens, sunrises and sunsets, our sanctuary and our stained glass windows. And there are photos of people and programs (and a fluffy dog!). Together they tell a story of a lively, joyous, open-hearted campus and the communities that gather here.

That is cause for celebration! So join us for an evening of good food, good conversation, and probably some good music as well. Watch for more details, but mark your calendar now!

Edwards Church UCC  
39 Edwards St  
Framingham, MA 01701-3433

# Thai Take-Out Lunch Bunch

*Wednesday, August 21 at noon  
in Susan P. Dickerman Hall*

*Join us for delicious Thai food from a great local restaurant!  
Sign up at church or contact the office to RSVP.*



# Summer Fun @Edwards

During these months of the year, church life tends to slow down a little, but if you're in the neighborhood, there's still plenty to do! Join us for creative worship services, rewarding service projects, and worship opportunities. Get details on these and other activities for people of all ages in the *Steeple* and weekly emails!

## **Daniel's Table Service Day**

*Friday, July 12 at 1:00pm*

*Sign up by contacting Debbie*

## **Outdoor Worship with Plymouth Church**

*Sunday, July 14 at 10:00am*

*Outdoors on our beautiful campus*

## **Intergenerational Brunch Worship**

*Sunday, August 18 at 10:00am*

*In Sue Dickerman Hall*

## **Thai Take-Out Lunch Bunch**

*Wednesday, August 21 at noon*

*In Sue Dickerman Hall*

## **Celebrating the Spirit of Our Campus**

*Sunday, August 25 at 5:00pm*

*In Edwards Hall*

## **Jewish Family Service Backpack Event**

*Monday, August 26 at 10:00am*

*At the Framingham Public Library*



## **Check out Kermit's Korner!**

*Learn about some awesome green events and useful suggestions on how to support local agriculture during the abundant summer months!*