



EDWARDS CHURCH

An Open and Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ

39 Edwards Street

Framingham, MA 01701

Telephone: 508 877-2050 508-877-0300

E-Mail: office@edwardschurch.org

Web site: www.edwardschurch.org

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Deborah Clark

Associate Pastor: Shane Montoya

Mentored Pastor: Nena Radtke

Ministers: All the People of Edwards Church

THE STEEPLE

May 2017

No. 5

Dear friends,

At our Seeds-of-Grace-style worship service on April 23, we “consulted” with each other around the question, “What does it mean to be a Christian?” One of our members told us about a conversation that led her to an insight: being a Christian means she is never alone in her efforts to bring healing to the world. Sometimes, she said, companionship takes the shape of other people who are physically beside her—in the garden, holding signs on a street corner, serving lunch at Worcester Fellowship. Other times, the sense of not being alone emerges out of knowing there is a community praying for her and encouraging her.

Her testimony was a powerful one. It prompted me to think not only about the ways we support one another but also how we seek to walk together and work together with people beyond our own church. Two words come to my mind: accompaniment and collaboration.

Accompaniment is about walking together—being present with other people who are facing a difficult time. Over the last few months, I have been meeting with a group of community leaders to try to find ways we can support immigrant communities who are facing uncertainty. Accompaniment is one of the models we are exploring—forming teams of seven people who might be matched with a family in crisis. Their role is not to fix things but to offer encouragement, maybe food and rides, and especially the assurance that the family is not alone. We are working to figure out how to shape a project that would be most helpful to our neighbors.

As we explore accompaniments, we are also engaging in many new forms of collaboration. This year we collaborated with Plymouth Church on a

youth mission trip and for our confirmation class. Both collaborations enabled our youth to have a much richer experience than we could have provided on our own.

With the oversight of the Trustees and the support of the Board of Wider Mission, we are collaborating with Jessica Kruger, a Framingham resident who received a Projects for Peace grant, to create Framingham Community Garden in the space behind our office building. The garden will consist of raised beds, built and maintained by volunteers Jessica will supervise. The produce grown will be donated to Daniel’s Table, a ministry to end hunger in Framingham.

Another exciting collaboration, through Open Spirit’s Nourishing Teachers/Strengthening Classrooms project, is with Hoops and Homework, an afterschool program in downtown Framingham. We are providing the children and youth there with mindfulness training, using yoga and flamenco dance classes. The classes build skills that help the young people succeed in school and in life: the ability to focus and manage emotions.

We will celebrate and build this collaboration through a special fundraiser on Sunday, May 7 in Edwards Hall (see the article in this *Steeple*). The event, from 3:00 – 5:00 pm, will feature flamenco dance and music.

Accompaniment and collaboration are two exciting ways we extend the Edwards Church circle of caring, reaching out to build connections and make a difference in our world.

Peace,
Debbie

MAY WORSHIP

May 7, Holy Communion

Debbie Clark preaching

May 14

Nena Radtke preaching

May 21

Debbie Clark preaching

May 28

Debbie Clark preaching

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, May 7 after worship

Stay after worship for a Congregational Meeting in Sue Dickerman Hall. We will vote on an updated nominating committee report, and reflect on where we are and where we are going.

GATHERING OF FRIENDS

Sunday, May 21 after worship

You are invited to a “Gathering of Friends” brunch after coffee hour on Sunday, May 21st, from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. This gathering is for:

- folks who are new to Edwards Church and want to learn more and meet some new friends;
- folks who have been attending for a while and would like to learn about membership;
- long-time members who would like to meet our newer friends.

Please RSVP to the church office (508-877-2050 or pastor@edwardschurch.org).

LUNCH BUNCH ‘FIFTH WEDNESDAY’ THAI TAKE-OUT

Wednesday, May 31, 12 Noon

At our successful Chinese Take-Out Lunch, we decided that every fifth Wednesday would be Take-Out Day! This time we will try Thai Take-Out, from Chili Basil in Sudbury. Watch for a sign-up sheet or call the church office to reserve a spot. We suggest a donation of \$6 – more if you can, less if you can’t.

BIBLE STUDY—MATTHEW

The Wednesday evening and Thursday morning Bible Study classes will continue their study of Matthew. The Wednesday group will meet on May 10 & 24 at 4:30 pm for soup, 5:00 pm for Bible Study. The Thursday group will meet on May 11 & 25 at 11:00 am.

SERVING AT PEARL STREET CAFÉ

Tuesday, May 2 from 5:00-7:30pm

Our next date to serve at Pearl Street Café is Tuesday, May 2. Be sure to mark your calendars and sign up to join us. Pearl Street Café is now located at 46 Park Street.

WALK FOR HUNGER

Sunday, May 7 at 9:00am in Boston

Meet earlier to ride the train together

Join Edwards Church in one of the oldest fundraising walks in the country – the Walk for Hunger. The walk starts at 9:00 am from Boston Common but we will leave earlier to make our way to public transportation. The full walk is 20 miles but you can choose to walk what you can. Support your local food pantries and healthy food programs all over eastern Massachusetts.

To sign up, go to projectbread.org/walk-for-hunger and click on “join a team,” then search for Edwards Church – it pops right up. Or you can click on “donate to a participant” and make a donation to the Edwards Church team. Or see Laura Litman, Mary Memmott, or Frank Carney to make a donation that we will bring to the walk. Checks can be made out to Project Bread or cash is welcome.

GREEN TEAM KICK-OFF MEETING

Sunday, May 21 after worship

Edwards Church has done many things over the years to lower its impact on the environment and raise awareness in the community. But are we keeping up with our best intentions? Is there more we could be doing? Come share your ideas, wisdom, and common sense at our Green Team kick-off meeting.

We will meet after church (and after the dessert auction) on Sunday, May 21 for about an hour. The Green Team would then meet quarterly with informal follow-up on issues and actions as needed. There will be a simple soup lunch. Please email Mary Memmott (memmottm@gmail.com) to RSVP, or just show up (there always seems to be enough soup for one more). Youth and adults welcome.

STAND UP

Saturdays from 1:00-3:00pm, Downtown Framingham

Saturdays at 6:00pm at St. Tarcisius Parish

Stand up in support of immigrants, Muslims, and Jews – join the sign-holding sponsored by SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) every Saturday in downtown Framingham (corner of routes 126 and 135) from 1:00-3:00 pm. Bring a positive sign of support for diversity, inclusion, and a welcoming Framingham or borrow one from the group. For more information contact metrowestsurj@gmail.com, find the SURJ Metrowest group on Facebook, or contact Mary Memmott at memmottm@gmail.com.

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR DIRECTOR

Over the past few years there have been several articles which have alluded to different stages of my commissioning. With this one, I can say it will be the last time that I mention it!

Thank you kindly to everyone who was a part of my commissioning service on April 23. The overwhelming support from everyone was amazing, and I'm forever grateful that you shared the afternoon in honor of our music ministry. Thank you, all.

Rick Seaholm

Commissioned Minister of Music

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

There's been so much going on with our children and youth at Edwards, it's hard to know where to start!

In preparation for Palm Sunday, our children decorated t-shirts. The youngest ones decorated them with pictures of where they saw God's love for them including puppies, rainbows, and the doctor's office. Our older children made t-shirts decorated with Palm Sunday parade slogans-including my favorite – "Keep Palm and Carry On" – a play on the now famous British slogan "Keep Calm and Carry On." On the day of the parade, our high school youth creating signs asking for peace in foreign languages, including Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Arabic, and Hebrew. Our older children made signs in English, and our youngest children helped to decorate them. Right before the parade, the children booed that bully Pontius Pilate and his crew of dastardly toughs. The children distributed palms in the church and went outside with the rest of the church to march. Children in the other churches accompanying us on the parade also decorated t-shirts, and with the help of

noisemakers, guitars, and of course, Joey the Donkey, we made some joyful Hosannas and Hallelujahs on the march.

On Easter Sunday, our children hunted for Easter Eggs with blessings in them! Our in-church Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success, and much fun was had by all, particularly our youngest hunters. They learned that because blessings are gifts from God, we have a responsibility to give them away, just as God gave them freely to us.

Confirmation has also wrapped up; the youth of the church have been such a joy to work with; they're thoughtful and kind, and take church seriously. They'll be presenting their faith statements in a service on April 30, a can't miss service!

In faith,
Shane

DESSERT AUCTION!

Sunday, May 21 after worship

Save your appetite and stick around after church to bid on delicious baked goods. Proceeds will help support important mission projects and outings for our youth.

FROM THE CHANCEL COMMITTEE

Thank You!

The Chancel committee would like to thank all those that purchased flowers for Easter to help decorate the sanctuary .

Pentecost Geraniums

We will be collecting donations towards the purchase of red geraniums. The geraniums can be In honor of someone or In memory of someone. From May 14-28 there will be a sign up sheet in the hallway leading into the Susan Dickerman Hall from. The geraniums will be displayed on Sunday, June 4, which is Pentecost.

Cindy Booth
Chancel Committee

JUNE STEEPLE

Steeple articles are due by 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 17th . If you would like to write an article for the Steeple, please send it to Nicola, office@edwardschurch.org. The *Steeple* will be mailed on Wednesday, May 24th at 10:30 am. If you would like to help, please contact Jeannette Loughman of the Publicity Committee.

OUR LITTLE WOODEN BANKS

Recently we received a note and generous donation to our Banks Fund from Mrs. Carol Johnston who is the wife of our late pastor Reverend Bob Johnston who served Edwards Church from 1958 to 1971. The following is a quote from her note:

“My husband, Bob Johnston, and I brought a bank when we came to Edwards Church where we served for thirteen years. We had them at our home church, the Houghs Neck Congregational Church in Quincy, and thought they would be a way to remember to say Grace and put pennies in the little church for special projects. And I still see reports of them in the *Steeple*.”

The idea caught on, several little wooden banks were made and distributed to our members. And here we are fifty-nine years later still putting our coins in our banks. Thank you, Carol, for sharing a little “bank” history with us.

Please see me if you would like to have one of our new little church banks. Contributions may be placed in the model wooden church on the table in the hallway between the sanctuary and the Susan Dickerman Hall. Be sure to include your name with your contribution. We received six donations in April for \$72.49, for a total now of \$715.13. Many thanks to all our contributors. Every penny counts, and remember to say a little prayer with each one you add to your bank. God bless you all.

Norma Hart

COMING UP AT OPEN SPIRIT

Flamenco Fun(D)Raiser for Yoga and Mindfulness at Hoops and Homework

Sunday, May 7, 3-5 pm

Please join us at Open Spirit for a fundraiser featuring flamenco music and dance by ¡Olé Flamenco! in support of Open Spirit’s Nourishing Teachers/Strengthening Classrooms Project’s work at Hoops & Homework. This promises to be an entertaining afternoon of dance and live music for the entire family.

The Nourishing Teachers/Strengthening Classrooms Project is a community outreach program that supports both teachers and students in mindfulness practices and mind/body awareness. Hoops & Homework offers academic and enrichment services to at-risk youth living in and around the Beaver and Waverly Street areas of Framingham.

Through the generosity of private donors, Open Spirit’s Nourishing Teachers/Strengthening Classrooms Project has been able to offer students in the Hoops & Homework program after school sessions in both flamenco dance and mindfulness/yoga.

Eve Costarelli, a professional flamenco dancer and yoga instructor who works directly with the students at Hoops & Homework, will be the featured performer. Eve will bring with her the guitarist and vocalist who travel with her to perform ¡Olé Flamenco! across the state.

Miss Jeanie’s Catering and Nzuko will provide light Spanish-themed refreshments.

This event is co-sponsored by Re-Vibe: Music and Arts that Inspire. Re-Vibe is a collaboration of three healing communities: Root & Wings, Open Spirit, and Common Street Spiritual Center, with a mission to bring people together to celebrate and experience the connective, inspirational, and transformative powers of music and the arts.

Edwards Church, UCC
39 Edwards St.
Framingham, MA 01701

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

May 7 Following Worship
in Susan P. Dickerman Hall